

# SIMPLER RECYCLING GUIDE

For businesses, public sector organisations and charities







# WHAT IS SIMPLER RECYCLING?

**Simpler Recycling will help deliver improved recycling requirements in England. By ending the confusion over what can and can't be recycled, the legislation will support both households and businesses to recycle more and reach the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (DEFRA) recycling target of 65%, as part of the Government's wider Resources and Waste Strategy.**

This includes the already introduced Plastic Packaging Tax, Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging (pEPR) and a Deposit Return Scheme.

Collectively, this should help to reduce contamination and stimulate a recycled plastic market.

All businesses and other non-household premises with 10 or more Full Time Equivalent Employees (FTE) must separate plastic, paper and card, glass, metals (cans, tins and foil) and food waste from general waste, saving valuable resources from going to waste and supporting the circular economy in the UK.

## Am I affected by Simpler Recycling?

**Yes.** These new regulations will affect everyone in time. Please see the timeline to find out when you will be affected by the regulations.

## When is it coming into place?

### Phase 1 (31st March 2025):

- Mandatory segregation and collection of dry recyclable materials and food waste for **businesses and non-household premises with 10+FTE in England.**

### Phase 2 (31st March 2026):

- Mandatory segregation and collection of dry recyclable materials and separate weekly food waste collections (which can be combined with garden waste) for households.

### Phase 3 (31st March 2027):

- Mandatory segregation and collection of dry recyclable materials and food waste rolled out to **businesses and non-household premises with less than 10 FTE (micro-firms) in England.**
- **Plastic films packaging and in-scope plastic bags** to be collected for **businesses and households.**



# WHAT DOES SIMPLER RECYCLING MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

## What are the materials in scope?



### Glass

- Glass packaging including bottles and jars



### Metal

- Steel and aluminium tins and cans
- Steel and aluminium aerosols
- Steel and aluminium jars/bottle lids
- Aluminium foil
- Aluminium food trays
- Aluminium tubes



### Plastic

- Plastic bottles made from polyethylene terephthalate (PET, including amorphous, recycled PET), polypropylene (PP) and high-density polyethylene (HDPE)
- Pots, tubs and trays made of PET
- PE/PP plastic tubes larger than 50mmx50mm
- Cartons for food, drink and other liquids, including aseptic and chilled cartons



### Plastic from 2027

Plastic film packaging and plastic bags made of mono-polyethylene (mono-PE), mono polypropylene (mono PP) and mixed polyolefins PE and PP **(NEW)\***

*\*via pEPR DEFRA is encouraging mono-polyolefin (aka mono-material polyolefin) design to improve material quality and film-to-film recycling.*



### Paper & Cardboard

All paper and card are in scope:

**\*Except** the following:

- Paper and card that contains glitter or foil
- Paper that is laminated
- Stickers and sticky paper
- Padded lined envelopes
- Paperback and hardback books
- Wallpaper



### Food

- All food intended for human or household pet consumption
- Food waste from the processing or preparation of food, including inedible food parts such as bones, eggshells, fruit and vegetable skins, tea bags and coffee grounds

DEFRA is taking a flexible approach to Simpler Recycling so Local Authorities and waste collection companies can flex the solutions to suit their customers' needs.

For businesses and public organisations, Veolia will take a pragmatic approach to ensure you achieve your environmental performance with efficient and compliant services.

We will therefore continue to collect dry recyclates in one container also known as DMR (Dry Mixed Recycling) and offer separate cardboard and paper collections as appropriate. We will continue to collect glass separately from DMR to maximise recycle rates. We will also offer a separate food waste collection.

## When will your business be in scope?

- Businesses with 10 or more FTEs must be ready by 31st March 2025
- Businesses with less than 10 FTEs must be ready by 31st March 2027

The FTE criteria applies to the business as a whole, not by site.

## Examples:

**A business has 3 sites with 3 FTEs at each site**  
> Total FTE = 9 > Simpler Recycling in March 2027

**A business has 1 site with 10 FTEs**  
> Total FTE = 10 > Simpler Recycling in March 2025

**A business has 12 sites with 1 FTE at each site**  
> Total FTE = 12 > Simpler Recycling in March 2025



**Dry Mixed Recyclables Collection (Metal, Plastic, Paper & Card)**  
(with items in scope)

**Cardboard collections**  
(where appropriate)



**Food Waste Collection**  
(if food waste is produced) > Caddies available for small producers



**Glass Collection**  
(if glass is produced) > 140l bin available for small producers

# ROADMAP TO SUCCESS

Follow these steps to help you comply with the regulations and achieve success:

## 1 Understand your waste

Carry out a waste audit.

### What waste is your business producing?

- To understand the waste your site produces, we would advise you to start a trial segregation of your waste for a week to quantify the volumes you generate. This can be done by weight, bin bags or photos. This can then be shared with us and we will advise on the correct containers you require.

### Do you have the correct infrastructure/ bins in place?

- Review your current services to assess what additional services you might need.

We will support you with this assessment and we will capture either via your Account Manager, our dedicated Simpler Recycling Team or a Google form the following key information:

- Confirmation of the number of FTE your business has.
- Waste streams you have collected by a third party provider.
- The amount of food waste and glass you produce weekly.

