

Frequently asked questions about your recycling service

Is it ok if I put my bags out before my collection day?

No, your black bin and orange bags should only be put out on the street on your collection day.

What if I have more than one bag to put out?

That is ok – use as many orange bags as you need, but please try to ensure you fill them up to reduce wastage.

How many bags are on a roll?

The first roll we delivered had 50 bags on it. When you order more bags, each roll will have 30 bags on it.

Do I have to put each material in a separate bag?

No, each bag can contain any mix of the recyclable materials accepted.

Why do I need to rinse out items?

Rinsing items ensures that any food waste is removed. This is important because it reduces smells and will ensure that the recycling is not attractive to rats, foxes and other animals. Also, food waste will contaminate the materials in your orange bag, which may mean that we cannot recycle them.

What should I do with large bits of cardboard?

If you have large pieces of cardboard you can flatten them and place them under your orange bags for collection.

If the bag breaks, will the collection crew pick it up?

The orange bags are specially designed for recycling and are strong. However, if there is a spillage of waste on the footpath or road, the recycling crew will either attempt to clear it up themselves or they will report it so that it can be cleaned up by our Cleansing Services team.

How do I get more bags if I have lost my sticker?

Don't worry - if you don't have a yellow sticker you can order more bags by using our online ordering form at my.leicester.gov.uk.

Why are the bags orange?

A distinctive colour was required to reduce the chance of the crews missing any collections. Other colours were considered but many are already used for other services i.e. yellow is used for clinical waste, green is used by City Cleansing services for trade waste.

I get an assisted collection for my black bin, will I get one for my orange bags?

Yes, if you already have an assisted collection for your bin we will automatically provide an assisted collection for your orange bags. Just leave your bags next to your bin as normal.

What if I am unable to put my bin or bags out for collection?

Householders that are unable to present their bags at the kerbside for collection can request assistance. In such cases the collection of recyclables can be made from an agreed point, for example from the side gate, with bins being returned once emptied. To request an assisted collection please contact us to discuss your requirements.

What happens if I put the wrong items in the orange bags?

If an orange bag is badly contaminated with food or garden waste etc. The recycling crews will not be able to collect it. They will put a note through your door explaining how you have contaminated the recycling and they will inform a separate crew which will collect the contaminated recycling and where possible, recycle it.

What should I do with my household batteries?

Batteries contain toxic materials so please do not dispose of them in your black bin or orange bags. You can take them to the Household Waste Recycling Centres but you can also now recycle them at most shops and supermarkets - in fact most places that sell batteries will have a collection point. In the long-term, why not consider rechargeable batteries instead?

What should I do with energy saving light bulbs?

Energy saving or low energy light bulbs contain small amounts of hazardous materials and should not be put into your black bin or orange bags. They can be recycled at the Household Waste Recycling Centres.

What happens to my recycling?

The recycling collected in the orange bags is sent to a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). At the MRF, the recycling goes through a number of processes to separate out the different types of materials, including:

- Bag splitter – opens any bags and breaks up the recycling for sorting.
- Optical sorters and air jets – these identify and separate the different types of plastic.
- Different sized filters – separate cardboard and glass.
- Magnets and eddy currents – separate ferrous and non-ferrous metals.
- Picking lines – some items are still checked by staff on a picking line, this helps to ensure quality and reduce any contamination.

Once separated the materials are baled and sent on to the next location where they will start to be recycled. We try to ensure as much as possible is recycled in the UK.

Why have we changed from boxes to bags?

Changing to a bag makes it easier for you to recycle a wider range of items. As you can put out more than one bag, you can recycle more. Also, your street will be tidier as you can tie the bags up after you have filled them, which helps to reduce litter. As the bags are taken away with the recycling, nothing is left on the streets after the collection (unlike the boxes). This has enabled Leicester to improve its recycling rate and help reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.