

# Communications Toolkit

## Reducing the frequency of non-recyclable waste collections



<b>3</b>	<b>Consumer testing</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Communications</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Messaging</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Guidance for editing templates</b>
9	Envelopes
11	Posters
13	Leaflet
15	Vehicle livery
16	Collection calendar
17	Non-recyclable waste bin sticker
18	Recycling bin sticker
19	Bin hanger
<b>20</b>	<b>Further support</b>

**Zero Waste Scotland created these materials to help Scottish Local Authorities communicate with householders about changes to their waste and recycling service — highlighting the reduced frequency of non-recyclable waste collections.**

Over the past years several Local Authorities across Scotland have implemented comprehensive, high performing recycling services. Although performing well, analysis of items remaining in the non-recyclable waste has shown that a large proportion of materials that could be recycled aren't being captured. Disposing of these recyclable materials is an added burden to councils in terms of high disposal costs and loss of recycling income. Local Authorities are considering new approaches to encourage residents to make best use of services in order to maximise cost efficiency and provide a best value service.

One approach that has been adopted recently has been to restrict the capacity provided for non-recyclable waste by changing to a three or four weekly collection cycle and to provide comprehensive guidance on how to use the recycling services.

**These materials will help Local Authorities to:**

- Explain why the change is happening
- Encourage householders to participate fully to help them manage their non-recyclable waste effectively.

**Important.** All Recycle for Scotland materials must be printed on recycled stock. Please include the stock's environmental accreditation(s) on the back cover of leaflets or inside the margin on single sided communications, ie. a poster, in a minimum 7pt font size.

For further guidance, please contact the Zero Waste Scotland Communications Team:  
[support@recycleforscotland.com](mailto:support@recycleforscotland.com)

## Developing our messages

We held a series of focus groups in Falkirk and East Ayrshire, two Local Authorities who were considering this service change. They included residents of different genders, ages, social grades, housing types, and recycling behaviours. All attendees had at least some responsibility within their household for recycling.

Attendees were informed that we were testing messaging and materials to communicate a new waste and recycling collection service. In the new service non-recyclable waste would be collected on a three or four weekly collection cycle, and comprehensive guidance would be provided on how to make best use of the recycling and food waste services.

## What our research has found

Attendees identified areas of concern about the new waste and recycling collection service that communications should address.

These included:

**Frequency** – confusion towards different collection frequencies across the service and concerns around remembering which container to put out each week

**Capacity** – concerns about current non-recyclable waste bin capacity and the prospect of stretching this to three or four weeks

**Inconvenience** – the perceived ‘inconvenience’ of recycling – specifically the time and effort required in participating in all of the services

**Why bother?** – a lack of understanding of the benefits of recycling

The focus groups also highlighted that materials should:

**Be positive**, promoting all of the services available and thanking householders for participating

**Explain the rationale** behind the change, specifically landfill costs and savings achieved by recycling, Government targets, and environment benefits

**Include interesting information** like the recycle journey

**Provide reassurance** through waste analysis findings, and address concerns like smell and vermin

**Promote recycling of less well understood items**, such as those in the bathroom or garage. Remind residents of recently introduced materials, and reiterate existing materials.

If you want more information on this research, please get in touch:

[support@recycleforscotland.com](mailto:support@recycleforscotland.com)

# Writing a communications strategy

## Your strategy should help you communicate:

- **The change in collection frequency for non-recyclable waste bins**
- **Any change in collection dates**
- **The full range of the council's waste and recycling collection services**

Getting your communications right will help optimise householder participation in recycling.

## Your internal communications strategy

Use this to engage, review and increase understanding and awareness of the forthcoming service changes. It will help support an efficient and effective implementation by:

- Briefing internal audiences on the schedule, implementation areas and strategic importance of the changes
- Promoting communication within, and between, departments to ensure all staff know about the activities being undertaken, and are aware of changes to key documents, such as FAQs

Internal staff may live in the council area. Treat them as a target audience; encourage them to change their behaviour and act as ambassadors for the service.

## External communications strategy

Use this to let householders know well in advance about the collection changes for the non-recyclable waste bin. It should provide clear and concise information on:

- The change in collection frequency for the non-recyclable waste bin
- The change in collection dates, if applicable
- Making better use of existing recycling containers, and using the right containers for the right materials
- Encouraging householders to participate in all of the council's recycling services

# Writing a communications strategy cont'd...

## Think about designing your strategy around these three phases:

**Get Ready (Engage)** – four to six weeks before the introduction of the service change, used to raise awareness and inform the public of the forthcoming changes.

**Go (Enable)** – during the introduction of the service change, used to inform and encourage residents to fully utilise their recycling containers and follow the new collection schedule and any date changes for their waste and recycling containers.

**Remind (Encourage)** – after the service changes have been introduced in each area, to encourage the ongoing use of the waste and recycling collection services.

## Your strategy will work best if it's supported by a detailed:

- Community engagement plan
- Digital and social media plan
- Press and PR plan

If you need support developing your communications strategy, please contact:  
[support@recycleforscotland.com](mailto:support@recycleforscotland.com)

# Your new service is as easy as...

In testing, with almost 100% positive feedback, participants felt **'Your new service is as easy as...1, 2, 3'** was a clear, clean and catchy message. It addresses the barriers testing had identified, raising awareness of the collection frequency whilst drawing attention to the services' ease of use.



# It's never been easier to recycle.

**'It's never been easier to recycle'**, also tested very well. It was developed as an alternative for Local Authorities who do not collect any materials weekly. This message was seen as being clear and straightforward, recognising the simplicity of the service.



# Guidance for editing templates

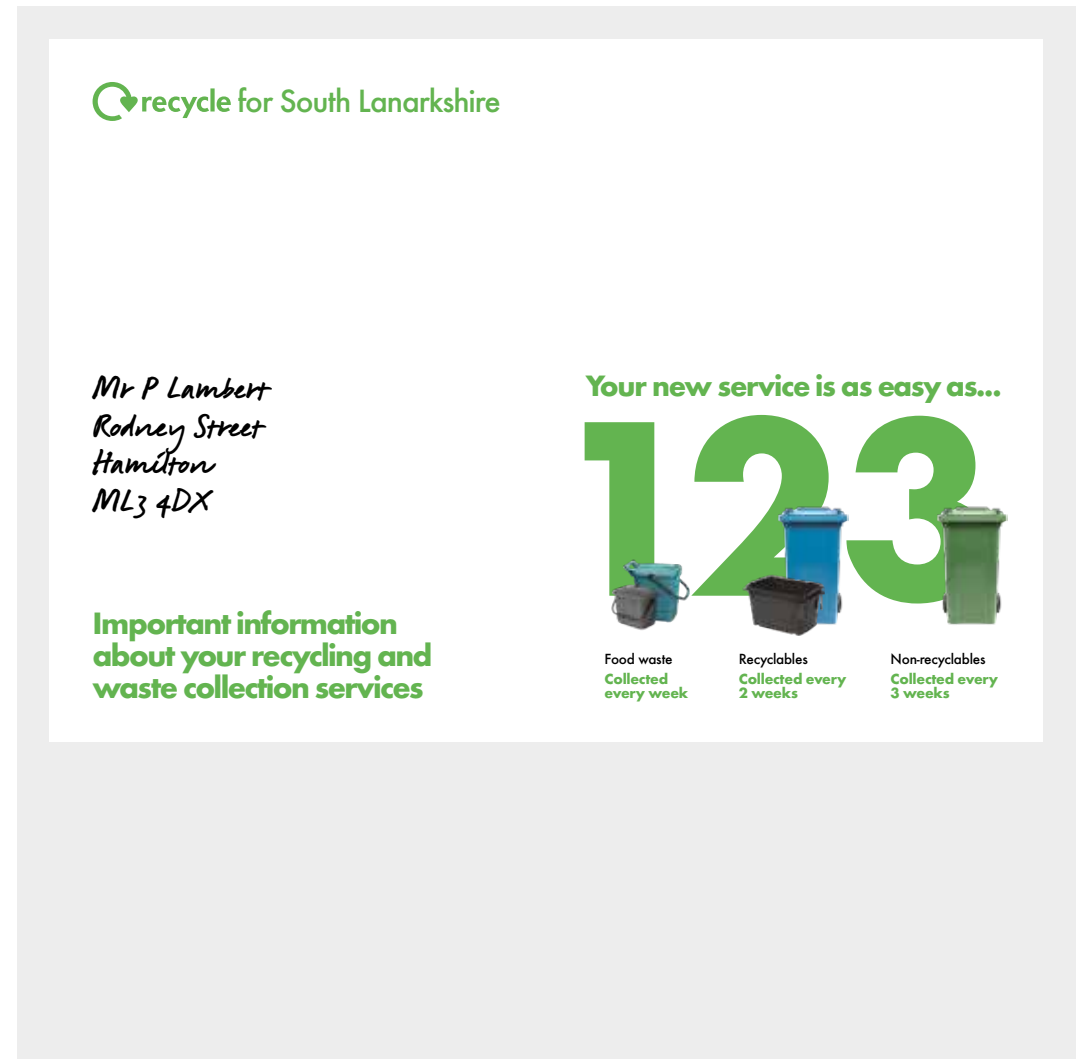
All templates mentioned in this toolkit are available for download at:  
[www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners](http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners)

Other useful guides to download from the Partners site include:

- Recycle for Scotland brand guidelines – providing guidance on using RfS branding, colour palette, typography and imagery.
- Household Recycling Service Change Communications Guidance - to help Scottish local authorities communicate with householders specifically about changes to their waste and recycling services that relate to implementing the Code of Practice (CoP) for the Household Recycling Charter.
- Guidance on recycling terms for communicating with householders - terminology to help ensure a standardised approach to communicating waste and recycling to householders.



Your external communications strategy can be reinforced by a range of communication materials that will support each phase of the service implementation.



Templates are available to download in Adobe InDesign format:  
[www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners](http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners)



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Local authority brand  
marque variation



recycle for East Ayrshire

# Your new service is as easy as...

# 123



Food waste <b>Collected every week</b>	Recyclables <b>Collected every 2 weeks</b>	Non-recyclables <b>Collected every 3 weeks</b>
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Council brand marque  
and futher information/  
contact details

[www.council.gov.uk/collections](http://www.council.gov.uk/collections)  
0845 000 000

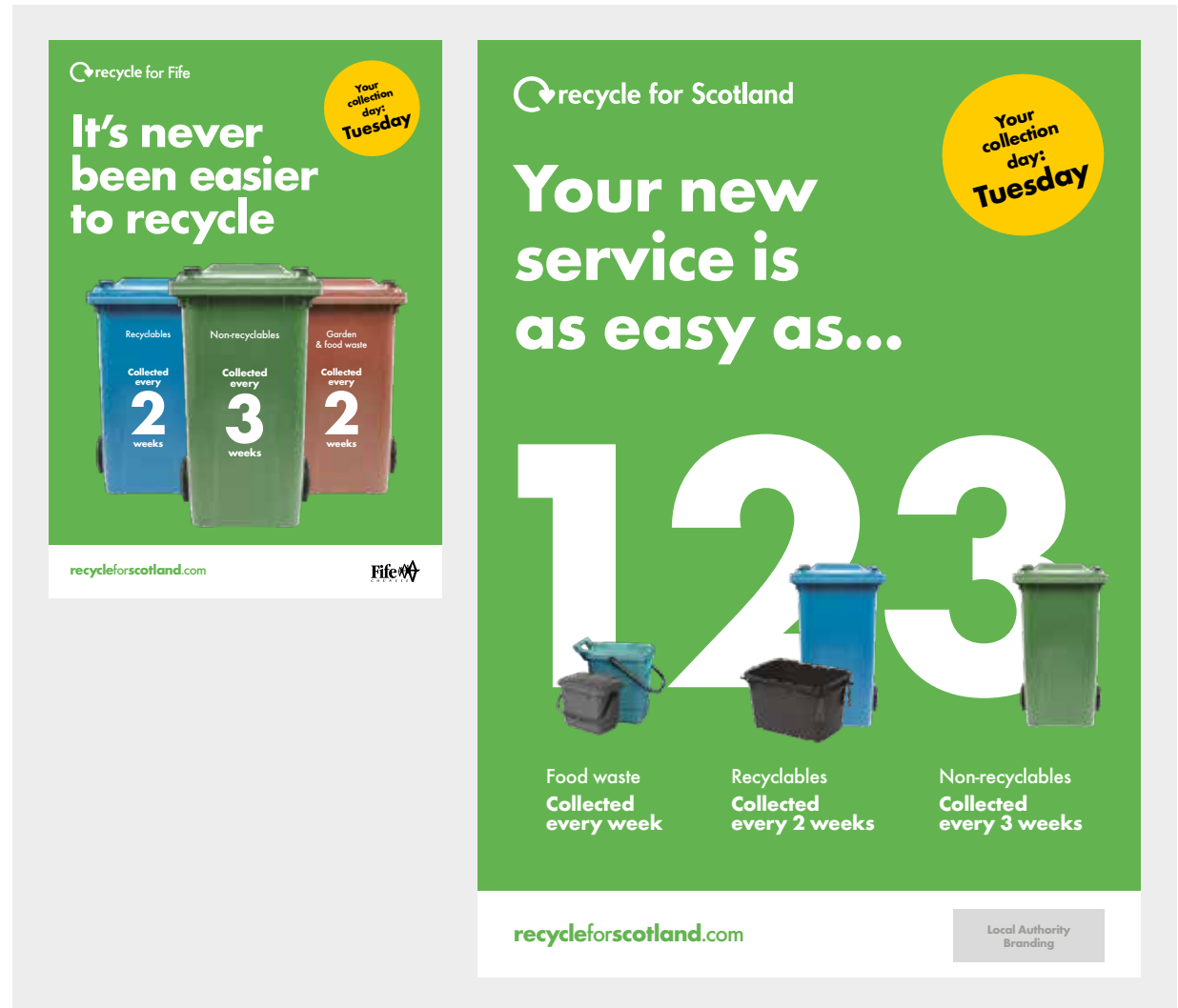


Templates are available to download in Adobe InDesign format:  
[www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners](http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners)



The leaflet gives householders detailed information about how to participate fully in the recycling service. This is a 12 page A5 leaflet that contains:

- The full rationale for the change in service
- Guidance on correct use of each container
