

PLASTIC BAGS AND WRAPPING RECYCLING

At a recent meeting of Boddington Sustainability Group we discussed plastic bags and wrapping recycling facilities that are available in the area and we thought it would be useful for Boddington residents to know about this.

Plastic bags and wrapping, e.g. carrier bags, bread bags, crisp packets, frozen food bags etc are currently only collected by 17% of councils in the UK. West Northamptonshire Council do not collect them. They make up nearly a quarter of all plastic packaging (311,000 tonnes is placed on the market) that we use in our daily lives, but currently only 6% of it is recycled. Until we have consistent and comprehensive household collections across the nations, supermarkets play a critical role to enable customers to recycle key items not collected at home.

Therefore, The UK Plastics Pact (<https://wrap.org.uk/taking-action/plastic-packaging/the-uk-plastics-pact>) have been working with supermarkets to provide collection points. Also WRAP brands Recycle Now <https://www.recyclenow.com/> and Clear on Plastics <https://clearonplastics.com/> are joining forces alongside supermarkets, brands and local authorities across the UK to make recycling plastic bags and wrapping easier and are currently running a campaign called 'Repeat the Cycle' <https://www.recyclenow.com/repeatthecycle> to raise awareness that citizens can now recycle plastic bags and wrapping in local supermarkets across the nation. See an image from the campaign below...

The On-Pack Recycling Label (OPRL) <https://www.oprl.org.uk/>

Many retailers/brands are signed up to The On-Pack Recycling Label (OPRL). This shows if packaging is recyclable or not. However, the labelling on packaging may not be up to date with the plastic bags and wrapping recycling schemes available



and therefore not all plastic bags and wrappings will currently be labelled as recyclable. Work is being done to ensure that labelling is correct going forward, but as things are constantly changing it is difficult to ensure that all packaging is labelled correctly.

If in doubt, Recycle Now has a handy Recycling Locator tool to help you find out whether the packaging can be recycled in your area.

How to prepare soft plastic for recycling

- Remove labels if possible
- Clean it – rinse your packaging out/ensure it is as clean as possible
- Flatten it so that it takes up less space in the collection bins

Other supermarkets are also looking into having collection points. Lidl are currently doing a trial (the Leamington Spa store is included in the trial) and hope to roll out to more stores soon and Aldi are doing trials in the Yorkshire/Derby area

What happens to the plastics?

- It is collected – usually using reverse logistics to minimise environmental impact.
- It is washed and sorted - If the film is dirty, it can sometimes contaminate the output and make the material unusable. Therefore it's crucial that we only put plastic bags and wrapping into the collection bin.

Local Supermarkets offering recycling - they accept plastics from all brands

Tesco: Southam/Banbury/Daventry
Sainsbury's: Banbury
Lidl: Leamington Spa
All local Coops

- Baby, pet food, detergent and cleaning pouches
- Biscuits and chocolate wrapping
- Bread bags
- Cereal liners
- Cheese, fish and meat wrapping
- Crisp and sweet bags
- Delivery bags
- Frozen food bags
- Multi-pack wrapping
- Plastic carrier bags
- Plastic film lids
- Salad, pasta, and rice bags
- Toilet roll wrapping

Waitrose: Banbury & Daventry
Morrisons: Banbury

- Bread bags
- Plastic carrier bags

Marks & Spencer: Leamington Shopping Park (Scheme will be rolled out to more stores soon)

- Carrier bags & online delivery bags
- Plastic pouches used for food & household items
- Wrappers & bags for chocolate, crisps, biscuits & sweets
- Film from the top of food trays
- Clothing multipack bags, including inbuilt hangers
- Wraps from bakery, food, household and beauty items

What you should not recycle at these collection points.

Compostable carrier bags, biodegradable bags & wrappers, plastic bottles or trays, bubble wrap and cling film.

Coop collection point locations:

Byfield – just inside door on left hand side (between the tills and window)
Woodford Halse – just inside door on right hand side
Fenny Compton - just inside door on right hand side

- It is made into new products - Retailers have different waste contractors in place to collect their front of store material. New uses are constantly being sought for the material and research is ongoing. Currently, the majority of the material is going into a range of non-food-based end markets. The polyethylene (PE) material that is collected is generally going back into carrier and refuse bags. The polypropylene (PP) film that is collected is commonly used for injection moulded products such as buckets, storage boxes and bins.

Is it possible to recycle materials that have already been recycled, and if so, how many times?

Current research suggests plastic can be recycled at least eight times. That means the plastic bags and wrapping recycling scheme is not only saving material from landfill, it's reducing the consumption of new materials. Market forces will reduce the cost of recycled materials, making products made from recycled materials more prevalent. Plastic bags and wrapping recycling schemes have the potential to influence substantial change.

Is it worth recycling soft plastics?

A lot of people are worried that they are taking plastic bags and wrapping to the retailer but then the retailer isn't then recycling it or disposing of it responsibly. A great blog on this issue is available at: <https://clearonplastics.com/is-recycling-plastics-worth-it/>

Useful information:

The list of collection points is changing all the time, so to find your nearest place to recycle plastic bags and wrapping use the Recycle Now Recycling Locator: <https://www.recyclenow.com/local-recycling?rlw-stream=16>.

The Coop have a really useful guide for what they collect at: <https://www.coop.co.uk/environment/soft-plastics/packaging-list>

We'd like your feedback.

Do you find these articles useful/informative? Do you have any ideas that you would like the Boddington Sustainability Group to look at or information that you would like us to cover in future Bugle articles? Please contact us via: clerk@boddingtonpc.uk.

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