Gravesham Borough Council

Waste Management Policy

Document Control

Responsible Department	Waste Management
Authors	Joel Simons (Waste Projects & Compliance Officer)
Consultation	N/A
Version	September 2025

Table of Contents

Waste Management Policy 1
Document Control 1
1.Service Provision 2
- Standard Service 2
- Exceptions to the Service 3
- Garden Waste Scheme 3
- Clinical Waste 3
- Bulky Waste Collection 3
- Additional Refuse and Recycling Capacity 4

2. Service Provision - Flats 4
3.Collection and Return of Waste Containers 5
- Enforcement 5

4.Excess Waste/Side Recycling 5
5.Contaminated Refuse and Recycling Containers 6
6. Missed Bins 6
7.Repair or Replacement of Waste Containers 6
- Repair or Replacement Process 7

8. Assisted Collection Service 8
9.New Development - Planning Guidance 8
Appendix One - Street Survey criteria 9
- Vehicle Access 9
- Unsuitable Steps 9
- Unsuitable Frontage 9
- Unsuitable Road Surface 9

Appendix Two - Recycling and Refuse Receptacles 10

1. Service Provision

Gravesham Borough Council will deliver a waste and recycling service to the households within the borough which includes residual domestic waste, recycling, garden waste and food waste.

Standard Service

All households in the borough will have their residual household and recycling waste collected on alternate weeks, with food being collected weekly.

Each suitable property will receive the following containers:

- Residual Waste - 180ltr bin, black body, and lid
- Recycling Waste - 240ltr bin, grey body, and green lid
- Food Waste - 23ltr caddie black body and orange lid

Properties that are not suitable for bins will stay as a sack collection but will still have a fortnightly collection. Sacks for these properties will be provided by the Council upon request.

Items that can be placed in the residual bin include:

- Crisp packets
- Bread bags
- Cling film and ready meal peel off seals
- Plastic bags,
- Black coloured plastic food trays
- Broken toys other plastic items
- Nappies and sanitary waste
- Pet waste
- Polystyrene

Items that ***can*** be placed within the recycling bin are as follows:

- Paper
- Cardboard
- Food & drink cartons
- Plastic bottles, tubs, and trays
- Glass bottles and jars
- Metal food & drink cans
- Empty aerosols
- Foil

A summary of items that can and cannot be recycled is shown in appendix two.

In addition, households may place used household batteries in a clear bag on top of their refuse or recycling bin / sacks for collection. Batteries must not be placed in refuse or recycling bins or sacks, as they can cause fires. Alternatively, batteries can be recycled at most supermarkets.

Suitable households will also be provided with a black food caddy with an orange lid). Items that can be placed in this bin are as follows:

- Meat and fish - raw and cooked including bones
- Fruit and vegetables - raw and cooked and including peelings
- Bread, cakes, pastries, pasta, pulses, and rice
- Dairy products i.e., cheese, solid butters, and lard

- Eggs and eggshells
- Leftover food
- Foods past their use-by date
- Tea bags, tea leaves and coffee grounds.

This will be collected on a weekly basis alongside the residual waste or recycling.

Exceptions to the Service

Properties not deemed as suitable for a wheeled bin will remain on a sack collection. The sacks will be collected on a fortnightly basis. The criteria used for determining whether a property is suitable for a wheeled bin is at appendix one.

Clear recycling sacks will be delivered to these properties upon request via the online form or by contacting the Council's Customer Services Team. Residents can purchase refuse sacks for general waste from most supermarkets or hardware stores.

Garden Waste Scheme

The Council also provides a garden waste scheme (brown wheeled bin) to households in the borough for an annual charge (which is reviewed on an annual basis). Collection is from households on a fortnightly basis.

To qualify for the scheme, properties must have sufficient space to store a wheelie bin.

There are two bin size a 240ltr bin and 140ltr bin for the scheme.

