



WHITEHORSE
CITY COUNCIL

Conversation Starter Kit

Moving to 4-Bins



Introduction

What is the Conversation Starter Kit?

This conversation starter kit explains the upcoming changes to your kerbside waste and recycling service. It will help you understand your options and make an informed decision about the future of our services.

Whitehorse households will move to a 4-bin waste and recycling service by 1 July 2027 as required by the Victorian Government to meet the [Proposed Household Waste and Recycling Service Standards \(2024\)](#).

The 4 bins will include:



The size of the bins and how often they are collected has not been standardised and can be determined to suit our community needs.

To allow enough time for our community and Council to prepare, the change to a 4-bin service will not begin until early 2027.

We have not decided how this change will work or what it will look like yet. This is where you can help inform a well-designed 4-bin waste service that helps Council to achieve our:

- [Waste Management Strategy \(2018-2028\)](#) target of 80% waste to landfill diversion rate by 2028.
- [Climate Response Strategy \(2023-2030\)](#) target to aspire for net zero community emissions by 2040.
- [Integrated Council Plan \(2025-2029\)](#) to achieve an environmentally sustainable and climate resilient City and a Council that responsibly and sustainably manages waste.

Key topics covered in this kit

- Current waste and recycling service
- Introducing a Food Organics and Garden Organics bin to all households
- Introduction of the glass recycling service
- Two 4-bin service options
- Proposed shared FOGO and glass bin arrangements at apartments, townhouses and people living in units.

Our current kerbside waste service

The standard Waste Service Charge includes:

- 80-litre garbage (red-lid) bin, collected weekly
- 240-litre recycling (yellow-lid) bin, collected fortnightly

Any bins that vary from the standard service including FOGO (lime-green-lid) bins and additional or larger bins cost more.

Included in Standard Waste Charge	Optional extra cost
 Garbage 80L Weekly	 Recycling 240L Fortnightly
	 FOGO 140L/240L Fortnightly

Businesses, Community Groups, Sporting Clubs

Businesses, community groups, sporting clubs and schools who have Council kerbside bins will fall under the mandated 4-bin service. Any property that has chargeable Council kerbside bins will be expected to have all 4 bins and will be charged based on the Waste Service Charge.

How can I have my say?

Your feedback will help shape the transition to a 4-bin service. Have your say via our survey at yoursay.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/4bins by 30 September 2025.

Other ways to have your say

- Send an email to wasteteam@whitehorse.vic.gov.au to provide your feedback or request a call from one of our officers
- Collect a hardcopy of the survey from the Customer Service desk at the Nunawading Civic Centre or Box Hill Town Hall
- Further ways to have your say, both in-person and online are listed at yoursay.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/4bins

Translation information

If you need an interpreter, call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450 to speak to an interpreter. Ask them to phone Whitehorse City Council on 9262 6333.

OR

- National Relay Service (NRS)
TTY: 133 677 (ask for 1300 787 624)
- Speak and Listen (speech-to-speech relay):
1300 555 727 (ask for 1300 787 624)
- Translator Interpretation Service
131 450 (ask for 1300 787 624)



What are the current issues?

Community food waste is at an all-time high

Food waste makes up 40% of weight in the average Whitehorse garbage bin. Around 10,000 tonnes of food is currently thrown out by our community every year. 10,000 tonnes is equal to 500 Melbourne trams. This could be diverted from landfill by placing food waste into a FOGO bin.

Food waste costs us

Landfill is the most expensive way to dispose of food waste, and the cost is increasing. From 1 July 2025, the Victorian Government raised the landfill levy from \$132.76 to \$169.79 per tonne, a 28% increase.

Turning food waste into compost is around 40% cheaper than sending it to landfill.

The rising cost of waste and recycling (including the Victorian Government landfill levy) are passed on to our residents through the [Waste Service Charge](#). By reducing the amount of food waste sent to landfill, we can lower costs for our community.

Environmental impacts

When food and garden waste breaks down in landfill it creates methane, a greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change. Instead, food and garden waste can be made into compost that helps improve soil. This reduces harmful gases, keeps valuable materials out of landfill, and creates something useful for Victorian farmers.

Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) participation and diversion rate

76% of our residents already have a FOGO bin. However approximately 40% of food waste is still in the average garbage bin.

