

Better Recycling is coming!



Find out more about the new recycling and waste collection services starting from June 2026

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INTRODUCTION

These frequently asked questions (FAQs) have been created to help explain the upcoming recycling and waste collection service changes affecting all households across Suffolk.

From June 2026, services will include weekly food waste collections, separate paper and card collections, an extra recycling bin and more items accepted for recycling.

Collection	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Food Waste			
Refuse general rubbish			
Paper and Card			
Recycling glass, plastics, metal and cartons			



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why are these changes happening?

Recycling and waste collection service changes are taking place to ensure the councils meet new government 'Simpler Recycling' legislation - known locally as Better Recycling.

The policy requires all councils to:

- provide weekly food waste collections
- collect a core list of recyclable items
- collect fibre recyclables (e.g. paper and cardboard) separately

This will make sure the same items are collected for recycling no matter where in the country you live. Therefore, helping more people to recycle and boost national recycling rates. **Recycle more, waste less!**

What can I recycle from home now?

Currently, the following items are collected from households for recycling:

- Paper and card
 - Plastic bottles
 - Pots, tubs and trays
 - Metal food and drinks cans
 - Aluminium foil
 - Garden waste (subject to an additional charge)
-

What else can I recycle from June 2026

The following items will also be collected from Suffolk households for recycling from June 2026:

- Food waste (collected separately on a weekly basis)
 - Glass bottles and jars
 - Drinks cartons such as Tetra Pak
 - Plastic bags, wrappings and films
-

When will the new collections begin?

The new services will start in June 2026. Full details and timings for any change will be provided before the new service starts with further information being posted to homes from January 2026

Will garden waste collections change?

No. Garden waste (brown bin) collections will remain an optional, separate charged for service, with collections continuing fortnightly.



Why will refuse bins be emptied every three-weeks rather than fortnightly?

Suffolk Recycles regularly takes a representative sample of what is going into bins in Suffolk - you can find these reports on the Suffolk Recycles website.

On average, nearly 60% of waste that residents currently put in their general rubbish (refuse) bins could be recycled instead. For example, via the food waste or recycling collections.

Therefore, as the general rubbish bin will not fill up as quickly, it will need emptying less often.

With a reduced amount of general rubbish to collect, the councils can move to a more cost-effective three-weekly refuse collection schedule.

However, we understand that the change to a three-weekly refuse collection may be concerning for some households, such as those with larger families or medical requirements. Households may be eligible for extra bin capacity, and we will be happy to discuss any concerns.

Won't this mean that bins are more likely to smell?

Food items, which are most likely to cause bins to smell or attract vermin, are currently collected fortnightly as part of the refuse collection.

From June 2026, we will collect food waste every week via a new dedicated service. This means food waste will spend half as long in the bin, helping to reduce smells and mess.

Items placed in recycling bins should already be empty, clean and dry, so they shouldn't smell at all.

What extra bins will I receive?

For food waste, every home across the districts will receive two new containers for the weekly collection of food. You will receive:

- one 5 litre caddy for use in the kitchen (small enough to sit on your worktop or under your sink) and
- one 23 litre food waste bin (lockable) to store food outdoors between your weekly collections, that you put on the pavement to be collected.

Most households will also receive **one extra 240 litre wheelie bin:**

- **Addresses in Babergh** will receive a green lidded paper and card bin. The current blue bin will become the recycling bin for glass, plastics, metal and cartons.

- **Addresses in Mid Suffolk** will receive a blue lidded recycling bin for glass, plastics, metal and cartons. The current green lidded bin will become the paper and card bin.



When will I receive the new bins / containers?

The extra bin and food waste containers will be delivered to households between February and May 2026. Once you have received them, please store them somewhere safe, and do not use them. We will let you know in May 2026 when to start using them.

What if I don't have room for extra bins?

As we currently do, we will work with residents to look at alternative solutions, such as using smaller bins / containers or providing sacks instead.

For clarity, the approximate sizes (height x width x depth) of the new bins are:

Item	Dimensions (cm)		
	W	D	H
External caddy (23 litre)	29	34	39
Internal caddy (5 litre)	25	19	21
240 litre bin	58	74	108
180l bin	49	73	108

Will my collection day change?

Probably not. We try to avoid changing collection days as we know this can be confusing. However, it is sometimes necessary to do so due to service demands, such as new housing developments.

For most addresses the food waste bin will be emptied weekly on the same day as the refuse, recycling, or paper and card collection. Although, the food waste will be collected by separate, dedicated crews and vehicles.

Why will there be a separate collection/bin for paper and card?

The new government policy requires all councils to collect paper and card separate from other recyclable items.

When paper and card are collected along with items like glass and plastics, they can get damaged or contaminated. Therefore, reducing its recycling quality and value.

Keeping paper and card separate means, it can be recycled more effectively and is worth more when sold for recycling.

What about waste collections from flats?

We are currently reviewing bin provision for all flats/communal areas, as well as working with landlords and management companies. This will ensure that sufficient bins are in place ready for when the new collection services start.



Who is paying for these changes?

The Government is providing some extra funding to help councils set up new food waste and recycling collection services. They are also introducing new rules that will make the producers of the packaging financially responsible for the materials they put onto shop shelves.

Therefore, in the future, packaging producers will help pay towards recycling and waste collections, reducing the cost to the taxpayer.

