Helping you recycle more

Your guide to waste and recycling collection services in Midlothian

recycle for Midlothian
Helping you recycle more

Midlothian Council offers a range of services to help you recycle your waste. Please use the information provided in this guide to help you make the most of these services and reduce the amount of waste you sent to landfill.

Residents in Midlothian currently recycle about 50% of their waste, but we want to increase this figure and one of the easiest ways is to reduce the amount of waste you generate in the first place.

There are a number of easy steps you can take to reduce your waste.

- **Stop unwanted mail**
  To stop receiving unsolicited advertising literature, contact the Mailing Preference Service (www.mpsonline.org.uk) and Royal Mail. When giving your name and address, ensure you indicate you don’t want your details to be used for future promotions or passed to other marketing agencies.

- **Think before you shop**
  Before you shop, think about how you could reduce your waste. For example, you could buy things with less packaging, or second-hand items.

- **Your rubbish is another person’s treasure!**
  Having a clear out? Donate good quality clothing, books and unwanted gifts to charity shops. Alternatively use the clothing banks at your local recycling centre.

- **Avoid wasting food**
  Every year in the UK we throw away £12.5 billion worth of good food, costing the average family almost £60 a month. To find out useful tips on the storage of food, tantalising recipes and advice on portioning and meal planning, visit the Love Food Hate Waste website (www.lovefoodhatewaste.com)

Consider using reusable, rather than single use, items such as cleaning cloths and nappies and try to avoid buying food in packaging that is not currently recyclable such as polystyrene packaging or coffee machine pods.

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Your blue recycling bin

Your blue wheeled bin is for the collection of:

**Paper**
- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Office paper
- Telephone directories and Yellow Pages
- Brochures and catalogues
  (Remove plastic/film wrappers)
- Leaflets
- Envelopes (including window envelopes)

**Cardboard**
- Cereal boxes
- Cardboard packaging
- Large brown cardboard boxes
- Cardboard tubes

**Foil and foil containers**

**Aerosol cans**

**Food tins and drinks cans**
- Soft drink cans
- Soup cans
- Food cans e.g. baked bean tins
- Large metal tins (such as empty biscuit and chocolate tins)

**Cartons – e.g. Tetra Pak**

**Rigid plastic food and drink packaging**
- Plastic bottles
- Plastic tubs, pots, trays and punnets

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How to use your blue bin collection service

We need your help to ensure we collect good quality materials for recycling.

- Empty any liquid from bottles and cartons and give them a quick rinse before recycling.
- Rinse food packaging to remove food residue
- Flatten cardboard boxes and squash plastic bottles to save space (you can replace plastic bottle lids)
- Place all items directly into your bin – do not use plastic bags
- Keep cardboard and paper dry

Why do I need to empty and rinse containers?

If you empty and rinse bottles, cans and plastic containers you remove food or drink residue which can spoil other items in your blue bin, like paper and cardboard. Fewer spoiled items means more is recycled, and less is sent to landfill.

Aren’t bottles and tubs washed at the recycling factory?

Whilst plastic packaging is shredded and washed for recycling, putting dirty containers in your blue bin means other materials such as paper and card can get covered in liquid or food waste. This means they can’t be recycled. Dirty items cost Midlothian Council, and therefore you as a Council Tax payer more to dispose of, as they have to be sent to landfill.

Place your blue bin out for collection at the boundary of your property by 7.00am on your collection day.

Ensure that all your waste fits securely into your blue bin and the lid is closed. Additional material presented outside the bin will not be collected.

Do not put glass bottles and jars in your blue bin. These can be recycled in your glass recycling box.

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Your blue bin will be collected each fortnight.

Avoid putting:
- Electrical items
- Clothes or shoes
- Plastic bags
- Food waste

Do not put electrical items, clothes or shoes, plastic bags or food waste in your blue bin. They cannot be recycled as part of this service.
Recycling plastic packaging

What type of plastic packaging can I recycle?
Even though many items of plastic packaging now display the Möbius loop recycling symbol, we will only accept plastic bottles, pots, tubs, punnets and trays.

These containers are classified as ‘rigid’ packaging, or items that have been moulded into a specific shape.

