



WORCESTER CITY COUNCIL

OPERATIONAL SERVICES

GUIDANCE FOR THE GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE (June 09)

1. Overview

1.1. A chargeable garden waste collection service will be introduced to domestic households requesting the provision of this service in Worcester from July/August 2009 onwards.

1.2. The reasons for this service are:

- To provide an additional service to supplement the existing dry recycling scheme.
- To divert more waste away from black bins thus increasing the percentage of recyclable waste and further reducing the burden of landfill tax penalties.
- To offer a similar facility as currently provided by other District Councils in Worcestershire.
- To assist Worcestershire County Council in meeting future increases in recycling targets.

1.3. A brown 240 litre bin is provided to households on payment of a registration fee and annual collection charge.

1.4. The service consists of 21 fortnightly collections per year between February and November.

1.5. The service is only available to addresses in Worcester registered for domestic Council Tax. Business customers are not eligible.

1.6. The description of garden waste that can be placed in the bin is available on the website at <http://www.worcester.gov.uk/index.php?id=1870>. The bin is for garden matter which can be composted. Kitchen waste and rubble/soil should not be placed in this bin.

2. Payment for the service

2.1. New customers are required to pay a one-off non-returnable registration fee of £10.

2.2. The annual charge during the financial year 2009/10 is £30 per bin and covers 21 collections over a 12 month period starting at the first collection.

2.3. Payment of the registration fee (first year only) and annual charge is required in advance of the service delivery and can be made online or via the Customer Service Centre.

2.4. Renewing customers need to pay prior to their "anniversary date" (first collection date) before the next year's collections take place. A letter will be sent one month before the anniversary date inviting renewal and stating the amount to pay.

2.5. Failure to pay for the following year will result in collections being suspended and the Council will recover the bin from the householder's property within one month of the anniversary date.

2.6. The registration fee and annual service charge may increase each year. The revised charges are agreed by Council each year and will then apply from 1 April to 31 March.

2.7. Part refunds are not available should the householder cancel the service during the year. Any break in service will incur a further registration fee.

3. Using the bin

3.1. The householder must conform to these guidelines regarding use of the bin.

3.2. A property can have a garden waste bin only if that property currently has domestic wheelie bins and those bins can be safely moved to the vehicle for emptying.

3.3. The bin must only be used for the purpose that it was intended for.

The following items can be placed in the bin:

- Grass cuttings
- Hedge and shrub clippings
- Leaves, twigs and bark
- Small plants and weeds
- Cut flowers

The following items cannot be placed in the bin:

- Kitchen waste (food, peelings, tea bags, egg shells etc.)
- Animal waste
- Plastic bags, pots and trays
- Brick, rubble, soil and stones
- Tree stumps or branches over 10cm (4") in diameter.

3.4. Bins are owned by Worcester City Council and are registered to individual addresses not occupants. If residents move properties within the City, then the existing collection arrangements can be transferred to the new address. Bins must not be moved to any other property unless agreed by the Council.

3.5. Only bins supplied by Worcester City Council will be emptied. Other companies or contractors are not permitted to empty bins.

3.6. Each bin is embossed with the City's crest and name. Bins are supplied with a label on which the property name or number is written. No other details or artwork shall be permitted to be inscribed on the bin by the householder.

3.7. Householders may use up to a maximum of three garden waste bins at one property.

3.8. Neighbours may share one bin however the bin is only registered to one address, paid by the householder at that address and collected from that address.

3.9. No garden waste arising from any commercial activity may be deposited in the bin.

3.10. Bins should be stored on the householder's own property – not on the public highway, in communal alleyways or passageways to other properties.

3.11. Damaged and stolen bins must be reported to the Council. If they have been willfully damaged or stolen whilst on the householder's property, the householder will be charged for the repair or replacement. The service may be terminated immediately and any remaining collections forfeited by the householder due to unrecoverable loss or damage. Damage caused by natural wear and tear will be the responsibility of the Council.

3.12. Worcester City Council will check the use of the bin and may request return of the bin if misused. The Council reserves the right to remove bins, when presented for collection, if the householder does not use the bin in accordance with the guidelines.

3.13. Accidents reported to the Council may be investigated. Householders could be liable for injury caused to pedestrians if bins are not placed in the correct position on the curtilage or inappropriately placed on the highway where no curtilage is available.

3.14. The householder is responsible for the cleanliness of their bins. The Council currently does not offer a cleaning service nor recommends any company.

3.15. If the occupant no longer wishes to use the service then they must notify the Council.

4. Collection guidelines

4.1. Garden waste bins will be collected 21 times per year, fortnightly on Mondays, between February and November. A calendar and service information shall be issued to each customer.

4.2. Householders must place bin on the "curtilage" of their property ("curtilage" = edge / boundary / perimeter). The preferred point of collection is the nearest point of access by the vehicle, usually the front curtilage of the property. If householders wish to store their bins at the rear of their property then they are required to move their bin to their front curtilage on the day of collection and by 7.00am.

4.3. Bins must not be placed out on highway verges or on public footpaths except where there is no front garden or other appropriate location (e.g. terraced houses fronting onto road). In all cases, they must be placed in a safe position without causing obstruction.

4.4. Bins must not be placed out in advance of the normal collection day or bins routinely placed out for day to day storage on the public highway. After collection, bins placed out on the highway should be returned to the property as soon as possible and, at the latest, by the end of the collection day.

4.5. The bin will not be emptied if:

- There is waste at the side or on top of the bin.
- The bin lid is not closed flat. Bins with open lids and protruding waste will not be collected because of the risk of falling items during the lifting process.
- The bin contains the wrong contents or is contaminated in some way.
- There are items in the bin that the collection teams feel may damage the vehicle in the compaction process.

4.6. Where any problem occurs with the collection of a bin as described above, a default notice will be left on the bin informing the householder about the problem. It is then the responsibility of the householder to resolve the reason behind the non-collection prior to the next collection taking place. The Council will not return between scheduled collections to empty bins left uncollected due to the non-compliance of the householder.

4.7. Where a householder forgets to place out their bin on the day of collection or is late placing it out, then it should be stored until the next scheduled collection. Crews will not return to collect bins placed out after the vehicle has passed the property. Occasionally, collection times can vary due to traffic, roadworks or breakdowns so the crews may take a different route. Therefore, householders should ensure their bin is placed out by 7.00 on the day of collection.

5. Exemptions to placing out bins

5.1. If householders already have an exemption from placing out bins on the curtilage of their property then that exemption will apply to the garden waste bin. The garden waste bin must be in the same location as agreed with the Council for the standard refuse bins.

5.2. An exemption will not be authorised solely for the garden waste bin.

5.3. All other rules regarding the granting of exemptions still apply.

6. Bank holiday arrangements

6.1. Monday bank holidays (Easter Monday, May Day, Spring Holiday, Late Summer Holiday) will not have any affect on collections.

7. Failure of service

7.1. The Council reserves the right to cancel this service in times of severe disruption in order to concentrate on normal refuse and recycling collections delayed from the previous week.

7.2. Should Worcester City Council fail to provide the service due to vehicle breakdown, adverse weather, road inaccessible or industrial action on the day then collections shall be made as soon as possible after the situation has been resolved.

7.3. Additional collections shall be made to replace lost collections. No refunds to the collection charge are available.