

## How to get recycling

### Why get recycling?

Over 50% of household waste can be recycled or composted, but we recycle only 12%. Recycling saves natural resources and reduces landfill sites, but UK councils have only recently begun to provide full facilities. With a little effort, recycling can be made easy and most people already have a recycling bank nearby. To find yours, visit the Recycle-more website ([www.recycle-more.co.uk](http://www.recycle-more.co.uk)).

Many local councils organise 'kerbside recycling'. They provide plastic boxes, special bags or extra bins for each household to collect a mix of materials: glass, cardboard, plastic, cans and garden waste.

If you're not serviced by one of these schemes already, this guide shows you how to:

- Get doorstep recycling from your council
- Organise a community recycling scheme
- Recycle waste yourself

### How to get doorstep recycling from your council

#### Contact your local recycling officer

Your council's 'environmental services', 'waste services' or 'recycling services' department runs kerbside recycling. Find contact details for your council on your **Local information** page on Action Network or on the [www.letsrecycle.com](http://www.letsrecycle.com) list of local authority recycling officers.

You can ask for kerbside recycling because you have the law on your side. The Household Waste Recycling Act 2003 requires local authorities in England to have provided kerbside collections for everyone by 2010.

If you've been told you can't get kerbside recycling find out why not. Councils will often say that it is too expensive or difficult to provide kerbside collections for:

- High-rise flats
- Remote rural areas
- Properties on narrow streets

Even if you don't get recycling now, don't be hesitant to lobby for it. You can:

- Write your council a letter proving local demand for recycling and send a copy to your councillor
- Get the support and names of other people in your area or building
- Ask for a less frequent collection service, which is cheaper for the council to run
- Request recycling banks within a few hundred metres
- Get recycling boxes collected from nearby if street access is poor

#### Contact your ward councillor

The councillor for your ward is there to represent you and help you access services. If you have difficulty getting recycling services you can lobby your ward councillor to arrange it on your behalf.

### How to organise a community recycling scheme

If your community is poorly served by council recycling, why not organise your own scheme? With a little help from your neighbours, you can collect recycling yourselves and sell it on to recycling businesses. You can even raise cash credits from your council for every kilogram you recycle.

The Community Recycling Network and Waste Watch have a practical PDF guide on How to set up a local waste reduction, re-use or recycling project ([www.crn.org.uk/gifs/practicalguidetocomrecycling.pdf](http://www.crn.org.uk/gifs/practicalguidetocomrecycling.pdf)), which includes:

- How to prepare your recycling scheme well
- What to collect
- How to organise collection and the collection team

#### How to find markets for the materials you collect

The Community Recycling and Economic Development Programme has fact sheets on promoting recycling projects and building partnerships with local authorities. There are useful websites for community recycling networks in Scotland, Devon and London.

#### Recycling credits

'Recycling credits' are cash payments made by local councils to recycling groups. They represent the money the council saves by not collecting the rubbish in the normal way. Your council's recycling officer can tell you if your council offers recycling credits and how to claim them.

#### Finding Funding

Community schemes need money to cover the doorstep recycling boxes, gloves for collectors, hire of the truck and early administration. You can approach the Environmental Action Fund ([www.defra.gov.uk/environment/eaf/](http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/eaf/)) or the Community Recycling and Economic Development Programme (<http://cred.rswt.org/>) for funding.

#### How to recycle and reduce waste yourself

You don't have to have a council recycling service or your own local scheme to reduce the rubbish you send to landfill sites. There are lots of creative ways to limit waste yourself:

- **Re-use or sell** household items at charity shops, community groups, scrap merchants, repair workshops and second-hand furniture shops or civic amenity sites
- **Recycle nappies:** The Real Nappy Association ([www.realnappy.com](http://www.realnappy.com)) and Edinburgh Real Nappy Network have more information.
- **Compost your kitchen waste:** The Composting Association ([www.compost.org.uk](http://www.compost.org.uk)) and the Community Composting Network ([www.communitycompost.org](http://www.communitycompost.org)) have more information and advice
- **Exchange old furniture:** Contact the Furniture Re-use Network ([www.frn.org.uk](http://www.frn.org.uk)) for information on how to set up a community-run project.
- **Stop unwanted direct mail:** Contact Mailing Preference Service on 0845 703 4599 or visit [www.mpsonline.org.uk](http://www.mpsonline.org.uk)
- **Recycle fridges or old tyres**
- **Join a paint exchange:** Contact Community Re>Paint ([www.communityrepaint.org.uk](http://www.communityrepaint.org.uk)) for more information
- **Recycle drinks cans:** Alupro and Alcan have information on how to get cash for cans. You can earn 40-45p per kilogram (roughly 60 cans)
- **Buy products made from recycled materials where possible**