

# TENEMENT FOOD WASTE

let's get it  
sorted

And save  
£££s on your  
food  
shopping!



- CUT YOUR BILLS ● HELP THE ENVIRONMENT ● MAKE OUR CITY HEALTHIER
- EXCLUSIVE REPORT: LESSONS FROM BERLIN ● PLUS LOTS MORE INSIDE

# Welcome

HELLO, and welcome to South Seeds' guide to our project area's new food waste recycling system.

I'm really excited that my neighbours and me are getting a food waste bin. It was so sad to see the huge amount of food waste being put in our green bin, especially when this could be used instead to make compost for the many community gardens growing food for local people or to make biogas that can be burnt to generate electricity for Glasgow's households and businesses. Now it won't be left to rot in a hole in the ground, it's great!

But living in Govanhill, I also



see that just putting a food waste bin out the back is not the end of the story. How will those of my neighbours who don't have English as a first language or have difficulty reading know how to use the service? What about when they move out and new people move in – will they know what to do with the bin?

After a trip to Berlin this summer, I saw that there wasn't much communication with residents about the city's food waste service. And when I found out that just 16% of all food waste produced in Berlin is recycled, it made me think that if the benefits and 'how to' of the food waste recycling service were communicated better maybe more people would use it?

There's also so much money to be saved if we didn't waste food in the first place – could you do with an extra £460 a year? I know I could!

**Jo Hartga**  
South Seeds waste officer



Pupils launch the city's food waste service with Elaine McDougall, council executive member for transport, environment and sustainability

## So what's the problem?

ABOUT 30% of Glasgow's household rubbish is made up of food waste – some 50,000 tonnes per year.

When this food waste rots in landfill it produces climate-changing gases. Imagine 950 hot air balloons setting off from Glasgow Green – that's how much gas Glasgow's rotting food waste generates every year. And on average, Glasgow households could save up to £460 a year on their food shopping by cutting down on food waste.

Food waste collections for multi-occupancy buildings across Glasgow began to be rolled out by the city council in January 2016, with the introduction of the service planned to be completed by April 2017.

If the council can get the service right, the potential environmental and economic benefits are huge. The council has said it will introduce the system in Govanhill and the rest of the South Seeds project area from October to



Photograph courtesy of WRAP

November 2016. However, the collection service is likely to bring a number of challenges, particularly in high-density housing areas such as Govanhill where bin storage may cause health, security and logistical issues, while the relative 'anonymity' of the individual users of shared bins can increase the likelihood of their misuse.

The melting pot of languages and cultures present in Govanhill, along with some issues with poor literacy and regular changeovers of tenants, also presents a challenge in how to communicate the new service so that everyone knows why and how to use the bins properly.

GLASGOW'S food waste recycling service is one of the biggest such initiatives in Scotland reports **Scott Armstrong**, the city council's recycling manager for Govanhill, part of the South Seeds project area,

He said: "Most residents will have their new food waste caddy and liners, and large grey communal bin to dispose of their food waste. Every home in Glasgow received a letter advising them of the new service and a leaflet, which explains with pictures how to use the new service, including handy tips.

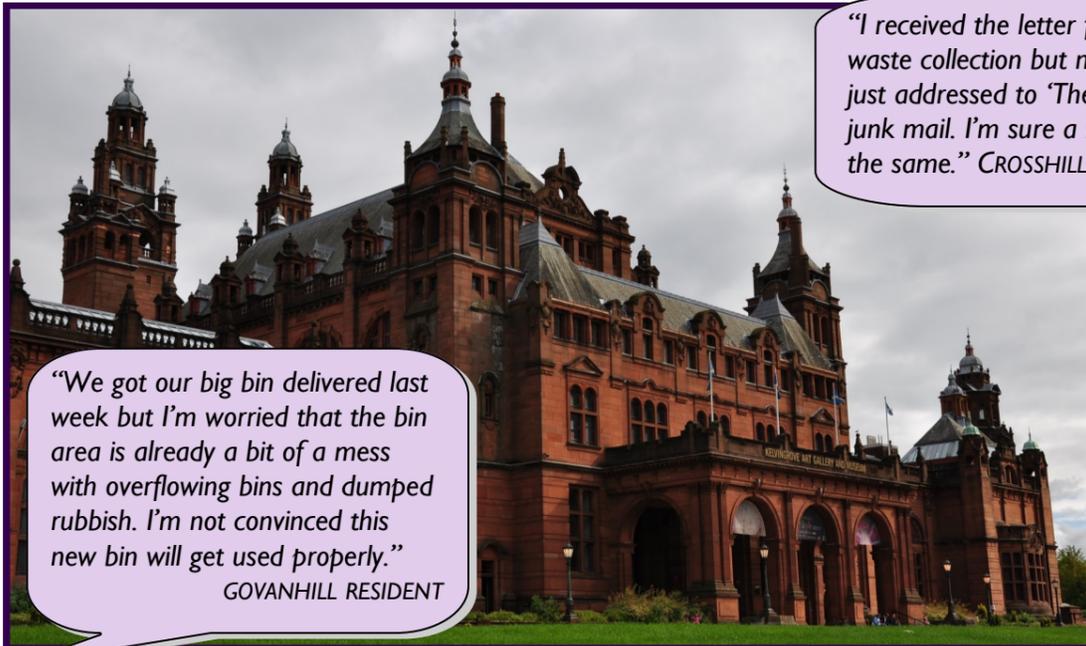
"With more than 300,000 properties to deliver this new service to citywide, it is one of the biggest recycling initiatives in Scotland. Govanhill is one of the most