What will happen to my local recycling banks?

Glass – as demand for glass banks decreases - now that it can be recycled in the blue / blue lidded bin at home - these banks will be removed. Organisations that wish to keep a glass bank, will need to make their own arrangements, either with a third-party provider or through the councils' business waste service.

Paper (blue wheeled banks) - we expect to remove the remaining blue wheeled paper banks later in the year (September 2026), once the new recycling system is fully in place. Waste management officers will contact all current paper bank sites in February 2026 to let them know about these changes.

Textiles – we are still reviewing how textile recycling banks will be managed in the future. Once the waste team has agreed the next steps, we will contact organisations affected directly with an update.

What if I already compost my food waste?

That is great to hear. However, some food waste such as meat, bones and pasta, can be difficult to compost at home.

We also understand that not everyone has the space or ability to compost at home. Find out more about home composting on the Suffolk Recycles website – at www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk/recycling-composting/composting, including information on heavily subsidised composting items.

How can I reduce the amount of food waste I have?

We always want to encourage households to generate as little waste as possible. Visit the Food Savvy website - at www.foodsavvy.org.uk, for hints and tips on how you can reduce food waste.



What can I put in my new food waste bin?

- leftover food, plate scrapings and peelings
 - meat and fish (including bones)
 - tea bags and coffee grounds
 - bread, pasta and rice
 - eggshells
 - dairy products
 - fruit and vegetables
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Can I put the food waste into my garden waste bin instead?

No. The garden waste (brown) bins are used for the collection and disposal of garden waste only.

This is because the garden waste is taken to the Material Change Facility in Creeting St Mary to be turned into compost. This facility uses a 'windrow' composting process. Windrow composting is used to process garden waste only and is not able to deal with food waste.

By collecting the food waste separately, it can be taken to a specialist anaerobic digestion facility where the waste is broken down to produce biogas and bio-fertiliser.

What will happen to the food waste?

Any food waste collected will be taken to an anaerobic digestion facility, where it will go through a process and be broken down to produce:

- biogas - used to power vehicles, produce electricity and provide gas to homes and businesses
- bio-fertiliser - used for spreading on farmland

It is generally more efficient and environmentally friendly to treat food waste through anaerobic digestion rather than Energy-from-Waste (EfW) incineration.

What happens to my recycling?

Recycling will continue to be taken to the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) at Great Blakenham, where items are separated, baled and sent to companies who recycle them.

The MRF will be redesigned to sort the glass, plastics, metal and cartons collected via the blue / blue lidded recycling bins.

Paper and card, collected separately in the green lidded bins, won't need to go through a sorting process. Instead, it will be bulked up and sent straight on for recycling.



What's left?

General rubbish (refuse) - will continue to be taken to the Energy from Waste Facility in Great Blakenham, where it is burned at high temperatures to generate electricity for over 40,000 homes. We do not currently send any waste directly to landfill and this will remain unchanged.

However, if the Energy from Waste facility needs to shutdown, either for planned maintenance or due to an unexpected incident, waste may need to be sent waste to landfill, if no other options are available.

Textiles - old clothes and textiles can go in the general rubbish (refuse) bin, but first, think about:

- Donating them to a Charity shop.
- Selling them online (there's a big market for 'pre-loved clothing')
- Dropping them off at a Recycling Centre.
- Dropping them off at a textile recycling bank

Bulky items - this includes things like furniture, large appliances such as fridges and washing machines, beds and similar.

- items that are reusable can be donated to charities, some of whom may collect the items.
- The Council offers a Bulky Waste Collection service which is chargeable.
- Items can also be dropped off at Recycling Centre. To find out more, visit: www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk/

Electricals – electronic devices should never go in any of the recycling or black rubbish bins. Avoid holding on to old devices at home. Batteries can leak corrosive and harmful substances and can cause a fire hazard. They also contain a lot of sometimes very rare materials that can be recycled into new devices.

- Working devices can be sold to second hand shops or online (remember to wipe your hard drive first).
- Many electrical retailers accept old electronics.
- Drop them off at a Recycling Centre or at one of a growing network of electrical banks across Suffolk. Visit www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk/ for more information.



NEVER PUT ANY BATTERY IN ANY BIN!

Batteries of any kind including vapes, must not be put in any recycling or rubbish bin.

Batteries can cause fires in collection vehicles and recycling centres if they are crushed or damaged, putting staff and the public at risk.



Instead, they should be taken to battery recycling points, which are available at many supermarkets, shops and recycling centres across the districts. Visit www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk/ for more information.

What if I need help understanding these changes?

If you have any concerns relating to the upcoming changes, please contact waste services.



Web: Babergh District Council www.babergh.gov.uk/future-changes-to-bin-collections
 Mid Suffolk District Council www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/future-changes-to-bin-collections

Email: recycling@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

Phone: 0300 1234 000 (option 4)

Address: Waste Services,
Creting Road Depot,
Creting Road West,
Stowmarket,
Suffolk,
IP14 5AT

We will also produce a leaflet about the upcoming changes in a range of accessible formats, including large print, non-worded, braille and audio versions, along with translations into 10 different languages.

Where can I find out more?

We will continue to share updates as we get closer to the rollout on our website, social media pages and in the local press. Households will also be posted information directly too.

Alternatively, you can find out more on Suffolk Recycles' Better Recycling webpage – at www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk

