

Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council

Communities, Regeneration & Environment Directorate Environmental Services

Policy ES 02: Recycling & Refuse Collections

This policy specifies Stockport Council's methods for dealing with recycling and refuse collections. The policy has been written to: -

- Support the implications of local, national and European pressures for change to reduce the amount of biodegradable waste that is sent to landfill.
- Address tightening health and safety law. This means moving from manual to mechanical handling operations wherever possible.
- Ensure that the Council maintains safe, economic and efficient recycling and waste collections.

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1.0 Individual Properties

Wherever operationally possible Stockport Council's preferred method of storage and collection for individual properties of recycling and refuse is a wheeled bin. Householders will be offered wheeled bins as a first choice. Only in circumstances where it is operationally unsafe, uneconomic or inefficient will alternative methods of storage and collection be offered. The prescribed types of recycling and refuse containers used to collect from Stockport individual properties are:

1.1 For properties determined by the Council as having adequate storage and access for wheeled bins

Colour	Capacity	Material	Container Style	Number Of Containers To Be Presented On The Scheduled Collection Day unless exceptions have been agreed under section 5
Blue	180 litre	mixed paper, card and cartons	Wheeled bin	One
Brown	180 litre	glass, cans and plastic bottles	Wheeled bin	One
Black	140 litre	residual waste (waste that can't be recycled)	Wheeled bin	One
Green	240 litre	garden and food waste	Wheeled bin	One
Green	23 litre	waste food	Lidded lockable container (for properties without a garden waste bin)	One
Green	7 litre	waste food	Lidded vented food caddy	N/A

1.2 For properties determined by the Council as not having adequate storage and access for wheeled bins

Colour	Capacity	Material	Style	Number Of Containers To Be Presented On The Scheduled Collection Day unless exceptions have been agreed under section 5
Blue	90 litre	residual waste (waste that can't be recycled)	Plastic sack, T10 film. 770mm half perimeter (with tie handles).	Two

Colour	Capacity	Material	Style	Number Of Containers To Be Presented On The Scheduled Collection Day unless exceptions have been agreed under section 5
Black	55 litre	glass, cans and plastic bottles	Black Box	One
White	45 litre	mixed paper, card and cartons	Plastic Sack, 610mm x 760mm with no tie handles	One
Green	23 litre	waste food	Lidded lockable container	One
Green	7 litre	waste food	Lidded vented food caddy	N/A

2.0 Multi Occupied Properties/Flats

- 2.1 Where it is operationally possible Stockport Council's preferred method of storage and collection for properties in multiple occupation (e.g. flats) are communal containers.
- 2.2 The Council may by notice ensure recycling and refuse is placed for collection in receptacles of a kind and number specified. The Council is entitled to and will make the standard charge for the rental of communal refuse containers. The Council will not charge for recycling containers to encourage waste diversion.
- 2.3 Householders and landlords who choose to purchase their own approved container(s) should note that all repairs and maintenance are their responsibility. The Council will not accept liability for any damage sustained to containers during collection.
- 2.4 Householders in multi occupied premises will be offered communal recycling facilities as a first choice. Only in circumstances where it is operationally unsafe, uneconomic or inefficient will alternative methods of recycling storage and collection will be offered.

3.0 General arrangements for the collection of recycling and refuse

- 3.1 Households are notified of their collection dates and times through the provision of a collection calendar. Any planned changes to the standard collection of their recycling and collection service will be notified in the press and on the Council's website at www.stockport.gov.uk/waste.
- 3.2 Except in the cases of residents with particular issues (please see section 14.0), the general requirement will be that only recycling and refuse presented at an accessible point adjacent to the highway (e.g. pavement) will be removed by the collection crews. In the event of this not being practicable or safe due to issues with vehicle access for example, then an alternative suitable location will be specified. Where appropriate consultation with the households' concerned will be undertaken.
- 3.3 In the event that recycling and refuse can only be presented by placing it on the highway then advice will be given as to how to minimise obstructions.