Table 1 shows improved diversion rates (the higher, the better) from our neighbouring councils after:

- introducing FOGO to all households,
- moving to a weekly FOGO collection, and
- shifting garbage collection to fortnightly.

We calculate diversion rate by looking at the total amount of FOGO and recycling collected, and dividing that by the total amount our trucks pick up (including garbage, FOGO and recycling).

When FOGO bins are collected weekly and garbage fortnightly, more waste is kept out of landfill. Councils such as Boroondara, Monash, Knox, and Manningham reduced the amount of waste going to landfill by an average of 19% in the first year after making this change.

In contrast, when our opt-in FOGO service was introduced in July 2022 (keeping a fortnightly collection), we only saw a 5% improvement in our diversion rate over the first year. Our total diversion rate is 55% (when comparing to other councils in Table 1).

As part of this consultation, we are seeking feedback on two 4-bin service options to meet the Proposed Household Waste and Recycling Service Standards (2024). This includes an option to change the collection frequency so that FOGO bins would be collected weekly and garbage fortnightly.

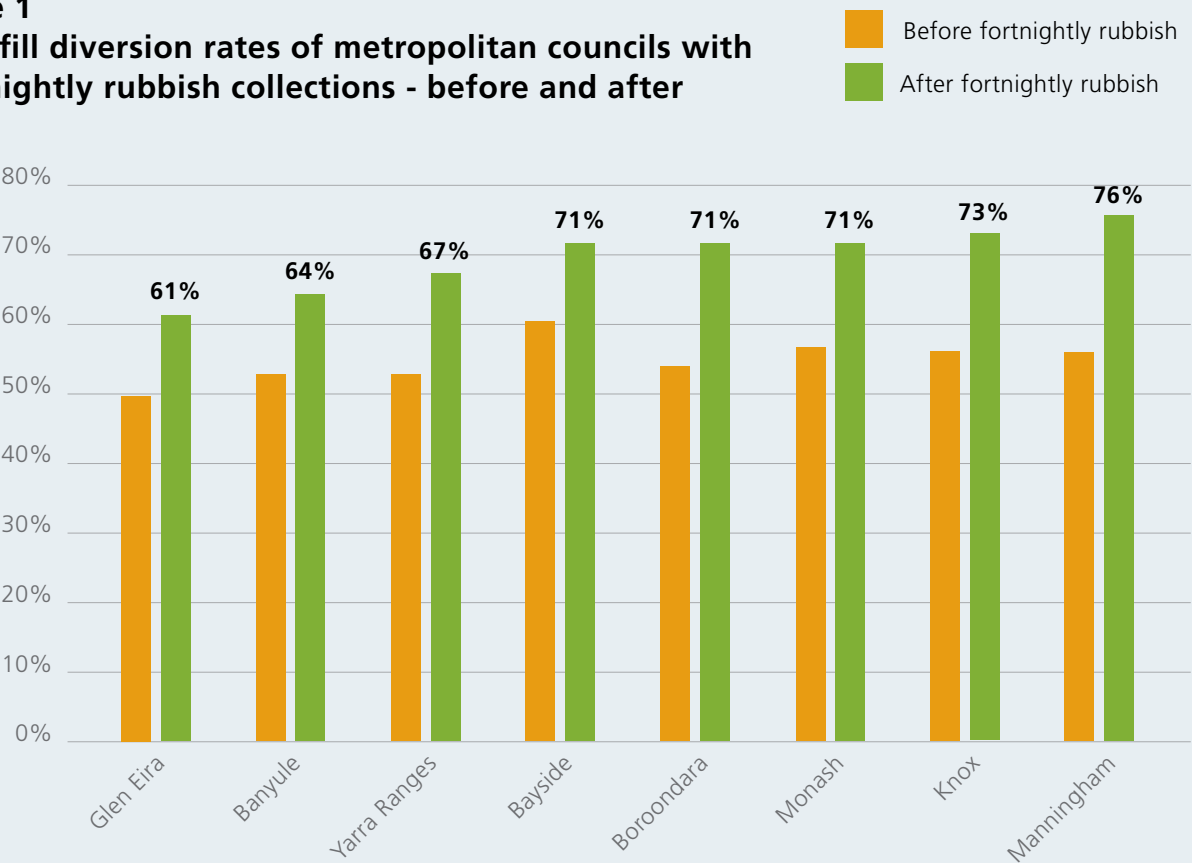
Garbage Bin Composition (% by weight)

The average Whitehorse garbage bin waste audit from 2024 and 2025.



