

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council

New Weekly Food Waste Collection Service

FAQs



Here are some of the questions about the new food waste collection service you might be asking.

1. Why are you introducing the new food waste collection service?

In the UK we throw away over 7 million tonnes of food each year, much of this could be avoided. In Tonbridge and Malling, over 30% of waste in the black rubbish bin is food waste. Throwing away food is a huge waste of water, energy and the resources used to produce, prepare, package, transport and store it.

If food waste is sent to landfill, when it decomposes it generates methane gas, because of the lack of oxygen. When released into the atmosphere, methane is 25 times more potent a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.

If food waste is incinerated, even though this process produces energy, the waste cannot be recycled again. It also costs much more to dispose of food as waste, than it does to recycle it.

The compost produced from food waste is used as a soil enricher for agriculture to help grow new crops.

By introducing a new weekly food waste collection service, we know we can significantly increase the amount of food waste we recycle.

2. When will the new service start?

When the new contract starts on 1st March 2019, services will initially remain the same as they are now, while preparation is made to launch the new recycling service. The new service is expected to be available to all residents by November 2019 and we will keep you informed before any changes take place.



3. What can I put in my food waste bin?

All raw and cooked food waste including leftovers and spoilt/mouldy food: **please remove food from all packaging**

- meat and fish – raw and cooked including bones
- dairy products such as cheese
- raw and cooked vegetables and fruit
- bread, cakes and pastries
- rice, pasta and beans
- uneaten food from your plates
- tea bags and coffee grounds
- eggshells
- pet food (however wet pet food left out can be a breeding ground for flies to lay eggs)

What can't I put in my food waste bin?

- non-food products/materials
- packaging of any sort
- plastic bags (don't use them as liners),
- oils and liquids
- animal faeces.

4. How will the food waste be collected?

Each property will receive a 5 litre kitchen caddy and a 23 litre food bin. Food waste can be scraped into the small caddy in the kitchen and when full, the

contents transferred into the larger 23L food bin (please don't put your small 5L kitchen caddy out for collection).

Present the 23 litre black and orange food bin **every week** for collection alongside your refuse or recycling bin, on the boundary in your usual place. Please make sure the food bin is visible from the road. You may see the collection crews emptying the food bins into a wheeled bin as they walk along (it is not being mixed with other recycling) –this is called a 'slave' bin and will be emptied on the automatic lifting equipment on the freighter when it is full.

5. Is it not better to reduce food waste than to collect for treatment?

Yes, reducing waste is always the preferred option. It is hoped that as you start using the new collection service you will become more aware of food that is going to waste. If households reduce the amount of food waste produced, it can benefit both the environment and the pocket, as you can save money on food bills. To find out more information on reducing your food waste visit the Love Food, Hate Waste website at www.lovefoodhatewaste.com

6. Why can I no longer put food waste in with my garden waste?

Your brown wheeled bin is for garden waste only. Your food waste will be collected separately **every week** which means the two material streams can be processed in different ways. Food waste will be processed by In Vessel composting at Blaise Farm in West Malling.

This material falls under the Animal By Product Regulations and must be tipped indoors and reach a temperature of 65-800C for a minimum of 4 days to be sanitised. It is regularly tested to ensure it is safe to use as a soil improver.

However, the pure green garden waste can be tipped outside and can be composted in the open air, this is a more cost effective way of composting garden waste. The garden waste cannot contain any food or animal waste because outdoor composting facilities do not need to comply with Animal By Product Regulations.

It is better to collect food waste every week as it helps to minimise smells and flies. The 23L food bin has a lockable lid, so keeping the contents secure until collection.

7. Can I put food waste in with my normal domestic waste?

We encourage all residents to participate fully in the service in order to reduce the amount of waste for disposal. It costs much more to dispose of general waste than to recycle it.

Even though most of our non-recyclable waste goes to the Energy from Waste facility at Allington, there are occasions when it is closed for maintenance and the waste will be diverted to landfill.

Biodegradable waste sent to landfill generates the potent greenhouse gas methane, so it makes sense environmentally and economically to recycle your food waste, rather than put it in your black bin.

8. I don't have any food waste, what should I do?

Some people have more food waste than others. At some point, everyone will have some food waste. It could be a slice of stale cake, bones from a Sunday roast, fish

skin and bones or even something lurking at the back of the fridge that you had forgotten about. All of these can be recycled and turned into a soil improver for local farmland.

9. If I have extra food waste that will not fit in my bin, can I put it out for collection in a bucket or a bag?

The 23L food bin, for all property types, will usually be large enough to contain your food waste, but please contact us if you regularly find you have more food waste than will fit in your external bin. Please do not leave food waste on top of or beside your food bin in any other container or bag.

