

Review of the No Side Waste Policy

Background

When preparing the current Waste Strategy, a compositional analysis was carried out of the contents of black bin/bag waste which showed there are still considerable quantities of recyclables being presented in these containers.

Since its adoption, the recycling scheme has expanded to include nappies and other Absorbent Hygiene Products and there are also possible further expansions to the collection of recyclable materials at the kerbside.

Furthermore, since its adoption, Officers responsible for ensuring residents comply have raised some areas of concern and suggested improvements to the Policy from their experience during the course of their duties.

Some areas for concern are:

1. Residents applying for exemptions to avoid recycling, by placing recyclable waste within black bins and non-recyclables within E stickered bags. (Note: The Recycling Awareness and Compliance Team have powers to check the contents of the E stickered bags but cannot go through bins);
2. Residents falsely applying as having a large family;
3. Residents falsely applying as having numerous pets;
4. Placing one E sticker on a second bin and presenting both, leaving a minimum of 25 additional E stickers to use over the next 12 months in addition to presenting 2 bins every fortnight;
5. Falsely applying in order to conduct a house clearance and place a minimum of 26 excess bags out for one collection;
6. Officers have personally witnessed E stickers being traded

- between residents across various social media sites as well as threads giving tips on how to get them (points 1-5 above);
- Repeated reports of fake stickers being sold to residents by parties unknown (although it should be noted that these are unsubstantiated reports at this time).
 - E stickers being used on bulky household waste items

It is recognised that there are genuine circumstances where householders require additional capacity for non-recyclable waste and the revised Policy should not inhibit these cases. However, as the Council strives to achieve the challenging statutory recycling targets set by the Welsh Government and avoid the associated fines, a stricter stance on Excess/Side Waste needs to be adopted to combat the issues detailed above.

It is proposed that the current Terms and Conditions of the scheme are revised in order to address the abuse of the scheme as follows:

- All new applications for exemption, in addition to being provided with the Terms and Conditions, be issued a Section 46 Notice under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 which legally sets out the requirement to recycle and in which receptacles recyclable waste must be placed. This provides the Recycling Awareness and Compliance Team better ability to take enforcement action against those properties using the scheme as a means to not recycle;
- The scheme sets a level on exemptions for households, which increases dependent on number of full-time occupiers of the property, similar to that of other Welsh Authorities as follows:

| • Number of occupiers | • Permitted additional bags |
|------------------------------|--|
| • Five or fewer residents | • No exemptions |
| • Six or seven | • 1 extra bag per refuse collection (26 stickers) |
| • Eight or more | • 2 extra bags per refuse collection (52 stickers) |

- That a cap be set on the additional bags permitted to be provided for pet waste to 1 additional bag per collection. (It should be noted that a lot of other Welsh LA's do not include pet waste as a reason for exemption);
- Any wheeled bins presented with an E sticker on them be removed by the collection crew and the property be put on both a 'bin ban' and a ban from applying for exemptions for a period of 12 months (the bin ban is already in place for any properties trying to order an additional bin within 12 months of their previous order for the Recycling Awareness and Compliance Officer to check if there is already a bin on site before issue);
- Any properties identified by the collection crews as using E stickers for a house clearance be put on a ban from applying for exemptions;
- Following the introduction of the In-Cab Live Feed, which will indicate to the crew that a property has permitted exemptions, any property that is presenting E stickered waste without an approved exemption can be reported by the crew and subject to a visit and Section 46 Notice from the Recycling Awareness and Compliance Team.

The proposed revised Terms and Conditions are given below, with amendments highlighted.

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
SIDE WASTE RESTRICTION EXEMPTION SCHEME



Terms and Conditions

1.0 Definitions

“You” means the person whose name and address is on the Application Form

“The Council” means Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

“Exemption Scheme” means this scheme for an exemption from the Council’s Side Waste Restriction

“Exemption Period” is the 12 month period from the date the Council notifies you that your application has been successful (this may be by issuing to you exemption stickers)

2.0 General

The Council has a Side Waste Restriction to limit the amount of waste put out for disposal and encourage greater recycling

The Council collects non-recyclable waste from households in either wheeled bins or black bags, as determined by the Council

The following limits apply to non-recyclable waste presented for disposal:

- not more than one wheeled bin for disposal from each house; or
- in bag collection areas not more than a total of 3 black bags for disposal from each house

There is no limit on the amount of recyclable material that can be put out for recycling

This Exemption Scheme is for non-recyclable waste only

To apply for an exemption you are required to use the Council’s kerbside recycling service to present your recyclables for collection

The Exemption Scheme is available for households that recycle but still have more non-recyclable waste than the specified limit

The Council may change, alter, or cancel the Exemption Scheme

3.0 Application:

The Council will then:

- consider your application and may contact or visit you for further information and assess whether the Council can help your household recycle more
- only issue an exemption if you can demonstrate that your household only puts out non-recyclable waste in your wheeled bin or black bags

4.0 The Exemption Scheme

If your application is successful, then you will be required to:

- continue to not put out recyclable material in your wheeled bin or black bags and comply with the attached Section 46 Notice under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 for presentation of your waste;
- supply your own **standard size** extra black bags for any additional waste
- place one exemption sticker on each **approved** extra black bag above the limit put out for collection. **Any stickers placed on additional wheeled bins will result in the bin being removed and you will be removed from the approved exemption list with no further applications being processed or approved**
- **Only present the agreed amount of additional black bags for collection, as per the Council's No Side Waste Policy**
- **Do not use the exemption stickers for house clearance or any other 'clear out'. Presenting an excessive amount of exemption stickered waste could result in you being removed from the approved exemption list with no further applications being processed or approved**
- **not pass on your exemption stickers to any other property or person, if you do so, it could result in your removal from the exemption scheme with no further applications being processed or approved**
- inform the Council if you move house
- take your stickers with you if you move house

- re-apply for a further exemption if you continue to produce large volumes of non-recyclable waste and require an exemption after the end of your current exemption
- re-apply not more than one month before the end of your current exemption

And the Council will:

- give you a number of exemption stickers (the number of stickers you will be equal to the number of extra black bags you will need to present over a 12 month period, the Exemption Period),
- not give you any additional exemption stickers, nor replace lost or stolen exemption stickers (the number of exemption stickers supplied must last you for the full 12 month period)
- not collect excess waste that does not have an exemption sticker
- may check wheeled bins and black bags for compliance with the Exemption Scheme (in particular, that no recyclables are put out for disposal) and may not collect excess waste if wheeled bins or black bags contain recyclables
- reserve the right to cancel your exemption
- consider any re-application not more than one month before the end of any current exemption (and any new exemption will begin not earlier than the end of the current exemption)