



# Recycling and Environmental Communication Plan

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## CONTENTS

1.	Introduction & Background	3
2.	Aims & Objectives	3, 4
3.	What goes into the containers provided	5, 6
4.	What happens to the recycling & waste that is collected by the Council	6, 7
5.	What can you, the resident do to improve recycling & waste minimisation	7, 8
6.	Littering & Fly tipping	8, 9
7.	What can you, the resident do to help with littering & fly tipping	9
8.	How are we going to communicate with you	10, 11
9.	Frequently asked questions	12, 13, 14
10.	Glossary of terms	15

## **1. Introduction & Background**

- 1.1 Recycling has become part of everyday life for many people. However it is recognised both locally and nationally that further action is required to divert waste away from disposal.
- 1.2 Recycling and waste reduction remains a key corporate plan target for the Council and we must, therefore, continue to promote reuse, recycling, composting and waste prevention. In the 2017/18 financial year residents recycled 43.9% of their waste and produced 512.62kg of residual waste per household. When compared with 2013/14 data of 52.29% recycling and 448.13kg of residual waste per household, this shows that we are recycling less and disposing of more.
- 1.3 Improved waste awareness and education are key in helping the Council to achieve increased recycling targets, to minimise residual waste and to prevent littering.
- 1.4 Whilst the majority of residents in the borough are aware of our recycling and waste collection policies, there is the need to keep pursuing our messages about recycling and waste minimisation.
- 1.5 In addition, it costs the Council over £900, 000 each year in street cleaning activities. Whilst our performance in maintaining high levels of cleanliness is good, we recognise that more needs to be done to prevent littering and fly tipping.
- 1.6 The Governments Litter Strategy for England seeks to create a culture where it is unacceptable to drop litter. This culture should be applied across East Staffordshire through both education and enforcement initiatives.
- 1.7 The continued pressure on Council budgets demonstrates the importance of reducing the cost of our street cleaning activities, with more emphasis on education and enforcement with regard to litter and fly tipping incidents.

## **2. Aims & Objectives**

- 2.1 The principle aims of this plan are as follows:
  - a. Reduce the amount of waste being disposed of by residents in East Staffordshire.
  - b. Increase participation in recycling.
  - c. Raise awareness of the services that the Waste Management Team provide, for example the bulky reuse collection service and additional bin policies.

- d. Promote waste minimisation and its benefits and encourage recycling.
- e. Target specific residential areas where contamination in the recycling bins has been high in order to reduce the amount of contamination taking place and improve the quality of the recycling material collected.
- f. Work with our Community and Civil Enforcement Team to deliver key messages on waste, recycling and street cleanliness.
- g. Work with our Enforcement Team to provide information on their most commonly experienced issues in order to try and reduce the number of complaints received. For example untidy gardens, accumulations of rubbish and fly tipping.
- h. To work with Ward Councillors in areas where there are a high number of environmental issues and help educate residents on correct use of wheeled bins and the disposal of litter and bulky items.
- i. To work with external organisations to deliver key messages around recycling and street cleanliness.
- j. To develop E-Services such as the website to make information readily accessible for residents and to develop use of social media.

2.2 The principle objectives of this plan are as follows:

- a. Increase the tonnage collected on the recycling schemes and improve the quality of the collected materials.
- b. Increase the participation of all recycling schemes, leading to an increase in overall performance.
- c. Ensure residents are fully aware of the services provided by Waste Management and how we may help them.
- d. To get key messages out using as many communication channels as possible.
- e. To reduce the amount of waste collected per household.
- f. To reduce the number of contaminated bins by ensuring that residents are aware of what can and cannot be placed into their bins.

### 3. What goes into the containers provided?

3.1 The Council provides the following containers for recycling and waste collection:

- A blue wheeled bin for dry recycling
- A brown wheeled bin for garden waste
- A blue bag for paper
- A grey wheeled bin for residual waste

3.2 The key message for residents is what can and cannot be recycled in the blue and brown bins and the blue bag. Below is a list of items that can and cannot be accepted.