✓ Plastic bottles
✓ Margarine / butter tubs
✓ Yoghurt pots
✓ Ice cream containers
✓ Fruit and vegetable punnets
✓ Meat / fish trays
  (but not polystyrene)
✓ Fresh soup tubs
✓ Ready meal and food trays
✓ Deli tubs
  (e.g. coleslaw, salad, olives)
✓ Plastic take-away food containers
  (but not polystyrene)

‘Soft flexible’ items such as plastic bags, plastic film, plastic food wrapping, crisp packets, or plastic sleeves from a ready meal cannot be recycled as part of this service.

The ‘scrunch’ test will help you – if you can easily scrunch it in your hand into a ball shape it’s flexible or film and cannot be accepted for recycling. If it retains its original shape it’s ‘rigid’ and you will be able to recycle it in your blue bin.

Please rinse plastic packaging to remove food or drink residue before placing items in your blue bin.

Sorting co-mingled materials

If all these materials are collected together, how are they recycled?
Your recycling is sent to a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) where different materials are identified and separated. Specialised equipment is used to identify and sort items by type, weight, shape, colour and grade. The various recycling material streams are then sent to reprocessing outlets where they are turned into new products.

You can watch a video online of this process at: http://goo.gl/mWd8M

Because your materials are mechanically sorted, it is important to use your blue bin for materials for recycling only.

We cannot accept the following items in your blue bin:
✓ Plastic carrier bags or refuse sacks
✓ Polythene bags such as bread bags or frozen vegetable bags
✓ Food contaminated containers such as pizza boxes
✓ Polystyrene
✓ General household rubbish
✓ Batteries
✓ Crisps / sweet wrappers
✓ Glass bottles and jars
✓ Pet food pouches
✓ Hard plastic items such as coat hangers, toys, plant pots, plumbing pipes, pens, garden furniture, lunch boxes, CD / DVD / video cases, plastic cutlery or crockery
✓ Toothpaste tubes
✓ Shredded paper as it is too small to be recycled and can cause windblown litter

Blue bins that contain any of these items will not be emptied. If contamination is found in significant quantities then it will cause problems for the re-processors so they are likely to reject the load. This has significant implications as it means that your recycling will not be recycled. There are also increased costs associated with this.
Your glass recycling box

Your box is for the collection of glass bottles and jars.

This includes:
✓ Wine bottles
✓ Cooking sauce jars
✓ Jam jars
✓ Beer bottles
✓ Coffee jars
✓ Ketchup bottles
✓ Baby food jars

But not:
✗ Drinking glasses
✗ Spectacles
✗ Pyrex dishes
✗ Sheet glass / greenhouse glass
✗ Broken glass
✗ Vases and ornaments
✗ Tea-light candle holders
✗ Light bulbs

How to use your kerbside glass collection service
• Remove wine bottle corks and jar lids
• Rinse glass bottles and jars clean
• Place items directly into your kerbside box for collection

Place your box out for collection at the boundary of your property by 7.00am on your collection day.

Your glass bottle and jars are crushed and graded for recycling into new products.

Food waste recycling

Your food waste caddy is for the collection of food waste.

This includes:
✓ Uncooked food
✓ Cooked food
✓ Bones, egg shells and fruit stones
✓ Out of date food

Types of food include:
✓ Fruit and vegetables
✓ Tea bags and coffee grounds
✓ Meat, fish and bones
✓ Cheese
✓ Bread, cakes and pastries
✓ Pasta and rice
✓ Egg shells
✓ Pet food
✓ Leftovers

But not:
✗ Liquids such as yogurt, milk or oil

How to use your food waste collection service
• Put a liner into your kitchen caddy – you can use carrier bags, bin bags or newspaper to contain your food waste
• Remove all food from its packaging. Most containers can be rinsed and recycled as part of your other kerbside recycling collection services
• Place any cooked or uncooked food into your kitchen caddy
• Once full, tie the liner and place in your outdoor caddy

Place your outdoor food waste caddy out for collection at your designated bin collection point by 7.00am on your food waste collection day. Please note this may be different from the collection day of your other bins.

Your food waste is processed to create energy and agricultural fertiliser.
Your brown bin

Your brown wheeled bin is for the collection of garden waste.

