

Bin Stores Guidance

Purpose of Guide

The purpose of this guide is present best practice in relation to bin stores. The guide will cover the following: -

- Information on the Kent Resource Partnership;
- Differences between flats and houses (incl. opportunities & challenges);
- The impacts different communities may have on recycling;
- Bin store requirements;
- General requirements for the facilitation of waste collection;
- Operational elements of bin stores;
- Communications and signage;
- Examples of good practice; and
- Relevant contact details for the 13 Kent councils.

Further guidance on the provision of recycling & waste services within housing developments may be available. In the first instance, it would be best to check with the local council – contact details are on page 10.

About the Kent Resource Partnership

The Kent Resource Partnership (KRP) consists of the 13 Kent councils¹.

The purpose of the KRP is to deliver the following three strategic objectives: -

1. Deliver the Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (KJMWMS).
2. Deliver financial and performance benefits to Kent taxpayers; manage risks to finance and performance as appropriate; and
3. Contribute to, and set a national lead, in delivering projects that manage supply chain issues in the leanest and most effective ways; securing value from discarded materials; and proactively identifying innovation and excellent practices.

The 13 Kent councils work together to provide recycling, waste and streetscene services to its 1.5 million citizens across the County. It collects and disposes of over 600,000 tonnes of recycling & waste annually. Latest figures for 2019/20 showed Kent recycled & composted 46.7%, 51.8% sent to generate electricity with as little as 1.5% sent to landfill.

Full details on the KRP are at www.kent.gov.uk/krp

¹ These are in alphabetical order: - Ashford Borough Council, Canterbury City Council, Dartford Borough Council, Dover District Council, Folkestone & Hythe District Council, Gravesham Borough Council, Kent County Council, Maidstone Borough Council, Sevenoaks District Council, Swale Borough Council, Thanet District Council, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

Why are flats different to houses?

Providing recycling services to residents living in flats is fundamentally different to providing services to residents who live in houses. Below are some key opportunities and challenges around the provision of recycling services to flats.

Building features: Opportunities

- Communal areas provide an opportunity for communications and often notice boards and poster sites already exist.
- Opportunities for easy to use recycling schemes may exist e.g., there may be two chutes side by side, one of which could be used for recycling.
- Unused areas such as derelict garages or unused car parks can be brought back into use for community recycling or composting initiatives.

Building features: Challenges

- Security arrangements can make it difficult to enter blocks of flats to collect recycling and deliver communications materials and messages.
- There may be little space internally and externally for storing refuse and recycling. Residents may be unable or unwilling to store material for long periods of time in their flats and it may be difficult to find space for external containers meaning frequent collections are needed. Appropriate storage must be considered for the storage of waste and recycling in the flats.
- In terms of storing recycling and refuse in flats and transporting to communal areas, it may be worth considering re-usable sacks (e.g. Weirbags or Sackmaker in 20L or 30L configurations). In the first instance, please check with the respective local council. (contact details on page 10)
- Flats are usually close together and linked by corridors which can increase fire risk.
- Vehicle access could be difficult (e.g. narrow access; low headroom; restricted entry to sites; need to stop on busy road to service flats above shops).

Management: Opportunities

- There may be regular management newsletters and induction packs for new residents in which information about recycling could be included.
- Caretakers may be regularly on site and can play a role in delivering recycling services (e.g. collecting recycling from the doorstep or providing assisted collections); reporting issues with recycling and refuse (such as contamination, overflowing of recycling bins etc.); answering resident queries and maintaining equipment related to recycling systems.
- Requirements for managing agents to purchase or hire recycling containers can act as an incentive for recycling depending on how they are priced in relation to residual waste containers.
- Some management companies will support recycling services on the basis that it will help them to achieve environmental accreditation.

Management: Challenges

- Flats and communal areas are subject to more legislation and policies than kerbside properties such as The Regulatory Reform Order 2005 which governs fire safety. These regulations can affect the complexity, design and cost implications of the recycling services provided.
- There are multiple stakeholders that need to be consulted when a recycling service is launched e.g. caretakers, residents associations and managing agents. This can impact on expense and time requirements.

