

# Frequently Asked Questions!

Everything you need to know about Recycling and Waste Services in Suffolk



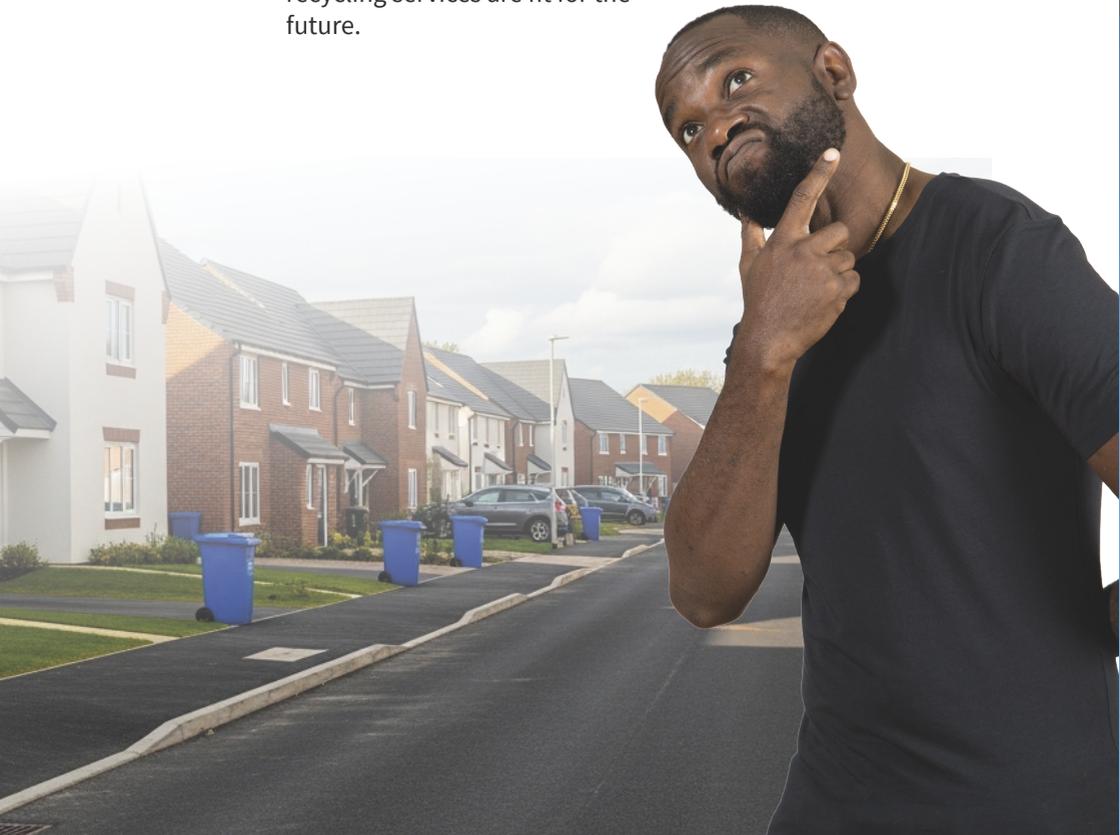
**Better  
Recycling**  
For Suffolk

# Why change?

Household recycling services in Suffolk have been in place for around 25 years, but much has changed in this time.

More products can now be recycled, technology has improved, and demand for recyclable materials has grown. Updating local services will make it easier for residents to recycle more and waste less.

These changes are part of a national programme, required as part of the Environment Act (2021), which aims to create a clearer and more consistent recycling system across England. By aligning with this approach in Suffolk, we can reduce confusion, recycle more materials, protect the environment, and cut carbon emissions. This will help to ensure that our recycling services are fit for the future.



# Why can't I put all the recycling in one bin?

Different materials need to be sorted in different ways at the recycling facility. By keeping paper and card separate from other recycling, we can collect higher-quality materials that are easier to turn into new products.

The new recycling service also meets the latest Government requirements. Local research carried out by Suffolk councils shows that this approach is not only legally compliant, but also the most cost-effective option for residents.



## What if I don't have room for an extra bin?

Most homes should be able to accommodate an extra wheelie bin and the food waste caddies. Where we know this will be difficult, we have provided an alternative.



However, if you've received a new wheelie bin and are really struggling then get in touch with your district or borough council and they will help you. See back page for contact details.



# What happens to the plastic we collect?

Each year, we recycle almost 7,000 tonnes of plastic in Suffolk.

The plastic is separated into different types at our facility in Great Blakenham and the material sent on to processors across the UK. They turn the material into pellets and these are then used to manufacture textiles and new plastic items.

The new service will help us and you to increase the amount of plastic we recycle.

Here's a reminder of the new types of plastic you can now recycle:



Film lids (please remove from the tray)



Carrier bags



Food bags



Plastic wrapping film



You can even recycle bubble wrap...



...but don't worry, you can still pop it first if you like!



Don't forget! You can now recycle drinks cartons in the Blue-Lidded Bin.

# What about glass?

Glass collected in Suffolk gets ground down and is used to make new glass bottles and jars, as an aggregate in building materials and even for bunkers on golf courses!

We recycle over 15,000 tonnes of glass each year. Under the new service, we estimate that to increase to 21,000 tonnes.

## Cans

Steel and aluminium food and drink cans are taken to UK reprocessors where they are melted down and used to make new metal products.