Blue Bin	Yes Please	No Thanks
	Steel & aluminium cans & tins	Black bin liners
	Aluminium foil & food trays	Pyrex
	Empty aerosol cans	Window glass
	Glass bottles & jars of all colours	Light bulbs
	Greeting cards	Pots, pans or any other types of metal
	Cardboard egg boxes	Polystyrene
	Plastic detergent bottles	Food
	Cereal boxes	Nappies
	Toilet & kitchen roll inners	Clothing
	Flattened cardboard	Newspapers
	Margarine & ice cream tubs	Crisp packets
	Yoghurt pots	Shredded paper
	Plastic cups, plates & cutlery	Bubble wrap
	Plastic carrier bags	Garden flower pots
	Plastic containers & tubs	Spent fireworks
	Plastic food trays	Plastic toys
	Plastic drinks bottles	Bed linen
	Beverage cartons	Pillows
Milk cartons	Tissues	

Brown Bin	Yes please	No thanks
	Leaves & Bark	Plastic or plastic bags
	Flowers & plants	Vegetable or fruit peelings
	Prunings	Tea bags and coffee grounds
	Weeds	Bread
	Hedge clippings	Egg shells
	Grass mowing	Paper
	Real Christmas trees	Polystyrene
	Branches	Textiles
	Sawdust bedding	Treated wood
		Meat, fish & bones
		Fruit
		Pet waste
		Rubble or large quantities of soil or turf
		Cardboard

Blue Bag	Yes Please	No Thanks
	Newspapers	Wrapping paper
	Magazines	Tissue paper
	Other white papers	Sticky labels
	Envelopes	Wallpaper
	Brochures	Jiffy bags
	Junk mail	Shredded paper
	All telephone directories	

Grey Bin	Yes Please	No Thanks
	Polystyrene	Construction waste
	Food waste	
	Nappies	
	Incontinence products	
	Sanitary wear	
	Crisp packets	
	Plant pots	
	Tissues	

Full details can be found on our website at <http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/bins-rubbish-recycling/blue-bin>

#### 4. What happens to the recycling & waste that is collected by the Council?

##### 4.1 So what happens to the material collected through the blue bin and blue bags?

- The glass, cans, plastic and cardboard which is collected through the blue bin are taken to a Materials Recovery facility for processing.

The blue bin material is tipped on to the tipping floor at the facility where it is visually checked for contamination prior to going through the facility processes. It is sorted into the different material types before being sent on for further processing.

- The newspapers, magazines and junk mail collected through the blue bag scheme are delivered into the Materials Recovery facility in a separate vehicle load to the mixed recycling. Once at the facility, the material is baled in bulk to be sent on to a paper mill for processing.

4.2 The garden waste collected through the brown bin scheme is taken direct to a composting facility for in vessel composting. The garden waste is delivered into the reception area for processing. Once the processing is completed, the final phase is screening. The specialist screen removes plastic, stones and metal. The material is then ready to use.

4.3 The waste which is collected through the grey bin scheme is taken to an Energy Recovery facility located in south Staffordshire. The waste is deposited into a bunker, then a crane grabs the waste and places it into a feed hopper where it then drops down a feed chute onto a furnace grate. The moving grate turns the waste to allow it to combust fully and then the bottom ash that is left over from the furnace passes through the ash discharger onto an ash burning system which extracts metal for recycling. The remaining bottom ash suitable for recycling or disposal is sent for reprocessing and reuse in the construction industry. Hot gases produced in the combustion process pass through a water tube boiler where they are cooled and the heated water becomes steam. A turbo generator uses the steam to produce electricity which is exported to the National Grid.

## **5. What can you, the resident do to improve recycling and waste minimisation?**

5.1 Recycling contamination can significantly affect the quality of the material collected and processed. Incorrect items of material placed into the recycling bins can cause whole vehicle loads to be rejected at the processing facility if this is not spotted at the point of collection. By ensuring that the correct material is placed into the correct bin we can increase the tonnage collected thereby increasing the recycling performance. The quality of the material collected also has a direct impact on the income the Council receives for its recycling material. If you are unsure about where to put an item for disposal, please ask Customer Services or place into your grey bin. We are only able to collect items that our contractors can sort for recycling or composting. Unfortunately there are still

some items that cannot be included e.g. not all items made from plastic, metal or glass should be included in the blue bin.

