

# Waterbeach Waste Education Centre

Community Newsletter

AUTUMN 2024

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# Welcome to the Autumn edition of our newsletter!

Located at Waterbeach Waste Management Park, Cambridgeshire County Council work with our service provider, Thalia, to highlight the importance of waste reduction across Cambridgeshire.

We offer presentations on waste education, reduction, recycling and more. As well as engaging 'hands-on' activities, (including sorting out your recyclables).

We deliver FREE recycling workshops across the county to schools, community groups, businesses and support a wide range of community events throughout the year.



## Did you know?

In 2023/24 our Waste Education Officer successfully carried out **over 180 engagements to schools, community groups** across Cambridgeshire where **over 10,000 people attended!**



For more information about our FREE recycling workshops, and to book, scan the QR code or go to:

[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/waste-and-recycling/waste-education-service](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/waste-and-recycling/waste-education-service)

**RESCUE ME!**

**RECYCLE**

Find out what else you can recycle at [recyclenow.com](http://recyclenow.com)

Britain recycles

## The nation's annual celebration of recycling

Recycle Week is Recycle Now's flagship annual event which is a celebration of recycling across the nation. Find out more here: <https://www.wrap.ngo/taking-action/citizen-behaviour-change/recycle-now>

It's the one week of the year where retailers, brands, waste management companies, trade associations, governments and the media come together to achieve one goal: to galvanise the public into recycling more of the right things, more often.

This year's Recycle Week theme is 'Rescue Me'. The campaign will run from **14th-20th October 2024**, focusing on rescuing recyclable items from the rubbish bin.

By recycling at least one extra item as part of our daily recycling routine will make a huge difference.

## HWRC WINTER OPENING HOURS

As from 1st October 2024, residents are reminded that Household Waste Recycling Centres are now operating their winter opening hours, for more details please search on our website or scan the QR code.

[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk)



# How to have a Spooky and Sustainable Halloween

The spookiest night of the year is nearly here but it's a time to scare your friends, not the planet! There's plenty of recycling to be done around Halloween and lots of ways you can reduce the scary amount of waste generated by the fearsome festivities. Here's how to go green this Halloween.



## Get creative with costumes

Score some Halloween recycling brownie points with these top tips:

- ✔ **Make your costume from recyclable items** – from cardboard box robots to DIY witch hats from old bits of fabric and ghosts from old bedsheets, it's time to get creative!
- ✔ **Reuse costumes from previous years** – there's no shame in being the one who always comes as a zombie if you've already got the costume, and it saves buying new. If the kids have outgrown their costumes from last year, why not hunt around in a charity shop or online marketplaces to find something preloved? These are great places to take your outgrown costumes, too!
- ✔ **Rent a costume** – if you're after something more elaborate, or you don't want to wear the same thing as last year, another option is to rent your costume. There are lots of websites that allow you to rent fancy dress outfits, and these not only look more impressive, but they're much kinder to the environment!

If you're hosting a party, why not set your guests the challenge of making their own recycled costumes? Don't forget a prize for the most creative use of recycled materials! Why not have an **#UnwornFridays** Halloween special and share your pre-loved creations on social media.

## Sweet wrappers

**Gone trick or treating?** That stash of sweets is probably crawling with plastic wrapping. The good news is that while these kinds of plastics can't usually be collected for recycling from your home, sweet wrappers are now recycled at supermarkets across the country. Find your closest participating store on our Recycling Locator:

[www.recyclenow.com/recycling-locator](http://www.recyclenow.com/recycling-locator)

Just be sure to put them inside another bag and drop them off at the front of the store the next time you go shopping.

Finally, being sustainable isn't just about recycling – it's also about reducing the amount you need to recycle in the first place. If you're prepping for trick or treaters arriving at your door, why not offer them some baked treats like pumpkin-shaped biscuits? This will instantly cut out the plastic wrappers and will taste better too! **What will you be treating your neighbourhood to when there's a knock at the door this Halloween?**

## Reduce your disposable plastic

Every year, Halloween can be awash with cheap plastic: LED pumpkins, scary masks and devil horns, buckets for trick or treating... the list goes on. Reduce your plastic this Halloween and make some simple sustainable switches:

