

Why is food waste collection being introduced?

In October 2023, the government announced proposals for a change to recycling collections known as 'Simpler Recycling'. Simpler Recycling aims to increase recycling rates in a number of ways, including the expansion to the range of standard materials collected at the kerbside. This includes a mandatory requirement for Waste Collection Authorities (local councils) to operate a separate weekly household food waste collection in addition to your normal non-recyclable waste collection.

Who has been consulted over the introduction of separate weekly household food waste collections?

The changes to household kerbside waste collections are being introduced by the UK Government, who has consulted a range of stakeholders since 2021 including local councils and businesses.

When are local councils expected to start to separately collect food waste from households?

Individual Councils are currently working on timetables to roll out food waste collection. We are expecting food waste collections for households to start from Spring 2026.

What is being proposed in the Liverpool City Region?

At present, none of the Liverpool City Region Councils (except St Helens) separately collects food waste. Therefore Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority (MRWA), the Authority responsible for waste disposal in the Liverpool City Region, along with its contractor Veolia has explored a range of options to enable the handling of separately collected food waste at existing Transfer Facilities in Bidston, Huyton, Gillmoss and Southport.

As a result 3 new buildings are being proposed at Huyton, Gillmoss and Southport together with the redevelopment of an existing building at Bidston. These new buildings will accept the food waste from the councils, then the waste will be transferred away to other facilities to be recycled.

Why can't people just carry on putting food waste in their general household waste bin?

It will be a legal requirement for food waste to be collected separately at the kerbside. Recycling your food waste is better for the environment and will be used to generate natural forms of energy and fertiliser which can be used beneficially in farming.

What controls and regulations must be adhered to when storing food waste?

All waste facilities are required to operate in accordance with the site's waste permit, these are issued and monitored by the Environment Agency, who regularly inspect the facilities. All waste arisings from households is subject to appropriate legislation. In addition, the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) also has responsibility for monitoring facilities that handle food waste.

The buildings will be constructed and operated to meet the relevant legally defined standards for household and commercial food waste management.

The new buildings will improve the way we manage food waste at the sites, allowing us to keep it separate from other wastes and ensure it is transferred away from the site more quickly.

What will the new buildings look like?

The proposed buildings will be modular in construction. These buildings provide several key benefits: speed of construction, cost efficiency, flexibility and reduced disruption to existing operations. Please see below examples of the proposed buildings. To reiterate, the buildings will be built at existing Transfer Facilities.



How do the new buildings protect the environment?

The buildings will be fitted with fast acting roller shutter doors and dust suppression equipment, all designed to meet the highest standards of operational and environmental control. Coupled with the more frequent removal of this waste any risk to the environment is greatly reduced compared to handling it within the current residual/black bag collection methodology. The buildings will also be washed down and disinfected on a daily basis.

Please keep in mind that food waste is already being accepted at the Transfer Facilities, as it is contained in the contents of general black bin bag waste, it's just that it will be collected and stored separately before being transferred to external recycling facilities more frequently. For the avoidance of doubt there is no "new" waste, as such.

When is all this happening?

The facilities will need to be ready to accept kerbside food waste collections by 31st March 2026.

We have engaged with the relevant authorities and made them aware of the proposed buildings. This engagement has involved discussions to understand and identify potential issues and gather feedback on the proposed developments. Formal planning applications at three of the sites (Huyton, Gillmoss and Southport) have been prepared for submission on 21st February 2025. Veolia has already received approval for a Lawful Development Certificate from Wirral Planning Authority for the facility at Bidston.

Site surveys and investigation works have been completed and design work is taking place. This will be incorporated into the tender document for the development phase of the project in due course.

The development phase is expected to commence June 2025 with completion expected in December 2025.

Following completion of the development phase the food waste facilities will be assessed by APHA and licenced for handling food waste prior to becoming operational.

What will happen to the collected food waste?

The collected food waste will be sent to Anaerobic Digestion (AD) Facilities, where it will be processed and recycled to produce biogas (an alternative to fossil fuels) and a fertiliser for beneficial use in farming.

What are the benefits to residents?

Everyone has their part to play in recycling their household waste. Simpler Recycling will work towards increasing recycling levels, reducing the amount of non recyclable residual waste, cutting carbon emissions and will help to deliver the goal of a net zero carbon Liverpool City Region by 2040. The collection and subsequent recycling of food waste will be vital in achieving this goal.