



Please don't bin that battery



Did you know that batteries hidden in rubbish cause hundreds of fires every year?

- Firefighters in Cambridgeshire have put out 33 battery related blazes since Jan 2023
- 7 bin lorries have caught fire in the Greater Cambridgeshire area this year
- “Dead” batteries can “come back to life”, earning them the description of “zombie batteries”
- Every year, people across the UK throw away around 22,000 tonnes of batteries and only about 1/3 are properly recycled. The others end up in general waste or with other recycling to become potential “zombie batteries”

Batteries that find their way into our grey bins, get pretty rough treatment. They're squashed, punctured, shredded, soaked in liquids and ultimately burned. The leaking contents of some high energy batteries can react with water to produce enough heat to ignite the hydrogen gas produced. **Boom!** You probably remember seeing lithium, sodium and potassium whizzing across a water tank, catching fire and exploding in chemistry lessons at school. Fires caused in this way put lives at risk; can cause millions of pounds of damage; and disrupt waste services.

Remember what's inside our rechargeables! Devices like phones, laptops, tablets, power tools, remote controlled toys, lights, torches, drones, e-scooters and bikes even e-cigarettes/vapes contain potential “zombie batteries”.



Are there any other reasons why I shouldn't bin batteries?

Batteries have a triple whammy, not only are they potential “zombies” but the metals in them can be really harmful to the environment and obtaining them in the first place, usually by mining, causes ecological damage. They are also becoming very scarce resources so need to be recycled so we can protect the environment by using them again. Up to 90% of the contents can be reused. If you can, please use rechargeables as this also reduces our use of scarce raw materials.

How to dispose of your batteries and small electrical devices:

- If you can do so safely, remove the batteries from broken devices and recycle the device and battery separately.
- Only recycle batteries using a proper recycling service e.g. One Stop in Buckden, those found in larger retail stores or at the Household Waste Recycling Centres in St. Neots or Alconbury.
- Large lead acid batteries, such as those from a car/mobility scooter, should be taken to the Household Waste Recycling Centres.
- If the battery cannot safely be removed, recycle the device with the battery inside using the small waste electricals recycling service at the Household Waste Recycling Centres. We hope to have a WEEE (waste electrical and electronic equipment) recycling point in the village in the near future where you can dispose of such devices (and more).
- If your device isn't broken, please consider trading it in, selling it on or donating it to prevent items going to landfill/waste. Even if it is broken, can it be repaired/refurbished? You could bring it along to our next Repair Café at the Village Hall on Feb 8th. If it's a laptop/tablet/phone there are companies which buy these up so you could look online to see whether you can get a deal to sell it.

Want to know more? Visit www.takecharge.org.uk