Communities: Challenges

- Flats might have clusters of certain resident types (e.g. sheltered accommodation or student flats) meaning different approaches to recycling and communication are needed.
- There can be less ownership and visibility of refuse and recycling services if communal recycling containers and chutes are used. For example residents can put refuse down the chute and not be seen to be doing so which may mean there is less social pressure to recycle.
- Resident and management turnover can be high.

What impact might different communities have on recycling?

It is not just the different types of architecture that present challenges and opportunities for recycling. It's normal for each block of flats to differ in terms of the social make up and management and this can demand very different approaches to recycling and communications.

- Communications to student accommodation blocks need to be planned to overcome turnover of residents at different times of year.
- In sheltered housing blocks residents may have physical difficulties that prevent them from transporting material so recycling collection schemes need to be easy to use.
- In areas that have a history of social issues, collection schemes need to be carefully planned to ensure they do not pose a risk to residents.

Understanding flats

In order to plan the best ways of providing a food waste and recycling service to flats, it is useful to understand some of the factors that make flats unique from other properties.

Every block of flats is individual in terms of building features, management structure and types of residents.

Flats as part of a commercial building are often not thought about in terms of providing appropriate waste collection facilities.

Health and safety

The consequences if there is a fire, accident or injury at a block of flats can be extremely serious and risks can be greater than in houses (e.g. a fire in a block of flats could spread quickly and have a greater impact than a fire in a house). For further advice, please contact the local council – details on page 10.

Bin store requirements for multiple communal properties

For all new bin stores the following requirements are specified to support the collection and disposal of recycling and waste: -

1. Bin stores should be sited up to the 15m required pull out for bins to the highway
2. Bins need to be pulled over a smooth / unobstructed surface to the highway
3. Bins should have a straight pull out with drop down kerbs to be in place to the highway
4. If secured with a lock – FB1 or FB2 lock or FB1 padlock should be used only
5. Coded keypads are not preferred though you may wish to check with the local council if they are accepted – contact details are on page 10.
6. Double doors should open out to the highway and have a sufficient hold back mechanism in place using drop down bolts or hook and eye tie backs or similar
7. Any gradient from store to highway is to be no more than 12%
8. Stores to be maintained – any damage repaired and stores swept out on a regular basis
9. Stores to have motion sensor lighting
10. To be sufficient in size to accommodate the number of bins required to provide enough waste capacity for the number of units/residents
11. All bins should be sited in order to be moved independently of each other in and out of the store
12. Container requirements vary across Kent. It's therefore advised to contact the local council directly for further support – contact details are on page 10.
13. All bin stores should have clear signage, explaining the types of bins and also say side waste is not allowed. There should also be visual signage which reflects what can and cannot be placed in bins. (good practice can be found on pages 7, 8 & 9)
14. Refuse collection will take place from adopted highway only. Any roads that are not adopted even if constructed to Kent CC standards will require an indemnity from the local council to be signed off

Enclosed stores

1. Lighting to be fitted
2. Sufficient roof height to allow lids of bins to be raised

Container Sizes:

Container sizes can vary across local council areas. It's therefore advised to contact the respective council directly to ensure compliance. Contact details are on page 10.

Research shows that effective recycling is achieved when residents;

- have the correct **knowledge** – lack of easy access to accurate information can undermine confidence; and
- find it sufficiently **easy** – services that fit with people's existing routines will feel easier to use.

Operational elements of bin stores

Clean and well-maintained bins and bin areas for all waste streams are an essential part of the design. This should include ensuring the bin areas are well-lit; at least a weekly clean of the bin lids and apertures; regular cleaning of bins and floors around the bins; and ensuring any issues, i.e. broken wheels, are promptly rectified. Bulky waste should be cleared regularly. See below:-

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2. Appropriate apertures on recycling bins Provide a large enough aperture to put items such as cardboard boxes or bags of recyclables in. This also stops residents having to lift the whole bin lid to put larger items in, thus preventing locks from being broken or recycling being left by the bins. A reverse lid helps to prevent contamination from large items such as black sacks of waste. They also help protect signage during collections as the signage is effectively on the back of the bin.

