

# Tackling **incorrect items** in household recycling

## Frequently Asked Questions...

Residents may have noticed the council has recently commenced a process of placing stickers on recycling bins which have items which cannot be recycled incorrectly placed within them.

These Frequently Asked Questions should help in explaining the changes...

### **Why has the process been introduced all of a sudden?**

For the last three years, the council has worked to raise awareness of what can and cannot be recycled through a series of 'door stepping' campaigns, which aimed to remind residents of which items should be placed in which bins.

While the majority of residents do recycle correctly, which we are obviously very grateful for, unfortunately the minority still do not.

The process of 'stickering' bins is the next phase in raising awareness of what can and cannot be recycled.

### **It's never been a problem before? Why, all of a sudden is my bin not being collected when it always has been in the past?**

Caerphilly is consistently one of the best performing local authorities in Wales when it comes to recycling. This, in the main, is down to the sterling efforts from the majority of our residents.

However, contamination remains a real issue, where incorrect items are being placed in recycling bins. As a consequence, lorry loads of recycling are being refused at the council's recycling contractor as the level of contamination within the recycling is so high.

**The fact is that even one incorrect item placed within the recycling bin can contaminate the entire lorry load of recycling, which can then be refused by the recycling contractor. This then costs the council (and of course the taxpayer) money.**

In order to ensure Caerphilly remains one of the best recyclers in Wales, the council has had to take this additional step as a means of reminding residents what can and cannot be recycled.

### **So what can be recycled then?**

The below graphic should be useful in highlighting what can be placed in the recycling bin. Recycling should be placed in the recycling bin loose – i.e. not in carrier bags or black bags, as these cannot be recycled.

Please note – items placed in the recycling bin must be clean and free from contaminant (for example, a baked bean tin can be placed in the recycling bin but it must be clean).



# What can I recycle?



Paper	Plastic	Cans	Cardboard	Glass
				

If you have a brown bin for recycling - please place items loose in the bin and refrain from placing items in bags.

## What cannot be recycled?

The following items CANNOT be placed in the recycling bin:

## DO NOT place items listed below in your recycling container:



### The following items can be taken to one of our household waste recycling centres:



Failure to recycle or placing inappropriate materials in your recycling container may result in prosecution.

Polystyrene also CANNOT be placed in the recycling bin.

## Some items that Caerphilly say they can't recycle are accepted in other areas – why is this?

Caerphilly has always tried to keep recycling as simple as possible for residents, by having a 'co-mingled' system where all recyclable items go in the same recycling bin.

Other areas may accept items such as wrapping paper and polystyrene as recycling, but in the main that is because they have different, often more complex methods of recycling than us, with various bins and bags for separate items.

We know that residents value our simple recycling system and would be reluctant for us to change our collection approach, so we really need our residents to come on board with us.

## My bin wasn't emptied this week and had a sticker left on it – what should I do?

You will receive a letter from the council before your next scheduled collection day, outlining which item(s) were incorrectly placed in your recycling bin.

Assuming these items are removed, your bin will be collected on your next scheduled collection day. If your recycling bin is overflowing, the council will also collect additional recycling which is placed in clear bags at the kerbside.

## **My bin hasn't been emptied this week and is now full? If I remove the incorrect item, will you return to empty it?**

The crews will not return to empty recycling bins until the next scheduled collection day. However, residents with extra recycling can place it in clear bags and place out at the kerbside for collection along with the recycling bin.

## **A passer-by must have placed incorrect items in my recycling bin – for example, dog waste was found in my recycling bin but I don't have a dog. What do I do?**

This is a tricky one, but ultimately recycling placed out at the kerbside is a householder's responsibility. We can only advise that recycling is placed out at the kerbside as late as possible the night before collection, and brought back onto your property as soon as possible after the collection has taken place.

## **Can I place my recycling in bags?**

If you have a recycling bin, then all clean recycling, free of contaminant, should be placed in there loose – i.e. not in black bags, carrier bags, liners or clear bags.

If you do not have a bin, recycling will be collected provided it is placed out at the kerbside in clear bags.

In future, recycling in black bags, carrier bags etc will be not collected. The reason for this is because unfortunately a small minority of residents have been using black bags to dispose of general waste, food etc within the recycling bin.

## **Is this 'sticker' process a permanent change?**

Put simply, this process will be used for as long as it is required.

As we've mentioned earlier on, this process isn't intended to penalise the majority of residents who take recycling seriously and do it well – we are very grateful to these residents for their ongoing support.

There may be instances where residents believe they are doing the right thing, and with a reminder of what can and cannot be recycled using the 'sticker' method, they will be able to recycle correctly in future.

The significant majority who recycle do so well. Sadly, a small minority who recycle do so incorrectly, meaning that often the efforts of those who recycle correctly goes to waste.

Where lorry loads of recycling are being refused by the recycling contractor due to high levels of contamination contained within it, this isn't fair on those who make the effort and recycle properly.

As an example, these are just two of the recycling bins that our crews found out for collection recently:



### **What if I don't have a recycling bin?**

A number of properties across Caerphilly county borough, mainly terraced houses, don't have recycling bins and instead place out bags for recycling.

This is fine, however clean recycling free from contaminant should be placed in clear bags and placed at the kerbside for collection.

### **How can I order a bin?**

Due to financial constraints, the council is no longer able to provide replacement general waste and recycling bins to residents free of charge.

However, food waste bins continue to be free to order. New bins can be ordered here:

<http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Services/Household-waste-and-recycling/Request-a-new-bin>

### **What if I'm still unsure?**

Lots more advice on what can or cannot be recycled can be found on our website:

<http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Services/Household-waste-and-recycling/What-goes-in-my-bins/Brown-bin-or-recycling-box>

- Why have I been sent a contamination letter, my bin was emptied?

### **Why have I been sent a contamination letter but my bin was emptied?**

Does your recycling bin have a house number written/printed on it? If not place one on there as bins being placed by other properties with no numbers on them causes a lot of confusion for the crews. You can disregard the letter.

### **Why have I been sent a contamination letter when my bin was not out for collection?**

Another resident's bin with no house number clearly written/printed on it may have been placed near your property and the crews have mistakenly noted your property as the offending property. You can disregard the letter.

### **I live in a block of flats and do all my recycling correctly. Why have I been sent a contamination letter?**

It is very difficult to pin point exactly where the contamination has come from with communal bins for flats, therefore letters are sent to all flats to make residents aware of the issue.

All telephone recycling enquiries are answered at our contact centre. Opening hours are Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm and Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm.

The team can be contacted on: 01443 866 533