



Lambeth
RECYCLING & WASTE
Collections
CHARTER for
kerbside households

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Section One – Recycling & Waste Collections Charter

Lambeth Council is committed to delivering a high-quality recycling and waste collection service.

1.1 The council will:

- Provide a recycling and waste service that offers value for money
- Provide a service that helps residents reduce black bin rubbish and recycle more
- Ensure everyone can access our services by tailoring them to those with specific needs when necessary
- Collect all correctly presented materials on the stated collection day and return containers safely to their original presentation point
- Speak to residents in a polite and respectful manner
- Ensure that any spillage caused by the crew is cleared up by the end of the working day
- Respond to residents' concerns and inform them about how and when we will resolve them
- Ensure that crews leave a bin hanger to advise residents who have contaminated their recycling bin why it wasn't emptied
- Advertise any changes to collections well in advance

1.2 Our target response times are:

- Return to collect a reported missed collection by the end of the next working day
- Deliver or replace collection receptacles within 10 working days of being ordered

1.3 We ask residents to:

- Place their recycling and waste containers on the pavement with the handles facing the road immediately outside their property on the correct day with the correct materials in them by 6am on the day of collection. Containers should not be presented before 8pm the evening before collection
- Present their containers between 8pm the evening before collection and 6am on the day of collection (this does not apply to large bulky containers with four wheels)
- Consider where they park their vehicle on collection day, as vehicles blocking access make collections very difficult
- Contact us or visit our website if they require help or are unsure which material goes in which container
- Treat our operatives with respect and allow them to carry out their important work without fear of abuse

Section Two – Standard Recycling and Waste Containers

The council will only empty the official recycling and waste containers issued by the council. This is to ensure compatibility with the collection vehicles as well as the safety of the collection crews and residents. Bins purchased by residents will not be emptied.

If residents already own wheeled bins, these can still be used for storage of waste, but waste will not be collected from them. A new bin that's compatible for collections will instead need to be purchased from the council, or will be provided free of charge if it's for recycling. Wheeled bins already owned by residents can be used for alternative uses at the residents' discretion or arranged to be removed by the council's bulky waste collection service.

2.1 Standard container details

Waste stream	Standard containers
<u>Rubbish (i.e. non-recyclable)</u>	140-litre wheeled bin supplied by the council Black / dark grey body and lid Embossed with Lambeth Council logo
<u>Dry recycling</u>	240-litre wheeled bin supplied by the council Green body and lid Embossed with Lambeth Council logo
<u>Food waste</u>	23-litre outdoor food waste bin Black / dark grey body and brown lid Embossed with Lambeth Council logo Light grey 5-litre food waste kitchen caddy also provided
<u>Garden waste</u>	Subscription service Two heavy duty reusable garden waste sacks provided as standard; more available on request for additional payment Green sacks with Lambeth Council logo
<u>Small electricals & batteries</u>	Standard sized carrier bag, provided by residents. (Batteries must be kept in a separate bag to the electrical items.)

Section Two – Standard Recycling and Waste Containers

Please note that exemptions to this section are dealt with in **Section Three (Exemption from Standard Recycling and Waste Containers)** and **Section Four (Exceptions)**.

Containers remain the property of the London Borough of Lambeth.

2.2 The council will:

- Charge developers or estate managers for the supply and/or replacement of black rubbish bins which have been lost, stolen, or are needed by new developments;
- Charge kerbside properties to replace any lost, stolen or damaged black rubbish bins with standard sized containers unless there has been a prior agreement for additional capacity;
- Replace containers that have been damaged during the collection process free of charge.

2.3 Residents are responsible for:

- Ensuring containers are only used to store recycling and waste before collection;
- Seeking permission from the council before removing containers from the property to which they were issued;
- Ensuring that containers are kept safe and secure if possible
- Ensuring containers don't block footways
- Personalising the bins with the relevant property number

2.4 Reason for inclusion:

Unauthorised containers may not conform to BS EN 840, presenting a risk of them falling off the collection vehicle during emptying. This would pose a serious health and safety risk to staff and members of the public.

Section Three – Exemption from Standard Recycling and Waste Containers

All properties within the borough will be deemed suitable for the standard recycling and rubbish containers as outlined in **Section Two**, unless they meet any of the criteria below to qualify for an exemption.

