



## Briefing for Members, Partners and Staff May 2023



### **Make sure your bins are standing to attention - know your coronation collection days!**

This May we have a bumper number of Bank Holidays, meaning special arrangements for waste collections.

**Collections were, for the first time ever, made on bank holiday Monday, 1 May and are taking place on the usual scheduled days all this week.**

Make sure your bags, bins and boxes are presented on your usual day.

**But there will be no collections on the extra bank holiday Monday, 8 May** and collections will be one day later for rest of the week, incl. Friday 12 May collections taking place on Saturday 13 May.

Looking ahead, there will be no collections on the late spring bank holiday on 29 May. Crews will be collecting one day later for the rest of the week, including collections on Saturday 3 June.

All 16 recycling sites will open as normal over the weekends (9am-4pm). If opening on a Monday is part of their normal schedule, they will be open both bank holiday Mondays, 9am-6pm.

### **Somerset recycling goes top 30**

Thanks to our Somerset residents, we've seen the amount we are recycling rise to 56.2% in 21/22, putting us 28<sup>th</sup> against 228 local authorities.

Defra recently published their recycling league table and are pleased to see the impact of the Recycle More scheme has helped put us in the top 30.

In 2021-22, almost 150,000 tonnes of waste were recycled or reused, saving around 133,000 tonnes of carbon – the equivalent of taking more than 51,000 cars off the road for a year. A massive 97.2% of this was recycled into new products and packaging in the UK. Of the 5,771 tonnes of plastics collected, 99.4% were reprocessed in the UK.

### **Trimming, strimming or cutting?**

Spring is here and that means more of us out in the garden. There are three ways to dispose of garden waste.

### **Home composting**

We are working with [Get Composting](#) to offer Somerset residents home compost bins at reduced prices, including a buy-one-get-one-half-price deal for two of the same size.

### **Garden Waste collections**

More than 56,000 Somerset residents have subscribed for a garden waste collection. We offer fortnightly garden waste collections through a pre-paid 180-litre wheeled bins at a cost of £63.50. You can subscribe at any time of the year, just visit [somerset.gov.uk/waste](http://somerset.gov.uk/waste) If you're already a subscriber we will contact you the month before your subscription runs out and remind you to renew.

### **Recycling sites**

All 16 Somerset recycling sites take garden waste. To find your nearest recycling site and check opening hours, visit [somerset.gov.uk/waste](http://somerset.gov.uk/waste)

## Flex-collect – soft plastic recycling collections piloted in parts of Frome

A small number of residents in Frome will have recently received a letter to say their recycling collection will soon include flexible plastics. Somerset Council successfully bid to be part of a national 'FlexCollect' trial of kerbside collection of plastic bags and wrapping.

The trial collections will be available to around 3,600 homes across two locations in Frome, starting near the end of May. **No other householders, in Frome or elsewhere in the county, can participate or request to take part.**

The costs of the pilot collections are funded nationally. The only costs to the council are time and resources.

Depending on progress, it is expected that the trial will be expanded to more Somerset homes next year.

## Business of recycling

New legislation is on the way that will require all businesses to separate out more recycling - glass bottles and jars, metal food and drink cans, plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays, paper and cardboard from their general waste.

Any premises preparing or selling food, such as cafes, restaurants and pubs, will also have to separate and recycle food waste. During March and April, Somerset trialled localised face-to-face support for businesses to discuss preparing for the change and Business Support Advisors contacted around 400 businesses in Langport, Chard and Ilminster.

Somerset also helped pilot the Business of Recycling [website](#) developed by [WRAP](#). The pilot has just finished, but the website remains in place, full of useful guidance and resources for business wanting to get ahead of the game and prepare.

## Happy birthday to Fixy

Somerset's Fixy initiative celebrates its first birthday this month, having started the repair and reuse conversation with nearly 3,000 people.

Fixy is all about encouraging and helping the repair and reuse of electricals and the team

has attended over 80 events over the last 12 months.

Many of these have been supporting Somerset's network of repair groups, giving practical help, recruiting more volunteers to get involved and generally banging the drum for breathing new life into old items.

Fixy also runs a 'tech take back' service, accepting donations of unwanted or broken smart tech, such as laptops, tablets, smartphones, smart watches, digital cameras, game consoles, routers, hard drives, external disk drives, and their leads and chargers. Donations are data-wiped and repaired by Somerset specialists DonateIT, and passed onto schools, community groups and families who need them.

Since it launched in May 2022, over 1,500 items have been reused in this way. The scheme's first year was funded by a grant from the Ecosurety Exploration Fund and managed by Resource Futures in partnership with Somerset Waste Partnership, - now Somerset Council – and Donate IT.

For more about Fixy, upcoming events and repair and reuse I, visit the Somerset Council [waste web pages](#).

## Updates to your inbox

Somerset Council is asking residents to come on board to help deliver our climate strategy by signing up to its new climate newsletter SEEN: 'Somerset Environmental and Ecological News'.

It's full of news, project updates, and inspirational ideas about the work going on in the county in response to the Climate Emergency, along with information and tips to help us all live better, waste less and reduce our environmental impact. If we all do our bit and love where we live, we can keep Somerset clean, green and attractive.

[Sign up](#) and select to hear about the topics that interest you.