

# North Yorkshire Council

## Selby and Ainsty Area Constituency Committee

21 September 2023

### Selby Area Garden Waste Service

#### Report of the Corporate Director – Environment

#### 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks to provide an update on the implementation of a subscription garden waste service in the Selby area.

#### 2.0 Background

- 2.1 At a meeting of the Executive on 10 January 2023 it was approved that the rates for garden waste collection across the county be harmonised for the 2023/24 season. A request was made to the district and borough councils to implement the harmonised rate and for Richmondshire to implement the pro rata rate due to smaller bin sizes.
- 2.2 It was also agreed that in the Selby area, where garden waste collection was currently free of charge, a consultation would take place to understand what demand there would be for the garden waste service if it was subject to the same charges as all other areas of the county. The consultation took place between 20 February 2023 and 03 April 2023 and the subscription service commenced 28 August 2024 following approval by the Executive on 20 June 2023.

#### 3.0 The Report

- 3.1 The collection of garden waste is not a statutory service and under the Controlled Waste Regulations 2012, the council has the discretion to charge for this service. The legacy district and borough councils of North Yorkshire have all operated a subscription-based service for a number of years, with the exception of the former Selby District Council (SDC).
- 3.2 Public Consultation
- 3.2.1 A public consultation ran from Monday 20 February to Monday 03 April. The consultation was available on the former North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) website with paper copies on request. It was promoted in the local news, on NYCC and SDC social media platforms and via councillor and parish council briefing notes. 3580 responses were received.
- 3.2.2 3580 responses were received and 95% said they currently used the council's garden waste service. Of those who use the service, 22% said they would continue to, following the introduction of a subscription-based service. A further 18% said they didn't know.
- 3.2.3 Respondents were also asked how they would dispose of their garden waste if they didn't subscribe, 51% said they would dispose of it in the rubbish bins, 19% said they would take it to a household waste and recycling centre (HWRC) and 13% said they would compost it at home. Where other areas have introduced an additional charge, they have not seen a significant increase in residual waste tonnages.

- 3.2.4 Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide additional comments on the proposal. There have been 1633 comments received. Themes centred on concerns around an increase in fly tipping, the cost of living, council tax and the perception that the council already makes a charge by selling garden waste to reprocessors. These concerns were addressed through the comprehensive communications and marketing campaign.
- 3.2.5 The majority of local authorities across England charge to collect garden waste. There is no evidence to suggest that charging a subscription fee leads to an increase in fly-tipping, which is a criminal offence and liable to enforcement action where appropriate. Most residents either choose to home compost, which is the most environmentally beneficial option, or take their garden waste to a household waste recycling centre, which is free of charge.
- 3.2.6 When we do see fly-tipped garden waste it tends to be in much larger quantities than would fit into a garden waste green bin and isn't household garden waste like grass cuttings and weeds. Fly tipping will continue to be monitored and enforcement action will be taken against offenders where appropriate.

### 3.3 Service Options

- 3.3.1 A number of options were analysed in relation to subscription periods for the Selby area, and the approved option was for a pro-rata charge of £29 for 2023/24. Subscriptions opened w/c 10 July 2023 with charged collections running from w/c 28 August 2023 to w/c 26 February 2024.
- 3.3.2 The subscription rate is not based on a charge per collection. It is a pro-rata calculation based on the number of weeks in the season compared to the rest of North Yorkshire. The charge for 2024/25 has not been confirmed and will be set as part of the annual fees and charges process.
- 3.3.3 The overall service across the county will be harmonised from 2024 with collections running from w/c 4 March to w/c 2 December 2024. This will include:
- subscriptions opening across the county in early January and closing at the end of October each year, and
  - a standard annual winter close down from the end of November / early December to the end of February each year.
- 3.3.4 Collections in the Selby area currently run all year, with a four-week close down over the Christmas and New Year period. Collections operate with a reduced number of crews and reduced staffing levels (driver and one loader instead of a driver and two loaders). On average, over the last five years, the amount of garden waste collected between December and February is just under 8% of the annual total (approx. 860 tonnes over three months out of an average annual total of 8578 tonnes). Average tonnages in January account for less than 3% of the annual total (approx. 294 tonnes).
- 3.3.5 The other legacy district and borough council areas have operated a winter closedown for a number of years because of the low tonnages collected. The associated reduction in vehicle miles and emissions will help contribute towards the council's ambition to be net carbon neutral by 2030. Drivers and operatives will be redeployed in other parts of the waste service during this period.

### 3.4 Communication and Engagement Campaign

- 3.4.1 A comprehensive communications and engagement campaign was developed which included direct mailing to every property in the area with the exclusion of flats / communal properties. The direct mailing set out how residents could subscribe and included a

personalised QR code which linked to the subscription page of the website auto filling the residents address to enable an efficient customer journey. Communications focused on promoting digital sign up although options are available for telephone subscription. A copy of the direct mailing pack can be found at Appendix A.

