

Northumberland County Council garden waste service terms and conditions

By subscribing to the garden waste collection service, you accept the following terms and conditions:

1. Service description

The garden waste collection service runs from March to November/ December and is chargeable. The Council will carry out a maximum of 20 garden waste collections per household during this period. A sticker and a garden waste bin will be provided (where appropriate), which will be emptied on a day specified by the Council once in every two weeks.

2. Service eligibility

The Council will make every effort to offer its garden waste collection service to all households where it is operationally practicable to do so within current resources. Each collection area/ property must be easily accessible by the refuse collection vehicle which operates in that area. This includes being able to empty bins and manoeuvre the collection vehicles (turn around) easily and safely. The scheme is only available to those properties with gardens that lie within the identified scheme area. Collections will only be offered to properties on either an adopted or planned adopted highway.

3. Application process / payment

Residents will be required to subscribe to the garden waste collection service on an annual basis. Incentive schemes may be offered to / or removed from the residents at the Council's discretion and will be promoted by the Council. The Council reserves the right to refuse an application for the garden waste collection service where it is not operationally practicable to do so within current resources. Payment can be made by various methods including via internet, over the telephone (but not via the automated payment telephone line) or at Council Information Centres (please note, cash payments will not be accepted at Council Information Centres). Purchase of a subscription includes acceptance of these terms and conditions. Residents can register throughout the year. Later registrations will receive fewer collections during the period of the service and no refunds will be given. The annual fee is for the collection season, regardless of when you sign up and no discount is offered if you sign up later in the year. Upon receipt of payment the Council will issue a garden waste sticker and a garden waste bin (where appropriate). We aim to deliver a bin within 5 working days of clearance of payment. (Exemptions to this clause apply during inclement weather, in cases of operational difficulty or any event of 'Force Majeure' and during the winter suspension period of December to February inclusive). Renewal notices are sent out in advance. If you do not renew, collections will stop without further notice from March of the renewal year. The Council reserves the right to vary the fee. Appropriate notice will be given prior to any alteration. The Council has a duty to keep records up to date, therefore there is a requirement of customers to notify the Council of any changes to their personal details.

4. Sticker

Your proof-of-payment sticker is sent after your renewal payment is cleared. For the bin to be collected, the sticker must remain attached to the outside of the lid as instructed.

5. Refunds

Except where cancelled in accordance with clause 14, no refunds will be provided for cancellation of the service. If there is any misuse of the service or the garden waste bins for that household, then the service may be cancelled by the Council; there will be no refund in these circumstances. If a collection has been missed by the Council, every effort will be made to rectify the problem. Where it is not possible to do so, there will be no refund or partial refund offered.

6. The garden waste bin

The garden waste bin(s) is provided for use by household(s) but remains the property of the Council (except for those householders in the former district of Blyth Valley Borough Council who can demonstrate that they paid for and received their own garden waste bin, where the bin remains the property of those households). If requested, households will be provided with additional garden waste bins at an additional cost for each bin serviced (Price correct for 2022 season). Only garden waste bins supplied by the Council for garden waste collections will be emptied. Garden waste bins presented in any other container will not be collected. Requests for garden waste bins will be logged and issued by the Council within 5 working days of payment being made. (Exemptions to this clause apply during inclement weather, in cases of operational difficulty or any event of 'Force Majeure' and during the winter suspension period of December to February inclusive). The garden waste bins will be supplied clean and in a useable condition. The head of the household is responsible for the general condition and cleaning of the garden waste bin whilst in their possession. The Council will accept no liability for garden waste bins used for any other purpose other than for the collection of garden waste. Misused garden waste bins may be removed, and no refund will be offered. A charge may be levied for bins damaged through neglect or misuse by householders. On payment of the annual subscription the Council will issue each household with a bin sticker. Stickers issued by the Council for the garden waste collection service must be placed on the outside lid of the garden waste bin by the householder. Only bins displaying a valid garden waste sticker will be collected from March onwards. If you have not received a sticker that you have paid for, please contact Northumberland County Council on 0345 600 6400. Garden waste bins must be put out before 7am on collection day. Collection times can vary from collection to collection. Please take your bin back in as soon as possible after collection. Do not obstruct pavements or roads. Excessively heavy garden waste bins will not be emptied if collection staff consider there is any risk of injury to staff or damage to the bin or vehicle. Lightening the bin is the householder's responsibility. If your wheeled bin is damaged or lost, there may be a charge for a replacement. Bins remain the property of Northumberland County Council unless otherwise agreed. Contact the council if you move within Northumberland and want to take the bin with you, or if you wish to end the service. If you don't contact us, then we will continue emptying it for the new resident.

If you chose not to subscribe to the garden waste service by notifying us that you no longer wish to have the service or by failing to pay your annual subscription, we will remove the wheel bin provided unless you can prove you own the bin, and re use it for providing the service to other subscribing households. We will write to you informing of our intention to retrieve the bin ask you to leave it empty in an accessible location on your property ready for collection.

