

Dodge the recycling road hogs

Congestion at recycling sites has led Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) to urge residents to have a swift, smooth and safe visit by switching to times when there is less traffic.

Recycling sites are usually less busy with shorter or no queues in the hour or two after they open on weekdays at 8am. And the 11 sites that open on Monday evenings are often quieter, allowing a faster visit, between 4pm and 7pm.

Research by SWP suggests that as well as Somerset's rising population, greater car and van ownership, and increasing number of visits to recycling sites – more than 1.5 million in 2015-16 – certain users and vehicles can be a big factor in congestion.

The largest vans and vehicles with trailers not only take up more space on often cramped recycling sites, but also bring in far more waste, slowing down those queuing behind.

And it is clear that Somerset's sites are regularly used by out-of-county visitors, who also contribute nothing to meet the cost of waste services.

While in surveys Somerset residents give recycling sites an 87% satisfaction rating, a majority think action is needed to discourage large vehicles and out-of-county users.

For a swift, smooth and safe visit, SWP is advising Somerset residents to dodge

the recycling road hogs and pop in early on weekdays or from 4pm onwards at the 11 Monday night sites.

Fly-tipping

Somerset's district councils have tightened up how they record and report fly-tips to ensure more accurate statistics as part of efforts to prevent, detect and prosecute environmental crimes. The five councils have agreed to be more consistent to ensure that fly-tips are accurately described and recorded especially when training new staff or dealing with the public. SWB's most recent meeting also agreed a new inflation-adjusted formula for the internal accounting of fly-tip clear-up costs between the county and districts.

Waste arisings

The latest annual waste figures, for 2015-16 compared to 2014-15, show a 1.6% increase in overall household waste arisings at 257,420 tonnes, equal to more than a tonne per household. Recycling performance has improved by 0.6% to 52.9%. Garden waste was down 2.4%, street sweepings recycled and so diverted from landfill up 7.9%. Fly-tip numbers were almost unchanged. Food waste recycled rose 14.5% after the successful "no food waste please" in rubbish bin sticker initiative.

SWP Communications

Somerset Waste Partnership uses its social media feeds on Facebook and Twitter to promote a range of messages. Focus in June was on de-cluttering, reuse, food, waste reduction

and recycling, with up to four posts or tweets a day. This has been part of efforts to extend SWP's social media reach, encourage sign-up by residents, and ensure a better balance of demographics, including gender, among those following SWP. In July the focus is on kerbside and recycling site services.

Latest media releases

Media releases from SWP in the last month included:

[Catch-up collections after Glastonbury jam delays](#)

['Library of things' wins big cash grant to boost reuse.](#)

[Eat well and stay safe](#)

Somerset Waste Board

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

The Chair and Vice-Chair are elected at the annual general meeting from the Board's membership.

There were no changes to SWB board membership at the Annual General Meeting held on 17 June 2016, with the re-election of Cllr Derek Yeomans as Chairman and Cllr Nigel Woollcombe-Adams as Vice Chairman

The next Board meeting will be held on Friday 30 September.

For details of SWP, SWB and waste services:

<http://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/about/board>

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, Angie Singleton
- **Taunton Deane Borough** – Cllr Patrick Berry, Steve Ross
- **West Somerset** – Cllrs Martin Dewdney, Brenda Maitland-Walker

Agenda, papers and reports for SWB meetings are available [online](#).

Information on SWP services

The main source of advice and information on SWP services is www.somersetwaste.gov.uk.

Customer service helplines for all partner authorities can assist with service enquiries.

SWP publishes the Sorted monthly e-zine (sign-up on the website) and posts on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

