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Councils give new Dorset recycling and waste service the green light

All seven councils in the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) have given their go-ahead to a new waste collection service that will boost recycling rates and save up to £2m.

On Thursday 19 January, Weymouth and Portland Borough Council became the seventh partner authority to approve the service, which will be provided by the DWP on the councils' behalf.

The new service will be introduced in phases across Dorset (not including Bournemouth and Poole) starting this autumn. Christchurch and part of East Dorset will be first to receive the service, which should be in place countywide by 2014/15.

There are currently 12 different collection systems in place across Dorset's six boroughs and districts. Bringing them together into a standardised service will drive down costs, enabling the councils to re-invest the savings in other frontline services.

The easy-to-use service will also allow many people in Dorset to recycle more at the kerbside than they can at present, including food, cardboard and plastic bottles. This will reduce the amount of rubbish sent to landfill and help meet the DWP's target of recycling 60% of its waste by 2015/16.

When the service is introduced, most residents will receive the following as standard:

- A weekly food waste collection, using a seven-litre kitchen caddy and a larger, lockable container to be kept outside
- A fortnightly recycling collection for paper and card, plastic bottles, cans, aerosols, glass bottles and jars and household batteries, using a 240-litre wheelie bin, a 55-litre box for glass and a small reusable bag for batteries
- A fortnightly refuse collection for any waste that can't be recycled, using a 140-litre wheelie bin

Households will also have the option to receive a fortnightly garden waste collection using a 240-litre bin for an annual charge of £35 or a reusable bag for £25.

The new service is designed to be flexible to allow as many residents as possible the opportunity to use it and maximise their recycling. The DWP and partner councils will work with people who have limited outdoor space, large families or limited mobility to find suitable alternatives where the standard service is not possible. The partnership will also assess blocks of flats in advance and work with landlords and management companies to identify opportunities for shared facilities where appropriate.



The DWP and partner councils will carry out a comprehensive communications and engagement campaign leading up to and during the introduction of the new service to explain the changes and how and when people can apply for a non-standard service.

Every home in the first area to get the service will be sent information in the spring including details of an extensive series of public roadshows in towns and villages where people will be able to see the new bins and speak with staff directly.

Dorset is already among the best counties in the UK for recycling with a rate of around 50 per cent. Even so, last year Dorset still sent more than 82,000 tonnes of rubbish to be buried, costing councils nearly £4m in landfill tax.

Collecting food waste separately also means money can be recovered by turning it into compost or generating energy from it. This will be better for the environment than dumping food waste in landfill, where it produces greenhouse gases.

Councillor Hilary Cox, Chair of the Dorset Waste Partnership Joint Committee, said:

“Having all the partners on board for the new waste collection service is a fantastic sign of how Dorset councils are working together to save money and provide better services for taxpayers. It means people across Dorset will be able to recycle more at home and get the same high standard of service at the kerbside.

“However, we realise that one size doesn’t fit all. The new service will be flexible so that people who can’t store the bins, need help with their collection or have a large family can enjoy as many of the benefits as possible.

“The DWP will be providing the new service on behalf of the partner councils, with each council having an equal say on how the service is managed. By working together in this way we will drive down costs, slash Dorset’s landfill tax bill and allow each council to put the money saved back into key services while helping keep council tax down.”

Steve Burdis, Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership, said:

“The new service is fully in-line with Dorset’s Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy, which partner councils adopted in 2009. This unanimous green light for the service now enables the DWP to deliver on the potential and meet some of the key aims identified in the strategy. At this time of austerity, the DWP will be working hard on behalf of councils to ensure we provide not only high quality services but also the best value for local people.

“We can now begin the exciting job of rolling out the new service, beginning with talking to people about how it will work and what will happen next. By working together, we can push Dorset back to being the best recycling area in the country.”

The DWP’s joint committee, which is made up of two councillors from each partner, is due to discuss some of the finer details of the new service at its next meeting on Tuesday 31 January.



People can find out more about the new Dorset waste service, including a list of frequently asked questions, at <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/dorsetwasteservice>