4.0 Designated Containers

- 4.1 Except for refuse and recycling collected and stored in sacks, as determined by Stockport Council and communicated to the residents affected, only Stockport Council approved containers will be emptied.
- 4.2 Householders must place their refuse and recyclable waste in the appropriate designated container where provided. Failure to do so could lead to enforcement action as per section 13.0.

5.0 Excess Residual Waste – Larger Households/Insufficient Capacity Claims/Medical Conditions

- 5.1 Where a household claims that they have insufficient capacity to store their waste in the Council issued container, they will be visited by a community recycling officer who will assist them. If it is shown that the current capacity is still inadequate after careful recycling and composting on a regular basis then,
- 5.2 The Council will assess the quantity of waste produced and:
- a) If there is excess domestic residual waste and it is determined that maximum recycling is taking place in that household then the Council will provide an additional container for a fee.
 - b) Where recycling is not taking place, the Council will write to the householder explaining that an additional container will not be provided and provide further advice on how to maximise recycling. Failure to follow this advice could lead to enforcement action as per section 13.0.
- 5.3 Larger households (6 persons or more) will not be required to have a waste assessment but will be asked to apply for an additional waste container. The householder's use of the additional bin will be subject to review.
- 5.4 A household with excess domestic residual waste due to an occupier having a recognised medical condition – due to the use of incontinence pads, catheters, catheter bags, stoma bags and anal plugs – will not be required to have a waste assessment but will be asked to apply for an additional waste container. The householder's use of the additional bin will be subject to periodic review.

6.0 Excess Recycling Waste

6.1 Householders can request additional recycling containers for a fee, subject to the agreed collection point not being deemed unsafe due to the volume of containers presented for collection.

7.0 Excess Waste – Side Waste

7.1 Side Waste is excess bags or waste from the household, which are presented for collection at the side of the container.

7.2 Any side waste left by households will not be collected. A notice will be left on the bin explaining why the waste has not been collected. The householder will be advised to use the Household Waste Recycling Centre/Local Recycling site, or wait until the next collection.

7.3 During the Christmas/New Year period alternative arrangements maybe made. Households will be notified of any amended collection arrangements as described in 3.1

8.0 Excess Waste – Closed Lids

8.1 Wheeled containers presented with waste that does not fit comfortably within the container and the lid is ajar will not be collected. A notice will be left on the container explaining why the waste has not been collected.

9.0 Collection Points

9.1 In situations where collections cannot be made from adjacent to the front edge of the householder's property then the Council will (in order to maintain economic and efficient collections) identify central or other agreed collection points.

9.2 This will involve Council officers identifying a safe place for a number of bins to be temporarily stored by householders by a specified time prior to emptying. This will apply to properties on walkways or those remote from an adopted highway.

9.3 In determining collection points for those affected properties, consultation will take place with the householders concerned. Householders will be required to place their recycling or refuse bin at the specified collection point on their scheduled day and then retrieve their bin from the collection point at the end of the day once emptied.

10.0 Collection Times

- 10.1 Properties where refuse is collected in sacks. In order to ensure that refuse can be efficiently collected and minimise the risk of spillage refuse sacks must:
- a) Be presented in either a refuse sack meeting the requirements of 1.0 or in a black sack of at least the same quality.
 - b) Fully contain the refuse, be undamaged and be securely closed to prevent spillage.
 - c) Be presented either at the edge of a property near to the highway or at an alternative suitable location (see section 9.0) and be easily accessible.
 - d) Be presented by 7:00 am on the programmed day of collection to ensure collection.
 - e) Not be presented any earlier than 5:00 pm on the evening before the programmed day of collection.
- 10.2 Properties where Recycling or Refuse is collected in wheeled bins. In order to ensure that refuse can be efficiently collected wheeled bins must:
- a) Be presented either at the edge of a property near to the highway or at an alternative suitable location (see section 9.0) and be easily accessible.
 - b) Be presented by 7:00 am on the programmed day of collection to ensure collection.
 - c) Not be presented any earlier than 5:00 pm on the evening before the programmed day of collection.
 - d) After collection the wheeled bin will be returned to the place where it was presented for collection or in the event that this place is not suitable then to a suitable place as close as possible to where it was presented minimising obstruction of the highway.
 - e) Households will be expected to return their empty container back onto their property on the day of collection, by no later than 7pm.

11.0 Contamination

- 11.1 A recycling container may be contaminated with the wrong recyclates(s) or the refuse container may contain waste that could be recycled.
- 11.2 If a recycling container is found to be contaminated prior to collection, it will not be emptied and a notice will be left on the container explaining why the waste has not been collected and the householder advised to remove these items by the next collection. The Council will offer a chargeable service to empty contaminated containers, upon request.
- 11.3 If refuse is found to contain items that could be recycled the collection crews will empty the container and leave a notice on the container explaining the situation and the consequences of further occurrences. In the case of individual properties using sacks written notification will be posted through the door of the household.
- 11.4 Where it is established that recycling and refuse containers are repeatedly not being used correctly, enforcement action will commence as per 13.0.

12.0 Replacement Containers

- 12.1 Householders will be responsible for the container(s) provided to them. The Council provides labels to enable householders to identify their container(s). The cost for any repair or replacement will be for the householder to bear unless the damage is proven to be through the fault of the Council. The Head of Environmental Services has discretion in considering extenuating circumstances.
- 12.2 Collection operatives have a duty to report any damaged containers caused through the operation.

13.0 Enforcement

- 13.1 The Council recognises that the service requirements contained in this policy will take time to be fully communicated and understood. Consequently the Council has decided to adopt an approach that will offer advice, support and guidance as the first and preferred way to establish this policy. However, the Council is fully aware that resorting to the use of formal powers will be necessary in some circumstances and is committed to seeing such measures applied in an open, reasonable and proportionate way.
- 13.2 As a signatory to the Government's Good Enforcement Concordat the Directorate has produced and the Council Executive approved a

Directorate Enforcement Policy. This Concordat will cover all service specific guidance.

- 13.3 Enforcement where household recycling and refuse is presented incorrectly either by the position of the container, time of presenting for collection or content.

The following identifies the approach that will be taken in cases where robust evidence is obtained that the requirements in paragraph 10.0 are not met.

a) **Stage One**

On the first occasion, officers who witness incorrect presentation by a householder will, where possible, advise householders verbally and in any event provide written advice. This will inform them of the correct method of presenting the container and the contents.

If necessary the Council will endeavour to remove recycling and / or refuse presented in the containers (i.e. not excess) on this first occasion if there is no significant risk to the health & safety of the collection crews.

b) **Stage Two**

On the second occasion a notice as required by Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 will be served on the householders.

If possible the Officer will contact the resident in person and advise them of the issue and seek to determine the resident's reasons for failing to present their refuse correctly. The Area Conditions Officer will offer help and advice to the resident to solve the problem.

If at any point before Stage 3 a resident requests the help of the Community Recycling Team (CRT) then no further action will be taken until that help has been provided. However, if following such a request a resident refuses three appointments offered by the CRT then action can proceed to stage three.

c) **Stage Three**

On the third occasion an Officer will serve a fixed penalty notice (FPN) on the householder.

If the householder continues to present their refuse incorrectly or fails to discharge their liability by payment of the FPN, then the Council will consider taking legal action at the Magistrates Court to prosecute the alleged offender.

13.4 Enforcement where trade refuse is presented

Where evidence is obtained that trade recycling or refuse has been unlawfully placed in the household collection containers, the Council will in the first instance issue a section 34 notice under the provision of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 followed by a FPN if the correct documents are not produced. Should further incidents occur then the Council will consider legal action at the Magistrates Court to prosecute the alleged offender and recover full costs.

13.5 Enforcement regarding Duty of Care

When a trader is asked to provide a proper duty of care waste transfer note with regard to their arrangements for the collection and disposal of their trade refuse and the necessary documentation cannot be immediately produced, then the trader will be given twenty one days to produce the necessary documentation.