- **Real pumpkins** – carved or not, pumpkins of all shapes and sizes make the perfect Halloween decorations, with no plastic required. Even better, you can eat them as well as carving them! Take a look at these delicious ways to eat your Halloween pumpkins from our friends at Love Food Hate Waste: [www.lovefoodhatewaste.com/blog/6-ways-eat-your-halloween-pumpkins](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com/blog/6-ways-eat-your-halloween-pumpkins). Any leftovers can either be composted at home or depending on where you live your local authority may be able to compost them as part of your food waste collection.
- **Paper pumpkins** – if you're on a budget or just don't want to fill your home with real pumpkins, paper pumpkins are a sustainable alternative to plastic ones. If you can't find any in your local shop, they're easy and fun to draw, and make great bunting when tied to lengths of string! You can do other spooky paper cut-outs, too – think spiders, skeletons and tombstones.
- **Face paint instead of masks** – painting a scary face on is a great alternative to buying a plastic mask that could soon end up in the bin.
- **Real cutlery and glasses** – instead of disposable plastic knives, forks and cups at parties.
- **Wicker or metal bucket instead of plastic** – get the kids to gather their trick or treating haul in a more sustainable option. A bonus treat if they decorate it themselves!



# What is recycling contamination?

Put simply, contamination in recycling refers to anything that's in your recycling that shouldn't be. In some cases, that might be the result of what's known as 'wishcycling' – when we chuck without checking, in the hope that something is recyclable. This article explains more:

[www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/feb/07/stop-wishcycling-and-get-wise-how-to-recycle-almost-everything](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/feb/07/stop-wishcycling-and-get-wise-how-to-recycle-almost-everything)

It could be something that's recyclable, but not collected by your local council, such as plastic wrapping. Or it could be collected by your local council, but it has been tainted by a material or substance that isn't, such as a grease-soaked cardboard takeaway pizza box or the food residue from a can of beans.



## Why is contamination bad?

There are several reasons why it's important to put the right things in the right bin. First and foremost, if there are too many of the wrong things, it can mean that **whole lorry-loads of recycling can't be recycled**. In other words, a few bad apples spoil the whole barrel.

Another consideration is the **increased costs** of collecting and sorting contaminated recycling – costs that are ultimately borne by all of us, as taxpayers. By making sure the right things are in the right containers, we can all help save time and money and make the recycling process more effective. Bulky items such as DIY tools, and textiles cause blockages and breakages to the equipment used to sort our waste, which is costly and causes delays in the processing of waste, which can result in less of it being recycled.

Contamination can also **reduce the value of the recyclable materials** and can lead to them having to be **disposed of** rather than recycled into new products. What's more, some types of contamination can even be **dangerous** for the recycling and waste workers handling it. An example of this is the disposal of batteries which this year alone caused 24 fires at the Material Recovery Plant located at Waterbeach near Cambridge.

**In short, contamination is best avoided!** Doing so can be confusing at a time when we've not yet got a recycling system that works the same way across the country, but as the recycling system becomes more consistent, things will get simpler. In the meantime, here are a few pointers to help you get your recycling right.



# To reduce recycling contamination, DO NOT put these items in your home recycling:

## Take these to a Household Waste Recycling Centre

- Batteries and electricals



- Large bulky items



## Take these to a Charity Shop if they are not broken (or Household Waste Recycling Centre)

- Glass cookware, Pyrex, ovenware, drinking glass & ceramics
- Pots & pans, cooking utensils, cutlery
- DIY and gardening tools
- Clothing and textiles



## Put these in your General household waste bin

- Animal waste
- Disposable nappies
- Sticky tape
- Tissues, wet wipes, cotton buds, cotton wool & sanitary products



If you have an item which you want to dispose of but are unsure how to do so, please check your local authority website or collection leaflet for specific instructions about how to recycle some items.

## When something can be recycled, but it's contaminated with something else...

When a recyclable item is contaminated with something that isn't recyclable, it often means it can't be recycled. Small amounts of the contaminated material are usually fine, but if there's too much then it renders the whole item unrecyclable. This means it will end up being disposed of rather than being made into something else.

A common example of this is **food packaging that still has food left in it** – such as jars with bits of jam still inside, plastic bottles containing liquids, or takeaway trays and boxes that still have lots of food residue or grease in them. Another common example is **cardboard that has sticky tape attached to it**.

The key with this type of contamination is moderation. You don't need to remove every label or bit of sticky tape, you don't need to remove the plastic windows from envelopes, and you don't need to put your jam jars through the dishwasher, just make sure the jars are empty and give them a quick rinse. It's important to make sure your recyclables are in a condition that means they can be recycled.