In addition, the Council provides a brown paper sack collection for households which do not have space for a bin. The paper bags can be purchased on the Council's website and collected from the Civic Centre, or they can be delivered if a resident receives an assisted waste collection.

Alternatively garden waste can be composted at home or can be taken to Pepperhill Household Waste Recycling Centre for no charge.

Clinical Waste

Clinical waste is defined as medical waste that has been in contact with bodily fluids, including dialysis bags, swabs, dressings, cotton wool etc. The Council provides a collection service for domestic properties only. The bags provided are yellow and specially marked.

Needles must be placed sharps boxes and not directly in the yellow or black bags. Sharps boxes are available from Waste Management upon request.

Customers requiring a clinical waste collection are asked to complete an online form or contact the Council's Customer Services Team.

Bulky Waste Collection

The Council provides a bulky (and other) waste collection service to residents of the borough as follows:

- Bulky Goods Collection
    - Beds, mattresses, sofas, chairs, dining tables and chairs, coffee tables, dining units, sideboards, bedroom furniture i.e., wardrobes, dressing tables, chest of drawers, bookcases, plastic and wooden garden furniture, televisions, large toys i.e., sandpits, slides etc and wicker furniture.
- Metal Collection

- Cookers, washing machines, dishwashers, tumble dryers, microwaves, bikes, rowing machines, treadmills and exercise bikes, lawn mowers and most furniture made from metal i.e., bedframes.

- Fridge / Freezer Collection

Bulky (and other) collection services can be booked using an online form or by contacting the Council's Customer Services Team.

The costs of these collection services can be found on the Council's website.

Small electrical items can be recycled via small electrical recycling points.

Find information about electrical recycling online.

Additional Refuse and Recycling Capacity

If a householder requests additional recycling capacity because they are utilising the recycling container to its full capacity, a larger container or an additional container may be provided on application.

A "larger" household can apply for a larger or additional wheeled bin for non-recyclable refuse, which may result in additional capacity being agreed. A "larger" household is defined as one where there are six or more people in permanent residence, or where a medical condition results in additional refuse.

A "larger" household will also be entitled to receive an additional 240L wheeled recycling bin.

Where a household of five or fewer people reports that they have insufficient capacity to store non-recyclable refuse in a standard (180ltr) black wheeled bin, a visit may be made by a Council Officer to assess the situation.

The Officer will seek to establish the extent to which the householder is currently recycling. If the householder is fully utilising the recycling facilities provided (either kerbside or bring-sites) but can still demonstrate a shortfall in their bin capacity, an additional black wheeled bin may be provided for refuse.

Where the Officer deems that a household is not making full use of the recycling collection service, they will not be given an additional refuse wheeled bin and any resulting side waste will be the responsibility of the householder to dispose of themselves.

Where capacity is exceeded due to cat litter or pet waste additional storage capacity will not be provided. Officers will provide advice to householders on an individual basis as to alternative methods of treatment and disposal.

In the event of a dispute, the request will be referred to the Director (Environment) and/or Portfolio Holder. This decision will be final.

Additional food waste caddies will be provided on a case-by-case basis to be agreed by the Council.

A review of households with additional bins will be carried out every two years to determine whether the household is still eligible for the additional bin.

If additional communal refuse bins are required to accommodate excess rubbish due to recyclables not being separated, the householders, landlord or managing agent will be required to purchase these from the Council or alternative supplier to the Council's specification.

1. Service Provision - Flats

Flats will continue to have their waste and recycling collected as per their current scheme.

A specific review of the waste and recycling provision to all flats in the borough is underway and will be rolled out by 31st March 2026.

2. Collection and Return of Waste Containers

Residents must place their residual bin/black sacks, recycling bins/clear bags and food caddies out for collection at the front edge of their property by 7am on the morning of collection but no earlier than 4pm the preceding day.

Details of the collection days are available on the Council's website.

The waste and recycling receptacles must be placed at the edge of the resident's property, where the boundary meets the public highway, on the pavement where possible and safe. Where properties are at the end of a private driveway, the bins must be presented where the private access/driveway meets the public highway.