If after twenty one days the trader has not produced the necessary documentation, the Council will issue an FPN. If there is a second such incident of failure to immediately produce the duty of care then the Council will consider legal action at the magistrates court to prosecute the alleged offender and recover full costs.

13.6 Enforcement of Fly Tipping

Where evidence of fly-tipping is obtained an investigation will begin and in the absence of any evidence of extenuating circumstances the Council will always initiate legal proceedings to prosecute the alleged offender and recover full costs.

14.0 Special assistance for residents with difficulties with the standard service

14.1 The Council is dedicated to enabling all Stockport's citizens to participate in the boroughs recycling and refuse services. The Council recognises that some residents will have particular problems using the standard Council services and therefore, the Council needs to make alternative arrangements. One of the arrangements is the Assisted Collection Service (see 14.4 and 14.12 for definitions)

14.2 The Council will provide, upon request, an Assisted Collection to residents who are:

- (a) registered as a Blue Badge holder, ⁽¹⁾
- (b) unable to participate without assistance due to a qualifying health condition, mobility issue or disability. ⁽¹⁾

(1) Provided that there are no other members of the same household who are able to assist in the participation of the service. The Register of Electors maybe checked to confirm the adult occupants of the household.

In order to reduce abuse of this service the Council will require all applicants under 14.2(b) to return with their application form a medical assessment form signed by their general practitioner, which will be included with the application form. This does not apply to applications under section 14.3 of this policy.

Documentary proof will not be required if referrals are made to the Council directly from recognised referring partners who confirm in writing that their client meets the criteria in this Policy.

14.3 Documentary proof will not be required if referrals are made to the Council directly from recognised referring partners who confirm in writing that their client meets the criteria in this Policy. Referring partners include Walthew House (formerly Stockport Eycline), Disability Stockport and Age Concern Stockport (current as of December 2009). This is not a definitive list and other groups may be added at a later date. The list will be maintained and held by Environmental Services.

14.4 Application Process – Household Recycling and Refuse Collection Service

14.5 Definition – Assisted collection; household recycling and refuse collection services

An assisted collection is "the collection of a refuse or recycling container, by the recycling and refuse crew from an agreed collection point at the resident's address and return of the said empty container(s) back to the agreed collection point"

A collection point is" an agreed location which is open to the air on the residents' property which is closest to the highway¹ (i.e. not inside a building)".

The Council will assess each application individually but reserves the right to refuse offering this service if:-

(a) The application does not meet any of the criteria detailed in section 14.2 of this policy,

¹ In agreeing the collection point for properties with steps / slopes / condition of the land issues residents may have to relocate their containers as the Council must have regard to the health and safety risks to the operatives.

- (b) The offer of the assisted collection leads to significant operational difficulties or unreasonable expense for the provider of the collection service, although the Council will investigate all practical solutions before adhering to this clause.

- 14.6 Application forms to access the Assisted Collection Service may be requested via telephone, fax, e-mail, or letter.
- 14.7 Application forms will be made available within 5 working days of the initial request. Upon request, the following formats are available: translated, Braille, large print, and Audio (these formats are provided by external sources and therefore the availability may be delayed by 14 days).
- 14.8 Applications will be assessed and the applicant notified of the outcome, within 4 weeks of receipt of a fully completed application, in accordance with the Assisted Collection Policy. The application will be assessed against the criteria in section 14.2 of this policy. An interim service will be provided for 21 days or until the application has been determined – which ever is sooner.
- 14.9 In the case of refusal the applicant is notified of the decision, detailing the reasons for refusal, and advising them of their right to appeal the decision (for details please refer to section 14.19 of this policy)
- 14.10 If the Council has reason to believe that the recipient is no longer eligible for the Assisted Collection Service an application form will be reissued along with a request for a medical certificate (for details please refer to section 14.14 of this policy).

14.11 Application Process – Bulky Waste Collection Service

- 14.12 Definition – Assisted collection; bulky waste collection service

An assisted collection is *“the collection of bulky items of waste from within the residents property at an agreed appointment”*

This service is available to residents who are: -

- (a) Referred by the recognised referring partners (listed in section 14.3 of this policy)
 - (b) Already in receipt of the Assisted Collections service, under section 14.11 of this policy.
- 14.13 The Council will assess each application individually but reserves the right to refuse offering this service if the offer of the assisted collection leads to significant hazards, operational difficulties or unreasonable expense for the provider of the collection service.

