

Defra – Simpler Recycling update Briefing Note No. 24 - 09

Service : Waste Management

Further Enquiries to: Martin Litherland

email: martin.litherland@wiltshire.gov.uk

Date Prepared: 14/05/24

As you may have seen last week, Defra has published information on its future approach to recycling with the aim of simplifying collections. You can read the update at [Simpler bin collections for England to boost recycling - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/simpler-bin-collections-for-england-to-boost-recycling).

To summarise, Defra has said it will provide exemptions to councils to allow for the collection of all dry recyclables (paper and card, plastic, metal, glass) together in one container, and food and garden waste together in another container. Defra has confirmed that it is aiming to introduce regulations on these changes before the summer recess for Government, with statutory guidance to follow thereafter. Prior to this, the prevailing guidance for councils looking to design new recycling services was to collect materials separately from one another to avoid contamination between different material types, unless there was strong evidence to demonstrate that collecting materials separately from one another was not necessary. This focus on separate collection of materials was intended to maximise the amount of material successfully recycled. We had no advance notice of an update being made on the Simpler Recycling policy and until we have more information, we are unable to confirm how this may influence how our waste and recycling collection services are delivered locally in the future.

Defra has said that by 31 March 2026, local authorities will be required to collect all six recyclable waste streams (excluding plastic film), from all households. Wiltshire Council's current kerbside recycling services already comply with this requirement. Local authorities must also collect food waste weekly from March 2026 (except where a transitional arrangement applies, affected local authorities will have a later implementation date set in regulations). As we confirmed in February, due to our existing contractual commitments, we have agreed with Defra that separate weekly collections of food waste will commence in the Wiltshire local authority area from 1 August 2027. Defra will provide some capital funding to councils to support the transition to this new service. We await confirmation of when this funding will be made available, together with confirmation of additional revenue funding support through the New Burdens scheme.

In the meantime, we continue to review our waste services to ensure we are giving people the best opportunities to recycle as much as possible and we will keep you updated on any future developments and changes. The work through our Recycling: Let's Sort It campaign has proven to be a successful and effective way to get our waste minimisation and recycling messages and aims across, and we'll continue to use creative ways to engage with people.

Defra also recently confirmed that its national Deposit Return Scheme for all drinks containers (excluding glass) has been delayed from 2025 to 2027. When brought in, this means customers would be charged an additional deposit fee when purchasing a drink in a single-use container which is then redeemed when the consumer returns the empty container to a return point.

We will share any significant updates with you in due course.

End