- A list of frequently asked questions



Templates are available to download in Adobe InDesign format:  
[www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners](http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners)

## Some things to bear in mind when editing

The focus groups reacted very well to figures which are specific to their Local Authority. If you choose to use these statements, you should input the figures for your area. These include:

- The percentage of recycling still remaining in the non-recyclable waste - identified through composition analysis
- The total annual costs to dispose of the contents of non-recyclable waste bins rather than landfill tax
- Projected disposal costs for future years

You could also consider including a table that shows which services could be funded with the budget saved on non-recyclable waste disposal. This idea tested especially well.

The services that resonate best with householders include road maintenance, winter gritting and snow ploughing, and libraries. Using your own figures for these motivational messages helps to address the 'why recycle' barrier.

Templates are available to download in Adobe InDesign format: [www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners](http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners)

### 1 Collected every week


## Food Waste



All types of food waste – cooked and uncooked

Yes	No
<p><b>Cooked and uncooked</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Dairy and eggshells</li> <li>✓ Fish, meat and bones</li> <li>✓ Fruit and vegetables (and peelings)</li> <li>✓ Bread and cakes</li> <li>✓ Rice, pasta and pizza</li> <li>✓ Tea bags and coffee grounds</li> <li>✓ Fat foods</li> <li>✓ Unpackaged out of date food</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ No liquids please</li> </ul>

**Top Tip!**  
Use any plastic bag, compostable liner or newspaper to line your kitchen caddy. And remember, you can even recycle meat and bones.

