

Waste and recycling strategy - Questions and Answers

30 October 2024

Why are we proposing these changes?

Right now, recycling rates in the Sevenoaks District are low. What's more, since the pandemic, the amount of waste we collect has increased by about a third. We need to collect more of our residents' recycling.

Recycling helps us to prevent climate change. It saves energy and helps us transform items that no longer have a use into something new.

It also saves money. Recycling is the cheapest way to deal with waste and is more cost efficient than landfill or incineration. The money saved can be spent on other important Council services.

The only way we can reduce the waste we collect and increase recycling rates is to change our collection systems.

Will I get a bin for my general waste?

At this time our 'Waste & recycling strategy' is being considered by our Councillors and we're planning to run a comprehensive survey to understand residents' views.

If the strategy is approved by Councillors, and depending on residents' opinions, we may consider the introduction of wheelie bins in few years' time.

Once we have a firm timeline, we will tell our residents.

Can I use my current wheelie bin once the Council has given everyone a bin?

At this time our 'Waste & recycling strategy' is being considered by our Councillors and we're planning to run a comprehensive survey to understand residents' views.

If the strategy is approved by Councillors, and depending on residents' opinions, we may consider the introduction of wheelie bins in few years' time.

If we decide to introduce wheelie bins, we are likely to provide all homes with a free bin (except those who use communal waste bins). This is because the bins need to be compatible with the mechanical lifting equipment on our refuse trucks.

Will we provide different size waste bins to suit household needs?

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If we decide to introduce wheelie bins, we will consider providing households with different size waste bins to suit their needs.

When will we introduce food waste collections?

If our 'Waste & recycling strategy' is approved by our Councillors, and we secure the necessary funding from Government, we hope to introduce a weekly food waste collection service by 31 March 2026.

When will we introduce glass collections?

If our 'Waste & recycling strategy' is approved by our Councillors, and we secure the necessary funding from Government, we hope to introduce a glass collection service by 31 March 2026.

How will food waste collections work?

If our 'Waste & recycling strategy' is approved by our Councillors and we secure the necessary funding from Government, we propose to collect food waste every week.

No decisions have been taken at this time on the containers we would provide to households for food waste.

The food waste would be composted, helping to tackle climate change.

How will glass collections work?

If our 'Waste & recycling strategy' is approved by our Councillors, and we secure the necessary funding from Government, we propose to collect glass every other week.

No decisions have been taken at this time on the container we would provide to households for their glass.

Will the Council replace the reusable recycling sacks with a wheelie bin for recycling?

There are no plans to replace reusable recycling sacks with wheelie bins at this time.

How much is this costing?

The changes will involve significant investment, some of which would be funded by Government. At this time, we do not know how much funding we will receive from the Government.

However, we know these investments will, over time, save tax payers money.

Is the Council considering moving to alternate (fortnightly) collections for general waste and recycling?

No decision will be made on the frequency of the service until we have sought the views of our residents.

Why has the Council not included the changes to its waste and recycling services in its 10 year budget?

The 'Waste & recycling strategy' needs to be approved by our Councillors and we need to know how much funding we will receive from Government. We can then factor the necessary investments into our long-term budget planning.

Is the Council planning to put the waste collection contract out to tender?

The waste collection service is currently provided in-house by staff employed directly by the Council and some agency staff. This is the most cost effective option and there are no plans to change this.