

Green light for Recycle More

Somerset Waste Board (SWB) has unanimously agreed to start a new Recycle More collection service, adding new kerbside recycling materials – plastic pots, tubs and trays; household batteries; small electrical equipment – to the present dozen or so items, including food, with three-weekly pick-ups of the resulting lower levels of rubbish.

Garden, clinical and bulky collections stay as they are; assisted collections continue but on the new schedule; and communal collections are unchanged except that, where possible, extra recycling items will be collected.

Before SWB's decision, all six Somerset councils separately and overwhelmingly endorsed Recycle More. The roll out is likely to be in three phases from late 2017. Details of [Recycle More](#) have been added to the SWP website.

Using a range of new vehicles to suit Somerset's varied conditions and take all materials at one time, including the rising "internet avalanche" of cardboard, Recycle More will collect the light but bulky plastic food packaging in a tough new base-weighted store-flat bag.

Similar successful schemes of extra materials and reduced frequency rubbish collections have long been underway for millions of residents in 14 council areas across the UK, with more expected and similar plans in Devon.

While Recycle More will take exactly the same amount of waste – rubbish and

recycling – overall, sending less rubbish to costly landfill offers serious savings in money and materials when budgets met by all council tax payers for other vital services are being squeezed.

Recycle More is expected to recycle almost 13,000 extra tonnes of materials now being landfilled each year, cut rubbish levels significantly, and save, after initial costs, £1.7 million annually, which can be spent supporting other important pressurised council services.

Extensive experience, in-depth research and a range of popular trials with 5,000 Somerset families of all sizes and situations over several months showed that services like Recycle More create a "virtuous circle", with the newly-added items prompting more recycling of all materials, from food to glass and card.

In a survey, over 80% of families in the trials with extra weekly recycling and three-weekly rubbish collections wanted to continue with the same service.

With research showing no significant problems with three-weekly rubbish collections, SWP guidance for Recycle More will be unchanged: recycle every bit of food, double bag smelly waste, rinse all containers, keep waste bins, boxes and bags in the shade, and ask for – and follow – SWP advice,

Communal collections from flats will stay as they are, except that extra weekly recycling materials will be added, if possible. Clinical, garden and bulky waste collections will be unchanged,

while assisted collections will continue but on the new frequency.

Families with children in nappies, and other residents with additional needs, such as those using adult hygiene products, will continue to get priority assistance if they require extra help.

Meanwhile, over-eager recyclers who have begun putting out extra materials, such as plastic pots, tubs and trays, are being reminded that crews will leave these behind until Recycle More starts.

Latest national figures show that after five years of growth, average recycling rates slipped back from 44.9% in 2014 to 44.3% in 2015; With Somerset's recycling rate already at 52%, Recycle More should soon see that jump.

Festive waste services

Recycling centres will open during the festive period on their usual schedule, but close on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Recycling, clinical and refuse collections between Monday 26 December and Friday 6 January will be one day later. Garden waste collections are suspended between Monday 26 December and Friday 6 January, resuming on Monday 9 January 2017 on the usual days. See [SWP website](#) for collection information.

Latest media releases

Recent media releases included:

- [Simple plastic bottle recycling](#)
- [Christmas collections – all change](#)
- [Green light to Recycle More](#)

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.

SWB's next meeting is on Friday 24 February.

For details of SWP, SWB and waste services: www.somersetwaste.gov.uk.

SWB membership by council is:

- **Mendip** – Cllrs Nigel Woollcombe-Adams (Vice Chair), Terry Napper
- **Sedgemoor** – Cllrs Dawn Hill, Gill Slocombe
- **Somerset County** – Cllrs Derek Yeomans (Chair), David Hall
- **South Somerset** – Cllrs Jo Roundell Greene, Clare Aparicio Paul
- **Taunton Deane Borough** – Cllrs Patrick Berry, Steve Ross
- **West Somerset** – Cllrs Martin Dewdney, Brenda Maitland-Walker

SWB meeting agendas, papers and reports are available [online](#).

Information on SWP services

For all advice and information, visit www.somersetwaste.gov.uk.

All partners' customer service helplines can assist with service enquiries.

SWP publishes the Sorted monthly e-zine (sign-up on the website).

