

Waltham Forest Town Hall, Forest Road, E17 4JF

To all licence holders, property
owners and agents

Ask for: Private Sector Housing & Licensing
Team
Email: propertylicensing@walthamforest.gov.uk
Direct line: 020 8496 4949
Date: February 2025

Dear Sir or Madam

Arrangements for the disposal of refuse and recycling

I am writing to you to highlight an important issue relating to the effective management of privately rented homes in Waltham Forest.

Many landlords in the borough take their responsibilities seriously and provide good quality accommodation that is well managed and maintained. However, it is the case that experienced problems of refuse/waste containment are disproportionately found at privately rented homes.

We therefore need landlords and agents to be more proactive in tenancy management, in accordance with their legal obligations including those imposed as part of a granted property licence. It is particularly important that landlords and agents, where necessary, get a better grip on the management of waste from rented homes and ask you to inspect your property prior to the impending changes to waste collection arrangements, which I have summarised below.

Changes to waste collection services

From 24 March 2025, black refuse bin collections for kerbside properties will be every two weeks instead of weekly. There will be no change for purpose-built flats that have bulk bins or flats above shops. Green recycling bins and brown food caddies will still be collected weekly, and brown garden waste bins will still be collected fortnightly on the alternate week to the refuse collection

These changes have been introduced to encourage residents to recycle as much as possible and to improve recycling rates in the borough. Roughly 85% of household waste in Waltham Forest can be reused and recycled, reducing the need to put waste in black bins. Many local councils, including the best-performing recycling councils and the majority of councils in London, already collect black bin waste fortnightly. Research has shown that about 90% of councils with responsibility for bin collections empty their residual waste bins on a fortnightly (or less frequent) basis.

For some households, this change will commence on the week beginning Monday 24 March, and for the remainder the change will be implemented in the week beginning Monday 31 March. Information will be sent out about these changes to every affected household, along with a guide on the services available including what can and can't be

put in each bin.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the correct bins of the right capacity are provided for your occupants. If you have one property where an additional bin or bins are required, the quickest way to order an additional or larger bin is through our system (search the Waltham Forest Council website for 'order a bin'). If you have multiple properties where additional bin provision is required, you can contact our Recycling Team:

recyclingteam@walthamforest.gov.uk.

Legal obligations and enforcement

The significant majority of privately rented homes in Waltham Forest are required to be licensed under one of the borough's large-scale property licensing schemes. Under these schemes, named Licence Holders are required to comply with a set of licence conditions under any granted property licence. The relevant conditions are summarised below:

- Ensuring that regular checks are carried out to ensure that the common parts, gardens and waste are free from waste and to ensure that waste such as old furniture, bedding or rubbish from the property is not left on or immediately outside the property or in its vicinity
- Ensuring that tenants are provided with adequate facilities for the disposal of refuse and recycling
- Ensuring that new tenants are given written information regarding the relevant arrangements for waste disposal and recycling within 21 days of the start of their occupation
- Ensuring that any type of waste that the Council does not routinely collect such as hazardous waste is disposed of in a safe and lawful manner
- In the event that the Licence Holder becomes aware that the occupiers of the property (or their visitors) are not using the waste disposal facilities provided and/or are leaving waste outside the property or in its vicinity, ensuring that a warning letter is sent to the occupiers requiring immediate removal of the refuse.
- Ensuring that any documents referenced above are provided to the Council within 21 days on demand.

Licence conditions can be viewed in full in the issued property licence or via the Council's web pages at <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/housing/private-sector-housing/private-rented-property-licensing-prpl>

Landlords of addresses that are let out to multiple households as shared 'House in Multiple Occupation' (HMO) accommodation, and in some buildings that are divided into flats, have additional legal responsibilities to ensure that there are sufficient bins provided for the property under Management Regulations that relate to certain HMOs.

A person who fails, without a reasonable excuse, to comply with a licence condition or a regulation in the HMO Management Regulations commits a criminal offence. Where there is evidence that an offence has been committed, the Council may instigate prosecution proceedings or impose a financial penalty of up to £30,000 in accordance with its adopted enforcement policy (which can also be viewed on the Council's web pages).

In the event that the Council takes formal action, this will normally have implications as regards any licence which is in place or an application that is being processed. The

Council may refuse a licence application, revoke an existing licence or vary or issue a licence for a reduced term.

Council enforcement officers may take a range of other actions depending on the circumstances of the case, including the issuing of warning letters/notices, serving formal notices and issuing Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs).

Whilst the Council understands that problems associated with the incorrect disposal of waste may arise through the actions of tenant[s], the Council would expect all landlords to ensure that regular visits are made to rented properties to monitor conditions, to proactively address any identified issues and to warn tenants as to the potential consequences of any continuing failure to properly dispose of their refuse. The Council would also expect landlords to respond promptly and appropriately to any issues identified by their own officers. This has become even more important given the move to the fortnightly collection of black bins for kerbside properties.

