

## FAQs – food waste collection service

- **Why collect food waste separately?**

An estimated 10 million tonnes of food is wasted in the UK, with household food waste accounting for 6.6 million tonnes of the total. By collecting food waste separately, we produce green energy to power homes and a rich fertiliser for farming. It also helps reduce the borough's carbon footprint. As well as benefiting the planet, recycling food waste saves councils money – local authorities are non-profit organisations and pay for the disposal of waste by the tonne. Recycling waste brings disposal costs down and reduces pressure on budgets, helping to protect other frontline services.

- **How does the weekly food waste collection service work?**

Households in Telford and Wrekin have two food waste caddies, a small caddy for inside the home and a larger caddy for outside. The larger caddy should be presented each week alongside your other containers. Please ensure your caddy is presented so it is easy for the food crew to spot (food waste is collected by a different crew/wagon to your other waste/recycling collections). All containers need to be out for 7am on your collection day.

Households with shared recycling and waste containers (e.g. flats) have a small caddy for inside and a silver top wheelie bin in their communal bin area in which to empty the contents of their smaller caddy.

Tips for windy days - very windy weather is always going to present a problem with any type of container, particularly once emptied and no longer weighted down by their contents. The advice is to ensure containers are presented in a visible place but not too exposed. Windy weather also highlights the importance of marking containers with your house number, so it is easier for you to identify which are yours and for crews to return them to the right property.

- **What can I put in my food caddy?**

Raw and cooked meat and fish, bones, fruit and vegetables (raw and cooked). All dairy products such as eggs and cheese, bread, cakes, pastries, pasta, rice and beans, tea bags, coffee grounds, pet food as well as leftovers and uneaten food from your plates. Please remove packaging from any unopened food before emptying into the caddy, and then dispose of the packaging in the correct container.

- **What can't I put in my caddy?**

Non-food products such as packaging of any sort, cling film, food trays, fruit punnets, plastic bags, pet mess or faeces, pet litter or pet bedding, liquids (e.g. orange juice, squash, fizzy drinks) or oils (e.g. fats/oils from cooking).

- **What happens if I put the wrong items in the food caddy?**

If your food caddy contains the wrong things, crews will not be able to collect it. If this is the case, they will leave a hanger on your caddy to explain the problem and what you need to do.

- **I don't produce food waste/already compost at home – how can I use the service?**

Some people produce more food waste than others, but all of us produce some sort of food waste (e.g. bones from the Sunday roast, a bit of stale bread or something lurking at the back of the fridge that has been forgotten). Households are encouraged to recycle what they don't eat. If you already compost at home, please keep composting all your vegetable/fruit peelings, teabags and garden waste. However, the food waste service accepts a variety of food waste that can't go in your compost bin (e.g. meat, fish, bones, dairy products and leftovers); these can all go in your food waste caddy.

- **I don't have room for a food caddy in my kitchen, what can I do?**

The food caddy is only 7ltr and is designed to be kept indoors (e.g. on a kitchen work surface/under the sink). However, if you don't have space or prefer not to use your indoor caddy, then you can empty your food waste directly into the larger food caddy outside.

- **Can I put my kitchen caddy out for collection?**

No, it is intended for indoor use and could easily blow away.

- **What happens to my food waste once it is collected?**

Your food waste is taken to a special facility in Stourbridge called an Anaerobic Digester where it is broken down naturally by bacteria in an oxygen-starved environment. This process produces biogas which is used to create energy and produces a rich fertiliser which can be used in farming.

- **I have too much food waste for one caddy, can I have another one?**

The food caddy has a capacity of 23ltr which should be enough for most households, as this is a weekly collection service. You can, however, order an additional food caddy here.

- **I don't want to recycle my food waste; do I have to?**

Recycling is one of the best ways we can have a positive impact on our planet and one we can all do. As well as benefitting the planet, recycling food waste saves councils money, local authorities are non-profit organisations and pay for the disposal of waste by the tonne. Recycling waste brings disposal costs down and reduces pressure on budgets, helping to protect other frontline services. The food waste service is an optional service, but we have to dispose of our food waste, and so the choice is which container to place your food waste in and how often you want it collected. You can either dispose of food waste in your silver food caddy which is

collected weekly or your red top bin which is collected fortnightly. We encourage all households to take part in the weekly food scheme so we can reduce our impact on the environment, and we very much hope people will recycle their food waste.

