

NEWS RELEASE



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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COUNCIL URGES RESIDENTS TO REPURPOSE THE OLD BLACK RECYCLING BOXES

The rollout of the borough's waterproof bags was completed in April this year and we're encouraging as many residents as possible to find a new use for their old black boxes.

From 4 October, recycling will no longer be collected from the old black boxes however there will be a short grace period to ensure all residents are notified and prepared for this change. After this time the council and its contractor Veolia will only be collecting recycling from the green waterproof recycling bags. Residents have been doing a great job repurposing and rehoming their old black recycling boxes, therefore the number of boxes that require collection is small.

There is a significant carbon and financial cost of collecting these boxes. Therefore the council has reviewed its plans to collect these, as it would have cost about £100,000. The decision not to collect the old black boxes is in part due to the number of residents embracing the importance of repurposing their boxes. Eliminating the carbon impact of the collection will also contribute to the council's goal of being carbon neutral by 2030.

Cllr Parry Bath, executive member for environment and leisure said: "Our residents have been really creative with their old black boxes and, when we looked closely at the environmental and financial cost of collecting them all, it just did not seem a sensible thing to do. We are allowing our residents to keep their old black boxes and find alternative and creative uses for them."

- MORE -

Private: Information that contains a small amount of sensitive data which is essential to communicate with an individual but doesn't require to be sent via secure methods.

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What you can do with your black boxes

The council has heard from many residents repurposing their black boxes in unique and practical ways such as:

- Storage for items in the shed/garage/loft
- As a planter in the garden for growing vegetables
- Growing flowers in it
- Storing glass to take to the bottle bank
- Shelter for hedgehogs
- Donating to family, friends, neighbours, or anyone who wants it

The council is encouraging residents to join the [Facebook group 'Wokingham Borough black box rehoming hub'](#) and our other social media channels to connect with schools, companies, nurseries, or anyone else that may need some. This way those who want to reuse them can have access to more.

If residents can't find a way to reuse or repurpose their black boxes, the re3 recycling centres are now able to [recycle rigid plastic](#). All the materials are recycled in European and UK markets in pipelines, cars, construction and furniture materials. You can book your [click & tip slot via the re3 webpage](#).

Anyone who needs more green recycling bags can collect up to four more from one of our collection hubs in Wokingham, Woodley or Earley. Further information on opening times and days can be found on the [recycling bag webpages](#).

- ENDS -

Further information:

- 1. More from Cllr Parry Batth, executive member for environment and leisure at: parry.batth@wokingham.gov.uk or 07969 683595**