North Somerset Council

Open, Fairer, Greener

Implementing three weekly collections and soft plastics



Lizzie Shepherd
Waste Minimisation and Compliance Manager

The service and changes made

Old

- 180L residual black bins, was fortnightly
- 23L food waste collected weekly since 2015
- Kerbside sort recycling boxes weekly
- Including collecting batteries, textiles and small electricals



New

- Council app for communications
- Additional 90L red bag for plastic and metal
- Food waste recycling campaign
- Three-weekly 180L residual
- Collecting soft plastics at kerbside

Engagement

Transparency and engagement



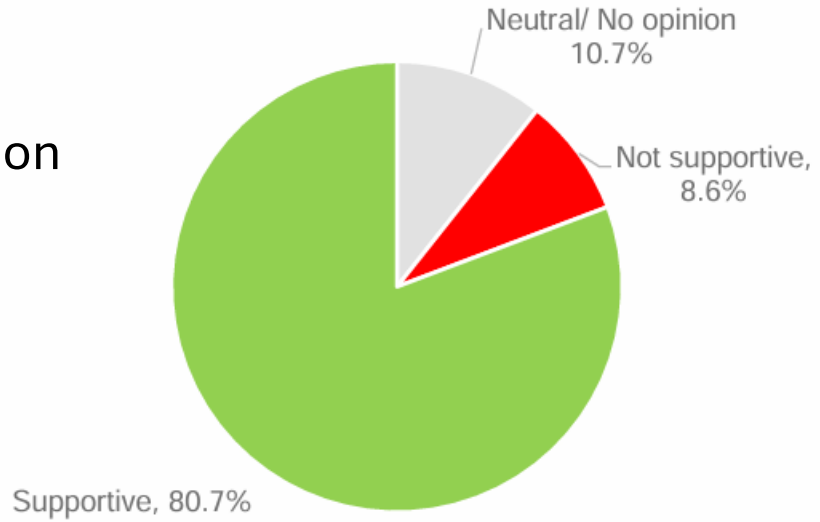


Crew engagement



Figure 23: Support for Kerbside Collection of Soft Plastics and Wrappers (n = 9,060)
Source: Waste Consultation, North Somerset Council, 2024

Largest consultation in council history



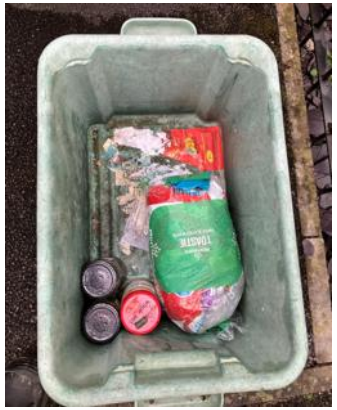
Community influencers engagement

Widescale communications plan for rollout of the service tested with citizens panel and Cllr working group

Innovation in soft plastics

Collection methodology






- Small-scale trial over 4-weeks to see what residents did
- Bagging of soft plastics within a bag for recycling
- 28 new vehicles with soft plastic compaction- first of its kind
- Around 5t per week being collected
- Bailed separately and 24t loads going to Hartlepool to be recycled

