

# Community composting



## Welcome Community Composter!

You are now part of a citywide initiative to reduce food waste. There are a whole host of benefits to becoming a member – you will reduce the overall amount of waste you throw out and instead, your food ‘waste’ will be turned into compost and this compost in turn will play its part in producing more fruit and vegetables within the city. It’s also a good way to get to know your neighbours.

Here is some basic information about your scheme, some dos and don’ts, and a brief outline of what is expected of members.

*Your compost bin is located at:*

*Your compost monitors are:*

*Please use the bin with the combination lock.*

*Align the numbers and press the button at the bottom of the padlock to open.*

*Remember to lock the bin again after use and scramble the lock.*

*Please use the bin during daytime hours.*

### What goes in the bin:

- **Uncooked fruit and vegetable** ‘waste’, peelings, tea bags and coffee grounds. Please squeeze out the water from tea bags and remove stickers from banana skins, fruit peelings, etc
- If you aren’t sure what can go in the bin – don’t put it in – ask your compost monitor
- **Cardboard and paper** – it’s more important than you think! Please add twice as much cardboard/paper as food waste. It soaks up all the liquid and helps to create the perfect chemistry of healthy compost and stops it from going slimy and smelly. A thick layer of shredded paper in the summer can also help to reduce fruit flies. The compost gets turned weekly and the paper and card eventually breaks down and helps to create the correct consistency.
- Please **tear up cardboard into postcard size pieces** or smaller. Egg boxes, corrugated card packaging, loo rolls, newspaper etc are all helpful. Please do not use shiny card as this will have a plastic coating.
- If you compost **whole items of fruit or veg, do cut them up** before adding them to the bin. A whole cabbage will take an age to compost down.

### What to exclude:

- **Please don’t add eggs shells.** Eggs are a favoured food source of rats and we want to discourage them. Egg shells also take a very long time to compost down
- Don’t add **cooked food, meat, dairy, pasta, rice, bread, fish** – it will attract vermin
- No avocado stones, mango stones, corn cobs, pineapple heads – they take an age to break down

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- **Don't put plastic bags in the compost bin, even the ones that say they are "biodegradable or compostable"** caddy liners. The worms can't access the food inside because they take such a long time to break down and another member will have to pick them out. Also, the air can't get to the food and it will start to smell bad. If you want to line your caddy with something, use cardboard.
- Absolutely **no cat litter or animal faeces**
- Please **don't add garden waste** – there is not enough room

## What being a member means:

- All members need to play a role in looking after the 'health' of the community compost box. The box where you deposit your waste is more than just a 'bin' – it is a community scheme and that means sharing the responsibility for it. **Thank you for participating.**
- Please help keep the composting area clean and tidy by **picking up any litter** or bits of food waste that may have been dropped accidentally. **Report any damage or breakages** of locks or boxes to your compost monitor.
- If you see something in the bin that shouldn't be there (e.g. plastic bags or containers), please remove it, put it in a nearby litter bin and let your bin monitor know.
- **Compost needs turning** to let the air in and mix up the contents. This too helps to keep it smelly fresh. You need to be willing to take your turn, if you are able, when asked by your bin monitor (usually only once a year if everyone is on a rota).
- Flies do visit, especially in the summer when it's hotter and people tend to eat more fruit. The solution is to **add more cardboard**, so add some extra cardboard next time you go. **Every time you empty your caddy add some cardboard.**
- **Please don't pass on the padlock code to others.** New people wanting to join the scheme must go through the Food Partnership. This is so they can get all the right information and so we can keep an eye on numbers. Having accurate numbers of how many people in the city are composting also helps us to get continued funding from the council!
- Equally, **if you decide to stop composting or leave the area, please inform your compost monitor.** Many schemes get full up so if your place is no longer needed, we can allow another person to join up.
- **Anti-social behaviour** - if the composting boxes attract fly tipping and needles the council will collect these. Compost Monitors and residents can report this to the council on 01273 292929.
- You can take compost for your garden when it's 'ready'. If not, local gardeners can collect it.

If you have any questions about any of the above please do get in touch and happy composting!  
[compost@bhfood.org.uk](mailto:compost@bhfood.org.uk) / 01273 234 810