3. Check with your Local Authority what materials they currently collect for recycling.

4. Convenient location of recycling bins for residents – ensuring that recycling bins are on the main walking entrance/exit routes for residents. You may want to redistribute the recycling bins around the site if there are multiple routes.

Communication and signage

To improve residents' knowledge on which items should go into the recycling bin, they need to have easy access to clear and reliable information

Communication elements

Clear and visible signage on and above the bins.

All recycling, food waste and rubbish bins should have clear signage on the front of the containers. This includes signage on chute hopper doors.

Additional stickers by the aperture of recycling bins can remind users that black sacks are not accepted in these bins.

Recycling bin area signage, fixed on walls above recycling bins or as standalone signs, provides further clear instructions about what can and can't be recycled.

Rubbish bin area signage, also fixed on walls above rubbish bins or standalone, can include details of how to get rid of large or 'bulky' items which can often cause problems in bin stores and on estates.

Bin store signage should be used on bin store doors to remind people where they can dispose of and recycle their waste.

Recycling leaflets should be sent to residents once a year will help reinforce how residents should use their recycling and rubbish services, as well as informing new residents in your flats.

Posters highlighting recycling messages, displayed in a central location (where possible). Use internal recycling posters to promote the items that can be recycled from around the home.

Residents informed of what they should do with large items or bulky waste Where required, stand-alone “large items” signage and stickers can be installed and used either in bin stores or alongside chutes to inform residents of how to dispose of these items. Use internal posters to inform residents how to get rid of large items and help prevent these items from just being dumped. “No dumping waste” signs can be used in areas where the dumping of waste is problematic.

Key things to consider when designing bin area signage:

- For recycling/rubbish signs (on wall/posts) –approx. 1 sign to 2 bins.
- Consider light and space in internal bin store as this will determine how many signs are needed – if dark, the colours may need to be reviewed. The provision of good lighting is also a major consideration.
- Be aware of too much signage otherwise key messages may be lost.
- Think about how signs can be displayed e.g. wall mounted, free standing – what would work best in the store?

For more information on style guides and valuable research into the area of flat recycling please visit:

[Resource for London - Flats Recycling Toolkit](#)

Alternatively, contact the local council for further advice. Details found on page 10.

Examples of well-designed stores:

Metrostor Option:

Bins contained in segregated stores so no need for a large 'bin shed' – residents don't need to open doors but use the apertures available on the outside of the store. These step away from enclosed bin stores and reduce contamination, adequate space in the store for residents to get to all the bins etc. ASB is less as there isn't an enclosed bin store – people can see everyone using the store at all times.



Examples of good signage:





Marking out the designated areas on the floor using paint helps ensure bins are kept in the right places, helping both caretakers and crews!



Clearly designated recycling and rubbish areas with details of what can and can't be recycled, where to put rubbish and how to get rid of large items. This layout works particularly well when you have a similar number of recycling and refuse bins.

Councils' Contact Details

Detailed below are the contact details for the respective local councils':-

Council	Email
Ashford Borough Council	Streetscene@ashford.gov.uk
Canterbury City Council	rubbishandrecycling@canterbury.gov.uk
Dartford Borough Council	waste@dartford.gov.uk
Dover District Council	https://www.dover.gov.uk/Contact-us.aspx
Folkestone & Hythe District Council	https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/Contacts/recycling-and-waste-team
Gravesham Borough Council	waste.management@gravesham.gov.uk
Kent County Council	WasteLiaison@kent.gov.uk
Maidstone Borough Council	recycling@maidstone.gov.uk
Sevenoaks District Council	Direct.services@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Swale Borough Council	ContractsandProcurement@swale.gov.uk
Thanet District Council	https://www.thanet.gov.uk/get-in-touch/
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council	waste.services@tmbc.gov.uk
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	depot@tunbridgewells.gov.uk