A rejected load costs the authority up to £3000 and the material that cannot be processed unfortunately has to be disposed of via landfill or incineration.

Residents can visit the Council website [www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk) to get up to date information on the recycling services. You can also visit national campaign websites such as the Love Food Hate Waste campaign which can be viewed at [www.lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com) and pick up tips on how to minimise food waste, in turn reducing the amount of waste going into the grey bin.

- 5.2 If an item can be reused by a charity or someone that you know then pass the item on to them so that it is not discarded.

## **6. Littering & Fly Tipping**

- 6.1 It is the duty of East Staffordshire Borough Council as a local authority to collect litter from relevant highway and relevant land for which they are responsible.
- 6.2 The definition of littering is “*knowingly depositing in any manner litter on any public or private property or in any public or private waters, without permission to do so*”. Litter is trash improperly placed so as to be a nuisance or health concern.

The Litter Strategy for England sets out the Government’s aim to clean up the country and cut both litter and littering behaviours by using better education, enforcement and ‘binrastructure’ (design, number and location of public litter bins). The Litter Strategy also puts an emphasis on engaging with local communities and getting them involved with litter picking initiatives. Our Community & Civil Enforcement Team engage in this type of activity.

Anyone caught littering in East Staffordshire will be issued a Fixed Penalty Notice of £75.00.

### **6.3 Fly tipping**

Fly-tipping is the illegal deposit of waste on land. Fly-tipping differs from littering in that it involves the removal of waste from premises where it was produced with the deliberate aim of disposing of it unlawfully, or as a result of legitimate outlets not being available.

- 6.4 Not everyone is aware that they have a responsibility to ensure that their waste is taken away by a registered waste carrier and someone who has a waste transfer certificate. Fly-tipping is an offence under Section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. If you are caught fly-tipping, or evidence

which relates to your address is found within the fly-tipping itself, you will be issued with a £400 Fixed Penalty Notice. You could also face an unlimited fine and up to 5 years in prison if the case proceeds to Court.

## 7. What can you, the resident do to help with littering and fly tipping?

- 7.1 If you have a bulky item of waste to dispose of such as a washing machine or a fridge freezer, please make sure that the person collecting it from you is a registered waste carrier by asking to see their credentials. If you fail to do so it could result in you being convicted if the item is found fly tipped.
- 7.2 Residents in East Staffordshire can contact the Council and arrange for a bulky waste collection. For further details <http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/bins-rubbish-recycling/large-unwanted-item>
- 7.3 Bulky items of waste can be disposed of at the local household waste sites, of which there are 2 located across the borough. Please visit <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/rubbishwasteandrecycling/recyclingcentres/RecyclingCentres.aspx> for further details.
- 7.4 There are a number of litter bins located throughout East Staffordshire for residents and visitors to dispose of their litter when out and about so please use them. If you are caught littering then you will be issued a Fixed Penalty Notice of £75.00.
- 7.5 Residents can help with other environmental issues experienced frequently across the borough. Dog fouling, littering and fly tipping are every day issues and any information on these incidents can be reported to the Enforcement and Community and Civil Enforcement Team for investigation.
- 7.6 The Waste Management Team maintain a list of hot spot areas for littering and fly tipping. If you have any information regarding incidents of fly tipping or littering then please let us know.

Litter Hotspots	Fly Tipping Hotspots
Uxbridge Street near shops	Anglesey ward
Rosliston Road shops, Stapenhill	Mill Stream Lane, Burton
Short Street shops, Stapenhill	Catholme layby
	Meadow Lane, Yoxall
	Vernon Terrace, Victoria Street

- 7.7 The Community and Civil Enforcement Team arrange a number of community litter picking initiatives throughout the year within their identified target areas as part of their workload. Residents are encouraged to take part in these initiatives.

