

South Staffordshire District Council Case Study

South Staffordshire District Council is a rural district with 95 percent of households having access to a fortnightly service for garden waste, offered at no additional charge, operating year round with the exception of four weeks over Christmas/New Year. They collect around 13,000 tonnes of garden material a year delivered to an open-windrow composting site within the district.

Measures taken to tackle contamination

South Staffordshire District Council works closely with its collection contractor, Biffa Municipal Ltd, and reprocessor (Veolia) on several different levels to ensure that its organic matter is of the highest possible quality.

Communication

The council have a zero-tolerance approach to contamination. They issue a regular guide to waste and recycling to communicate to residents. The consistent message is 'about what the container is for, how it should be used and what happens to the material'. This is communicated to residents through a range of channels including leaflets, social media, and an email alert system to provide bespoke messages.

The message about what happens to the material is key in ensuring that householders are aware and attaches a greater value to the material. The council makes sure residents know that the garden material goes to a facility within the district and that the compost produced is then is used back in local agriculture (within about two miles of the council offices) creating jobs and green growth.

Specific messaging around contamination also lets residents know the impact of putting incorrect waste in the garden waste bin. For example, they might highlight that most of the reject bins contain plastic bags and that these take hundreds of years to degrade and include a photo of what this looks like on a field.

Collection process

South Staffordshire work very closely with Biffa, the collection contractor, and constantly interact with

collection crews through briefings and bespoke training. The collection crews lift the lid on every bin and check the contents. If they find any material that shouldn't be there, they attach a contamination tag to the bin. The tag has a list of the six most common contaminants and the specific contamination is noted so that the resident is aware why the material was not accepted to help educate them for the future.

Crews record any contamination on an in-cab handheld computer. This helps inform the Council's contact centre, so that queries and complaints can be handled at the first point of contact and the resident advised clearly why the bin has not been emptied. The resident is then responsible for removing the contaminants before the crews will return on the next scheduled collection. Moreover, the data that is captured supports future operations and communications: for example, if there is a sudden rise in the presence of a particular contaminant,



GREEN BIN

YES Please

- Grass
- Leaves
- Plants
- Weeds
- Flowers
- Twigs and small branches

NO Thanks

- Food
- Soil
- Stone and rubble
- Wood
- Animal waste and bedding
- Plastic bags and pots

If your green bin contains material not listed as "YES Please" it will not be emptied.

- Your garden waste is composted into environmentally friendly soil improver and used on local farms.
- Please **do not** overfill your green bin - if it is too heavy for the bin lifts on the collection truck it will not be emptied.
- Please **do not** leave bagged garden waste at the side of your green bin as it will not be collected.
- Discounted home compost bins are available - please visit our website.

Additional green bins are available for a small fee.

For more information on what else can go in your bins, please visit our Recycling Finder at www.sstaffs.gov.uk/waste

this can be identified and proactively targeted within a matter of days. Furthermore, if contamination reports are limited from a particular crew, this can be targeted to ensure that they understand their role in the process and receive additional training/monitoring if required. We have also successfully trialled "job swaps" between crew members and Customer Services, so that all participants appreciate the role that they have in delivering excellent services whilst maintaining the integrity of the product that is created from the compost site. The Council meets regularly with both collection and reprocessing contractors to align key requirements and ensure continual improvement in service delivery.

Has it worked?

South Staffordshire District Council use Veolia to process their garden material and since the beginning of the contract, they have not had a rejected load, mainly down to the hard work of a lot of people involved in the process. The compost meets the specifications of PAS100 and the Compost Quality Protocol.

Resident satisfaction with the kerbside waste and recycling services currently stands at 92%. The Council's approach to service delivery has resulted in them being winning the award for 'The best local authority recycling initiative' at the Awards for Excellence in Recycling and Waste Management 2018 were shortlisted in three categories in the MRW National Recycling Awards, held in June 2018 .



Biffa South Staffordshire Council

We've not been able to empty your bin today because:

- The green bin/blue bin contained unacceptable material. Please remove these items and place the bin out on the next scheduled date.
- The bin was too heavy to move and/or lift. Please remove some contents and place the bin out on the next scheduled date.
- The contents were frozen.

Your bin has been emptied today but:

- We can't accept excess waste with your grey bin so it has been put back in your bin.

www.sstaffs.gov.uk/waste