This will allow us to assess your compliance at site level.

## 2 Switch early

We will review the information you provided us to propose a comprehensive solution that is best suited to your waste profile and operations.

*Make sure you switch early!*

By being **proactive** you can ensure you are compliant on time and avoid potential legislative fines.

Conduct your audit **today** and receive your plan which will allow you to order your recycling bins in time and avoid a bottleneck in March, should everyone decide to wait.

You'll see an increase in your recycling rates earlier and avoid unnecessary stress. This will help you bolster your business's sustainability and resilience.

## 3 Check your internal waste arrangements

By sorting your waste correctly inside your premises, you will increase the quality of the material at the collection point. This will support and ensure your compliance and avoid contamination which will lead to your collections being rejected in the future.

- Make sure all containers are clearly labelled.
- Ensure your containers inside your premises match those outside.
- Ensure they are placed strategically where the waste is produced.
- Bring your employees on the journey with you. Early communication and educational materials shared with all employees is crucial to compliance.

Veolia offers a range of internal containers to help you sort your waste, whether you want them to be branded or as small as possible to address any concern with space.



## 4 Brief your team

Ensure you arrange meetings with your team to talk them through the new system and what needs to be recycled.

- Clear signage is key - Veolia can support you with posters and stickers you can place in communal areas and/or above bins.
- We are developing a new training suite which will be available on Veolia's Customer Hub. Make sure all your staff have been trained and think of making it part of the induction for any future employees joining your business.
- Ensure everyone who interacts with your waste is briefed. This includes cleaning companies you might outsource. This is important so all your efforts don't fall apart.

## 5 Celebrate your success

- By separating your waste, more of it can be recycled.
- Veolia can support you by tracking your progress through monthly monitoring which can provide bespoke recommendations to help you to continue improving.
- Share your success with your teams to show them their hard work and dedication has an impact and a purpose.





# FAQs

## I am part of a centrally managed location and share a bin store, how will we be able to demonstrate we are compliant?

**Answer:** You will need to demonstrate that you are segregating the materials in scope under Simpler Recycling at site level. Therefore, you will need to have containers for recyclates, food and glass (if you produce it).

## What happens if I don't have enough room for all the containers required?

**Answer:** We have a large choice of containers you can choose from and we can flex your collection frequency as well to ensure we provide a solution which fits with the space you have on site.

## What happens if I require daily collections and Veolia can't fulfil my requirements?

**Answer:** We will always aim to carry the service we provide to you on our own wheels. When this is not possible, we work closely with a range of trusted partners who will be able to deliver the service on our behalf.

## Our waste is backhauled, do I still need to segregate it?

**Answer:** Yes, as if you do not segregate at the point the waste is created, you will not achieve good separation once it has been backhauled.

## How do I know what volumes I will produce in order to get the correct size containers?

**Answer:** We would advise you to start a trial segregation of your waste for a week to quantify the volumes you generate. This can be by weight, bin bags or photos. This can then be shared with us and we will advise on the correct container.

## Will it cost me more, or is it cost neutral?

**Answer:** This will really depend on the current services and collection frequency you have and your future needs. Recycling is not always the cheapest option but it is the right one for a more sustainable future.

## What's the size of containers available?

**Answer:** We have a wide range of containers available from caddies for food and glass to 1100l containers to suit your needs and operations on site.

## Who is responsible for reporting / managing breaches: collection companies or councils? Do we know what the impact of these will be?

**Answer:** Collection companies will be responsible for reporting breaches as well as anyone from the public. We do not have visibility yet of the fines associated with these breaches.

## If my waste is not collected, am I responsible if it becomes contaminated? And how will this be collected?

**Answer:** If we miss one of your collection, we always aim to recover within 24 hours so this shouldn't impact the quality of the material you have segregated.

## Will Veolia be able to support my business with segregation processes, training and coaching my employees?

**Answer:** We are reviewing our training materials so they match the requirements under Simpler Recycling. These materials will be available in the Customer Hub.

## Will there be an option for recycling bag services for food and glass? (Many of our sites have no bins due to spatial restrictions, what is the solution here?)

**Answer:** For any sites which have spatial restrictions, we will offer a small caddy service for food and glass. Glass is not safe to be collected in a bag and food that is not stored in a container could lead to pest issues on your sites.

## Why can't I put my glass in my DMR containers despite the legislation saying I can do it?

**Answer:** Although the legislation states you can put your glass in your DMR, in reality, only 67% of Material Recycling Facilities where your recycling goes are equipped to handle glass. This means your glass could end up not being recycled at all. By segregating glass from other recyclables, the overall efficiency and effectiveness of recycling programmes can be improved, leading to better environmental outcomes and more sustainable waste management practices.

## Are student accommodation facilities in scope in 2025 or 2026?

**Answer:** Following legal consultancy by Unite Students and confirmation from local councils for Fresh Property (both student accommodation providers), we can confirm that the student accommodation locations are classified as residential and therefore are required to align with Simpler Recycling from 31st March 2026.



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