



Somerset
Council

Waste Services

Briefing for Members, Partners and Staff June 2023



**Thank you for
protecting the
environment.
Over 90% of
residents are
actively recycling.**

A recycling result to celebrate

We recently looked at the waste of 3,000 Somerset homes and found that 91% of us are actively recycling. That is up from the 85% when this analysis was last carried out five years ago.

And when it comes to food waste recycling the improvements are even better, with 72% of households recycling compared to 62% in the 2018 survey. Industry experts [WRAP](#) consider 55% to be a high rate for food waste for recycling.

Disruption to some collections

As you will be aware, we have seen disruption and delays to some collections in recent weeks. We apologise for this and are working hard with our contractor, Suez to get things back on track.

The disruption has been caused by a combination of factors including heavy bank

holiday loads, large volumes of the cardboard, increased garden waste, vehicle breakdowns and traffic congestion linked to the Bath and West Show.

Please encourage residents to report missed collections using our online [form](#) if possible. Crews will do their very best to return within two working days, and usually within one day.

Recycling sites will soon stop taking cartons

Due to the success of Recycle More, recycling sites will stop accepting cartons and Tetra Pak later this month.

Twelve of our 16 sites currently take these items – used for liquids like juice and milk – and this will stop from the 12 June. Recycle More has seen the number of cartons recycled more than double and the numbers coming through recycling sites have fallen dramatically, making it no longer viable to take cartons on-site.

Last year Somerset recycled close to ten tonnes of cartons each month, with less than 500 kilograms having been collected across the recycling sites.

Fixy's first birthday

Somerset's Fixy initiative celebrated its first birthday last month, having started the repair and reuse conversation with more than 3,100 people since its launch.

Fixy works alongside Somerset's repair network, visiting events, schools and businesses to promote repair, support repair events, encourage volunteers to get involved, and collect smart tech for reuse.



Help to prevent fires in your waste

We've recently seen a number of fires in trucks and at household sites believed to be caused by batteries or gas cannisters left in refuse or recycling. To help keep everyone safe and reduce the risk of fires starting we're asking you to be careful with your waste.

- **Batteries** should not be put into refuse bins or left loose in recycling boxes or bags. They must be separated from waste and put out for recycling in a clear, tied plastic bag. The bag should sit on the top of your recycling. Do not put in your general refuse bin.

If batteries get caught-up with any other waste then they can easily go through processing systems, including compactors or bailers. Crushing batteries can start fires.

- **Small gas canisters** including ones used with a camping stove, cannot be recycled at the kerbside. Canisters should not be put in the bright blue recycling bags. Waste in this container is not sorted until it goes through a mechanical system on site. If a gas canister goes through this process, it may catch fire. Do not put the cans in your refuse bin, this is also very dangerous and increases the risk of a truck fire.

Small gas canisters are accepted as recycling sites free of charge.



- **Barbeques** can cause hazards and fires. Disposable barbeques should be left to cool before they are thrown away, after it has been left to cool for a few hours, pour some cold water on top to be sure. To dispose of separate the materials, cold coals and ash should be put in refuse, foil trays with your recycling and the wire rack can be saved up for your next trip to a recycling site.

Do more online

Don't forget you can use the [My Waste Service](#) feature at to do all manner of tasks online. Log missed collections, order free recycling containers, sign-up for a garden waste collection, request and pay for a bulky waste collection – it is quick, easy and available 24/7.