We don't accept things like Pyrex, glassware and sheet glass (such as windows, mirrors, etc) in the blue-lidded recycling bin because that type of glass is treated in a way that makes it very difficult to recycle it. Please put these things in the black rubbish bin or take them to a Recycling Centre.



## Paper and cardboard

Paper and cardboard gets pulped and used to manufacture new paper and cardboard products (including this booklet).

49% of Suffolk's paper and cardboard is recycled in the UK with the remainder exported to reputable merchants in Europe, and Asia - thus helping to boost the UK's economy through exports.



# Food waste

Food waste collected from homes across Suffolk is taken to a facility where it's processed to create a biomethane that can heat homes and a biofertiliser that will be spread on local farmland. **In 2025, 54,000 tonnes of food waste was placed in Suffolk's rubbish bins with 15,000 tonnes still in its original packaging!**

Did you know...



**23%** OF THE CARROTS WE BUY ARE WASTED



**18%** OF THE APPLES WE BUY ARE WASTED



**46%** OF THE POTATOES WE BUY ARE WASTED

Source: WRAP

When local authorities introduce separate food waste collections, many people are surprised at just how much food they throw away each week.

On average, across the UK, each home throws away around a third of the food it buys. **That's £1,000 worth of food, wasted each year.** But it's estimated that around a quarter of this food is still edible



Watch our video on Food Waste. Scan the QR code or visit [suffolkrecycling.org.uk](http://suffolkrecycling.org.uk).

# Getting recycling right!

The new Recycling and Waste Service makes it easy to recycle more items. But, there's a few things that you need to do to make sure we can recycle what you put in your recycling bins and deliver the best service possible.



## Keep it clean!



It's important that any food residue is removed before it goes in the recycling bin. A quick rinse under the tap or a swill in the washing up water after you've done the dishes is all that's needed.



## Keep it dry!

Make sure there's no liquid left in plastic bottles, drinks cartons, cans and aerosols before they go in the Recycling Bin.



## Keep it loose!

There's no need to bag recyclables that go in the wheelie bins. Bagging waste takes up space and can cause problems at the recycling facility.

06.00

Make sure your bins and caddy are placed out by 6.00am on collection day.



## Number your bins!



We recommend putting your house number on your bin using stickers or permanent marker.



Just a small amount of the wrong things in the recycling bins and food waste caddy can mean the entire load collected can't be recycled. That's why if you put the wrong things in the bins, we may not be able to empty them. That's why it's important to get recycling right!

# Textiles?



Old clothes and textiles can go in the black rubbish bin, but first, think about:



Donating them to a Charity Shop.



Selling them online (there's a big market for 'pre-loved' clothing).



Dropping them off at a Recycling Centre.



Dropping them off at a textiles recycling bank.



# Bulky items?



This includes things like furniture, large appliances such as fridges and washing machines, beds and similar.



Items that are reusable can be donated to charities, some of whom may collect the items.



Your district or borough council offers a Bulky Waste Collection service. There may be a charge for this service.



Items can also be dropped off at a Recycling Centre.

Find out more about recycling and disposing of these items plus information about local repair cafés at:

[suffolkrecycling.org.uk](http://suffolkrecycling.org.uk)



# Electricals?



**Electronic devices should never go in any of the recycling or rubbish bins.** Avoid holding on to old devices at home. Batteries can leak corrosive and harmful substances and can cause a fire hazard. They also contain a lot of sometimes very rare materials that can be recycled into new devices.

 Working devices can be sold to second hand shops or online (remember to wipe your hard drive first).

 Many electrical retailers accept old electronics.

 Drop them off at a Recycling Centre, check if your local council has a collection service or visit one of the growing network of electrical bring banks across Suffolk.

# NEVER PUT ANY BATTERY IN ANY BIN



## Batteries of any kind, including vapes, must not be put in any recycling or rubbish bin.

Batteries can cause fires in collection vehicles and recycling centres if they are crushed or damaged, putting staff and the public at risk.

Instead, they should be taken to battery recycling points, which are available at many supermarkets, shops, and recycling centres across Suffolk.

***I've heard that recycling just gets dumped into landfill!***

**MYTH  
BUSTER**

Recycling collected in Suffolk is sorted at a facility near Ipswich and sold to reprocessing plants to be turned into new products, not dumped in landfill. Recyclable materials have real financial value, which is why councils and recycling firms sell them to manufacturers as part of a regulated recycling market.

The idea that all recycling ends up buried as rubbish is a myth. Recycling supports the economy and reduces the need for new raw materials.

**In Suffolk, even non-recyclable waste doesn't go to landfill. Instead, it's used as fuel to generate electricity for 30,000 homes.**

Want to know where your recycling goes? Visit [suffolkrecycling.org.uk](http://suffolkrecycling.org.uk)

***Recycling uses more energy than it saves!***

In reality, recycling uses significantly less energy than making products from raw materials.

For example, recycling aluminium saves around 95% of the energy needed to produce it from raw material (bauxite ore).

Recycling paper saves around 40%, and glass about 30%.

These energy savings also mean lower carbon emissions, which is why recycling plays an important role in tackling climate change.



## Get in touch

Recycling and waste services are provided by your local district or borough council. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact them. They can also provide information in different formats, such as large print, audio, Braille and in different languages.



 0300 1234 000 (option 4)  
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For more information about recycling, please visit:

[suffolkrecycling.org.uk](http://suffolkrecycling.org.uk)

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