3.1 Wheeled bin exemptions

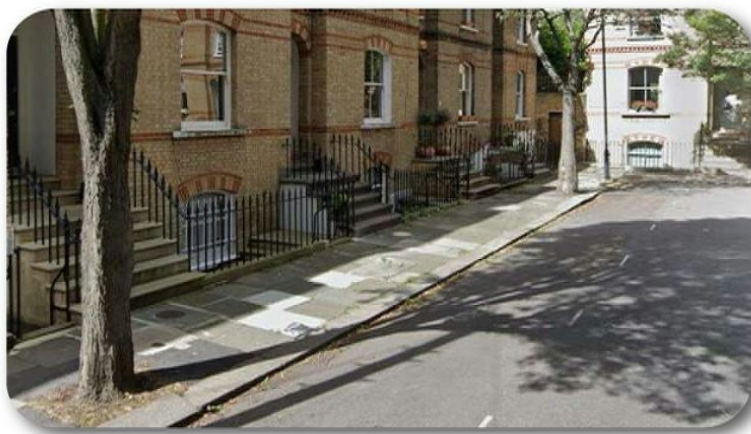
A property *may* be exempt from using a wheeled bin if one of the following applies:

- The front door opens directly onto the pavement, or
- Where the pavement is deemed by the council unfit to store a wheeled bin; or
- The front garden does not have space for the required bins (excluding space required for access but including any space taken up by plants and landscaping); or
- They're in a conservation area and it's been agreed with the council not to have wheeled bins
- Where there would be health and safety concerns in manoeuvring a bin from the front garden to the public highway.

and the property has no alternative space for the storage of a bin between collections.

In these cases, properties may be given permission to present their waste in sacks. There will be a limit of one sack per week that can be presented for collection unless exceptions apply under

Section Four.



Where appropriate, the council may investigate and/or trial new and innovative approaches, such as installing kerbside bin storage, in conjunction with sustainability initiatives such as Lambeth's [Kerbside Strategy](#) which encourages inclusive design principles to reduce pavement clutter. Any such approaches will need to balance sustainability and active travel objectives with the council's duty to maintain a clean and tidy environment that's free from litter and dumped rubbish.

Section Three – Exemption from Standard Recycling and Waste Containers

3.2 Operational exemptions

Some properties may be deemed unsuitable for wheeled bins due to certain criteria, including, but not limited to, the need to lift bins over steps or pulling bins up steep inclines or over long distances.

3.3 The council will:

Provide clear recycling sacks for properties exempt from using recycling wheeled bins; there is no limit to the number of recycling sacks that can be presented for collection.

3.4 Residents in exempt properties will be responsible for:

- Providing their own sacks (usually black) for the presentation of rubbish for collection
- Storing their rubbish and / or recycling sacks internally until their collection day
- Presenting their rubbish and recycling sacks neatly on the footway in front of their property by 6am on the day of collection or not before 8pm the previous evening
- Supplying accurate information when requesting an exemption from **Section Two**

3.5 Reason for inclusion:

This section defines the reasons a property would be exempt from the use of wheeled bins.

Section Four - Exceptions

Special arrangements or changes to the core recycling and waste collection arrangements will be made available in the circumstances detailed below:

4.1 Assisted collections

Assisted collections remove the need for residents to move their bins to and from the footway for collection. Instead, collection operatives collect the bin from its normal position and return it there following collection. Assisted collections will be made available to residents who, on assessment, are deemed to be unable to use the core recycling and waste collection service without assistance from the council. Assisted collections will only be offered where nobody else is able to assist in placing the bin out for collection. Assisted collections are also available on a short-term basis, e.g., following surgery. The collection crew will only collect containers which are visible from the roadside or placed in an agreed collection point. Assisted collections will be regularly reviewed to ensure the service is still required for each property.

4.2 Additional black bin rubbish capacity

Residents can request larger black rubbish bins should they believe that the standard 140-litre size wheeled bin be too small. To qualify for a larger black rubbish bin, one or more of the following criteria must be met:

- Five or more permanent residents
- One or more children in nappies
- Bulky medical waste (such as incontinence nappies, **not** clinical waste) needs to be disposed of

In all cases, residents applying for a larger bin must be able to demonstrate that the household is recycling as much as possible through the council's food waste and dry recycling services.

Should one or more of the above criteria be met, a 240-litre wheeled bin will be provided. This will replace the 140-litre wheeled bin provided as standard. Should a property be exempt from wheeled bins under **Section Three** above, they will instead be able to put out four sacks of rubbish per fortnight, instead of the standard two.

Where additional rubbish capacity is approved and it is later found that a household is not fully using the food waste and dry recycling services, the council reserves the right to withdraw the additional capacity.

