

September 2007

Dear Resident

Compulsory recycling trial in your area

I am writing to let you know that from 1 October 2007, there will be two important changes to your recycling service. These include making recycling compulsory.

1. It will be compulsory for all Hammersmith & Fulham residents in street properties, north of the Goldhawk Road, to recycle the materials listed on the reverse of this letter using the orange Smart Sack recycling service.

Your recycling collection day is on

2. The council has listened to residents' feedback and is adding the facility to recycle food and drink cartons to all the other materials accepted by the Smart Sack collection service. Please note that this development is very new, so this information supersedes all information previously distributed by the council regarding which materials can and cannot be recycled.

We collect recycling weekly and will be closely monitoring which households are not participating. If you are found not to be taking part, a member of the recycling team will visit you to answer any questions you may have and assist you in recycling your rubbish. Our aim is to make the transition to a compulsory scheme as easy as possible for residents. Many of you already recycle your rubbish and the aim of this scheme is to encourage others who don't to do their bit.

Residents who persistently and deliberately fail to recycle (and are putting out rubbish for collection) may be served with a formal legal notice and issued with a £100 fixed penalty.

Recycling targets are set at a national level by central Government, with local councils being fined if they do not meet their individual targets. Your help in achieving these recycling targets is essential. Recycling in Hammersmith & Fulham using the Smart Sack service is quick and easy, beneficial for everyone and is an important part of creating a cleaner and greener borough. Recycling helps us to minimise waste sent to landfill for disposal, decreases the impact waste has on our environment and reduces the effects of climate change. By reducing the costs of waste disposal, it also helps us to keep the council tax down.

Please see the frequently asked questions on the back of this letter. If you have any further questions about these changes to your recycling service, please phone the recycling hotline on 020 8753 1100 or visit www.lbhf.gov.uk/recycling

Yours sincerely
Councillor Nicholas Botterill
Deputy Leader of the Council

Your questions answered

Why introduce compulsory recycling?

Hammersmith & Fulham is currently recycling over 24% of its household waste. However, in order to meet our recycling target of 30% by 2010, it is essential that all residents take part in our weekly recycling service.

What happens if Hammersmith & Fulham doesn't increase its recycling rates?

The cost of disposing of un-recycled waste to landfill is increasing and the government is introducing a whole range of financial penalties for councils which fail to recycle enough. Financial penalties could lead to higher council tax bills.

Is compulsory recycling legal?

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the council can legally require residents to use particular containers or sacks for different waste materials. In this new scheme, the council does not allow residents to put the recyclable materials listed below in their black sacks or bins for disposal. These must instead be placed in an orange Smart Sack for recycling.

What do I put in the orange sack?

- Paper and card – newspapers; junk mail; magazines; directories and cardboard packaging
- Glass bottles and jars of all colours (please rinse and remove lids)
- Drink cans, food tins (please rinse before recycling) and used aerosols
- Plastic bottles (please rinse and remove lids)
- Food and drink cartons (please rinse before recycling).

The following should not be put in the Smart Sack - food waste; garden waste; plastic food packaging; plastic cups; margarine tubs/yogurt pots; paper towels and tissues; nappies; crisp packets; sweet wrappers; food contaminated paper and card; plastic carrier bags and polystyrene.

How do I get the orange Smart Sacks?

Orange sacks are free and packs of 30 sacks are delivered to your door three times a year. If you need more, these can be collected from one of the designated pick up points. Call the hotline on 020 8753 1100 to find your most convenient point.

How is my recycling collected?

Place your securely tied Smart Sacks either just inside your front garden where they can be clearly seen from the street, or on the kerbside immediately outside your property. To make sure your recycling is collected, please place your Smart Sack out before 6.30am on your collection day or after 9.00pm the night before. Please do not leave your sack out at any other time as you may incur a fine for unlawful dumping.

What if I am physically unable to lift the recycling sack?

Elderly and disabled residents can get help by asking for an assisted collection. Phone the hotline on 020 8753 1100 to make these arrangements.

What if I live in a flat?

Compulsory recycling applies to all households that have a kerbside collection of refuse and recycling. So for example, if you live in a block of flats and your waste is collected from large shared wheeled bins, compulsory recycling will not apply initially. Recycling is however important regardless of where you live, so we do encourage residents living in flats to recycle as much as they can by using the Smart Banks located on their estates. These accept exactly the same range of materials for recycling as the Smart Sacks.

I heard that all materials collected for recycling go to landfill anyway. Is this true?

This is not true. A great deal of work goes into finding appropriate markets and destinations for recyclable materials. Occasionally some batches of recyclable materials are rejected due to contamination with other materials and have to be put into the general waste stream. Please help us to minimise contamination by only recycling the items we have requested.