Food waste makes up approximately 40% of weight in the average Whitehorse garbage bin.

Table 1
Landfill diversion rates of metropolitan councils with fortnightly rubbish collections - before and after



Kerbside service options for Whitehorse

Two 4-Bin Service Options

We have explored two 4-bin service options for all households.

Both options include mandatory food organics and garden organics (FOGO) and glass service. Each option suggests a different schedule for how often your food organics and garden organics (FOGO) and garbage bins would be collected, as shown in the table below.

Service Options	Garbage	FOGO	Recycling	Glass
Option 1 Weekly garbage, fortnightly FOGO	Collected weekly  80 Litre	Collected fortnightly  140 Litre	Collected fortnightly  240 Litre	Collected every 4 weeks  80 Litre
Option 2 Fortnightly garbage, weekly FOGO	Collected fortnightly  80 Litre	Collected weekly  140 Litre	Collected fortnightly  240 Litre	Collected every 4 weeks  80 Litre

A weekly FOGO and weekly garbage collection service is not feasible and is too expensive.

Note: Garbage and FOGO bins are available in different sizes for an additional fee.

How do the options compare?

Final costs will vary depending on the final service option chosen, government funding, and industry pricing. The information below will help you compare the options:

Estimated FOGO and Garbage Service Options	Option 1 Weekly garbage, fortnightly FOGO	Option 2 Fortnightly garbage, weekly FOGO
Yearly cost of FOGO and garbage service	\$15.6M	\$14.8M
Yearly cost per household for FOGO and garbage	\$209	\$199*
FOGO waste diverted from landfill in the first year (more is better)	 19,000 tonnes	 25,000 tonnes
Garbage sent to landfill in the first year (less is better)	 25,000 tonnes	 18,000 tonnes**
Landfill diversion rate (current diversion rate 55%)	 56%	 67%
FOGO and garbage greenhouse gas emissions generated	 More emissions	 Less emissions
Change from current service	Least change	Most change

**This represents the average cost to Council per household in the first year of the transition, not the final household charge. Over time, greater savings are expected as more food waste is diverted from landfill, which is the most expensive disposal method.*

***Tonnes are lower as a result of a fortnightly garbage service, as it improves people putting the right thing in the right bin.*

Option 1	Option 2
  Weekly garbage Fortnightly FOGO	  Fortnightly garbage Weekly FOGO
Pros: This will require the least amount of change in your behaviour. You keep the same bin sizes and collection schedule, everyone will get a new glass bin and a FOGO bin if they do not already have one.	Pros: Less smell: Your food waste bin gets picked up every week, so it won't smell as bad or attract flies and bugs (especially important in summer when food rots faster). Lower costs: It costs less because less waste will go to landfill. Saving more food waste: When FOGO bins are picked up weekly but regular garbage is only picked up every two weeks, you are encouraged to separate food waste properly and throw away less overall.
Cons: Higher costs: Keeping weekly garbage is more expensive in the long term, with more waste going to landfill. The State Government annually increases the landfill levy to encourage diverting waste from landfill and drive positive circular economy outcomes. No change to encourage different behaviour: People are more likely to throw food waste in their garbage instead of using their FOGO bin, which creates more greenhouse gas emissions.	Cons: Higher contamination: If your garbage bin is too small, you might put the wrong things in other bins just to fit everything – increasing contamination (the wrong thing in the bin). Most change: You will need to change how you manage waste because bin collection will happen at different times.

What would a fortnightly garbage collection service mean?

Current garbage capacity

Our standard bin size is currently an 80-litre bin. There is an option to upsize or have an additional 120-litre or 240-litre bin for an additional fee.



Fortnightly garbage collection service

As part of this consultation, one of the 4-bin service options is swapping how often we collect your food organics and garden organics (FOGO) bin and garbage bin.

If we switched to collecting garbage bins fortnightly and FOGO bins weekly, we would need to understand how this change would impact the community.

What we know right now:

- Almost 40% of what goes in Whitehorse garbage bins is food waste. Once households start putting their food scraps in the FOGO bin, many households should have room in their garbage bin.
- 48% of Whitehorse households are made up of just one person or a couple with no kids. For these smaller households, an 80-litre bin would be big enough.

However, other councils who have switched to collecting garbage every two weeks found that 80-litre bins weren't big enough, so we want to hear from you what support you might need with a fortnightly garbage service.

