



Campaign to reduce unwanted items in recycling bin

24 May 2019:

[Find out more](#)



[more news](#)

Project underway to reduced unwanted items/contamination in the recycling bins

During May and June 2019, residents in the borough will see stickers on their recycling bins advising that certain types of waste must not to be included in their household recycling.

Over the past few months we have seen an increase in contamination with recycling bins containing black sacks, nappies, food and textiles.

We are placing a sticker on all residents' recycling bins increasing awareness of the problem, with the aim of improving the quality of the recycling that we collect.

Less contamination in the recycling means that the materials can be made into higher quality products, reducing the processing and environmental cost of the service.

What is contamination and why does it matter?

Contamination is simply, the wrong material in the wrong bin, contamination will

- Increase the cost of sorting recyclable materials
- Increase transportation and disposal costs
- Reduce the quality of the recycling - for example, food waste in the recycling bins can spread onto clean paper and can reduce the quality of the resulting recycled paper
- In serious cases a whole lorry load of recycling can be rejected and sent for disposal - luckily this is a rare occurrence
- If the quality of items made from recyclable materials cannot be maintained, the market for recyclable materials will drop, reducing their value.

Overall, contamination directly increases the cost of the local service to the local taxpayer.

What can I do to help?

- Ensure that you place your recycling items loose in your recycling bin or box
- Make sure that your food and drink containers (bottles and cans) are empty and rinsed, before placing them in your recycling bin/box
- Dispose of your food waste using the weekly food recycling service
- Place all nappies in the refuse bin
- Present textiles* separately for collection in a carrier bag **beside** your recycling bin

**The separate textiles collection service has operated since 2013, the items to be contained in a standard plastic carrier bag, as they are placed into a separate compartment on the vehicle.*

Alternatively, you can take reusable clothes items to local charity shops or recycle them at a local textile bank.

What do we want in the recycling bin?

Your local household recycling service is designed to collect all paper and cardboard, as well as a wide range of food and drinks containers. A quick guide follows below:

Please Recycle



Glass bottles and jars



Plastic meat trays



Plastic fruit & vegetable punnets



Food & drink cartons



Newspaper & magazines



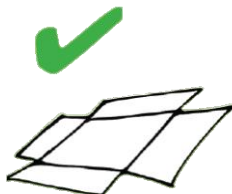
Leaflets, envelopes & junk



Phone books & yellow pages



Cardboard packaging



Flattened cardboard



Plastic bottles & containers



Yoghurt pots & plastic tubs



Food & drinks cans & tins



Sweet & biscuit tins



Metal bottle tops & jar lids



Kitchen foil & foil food trays



Empty aerosol cans

No carrier bags or black sacks

To recycle textiles, place them next to your bin in a standard sized plastic carrier bag (tied up) on your RECYCLING collection day.

FAQ's

What happens to the recycling you collect? Online link-

<https://www.maidstone.gov.uk/home/primary-services/bins-and-recycling/additional-areas/what-can-i-put-in-my-bin>

and then the Where does it go? tab

The recycling that we collect from residents in Maidstone is taken to a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) in Crayford where the items are sorted into material streams using automated and manual sorting processes. Once separated the materials are baled and transported to manufacturers, to be reprocessed into new products.

Why have I got a sticker on my bin?

Stickers are being placed on all recycling bins in the borough to raise awareness of the main items which cause contamination. Reducing the amount of contamination in the bins will increase the quality of the recycling that we collect.

We are not singling out any individual households, we want all bins to carry the same message.

If you already recycle and aren't including these items in your recycling, we hope you understand the need for us to advise other residents.

We really do appreciate the recycling that residents in Maidstone are doing. Thanks to their efforts the recycling rate has increased yearly, bucking the national trend.

Why does the sticker focus on four items - nappies, plastic bags and black sacks, food and textiles?

There are many sources of contamination, over a number of months these have been identified as the most common.

We urge residents to be guided by the full recycling list, before placing the correct recyclable materials, loose into their recycling bin.

Food can be recycled via the separate food recycling service, nappies must only be disposed of in the residual waste bin and we offer an additional service for textile recycling.

Wheeled bins should stay at the property, if you move house in the future, we want any new residents to see this message too.

Why can't carrier bags and sacks be included in the recycling bin?

We have always stated that recycling should be presented loose in the bins. Placing items loose in the bin allows them to fall onto the conveyor belts at the sorting depot, allowing the different types of materials to be separated from each other.

Why can't textiles be included in the recycling bin?

The green recycling bins and recycling boxes are for the collection of the paper, cardboard and a wide range of household food and drinks containers.

If textiles inadvertently get into these bins, they can block up the sorting equipment.

How can I recycle textiles?

Textiles can be recycled, but must be kept separate from all other recycling.

To take part residents can place shoes and textiles into a carrier bag and present these beside their recycling bin. The textiles that we collect are kept separate on the collection vehicle and returned to our depot, before being collected for recycling.

Alternatively, you can recycle textiles locally by taking reusable clothes items to local charity shops or to nearby textile banks.

Where can I find out what can go in my recycling bin?

Link to website- https://www.maidstone.gov.uk/home/primary-services/bins-and-recycling/additional-areas/what-can-i-put-in-my-bin#recycling_bin

If you are unable to access our website, residents can contact the Council on 01622 602600, to speak with our customer contact centre or request information to be sent to them.

Unsure? Need further advice?

Please email us using recycling@maidstone.gov.uk