

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are we considering charging for garden waste?

Central government have cut funding to all local councils. This means tough choices have to be made (including charging for collecting garden waste.) More than half of councils in the UK now charge for collection of garden waste.

When would the charges start?

The new service is planned to start from April 2018.

How much is the new service proposed to cost?

The cost of the new service is proposed at £35 per year per green bin. Additional bins at the same property will incur an additional annual cost of £30 per bin. You have the opportunity to influence this during the consultation with options to increase the number of collections, or reduce them if our residents want to pay less for fewer collections.

How would I sign up and pay for the new charged garden waste collection service?

You would be able to sign up and pay online or over the phone by debit or credit card from the end of 2017. We are looking into the option of paying by cash or cheque at Post Offices and Paypoint locations.

When would I have to pay by?

The proposal is that you can sign up and pay any time from the end of 2017.

How would the proposed changes affect me?

To have your garden waste collected after March 2018 you would need to pay a fee to cover the collection cost. This is optional; you would only pay if you wanted to use the service. Those who do not want to pay for the service can use the county council's household waste recycling centres for free or compost at home (details of home composters are available at www.getcomposting.com or by phoning 0844 5714444, quoting LWP10L.)

Would my collection day change?

Changes to collection days would be unlikely during the first year. We may review this in the future as we look to make the service as efficient and cost effective as possible

How would I opt out?

You would not need to contact us to opt-out. If you did not sign up and pay for the service, your bin would not be collected when the service starts in April 2018. If you did not want to sign up, you could keep your bin but we would not empty it. If, at a later date, you chose to sign up, you could use your existing bin (providing it is serviceable.)

Could I have more than one bin and would additional bins be charged at the same rate?

Yes, as is the case now, properties can have more than one garden waste bin (providing there is suitable storage and a suitable collection point.) The proposal is that there will be a discount for additional bins.

How would you know if I have paid for the service?

We would send identification stickers to those who sign up and pay to place on their bin(s). Our crews would also hold information inside their cabs to identify those who have paid.

Could residents share a bin?

Yes. The bin would be charged to one resident and would be collected from that property only.

What would happen if I signed up part way through the year? Would I have to pay the full annual charge?

The proposal is that you can sign up to the service at any point during the year. The annual charge would run from 1 April until 31 March each year. If you were to sign up part way through the year, you would be charged for the full year.

I don't currently have a bin, could I still sign up for the service?

Yes, the proposal is that you can sign up and pay for the service at any time. Once you have paid for the service the council will arrange for the delivery of a garden waste bin. The usual council delivery charge will apply to all new bins.

Don't I already pay for a garden waste collection through my council tax?

Council tax contributes towards the cost of running Council services but changes to Government Funding means that we can no longer afford to offer this service free of charge.

Alternatives to paying for garden waste collection

Would home composters still be available?

Yes, we will continue to offer cost-price compost bins. This is a good alternative to paying for a collection or taking garden waste to your local household waste recycling centre. You will also produce great compost to use at home. These are available at www.getcomposting.com or by ringing 0800 5714444

Would I still be able to take garden waste to my local Household Waste Recycling Centre?

Yes, you can continue to take your garden waste to any of Lincolnshire County Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres free of charge.

What would happen if I couldn't get to a household waste recycling centre (HWRC)?

You could investigate the possibility of sharing a bin with a neighbour or the council offers compost bins which are available as a subsidised rate. This is a good alternative to taking garden waste to the HWRC. You will also create great compost to use at home. These are available at www.getcomposting.com or by phoning 0800 316 4454.

Charging

Would there be help for residents without the means to pay or who are in receipt of benefits for a bin?

The service is designed to be fairer than the current system; only those that require the service would fund it, rather than everyone paying for it through their council tax. No concessions are planned, but an equality impact assessment will be added to as we receive your feedback and the consultation results are analysed. Councillors will make a final decision in December.

Why are you considering a charge of £35 when other councils charge less?

The collection charge is less than the Lincolnshire average. It proposed at this level based on the experience of other authorities and is created to cover the costs of the service. No profit is made from the service. The charge in future years would reflect the costs and could go up or down according to the number of people who sign up to the service. Authorities across the country charge similar amounts per year for the kerbside collection of garden waste. Collecting waste in rural areas like West Lindsey can be more expensive and we think £35 is good value for money.

Why is the council considering charging for garden waste collections now after it has been a free service for nearly 10 years?

Central government has changed the way funding is provided to all local councils over recent years. This means the council has to make tough choices, including charging those who use the garden waste service.

I won't put my bin out every fortnight, could I have a discount?

No. The collection crews would visit your property regardless of whether you put your bin out for collection or not. You could talk to your neighbours about the possibility of sharing the cost and a bin.

Could I have the £35 charge discounted from my council tax?

No. Council tax is collected and distributed to Lincolnshire County Council, fire and police services and others. Of the £1,580 or so paid in council tax by a band D property, only around £200 goes to West Lindsey District Council. In the past, council tax has contributed to the cost of running this service, and all other services, but the council can no longer afford to offer this service free of charge.

