

## **THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1990 PART 2**

### **“The collection, disposal or treatment of controlled waste.”**

The Council has obligations placed upon it by part 2 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the introduction of the bin method of collection is being implemented under the provisions of section 46 –“Receptacles for Household Waste.” Any person who fails, without reasonable cause, to comply with any requirements of the bin collection scheme shall be liable upon summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale (presently £1000). The Great Yarmouth Byelaw made under Section 81 of the Public Health Act 1936 relating to the depositing of household waste in a street remains in force.

# TWIN WHEELED BIN REFUSE AND RECYCLING BRIEFING

## INTRODUCTION

Since the inception of the European landfill directive in 1999 and its adoption into UK law in 2002, all local authorities have been set targets by Government to increase the percentage of their domestic household waste which is recycled. These targets were set at differing levels for each authority which resulted in the better performing authorities having higher recycling targets than those who had little or no recycling infrastructure in place. Great Yarmouth Borough Council (GYBC) has been successful in achieving its initial 10% target set for 31<sup>st</sup> March 2004, however, we now have a far more challenging target of 18% set for completion by April 2006.

This challenge prompted the Council to evaluate options as how best to achieve the desired results. Through consultation and research with neighbouring authorities as well as by studying the logistical and financial implications of the introduction of any new system of collection, it has been decided that the best available option is through the implementation of a twin bin system.

The new scheme aims not only to achieve government targets but to also provide residents borough wide with the best service we can offer for both the kerbside collections of refuse and recycling opportunities.

## GREEN BOXES

Great Yarmouth Borough Council's first kerbside recycling scheme was introduced in March 2003 using green 55 litre boxes. Working with local company East Coast Waste and the Council's partner company GYB Services Ltd, collections of glass, paper, cardboard and metal cans began from 12,000 homes in Belton, Bradwell and Gorleston. The scheme was later expanded in September 2003 to include a further 4000 properties in Caister. The collection crews solicited a great response from local residents with between 60-70% of homes placing recyclate out for collection on a fortnightly basis.

In the 18 months the kerbside scheme has been in operation over 3000 tonnes of materials have been recycled. This equates to approximately 750 tonnes of material per crew per annum. The green box scheme has also been expanded into over 30 schools allowing pupils to recycle direct from their classrooms as well as learning about waste minimisation.

As the green boxes proved a success an application for funding was made in November 2003 to the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) under their National Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund. The application aims were to provide the scheme to all residents borough wide. Unfortunately, the bid was unsuccessful and the Council were unable to expand kerbside recycling in its current guise. Although disappointed with the outcome of the bid, the Council still aimed to provide kerbside collections to all homes and work began on exploring other options. It soon became apparent that whatever method of collection was employed the solution also needed to tackle the problem of the ever increasing amounts of waste going to landfill. At present the Councils waste arisings are increasing in line with the national average at around 3% per annum. Last year this resulted in local residents producing nearly 40,000 tonnes of waste.

One of the most noticeable factors associated with the operation of the twin bin system is its proven ability to combat this continual rise. For example in the Broadland area, their

first year of operating the twin bins saw overall domestic waste arisings fall by approximately 10%.

## **WHEELED BINS**

The Council aims to deliver two, 240 litre wheeled bins to the vast majority of homes in the borough. A grey bin will be provided for general refuse and a green bin for recycling. Each of these bins will then be emptied on an alternating fortnightly basis. The wheeled bins will be emptied from the front of each property unless the householder is otherwise directed. The colours for each bin were chosen primarily to produce uniformity between ourselves and other local authorities. (Green is commonly the colour most associated with a positive environmental message.)

After the bins have been delivered, no future black sack deliveries will take place. There will be a few properties that have to remain on a black sack system where bins would prove impractical.

### **Green Bin (Recyclates)**

The green recycling bin is for the following materials: (The materials are clearly listed on the lid and should be placed directly into the green recycling bin loose and not inside a bag or sack.)