- **I am worried my food waste will smell/attract vermin/flies, what can I do?**

The food service is a weekly collection, leaving less time for smells to develop. Always shut the lid of your kitchen caddy and transfer waste to the outside caddy regularly. If the food is off, smelly or high risk (e.g. raw meat) wrap it in newspaper/kitchen towel and take it straight to your outdoor caddy. Put your outside caddy out for collection every week, no matter how small the amount.

- **I had maggots in my food caddy/bin, what can I do?**

Don't panic, although not nice, maggots should not cause you any harm. You will only have a problem with maggots if flies can get to your waste. Flies are attracted to the smell of food and other rubbish. They lay their eggs on the waste and within 24 hours these eggs hatch into maggots. The speed of this means that we will never be able to collect your bins quickly enough to prevent maggots, but you can limit their production. Placing food waste in the outside food caddy which has a lockable lid and is collected weekly, rather than putting it in your red top bin which has a fortnightly collection, will reduce the risk of maggots. Other advice is to never leave food uncovered inside the home longer than necessary, including cat and dog food; put your food waste into your kitchen caddy for recycling and ensure the lid is closed properly to keep flies out; transfer the contents to your outside caddy regularly; and put your outside caddy out for collection every week, no matter how small the amount. After your container is emptied, rinse it out with hot water, white vinegar or disinfectant.

- **What can I use to line my caddy?**

You have a number of options: kitchen paper towels, junk mail or newspaper to line your kitchen caddy; placing food directly in your caddy; or buying your own biodegradable caddy liners, which are widely available in supermarkets and discount shops. The most environmentally-friendly option is to place food directly in the caddies provided, which is what a lot of people already do.

- **Didn't you used to supply free caddy liners?**

The food waste service was introduced in Telford and Wrekin in September 2019 to boost the amount we recycle in the borough and reduce the impact of waste on the environment. Most local authorities give away a free roll of liners when they first roll out the service to get people started on recycling their food waste. Our recycling and waste contractor, Veolia, opted to give away free liners to encourage as many people as possible to recycle their food waste. However, due to high demand for liners, with almost 10 million individual liners distributed in less than a year, it was unsustainable for them to continue to provide them free of charge to all households. Participating households with their own outside caddies were given a last roll of 52 free liners in September 2020 to last them another 6-12 months. Households who share a communal outdoor food wheelie bin (e.g. flats) will continue to receive free caddy

liners to transport their food waste to their communal bin. New build properties will also receive a free roll of caddy liners with their containers.

- **My food caddy has been damaged/lost/stolen or I have just moved to the area and don't have any, how can I order them?**

You can order caddies [here](#)

- **Crews have spilt food waste on the street, what can be done?**

Crews are responsible for clearing any food spillages they make during collection rounds. If you notice them spilling any and not clearing up, please let us know the location so we can ask Veolia to review the video footage from the round and arrange for crews to return and clear it if it is appropriate to do so.

- **My food waste hasn't been collected, what should I do?**

Providing that you put your caddy out by 7am on your collection day, you can report a missed collection [here](#). Please note that your food waste is collected weekly by a different crew and wagon to your other refuse/recycling collections, so will not be collected at the same time. With 70,000+ households to collect from each week, the odd missed collection is inevitable. You can help food crews by ensuring that your caddy is presented so it is easy for them to spot.

- **Can I take my food waste to Household Recycling Centres?**

No, unfortunately Household Recycling Centres don't have the facility to store food waste safely.

#### **Further information and useful links:**

[Recycle for Telford and Wrekin – what goes in your containers](#)

[Bin collection day checker and calendar](#)

[Apply for an assisted bin collection](#)

[Report a missed bin collection](#)

[Request additional/replacement containers](#)

[Book a bulky item collection](#)

[Household Recycling Centres and e-permits](#)