



9 June, 2021

## Update from Somerset Waste Partnership

### Service disruption

SWP's collections services have been under significant pressure in recent weeks, leading to unacceptable levels of missed collections.

We apologise for the disruption and have been working hard with our collection contractor, SUEZ, to address the immediate issues as well as the underlying causes of them.

Crews have been working long hours for a long period of time to keep our services relatively stable throughout the vast majority of the pandemic, and we thank them for that.

The current pressures are primarily down to a nationwide shortage of HGV drivers, a situation made worse by Covid (which has meant a backlog of HGV driving tests) and Brexit which has seen some drivers move back to EU countries.

Locally there is also a more general shortage of agency staff which, combined with recent heavy holiday traffic and continued Covid-related heavy loads, has seen an increase in missed collections in various parts of the county in recent weeks.

### Update from today

- Many crews are still on their routes and today has been a more positive day. Only a small number of incompletions are expected, all of which will be returned for tomorrow.
- When we have more detail these they will be shared locally through social media and summarised on the SWP website.
- Progress has been made on clearing a backlog of garden waste collections. We expect more progress tomorrow when additional crews will be tasked to address this.

### Actions taken

- Although drivers are in huge demand across the country, SUEZ is transferring several to the Somerset contract on a temporary basis to help get things back on track.
- Extra vehicles brought in to minimise the impact of any mechanical issues.
- Sedgemoor recycling collections were rescheduled from Tuesday to this Saturday, freeing up crews to tackle the backlog.
- Crews will be working this Saturday to collect the rescheduled Sedgemoor recycling from Tuesday and reduce/complete the backlog of garden waste collections.
- Took the decision that any missed recycling collections from Monday, Tuesday or the tail end of last week that had not yet been caught up will not be collected until their next scheduled recycling collection day. These properties will be prioritised and collected first. Additional recycling waste, ideally sorted into containers, will be collected.