4.0 Section Four - Exceptions

In the case of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs), this will be dealt with on an individual basis in discussion with the landlord. In larger HMOs, the landlord may be required to hire bins (up to 1100 litres) from the council. Further details can be found in **Section Nine**.

4.3 Additional recycling capacity

As most household waste is recyclable, residents can request additional recycling containers as required. There is no limit to the recycling capacity that properties are allowed to use.

4.4 Reason for inclusion:

This section ensures that all residents can access the recycling and waste services offered by the council, providing a tailored service to those with specific needs.

5.0 Section Five - Side Waste

Side waste is defined as waste put out for collection which is not contained in the standard container issued to the household for that service, and is instead placed next to the container. See **2.1 Standard Container Details** on page 5.

The process for managing side waste depends on the type of waste.

5.1 Rubbish (i.e. black bin waste)

No black bin side waste will be collected except where a property is in the process of being assessed for additional non-recyclable waste as per **Section Four**.

In any other circumstance, should side waste be found next to a black rubbish bin, it will be stickered and returned to within the property boundary. This sticker will provide details of how to apply for additional rubbish capacity if required by the household.

The same procedure will apply in situations where an exempt property (as defined in **Section Three**) presents more than the one sack allowed per week, or two sacks in the case of properties exempted and approved for additional rubbish capacity.

Persistent offenders may be subject to enforcement action.

5.2 Recycling

Recyclable side waste will be collected as long as it's placed in an untied plastic bag that's large enough to contain it without spilling. Cardboard that doesn't fit in the recycling bin will be taken as long as it's flattened and does not contain any polystyrene. Polystyrene is not recyclable and should be placed in the non-recyclable wheeled bin.

5.3 Reason for inclusion:

This section clearly sets out what is and is not acceptable in terms of side waste in Lambeth. Excess rubbish should be avoidable with proper use of the recycling services or by applying for an exception under **Section Four** where appropriate.

Section Six – Contamination and Enforcement

The Council will only empty recycling and rubbish containers which contain the correct materials.

6.1 Recycling

Green recycling wheeled bins (or clear sacks where bins are not allowed) should only be used to contain materials that the council can collect as part of its [dry recycling service](#). Should a recycling bin or sack contain any items that the council can't collect as part of this service, it will be considered 'contaminated'.

6.2 Rubbish

Black rubbish bins should only contain items that can't be recycled using the council's recycling services or the Vale Street or Smugglers Way Reuse and Recycling Centres. This includes:

- Dry mixed recycling, which must be recycled using the council's green recycling wheeled bins (or clear sacks where bins are not allowed)
- Food waste, which must be recycled using the council's food waste recycling service or composted at home
- Garden waste, which must be recycled using the council's garden waste subscription service, or taken to Vale Street or Smugglers way, or composted at home

If a black rubbish bin is too heavy, the crew will not empty the bin and will report it as being too heavy. Residents should then remove the heavy items to enable the bin to be emptied.

6.3 Procedure for contaminated recycling containers

Should a recycling container be found at the point of collection to be contaminated such that its collection may contaminate the entire load, the collection crew will not empty the container. The collection crew will leave a tag on the handle of the bin to advise residents of the problem.

- If a recycling container is left because of contamination that's easy to remove, residents are expected to remove the contamination and re-present the uncontaminated container on the next collection day.
- If a recycling container is heavily contaminated to the extent that it would not be possible for residents to easily and safely remove the contaminant, the bin will be emptied by a rubbish collection crew at the next opportunity.

Section Six – Contamination and Enforcement

6.4 Enforcement of contaminated containers or side waste

Should a household contaminate their recycling bin or present non-recyclable side waste (as defined in **Section Four**), an education and enforcement process will be set in motion. This process will follow these steps:

First instance: The household will receive a tag on their bin warning them that they should not contaminate their bin / present side waste.

Second instance: The household will receive a letter providing further details of the problem and explaining how they should present their waste.

Third instance: The household will receive a second letter

Fourth instance: The household will receive a visit from the council's Education, Communication & Outreach Team who will talk to residents and try to ensure they are aware of how they should dispose of their waste.

Fifth instance: The household is reported to the council's Enforcement Team who may issue a fixed penalty notice.

6.5 Reason for inclusion:

This section defines what can and can't be presented for collection in each of the containers provided and the process for managing contaminated waste and side waste. An improvement in the materials placed out for recycling will enable the council to reduce rubbish and increase the amount that's recycled.

