



**Environment Services
Waste Services**

Customer Service Pledge

This Customer Service Pledge has been developed to provide information for our customers about the services we provide and our commitment to provide a quality service in line with Stirling Council standards and customer care commitments. We will continue to review our services and further develop our Customer Service Pledge in line with any changes to our operations and working practices where they will affect our customers.

The Waste Service strives to provide good, reliable and efficient services for all our customers. We believe in delivering a continuously improving service by committing ourselves to a clear set of standards and constantly reviewing what we have achieved. We will keep our customers informed by publishing information relating to service delivery arrangements and performance indicators.

Stirling Council

Waste Service Customer Service Pledge

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1.0 Purpose of the Document

This document outlines the customer service pledge of the domestic (including kerbside recycling and household waste recycling facilities) and commercial waste collection service within Stirling Council's Waste Services. It aims to clarify the rights and responsibilities of both employees and customers of the service in line with corporate policies towards customer care.

2.0 Our Service

Stirling Council's Waste Service department operates throughout the Stirling Council area offering a collection service to households and businesses. The new household collection service is now operational in over 95% of the households in Stirling. It works using two wheeled bins and a recycling box system. Mixed waste and compostable green waste is collected on alternate weeks and a kerbside recycling collection operates weekly. New vehicles are currently being introduced to increase the efficiency of wheeled bin collection. All households within the council area are entitled to a free collection service from the council in the receptacles provided by the service. Any customers who do not receive a collection service can contact the councils Contact Centre where their enquiry will be recorded and passed on to the collection service to be included on an appropriate route. The service also operates four Household Waste Recycling Facilities (HWRFs) where customers can take additional waste and recyclates. These facilities are free of charge to householders.

A commercial collection service is also offered across the council area. Waste Services will provide appropriately sized containers for collection and will collect the waste on a pre-determined day for a charge. Additionally, commercial customers who want to take mixed or green waste to the facility at Lower Polmaise can do so by purchasing pre-paid tickets from the reception at Viewforth. To find out more about commercial waste collections, to set up an account or to find out more about the pre-paid vouchers, customers can contact the councils Contact Centre where their enquiry will be passed to the Commercial Waste Team for action.

The service contact details are in section 11 of this document.

3.0 Stirling Councils' Customer Champions Board and Waste Services

Waste Services is dedicated to developing our Customer Service Pledge in line with the council-wide standard developed by the Customer Champions Board. The Board was established in July 2004 to address the council's commitment to developing a consistent and improved customer service agenda across the services within the council. Waste Services has adopted the Councils Values and Strategic Aims and the Customer Service Pledge.

3.1 Values and Strategic Aims

Values

- To make access to the Council as easy as possible and to listen and respond.
- Encourage open communication and working together across services and with other organisations to achieve best results.

Strategic Aims

- Promoting Social Inclusion by progressing the Social Charter themes of information, participation and choice.
- Delivering Quality and Best value by looking at new ways of delivering services and by helping the Council to listen to and give feedback on customers' views.

3.2 Stirling Council Customer Service Pledge

Service Quality

- We publicise information about service standards.
- We deliver to our customers consistently good, reliable and efficient services, on time.
- We make every effort to get it right first time and acknowledge it if we don't.
- We plan our services to meet customer needs.
- We make our services as accessible as possible for all our customers.
- We strive to continuously improve our services, working co-operatively with partner agencies.

Customer Care

- We serve all our customers with dignity, courtesy and respect responding to their individual needs.
- We inform our customers when we cannot do as much as they expect together with the reasons.
- We respond to our customers' requests, comments and complaints promptly.
- We work with our customers to develop their trust and confidence in our service delivery.
- We respect customers' rights and promote responsibility.
- We keep our customers informed by providing information on service delivery arrangements and on how to get service in other ways.

In Waste Services, operatives come into daily contact with customers. We are working to improve the customer service training and literature available to our staff including the opportunity to take part in the council's own customer services development programme which is operated in partnership with The Institute of Customer Service (ICS). Successful completion of this work-based programme will lead to a formal customer services qualification.

4.0 Waste Service Standards – What we'll do for you

Waste Services strives to provide a reliable, affordable, quality service that meets the expectations of our customers and the national drive towards waste reduction and recycling. When we cannot meet our customers' aspirations we will explain the reasons for this and where possible suggest an alternative option. At all times we will treat our customers and their property with courtesy and respect. Our service standards are as follows:

4.1 Commercial Waste Collection

- If a bin is presented on time and we miss it, we will endeavour to collect it within 2 working days.
- If there are any spillages of waste during collection we will clean it up.
- Excess Waste not contained within a bin will not be collected, e.g. waste presented at the side of the bin.
- Bin lids should be closed wherever possible. Overflowing bins present a health and safety hazard and may not be collected.
- Bins not presented at the correct location or time will not be collected until the next collection day. However, if the customer has a genuine reason for non-presentation and the service is returning to that area, we may collect the bin prior to the next scheduled collection if resources allow.
- We will visit businesses and provide advice about the type of container we can offer and advise customers on presentation location and collection arrangements as per our collection schedules.
- We offer a wide choice of quality containers - including secure containers where suitable.
- We offer a blue sack collection for businesses without a suitable location to store a bin.
- We will invoice customers in advance during the second week of each quarter and allow 14 days from invoice date to payment.
- Customers can choose their payment method - we accept Credit Card, Cheque or Standing Order payment.
- The Lower Polmaise site accepts mixed and green waste from commercial customers who have pre-paid vouchers. The vouchers permit the holder to dispose of up to half a tonne per voucher and can be bought from the Viewforth reception.
- Commercial users of the site who do not have enough vouchers for the waste they want to dispose of may be refused entry to the site or asked to weigh their vehicle on the weighbridge facility on site.

4.2 Household Waste & Recycling Collection

- If a bin is presented on time and we miss it, we will endeavour to collect it within 2 days.
- If there are any spillages of waste during collection we will clean it up.
- We will return your bin to the collection location once emptied – we may ask you to present your bin in a specified location to aid efficient collection.
- We will collect your bin on the allocated day of collection. If the service is running late, we will publicise this on the Councils website and aim to collect your bin as quickly as possible.
- We will provide suitable receptacles for waste storage and collection.
- Excess Waste not contained within a bin will not be collected, e.g. waste presented at the side of the bin.
- Bin lids should be closed wherever possible. Overflowing bins present a health and safety hazard and may not be collected.
- Contaminated brown bins and recycling boxes will not be uplifted. They will be marked with a bin hanger or sticker advising the customer of the reason why it has not been emptied. The bin or box will be uplifted on the next scheduled collection day provided the contamination has been removed.
- Bins not presented at the correct location or time will not be collected until the next collection day. However, if the customer has a genuine reason for non-presentation and the service is

returning to that area, we may collect the bin prior to the next scheduled collection if resources allow.

- For customers who are unable to present their bin at the kerbside, we will offer a pullout / return service on application.

4.3 Special Uplift Collection

- Special Uplifts can be arranged by contacting Stirling Council's Contact Centre or using the interactive facility on the Council's internet site. The minimum service charge is £23, with a sliding scale thereafter.
- For households where all residents are of pensionable age, uplift of standard items is free of charge. Non standard items are still chargeable.
- We will advise you of our expected collection day and ask you to present your waste for collection on that day. If the service is running late we will contact you and advise you of the rescheduled collection day.
- If there are any spillages of waste during collection we will clean it up and leave the collection area free from litter as a result of collection.
- We will uplift bulky household items from the kerbside provided they have been listed on your request for service.
- We will uplift all items on the list given by the customer at the time of arrangement. However, we will not uplift additional items not on the list.
- We will uplift fridges / freezers free of charge from all households. (A charge will be applied for uplift of commercial fridges / freezers.)

4.4 Household Waste Recycling Facilities (HWRFs)

- The largest HWRF is at Lower Polmaise former landfill site. We will accept all household waste and offer a wide range of recycling facilities. This facility is currently being extended and the new site is due to be opened during April 2007.
- All HWRFs are free of charge for household waste originating within the Stirling Council area.
- Any waste identified as having originated outside the Stirling Council area will be rejected from the site.
- All customers using the site will be encouraged to separate their waste and recycle as much as possible using the appropriate containers on site.
- As part of the legal Duty of Care waste operatives will query any loads which they suspect may be being presented as household waste but which has been generated by commercial work. They have a responsibility to reject any such loads.
- Our operatives on site will direct vehicles to unloading points and assist customers to safely unload items from their vehicles.
- All users on site are asked to follow the instructions of the waste operatives on site for health and safety reasons.
- Asbestos Waste is accepted at Lower Polmaise HWRF by prior arrangement. The site accepts safely wrapped asbestos waste on Wednesdays only. Customers requiring to dispose of asbestos should contact the Gatehouse on 01786 462859 to pre-book a minimum of 24 hours prior to delivery.
- The opening hours of the sites are:
 - Lower Polmaise Summer – 8.30am – 6pm (last entry at 5.45pm)
Winter – 8.30am – 5pm (last entry at 4.45pm)
This site is open 7 days a week – closed 25 December & 01 January
 - Callandar 10am – 2pm Saturday, 5pm – 8pm Monday – Friday
 - Balfroon 10am – 2pm Saturday, 5pm – 8pm Monday – Friday
 - Killin 11am – 3pm Saturday only

5.0 Why we may not empty a bin

Wherever possible we will uplift waste presented for collection. Sometimes we may not empty a bin. This can be for a number of reasons.

We may leave a bin if:

- A brown bin is contaminated – all brown bin waste is composted and cannot contain plastics and general mixed waste. Contaminated bins will be collected at the next scheduled collection day providing the contamination has been removed.
- The bin lid is open and protruding waste presents a Health & Safety risk – we have been faced with various hazards including a large piece of broken glass sticking out of a bin.
- A bin is over-filled and is too heavy to move – where two operatives together can move a bin we will try to uplift it as long as the operatives are happy they it is not too heavy for the lifting mechanism of the vehicle.
- The contents of the bin / uplift items are not suitable for the type of collection - please present the correct materials in the correct bin.
- Excess waste is presented. We will uplift the bin, but excess waste left at the side of the bin will not be collected.
- The bin has not been presented on time. Collection crews complete a beat sheet including information about non-presented bins. If a bin has not been presented at the agreed location and time / day we will not return to collect it until the next scheduled collection day. However, in certain circumstances, and if a crew is returning to the area, we may collect a non-presented bin prior to the next scheduled collection.
- We may have missed it. Occasionally the collection crews may miss a bin. If this happens we will return to collect the bin within 2 working days of it being reported.
- In the case of special uplifts, only items declared when initially requesting and processing payment for the uplift will be collected. Additional items will be left.

When a bin has been rejected, a sticker or tag will be placed on rejected bin indicating the reasons to the customer to allow them to present the bin properly for the next collection cycle.

6.0 Identification of Waste Collection Staff

In line with the Customer Champions Board recommendation that all Stirling Council staff should be identifiable, all Waste Services staff will carry, at all times, the following identification:

- An official Stirling Council identification pass, clearly displaying a photograph of that person.
- The card will clearly display the employee's name, title and main place of work and employee number.
- A contact phone number where the identification of the cardholder can be checked.
- All waste operatives will wear Stirling Council issued personal protective equipment that will enable them to be identified as employees of Stirling Council.

7.0 Health and Safety Commitment

We take the health and safety of both our employees and customers seriously and work within guidelines and legislation when carrying out our services.

- All Waste Collection's work will be carried out in accordance with the relevant Health and Safety legislation.
- As an employer, Stirling Council will, as far as is reasonably practical, secure the health, safety and welfare of all our employees.
- All Waste Collection's employees are aware of their responsibilities to take care of both their own health and safety, as well as those who may be affected by the work they do.
- All of Waste Collection's personnel will receive the required training to enable them to carry out their duties in accordance with the required standard.
- All risk assessments, chemical and substance assessments, method statements or other such documentation will be maintained within the service and reviewed on a regular basis to comply with the current legislation.
- Where we request our customers to present their bins for collection at a specified location, for example at the other side of the road, a risk assessment will be carried out prior to the request being made by a qualified risk assessor.
- When carrying out waste collection operations our staff will, as far as is reasonably practicable, protect the health and safety of the crew and members of the public in the vicinity. This may mean that they will not lift waste where it is unsafe to do so.

