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Recycling and Waste Team  
Place Directorate  
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## Dear resident

### **We are writing to you because North Somerset Council has made the difficult decision to introduce an annual charge of £50 per bin for garden waste collections from 1 April 2021.**

While it is understandably frustrating to be asked to pay for a service you were previously receiving for no additional charge, we have been forced to make tough decisions about where to make savings as council finances are under a great deal of pressure.

We do want to work with all households to encourage more home composting. This is the cheapest and most environmentally friendly way to deal with your garden waste. It also produces a useful, free soil enhancer for your garden. More information about home composting is included in the leaflet with this letter.

Garden waste is not a statutory service and we have continued to provide a collection without an annual charge for longer than two-thirds other councils in the country, including all our neighbouring authorities.

To ensure we can deliver our statutory obligations and protect essential services such as care and support for the most vulnerable people in our community, the decision has been taken to introduce an annual charge to cover the costs of the service and make it self-financing.

We recognise that not all our residents have a garden and others already home compost or take their garden waste to a recycling centre. By introducing an annual charge we can continue to offer a good service for those who choose to pay. We will also be making a positive contribution to our carbon emissions target by encouraging more home composting.

As your property is currently registered for the garden waste collection service, if you wish to continue to receive collections you will need to sign up to the new service and pay the annual charge of £50 per bin (or three sacks, if your property is unable to have a bin). There are options to pay by annual direct debit or a one-off payment.

You can pay for a maximum of two bins to be collected from your property for a one-year period of 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. The frequency of collections will not change and for those who sign up, you should continue to use your existing garden waste bin or sacks. Your collection day will stay the same for now but may change in the future.

Garden waste crews will be able to clearly identify which bins have been paid for through a permit sticker delivered to garden waste customers each year.

## Ways to reduce the cost

During consultation on the garden waste service last year, residents told us an initial discount was important. There is a 10% 'early bird' discount available on your first bin if you sign up to the new service by Sunday 28 March 2021.

If you are eligible for the council tax support scheme, you also qualify for a subsidised garden waste collection service, the same proportion of discount will be applied when paying.

If you have a smaller garden you may want to arrange to share the service with a neighbour.

## If you choose not to pay

If you do not want to pay, you do not need to do anything, but you will no longer receive a garden waste collection after 1 April 2021. The alternative options are to home compost or to take your garden waste to one of the three household waste recycling centres in North Somerset, free of charge.

Any unwanted garden waste bins will not be collected straight away, we will provide further details on this later in the year.

## How to sign up

 the quickest and easiest way to sign up is online at **[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/gardenwaste](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/gardenwaste)**  
You can ask a friend or relative to help you if you do not have access yourself.

 if you can't do it online you can also call **01934 888 888** and sign up and pay over the phone.

Due to coronavirus we are not able to take payments in person.

Please do not visit the Town Hall or Castlewood offices. If you can't pay by card but wish to sign up to the new service please call 01934 888 888 to discuss alternative options.

For more information on the new service go to **[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/gardenwaste](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/gardenwaste)**

This letter can be made available in large print, audio, easy read and other formats. Documents on our website can also be emailed to you as plain text files. Help is also available for people who require council information in languages other than English. For more information contact the sender of this letter.

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