This includes materials such as:
✓ Grass cuttings
✓ Hedge trimmings
✓ Leaves
✓ Small branches, bark and twigs
✓ Plants and flowers

As the garden waste collected is composted, it is important to keep it free of contamination. Please do not use your brown bin for the disposal of:
✗ General household refuse
✗ Chemical and liquid, including weed-killers, outdoor paints or fertilisers
✗ Compost or turf
✗ Fence panels, posts or wood such as trellises
✗ Flower pots or plant labels
✗ Plastic bags
✗ Garden furniture and ornaments, including gnomes, lights or fountains
✗ Seedling trays
✗ Soil, stones, slabs, rubble or hardcore
✗ No dog faeces

Brown bins that contain any of these items will not be emptied.

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Your brown bin will be collected each fortnight from March until October.

Please refer to your calendar for your first and last annual collection dates.

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How to use your garden waste collection service

• Place materials directly into your bin. Do not use plastic refuse sacks, even those that are bio-degradable.
• Do not pack material into your brown bin too tightly. Wet garden waste can be very heavy and the weight of the bin must not prevent free movement by collection staff. If your bin is too heavy for the crew to move or the mechanical vehicle hoist to lift, it will not be emptied.

Place your brown bin out for collection at the boundary of your property by 7.00am on your collection day.

Ensure that all your waste fits securely into your brown bin and the lid is closed. Additional waste presented outside the bin will not be collected.

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Top Tip

If you have a large quantity of garden waste, or bulky items such as large branches, tree trunks, soil or turf please take your waste to your local Household Waste Recycling Centre. This waste can also be collected as part of our ‘Bulky Uplift’ service. There will be a charge for this.
Your grey bin

Your grey wheeled bin is for the collection of materials that cannot be recycled.

This includes:
✓ Nappies
✓ Bathroom bin waste
✓ Food contaminated pizza boxes
✓ Polystyrene
✓ Wrappers
✓ Crisp packets
✓ Plastic film
✓ Bubble wrap
✓ Toothpaste tubes
✓ Cat litter

Your grey bin is provided for the disposal of general household refuse. It should not be used for the disposal of:
✗ Turf / soil
✗ Bricks
✗ Rubble
✗ Timber / laminate
✗ Plate / greenhouse glass
✗ DIY materials
✗ Building materials
✗ Electrical items, including batteries
✗ Textiles

If you have any of these items, take these to your local Recycling Centre for disposal.

How to use your grey bin collection service

- Using plastic sacks to store your refuse helps keep your waste secure within your bin
- Do not pack material into your grey bin too tightly. The weight of the bin must not prevent free movement by collection staff. If your bin is too heavy for the crew to move or the mechanical vehicle hoist to lift, it will not be emptied

Place your grey bin out for collection at the boundary of your property by 7.00am on your collection day.

Ensure that all your waste fits securely into your grey bin and the lid closes. The lid must close fully to allow our collection crews and the lifting mechanism on the collection vehicle to empty your bin safely.

Additional sacks presented outside the bin will not be collected.

Top Tip

If you have a large quantity of general refuse, please take this to your local Recycling Centre. This waste can also be collected as part of our ‘Bulky Uplift’ service. There will be a charge for this.
**Household Waste Recycling Centres**

Midlothian Council has two Recycling Centres to allow residents to recycle a wide range of materials and dispose of excess household waste.

There are containers for the following items:
- Garden waste
- Scrap metal
- Wood
- Laminate
- Rubble (Stobhill Recycling Centre only)
- Electrical items
- Fridges and freezers
- Paper
- Cardboard
- Cooking oil (Stobhill Recycling Centre only)
- Engine oil
- Car batteries
- Household batteries
- Gas cylinders
- Textiles
- Glass bottles and jars
- Food and drink cans
- Food and drink cartons
- Books/CD’s/DVD’s

**How to use the Recycling Centre**

Please ensure that all recyclable material is separated before you visit the site. It will make your visit easier and ensure as much of Midlothian’s waste is recycled as possible.

Staff are always on site to offer advice and direct you to the correct container for the items you wish to dispose of.

Access to both Household Waste Recycling Centres is restricted for vans, pick-up vehicles, large trailers and vehicles classified as Private or Light Goods (PLG).