In parallel with this change, the Council has been reviewing its own procedures and, in particular, the exercise of its formal enforcement powers in situations where a landlord/agent does not respond with the necessary urgency or effectiveness.

Collection services provided by the Council

An information sheet, appended to this letter, details the range of collection services provided by the Council and how these may be accessed by residents and landlords.

Many of these services are free at the point of service to Council Tax-paying tenants but there are conditions associated with the use of these services, which are also detailed in the attached document.

The information sheet also details paid-for services available at competitive rates, which landlords can use in order to comply with their legal obligations in renting a property in Waltham Forest.

Conclusion and action required

Poorly maintained gardens/yards can have a serious detrimental impact on the look and feel of a neighbourhood and have the clear potential to give rise to environmental hazards.

We know that many landlords take their legal responsibilities seriously, but we need all landlords/agents to proactively maintain and manage their privately rented homes, both for the benefit of the tenants and for the wider community.

Officers do work with landlords to resolve issues. This is usually on an informal basis where identified problems are resolved very quickly but the Council will not hesitate to enforce one or more formal actions where this is necessary.

I trust that this letter provides clear information regarding your responsibilities in this area but please email propertylicensing@walthamforest.gov.uk if any matters require clarification.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D Beach". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David Beach
Corporate Director, Regulatory and Contingency Planning Services

Neighbourhoods & Environment Directorate

Strategic Director: Debbie Porter

Appendix A

1. Waste and Recycling Collections – Free Services

Housing Type	Service Provision	Free Collection
Street level property with front garden	<p>Refuse bin (140 litre capacity) Recycling bin (140 or 240 litre) Garden bin(140 or 240 litre) Food waste (23 litre outdoor caddy and 5 litre indoor caddy)</p> <p>Residents can place additional items out for collection on top of their bins including clothes/shoes, batteries, small electrical items and coffee pods</p>	Refuse and garden waste collections alternate weeks on a fortnightly basis, recycling and food waste weekly collections fortnightly
Street level property with no front garden	<p>Green translucent plastic sacks [recycling] provided quarterly. Residents must provide their own refuse sacks</p>	Refuse, recycling and food waste collections weekly
Purpose built flats	Communal bulk bins, ranging in capacity depending on the number of properties served. 120 litres of waste and 120 litres recycling per dwelling. Bin sizes are 660 litres, 1100 litres or 1280 litres	Weekly Collections
Flats above shops	<p>Green translucent plastic sacks [recycling] provided quarterly. Residents must provide their own waste sacks</p>	Refuse and recycling collection Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 6am-9am. Some properties have evening collections also please check our website

To report a missed collection please ask your tenants to visit their [My account](#).

- Waste and recycling must be presented in separate containers or sacks. Recycling containers or sacks containing incorrect items will not be collected and tenants will be responsible for ensuring that this happens. In this instance a sticker will be placed onto the bin advising residents to remove incorrect items, failure to comply will result in the issuing of warning letters which can lead to a fixed penalty notice being issued. For a full list of acceptable materials please visit <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/green-bins-household-recycling>

Communal recycling at purpose built flats which are found to contain incorrect items will not be emptied and you will be responsible for ensuring that the items are cleared.

- Waste and recycling containers must not be over-filled, meaning that a lid on the container must be closed to receive a collection; those not compliant with this will not receive a collection and therefore must make alternative arrangements to dispose of their waste.

2. Waste and Recycling Collections – Commercial Services for Landlords

In addition to the above free services the council offers a variety of paid services to support landlords in the borough.

Large Item Collection (non-electrical items) – Commercial Service for landlords. If you're a landlord or business owner in Waltham Forest you can use the commercial large items collection service. You can book up to 20 non-electrical items to be collected. Visit our website to for more information about this service including our pricing.

<https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/commercial-large-item-collection>

White Goods Collection (large electrical items) – Landlords are welcome to use our paid for service for the collection of any large electrical items. You will find details of this service on our website:

<https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/commercial-large-item-collection>

To book this service you will need to pay for it online and your collection time will be confirmed by email within 1 working day of receiving your payment. Our average collection time from receipt of payment is less than 3 working days.

Quoted Service for Waste and Recycling - If you have special requirements then please contact us directly on largeitemcollections@walthamforest.gov.uk with details of your requirements to request a highly competitive quote. We will respond to you within 2 working days.

Examples of special requirements that we cover with our quoted service include:

- a mix of electrical and non-electrical large items
- more than 20 non-electrical items
- more than 3 large electrical items
- a mix of large and small items to be collected
- a collection from inside the home

We are here to help so don't hesitate to [contact us](#) for a quote!

Tenants also have their own facility to arrange for large items to be collected from their home via the web page at <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/residents-large-item-collection>