10. I don't have room for the food waste bins.

The small kitchen caddy is only 5 litres capacity and is designed to be kept on a kitchen work surface or under the sink. However, if you do not wish to use the small kitchen caddy, then you can empty your food waste directly into the 23 litre black and orange food waste bin outside. This only takes up as much space as a pair of adult size wellington boots!

11. I don't need to use this service as I compost at home already.

We would encourage you to continue composting at home, we have a special offer available on compost bins please see www.getcomposting.com Items such as meat, fish, bones, cooked food and dairy products which should not be composted at home, can be collected by using the food waste service.

12. How will I keep my caddy/food bin clean?

The kitchen caddy and food bin can be rinsed out after use and are dishwasher safe up to 60°C.

13. What liners/bags can I use in my kitchen caddy?

You don't have to use a liner, you can use a paper bag if you wish or line it with newspaper or kitchen roll. You can also use compostable corn-starch liners in the kitchen caddy, look out for the Seedling compostable logo and the EN13432 number. Compostable caddy liners are available in most supermarkets and online. Please don't use any plastic bags, the **collection crews will not empty food bins with any plastic inside.**



14. Can I put a chicken/turkey carcass in my food bin - it won't fit into a caddy liner/bag?

Yes, you can wrap it in newspaper if you wish and pop it straight into the outside 23L food bin.

15. How can I avoid getting maggots in my food waste bin?

We'll be collecting your food waste every week, so maggots shouldn't be a problem. You can minimise the risk by locking the lid of your outside food bin. The bin can be locked by moving the handle to the forward position.

Other tips: rinse your caddy and food waste bin with hot water and try to keep it in the shade where possible. Left over pet food can go into the food bin, however, if wet pet food is left out prior to disposal it can become a breeding ground for flies and therefore could cause maggots.

16. What can I do about foxes and vermin?

Keep your food waste bin locked to keep smells inside and animals out. The lock is operated by moving the handle to the forward position. The design of the food bin has been tried and tested across many parts of the country, in both urban and rural locations, very successfully.

17. How will I know which food bin is mine after collection?

Only the black and orange 23L food bin should be put out for collection – not the small 5L kitchen caddy. Please put your house name or number on the food bin. This will reduce the risk of missing bins or confusion after they have been emptied.

18. I live in a flat – will I be able to use this service?

If you live in a house divided into flats where you already have your own wheeled bins, you will most likely be able to have food bins, if you do, please number your bin so you know which is yours. If you live in a block of flats with a communal bin store, we will be looking to introduce a food waste collection after the initial roll out of the service. We will be ordering special food waste bins suitable for this purpose, and we will advise you when they are in place.

19. I live in a house but can't have any wheeled bins - will I be able to use this service?

If you live in a property that does not have space or access for wheeled bins and you have a black sack waste collection, you will be able to use the food waste service, by presenting the 23 litre food bin next to your sack on collection day. You will find this a more hygienic method of storing your food waste as animals cannot rip open the food bin as they would sacks.

20. What happens if my food waste is not collected?

If your food waste is not collected it may be for a number of reasons. If so it should have a tag explaining the reason. If the bin was correctly presented on time and has been missed, please report it within 24 hours and we will return to collect it.

21. How can I make sure my food bin isn't knocked over and contents spilt when I put it out for collection?

Please make sure you lock your food bin by rotating the handle either to the front or so the handle is upright when you put it out for collection, this firmly locks the lid down preventing spillages.

22. What time must my food bin be out?

All containers need to be out for 7am. Collection crews cannot return if your food bin is out late.

23. Can I have an extra 23 litre food bin?

You might want to try the service first and look at reducing the amount of food waste produced. If you have a large family and feel that you will need an extra food bin, please contact us. For tips on reducing food waste please visit www.lovefoodhatewaste.com

24. If I've grown something in the garden e.g. apples, is it food waste or garden waste?

Fruit and veg grown in a garden such as windfall fruit is classed as garden waste and can go in your brown wheeled bin, however anything you bring inside to the kitchen becomes food waste and should go into your 23L outdoor food bin. (Please don't fill your garden bin with windfall fruit, this is very heavy and could cause the bin to snap off the bin lift, so overweight bins won't be collected).

25. I'm elderly or disabled and will struggle to put my food waste bin out for collection, can I get help?

We provide an assisted collection service. If you already receive this service for your other bins, you will automatically receive it for the food waste service. If you would like to receive this service please contact our waste team as below.

If you still have a question please contact us at:

www.tmbc.gov.uk/waste

Waste.services@tmbc.gov.uk

(01732) 876147