Once emptied, waste operatives will return the bins to the collection point at the edge of the pavement/boundary of the property. Residents are advised to label their bins with their house number to enable the operatives to return the correct bin to the correct property.

Where a bin store is used, the bins will be returned to the bin store wherever possible.

Bins stored on the pavement can cause a hazard to pedestrians with wheelchairs, mobility scooters or pushchairs and can be a trip hazard for visually impaired persons.

> Residents will be required to remove the bins from the pavement/boundary of the property and return them to within the boundaries of their property as soon as is reasonably possible after collection has been made. Bins must then be stored on the residents' property between collections and ***should not*** be left on the public highway.
>
> If bins are found to be left on the pavement at any other time, they may be removed, and the property will be put onto a sack collection.

Enforcement

Where residents do not meet the requirements set out above, either in terms of placing their waste and recycling out early or leaving their receptacles on the public highway for an unacceptable period, the Council will operate the following enforcement process:

- An initial letter will be sent to the resident advising them that they have breached the Council's policy and the reason for this breach. The rules will be re-confirmed to the resident within this letter.
- If the resident continues to breach the rules, an officer from the Council will carry out a home visit to the resident to discuss the Council's rules and to identify any issues the resident has in meeting those rules.
- If, after the visit, the resident continues to breach the rules the Council can issue a fixed penalty notice to the resident. This will be a last resort but will be used if the resident continues to disregard the rules set out in the policy.

3. Excess Waste/Side Recycling

The collection crews will only empty what is in the residual waste bin. Excess or side waste will not be removed. Any side waste should be placed in the bin by the householder ready for the next collection date. If households have excess waste, they take the waste to Pepperhill Household Waste Recycling Centre for no charge.

If a crew member is unable to safely manoeuvre and position a wheeled bin onto the collection vehicle, it will be left uncollected and reported back to the head office. Similarly, if the weight of a sack is too much for an operative to carry, it will not be collected.

The resident will receive a letter to inform them why their additional refuse sacks were not collected and to provide information about recycling and alternative disposal options for their waste.

The property address can also be checked on the Gravesham Borough Council website to identify collection issues, such as excess refuse or recycling contamination.

Excess recycling that is placed by the side of the wheeled bin will be collected if appropriately presented. Any additional recycling should be placed within a box or clear sack by the side of the recycling bin for collection if required.

Due to increased waste levels during the Christmas and Easter periods, additional waste will be collected on the first refuse collection after Christmas and Easter.

4. Contaminated Refuse and Recycling Containers

Wheeled bins, clear sack and food caddies will not be collected if they are deemed to be contaminated. This means that the wrong item(s) have been placed within them.

When too many non-recyclable or unclean items are placed in the recycling, it cannot be sorted and the entire load is sent to the energy from waste plant for incineration, rather than being sorted and sent for reprocessing into new materials and products. This process is more harmful to the environment and is an additional cost to local taxpayers.

For this reason, if you put incorrect items in your recycling bin or recycling sacks, the waste will not be taken, and you will receive a letter telling you what to do.

Contaminated recycling bins and garden waste bins will not be collected, and a sticker will be left on the bin.

If your recycling bin or sacks were missed because it was contaminated, you will receive a letter on the first occasion to tell you which items you will need to remove from your recycling bin or clear sacks before your next scheduled collection date. If necessary, please use cardboard boxes to store your excess recycling until the next collection.

If you live in a property with communal recycling bins, the managing agent of the building will be required to remove contamination from the recycling bins themselves. If you present a contaminated recycling bin or sack for a second time within a 6-month period, an officer may visit your property to assist you in understanding how to recycle correctly.

If further instances of contamination occur within a 6-month period and all reasonable steps have been taken to inform residents at the property about correct recycling, your recycling bin will be removed. We do not want to do this as we want to help people to do the right thing and maximise the collection of recyclable material, which is good for the environment.

