



Community Composting Scheme



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South Hams
District Council

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1 - INTRODUCTION

*"The following comes from the **Institute for Local Self-Reliance** (www.ilsr.org), a national nonprofit organization working to strengthen local economies, and redirect waste into local recycling, composting, and reuse industries. It is reprinted here with permission."*



Community composting sites are local sites for storing and processing garden waste usually in compost bays or pads with an end product called a 'soil conditioner', which can then be used again locally to fertiliser the soil for optimum growing conditions.

Composting can take place in many locations, in your own garden, in your local community or at a facility that specialises in the process of composting. There are many methods and sizes. Large-scale centralised facilities can serve wide geographic areas and divert significant quantities of organic materials from disposal. Composting locally at a community-level provides many other benefits: social inclusion and empowerment, increased education around recycling, less vehicles out collecting waste and opportunity for volunteering to work towards a greener future.

When composting is small-scale and locally based, community participation and education can flourish. When materials are collected and transported out of the community for processing, few if any of these benefits are realised at the local level. In addition, often community-scale operations can move from concept to operation in a relatively short time frame.

2 - AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Council's community composting scheme will support our strategic aims of adapting and mitigating climate change and strengthening community wellbeing.

The key objectives of the Council's community composting scheme is to:

- Enable local groups to access support and information
- Support local initiatives to compost their waste locally thus reducing the carbon footprint
- Support existing groups with up to 8 visits a year, to turn and shred the material.
- Support new groups with set up costs on a match funded basis
- Support and develop equitable provision across the District

Here are a few benefits that are derived from a community composting group:

- Encourages social inclusion and economic development through volunteer schemes and training opportunities.
- Increases participation and education in recycling awareness and waste prevention

3 – LEGAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 The Council has no statutory obligation to support community composting groups either financially or operationally, however the Council recognises the social and environmental benefits of these local groups.

3.2 There are several drivers at a national level, which are pushing forward the development of sustainable waste management in the UK:

Some of these drivers are summarised below:

The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP)

WRAP is an independent not-for-profit company set up by DEFRA. It was initially developed to promote and develop markets for recycled materials. This included the development of the British Standards Institute Publicly Available Specification 100 (BSI PAS 100) standard for waste-derived compost products. WRAP continues to develop this and is looking at a range of markets for products including commercial horticulture. Following the Waste Not, Want Not report, WRAP has gone on to develop a national home composting promotion campaign and the Recycling and Organics Technical Advisory Team (ROTATE), which is providing support to local authorities in the development of kerbside recycling. WRAP also runs a capital fund for composting facilities

Local and regional waste strategies

Most local authorities and government regions now have waste strategies. These will include plans for the development of sustainable waste management in the specific area covered by the authority or region.

3.3 The Councils community composting scheme will help to deliver on some of these key drivers as well as encouraging community engagement, education and promoting reuse and repair which are all fundamental elements of the Devon and Torbay waste Strategy and therefore by supporting local community groups it will help in the development of a sustainable waste management plan locally and nationally.

4 – ELIGIBILITY & REGISTRATION

4.1 Who will be considered:

The scheme encourages applications from communities from which there is not already a community composting scheme in place.

Existing groups

The Council will support community composting groups with manual labour by providing a resource from the Councils grounds maintenance team to assist with the 'turning and shredding' of the green waste which we know is a substantial expenditure, if successful this will include up to 8 visits per year depending on the size and capacity of the site.

New groups

The scheme will consider providing funding to contribute towards set up costs for Community groups who can evidence they have applied for a site permit and have the relevant planning permissions to operate a community composting site. The funding will then be provided to help assist with 'set up' costs such as equipment and stationery.

The Council will support community composting groups with manual labour costs and provide a resource from the Councils grounds maintenance team to assist with the 'turning and shredding' of the green waste which we know is a substantial expenditure, if successful this will include up to 8 visits per year depending on the size and capacity of the site.

As part of the application funding process, the group will be required to provide the following documents to support their application.

- Proof of the licences, permits and exemption for this site
- Proof of the Health and Safety documents showing legal compliance
- Public Liability insurance
- Plan of the site to show the maximum operating capacity
- Proof of expenditure to support the costs applied for i.e. start-up costs, permits etc.
- Reference number for the planning application

4.2 How to apply:

It is important that the applicant has checked that there are no existing groups in their immediate local area before starting this process, as the funding for new community groups will be dependent on there being no provisions in place already, we are encouraging new groups to join to provide an easily accessible service across the District for communities to use.

Applicants can apply for funding or assistance from the scheme by completing the online application form. This can be found via our website at www.southhams.gov.uk/community-composting

Should applicants require assistance in completing the form or require the form to be made available in other formats this can be requested by telephone or by prior arrangements.

Once a fully completed application form has been received with the required supporting documentation, the form will be assessed to determine if the applicant is eligible and qualifies for the funding.

Applicants will be required to provide supporting documentation where indicated or requested by the Council.

South Hams District Council will notify the nominated contact within 30 days to advise if the application has been successful and clearly outline the next steps to support them through the process.

For further information on the eligibility screening and application process please visit:

www.southhams.gov.uk/community-composting

5 – MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHEME

5.1 South Hams District Council will make available information and offer advice to assist applicants in understanding how the scheme operates.

The council will provide the following:

5.2 General Information

- A summary of the scheme
- Information about how to apply for funding and how it is allocated
- How their application will be treated and outcome

5.3 The Council seeks to support the Community composting groups by the following:

- To support the current six community composting sites in the District with manual labour costs such as 'turning and shredding' of the waste.
- To support any new groups with set up costs on a match fund basis up to £7500 for up to six new community composting sites each year until the allocated funding is spent

5.4 Requests for information

The Council may request that the applicant provides additional information above what is described within the scheme in order to determine if an applicant is eligible to receive such funding

5.5 Changes in circumstances

It is the responsibility of the applicant to notify the Council immediately of a change in their circumstances in which it would mean the applicant no longer meets the eligibility criteria to receive the funding.

6 – MONITORING OF THE SCHEME

6.1 Whilst the Council is not directly responsible for the operational day to day running of the community sites, South Hams District Council does recognise the importance of ensuring applicants have the correct governance and compliance in place both legally and for volunteers and visitors.

Therefore the council commits to ensuring information is available to support groups with all the necessary requirements.

The Council will also review the scheme annually to assess whether or not the scheme:

1. Delivers on its objectives (section 2)
2. Ensures there is equitable provision of access to community composting schemes across the District
3. Is helping to deliver on the councils Adapting and mitigating climate change and increasing biodiversity, which states that the Council will lead by example and encourage all others to take their own steps to adapt and mitigate climate change and increase biodiversity.

To assist us with our monitoring, successful schemes shall:

Provide annual reports on number of service users / number of volunteers supporting the scheme and tonnage of material recycled