The council's waste service can be contacted on 0141 287 9700 or at [www.glasgow.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/recycling)

diverse areas in Glasgow and the council has put significant additional resources into Govanhill and has dedicated teams working in the area every day of the week.

"Unfortunately difficulties are caused when people do not uphold their responsibility to put rubbish in bins, or contact the council when they put a bulk item out for collection."



"We got our big bin delivered last week but I'm worried that the bin area is already a bit of a mess with overflowing bins and dumped rubbish. I'm not convinced this new bin will get used properly."

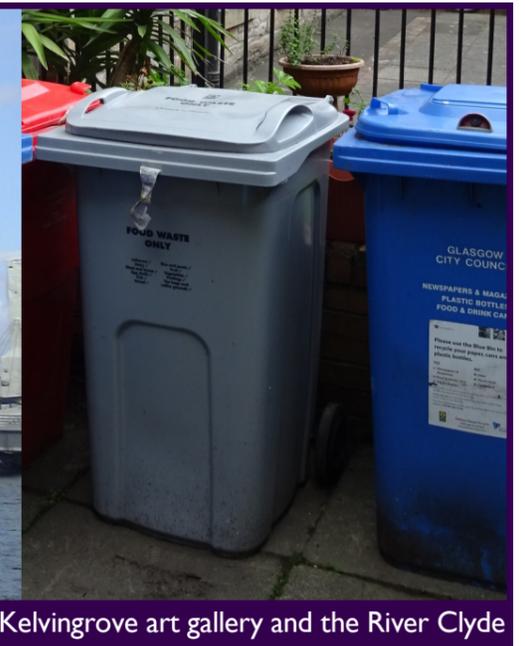
GOYANHILL RESIDENT

"I received the letter from the council about the food waste collection but nearly threw it out because it was just addressed to 'The Occupier' so I thought it was junk mail. I'm sure a lot of my neighbours would think the same." CROSSHILL RESIDENT



**Glasgow**

A grey food waste recycling bin, alongside city sights the Kelvingrove art gallery and the River Clyde



**We ask Glasgow City Council why it is bringing in a food waste collection service**

Glasgow landfilled approximately 162,000 tonnes of household waste in 2015/16 – enough to fill the whole of George Square to the height of the Walter Scott monument, and then a wee bit more.

This costs the council millions of pounds a year in landfill tax. An analysis of general waste bins found that about 30% was food waste – about 50,000 tonnes per year, the equivalent of filling the Commonwealth Pool at Tollcross 70 times.

A pilot food waste collection service (to 43,000 households) was undertaken from July 2013 to July 2014, with about 30% of residents using the service – at best.

The council says: "A lot of food waste will probably remain within general waste bins, so anything that can be done to promote/assist residents to use the food waste collection service will be positive."

"If the wrong items are placed within the bin, the food waste collection crew may not empty the bin. This would then be collected by the general waste collection crew and its contents landfilled instead of recycled."

"There is no specific tolerance level. We

# Food for thought: why we all need to do our bit

Support from residents in the South Seeds project area for food waste service mixes with concerns over how it will work

don't want anything going into the food waste bins other than food. However, if residents can use home composting bins – brilliant.

"But not all food waste is supposed to go into a home composting bin, e.g. bones, meat or cooked food, therefore residents should still use the food waste collection service for these types of waste."



**How does the council plan to ensure people know about the service, and what about people whose first language isn't English?**

"If requested, we can translate leaflets into other languages, liaise with ethnic community groups within the city to disseminate, and we've already had a media campaign, including on Radio Awaz, and we're working on an online food waste film which should be done before the end of the year."

"I think it's good that the council provided a free caddy and bags to keep food waste in the kitchen until I can take it downstairs." QUEEN'S PARK RESIDENT

**Let's get it sorted**

- Approximately 30% of households' general waste bin contents is food waste.

- For every tonne of waste the council landfills it has to pay landfill tax (the 2016/17 rate is £84.40/tonne). In 2015/16, the council spent more than £13million in landfill tax alone for household waste.