## **8. How are we going to communicate with you?**

### **8.1 Audience Profile**

This section outlines the demographic of our target audience and what established communication channels exist.

#### **Audience**

- Population of 113,600 (2011 Census).
- In 93.2% of the borough's 47,251 households all people aged 16 and over have English as a main language. However, there are 1,762 households across East Staffordshire where nobody in the household has English as a main language.
- The wards of Anglesey (28.4%), Eton Park (15.6%), Burton (12.7%) and Shobnall (25.1%) have a high percentage of ethnic minority population.
- Whilst we have incidents of contamination across the borough as a whole, we have a higher level of incidents recorded in Anglesey and Shobnall wards.

### **8.2 Established Communication Channels**

- The Council receives around 80,000 unique users to its website every quarter and is the main source of information for our residents.
- The borough has two daily newspapers (Burton Mail and Derby Telegraph) and a weekly paper (Uttoxeter Advertiser).
- Three main radio stations cover the borough (BBC Radio Derby, Ashbourne Radio and Touch FM).
- The Council has around 6,500 followers across its corporate social media channels.

### **8.3 Methods of Communication**

This section will highlight the different methods of communication the Council will use to target its audience.

- Traditional media – Regular press releases to be issued throughout the year on different themes and topics.
- Social Media – Social media posts to be issued that follow the theme of the press release. Social media posts to include pictures and videos in order to increase engagement.
- Paid for social media advertising. Utilise Facebook's paid for advertising in order to target specific demographics and locations from existing communication budgets.
- Targeted messages on our website's 'find your bin collection day' feature. Targeted messages can be used for each route through this.
- Launch of a new 'What can go in your bin' feature on our website which will allow users to type a material and be told what bin it goes into. This

facility will be promoted heavily on social media and the website once completed.

- Posters and information to continue to be displayed at our Customer Service Centres and other customer buildings.
- Work closely with key stakeholders, community groups and Councillors in order to help educate residents on recycling.
- Investigate the use of translated materials.
- Work with Staffordshire County Council and other Staffordshire authorities on key messages around unacceptable items in the recycling bins such as nappies and polystyrene.
- Continue to work with internal and external partners on environmental issues.

#### 8.4 Evaluation

This section highlights how we plan to undertake ongoing evaluation for the use of the Communications Plan.

Method	Outcome
Press releases and messages to the local media	Press releases to be published in the newspaper hardcopy, their website and social media channels.
Digital communications	Increase engagement from social media posts and use of 'call to actions'. Paid for advertising to engage with those who don't follow the Council.
Website features	Website analytics to show an engagement with the new features on our website.
Posters and leaflets	Posters to be placed on customer buildings. Discussions and actions to be agreed with key stakeholders.

## 9. Frequently asked questions

9.1 After your recycling is collected it is taken to the recycling or composting facility to be sorted and processed. If incorrect items are placed into the blue bin, brown bin or blue bag it can cause problems at the facility and impact on the quality of the materials collected.

**Q. Why do the collection crews check my recycling bins before emptying them?**

A. The collection crews look in the blue bin, brown bin and blue bag before they are emptied to ensure that they contain the correct items for that container. If they spot something that should not be in the bin they will not empty it and a sticker will be left on the bin showing what item should not be being placed into the bin. This item should then be removed and the bin will be emptied on the next scheduled collection day.

The most common items causing problems are nappies, food waste, black bin bags, plastic toys and household waste. All of these items should be placed into the grey bin.

**Q. Why can't the Council collect all dry recyclable materials?**

A. The Council uses a Materials Recovery facility in the West Midlands and whilst it is very good at sorting the dry recycling materials, for example glass and cans, it is unable to accept all recycling due to technology restraints and markets for all materials. This is the case for all Material Recovery facilities across the country.

