

Climate Newsletter

From Spelthorne Borough Council



December 2025



Reduce food waste this Christmas: Make the most of your leftovers

Christmas is a time of abundance, but it is also one of the most wasteful times of year. In the UK, millions of meals are thrown away over the festive period, much of it perfectly good food that could be enjoyed another day.

A little planning goes a long way. Before shopping, check what you already have and be realistic about portion sizes. After the big day, store leftovers promptly in airtight containers and freeze anything you will not eat within two days.

Leftovers can easily be turned into quick, delicious meals:

- **Roast dinner bubble and squeak** using leftover potatoes and vegetables
- **Turkey, vegetable, or nut roast curry** for an easy next-day meal
- **Stuffing and vegetable fritters** served with salad
- **Soup or stock** made from leftover vegetables or (where appropriate) bones

Reducing food waste saves money, reduces pressure on waste services, and cuts the emissions associated with producing and transporting food.



What to do with your Christmas tree

Once Christmas is over, it is important to dispose of your tree responsibly.

If you have a **real tree**, there are several sustainable options:

- Spelthorne BC will be collecting real Christmas trees from 5-16 January 2026. Remove the decorations and base and leave your tree next to your bins on your collection day and we'll take it away for recycling.

- Alternatively, you can take your tree to one of the following drop-off points from 5 January: Fordbridge Park (Ashford), Manor Park (Shepperton) & Old Bathing Station, Fordbridge Road (Sunbury-on-Thames)
- **Alternatively: Garden reuse:** Cut branches can be used as garden mulch or wildlife shelter, and trunks can be chopped for edging or logs.

Please do not place real trees in general waste bins or dump them in parks or woodland.

If you use an **artificial tree**, reuse it for as many years as possible. Artificial trees are difficult to recycle and only become the lower-carbon option if used for many years.



Helping wildlife through the winter

Winter can be a challenging time for wildlife, with food and shelter harder to find. Small actions at home and in gardens can make a real difference.

You can help by:

- **Providing food and water** for birds, checking feeders regularly and keeping them clean
- **Leaving some garden areas undisturbed**, such as leaf piles or log stacks, which provide shelter for insects and small animals
- **Avoiding lighting up gardens overnight**, as artificial light can disturb wildlife
- **Delaying heavy garden tidying** until spring, allowing habitats to remain intact

If you put out food, make sure it is suitable for wildlife and placed safely away from predators. Even residents without gardens can help by supporting local green spaces and being mindful when walking dogs near habitats.



A more sustainable Christmas

Celebrating Christmas sustainably does not mean sacrificing enjoyment. It is about making thoughtful choices that reduce waste and energy use.

Simple steps include:

- Choosing **reusable or recyclable wrapping**, or reusing gift bags and paper
- Turning off decorative lights overnight and using **LED Christmas lights** on timers

- Buying **locally made gifts or experiences**, which support local businesses and reduce transport emissions
- Recycling cards, packaging, and bottles correctly after the celebrations

By making small changes, residents can enjoy the festive period while reducing environmental impact, saving energy, and helping the council manage waste more efficiently during a busy time of year.

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