8.0 Standards of Behaviour

Stirling Council is committed to promoting dignity, fairness and respect with regards to the manner in which council services are delivered to all our customers. This extends to the way in which Waste Services operate.

All our employees are representatives of Stirling Council (and Waste Services) and as such are expected to promote a positive image of the Council at all times. The Council also has a duty of care to its employees in pursuit of their duties. Inappropriate behaviour and offensive language used by customers towards our employees will not be tolerated.

Stirling Council has adopted a Code of Conduct that invokes rights and responsibilities for all its employees. These include:

- The right to be listened to, but also the responsibility to listen to what others have to say
- The right to have their say, but the responsibility to respect others' point of view
- The right to be themselves, but the responsibility to value differences in others
- The right to be treated fairly, equally and equitably, with the responsibility to treat others fairly, equally and equitably
- The right to be treated with respect, together with the responsibility to treat others with respect

Whether speaking to another employee or a customer, employees and customers are asked to apply the rule "would you be happy to accept that form of behaviour if it was directed at you or a member of your family.

While at work, employees of Stirling Council are representatives of the council. To this end they should not express any political view or make discriminatory remarks while carrying out their work. This includes wearing football colours, displaying items in the vehicles that may cause offence, such as flags or banners.

Stirling Council's Waste Services will not tolerate any kind of abuse from either employees or customers. Reports of discrimination, intimidating behaviour or swearing from any party will be investigated and where appropriate, action will be taken.

9.0 How our customers can help us

The relationship we have with our customers is two-way. Customers can expect our commitment to the Customer Service pledge laid out in the previous sections. In turn, our employees have a right to expect certain standards of behaviour from our customers. Below are some guidelines on what staff should expect from our customers. This understanding will ensure the employee - customer relationship is as positive and supportive as possible.

It is reasonable for employees to expect the customer to:

- Be polite, courteous and non-threatening at all times towards Council employees.
- Treat council employees with respect.
- Listen to the advice / information given to them by an employee.
- Not behave in a way that puts themselves or others at risk.

All council employees have the right to feel safe while carrying out their role. Threatening or abusive behaviour from customers is a rare occurrence, and we hope to reduce it even more through our customer service pledge and training. However, it is the customers' responsibility to ensure they treat employees with respect and dignity.

10.0 Working together to provide a better, more reliable service

There are various ways in which working together can help us provide a better service. The following are things our customers can do to assist us:

- Present your bin at the designated collection point.
- Do not put excess waste at the side of your bin, it will not be collected.
- Try to ensure your bin lid is closed. Open bin lids can present a health & safety risk to passers by and employees.
- Place cardboard at the bottom of your brown bin and at regular intervals throughout it to prevent garden waste becoming lodged in the bin.
- Do not place any non-compostable (plastics, metals etc) waste in your brown bin. Contaminated bins will not be emptied until the contamination has been removed.
- Contact the Councils' Contact Centre if your bin goes missing to request a replacement – don't ask the collection staff, they are unable to carry a stock of bins / boxes on the vehicles.
- Contact the Contact Centre if you have any questions about, or are experiencing difficulties with the collection service for more advice and information.

11.0 Comments and Complaints - How are we doing?

The Waste Collection Service aims at all times to give our customers the best possible service. We invite you to tell us:

- When we fail to achieve our Service Standards.
- When we do well.
- How we may improve our service.

If we fail to meet our Customer Care Standards or you have a comment about our service to you, Stirling Council has a comments and complaints scheme called 'Talkback'. For more information about the Talkback scheme, please get in touch. We can be contacted in the following ways:

- Telephone 0845 277 000
- E-mail info@stirling.gov.uk
- Visit the website www.stirling.gov.uk for a range of online service requests including reporting a missed bin and requesting a replacement bin
- Write to the service – Waste Services, Stirling Council, Viewforth, FK8 2ET

This internal set of Service Standards does not affect any corporate Council Policy.