- 3.4.2 Of all subscriptions, 86% have been online with just under 34% coming via the QR codes included in the direct mailing. The success of the marketing campaign and in particular the ease of use of the online subscription offer, and use of QR codes is something that can be taken forward by rest of the county as we look to harmonise services.
- 3.4.3 To mitigate the impact on the Selby customer services team, telephone subscriptions and enquiries have also been managed by the Northallerton customer services team following service training. This is the first legacy district council service which has been jointly managed in this way.
- 3.4.4 Alongside the direct mailing, the service change was promoted on the council's website and social media platforms, via councillor and parish council updates, and at libraries and other key sites.

### 3.5 Subscription Levels

- 3.5.1 A conservative estimate of anticipated sign up was set at 22% or 7,700 subscriptions. This was based on the results of the public consultation.
- 3.5.2 As of 31 August 2023, we have 17,439 subscriptions which equates to a 49.8% sign-up. This is the second highest subscription rate in North Yorkshire. There will be no initial changes to collection rounds, but this will be assessed in year two. Any capacity created within the garden waste service will be redeployed within the wider waste and recycling service.
- 3.5.3 Other parts of the county saw a year-on-year increase in subscriptions post year one. Whilst we may experience some drop off in subscriptions when we move to a full year charge, we expect new subscriptions will mean that sign-up rates remain relatively stable. As part of the subscription form there is the option for residents to submit their email addresses to receive notification when subscriptions reopen next year. Just under 86% of subscribers have requested an email reminder.

### 3.6 Alternative Garden Waste Disposal Options

- 3.6.1 The direct mailing and other elements on the communications campaign have encouraged those who don't wish to subscribe, to either home compost or take their garden waste to a HWRC. Initial figures saw an increase in direct sales of discounted compost bins rise from nine between April and June 2023 to 60 in July 2023. Figures for August will be available shortly.
- 3.6.2 Those who do not wish to initially subscribe have been encouraged to hold on to their garden waste bins in case they choose to subscribe at a later date. This is based on the experience of other areas who all saw an increase in subscriptions in year two. For those who are unable to keep their garden waste bins they can request a removal. As of 31 August 2023, we have received 300 requests for bins to be removed. These will be actioned over the coming months and the bins will be reused wherever they are in a suitable condition.

## 4.0 Equalities

- 4.1 There are no significant climate change implications arising from this report.

## **5.0 Finance**

- 5.1 A harmonised charge of £43.50 was agreed by the Executive on 10 January 2023 and a pro-rata charge of £29 was agreed for the Selby area for 2023/24. The charge has not yet been set for 2024/25.
- 5.2 Income from subscriptions is currently £505,700.

## **6.0 Legal**

- 6.1 North Yorkshire Council as a Unitary Authority has a duty under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to arrange for the collection and disposal of household waste, and to comply with the waste provisions contained within the Environment Act 2021 and future secondary legislation and statutory guidance.
- 6.2 Garden waste collection is a discretionary service where waste collection authorities are able to make a charge under the Controlled Waste Regulations 2012.
- 6.3 It should be noted that a national government decision regarding an England-wide approach to recycling is anticipated, following a public consultation in 2021. This could lead to a cap on charging for this discretionary service.

## **7.0 Climate Change**

- 7.1 There are no significant climate change implications arising from this report.

## **8.0 Recommendations**

- 8.1 That the contents of the report be noted.

### **APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Direct Mailing Pack

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:** None

KARL BATTERSBY  
Corporate Director – Environment  
County Hall  
Northallerton  
September 2023

Author of Report: Michael Leah, Assistant Director, Environmental Services  
Aimi Brookes, Service Development Manager - Waste

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.



The Occupier  
 ADDRESS 1  
 ADDRESS 2  
 ADDRESS 3  
 POSTTOWN  
 POSTCODE

North Yorkshire Council  
 Civic Centre  
 Doncaster Road  
 Selby  
 YO8 9FT  
[www.northyorks.gov.uk](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk)  
 Monday 3 July 2023

Dear Occupier,

We're writing to let you know that your garden waste collections are changing.

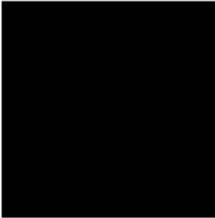
If you want to continue to have your garden waste collected from your home from 28 August you'll need to pay for a licence and display your licence sticker on your garden waste bin.

You won't automatically be signed up for the scheme and you do not have to tell us if you don't want the service. If you choose not to subscribe you must either take your garden waste to a household waste recycling centre or compost it at home. This change doesn't affect your other waste collection services.

It costs £29 for the service. This covers your collections up until Friday 1 March 2024. You should sign up by Friday 11 August if you want your garden waste to continue to be collected from 28 August. You can still sign up after this date but remember to allow up to 14 days for your licence sticker to arrive.

#### Sign up for garden waste collections

There are two options available to sign up for collections. Both require access to the internet and an email account. Please have your payment card details ready.

Option 1: Online	Option 2: Smart phone camera
<p>You can sign up online at:</p> <p><a href="http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/sel-gardenwaste">www.northyorks.gov.uk/sel-gardenwaste</a></p> <p>This will take you to our website where you will need to follow the on-screen instructions.</p>	<p>Scan your personalised QR code:</p>  <p>This will take you straight to the page where you can sign up for collections.</p>

or...

OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Once signed up you'll receive a licence sticker through the post with instructions for how to attach it to your bin. Please remember to allow up to 14 days for your licence sticker to arrive.

For more information visit [northyorks.gov.uk/sel-gardenwaste](http://northyorks.gov.uk/sel-gardenwaste) or read the leaflet enclosed with this letter.

If you need any of this information in another language or format, please call our customer service centre on 0300 131 2 131 and say "garden waste subscription" when prompted. Our opening hours are Monday and Tuesday 9am to 5pm; Wednesday 9.30am to 5pm; Thursday 9am to 5pm and Friday 9am to 4.30pm.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl Battersby', is positioned above a rectangular area of grey halftone dots.

Karl Battersby  
Corporate Director of Environment  
North Yorkshire Council

OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED



## The garden waste service for the Selby area is changing



To receive garden waste collections from 28 August 2023 you'll need to pay for a licence and display your licence sticker on your garden waste bin.



### What is changing?

From 28 August if you want to continue to have your garden waste collected from your home you need to pay for this service.

If you choose not to subscribe you must either take your garden waste to a household waste recycling centre or compost it at home. You should not put it in your household waste bin.

**This change doesn't affect your other waste collection services. You won't automatically be signed up for the scheme and do not have to tell us if you don't want the service.**

### Why is this changing?

Residents in all other areas of North Yorkshire already pay for garden waste collection services. When the new North Yorkshire Council launched earlier this year it inherited different collection services and, in all other areas, apart from the Selby area there is an additional charge for garden waste collections.

Garden waste collections aren't something local authorities have to provide but we know that residents in the Selby area do value to this service and would like it to continue. Due to pressures on our budgets, we need to introduce an additional charge to help pay for this service. Income from the service will be used to offset the costs of delivering it.

The garden waste collection service is an opt-in service. You will only need to contact us if you want to sign-up to the service, to continue to have your garden waste collected.

To receive fortnightly collections of garden waste you need to subscribe to the service and display a licence sticker on your garden waste bin.

Paid for collections will start from 28 August 2023. If you haven't signed up by then, your green garden waste bin will no longer be emptied by us.

### What can go in your garden waste bin

#### Yes please

- ✓ grass cuttings
- ✓ flowers
- ✓ plants and weeds
- ✓ leaves
- ✓ hedge clippings
- ✓ prunings, twigs and small branches up to 4cm thick



#### No thanks

- X food waste including meat, fish, vegetable peelings or tea bags
- X nappies
- X soil, rubble or stones
- X glass, metal and plastic
- X treated wood including fencing
- X animal faeces, bedding or pet litter
- X turf or compost
- X plant pots
- X sacks or plastic bags
- X Japanese knotweed or other invasive weeds or plants

You can sign up now if you want your garden waste to continue to be collected from 28 August.

The new subscription service will start from 28 August and will cost £29 which is just over £2 per collection. This provides a cost-effective way to dispose of your garden waste without having to take it to a household waste recycling centre.

This will cover your collections up until Friday 1 March 2024.

### Ways to sign up



The easiest way to apply for a garden waste licence is online by visiting [northyorks.gov.uk/sel-gardenwaste](https://northyorks.gov.uk/sel-gardenwaste). Please have your payment card details ready.



If you have a smart phone you can use the camera to scan this QR code.



If you can't sign up online, you can call our customer services team on **0300 131 2 131** and say **garden waste subscription** when prompted. Please have your payment card details ready.

Once signed up you'll receive your licence sticker through the post to put on your bin.

The licence covers one garden waste bin. If you would like to have more, you will need to pay the annual subscription fee for each additional bin.

If you wish to share with a neighbour, one of you will need to pay for a licence, registered and collected from one address.



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### Other options for dealing with your garden waste

The most environmentally friendly way to deal with garden waste is to compost it in your garden.

If you don't want to subscribe to the kerbside garden waste collection service, you don't have to tell us. You can dispose of your garden waste by:

- composting it at home.
- taking it to your local household waste recycling centre. This is free of charge.

You should keep your green bin even if you don't sign up for the service in case you decide to join at a later date. Your wheelie bin can be used for things like storage, composting or even as a water butt. If you can't keep your bin visit [northyorks.gov.uk/sel-gardenwaste](https://northyorks.gov.uk/sel-gardenwaste)



Low-cost compost bins are available from our partner, **Get Composting**. These start from just £12. There is also a buy one, get one half price offer, which means North Yorkshire residents can team up with a family member, friend or neighbour to get a compost bin cheaper. For more information and to purchase a compost bin, please visit [getcomposting.com](https://getcomposting.com) or call **0800 316 4454**. You can also buy one direct from Selby household waste recycling centre.

### Contact us

Online: [northyorks.gov.uk](https://northyorks.gov.uk)  
By telephone: **0300 131 2 131**

Follow us @northyorksc