Section Seven - Illegal dumping

7.1 Practices that are considered illegal dumping (fly-tipping)

All household waste must be presented in the appropriate container as defined in **Section Two** (or **Section Three** if exempt). Bulky waste should not be presented for collection unless a collection has been booked using the council's [bulky waste service](#) or other licensed waste collection provider. For the avoidance of doubt, the following practices will therefore be considered illegal dumping and may be subject to enforcement action including the issue of fixed penalty notices (fines) or prosecution:

- Putting excess rubbish on the pavement (see **Section Five - Side Waste**)
- Putting waste of any kind into a bin that belongs to another household or households, including bulk bins on housing estates
- Putting waste of any kind into a skip (other than one that has been hired and licensed for the purpose)
- Putting waste of any kind into a commercial waste bin
- Putting reusable items on the pavement with a note saying 'Please take' or similar. These items should be kept within the property boundary, or can be offered for reuse via local social media or sites such as [freecycle.org](#)
- Putting waste of any kind onto any area of public highway, or any area of private land that does not belong to the person depositing it, including housing estates

Residents with excess or bulky waste may be able to take it to the Reuse and Recycling Centre at [Vale Street](#) or the Household Waste and Recycling Centre at [Smugglers Way](#). Alternatively, they can use the council's bulky waste service.

7.2 Reason for inclusion

Dumping rubbish is a crime, so this section is included to help residents avoid breaking the law. Collecting rubbish that has been presented illegally costs the council money. Presenting waste correctly means that more of it can be recycled.

Section Eight - Use of Containers

The Council will only collect waste that's presented correctly.

8.1 Closed wheeled bin lids

The Council will only collect from wheeled bins with closed lids. This is to ensure that the wheeled bins and lids are not damaged during the collection and lifting process, and to comply with the Health and Safety Executive best practice guidelines that lids should be fully closed.

Where a wheeled bin is presented for collection with an open lid, the crew will take out the top sack and sticker it as 'side waste' to advise the resident that the bin lid was too open for the bin to be emptied. They will then subsequently empty the bin and leave the sack within the front boundary of the property. The collection crew will take a photo of the overfull bin before collection.

8.2 Time of collection

Containers must be presented for collection by 6am on the day of collection and no earlier than 8pm of the evening before collection day. Collections will be made between 6am and 10pm.

8.3 Placement of containers for collection

Residents should:

- Present their containers on the footway alongside the boundary of their property
- Ensure that their containers are visible – for example, food waste bins 'hidden' between larger wheeled bins can be missed by collection crews
- Make sure wheeled bin handles are facing outwards towards the road
- Make sure containers don't block the footway

Following collection, the collection crew will return the containers back to their original presentation point.

The principles outlined above also apply to households exempted from wheeled bins which are provided with sacks.

Section Eight - Use of Containers

8.4 Point of Collection

Where possible the Council will collect from the boundary of properties nearest to the public highway. However, the Council reserves the right to request an alternative collection point should any of the following apply:

- There is a danger posed to the crew, e.g., uncontrolled dogs
- There is a danger posed to the collection vehicle, e.g., overhanging cables or trees

8.5 Bins not presented for collection

The Council will not return to empty a container that has been reported by the crew as not presented on the boundary of the property for collection. This does not apply to assisted collections.

8.6 Missed collections

The Council will only return to collect missed collections that have been reported by midnight of the next working day (with the exceptions of assisted collections). Missed bins can be reported on the Council's website at any time after the road has been reported as collected by the crew.

The Council will try to collect any missed collection within one working day from when the report is received.

In certain circumstances where returning to collect is operationally difficult, the council may arrange with the household to collect additional materials on the next scheduled collection day.

8.7 Storage of containers

Containers must not be stored on the pavement or on the public highway between collections unless there's no room within the property boundary and storage on the public highway has been agreed by the council. Any bins left on the pavement without authorisation may be removed by the council, and householders charged for a replacement.

8.8 Reason for inclusion

This section ensures waste presented for collection can be collected safely.

Section Nine – Flats, Communal Properties and Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

The Council will collect recycling and non-recyclable waste from flats, communal properties and HMOs providing that those managing the property comply with the following guidelines.

