Trade Waste Changes in Inverness City Centre

Frequently Asked Questions

**Why is the Council doing this?**

As a Local Authority we are tasked with managing public space. In recent years we have received many complaints from residents, tourists and businesses about the amount of waste receptacles in the streets of Inverness, capital of the Highlands. It is our duty to address these complaints and improve the state of the city streets. Public land is increasingly being used by businesses to store their own trade waste. This situation has been slowly getting worse due to the introduction of new recycling targets with the numbers, positions and volume of bins increasing. Waste permanently stored on our streets attracts vermin, causes litter and obstruction issues for people with mobility difficulties. Improving the appearance of our streets will benefit all who use them through reducing anti-social behaviour and creating a safer feeling on the streets – it’ll be good for business too!

**How will this work?**

You will be able to present your trade waste kerbside for collection any time between 07:00 am - 10:00 am and 18:00 -21:00 for a maximum of 2 hours. Your waste must be labelled with your trading name and with a one hour collection slot. After this period, your waste or waste containers must either have been collected and/or removed from the street.

**Has this been done before? If so, what was the outcome?**

The City of Westminster, Manchester and Edinburgh have all successfully employed a similar system with a significant improvement to their appearance. Glasgow City Council has also recently launched a pilot project, where a positive impact is already evident. Furthermore, the majority of businesses were happy with the changes despite initial reservations.

**Where will I keep my waste? We don’t have any space for bins.**

Your business waste is your responsibility and will need to be stored within your property or on private land.

If you currently store your waste in a container on the street, your bin will probably be too large to store inside so you may need to change the way you manage your waste. You can speak to your waste contractor about getting more frequent uplifts and given that multiple collections can be made on a daily basis, a large container should no longer be needed.

If you have no space for a bin, you could use bags or collapsible bins for your dry mixed recycling (plastic, paper, cardboard and metal) and residual waste (landfill). Again these may be collected as often as you require avoiding large volumes of rubbish building up in your premises.

Another option is sharing a collection contract with a neighbouring business.

There are a number of trade waste collectors operating in Inverness who can help you explore the options available and provide the most appropriate solution for you.

**But more frequent collections will cost me more money.**

Having waste collected more frequently may carry an increased cost, however recycling more may result in saving money.

The Waste (Scotland) Regulations require you to follow the waste hierarchy:



By analysing the waste you produce and following the waste hierarchy you can lower the amount of waste you produce and the collections you therefore require. Zero Waste Scotland can help you with this.

**I can’t do this by a certain time**

We accept it may take time for some businesses to become compliant with the new requirements. Businesses that can evidence that they are taking the necessary steps to comply will not face unjust enforcement action.

As a temporary solution, whilst putting in plans to manage down their waste, businesses may be permitted to retain containers on public space. A permit for such containers will be considered, especially if these are shared between multiple businesses and there is a plan to recycle/reduce waste.

**What about food waste? Storing it inside will lead to vermin issues or pest infestation.**

Segregated food collection is a more hygienic method of disposal than mixing food with general waste. Given that food waste can be collected at any time during the day there will be no need to store food within your premises for any length of time.

Bags of food waste on the street will be too easily attacked.

You have a duty to ensure your waste cannot escape from your control. Food waste presented in bags may be vulnerable to attack from gulls or vermin. Bags may therefore require to be placed in a bin, collapsible container or ‘gull proof bag’ whilst they are on the street.

**What about glass? It’s heavy, bulky to store and could prove dangerous if bottles are left lying about in bags.**

We appreciate that for businesses that produce a large amount of glass waste; this will be the most difficult part to manage. We are keen to work with such businesses to identify potential solutions.

Following the waste hierarchy will help identify ways to reduce the amount produced. It may be possible to have empty bottles removed at the same time as a delivery is made.

You may wish to use small or collapsible bins for glass which can be stored on your own property. Again, a twice daily collection should reduce the amounts requiring collection.

Your supplier or Trade Waste collector may be able to tailor a solution to your requirements.

Some businesses may require an additional collection on busy days or a permitted, shared container may prove a useful solution meantime – these can be considered as part of the pilot.

**I have done everything I can and still do not have room. What can I do?**

If you have a high business turnover and simply do not have room to store your food waste and glass indoors then you will be required to prove to us that this is the case. One of our officers will pay a visit to your premises to help you identify potential locations. In extreme situations, if we agree that there is simply no room, we can issue you an exemption sticker which will allow your glass and food waste to be stored outside in a bin. Note this exemption will be temporary but open ended until further notice.

**Great, are there any conditions attached to this?**

Yes. You will only be permitted to have a two wheeled bin (120ltr, 240ltr or 360ltr) which must be closed, locked and positioned directly outside your premises at all times. Furthermore it must be clearly labelled with your premises name and the time of the collection.

**So can I apply for an exemption to my recycling and residual waste?**

No, exemptions will strictly be reserved for glass and food waste. Separating recycling when done correctly should give a clean, dry and non-odorous product which can be stored easily. If you do not have space to store on site, you should arrange for any remaining residual waste which does not fall into this category to be picked up at more frequent intervals.

**Is there a limit to the number of exemptions?**

The issuing of an exemption certificate is at the discretion of Highland Council and therefore will be judged on a case by case basis. Businesses which can demonstrate they have already managed to cut down the number of bins they require are likely to be considered in a more favourable light than those which have not reduced their number of bins at all.

**What happens if my waste collector fails to pick up the waste or is late?**

If for some reason your Trade Waste collector cannot collect your waste (such as a truck breakdown etc.) you will have to take it off the street and re-arrange collection. For this reason someone responsible must be present until the waste is collected. It is not OK to put out your waste and leave it when your business is closed; this is a failure in your Duty of Care.

If your waste collector regularly fails to meet the terms of your contract, you may want to consider setting up a new contract with a collector who can meet your requirements.

**I surely don’t need someone to stand and watch over my waste.**

No, but you do have a duty of care to ensure that your waste is disposed of correctly. You must therefore take reasonable measures to keep your waste safe until your appointed contractor has completed uplift.

Gulls and vermin will attack food waste – your duty of care means ensuring your waste is appropriately managed so this can’t happen. Small caddies or collapsible bins may need to be used to protect food waste awaiting collection.

**But, will I not be fined for placing rubbish bins on the street while waiting for collection?**

No. We want to work with businesses to make this achievable, not against them; therefore we will not be unfairly targeting those who are taking care of their waste by following our guidance and advice. If you do decide to switch to bags of waste then you should ensure that all your waste is labelled with your trading name and an approximate collection time so our officers know when bags were placed out. Bags must be out for a maximum of one hour and not overnight.

**Will I get fined if I make a mistake?**

When the system is introduced there will be an initial 4 week grace period when Council officers will be able to offer advice and guidance on the new system and help you to become compliant. A freeze will be placed on any tickets being issued during this period.

After the grace period has ended any business who is still non-compliant may face enforcement action.

If you are concerned about not being compliant or want any advice please do not hesitate to contact us. We are committed to helping and supporting you to improve the appearance of Inverness.

**I keep my bins on my own property, will this affect me?**

No, if your bins are kept and collected from within your business or on private land then this will not affect you.

If you present your bin for collection on the street, you must ensure that it is only out for the one hour time slot agreed between yourself and your contractor.

**Can I put my waste containers in front of my business and not in the lanes?**

Of course, it’s your waste and you are responsible for it. You must take reasonable steps to ensure your waste is safe until it is collected – this will be easier to do if it’s in front of your business. You must not create an obstruction when presenting your waste for collection.