

8 March 2022

Temporary suspension of recycling collection services due to GMB union strike action

Due to the impact of ongoing industrial action, Wiltshire Council and Hills Municipal Collections have made the decision to temporarily suspend recycling services in the county for two weeks, in order to prioritise household residual waste collections.

The current industrial action has impacted the county's waste collection services. This has had a knock-on effect for other collections during the coming days.

As a result of this action, Wiltshire Council and Hills have decided to suspend emptying recycling bins across the county for two weeks, with the service expected to resume again week beginning 21 March. If people have already put out their black boxes and blue lidded bins they should take them back in until their next scheduled collection date. When recycling collections do resume, the waste teams will accept additional recycling materials that have been stockpiled during this time. This means people will be able to leave out additional materials in separate bags/suitable containers by their bins if they can't fit it in their containers.

Cllr Dr Mark McClelland, Wiltshire Council Cabinet Member for waste, said: "Despite the industrial action, we still have managed to complete many waste rounds across the county, and we thank people for their patience as we look to catch-up on those missed residual household waste collections as quickly as possible, and these have to be the priority.

"Due to the position of the pickets at Churchfields, it meant that frustratingly no vehicles were able to get through at that depot on Monday, which resulted in police being called to the site. This has had a knock-on effect on our collection services. Similar difficulties with vehicles being blocked from leaving were experienced at the Riverway depot early on Tuesday morning.

"We always expected that collections during this period were going to be fluid and we apologise for the inconvenience this is causing, but we're doing everything we can to minimise the disruption during this complex and unprecedented time.

"One of our contingency plans, which we hoped we wouldn't need to implement, was to temporarily suspend recycling services. This means we can prioritise general waste collections, and people should leave their general waste bin out at 7am on their usual collection day, and it will be emptied - though it may be a day or so late.

"We know it's not ideal but we ask that people keep their kerbside recycling back and take their black boxes and blue lidded bins in until their scheduled collection day after 21 March, or please take the materials to your nearest household recycling centre, as they are operating as normal.

"This dispute is between Hills and the GMB Union, and we hope it is resolved as quickly as possible, so residents can continue to benefit from the range of collections we provide."

This change does not affect general household waste or garden waste collections. People are asked to continue to put out their household waste and garden waste bins on their scheduled collection day by 7am, and if they're not collected, to leave them out and where possible they will be collected the next day.

For the latest updates on any disruption or changes to waste collection services, people are asked to keep an eye on Wiltshire Council's Twitter feed at <https://twitter.com/wiltscouncil>

Details about Household Recycling Centres can be found at <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/household-recycling-centre-locations>

Notes to editors:

Wiltshire Council awarded a contract to Hills Municipal Collections in 2018 to collect waste and recycling from all homes in Wiltshire. The service includes black bag waste, recyclables and green waste, as well as clinical, bulky waste and bin deliveries. The service collects from over 220,000 homes in Wiltshire which receive a fortnightly collection of waste and recyclables.

Media contact:

Monique Hayes, Group communications manager, The Hills Group Limited

Tel: 01793 781200 info@hills-group.co.uk