**Will the food in my bin smell?**  
If you use your new service as shown below with liners, tie them when full, and close and lock your caddy lids (by putting the handle in the forward or upright position) there will be no problem with smell.



- Put all cooked and uncooked food waste into your kitchen caddy which should be lined with a compostable liner, or newspaper.
- When the liner is almost full, tie and remove it from the kitchen caddy.
- Put the full liner into your kerbside caddy, then place it at the kerbside on your collection day and we will collect it every week.
- Your food waste is then processed and shredded to create compost that can be used on your public spaces.


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### 2 Collected every 2 weeks

## Black Box

Glass bottles and jars.

Yes	No
<p><b>Glass bottles and jars</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Wine bottles</li> <li>✓ Beer bottles</li> <li>✓ Juice bottles</li> <li>✓ Cooking sauce jars</li> <li>✓ Jam jars</li> <li>✓ Baby food jars</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Glass cookware eg. Pyrex</li> <li>✗ Window/flat glass</li> <li>✗ Broken glass</li> <li>✗ Crockery</li> <li>✗ Drinking glasses</li> <li>✗ Duvels</li> </ul> <p>Please put these in your green bin!</p>



- Wash your glass bottles and jars and don't forget to remove the lids.
- Place the glass bottles and jars, into your black box.
- Your black box should be placed at the kerbside on your collection day and we will collect them (every two weeks).
- Glass bottles can be recycled into insulation which can be used to heat homes.

Vehicle livery templates have been developed so that councils can promote their new services on the side of their collection fleet.



Templates are available to download in Adobe InDesign format:  
[www.zerowastesotland.org.uk/partners](http://www.zerowastesotland.org.uk/partners)

Collection calendars let households know the collection dates for their recycling containers and non-recyclable waste bin.

Instructions are provided for including a function on your website that lets residents download their collection dates directly to their digital calendar – such as Outlook, Google or iCal. This means they'll receive an automatic reminder on the evening before each collection. The reminder can also provide information on which containers are due to be collected and the times when containers need to be out for collection.

## 2016 – Your collection day is Tuesday

**1** Your food caddy will be collected **every week**

**2** Your blue and black recycling containers will be collected **every two weeks**

**2** Your brown garden waste bin will be collected **every two weeks** (March - November only)

**3** Your green non-recyclable bin will be collected **every three weeks**

May						
M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
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30	31					

June						
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July						
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August						
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September						
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October						
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31						

November						
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

December						
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January						
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30	31					

February						
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

### Collection key



For more information and to request free additional containers, contact:

[info@council.gov.uk](mailto:info@council.gov.uk)  
[www.council.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.council.gov.uk/recycling)  
 01563 554 033





# Non-recyclable waste bin sticker

**Please note.** The non-recyclable sticker should not contain the Recycle for Scotland brand marque as focus group testing found this to be confusing.

**Stop!**  
**Can you recycle it?**

**Your green bin will be collected every 3 weeks**

<b>This bin should NOT contain:</b>	<b>X Food waste</b> this is collected in your grey food caddy every week	<b>X Recyclables</b> this is collected in your blue bin and black box every 2 weeks	<b>X Garden waste</b> this is collected in your brown bin every 2 weeks (March - November)
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For more information: Web. [www.council.gov.uk](http://www.council.gov.uk) Tel. 0845 000000 Email. [info@council.gov.uk](mailto:info@council.gov.uk)