5. Missed Bins

As detailed in section one, residents will be asked to ensure their bin/sacks/caddies are placed out for collection by 7am on the day of collection. Please note that our vehicles are equipped with CCTV, which we will check to verify any reports.

If the bin/sacks/caddies are not collected on the normal collection day, residents will be asked to complete an online form or contact the Customer Services Team. Residents will be encouraged to use the online form.

A missed collection must be reported within two working days. If the bin is reported as missed after more than two working days, the waste will not be collected until next scheduled bin collection day.

Once a report is received of a missed collection, the bin/sacks/caddies will be collected within one working day.

6. Repair or Replacement of Waste Containers

6.1. All wheeled bins, sacks and food caddies remain the property of the Council and should be left at the property, including in the event that the resident moves to another location.

6.2. The householder is responsible for keeping all waste receptacles safe whilst they are on their property and are only used for their specified use; being the collection of waste and recycling.

Repair or Replacement Process

All wheeled bins, sacks and food caddies remain the property of the Council and should be left at the property, including in the event that the resident moves to another location.

The householder is responsible for keeping all waste receptacles safe whilst they are on their property and are only used for their specified use; being the collection of waste and recycling.

Repair or Replacement Process

The Council will maintain a stock of wheeled bins and caddies to ensure that they can be replaced as required throughout the borough.

Residents will be required to request a replacement wheeled bin or caddy via an online form or through the Customer Contact Centre. Residents will be encouraged to use the online form.

There could be a variety of reasons why you require a replacement bin for your property ranging from:

- Damaged or stolen bin
- Moved into a property with no bins
- Moved into a new build property
- Additional recycling bins
- The bin was damaged during collection
- The bin went into the back of the bin lorry during collection

Depending on the reason for the request for a replacement bin there may be a charge that will need to be paid at the time of the request before the item will be arranged for delivery.

The charge is a contribution towards the overall cost of the bin, administration, delivery and, where necessary, the removal of the damaged bin.

Residents can also purchase additional recycling bins if required and these will all be emptied as long as they do not contain business waste or contaminated recycling. However, we will only empty one black rubbish bin from each property and we will not collect waste left beside it.

The charges are as follows:

Bin Type	Charge (If Applicable)
180-litre Refuse	£45.00
240-litre Recycling	£45.00
23-litre Food Bin (Orange Lid)	No Charge

We will replace wheelie bins for free if:

- has gone into the back of the collection vehicle
- Is damaged during the collection process
- has been stolen (you will need to provide a crime reference number)

- is a black and orange food bin

6.3. The Council aims to encourage people to recycle food waste and therefore, residents will not be charged for replacement food waste bins.

7. Assisted Collection Service

The Council provides an assisted collection service for residents who are unable to take their bins or sacks to the kerbside because of disability or ill-health, and have no access to a carer, friend, relative or neighbour (aged over 18) to help put their bins or sacks out.

An assisted collection may also be requested by residents recovering from a short-term illness or injury who have no access to a carer, friend, relative or neighbour (aged over 18) to help put their bins out while they recover.

The waste collection crew will collect the bins or sacks from an agreed location and will return the bins (if provided) to the same location. The crew will endeavour to return the bin to the point of presentation, although 100% accuracy cannot be guaranteed due to human error.

The Council has an application form in order to determine each assisted collection application correctly. This form will be available online or through the Customer Contact Centre. Residents will be encouraged to use the online form.

Council officers will contact successful applicants to discuss a mutually agreeable collection point for the waste or bin. Where an application is unsuccessful, residents do have the opportunity to appeal the Council's decision, in writing.

The Council reserves the right to withdraw or suspend the service, if it has reason to believe the criteria of the policy are not met.

When signing up for an assisted collection service, residents are requested to inform the Council should the assisted collection no longer be required. Regular checks will be undertaken by Council officers of those households that receive an assisted collection to ensure it is still required.