- Newspaper and Magazines
- Card and Cardboard
- Plastic Bottles (No Tops)
- Steel or Aluminium Food or Drink Cans (No Foil)
- Junk Mail and White Paper
- Empty Aerosol Cans (Not listed on Bin Lid)

### **Important**

As well as general food, garden and other household wastes the following materials must not be placed in the green recycling bin:

- Glass
- Plastics (other than bottles)
- Textiles
- Drinks Cartons (eg. Tetra pac containers, fruit juice cartons)
- Gift Wrapping Paper
- Bottles Tops and Lids
- Envelopes
- Shredded Paper
- Aluminium Foil

### **Why can't we place all the items we want to recycle in the recycling bin?**

Unfortunately, certain materials although potentially recyclable cannot be placed into the green recycling bin. The items we collect are controlled by our Contract with the recycling receiving company operated by Norfolk Environmental Waste Service (NEWS) who rely on local and world markets to sell the products on.

### **Glass**

Although Glass is clearly a recyclable product it cannot at this time be placed into the recycling bin. As many of you are aware we are presently collecting glass under the green box scheme, however, this is only possible because we sort and separate the materials at the kerbside. With the new wheeled bins all the recyclable materials is co-mingled in the collection vehicle and this is where the problem occurs.

In Europe, paper reprocessing companies see glass when mixed in with the paper as a contaminant. In essence, when the paper is delivered to the mills it is first pulped and sent through a series of filters. These filters get progressively smaller but any glass in the pulp that has been ground down through the co-mingled collection process acts on these filters as an abrasive and causes damages. The companies will not accept any paper likely to be contaminated.

Trials are due to start in 2005 with new technology designed to combat this problem and safely remove all glass at an early stage. Hopefully in the next few years it will be possible to recycle glass direct from home but until then we have no other reasonably cost effective option but to urge householders to take their glass to their local bottle banks.

On top of the existing 46 glass recycling banks, the Council will be providing more banks at locations that are more local and more easily accessible to local people. The aim is to ensure that there are adequate receiving points for this material at every centre of population borough wide.

## **Plastics**

The technology exists for many types of plastics to be recycled but unfortunately the same cannot be said for a viable economic market for these materials. At present a stable market only exists for the recycling of the 3 types of plastic that are used in the manufacture of bottles. There are no markets at present for many other plastics that are used for such products as yogurt pots, margarine tubs or children's toys which are still sent to landfill.

Many household products such as plastic milk bottles, squash or fizzy pop bottles, shampoo bottles, fabric softener bottles or bleach bottles can go in the recycling bin. All other plastic materials are considered by NEWS a contaminant and must go in the grey rubbish bin.

## **Textiles**

Textiles are extremely difficult to remove from co-mingled recycled material and can also cause damage to the sorting plant. We urge householders to take these materials, if in good condition, to be recycled/re-used at either an existing textiles bank or one of the various local charity shops.

## **Drinks Cartons**

Drinks cartons are actually two materials that have been bonded together to provide hygienic and durable food containers; a cardboard outer layer usually covers a waxy inner layer. To recycle these materials they would first need to be treated and separated. Unfortunately, like many plastics although the technology exists the markets do not. Therefore, these products must be placed into the grey rubbish bin.

### **Gift Wrapping Paper**

As with drinks cartons, a great deal of wrapping paper is two materials bonded together quite often with a plastic coating on top of the paper. There can also be covered in ribbons, glue, sticky tape or tinsel. Therefore please put this material in your grey bin.

### **Bottles Tops and Lids**

These are a combination of several of the material problems above. Not only in some instances are 2 materials bonded together but also many tops and lids are made from plastics that cannot be recycled.

### **Envelopes**

Envelope producers use water based glue in the preparation process which when processed further contaminate the paper pulp. This glue remains in the pulp, which is unlike other glues that can be washed out and can hamper the process of producing new material by damaging the paper fibres.

Please remember however that envelopes are perfectly fine to add into, and help maintain, a healthy compost bin. (Some 8000 free or heavily subsidised composting bins have been distributed to residents since 2003 in a joint initiative between the Council and the Waste and Resource Action Programme WRAP).

### **Shredded Paper**

It is very difficult to remove shredded paper from the recycle mix once it has been collected in a co-mingled recycling bin. Please put all shredded paper into your compost bin if possible.

### **Aluminium Foil**

Aluminium foil has a different chemical structure to aluminium cans and can cause problems during the metal reprocessing procedure. When added to a furnace with aluminium cans the foil will flare off to nothing. As this happens, the flame will raise the internal temperature of the furnace above its designed working temperature and cause an automatic shutdown. For this reason it is viewed as a contaminant. All aluminium foil should be placed into your grey rubbish bin.

### **Grey Bin [Rubbish Bin]**

All general household waste materials, other than hot ashes but including garden waste, may be placed in the Grey Rubbish Bin. To keep this bin clean, residents may find it beneficial to bag or wrap up rubbish before placing it into the Grey Rubbish Bin.

Although green waste will continue to be accepted in the Grey Rubbish Bin, the Council will continue to promote home composting as the most ecological and easiest way for residents to dispose of nearly all their garden refuse and much of their kitchen wastes.

Information on home composting can be found later in this document. For the future for those householders with large amounts of garden waste, the Council is exploring the possible introduction of a subsidised Brown Bin Scheme similar to the one presently used in Broadland whereby residents pay to have garden waste removed separately and then sent for centralised composting.

## **Fridges and Freezers**

The Council will continue to remove these items free of charge from domestic household properties. Please contact 01493 846846 for details.

## **BULKY WASTE (OTHER THAN FRIDGES AND FREEZERS)**

With regards to the disposal of bulky household wastes that will not fit in the grey rubbish bin, residents will have 3 options available. These are:

- Taking advantage of the existing GYB Services Ltd pre-paid bulky waste collection service listed in Yellow Pages or the local press.

Currently, GYB Services Ltd bulky waste collection charges are as follows:

1 item = £10

Up to 3 items = £15

For a full details relating to bulky waste collections, please contact GYB Services Ltd on 01493 846846.

- Taking materials personally to Norfolk County Councils' Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) at Pump Lane, Caister on Sea.

Norfolk County Council currently will accept large domestic bulky household items free and the equivalent of 1 black sack of construction/demolition waste per week free of charge at Caister Household Waste Recycling Centre. Any amount of construction waste over this limit is subject to a charge eg:

A Car load (inc. estate, people carrier, MPV or 4 Wheel Drive) = £15

Single Axle Trailer = £20

Double Axle Trailer = £35

For further details please contact Norfolk County Council Waste Management Section on 01603 224497.

- Contacting one of the local charity organisations that accept many bulky items.
- Having items removed by one of the many local licensed waste contractors.

Information on bulky waste collections will be included in the literature that householders receive along with their wheeled bins.

## **GREEN OR COMPOSTABLE WASTE**

GYBC has been working with the Waste and Resource Action Programme (WRAP) on a home composting promotion since 15<sup>th</sup> March 2004. This promotion has allowed residents

the opportunity to purchase a home composting bin at a greatly reduced rate and have it delivered to their homes free of charge.

To date Great Yarmouth residents have taken delivery of over 8000 compost bins of varying sizes and work is progressing by WRAP to ascertain how much garden waste has therefore been diverted from landfill.

Recently WRAP has confirmed that GYBC has been included in the third year of this promotion and residents will once again have the opportunity to purchase a subsidised compost bin in 2005.

For further information on the types of compost bin available and their corresponding prices of bins please contact Rob Cole, the Councils Recycling and Waste Minimisation Officer on 01493 846441.

WRAP will once again be supplying a dedicated order line and separate help line for residents as well as providing a composting advisor for Great Yarmouth Borough.

All residents are encouraged to compost as much as possible at home for a number of reasons. Primarily, composting is the most ecological way to dispose of both garden and some kitchen wastes and in return residents get a supply of compost which can benefit their gardens. Composting in its own right is also a superb waste minimisation tool which can greatly reduce the householder's reliance on their wheeled bin. Home composting also eliminates the necessity for lorry journeys to centralised facilities which burn additional fossil fuels.

## **WHEELED BIN RULES AND THE COUNCILS ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

In conjunction with the introduction of new wheeled bin system the Council will also be operating a strict collection policy especially on the issues of side waste and the correct deposit of materials placed inside the bins

### **Rules for the Householder**

- Wheeled Bins must be placed just inside the front gate or driveway of each property as close to the pavement or road as is practicable unless otherwise directed. This should occur for every collection whether that is the Green Recycling or Grey Rubbish bins.
- Residents will be able to place out for collection only as much waste as fits fully inside the grey rubbish bin. The bin lid must be completely closed. We will not collect any materials that cause the lid of the bin to be angled to any degree.
- All waste materials for collection must be placed within the confines of the bin.
- We will not collect any waste that has been placed either to the side or on top of the Grey Rubbish Bin.
- We will collect an unlimited amount of recyclable materials. If residents have excess recyclable materials they should place the materials into a suitable container (eg. A large cardboard box or other container which can store the materials loosely) and place it next to their green recycling bin.

