



Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Streetcare Services Division

Waste Services

Draft proposal for Consultation on potential service changes to help increase recycling performance in Neath Port Talbot

Please note: the following is an early draft of the consultation document and questionnaire and is subject to further amendments prior to the public consultation commencing.

Background

The council is looking at how we can improve recycling rates in Neath Port Talbot. We can't do this alone, it relies on residents playing their part, so we need your views and input to help us decide on a way forward. That is the purpose of this consultation.

In order to protect our planet's limited natural resources, make progress to zero waste by 2050 and promote a circular economy, Welsh Government, in its National Waste Strategy, "[Towards Zero Waste](#)", has set statutory recycling targets for all councils in Wales. For the past four years, the target has been to recycle 64% of all waste. This year the target has increased to 70%.

If this target is not met, Neath Port Talbot Council faces huge potential fines (£200 for every tonne by which the target is missed).

Neath Port Talbot, with the help of our residents achieved:

- 64% in 2020/21.
- 66% in 2021-22;
- 65% in 2022-23; *and*
- indications are that we will be just short of 68% for 2023-24 we are still collecting end of year figures, which will then be submitted to, and verified by, Natural Resources Wales) .

The rates of improvement in recycling began to slow down in 2022-2023, so the council introduced a Waste Strategy Action Plan [\[link here\]](#) in April 2023.

The target for 2024-25 is to recycle 70% of all waste collected, but at this point there is no certainty that we will achieve this by the end of this financial year (31 March 2025).

Furthermore, indications are that targets will only become more challenging in line with the national target to achieve zero waste by 2050. We therefore need to consider further action to improve recycling rates in Neath Port Talbot.

One area of improvement identified relates to food waste. Our most recent analysis of waste showed that more than half of what is being thrown away (some 57%) could have been recycled but wasn't. Food waste put in the black bins and black bags made up two thirds of this (some 8,000 tonnes in 2022/23).

We want to make it as easy as possible for residents to recycle as much as possible. This is why we collect recycling and food waste every week. By making sure that you put everything that can be recycled in the relevant bags and boxes, you will get a bigger proportion of your waste collected weekly – meaning less to put into black bags and black bins.

What is this consultation about?

To ensure we achieve the new statutory recycling target of 70%, we need to think about more measures to improve recycling rates in the county borough. We can't do this alone without residents playing their part. So, we need your views and input to help us decide on a way forward. That is the purpose of this consultation.

The decision to consult to improve recycling was taken as part of the council's Waste Strategy Action Plan which was approved in 2023.

It is important we hear from as many residents as possible so we can design a recycling collection system that works for people.

The council has already actioned a number of measures contained in the Waste Strategy Action Plan. There are also, a number of potential options which could be introduced to help increase recycling performance in Neath Port Talbot. These are:

- continuing with fortnightly black bin/black bag collections alongside continuing the weekly collections of recyclables including food waste, if improvements in the food waste recycling in particular can be achieved;

- to consider enabling residents to mix paper and cardboard in the same recycling container, thereby freeing up one container for the collection of small electrical items (e.g. toasters, shavers, kettles etc.);
- continuing with fortnightly collections of Green/Garden Waste;

We'd also like to know what you think about collecting black bin/black bag waste three weekly. To be clear, introducing three weekly collection of black bin/black bags is not in our plans for 2024-25, but we would like to know what you think the impact would be if this was an option we needed to consider in the future.

The following changes could also be considered alongside the frequency of non-recyclable waste collection (black bags / black bins) being reduced to once every three weeks and we would also welcome your views on these:

- to expand separate fortnightly collections of Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP) e.g. nappies
- Move to a 'paid-for' subscription service for garden waste collections. For those who choose to subscribe, Green/Garden Waste would be collected weekly (e.g. £26 per year / 50p per week for up to 6 garden waste bags per week, or £40 per year / 77p per week for up to 10 bags per week). Those who did not subscribe but wished to dispose of green waste would need to make use of the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres.
- To introduce weekly nappy collections alongside a 'paid-for' green waste service.

There is no proposal to change the weekly hygiene collection service for residents with stomas and the like – the current service will be maintained.

The purpose of this consultation is to gather views on these options and ask for any additional or alternative ideas for how we might increase recycling in Neath Port Talbot.

At this stage, **NO DECISIONS** have been taken. Your feedback along with the mid-year recycling figures for 2024-2025 (indicative mid-year figures are usually available around the end of October) will be used to inform a further report to councillors on any potential changes to the service.

Current waste and recycling service arrangements

The council currently provides fortnightly refuse collections alongside weekly collection of recyclables including food waste.

Materials	Collection Frequency
Recycling (inc. food waste)	Weekly
Non-Recyclable Waste (refuse)	Fortnightly
Green Garden Waste	Fortnightly
Absorbent Hygiene Products (e.g. Nappies) where current resources allow this to be separately collected	Fortnightly
Hygiene Waste	Weekly (bookable service)

We will not share your personal data with anyone (except in order to meet legal requirements). Please see our Privacy Statement [link].

In reporting/publishing the results of this survey, we may reproduce comments you make in open text boxes, but these will always be anonymous/anonymised.