8. New Development - Planning Guidance

Planning applications for major development will be notified to the Assistant Director (Environment) to enable comments regarding the new waste and recycling requirements to be fed into the planning process.

Guidance will be provided to Planning Services in order that new developments are provided with appropriate storage and access, including but not limited to the following:

- General information regarding the size of the kitchen food caddy (silver) so that internal storage within the kitchen area can be considered.
- External space for the storage of a wheeled bin for recycling and the outdoor kitchen caddy (black with orange lid);
- Vehicular access for each property

The new waste and recycling receptacles will be delivered to new developments as each property becomes occupied.

The minimum requirement for flatted developments are as follows:

House

- 180ltr bin - residual waste
- 240ltr bin - recycling waste
- 23ltr caddie - food waste
- 240ltr bin - garden waste (subscription service)

Flats

- 1 x Euro 1100 per six flats - residual waste
- 1 x Euro 1100 per six flats - recycling waste
- 1 x 140ltr bin per ten flats - food waste

Appendix One - Street Survey criteria

Prior to the original roll-out of wheeled bins across the borough, Council Officers undertook a street survey to determine which houses are and are not suitable for wheeled bins.

There are several factors which determine that a property is not suitable for wheeled bins. The following paragraphs provide an outline of the potential criteria for identifying that a property is not suitable for a wheeled bin. It should be noted that a there may be some properties that have unique circumstances which will be noted in the additional information section.

Vehicle Access

To empty a wheeled bin a Refuse Collection Vehicle (RCV) is required with a bin lift on the back end of the vehicle. Some roads across Gravesham are not wide enough to allow access for RCV's. These properties will be serviced by smaller collection vehicles with no bin lift and will be required to remain on a sack collection.

Unsuitable Steps

Properties that have steps to access them may not be suitable for wheeled bins. If the only area to store the wheeled bin requires the householder to wheel the bin up or down the steps, the steps need to be suitable for this purpose. Whilst it is easier for a householder to wheel a full bin down steps than up them, consideration also needs to be taken of the gradient, size and quantity of steps. The survey will identify the number of properties with various numbers of steps. When the information is available further consideration will be given to this issue.

Unsuitable Frontage

There are a number of potential issues that would deem a property to have unsuitable frontage:

No pavement – properties that open directly onto the main carriageway will not be suitable for wheeled bins; it is not acceptable to obstruct the road by placing the wheeled bin directly on the public highway.

Insufficient storage area - Householders will require a sufficient area at their property to store the wheeled bin. The appropriate acceptable area required being 1metre x 1metre and not next to a front window.

No front storage and no rear access - Properties which do not have a suitable storage area at the front and no means to wheel the bin from the front to the back e.g., mid terrace houses with no back alleyway, will not be suitable for wheeled bins and will remain on sack collections.

Back alley too long - Properties which do not have a suitable storage area at the front and have back alleys which are too long to wheel the bins to the collection point, will not be suitable for wheeled bins and will remain on sack collections. The acceptable length of alleyway being 15mtrs.

Unsuitable Road Surface

The road surface needs to be suitable for either the vehicle to drive down or for the bins to be wheeled to a collection point. Typical types of unsuitable roads surface are that of unadopted roads or private lanes which may be uneven and have potholes that could cause health and safety issues. All properties determined to be on unsuitable roads will be recorded on the survey along with the type of road surface.

9. Appendix Two - What Can and Cannot be placed in Recycling and Refuse Receptacles



Please **DO NOT** put the following into the recycling bin:

- General rubbish, black sacks, food waste, nappies & sanitary products, animal waste, clothing & shoes, wood, garden waste, soil & hardcore, plastic bags or wrappers and polystyrene



Please DO NOT **place the items listed below your refuse bin:**

- **Hazardous waste (such as asbestos, chemicals, batteries and gas bottles), building waste (such as plasterboard, hardcore and rubble), soil, electrical items, batteries, scrap metal, paint, car parts, wood or furniture and clinical waste.**