

New residual waste collection rounds will begin in February and March

Briefing Note No. 22-01

Service: Waste Management
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From 28 February 2022, the residual 'general waste' collection days will change for most Wiltshire residents. Kerbside recycling and garden waste collection dates will not change. This note provides more detail on these service improvements, and an online briefing for all Wiltshire Council members will also take place at 9am on Tuesday 18 January.

1. What is changing?

- 1.1 The council's waste collection contractors, Hills Municipal Collections Ltd (Hills), will be implementing new collection rounds for non-recyclable residual waste from 28 February 2022.
- 1.2 Most Wiltshire households (94%) will experience a change in their day of collection for non-recyclable residual waste. This just affects the 'refuse' or 'general waste' collections.
- 1.3 Collection days for mixed dry recycling (MDR) and garden waste collections will not change for any residents at this time.

2. When will the changes take place?

- 2.1 The waste client team and the contractors have undertaken a significant amount of work throughout 2021 to achieve the start date of 28 February 2022. The remaining critical project milestones are highlighted below:

Action	Date
Wiltshire Council online member briefing	18 January 2022
Commencement of communications programme	24 January 2022
Posting of household-specific information letters to advise residents of the changes to their collection dates	25 January 2022 to 4 February
Information letters received by residents	31 January to 11 February
Bin hangers fixed to bins to advise residents of last collection before day changes take effect	14 to 25 February 2022
New residual waste collection rounds start	28 February 2022

3. Why are these changes to refuse collection days required?

- 3.1 The redesigned rounds will be more efficient and result in significant financial savings to the council over the remaining term of the Lot 5 waste collection contract (to July 2026), and help reduce carbon emissions through the more efficient deployment of vehicle resources. Fewer collection vehicles will be needed.
- 3.2 The total savings achieved from the reduction in vehicle fleet and associated operational costs are estimated to be around £0.4m each year over the remaining four full years of the Lot 5 contract.
- 3.3 The current residual waste collection rounds inherited by Hills when the contract started in 2018, were originally modelled to operate from council depots. Hills no longer uses the council's Kennet House and Parsonage Way depots to deliver the collection service, following the relocation of operational resources to the contractor's own depot at Sands Farm, Calne, in February 2020. Hills continues to operate from the Churchfields Depot in Salisbury.
- 3.4 The Lot 5 waste collection contract requires Hills to regularly review its collection rounds to ensure that these are working efficiently. The changes to operational depot locations now require the re-modelling of the original residual waste collection rounds.
- 3.5 Under the Lot 5 contract, Hills is also required to ensure that the council is able to fulfil its annual tonnage target commitments for its Landfill Diversion Contracts, including the direct delivery of residual waste to the Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) facility in Northacre, Westbury.
- 3.6 The current rounds were not modelled to provide for the full direct delivery of residual waste to the Northacre MBT. The redesigned rounds will help avoid waste transfer costs of approximately £0.09m per year.
- 3.7 Tonnes of residual waste collected at the kerbside increased substantially during the pandemic, with more people working from home or isolating for periods of time. While kerbside-collected tonnages have now begun to subside, the tonnages still remain higher than pre-Covid levels. The new rounds utilise revised design parameters, adjusted for the increases in tonnages experienced during the Covid lockdowns.
- 3.8 Several years of house building and changes in depot locations mean that the current collection rounds are now unbalanced and inefficient. The new rounds will even out the daily workloads, while also providing sufficient capacity for future projected housebuilding up to the end of the current contract term (July 2026).

4. Service impacts

- 4.1 The newly designed rounds require changes in collection days for around 200,000 Wiltshire households. These changes relate to residual non-recyclable waste only. Kerbside recycling and garden waste collections will not be affected.
- 4.2 We acknowledge that all residents rely on their residual waste collection service, and that the efficiency and reliability of this service is highly valued by both residents and Wiltshire

councillors. This service change will be supported by effective and targeted direct communications, to ensure that residents successfully continue to present their waste on their revised collection day.

- 4.3 Between 31 January and 11 February 2022, all Wiltshire households will receive an information letter effectively providing notice consistent with a full 10-day collection cycle of the current service, before the changes are implemented from 28 February. In addition, bin hanger information tags will be fixed to the handles of waste containers on the last collection under the outgoing schedule, reminding residents of the impending change to collection days.
- 4.4 Given the scale of the changes involved, some service disruption is expected during the first six weeks of implementation while the collection crews and residents familiarise themselves with the redesigned rounds and new collection dates. Reports of missed collections are expected to increase over this period, but numbers should return to normal levels after three complete collection cycles. The council and Hills are working together on contingency planning to recover any temporary reduction in service performance over the six-week implementation period.
- 4.5 Currently 14,200 (7%) Wiltshire households have their residual waste and recycling collected on the same day in the same week. Under the remodelled rounds, this will increase to 23,400 (11%) households. While we are aware that some people find this arrangement convenient, it may be a concern for others. The council and Hills will proactively respond to any issues and will seek alternative arrangements where possible, although to date very little intervention has been required where this situation already exists.
- 4.6 While these more efficient rounds will result in the reduction in the waste collection fleet, as Hills currently operate with a number of vacant positions covered by agency, this change will not result in any redundancies.

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