

**For Immediate Release**

**12 July, 2021**

**Missed collections: report online and please bear with us**

Residents are urged to report missed collections online as disruption continues for Somerset’s waste services.

The nationwide driver shortage and local pressures have seen delays to Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) waste collections in recent weeks.

There have been improvements but still too many collections are being missed and crews cannot always return as quickly as they should when missed collections are reported.

SWP and its collections contractor, SUEZ, apologise for the inconvenience and are working hard to get services back on track. But there is no quick fix and disruption is likely to continue for some time.

The “My Waste Services” feature on [www.somersetwaste.gov.uk](http://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk) is available 24/7 and the quickest way to report a missed collection and make contact with SWP.

SWP is confident that missed rubbish and garden collections will be returned for within two working days.

For recycling collections, crews will do their best to return within two working days for a reported missed collection. If they cannot get back in that time, they will return on the following week’s collection day and containers can be taken back inside until then.

Some helpful tips to manage recycling if your collection is delayed:

* Make extra room by flattening cardboard, squashing plastic bottles (putting lids back on afterwards) and crushing tins and cans (if it is safe to do so).
* Put extra recycling out in a cardboard box or other suitable container.
* If waste really has to go, take recycling to one of SWP’s 16 recycling sites. If that is not possible you can put it into your rubbish bin.
* If your food waste bin is full, add excess to your rubbish bin and it will go to the energy from waste plant in Avonmouth.

SWP crews make more than 400,000 collections a week, the vast majority of which continue to happen without a hitch. But since the beginning of June services has suffered, primarily because of the driver shortage.

The a long-term issue has been worsened by Covid - which has delayed driver training and testing - and the departure of many EU drivers.

The reopening of non-essential retail is increasing demand for drivers and recruitment is especially difficult in Somerset because it is home to many distribution centres.

Crews have been collecting about 20% more waste since the start of the pandemic. That makes it harder to complete rounds and means staff have worked extended hours for a long time.

Somerset also has some temporary and new drivers working unfamiliar routes, temporary depot arrangements while the Taunton depot is upgraded and some congestion hotspots.

Please check SWP's website somersetwaste.gov.uk. for updates and follow @somersetwaste on Facebook.

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**Notes to Editors**

SUEZ is the Somerset Waste Partnership’s contractor providing waste collections.

Related background articles:

Road Haulage Association: [RHA gives the Government 12 actions they must take as the driver shortage hits 'catastrophic proportions'](https://www.rha.uk.net/news/news-blogs-and-press-releases/news-updates/detail/rha-gives-the-government-12-actions-they-must-take-as-the-driver-shortage-hits-catastrophic-proportions-)

Federation of Wholesale Distributors: [HGV driver shortage could threaten food supply – FWD - FWD](https://www.fwd.co.uk/wholesale-news/2021/06/14/hgv-driver-shortage-could-threaten-food-supply-fwd/)

**Somerset Waste Partnership** is the local authority team managing waste services for all Somerset councils.

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