

From South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.

Dear Garden Waste Customer

Firstly, please accept our sincere apologies for the disruption to your garden waste service this summer.

We are pleased to share the news that we have agreed a temporary arrangement with Biffa that will enable us to begin collecting garden waste again from 27 September.

The well documented national shortage of HGV drivers is still an issue for Biffa, as well as for other council waste collections and many supermarkets, but the temporary arrangement they can provide requires fewer drivers, which means the service can resume sooner.

The temporary arrangement is that fortnightly collections will change to take place **every four weeks**, but you will be able to leave **twice as much garden waste** out as normal.

We appreciate this is still not the service you expect from us so we will be extending your subscription this year by three months to make up for the collections that you have missed while the service has been suspended. We will delay the collection of your next Direct Debit payment by three months – if we have recently informed you that your payment is due to be taken imminently but the payment has not yet come out of your account, the payment will be cancelled, and you will be notified of the revised collection date in due course once your subscription has been amended. If somebody else pays for your garden waste collections, please let them know of this change. If you choose not to continue with the garden waste service when your subscription expires, we'll continue to empty your brown bin for three months after your subscription was originally due to end.

While we will be reviewing the situation closely on an ongoing basis, we have set an agreed review date with Biffa at the end of October to see if the normal service can resume and we will let you know the outcome of that review.

Your collection day remains the same as before

If your bins are usually emptied on a Monday, for example, your brown bin will still be emptied on a Monday under a new temporary garden waste timetable with your bins emptied once every four weeks, instead of every two weeks.

You can see the **temporary timetable**, which shows when your four-weekly collection will take place on our dedicated webpage here

southoxon.gov.uk/gardenwastecollectionchanges
whitehorsedc.gov.uk/gardenwastecollectionchanges

Remember, when you put your garden waste bin **out while this temporary timetable is in place**, you can leave an extra bin's worth of garden waste out next to your brown bin. The extra garden waste can be put out in cardboard boxes, old compost bags or bin bags (not the very large trade waste bags please).

We will still collect your food waste weekly, and your recycling and rubbish every two weeks as normal.

We want to thank you for your patience and understanding and apologise once again that the service has fallen short of the standards you have come to expect. We hope you feel that the temporary arrangement is a good way of getting the garden waste service up and running sooner rather than later, while Biffa continues to look for ways to address its driver shortage.