## Top hacks:

✔ Use your washing up water to rinse items such as glass jars and plastic bottles

✔ If there's lots of grease on your pizza box, you could tear off the greasy sections ([www.recyclenow.com/recycle-an-item/pizza-boxes](http://www.recyclenow.com/recycle-an-item/pizza-boxes))

✔ Check whether your council collects the lids on plastic and glass bottles and jars – most do! If so, remember to replace the lids before recycling them

✔ Remember to remove any polystyrene or bubble wrap before putting cardboard boxes out for recycling ([www.recyclenow.com/recycle-an-item/polystyrene](http://www.recyclenow.com/recycle-an-item/polystyrene))

✔ Finally, it's always better to check if you're ever in doubt. You can find out more about what your local council collects on their website, where you'll find more details on specific materials, kerbside collections for your area and your nearest away-from-home recycling points.





## Recycling reforms sees separate food waste bins for England

The Government has announced that most homes in England will have separate weekly food waste collections by April 2026.

This initiative is part of the government's new 'Simpler Recycling' plans, which aim to standardise recycling across the country and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

The introduction of weekly food waste collections is expected to significantly reduce the amount of organic waste going to landfill. Currently, only about half of English councils collect food waste separately. The new mandate will ensure that all local authorities provide this service, thereby promoting a more sustainable approach to waste management.

Food waste is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, particularly methane, which is many times more potent than carbon dioxide. By collecting and properly disposing of food waste, these emissions can be significantly reduced. Moreover, collected food waste can be used to produce biogas, providing a renewable source of energy and reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

## Standard waste collections for schools & businesses by 2025

Collection of food waste is also being made mandatory across all local authorities in England for all non-household municipal premises such as businesses, (who employ more than 10 people), schools and hospitals, and they must present the same waste streams for recycling including paper and card, plastic, glass and metal.

Waste collection authorities in England must arrange a weekly collection of food waste for recycling or composting from households. Businesses too must arrange to have food waste collected separately, albeit they are not required to have weekly collections.

What does this mean for your business? By 31st March 2025, businesses will need to have implemented separate food waste storage & collection processes. This means understanding what wastes are produced and at what frequency and how these wastes should be stored and collected to be compliant with the new legislation.

Cambridgeshire County Council are assisting public service providers and commercial organisations support with these changes by offering free waste reduction workshops to all local schools and businesses. The hour-long workshops aim to teach people of all ages how to reduce their waste through waste prevention, re-using or re-purposing items, repair of unwanted items and recycling.

**If you are a school, business, or service provider and would like our help why not contact Jon Crisp at: [wmt@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:wmt@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)**



## Food for the Planet festival Saturday 26th October 11am - 4pm

**Making positive changes to the food we eat by choosing to eat a climate-friendly diet is one of the easiest ways that, as individuals, we can act on climate change.**

Our week-long festival, with a theme of Climate Action On A Plate, will inspire and encourage you to take positive action towards a climate diet, whether this is through reducing food waste, growing your own fruit and veg or reducing your meat and dairy consumption.

With family friendly workshops, stalls, activities, restaurant discounts and fun days out across the city, our festival has something for everyone.

<https://cambridgesustainablefood.org/events>

# Waste Prevention Education Free Workshops

To book a visit to your school or organisation and for more information please contact [wmt@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:wmt@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

## FREE workshops at any location across the County include:

- Tailored educational workshops for school, community and adult groups.
- Learning what waste is and what we can do to **prevent, reuse, repair and recycle it**, sort it for recycling or make something from waste material.
- Videos showing the **processes** involved in **sorting and recycling waste**.
- A discussion around **climate change** and an explanation of what an **individuals carbon footprint** looks like.
- Lessons are ideal for **classroom settings** and pupils work in **groups on a variety of tasks**.
- A typical workshop lasts around **60 minutes**. We can deliver up to **three lessons per day** and can visit a school for **two days if required**.

We offer outreach visits on weekdays, in the evenings and at weekends.

Contact us if you have an upcoming event in Cambridgeshire you would like us to support.



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CambridgeshireCC](https://www.facebook.com/CambridgeshireCC)

 [www.twitter.com/  
CambsCC](https://www.twitter.com/CambsCC)

 [www.linkedin.com/company/  
cambridgeshire-county-council](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cambridgeshire-county-council)

 **Thalia**  
Waste Management

 Working in partnership with  
**Cambridgeshire  
County Council**

# Calling all schools and community groups in Cambridgeshire!

Cambridgeshire County Council offer **FREE Waste and Recycling Workshops**, at any location across the County! They're ideal for school, community and adult groups.

Contact us below to book now



For more information about our **FREE recycling workshops**, and to book, scan the QR code or go to:

[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/waste-and-recycling/waste-education-service](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/waste-and-recycling/waste-education-service)

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