Would charging for garden waste mean more fly tipping?

In line with the experience of other areas, we expect customers will either pay for the service, compost at home or take their garden waste to their nearest household waste recycling centre. The council will continually monitor the number and nature of fly tipping cases to assess whether charging for garden waste increases fly tipping, but we do not expect a significant increase and will continue to prosecute offenders.

How would I be charged in future years?

The plan is that you would be charged from 1st April each year. You would receive an annual reminder to renew your contract when we deliver calendars each year. You could opt out of the service at any time, but you would not be entitled to a refund.

What would happen if I paid for the service but my bin gets stolen?

If your bin is stolen, it would be replaced in line with existing policies.

Would I have to pay for the service if I don't want it?

No, this is an optional service; you would only pay if you would like to receive a fortnightly garden waste collection.

Bins and collections

Would there be a ban on garden waste in household waste bins?

Yes. As is the case now, garden waste cannot be placed in your household waste (black) bin. Additional waste placed next to your household waste bin will not be collected. If you choose not to receive the kerbside garden waste collection service, you could compost at home or take your garden waste to any of the Lincolnshire County Council's household waste recycling centres at no charge. Household waste bins containing garden waste could be refused and result in enforcement action.

Would you take extra garden waste placed beside the bin?

No, the current service will be maintained and all garden waste must be contained within the bin with the bin lid closed. However, the proposal does allow for customers to subscribe to additional bins should there be a need.

Who owns the bins?

The council will continue to own the bins.

Would I have to pay to replace my broken or lost garden waste bins?

Just as is the case now, we would replace or repair bins which have been damaged or lost by the council. Where the damage is deliberate or negligent then a charge for the replacement could be made.

If I move house, could I take my garden waste bin with me?

The proposal is that if you move within West Lindsey, we would transfer your contract to your new property where your service will continue. We would like you to let us know if you are moving house so that we can alter our records. When you move house all bins should be left at the property. This would ensure that the bin is available for the new occupier to continue with the subscription if they wish. If you are moving outside of West Lindsey or would like to cancel your contract you could do so, but you would not be entitled to a refund.

Could I keep my garden waste bin for storage etc., if I didn't want to pay for the collection service?

Yes, although your bin would not be emptied from April 2018. If, at a later date, you chose to sign up, you could use your existing bin (providing it was serviceable.)

How would you stop residents without bins putting garden waste in my paid-for bin?

You should ensure that your property name or number is clearly marked on the garden waste sticker that we would provide you with. Your bin should be placed in a location that is difficult for others to put waste into (unless you choose to share this with them.) Retrieving your bin from the kerbside soon after it is emptied would also help to ensure that others did not use your bin.

I do not want to keep my bin. Would I be able to opt back in if I want to?

The proposal is that you can sign up to receive the service at any point during the year. The annual charge would run from 1 April to 31 March each year. If you were to sign up part way through the year you would be charged the full amount. A bin delivery charge would apply if we were to re-deliver your bin.

When would my bin be removed?

It is proposed that if you do not want to pay to sign up to the service, you could keep your bin but we would not empty it. If you chose to sign up at a later date, you could use your existing bin (providing it was serviceable.) The council would collect all unwanted bins in a phased manner.

Could I give my bin away or sell it?

Although the bin would remain at your property, the council remains the owner and you would not be allowed to sell or give your bin away. Those who are certain they will not use the garden waste collection service can arrange collection of their bin by contacting us.

Would there be delivery charges if I decided I did want a bin, having given it back?

If you were to return your bin and then decide to sign up for the chargeable service afterwards, the usual bin delivery charge for a bin would apply.

Extra information

Have you considered the environmental impact of more people driving to the household waste recycling centres?

Yes. However we hope that residents will recognise the benefits of the service and choose to pay the annual charge rather than use the household waste recycling centres.

Wouldn't the service be much less efficient if you charge?

The new charged service would mean only those paying for the service would be visited by the crews. We would keep collection rounds under regular review to keep them as efficient as possible.

Wouldn't we be sending more waste to landfill because of the changes?

We would encourage residents to sign up for the chargeable service. Those who choose not to could compost at home or take their waste to one of Lincolnshire County Council's household waste recycling centres. With these options, we hope to avoid any increase in waste going to the Lincolnshire energy from waste plant or landfill.

We are being encouraged to recycle. Would chargeable garden waste collections mean that we don't meet recycling targets?

We would continue to encourage recycling and focused education work will support the service. The council does not expect a significant reduction in the recycling rate for Lincolnshire. We hope most residents would pay for the service, take their garden waste to their nearest household waste recycling centre or compost it at home.

Is it legal to charge for garden waste collections?

Yes. Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and the Controlled Waste Regulations (England and Wales) 2012, councils can charge for the collection of garden waste. Charging for the collection of garden waste will bring West Lindsey District Council in line with many neighbouring councils who already have a charged service.



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