Communications

Feb



March





April





May









June

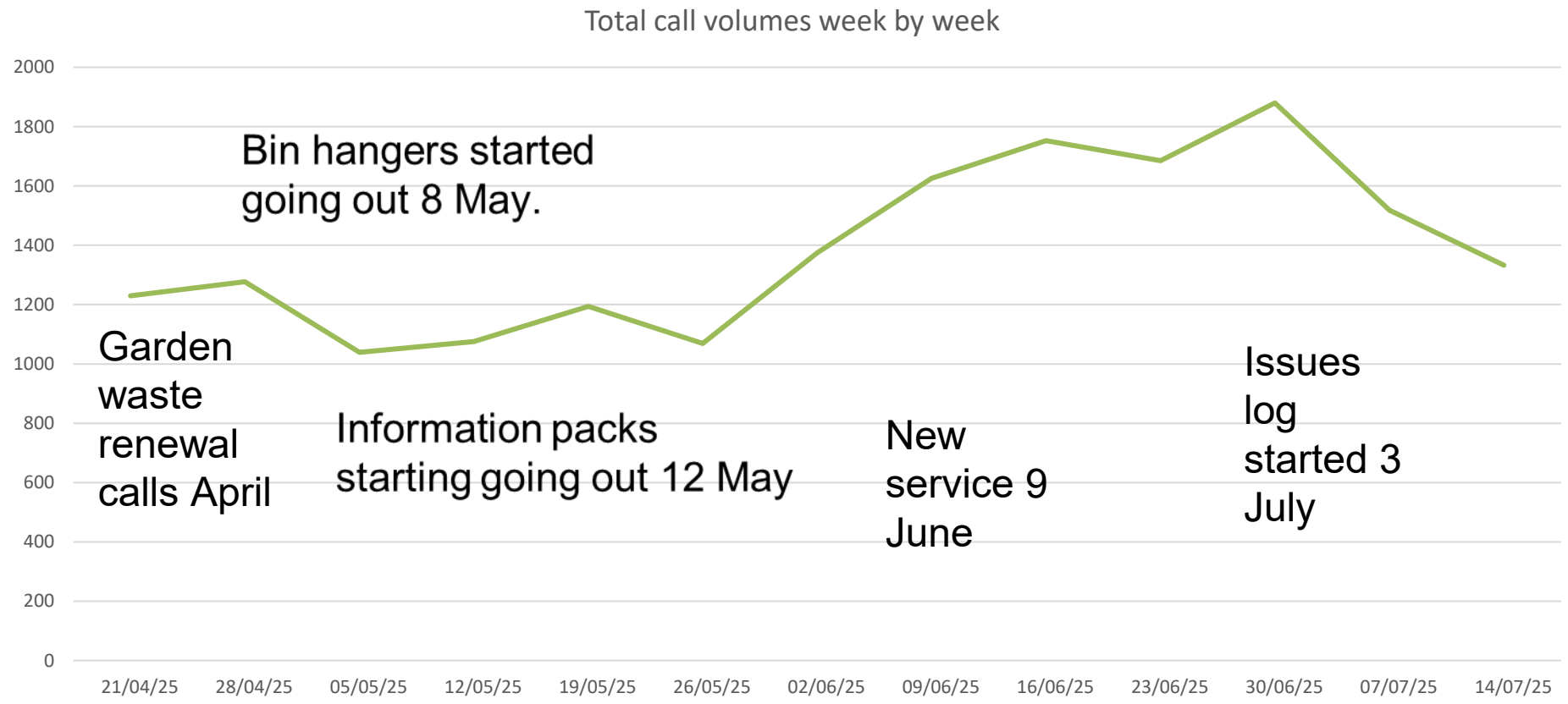






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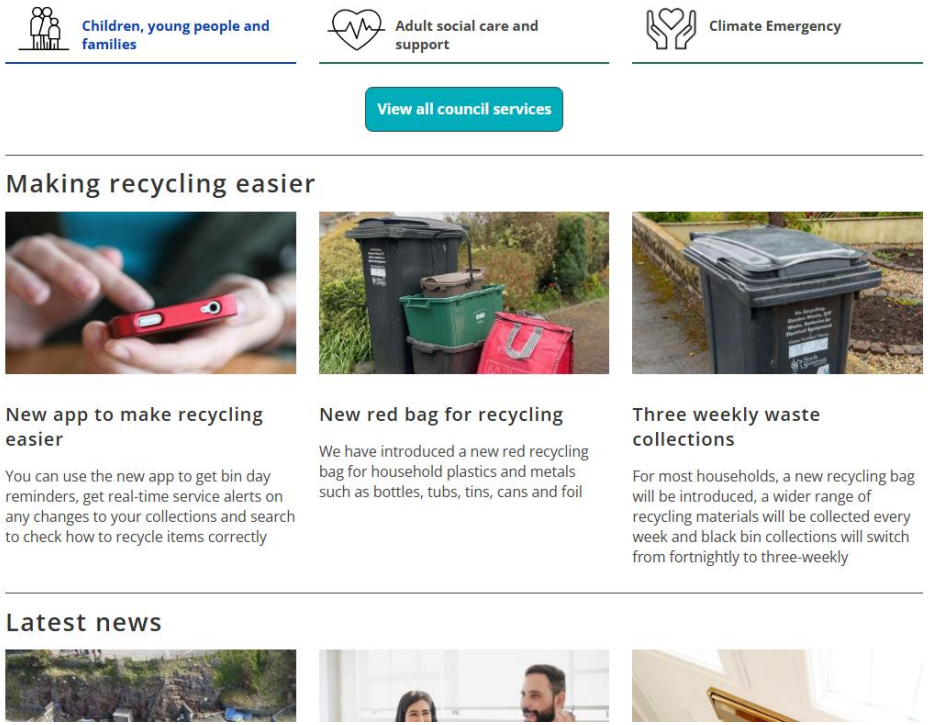
Impacts: Contact centre calls