This survey will close at midnight on Sunday 16 June, 2024.

Questionnaire

Q1. Please indicate which of the following applies to you (please select all that apply):

- I live in Neath Port Talbot
- I work for NPT Council
- I am an Elected Member of NPT Council
- I am a Community / Town Councillor in Neath Port Talbot
- I am responding on behalf of a Trade Union
please specify _____
- I have a commercial waste contract with Neath Port Talbot
- None of the above *[explain to respondents who select this that the questionnaire is for residents/staff/businesses in NPT only, thank them*

The council should collect the green/garden waste on a weekly basis even if this incurs a small charge (e.g. £26 per year for up to 6 garden waste bags per week, or £40 per year for up to 10 bags) for those who want to subscribe.	0	0	0	0	0	0
The council should collect nappies on a weekly basis (<i>if its affordable, for example alongside a 'paid for' green waste service</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0
If other measures fail to drive up recycling rates to meet the Welsh Government's targets, the council should reduce the frequency of non-recyclable waste collection (black bags / black bins) to once every three weeks to encourage more recycling.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Q3a If you disagree or strongly disagree with any of the above, please tell us why:

Q3b If you disagree, or strongly disagree, is there anything in your opinion that could be put place to make any of the above acceptable?

Q4 Which of the following do you usually recycle? (*please tick all that apply*)

- Plastics (e.g. bottles, food tubs, pots and trays, bottle tops or lids etc.)
- Tins, cans, metal lids/caps from jars and bottles, aerosol cans etc.
- Foil / foil food trays
- Cardboard (e.g. boxes, corrugated cardboard, ready-meal sleeves, cereal boxes, toilet / kitchen roll tubes, greetings cards, egg boxes, drinks/soup cartons, tetra paks etc.)
- Paper (e.g. magazines, catalogues, junk mail, envelopes, shredded paper etc.)
- Glass (e.g. bottles, jars etc.)
- Garden/green waste (e.g. grass cuttings, weeds, leaves, flowers, bark, twigs, sticks, branches, sawdust, wood chippings etc.)

- Food waste (e.g. meat, fish, fruit, vegetables, dairy products, bread, cakes, pastries, rice, pasta, beans, uneaten food from your plates and dishes, teabags, tea, coffee grounds, egg shells, out of date food etc.)
- Household batteries (e.g. hearing aid batteries, watch batteries, square batteries, mobile phone batteries etc.)
- Expired smoke and CO2 alarms

Q5. What, if anything, prevents you from recycling more of the waste produced in your household? *(please tick all that apply)*

- Can't recycle enough different materials
- Recycling bin(s)/box(es)/sack(s) not big enough
- Not enough space to store recyclables
- Time/lack of time/too busy
- No recycling centres nearby
- The recyclables are not collected often enough
- It's too much effort/too much hassle
- Don't have enough information
- I don't know what I should be recycling
- It's inconvenient
- I'm not interested
- I don't know where to take it/what to do with it
- No compost bin
- Transport/lack of transport
- Don't understand the purpose of it
- Confused over what goes in which bags/boxes
- Doesn't make any difference/doesn't help the environment
- It all gets mixed in together anyway
- Can't be bothered to wash it/too much hassle to wash it/smelly
- Nothing – I'm already making every effort
- Don't know
- Other (please specify)

Food Waste

Q6 How often do you recycle food waste?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

Q6a Approximately how much of your food waste do you recycle?

- None
- About three-quarters of my food waste
- About a quarter of my food waste
- All of my food waste
- About half of my food waste

Q6b Do you compost food waste at home?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

Q6c What type of food waste do you usually recycle?

- Meat and fish – raw and cooked, including bones
- Fruit and vegetables – raw, cooked and peelings
- Dairy products e.g. cheese
- Bread, cakes and pastries
- Rice, pasta and beans
- Uneaten food from your plates and dishes
- Teabags, tea and coffee grounds
- Egg shells
- Out of date food
- Liquids
- Oil or liquid fat
- Food in packets (e.g. out of date items)

Q6c If you recycle food waste, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about the food waste recycling service:

- I understand what can and can't be recycled in my food waste caddy
- I have been supplied with enough liners for my caddy
- The kitchen caddy is easy to use
- The outdoor caddy is easy to use
- The outdoor caddy is big enough for my food waste

Q7 Is there anything else the council could do to encourage / enable you to recycle more?

[Empty box]

Q8 What else, in your opinion, could the council do to discourage residents from putting recyclable materials in their black bin/bag waste?

[Empty box]

Standard Welsh Language and Equality Impact Questions to go here

About You Section

Standard Equality Questions to go here

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

At this stage, **NO DECISIONS** have been taken.

However, feedback from this consultation and the mid-year recycling figures will be used to inform a further report to councillors on potential changes to the service.

Please note, the biggest additional contribution to recycling you can make immediately, if not already, is to start taking part in the Council's weekly food waste collections.

We will keep you informed of our recycling performance and any considerations of service changes through our usual communications channels and via our consultations webpage

www.npt.gov.uk/consultations