14.14 Monitoring and Reviewing

14.15 There may be occasions where a significant proportion of individual residents in multi-occupied premises (e.g. sheltered accommodation) would be eligible for an assisted collection and the design of the premises is such that communal containers cannot be utilised. In the interest of efficiency the Council reserves the right to maintain a bin site collection at the property, without the need for the residents to apply individually for assisted collections. These arrangements must be agreed by the Head of Environmental Services.

14.16 The Council may, from time to time, but no more than annually, reissue an application to all those approved for an assisted collection, either directly or through the referring partner, to confirm that the applicant still meets the criteria under section 14.2 of this policy.

14.17 The Council reserves the right to withdraw this service if it has reason to believe a household is no longer eligible.

14.18 A thorough investigation will take place before a decision is made to suspend or remove the assisted collection service from an individual household.

14.19 Appealing against a decision

14.20 Where a resident wishes to appeal against a decision to refuse an application for an Assisted Collection they may do so in writing within 10 working days by contacting:

Head of Environmental Services
Stockport Council
Endeavour House
Stockport SK1 3XE
E-mail: stockportdirect@stockport.gov.uk
Or by telephone on 0161 217 6111

14.21 Data Protection

14.22 Details provided by the applicant through the application process will not be shared with any other part of the Council or external organisation other than:

- a) to identify the applicant's address and collection details to the provider of the collection service
- (b) to share information between the Council and the recognised referring partner

15.0 Action where recycling and refuse is not presented correctly

15.1 Whilst the Council will make every reasonable attempt to collect recycling and refuse from households, it cannot guarantee collection if containers are presented incorrectly. The Council also reserves the right to exercise its enforcement powers and to raise such additional charges as it is lawfully empowered to do in order to deal with situations where the incorrect presentation of refuse and recycling is causing or is likely to cause problems.

16.0 Missed Collections

16.1 Where a container has been presented correctly and has not been collected by 18.00 hours on the scheduled collection day then if the Council is notified of the mistake within three working days of the scheduled collection it will be dealt with the next week when the collection crews are back in the area. The Head of Service has discretion in considering extenuating circumstances.

16.2 Where either recycling or refuse containers have not been presented correctly, e.g. presented too late and they have not been collected then the refuse and or recycling must wait until the next programmed collection before it is removed. In these circumstances residents will be required to return the refuse and or recycling containers to their property until the next collection.

17.0 Properties that are difficult to access for collection vehicles

17.1 Due to the condition of some road surfaces particularly unmade /unadopted /private/weight restricted and rural roads, some roads in the borough are unsuitable for 26 or 13 tonne collection vehicles. Access can also be severely limited by the physical width of the road or parking of other vehicles meaning the collection vehicle cannot access the property or collection point.

17.2 Where the Council maybe held liable for any damage caused if a collection vehicle passed over the road surface or damage could occur to the vehicle due to the condition of the road, the Council will reserve the right to agree an alternative collection point. Further consideration is possible in the case of a private/ unadopted road if written authority from all residents concerned is received indemnifying the Council from any claim for damages in taking the collection vehicle on the said road².

17.3 In rural areas where the Council cannot maintain economic and efficient collections to specific properties, recycling services will not be offered to those affected householders. Whilst we would encourage the

² Where the Council has been undertaking refuse collections for a number of years it is understood that there is a continued right of access and the authority of residents is not required.

householder to recycle using the bring sites infrastructure, until such time that we can provide a recycling collection service the householder would be able to place such items in with the refuse.

17.4 When a collection cannot be made due to access being restricted by parked cars or other vehicles, collection operatives have a duty to inform Stockport Direct. Two further attempts on the next 2 working days will be made to make the collection (in most cases this will be in the presence of a supervisor). If access is restricted on both further occasions then the collection must wait until the next scheduled collection. Householders will be informed of the situation.