9.1 Container solutions

If space within the boundary of the property allows, flats, communal properties and HMOs will normally be supplied with the same allocation per household for non-recyclable waste, dry recycling and food waste as listed in the [Table at 2.1](#). Where space is limited, however, the following rules of thumb will be applied:

9.2 External container solutions for flats, communal properties and HMOs

Number of households	Non-recyclable waste	Dry recycling	Food waste
2	1 x 240 litre	2 x 240 litre or 1 x 360 litre	2 x 23 litre
3	1 x 360 litre	3 x 240 litre or 2 x 360 litre	3 x 23 litre
4	2 x 240 litre	1 x 240 litre + 2 x 360 litre	4 x 23 litre
5	1 x 240 litre + 1 x 360 litre	3 x 360 litre	5 x 23 litre
6	2 x 360 litre	3 x 360 litre minimum*	6 x 23 litre
7	2 x 240 litre + 1 x 360 litre	3 x 360 litre minimum*	7 x 23 litre
8+	Individually assessed		

Note: Households in properties comprising six or more flats tend to be smaller and will cumulatively produce less recyclable waste, meaning that a slightly lower capacity per household should be possible. However, more bins could be provided if space allows.

The capacities in the table above may not apply in all cases, and many properties will have to be assessed individually to take into account a large number of variables. The council will try to ensure each household is provided with a minimum allowance of 120 litres' capacity per fortnight for non-recyclable waste, and as much capacity as possible for recycling.

Section Nine – Flats, Communal Properties and Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

The council's preference is to make non-recyclable waste collections as efficient as possible by having fewer, larger bins. For dry recycling, the preference would normally be for each household to have their own bin to reduce the potential impact of contamination. However, lack of space, particularly for properties containing more than three or four households, often makes this impractical.

Where an owner or manager of an HMO requires additional capacity beyond the recommendations above, the council will charge commercial rates for the additional capacity.

9.3 Bin stores

Bin stores should be well lit, built on level hard standing and the entrance should be wide enough for the bins to easily pass through. Vehicular access to the bin store should allow the collection vehicles to drive as close as possible to the bin storage area, all pathways leading from the bin store should be hard standing.

Where bin stores are not on a level surface, bins should be secured by applying brakes or through another method.

The Council recommends that bin stores are locked.

On the day of collection bin stores should be cleared of any bulky items or obstructions (including bags of waste not contained in the bins) so that the crews have access to move the containers safely in and out of the bin stores. Please see Policy Four (Side Waste) as this also applies to communal properties.

9.4 Ramps and drop kerbs

Ramps and drop kerbs should be installed to allow bulk containers to be safely wheeled to the rear of the collection vehicle.

9.5 Reason for section

Flats, communal properties and HMOs have different needs than individual houses; therefore, this section details how the council will approach the collection of waste and recycling from flats and communal properties.

Section Ten - Access

10.1 Blocked access

Should a collection fail due to blocked access the council will return later on the same collection day to re-attempt collection. If re-attempted collection fails on the day of collection the council will monitor the problem and attempt collection (if resources permit) during the collection interval.

10.2 Private road/private access

Where possible, the council will collect from the boundary of properties via private roads/accesses; however, the Council reserves the right to request an alternative collection point where a private road/access is deemed to be unsafe for a collection vehicle to attend, for example due to narrow access, unkempt verges/trees or road surfaces.

Where a collection on private property has been requested, the council will not be held responsible for the deterioration of any road surfaces, earth banks or verges and shall be indemnified against any resultant claim. Where road surfaces are constructed to a non-highway standard that may not support a refuse collection vehicle, the council may insist on an alternative collection point.

10.3 Electronic gates

Electronic closing gates must comply with the Health and Safety Executive's 2010 safety advice alert.

10.4 Distance bins should be pulled out by crews

The distance that crews "pull out" containers should be minimised, where possible. Distances of more than 20 metres will require an individual risk assessment undertaken to assess the manual handling risk and whether an alternative collection method is required. (Risks such as uneven/broken surfaces, kerb edges, slopes, speed humps must be assessed and taken into account).

10.5 Excessively Heavy Bins

Bins that are deemed too heavy to be safely lifted by the lifting mechanism on the rear of the vehicle will not be emptied, and contact will be made via an email, sticker, hanger or leaflet to notify the resident/managing agent.

Section Ten - Access

10.6 Pets

Residents are requested to ensure that all pets are controlled in such a manner that, when a collection is made, they can't injure an operative or escape from the property.

10.7 Minimising difficult vehicle manoeuvres

Recycling and non-recyclable waste containers should be placed in locations that minimise the need for difficult vehicle manoeuvres. (Reversing is considered a difficult manoeuvre by the HSE.)

10.8 Reason for section

This section ensures the service compliance with the best practise guidelines from the Health and Safety Executive.