**Q. Why can't the Council recycle my nappies?**

A. There are a limited number of companies that provide this service and the cost to collect and treat would be high. Nappies need to be placed into the grey bin as they cannot be recycled in East Staffordshire. Placing nappies into the blue bin contaminates the rest of the blue bin contents and means that we cannot collect your bin.

**Q. What is the cost of a rejected load?**

A. A rejected load can on average cost the Council and its partners approximately £3000 in the cost of disposal at landfill or energy recovery.

**Q. Why won't the Council collect my blue bin if it contains black bags?**

A. Unfortunately we are unable to take recyclables in black bin bags as some residents hide non-recyclable items such as nappies, food and household waste in them.

Q. **Can polystyrene packaging and trays be recycled?**

A. No unfortunately not at present as it cannot be sorted and breaks up during the collection and sorting process resulting in contamination of other materials. Polystyrene should be put into your grey bin.

Q. **Where can I find out more information?**

A. The Council website by following this link <http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/bins-rubbish-recycling/blue-bin>

Q. **Why can't the Council take textiles?**

A. Textiles and clothing can be recycled using a clothing bank at one of the local recycling sites or a local charity. We cannot collect textiles or clothing in the blue bin as they are not accepted at the Materials Recovery facility.

Q. **What does the Council mean by the word textiles?**

A. Textiles are anything that is made from natural or manmade materials in a cloth form including bedding, duvets, pillows, clothing, curtains, carpets, cushions and towels.

Q. **Why do my small waste electrical items need to be left outside the blue bin?**

A. While small electrical items are collected by the same collection crew, they are not processed at the same facility. The small electrical items are placed into another part of the vehicle and are not offloaded with the main dry recycling.

Q. **Why can't I put food waste into my blue bin?**

A. Food waste has to be processed in a controlled way in order to kill all of the bacteria that it can produce. The contents of your blue bin are not recycled in a way that can kill bacteria or that can separate food from it. The food waste also contaminates and spoils the quality of the other recyclables.

Q. **Can I recycle old toys?**

- A. Unfortunately most unwanted/old toys are not suitable for recycling and need to be disposed of in your grey bin. If they can be reused then please pass on to a charity shop.
- Q. **Why is the Council so prescriptive in what it can take in the blue bin?**
- A. The Council has a contract with the material recovery facility to deliver specific materials that the facility is capable of sorting. A load that contains the wrong items will be rejected at cost to the council. Unfortunately there are still some items that cannot be included e.g. not all items made from plastic, metal or glass should be included in the blue bin.
- Q. **What do I do if my recycling bins are not emptied because they contain incorrect materials?**
- A. You need to remove the incorrect item and present your bin for collection on the next scheduled collection day. The Council will not return for a contaminated bin. The contents of the bins can be taken to the local household waste and recycling centre if it is too full to wait until the next collection.

## 10. Glossary of terms

**Bulky Reuse collection** – Large items of household waste such as furniture or fridges.

**Composting** – Decomposition of organic matter in the presence of oxygen (aerobic) to produce compost for use as fertiliser or a soil conditioner.

**Contamination** – An item placed into a wheeled bin that is not acceptable.

**Dry Recycling** – Items that are classed as glass, cans, plastic and cardboard.

**Energy Recovery Facility** – Conversion of waste into a usable form of energy, either by incineration, thermal treatment or the production of gas.

**Fly Tipping** – The illegal deposit of waste on land.

**In vessel** – Aerobic decomposition of organic materials confined within a building, container or vessel to create better air circulation than open composting.

**Littering** – Depositing in any manner litter on and public or private property or in any public place or private waters without permission to do so.

**Lovefoodhatewaste** – A national campaign run by the Waste and Resources Action group to try and reduce the amount of food that is wasted.

**Materials Recovery Facility** – A specialised plant that receives, separates and prepares recyclable materials for marketing to end-user manufacturers.

**Recycling** – Collection or recovery of reusable materials from waste and their subsequent reprocessing to form useable products.

**Residual waste** – Waste that cannot be recycled.

**Waste Minimisation** – A set of processes or practices intended to reduce the amount of waste produced.