- If the grey rubbish bin contains materials which should be placed in the green recycling bin, or visa versa, the council reserve the right to not empty the contents of the bin until such time as those materials are removed and placed into the correct bin.
- The householder is responsible for maintaining their bins in a hygienic condition. (There are local companies who will clean the bins for householders at a charge.)

The collection rules will be initially encouraged through the use of a yellow or red card system.

- The Yellow card will be left with residents as a reminder and guide and will inform residents that a certain aspect of their waste disposal method contravenes one of the above rules.
- Residents who receive a Yellow Card on the first occasion will be given the opportunity to comply with the instructions placed upon the card and then have their bin emptied free of charge before the next collection is due.
- Those households who receive a second yellow card will not have their rubbish or recycling removed until such time as the reason identified on the card has been put right. When this has been done and the Council is notified we will aim to empty the bin with 3 working days.
- For a period of 4 weeks from the beginning of each phase of the wheeled bin introduction only yellow cards will be issued to assist and encourage people to comply with the new rules during that period.

After this initial 4 week period the use of red cards will commence.

- A Red Card will only be issued to those households which have previously received at least 2 prior yellow cards.
- As with the Yellow Cards, residents who receive a Red Card will not have their rubbish or recycling collected until they comply with the instructions placed upon the card.

This system of Red and Yellow cards is being used by many of our neighbouring authorities to good effect. Experience shows the vast majority of people comply without hesitation with this system and the Red Cards are used only when all other avenues have been exhausted.

IT IS OUR INTENTION TO WORK WITH LOCAL RESIDENTS TO FIND A SOLUTION TO ANY EARLY PROBLEMS THAT ARISE. WE WILL ONLY USE FORMAL AND LEGAL METHODS OF ENFORCEMENT AGAINST THOSE WHO DO NOT COMPLY WITH THE RULES ON A PERSISTANT BASIS. ONCE THE BIN SCHEME HAS BEEN FULLY IMPLEMENTED THE COUNCIL HAS POWERS UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1990 TO APPLY LEGAL SANCTIONS AND FINES FOR NON-COMPLAINCE WITH THE CONDITIONS OF THE SCHEME. CURRENT BYELAWS RELATING TO THE COLLECTION OF WASTE WILL REMAIN IN FORCE AND TO INCLUDE BINS.

## **HELP AND ASSISTANCE**

The Council accept that there are aspects of the wheeled bin introduction that may cause some residents or families' particular problems. We are endeavouring to proactively seek solutions to these problems and will offer help and assistance wherever possible.

We will be offering the following services to help individual householders who need them:

- Those individuals who are currently receiving an assisted collection of their weekly black refuse sacks will continue to receive this service with the wheeled bins. (We reserve the option to review those households receiving this service at a later date).
- Residents not currently receiving this service but who may need an assisted collection will be able to apply for such help. Officers will visit most households to validate the application.
- Households containing 6 or more individuals may be eligible for a larger 360 litre grey rubbish bin. Officers will visit most households to confirm their application.
- Households containing 5 individuals will be eligible to apply for a larger 360 litre grey rubbish bin if they currently have children still in nappies. Officers will visit most households to validate their application.
- Householders may also apply for smaller 140 litre rubbish and recycling bins. Officers will visit each household to validate their application but these bins will only be issued if there is a compelling reason and residents will not be eligible for the smaller bins if their application is based solely on visual criteria.
- There will be a dedicated helpline number that will be advertised on all wheeled bin leaflets and communications. This helpline will be the first point of contact for residents who wish to discuss any aspect of the service. The helpline, which is scheduled to commence from the 6<sup>th</sup> January 2005 will be 01493 846846.
- Residents currently having a collection of Medical Waste in Yellow sacks will still receive this service in addition to the twin bin system.