Residents wishing to use a vehicle other than a car to visit the sites must let us know in advance. This can be done online at midlothian.gov.uk/recycling-centres or by calling 0131 561 5284. You are required to book at least the day before you intend to visit.

To help manage vehicle movement as well as the safety of all site users, caravans, campervans, mini-buses, motorhomes and horse boxes are not permitted access.

Midlothian Council’s Household Waste Recycling Centres are provided for householders to deposit their own household waste.

It is illegal for commercial businesses and traders to use the Recycling Centres to dispose of any type of trade waste.

**Locations**

**Stobhill Recycling Centre**

Stobhill Road, Newtongrange, EH22 4NU

Opening Times:
Monday – Sunday: 9:30am – 4:15pm

**Penicuik Recycling Centre**

Bellman’s Road, Penicuik, EH26 0AA
(no vehicles with a gross weight over 2 tonnes are permitted)

Opening times:
Monday – Sunday: 10:00am – 4:15pm
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**Bulky uplifts**

A special collection service is offered to householders, commonly known as a ‘bulky uplift’.

This service can be used to dispose of items such as furniture, furnishings and other household goods.

Please note that a charge is made for this service.

**How to book a bulky waste collection**

You can book a collection online by visiting www.midlothian.gov.uk/bulky-uplift or by calling 0131 561 5284. You will be provided with details of the date of your bulky waste collection when you book.

Items should be placed at the kerbside by 7.00am on the allocated date of collection. This is the place where your grey bin is presented for collection or your communal bin area.

**Other options for disposal**

Midlothian Advice and Resource Centre (MARC) accept furniture and white goods in good condition for redistribution and sale within the local community. For more information call 0131 663 8888 or visit www.midarc.org.

If items are broken or have no further use then these can be disposed of free of charge at our Recycling Centres.

**Other ways to recycle your waste**

If you have items such as furniture, toys, bicycles, furnishing and clothes in good condition, you may wish to consider donating them to charity or giving them to a friend or family member.

Use local internet sites such as Facebook groups or Gumtree to sell on unwanted items.

Internet auction sites such as Ebay can also be used to sell on unwanted clothes and household items.

Book a pitch at a local car boot sale or market.

Textile recycling banks accept materials of any quality. Good quality items will be reused while the poorer quality textiles will be recycled into industrial rags or carpet underlay. These banks not only accept clothes, but belts, bags, bed linen, towels, shoes and curtains.

Books, CDs, videos and computer games can be donated to local charity shops or recycled in our network of book and CD banks.

Plastic film / bubble wrap can be recycled by sending items to Polyprint Mailing Films. For details visit www.polyprint.co.uk/pages/recycling or call 01603 721807.
## FAQs

### If materials are mixed together in the blue bin, how are they recycled?
Your recycling is sent to a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) where different materials are identified and separated. Specialised equipment is used to identify and sort items by type, weight, shape, colour and grade. The various material streams are then sent to reprocessing outlets where they are turned into new products.

### Can I have an additional blue bin?
We can offer you an additional blue bin or a larger one. Please call us on 0131 561 5284 to discuss your requirements.

### Why do you accept plastic food trays but not the film on the top?
Plastic bags and film cannot be recognised by the automated sorting equipment that sorts your recycling. This can cause mis-sorting and the rejection of otherwise good quality materials. Plastic bags can also become tangled in the machinery.

### What happens to the food waste I recycle?
Your food waste is taken to a special processing plant where the process of recycling your food waste generates biogas used for heat and power. The nutrient-rich digestate also produced can be used as an agricultural fertiliser.

### Why don't you accept polystyrene?
Even though it may be marked as recyclable, due to its light weight it is not currently economical to collect polystyrene for recycling. In addition, some polystyrene packing material may contain fire retardant chemicals that would contaminate other materials collected for recycling.

### Why do I need to empty and rinse containers?
If you empty and rinse bottles, cans and plastic containers you remove food or drink residue which can spoil other items in your blue bin, like paper and cardboard. Fewer spoiled items means more is recycled, and less is sent to landfill.

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## Quick reference guide to sorting waste

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Contact 0131 270 7500 or email: enquiries@midlothian.gov.uk