

Plastic recycling

Since starting to accept household plastic pots, tubes and trays (PTT) at all 16 recycling sites, there has been an upsurge in the tonnage of plastic taken; with June's total over 50% more plastic than in the months before its introduction.

The scheme has been so successful that we are currently reviewing site-by-site provision to ensure we have enough banks and that their emptying frequency meets the demand. Site staff may occasionally ask visitors to deposit PTT in dumpy bags for temporary storage. It is encouraging to see Somerset residents strongly supporting the new scheme.

Crews in hot weather

Somerset Waste Partnership and Kier have been working to support the crews during the recent spell of unusually hot weather. Cold boxes containing water were added to cabs, and on particularly hot days, Kier supervisors and SWP operational officers attended crews to provide them with cold water supplies.

Early starts from 6am have been agreed for hot days. SWP is working hard to ensure that the public are aware of early starts, that Kier staff are sensitive to noise levels when starting early, and that appropriate arrangements are put in place to revisit streets collected from before 7am.

Unfortunately some scheduled collections can be delayed by lorry breakdowns or crews being unable to

finish collections due to the heat.

Following SWP's collection protocol, catch-up collections can be run on a Saturday, with the public advised via social media.

Collection crew safety

SWP has been using social media to ask for greater respect for collection crews after a loader was taken to hospital and recycling collections around Nether Stowey were subsequently disrupted after a car attempted to pass a waste vehicle that was parked to ensure safety for all road users.

SWP collection crews are advised in certain situations, such as collecting on narrow roads, to stop the collection truck temporarily in the centre of a road as a barrier so other vehicles cannot pass. This is to protect the loaders who may be working on both sides of the vehicle, and other road users, such as cyclists and pedestrians. Luckily in this case, the driver was not seriously injured but the incident was reported to the police.

Residents have also been reminded not to put sharp items, such as kitchen knives or syringes, in recycling boxes.

Recruitment and retention

The recent campaign to encourage recruitment of recycling collection drivers and loaders is starting to bear fruit. Kerbside contractor Kier has been working to improve staff retention, which assists with round knowledge to avoid missed collections. Additionally, Kier's

recruitment firm [Smart Solutions](#) has introduced a dedicated text number for enquiries, (Text DRIVEKIER to 88802), has been actively recruiting staff from Eastern Europe and from across the South West/South Wales, as well as working with SWP to develop a number of initiatives to more effectively target potential staff within Somerset.

SWP Vision and Strategy

Somerset Waste Board has revised its Vision and SWP is starting work on a 25-year Waste Management Strategy to set the ambition for the future. This document will set out our shared ambitions, include a focus on customer services and communications, and help the partnership be clear how it delivers services and measures success.

To this end, SWP will be working with an expert advisory panel, which will include industry, as well as local green and environmental groups. This project will be developed in response to expected significant national central government policy changes, scheduled to be announced within the national 25-year Resources and Environment Strategy, which is due to be released in the autumn. To view the relevant Board Paper [click here](#).

Latest media releases

Recent communications included:

- [6am starts for waste collections in hot weather](#)
- [Recycling collections in and around Nether Stowey disrupted](#)
- [Wells MP James Heapey visit to Wells recycling centre.](#)

Upcoming communications will continue to focus on crew safety.

Somerset Waste Board

SWP is the executive arm of SWB, with two members nominated by each of the six Somerset partner councils, one of which must be the portfolio holder for waste and/or the environment.

The Chair and Vice-Chair are elected at the Board AGM from its membership.

The next SWB meeting is on Friday 28 September 2018. SWB meeting agendas, papers and reports are available [online](#).

For more on SWP, SWB and waste services: www.somersetwaste.gov.uk.

SWB membership:

- **Mendip** – Cllrs Nigel Woollcombe-Adams (Vice Chair), Nigel Taylor
- **Sedgemoor** – Cllrs Dawn Hill, Gill Slocombe
- **Somerset County** – Cllrs David Hall, Mike Pullin
- **South Somerset** – Cllrs Jo Roundell Greene, Derek Yeomans (Chairman)
- **Taunton Deane Borough** – Cllrs Patrick Berry, Hazel Prior-Sankey
- **West Somerset** – Cllrs Martin Dewdney, Brenda Maitland-Walker

Information on SWP services

For all advice and information, visit www.somersetwaste.gov.uk. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). Sign-up to our e-zine on our [website](#). All partners' customer service helplines can assist with service enquiries.