## **WHERE WILL THE MATERIALS BE TAKEN**

Currently, all domestic refuse generated by residents of Great Yarmouth is taken to the Aldeby landfill site near Beccles in Suffolk which is operated by Waste Recycling Group Ltd. Some of this waste is taken directly by GYB Services Ltd and some is delivered via the Norfolk Environmental Waste Services (NEWS) Caister transfer station.

The recycle collected as part of the green box kerbside scheme is currently bulked for onward transport and sale by East Coast Waste from either their Harfreys or Eurocentre sites in Great Yarmouth. The materials are then transferred on to numerous companies for reprocessing.

Under the new wheeled bin system, our domestic rubbish will continue to be sent to Aldeby landfill site as it is at present. Our recycling will be taken to the NEWS operated Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) on the Norwich bypass at Costessey, Norwich via their transfer station at Caister.

This process will see Great Yarmouth sign up to an existing agreement drawn up between NEWS, the 6 other Norfolk District and Borough Councils and the County Council.

The way we transport materials to the MRF site in Costessey is currently under discussion by GYBC, NEWS and GYB Services Ltd.

Costessey MRF is at present the most update sorting facility of its kind in Europe. The plant is a combination of mechanical and hand sorted separation of materials. Once the co-mingled materials have completely passed through the separation procedure they are then sent on to various reprocessors. NEWS have in place long term agreements with many reprocessors which should result in the Council receiving a good and increasing financial return on the materials we supply to the MRF.

## **MOVING FROM INTENTION TO INTRODUCTION AND COLLECTION**

Great Yarmouth currently collects waste from over 43,000 domestic properties. The waste is collected by 8 refuse crews visiting approximately 1000 homes per day.

Although the Council wishes to introduce the wheeled bins borough wide as soon as possible and with the least inconvenience to householders, we also want to ensure that the introduction is carried out smoothly. We have therefore, decided to introduce the scheme across the borough in what we believe are manageable phases.

Each phase will see the wheeled bins introduced in 3 stages:

**Stage 1.** An A5 sized leaflet entitled “Wheeled Bins Are Coming” will be delivered to each home giving a brief introduction to the scheme and informing householders to expect the 2 wheeled bins to arrive at their home in the near future – around two weeks. It will also broadly outline the Councils’ reasons for the change in its waste collection service.

The “Wheeled Bins Are Coming” leaflet will not include any specific information on any aspect of the scheme. It will purely be to alert the householder to this imminent change.

The delivery of the leaflets will be undertaken over a 2 week period by the Electoral Register Canvassers who have a good knowledge of all the households in their areas.

**Stage 2.** Wheeled bin deliveries to households will commence. The bins will be delivered to the front of all homes so that householders can make their own arrangements for their permanent storage.

Householders will also receive during the delivery of the bins other detailed information they will require to participate in the scheme. This will include a further leaflet that will outline information on:

- Why we are introducing the scheme.
- What can and what can’t go into each bin.
- A section of questions and answers.
- How to deal with certain other wastes eg. Green waste, Bulky waste, DIY/Construction waste.
- How to contact the Council for further information – Wheeled Bin Hotline.

Residents will also receive a separate calendar which will clearly outline the dates on which each bin is collected. These leaflets will be placed through each household’s letter

box and not left inside the wheeled bins. Deliveries of bins and leaflets will take approximately 2 weeks.

**Stage 3.** Collection of wheeled bins will commence. Residents should consult their calendars to see which type of bin will be collected on that week.

## **SUMMARY**

The introduction of wheeled bins will be a big change to our refuse and recycling services borough wide. Its primary aim is to provide a sound platform from which the council can not only achieve, but hopefully surpass the recycling targets we have been set by government for 2006 and beyond. It will also provide residents across our area with the ability to recycle direct from their homes, a service which until now has only been accessible to 36% of residents.

There is no denying that wheeled bins will provide challenges for us all, members, officers, and residents alike. People are being asked to take more responsibility for the waste they produce and this is not going to be simply accepted by everyone. That is why the message from the Council on these issues must be clear; we must take action now or face an even greater problem in the future. However, as the current green box scheme has shown many people are dedicated to recycling and are willing to separate their waste. We must build on this goodwill to provide the best services we can and help to create a cleaner and safer environment.

If you would like to discuss any of these issues further please contact either Bob George or Rob Cole on 01493 846441.