18.0 Properties with steps / slopes making wheeled bin manoeuvring hazardous

18.1 In situations where safe, efficient and economic collections cannot be made it will be necessary for the Council to specify alternative storage and collection arrangements for the property. In determining the collection points for those affected properties, consultation will take place with the householders concerned.

19.0 Garden Waste – Economic Collections

19.1 Where the number of suitable properties on a street makes collection inefficient, the Council reserves the right to make alternative arrangements. Residents may appeal this decision to the Head of Environmental Services.

20.0 Wheeled Bin Cleaning

20.1 The Council does not offer a wheeled bin cleansing service.

21.0 Opting out of the Recycling Service

21.1 The Council is committed to driving down the amount of waste it sends to landfill and increasing the proportion of waste it recycles. If an individual property is considered suitable by the Council for a recycling service and the householder refuses the offer of the appropriate container, they will be informed that this type of waste will not be collected through the refuse collection service. The householder will be asked to sign a 'Declaration of Understanding' that they are aware of their responsibilities. Only on receipt of this form will the recycling bin be retrieved from the householder.

22.0 Property Suitability

22.1 Terraced Properties - The criteria for determining property suitability was agreed in an Executive Report 'Improving Waste Services – Public Consultation Results'. This report was received on 13th October 2008. The following decision matrix was agreed to determine terraced property suitability for wheelie bins. Property suitability will be determined by Environmental Services and communicated to residents on the delivery of the bins along with information on their collection point.

Ginnel Surface	Ginnel Ends	Front Storage	Pavement	Suitable for wheelie	Point of Collection
Suitable	Suitable	Yes	Less than a metre	Yes	Collection Point ³
Suitable	Suitable	Yes	More than a metre	Yes	Choice of collection at ginnel or from front of property on pavement
Suitable	Suitable	No	Less than a metre	Yes	Collection Point
Suitable	Suitable	No	More than a metre	Yes	Choice of collection at ginnel or from front of property on pavement
Suitable	Unsuitable	Yes	Less than a metre	No	-
Suitable	Unsuitable	Yes	More than a metre	Yes	Front of property on pavement
Suitable	Unsuitable	No	Less than a metre	No	-
Suitable	Unsuitable	No	More than a metre	Yes	Front of property on pavement
Unsuitable	Suitable	Yes	Less than a metre	Yes	Collection Point
Unsuitable	Suitable	Yes	More than a metre	Yes	Front of property on pavement
Unsuitable	Suitable	No	Less than a metre	No	-

³ householders will be required to present and retrieve their wheelie bins from this point

Ginnel Surface	Ginnel Ends	Front Storage	Pavement	Suitable for wheelie	Point of Collection
Unsuitable	Suitable	No	More than a metre	No	-
Unsuitable	Unsuitable	Yes	Less than a metre	No	-
Unsuitable	Unsuitable	Yes	More than a metre	Yes	Front of property on pavement
Unsuitable	Unsuitable	No	Less than a metre	No	-
Unsuitable	Unsuitable	No	More than a metre	No	-

	Suitable	Unsuitable
Ginnel Surface	Paved or Cobbled and in reasonable condition.	Unmade and / or overgrown or the paved / cobbled surface is considered unsafe to wheel bins over.
Ginnel Ends	Space available to safely store the maximum number of bins presented.	No or insufficient space available to safely store the maximum number of bins presented.
Front Storage	Physical space available to store bins on the property.	No space available to store bins.
Pavement	Pavement width more than 1 metre.	Pavement width less than 1 metre.

22.2 If an individual or small group of properties is considered unsuitable by Environmental Services for a wheelie bin recycling and refuse service other arrangements will be specified.

22.3 If an individual property in a group of suitable households is determined by the Council as unsuitable for wheeled bins they will be designated with containers as per 1.2. Collection crews may use a neighbour's bin to make the collection into the vehicle. Other householders will not be able to sign a declaration, have wheeled bins removed and then place out non-designated containers for collection using this methodology.