Why have you suspended the Garden Waste Collection Service?

To help tackle COVID-19 and make sure we continue to deliver services as well as additional measures for communities and businesses, West Suffolk Council is scaling back or stopping some operations for the time being, including suspending the Garden Waste Collection Service.

How long will the Garden Waste Collection Service be suspended for?

We do not know at this stage how long the suspension will be, but it will be for some weeks. We encourage everyone to check the council social media and website to see the latest advice.

Why could you not give everyone more notice?

The drop in numbers of staff has happened rapidly and although we are redeploying staff to protect essential services, we are not able to run the service at this time.

Why could you not do more to communicate it?

Normally we would have had time to alert customers with a note on their brown bin. We have emailed the three quarters of customers for whom we have email addresses but because of the extraordinary circumstances, are unable to get a letter delivered to those for whom we have postal addresses only. Messages have been placed on websites and social media and we have advised all residents to check the council website and social media in coming weeks for news of a return to usual service.

Why did you not stop the black or blue bin instead?

Collection of household waste and recycling is a mandatory service. People put their food waste in their black bins, so it is important to try to maintain this collection for public health reasons.

My brown bin is full. What should I do with it?

- Suffolk County Council has closed all Household Recycling Centres until further notice so please do not take the waste there.
- Garden waste can be decanted out of the bin into a home composting area in the garden.
- Depending on what is in the bin, residents may choose to leave the contents in it until we are able to collect. In this instance, it is advised to keep bins in the shade.
Will other collections be disrupted?

It is likely that other collections may be missed or happen late. We will try to ensure there is as little disruption as possible. The resources to run the service may change very frequently and at short notice. We ask everyone to bear with us while we work to get to you.

Will I get a refund?

The £43 paid for the current year April 2020 to March 2021 will not be refunded but the year will be extended by the period of the suspension to compensate.

Why did you take my direct debit?

We will be continually keeping our resourcing levels under review and announcing when the garden waste service will be resumed. It is for that reason that we have continued with direct debits for the next subscription year as we want to ensure all customers are able to resume the service without delay.

Will I get a refund on my Council Tax?

No. The Garden Waste Collection Service is not a statutory service and the cost of providing it is paid for by those who using it.

We are still providing a statutory collection service, and your Council Tax pays for more than blue and black bin collections.

Most of the tax collected is passed on to the county council to pay for schools, roads (including gritting), public transport, public health advice, street lighting, social services such as safeguarding children, supporting disabled people and caring for the elderly.

How can I help bin crews?

Bin collection crews

- If you can and it is safe to do so, please wash your bin handles and lids with mild disinfectant before you put them out for collection

Dog bins and litter bins

- If you are able to take your litter and dog poo bags home and put them in your black bin it will help ease the pressure on our street cleaning crews.

Can I have a bonfire to burn my garden waste?

No. In view of air pollution and respecting your neighbours, please do not burn your garden waste.