- About 25% of waste put into blue recycling bins is the wrong type of waste (Council analysis, December 2014 to March 2015)

The council says: "Getting our domestic waste sorted and recycled will save resources and help Glasgow become more sustainable. When you throw away food you are not just wasting the food, but also the resources such as energy, fuel, time and water that went into growing, harvesting, storing, transporting and cooking it. And it produces methane if put in landfill sites."





One of Berlin's advertising campaigns to promote food recycling, and iconic views of the Bundestag and the River Spree

## How do other cities collect food waste from their tenements?

It's good to hear the council's plans on communicating the new food waste service.

Many big cities across the world, particularly in Europe, have had food waste collections for a long time and we can learn from their successes and mistakes. For example, the German capital Berlin has many neighbourhoods which are similar to Govanhill, with most people living in flats, and large numbers of immigrants. Residents there have had a food waste service for the past 14 years.

Despite this, only about 16% of all food waste produced in the city is actually collected and recycled, indicating that many residents are not using the food waste service, and are instead putting food waste in the rubbish bin.

On a visit to Berlin in summer 2016, Jo Hartga, South Seeds' waste officer found that there were limited communications from the city authorities to residents about why they should use the food waste service and what can go in the bin.

With so many cultures and languages, and lots of people moving in and out of neighbourhoods, many have fallen through the cracks when it's come to communicating the 'whys and hows' of using the food waste bin.

Making sure everyone in the community is engaged is something Glasgow can learn from, highlighting waste and the harm our everyday activities can do, which we can all help to reduce.



School children in Berlin get a lesson in waste disposal

**Find out more:** South Seeds has published an investigation into food-waste disposal from multi-occupancy buildings in an ethnically diverse area of Berlin, and what lessons this has for Glasgow. To read this and more go to [www.southseeds.org](http://www.southseeds.org) and click on 'Resources'

## Recycling is good but reducing is better!

SO, you've got your food waste bin, and you're making a habit of putting all your food scraps, leftovers and out-of-date food in that rather than the green rubbish bin. Great!

But now you're separating your food waste, you might be shocked to see how much waste there actually is. Did you know that the average household could slash up to £460 per year off their food shopping bill by cutting out avoidable food waste completely?

Turn to page 8 to hear some top food waste-reduction tips from Robin, South Seeds community engagement officer. More tips can be found on the Love Food Hate Waste website ([www.lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com)).



Strathbungo residents turn their organic kitchen waste into nutritious plant food using a South Seeds community compost bin

**'If residents can use home composting bins – brilliant'**

## Community composting

REMEMBER that you can still compost your uncooked food waste such as fruit and vegetable peelings, tea bags, and coffee grounds. Composting keeps the benefits local – all that nutritious plant food being generated in the area can be used to grow food less than half a mile away.

So although the new food waste service

provides a convenient way to dispose of your unavoidable food waste, composting benefits the community and environment more.

South Seeds can help you build a bin for your shared back court. We also help people to turn unloved and derelict land in the area into community gardens for composting and growing food.

Contact us to find a community compost bin or garden near you.

## The grey bin loves to eat ...



Cooked or uncooked food and bones

Fruit, eggs and vegetables



Old bread and bakery products ... plus much more besides

## But it doesn't like

Wrapping, packaging, bags and other non-food waste. Put these in the appropriate bins. Visit [www.glasgow.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/recycling) if you're not sure what goes where.

**Recycling is good but reducing is better!**

# Top tips to reduce food waste

Shop more wisely and save cash with community engagement officer Robin Ashton's advice for getting more from your food

## 1 Plan ahead

Check what you've got and write a list before you go shopping. Don't shop when you're hungry, only buy what you can use, and don't be tempted by 'deals' that encourage you to buy too much. This can make a big difference to the amount of food you throw in the bin, and the money you spend.



## 2 Save leftovers

Put any leftover dinner in a tub in the fridge and have it for lunch the next day, or freeze what's left and eat it a few weeks down the line. Cooking in bulk and freezing a number of portions can cut down on preparation and cooking time – saving time, energy and money.



## 3 Try some recipes for new meals

If you're making something new, use a recipe for the best results, until you get the hang of it. You can get some great recipes and budget advice online, or check out your local library for recipe books.



Robin Ashton and helpers at South Seeds' community garden in Allison Street

## 4 Measure ingredients

Using implements such as scales, cups or spoons to get quantities right will stop you cooking more food than you need.



## 5 Check 'use by' dates

Read the marked date before buying food as it can sometimes go off a lot more quickly than you think.

**Why not go on to South Seeds' social media sites and share your top tips on reducing waste or saving on food bills?**

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For more information about what we do, or if you have any questions,

please telephone South Seeds on 0141 636 3959, email [info@southseeds.org](mailto:info@southseeds.org), visit [www.southseeds.org](http://www.southseeds.org),

or check us out on [Facebook.com/SouthSeeds](https://www.facebook.com/SouthSeeds) or [@SouthSeeds](https://twitter.com/SouthSeeds) on Twitter.

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