



City of Westminster
COMMERCIAL WASTE

8 Factors to consider

when choosing your new
commercial waste collector





1

Reliability is the key

Waste should never be an issue for your organisation. If your commercial waste collector provides you with all that you need to collect waste from your premises and picks it up with such regularity that storage is never an issue, you are on the right track.

As soon as collections are not made, waste becomes an issue. Storage issues, smell, and even fines can occur. Just when you have loads of other urgent things to sort out – waste could become another one.

Choose a supplier who can demonstrate not only a history of reliability, but a real understanding of the issues that can arise if storage and collections go wrong.



2

Reduce air pollution and vehicle movements caused by waste collection

Any provider of commercial waste services will be able to give you some figures on the tonnage they collect, number and range of vehicles, hours of operation and contingency arrangements.

Due to the ever changing nature of waste collection, providers need to be able to show very regular collection schedules. This could even be three times per day in busy areas. They must be within the official times which are set for rubbish to be presented on the street.

You need to choose a supplier that has sufficient capacity and more importantly, can demonstrate their ability to stick to schedules.

It is also important to review your commercial waste collector's air quality and waste consolidation practices. Traffic congestion and air pollution is made worse by private collections of commercial waste which duplicate

journeys that exist on Westminster City Council Commercial Waste Services' existing collection model.

Some collectors may also use outdated vehicles that produce disproportionately high levels of air emissions or use small inefficient vehicles that don't have an effective payload. This results in an excessive number of round trips to collect waste. Fortunately, by doing your research, you can prevent this from happening.

**Find out more about air quality
in Westminster**



3

Recycling should be standard and not an add-on

Recycling has benefits for the environment and for waste costs. We certainly hope that your organisation cares about its green credentials. This may be to reflect the organisation's corporate social responsibility policy. It may be a requirement requirement of your customers (or it can be both!)

Recycling waste actually comes in many different forms, so it is important to see how your new commercial waste provider categorises and deals with recycling. You should expect to see the following materials collected for recycling:

- Glass, plastic, paper, cardboard, cans and tetra-type packs
- Food waste

In addition to these, you should ask potential providers whether they also help with waste categories such as electrical items, bulky items, confidential waste, and hazardous or clinical waste.

Recycling is only going to get more important. Find a provider who looks to be ahead of the game and who can future proof your business against law and policy changes.

Your commercial waste collector must also adhere to [Resources and Waste Strategy](#) (RWS) guidelines, which have been created to help the UK better manage its waste and become more resource-efficient. The RWS will affect most businesses and shape the future of the UK's waste management services including those provided by all collectors of commercial waste. The four RWS elements aim to improve collection consistency, reform packaging use, create a UK-wide plastic packaging tax and introduce a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS).

Find out more about our recycling services



4

Costs should demonstrate value and flexibility

“Value is not overpaying for quality”. So if you are looking for a new commercial waste supplier that is a good maxim to follow.

You want a reliable, flexible, easy to use service – but you also need to show the organisation that you work for that are not paying more for the service than you should.

The internet has made researching services and likely pricing much easier so it is a good place to start. If possible, ring some potential suppliers and get them to send pricing details so you can read the small print as well as the headline “deals”. You may get ‘standard’ waste collected for one price, but any additional collections or special recycling may come at a premium price.

Finally, not all waste operators have to charge VAT. So make sure if you decide to pay VAT, you are getting extra for it!

Choose a supplier that offers good prices but not at the cost of receiving a reduced service. You may find that it will cost you more in extra charges and management time in the long run.

[Request a quote](#)



5

Find your ideal service package and not theirs

We've all seen adverts that promote "the ideal package" for you. Or maybe you've visited a website which has three services. So you choose the one in the middle of course.

Your organisation has its own set of requirements when it comes to waste collection. Make sure you agree a package to match those needs.

You should be looking for a waste provider who, in addition to packages created for similar businesses like yours, also creates tailor-made service packages.

Find a provider who will start by discovering what kind and what volume of waste you generate and then proposes a service package that fits well.

We want to help you reduce your waste in the first place than selling you more services. Reducing waste can help you save costs for waste and recycling collections.



6

Don't sign up to a 20 year fixed contract!

Commercial waste collectors all make an investment in your organisation when they start to collect and process your waste.

That does not mean, however, that you need to sign your business away in long-term contracts.

Just as in section 5 on 'ideal service packages', there should be different ways to secure these services. These should include options for multi-year agreements and 'contract-free' arrangements.

Find a supplier that wants to keep you as a customer through delivering great service at a reasonable price.



7

Additional collections

Most of the waste that you will generate as an organisation will fit in the bags or bins provided and can be collected by the waste vehicles that regularly come to your door.

From time to time you will have other items that don't fit in the bags or bins. Furniture you no longer need would be a great example – or perhaps an old photocopier.

You want to be sure that, when you ring your commercial waste collector with an additional collection request you don't get a "that's not covered". Nor do you want to wait a month for the collection to take place.

Check with potential waste collectors that they have a clearly defined process and price list for additional items.

[Find out more about bulky waste collections](#)



8

There should be support when you need it

Every organisation has experienced that special treatment from a prospective supplier. Then, once the contract is signed, you can't get hold of anyone.

Do make sure that you understand who you will be dealing with for each aspect of a commercial waste collection service. For example, will you be assigned a named account manager to look after you personally?

You should also ask about opening times of help lines. You may not operate during 'normal working hours' and need to get hold of someone in the middle of the night.

Finally, what happens if your location experiences some kind of situation where waste collection becomes vital. What would the process be in this event?

Get all of the facts and figures on how to contact your new provider. Check that, if a waste problem suddenly arose, the collector would provide a quick response service.



Consider waste as a valuable future resource

The current rate at which we consume the Earth's natural resources is unsustainable.

As the Waste and Resources Action Plan ([WRAP](#)) rightly notes, "improving waste management is essential if society's environmental impacts are to be reduced."

The mining and production of raw resources are environmentally damaging, affecting the livelihoods and health of local communities. Becoming more efficient with how we use natural resources and materials is, therefore, necessary to alleviate the pressure on the environment.

Unlike other commercial waste collectors, Westminster City Council Commercial Waste Services views waste as a valuable future resource and therefore we do not send anything to landfill; it either gets recycled, or is used to generate heat and electricity for up to 50,000 London homes each year.

Request a quote today



Did you know Duty of care

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 places a Duty of Care on all businesses to ensure that all business waste is produced, stored, transported and disposed of without harming the environment.

How we can help you comply with the law

We can give you the advice and support you need to help your business stay within the law.

The law says you must:

- Ensure your waste is transported by a licensed waste carrier – e.g. Westminster City Council.
- Pre-treat all waste to reduce its quantity and/or its environmental impact. This requires you to separate recyclable from non-recyclable waste. If your waste is collected by Westminster City Council we ensure you automatically comply with this legal requirement.
- Complete an annual Waste Transfer Note (WTN) to show you have given your waste to an authorised collector. For regular collections we can issue you an annual WTN. By law you must keep a copy of your WTN for two years.
- Have adequate waste storage space which can accommodate three days' worth of rubbish if you are a new building or are refurbishing. You can find storage planning advice online or contact us with your questions.

Contact us

Call: **020 7641 6180**

Visit: [Westminster.gov.uk/commercialwaste](https://www.westminster.gov.uk/commercialwaste)

For more bags or extra collections, visit [Westminster.gov.uk/commercialwaste](https://www.westminster.gov.uk/commercialwaste) or call **020 7641 6180**



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