

Glass recycling bins to be fitted with sensors

Regular bin collections for glass recycling across Edinburgh could be scrapped in the New Year thanks to new sensors which will alert the council when they are full.

More than 3,000 communal bins will be monitored using the devices to ensure they are only emptied when nearing capacity in a bid to cut down on noise for local residents.

A report to the council's transport and environment committee says 'dynamic' collections will be introduced with bins only emptied when full as well as identifying those with low use which could be removed from the streets.

It says there are around 3,400 communal glass recycling bins located around the city with 2,700 already fitted with the sensors.

The report says: "There are around 700 sensors due for installation in the remaining communal glass recycling bins. Once this is complete the intention is to move to fully dynamic servicing of these bins.

"This means there will be no fixed collection schedule for on-street bins as they will be collected on a demand basis linked directly to sensor data.

"Sensor data will start to highlight usage data for bins and, in particular circumstances, highlight bin locations where usage is

particularly low.

“The sensors also predict when the next collection is required, based on the usage data. In these cases, bins can be considered for removal following the establishment of a meaningful pattern.”

The council also plans to give residents the opportunity to suggest alternative sites for glass collections to provide more centralised hubs.

The report says: “These can be suggested and considered for trial purposes (subject to land ownership confirmation). In the case of the private land, permission from the landowner would need to be sought.”

Committee members will be asked to approve a new timeline for a review of existing bin hubs and potential new hubs in Edinburgh at a meeting this week.

The innovative plan for the glass recycling bins will provide feedback as part of the review once it has been established for several months next year.

The council has also carried out test on different types of bins to establish if some create more noise than others during glass collections.

However the report says the noise was ‘highly variable’ and it was difficult to find a solution which reduces the sound.

It says: “Factors which influence the level include how full the bank is, whether the bottle hits the container or other glass, whether the bottle shatters, and how many bottles are being placed in at any one time. Therefore, there is a limit to what the structure of the bottle bank can do to dampen noise level.”

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter