

The service is a subscription-based, two-weekly service collecting organic garden waste only. Collections only take place from brown bins presented on the advertised collection day as outlined and defined by these terms and conditions of use.

Terms & Conditions

The brown wheeled bin remains the property of Fenland District Council. It could be reclaimed if you no longer pay for the Garden Waste Recycling Service.

Not all properties are suitable for this service. This may be due to access restrictions for our collection vehicles or lack of space to either store the bin or place it out for collection.

You are responsible for the security of your bin. Charges apply to replace lost, stolen or damaged bins. If damage is caused by the collection crew or the bin falls into the rear of the collection vehicle, we will repair or replace it free of charge.

Bins must not be moved to another property. However, subscriptions can be transferred to a new address within Fenland if customers move home. You can change details on your subscription at: fenland.gov.uk/changesubscription

Your brown bin collection day may change during the year. If a change to your collection day is necessary, we will send you a letter explaining the change and provide you with a new sticker showing the revised collection day.

In the event of serious incidents or extreme weather, collections may be cancelled without return or refund. Updates will be posted on the Council's website.

We will not provide refunds where customers move out of Fenland or for cancelled subscriptions.

What you can put in your brown bin:

- Grass cuttings
- Leaves
- Weeds
- Hedge trimmings
- Small twigs and branches (less than 2.5cm / 1" diameter)
- Plants and flowers (except invasive species like Japanese Knotweed)

Please note: From summer 2026, you'll be able to recycle all food and vegetable waste through Fenland District Council's new **weekly food waste recycling collections**. More information is available at: fenland.gov.uk/foodwaste



Find out more at
fenland.gov.uk/gardenwaste

Important information

- Garden waste must be placed loose in the bin – do not use bags.
- Bins must be put out before 7am on collection day. Make sure the handle faces the road, and the subscription sticker is clearly visible.
- Brown bins are collected on the same week as your blue recycling bin, although the actual collection day may differ.
- All garden waste must be inside the bin with the lid closed. Waste must not be placed next to your bin – it will not be collected (except from real Christmas trees in season).
- Brown bins considered to be too heavy for safe handling by the collection crews will not be emptied.
- Blue or green bins containing garden waste will not be emptied.
- Brown bins containing plastics, textiles, soil, general waste or rubble will not be emptied.

Frequently Asked Questions

The information provided in the FAQs below forms part of the terms and conditions for the Garden Waste Recycling Service.

Q. What can I put into my brown bin?

A. If you subscribe to the service, the following garden waste can go in the brown bin:

Yes please

- Grass cuttings
- Leaves
- Weeds
- Hedge trimmings
- Small twigs and branches
- Plants and flowers (except invasive species like Japanese Knotweed)

No thank you

- Plastic bags or bin bags
- Cardboard and paper
- Flower pots and trays
- Food Waste
- Soil
- Stones or rubble
- Large branches or logs (larger than 2.5cm (1") in diameter)
- Any other household rubbish
- Textiles



Find out more at
fenland.gov.uk/gardenwaste

Top Tip

Garden waste placed inside bins can begin to break down and compact, especially when additional material is added on top, which can make the bin very heavy. If this becomes an issue, consider delaying filling the bin until a few days before your scheduled collection. You may also find it helpful to layer softer materials such as grass cuttings and leaves with dry twigs or small branches, as this can help keep the contents looser and reduce compaction.

Q. How often will my brown bin be emptied?

A. Your garden waste will be collected once every two weeks throughout the year. Changes to collection days will occur as a result of bank holidays and Christmas.

Q. Can I have more than one brown bin?

A. Yes, you can have as many bins as you like. However, please be aware that you will need to pay an annual subscription for each bin to be collected and a delivery charge as set out in fee and charges if you need another bin.

Q. What should I do if my garden waste collection is missed?

A. If your collection is missed, we will arrange to return and collect your brown bin the following working day wherever possible. To report the missed collection go to fenland.gov.uk/missedbin Our collection crews record which bins are collected. We will not be able to return if we have a record that the bin was collected, contained incorrect materials or was not out ready for collection by 7am on the appropriate day.

Q. How will your collection crews know I have paid for a collection each year?

A. When we receive your payment, we will send you a unique addressed sticker to put your brown bin. A new sticker will be issued each year upon payment of the subscription. If you subscribe to more than one bin, you will receive a sticker for each bin.

Q. How quickly after I pay can I expect the service to start?

A. Once payment has been received, we aim to deliver a letter of confirmation and subscription sticker to the relevant property within 10 working days. All subscriptions purchased in advance will be posted during February and early March each year.