7. Collections

- The Council endeavours to make fortnightly garden waste collections. These may be suspended, such as in severe weather, without notice or compensation. A catch-up collection may not be possible. Waste collections after bank holidays are usually a day late, check www.northumberland.gov.uk for up-to-date information.
- The council reserves the right to vary these terms and conditions at any time without notice. For the latest version, service guidance and updates, contact the council's customer services or see www.northumberland.gov.uk/garden

8. Presenting garden waste bins

Garden waste bins must be presented at the agreed collection point, usually at the kerbside on the boundary of the property, which is identified by the postal address and by 7.00am on the day of collection. After emptying, the garden waste bins will be returned to the boundary of the property. It is the resident's responsibility to ensure that the garden waste bins are brought back onto their property the same day. Properties that have an agreed special circumstances collection that has been arranged by the Council must place the garden waste bin at the agreed collection point by 7.00 am on the specified collection day.

9. Assisted collections (help to put your bin out)

An assisted collection service is available upon request for eligible households. If you already receive assisted collections and you are eligible for the Garden Waste Collection Service, then please contact us to discuss your Garden waste service needs.

10. Appeals process

You have the right to appeal to the Council if your property has been excluded from the scheme, but you feel that your property is eligible, based on the criteria outlined in clause 2 above. A review of all relevant information submitted will be undertaken by the Council but if the appeal is not upheld no further appeals may be submitted unless there has been a change in your circumstances. You can appeal by completing an online complaints form or by contacting Customer Services. N.B The appeal should contain reasons why you feel your property meets the eligibility criteria set out in clause 2 together with any supporting information.

11. Missed garden waste bins

Garden waste bins are to be presented for collection by 7.00am on the designated day of collection. If garden waste bins are not presented by 7.00am on the day of collection at the agreed location, garden waste bins cannot be reported as missed and will not be considered as a 'missed' collection. Responsibility for disposal of the garden waste will then become that of the householder. Garden waste bins not presented for collection at the time the bin crew arrive at the property will be recorded on the round sheet which will be submitted to the supervising officer at the end of the working day. If a bin is recorded on the round sheet as 'not presented' responsibility for disposal will become that of the householder and the Council will not return to collect the garden waste. Should a missed collection be reported on the designated day of collection (subject to the record sheet not showing the bin as being 'not presented' for collection) where possible, the Council will return and collect the garden waste within the same collection week. In the event of sustained adverse weather such as severe snow and ice the service may be suspended. Attempts will be made to return and empty the bin where practicable however collections cannot be guaranteed. There will be no refunds in any circumstances where collections do not take place. Where householders do not present their garden waste bin for collection in accordance with the Council's requirements, the householder will have the following options: • Take the garden waste to the Household Waste Recovery Centre (HWRC) – a permit may be required • Store the garden waste until the next garden waste collection day • Contact the Council to arrange and pay for a bulky waste collection All garden waste must be presented safely and suitably in the bin provided on the next collection day.

12. Moving house

The scheme relates to a collection service from a particular property or household. The service is not transferable outside Northumberland County. The payment made is for the garden waste collection service for that property only. If you move house, please leave the garden waste bin at the property. If you move house and would like to transfer the service to your new address, you need to contact the Council to see if that is possible. Where no transfer is possible within Northumberland then it is recommended that you make an arrangement with the new residents of your old property or that you cancel the service. The Council will not give any refunds or partial refunds for cancelled services out with the cancellation period (14 days from payment being made).

13. What can you put in your garden waste bin?

- Materials which are acceptable in garden waste bins include: leaves, bark, grass cuttings, hedge pruning; flowers, weeds, plants; branches less than 10cm/4" diameter; straw/sawdust (if bedding, only from household vegetarian pets).
- Materials NOT acceptable in garden waste bins include: plastic, metal, glass; food or food waste; soil, turf, compost, stone or rubble; plant pots; bedding from non-vegetarian animals, dead animals, nappies, any treated wood; branches over 10cm/4" diameter.

NB. Unfortunately, the Council cannot accept the following materials in Garden waste bins or at recycling sites include materials infected or suspected of being infected with Ash dieback (*Charala fraxinea*) or including Japanese Knotweed or Common Ragwort. Please contact us for advice on disposal of these materials. All materials placed in the garden waste bin should be loose ie. unwrapped. No side waste will be collected.

14. Your right to cancel the service

You have 14 working days - from the date you made your payment - to cancel the service. Requests to cancel the service must be either in writing or by email to: Waste Management Team Northumberland County Council County Hall Morpeth NE61 2EF Or by email to centralwasteteam@northumberland.gov.uk We have provided a form for you to use if you would like to print it, complete it and post or email it back to us. You will need to give us your full name and address and your Unique Garden waste property reference number (which is 12 digits long). The Council will retain your details for marketing purposes for the Council's waste related services for 1 year should you 'opt out' of the scheme.