A Waste Update

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Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

The council's current household waste management strategy follows the waste hierarchy, aiming to **reduce, reuse and recycle** as much as possible, while dealing with residual waste in the most sustainable way. The council has two landfill diversion contracts in place to help manage its residual waste and very little Wiltshire household residual waste is sent to landfill, with any food waste present used to contribute to the generation of energy or processing into a fuel.

You may have seen in other local authorities, and indeed overseas, weekly or twice weekly doorstep food waste collections. Wiltshire Council's current waste strategy is to not provide a separate collection of food waste as it would be prohibitively expensive to implement and operate across the large rural county. The current plan is to prioritise working with residents to reduce the amount of food wasted in the first instance, helping families to not waste money, and by continuing to offer subsidised home food waste digesters.

Wiltshire Council has teamed up with Great Green Systems to offer Wiltshire residents discounted food waste composters, called a Green Johanna. These "hot composters" are available for only £60 (discounted from £129.99). More information is online at Reducing your waste and composting - Wiltshire Council

However, the Government has consulted widely on a proposed policy which would mandate consistency in household and business recycling collections in England. This is expected to include the mandatory introduction of weekly food waste collections by 2025.

All the council's kerbside collected recyclables are managed by Hills at a materials recycling facility at Sands Farm, Calne and the council benefits from a 79% share of the income generated from the sale of materials collected through the kerbside service. During the six months April to September 2022, this realised £2.24m in income, as recycling commodity prices were particularly strong during the first part of the year. However, increasing levels of contamination can result in downgraded prices paid, or material being rejected. Residents can help improve recycling rates, and ultimately reduce the cost of managing waste to the council taxpayer by ensuring that:

- **Only recyclables are put into blue bins** – sadly, all too often bags of general waste and nappies find their way into the blue bins;
- **Flexible or soft plastics, such as bread bags, packaging film and carrier bags cannot** be recycled through the blue-bin scheme – people should place these in their residual waste bins where the waste is used to generate energy, or alternatively take to a local supermarket if they have facilities to collect them for recycling;

- **Packing materials in cardboard boxes (such as polystyrene) can't be recycled** so we recommend that non-card packing materials are put into the residual waste
- **Only paper wrapping paper can be recycled**. To check if wrapping paper is made of paper, people can use the "scrunch test". Scrunch the paper and if it stays in a ball, it can be recycled in your blue-lidded bin;
- **For Scrap metals – large biscuit tins can be recycled, but large car parts cannot!**

Wiltshire Council has recently introduced a kerbside battery collection service. People can now leave most small household batteries for recycling (as long as they are not leaking) including D, C, AA, AAA, 9V and button-type batteries and these should be placed on top of blue-lidded bins in a sealed, transparent plastic bag ready for collection.

Every year hundreds of fires at waste facilities across the country are linked to batteries thrown out in the bin. People can help to prevent fires and keep staff safe by only disposing of batteries using the new kerbside collection service or at battery collection points at locations such as supermarkets.

Finally, I would like to thank residents across Marlborough East, Savernake and Mildenhall for everything you do to reduce the impact on the environment and the cost of managing waste to Council Taxpayers. More detailed information is online at Rubbish and recycling - Wiltshire Council

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