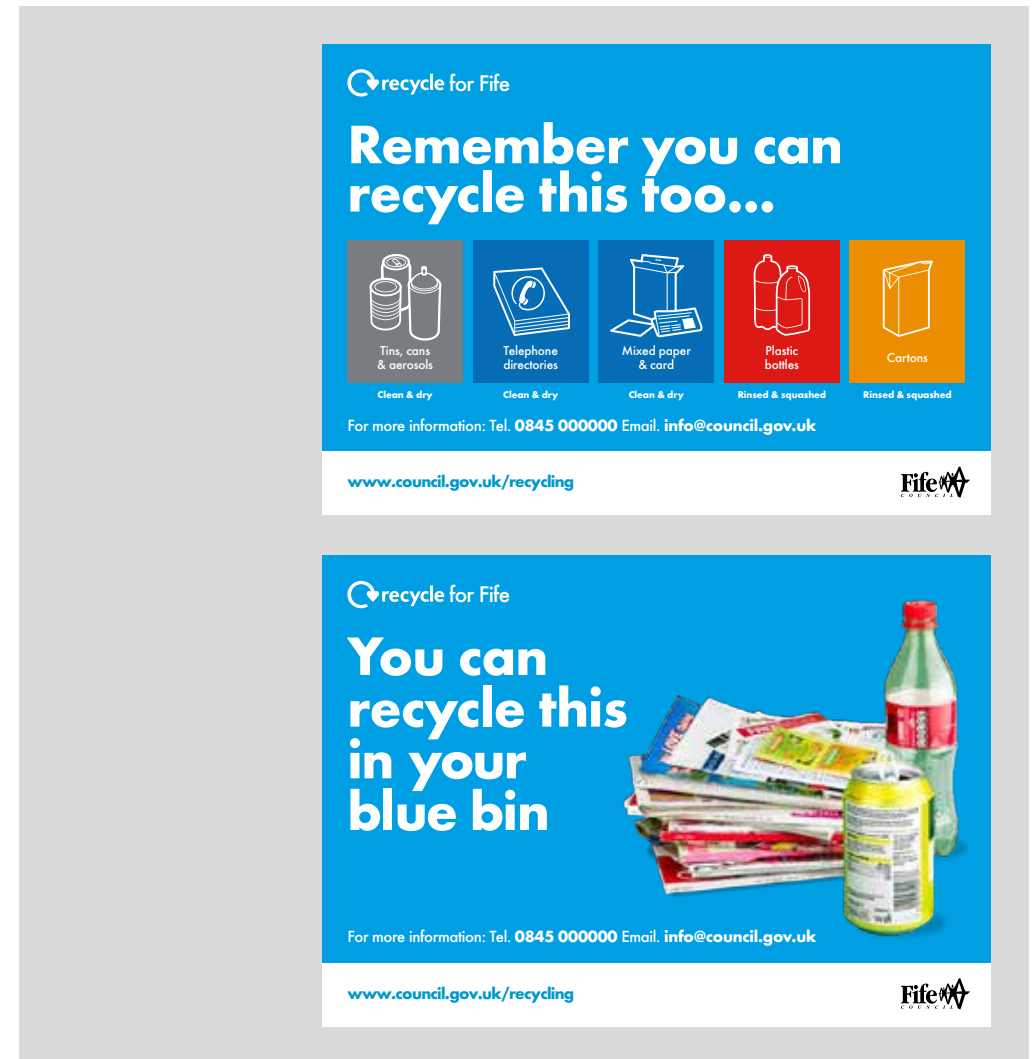
Include local authority contact details for people to find out more

Templates are available to download in Adobe InDesign format:  
[www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners](http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners)

# Recycling bin sticker

Stickers are also provided for recycling bins to remind residents about the less well known items they can recycle. These were identified through consumer testing and waste composition analyses.

Templates are available to download in Adobe InDesign format:  
[www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners](http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners)



# Bin hanger

Bin hangers can be placed on bins to let householders know why their bin wasn't collected – tick boxes let collectors inform them what caused the rejection. The hanger also contains information about what can be recycled in each container, and what goes in the non-recyclable waste bin.

Templates are available to download in Adobe InDesign format:  
[www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners](http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/partners)



# Further support

Please contact us, requesting '*Recycle for Scotland support*', if you have any questions about these materials or need further support.

**[support@recycleforscotland.com](mailto:support@recycleforscotland.com)**



A Zero Waste Scotland initiative  
Ground Floor Moray House Forthside Way Stirling FK8 1QZ