Supporting fortnightly garbage

We know that households have different needs and preferences depending on who and how many people live there. These include:

- large households,
- households with children in nappies,
- people with some medical conditions that might generate more waste than the average household.

To ensure we meet the needs of our community, certain households will be entitled to get additional or larger bins (up to a cap) at no extra cost, however additional fees may apply to some households.

How would I manage smells?

Unfortunately, most bins smell. Experience from other councils shows that once food is removed there is no difference in the smell of garbage bins after a fortnight when garbage, including nappies and other sanitary waste, was bagged or wrapped in plastic. A [trial in Lake Macquarie Council 2014](#), showed that after 2 weeks, bins with nappies didn't smell much worse than regular bins after one week. The study also showed that odour levels did not increase with time or the number of nappies.

Glass recycling

New glass bin

The Victorian Government's Proposed Household Waste and Recycling Service Standards (2024) includes a mandatory glass bin service for all Victorian households by 1 July 2027. Separating glass from other recycling improves the quality of recyclables. Pieces of broken glass can stick to other materials, such as paper, cardboard and plastics, which reduces the ability for glass to be recycled into high value products.

Cost impacts and considerations

We understand introducing a glass bin will cost more as it requires an additional service. We are part of a group of councils reviewing the cost and benefit of the kerbside glass recycling service.

On 20 December 2024, we signed a letter to the Minister for Environment along with 14 other councils, requesting reconsideration of the glass bin. The letter acknowledged the importance of glass recycling and stated that there are alternative approaches that can achieve the desired outcomes more cost effectively and environmentally efficiently.

While we continue to advocate to the Victorian Government on behalf of our community, we remain committed to meeting the legislative requirements.

We have 18 months to implement the glass service and will proceed with planning to ensure compliance, while also recognising the current cost-of-living pressures facing our community.



Living in units, townhouses and apartments

All our households will move to a 4-bin waste and recycling service by 1 July 2027 as required by the Victorian Government to meet the Proposed Household Waste and Recycling Service Standards (2024). This will include those households who live in an apartment who have a Council bin service.

Shared bins to help with 4-bins storage and space

We understand that not all households will have space to store 4-bins. That’s why we are trialling different shared bin arrangements with people living in units, townhouses and apartments across our community.

We are proposing a shared glass and food organics and garden organics (FOGO) bin arrangement model for when there are 4 or more households on a property.

The number of shared bins your property will receive is determined by the number of households in your apartment development – outlined in the tables below.

We understand that there is a higher level of contamination (the wrong thing in the bin) in apartments. Therefore our plan is:

- Every apartment building gets the minimum shared bins they need
- If you need more bins, you can ask for them
- If you already have your own FOGO bin, you can keep using it - no need to change anything
- For any site that has less than 4 households, individual bins will be distributed.

We are proposing to start with the minimum service and letting you ask for more if you need it (within the bins terms and conditions), rather than guessing what every unit, townhouse and apartment across our community needs.

All households that have Council bin services will be charged the Kerbside Waste Service Charge for the minimum service of all 4-bins. Additional or larger bins are charged for an additional fee.

Proposed shared bin options for units, townhouses and apartments

Option 1:
FOGO bin collected fortnightly,
Glass recycling collected once every 4-weeks

Dwellings	FOGO	Glass
4-10 households	2 x 140L FOGO bin will be delivered to your development.	1 x 120L glass recycling bin will be delivered to your development.
11-20 households	1 x 140L FOGO bin will be delivered for every 5 dwellings in your development.	3 x 120L glass recycling bins will be delivered to your development.
20+ households	1 x 140L FOGO bin will be delivered for every 5 dwellings in your development.	1 x 120L glass bin will be delivered for every 10 dwellings in your development.

Option 2:
FOGO bin collected weekly,
Glass recycling collected once every 4-weeks

Dwellings	FOGO	Glass
4-10 households	1 x 140L FOGO bin will be delivered to your development.	1 x 120L glass recycling bin will be delivered to your development.
11-20 households	1 x 140L FOGO bin will be delivered for every 10 dwellings in your development.	3 x 120L glass recycling bins will be delivered to your development.
20+ households	1 x 140L FOGO bin will be delivered for every 10 dwellings in your development.	1 x 120L glass bin will be delivered for every 10 dwellings in your development.