Q. What do I need to do if I've already got a direct debit subscription in place?

A. You don't need to do anything if you already have a valid direct debit in place. The fee per subscription will be £49 per bin. This will be taken during February to ensure a continuous service.

Q. How do I cancel my direct debit subscription?

A. To cancel your direct debit, you will need to inform us in writing and contact your bank.



Find out more at
fenland.gov.uk/gardenwaste



Q. I don't currently have a brown bin. Can I still sign up for the service?

A. Yes, you can sign up and pay for the service at any time. Once you have paid for the service, we will arrange for the delivery of a brown bin. The usual Council delivery charge for a bin will apply to new bins. A small number of customers will be offered the service using paper sacks rather than bins. This will be in defined locations where refuse vehicles cannot gain access.

Q. Can I share a brown bin with a neighbour?

A. Yes, we have no issue with customers sharing brown bins. If you have a small garden or don't have much garden waste, this is a good solution. One household will need to be responsible for the subscription and the bin. The bin will only be collected from this property, and the Council will communicate with this customer only. The agreement to share the bin is between the customers only.

Q. What can I do with my excess garden waste if I don't join the Garden Waste Recycling Service?

A. We can only collect garden waste contained within the brown bin. If you don't want to join the service, you could consider:

- Home composting. This is the most environmentally friendly way of dealing with garden waste. To purchase a subsidised compost bin, visit getcomposting.com or call 0800 316 4454.
- Taking your garden waste to a Cambridgeshire County Council Household Recycling Centre. These are available in March, Whittlesey and Wisbech. Check their website for details and opening times: cambridgeshire.gov.uk/recycling_centres

Q. What if I decide not to use the service for a period? Will I get a refund?

A. No, we are unable to refund any payments for this service.

Q. Will the Council replace lost or stolen brown bins?

A. No, you are responsible for the security of your bin. We will not empty the bin if it is moved to another property.

Q. What happens if my brown bin is damaged?

A. If damage is caused by our collection crew or the bin falls into the rear of the collection vehicle, we will repair or replace it free of charge; otherwise, the usual delivery charge will apply.

Q. Can I buy my own brown bin instead of the Fenland District Council ones?

A. No, we will not service brown bins that do not meet our specification (including make, model and logos), so cannot offer the service using other bins.



Find out more at
fenland.gov.uk/gardenwaste



Q. Are all properties suitable for this service?

A. We will do our best to help customers access the service. However, not all properties are suitable for this service. This may be due to access restrictions for our collection vehicles or lack of space to either store the bin or place it out for collection. We reserve the right to decide whether we can provide the Garden Waste Recycling Service via the brown bin.

Q. Why does the Council charge for garden waste collections?

A. The Council does not have a statutory duty to collect garden waste, but can make a reasonable charge where the service is offered. Some customers in Fenland do not have gardens and many householders compost at home. Therefore, with the pressure on funding and services, the decision was made that those customers who use the service should fund the service.

Q. Can I pay by instalments?

A. Due to very low demand, there is no longer an instalment option for the garden waste subscription.

Q. Can I put food waste in the brown bin?

A. No, food waste must not be placed in the brown bin. The brown bin is for garden waste only, such as grass cuttings, leaves, weeds, and branches. Starting in summer 2026, you will be able to recycle all your food and vegetable waste through the Council's new weekly food waste recycling collections. More information is available at: fenland.gov.uk/foodwaste

Q. Will I still pay the full subscription if I sign up part way through the year?

A. Yes, you can sign up to receive the service at any point during the year. The annual subscription runs from 1 April until 31 March each year. If you sign up part way through the year you will be charged for the full year. The subscription will need renewing before the next April for the service to continue.

Q. Where can I buy a home composter?

A. We offer cost-price compost bins and food waste digesters. This is a good alternative to paying for a collection or taking garden waste to a Household Recycling Centre. You will also create great compost to use at home. These are available at getcomposting.com or by phoning 0800 316 4454.

Q. What happens if I move house?

A. If you move to another property within Fenland and wish to continue using the Garden Waste Recycling Service, please complete the change of address form online at fenland.gov.uk/gardenwaste or call 01354 654321.

Your garden waste bin must remain at your current property and cannot be taken with you. If you move out of the Fenland area, refunds for part-year subscriptions are not available.

However, any remaining subscription period can be used by the new occupiers of the property.



Find out more at
fenland.gov.uk/gardenwaste