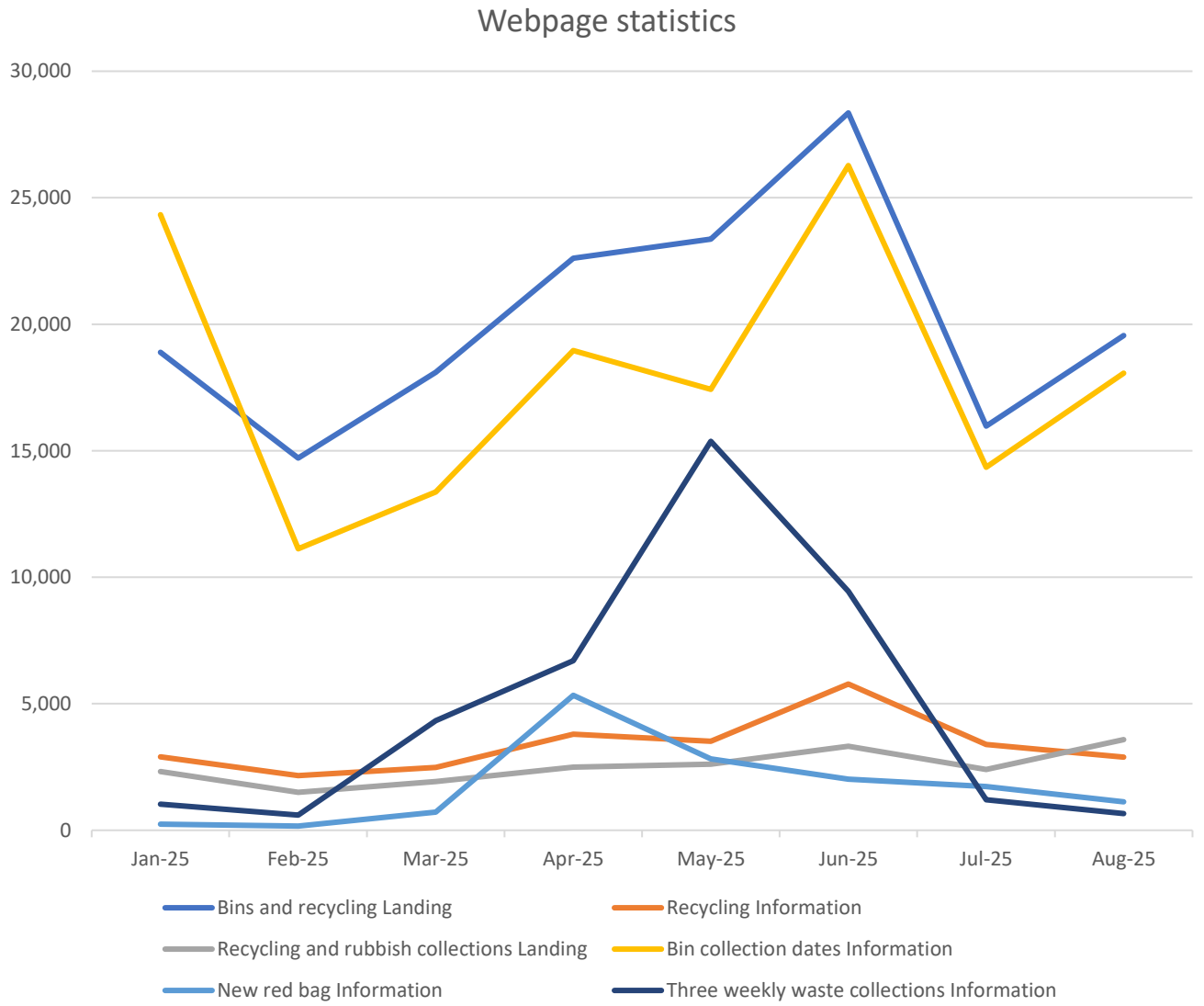


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Impacts:

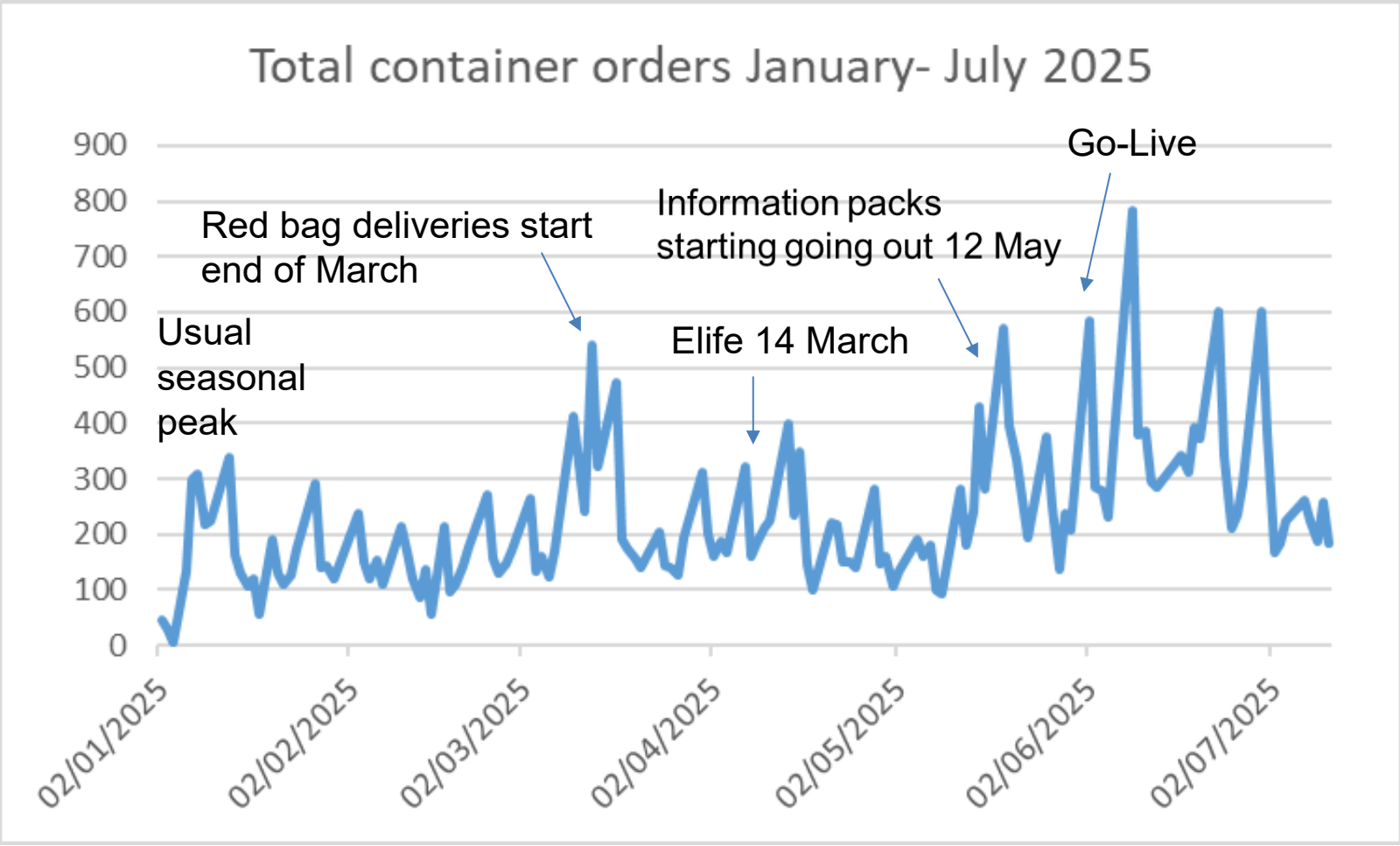
Website



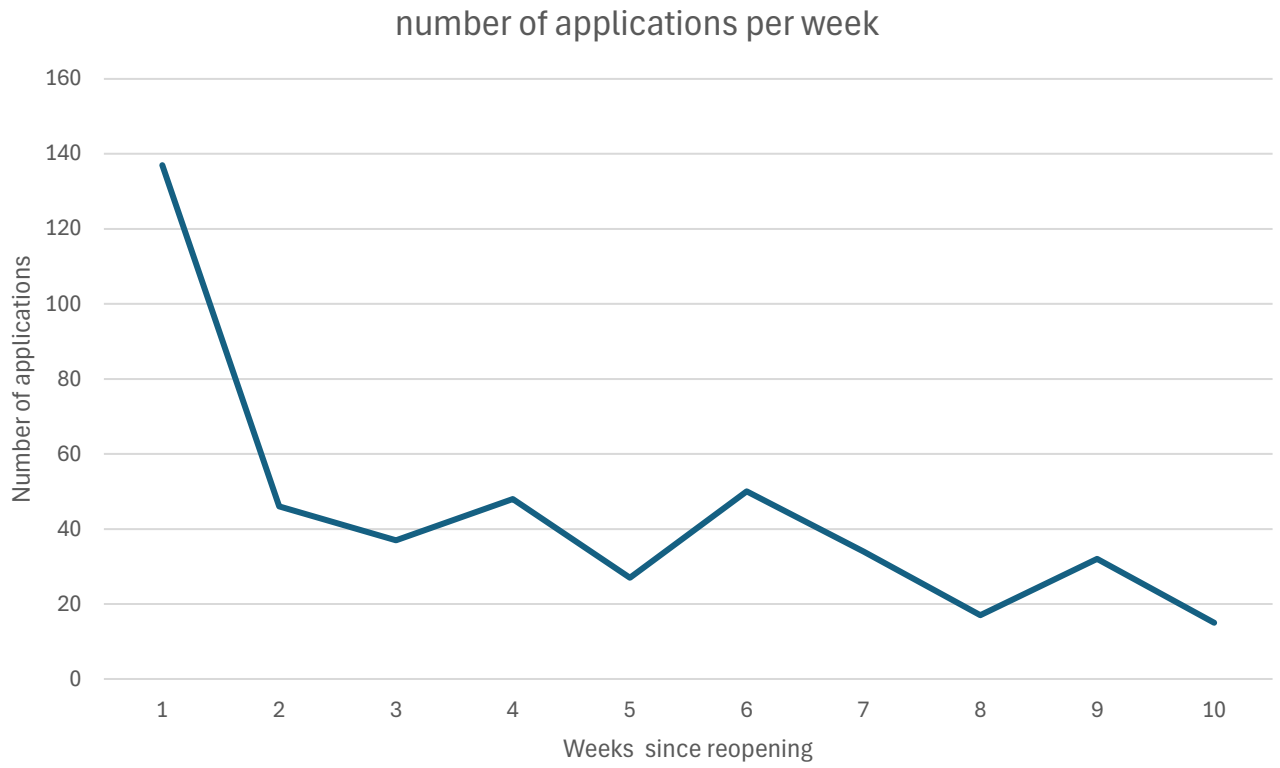


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Impacts: Container orders



Impacts: Additional waste applications



- Closed ahead of service change with ‘give it a go’ message
- Significant increase in applications
- Providing support for those who need it
- Approved additional waste stickers for those with temporary need for extra capacity.

Feedback & Community Support

I have 3 bags of soft plastics a week.. and my black bin is only half full.

Recycling soft plastics has made a massive difference to the amount of black bin waste we produce

I am just amazed at how much soft plastics that used to go in my rubbish.

We are lucky to have this in NS.

Love recycling our soft plastics as it would just fill up the black bin before

This has been a game changer for us. Brilliant service.

For many years, the members of Shrubbery Neighbourhood Group up on the hillside in WSM have carried out a weekly litter collection. We often felt that most of the litter was plastics which had escaped from the green boxes or been dropped by the recycling operatives. However, since the introduction of the new red recycling bag, the amount of litter lying around for us to pick up has greatly reduced. I know you have received a lot of flak on social media about this bag but the 14 people on the SNG Litter rota say "well done!"

Bridie Collier

Results

The headline figures on recycling rates

Waste Reduction

modelled

currently achieving

13%

Financial

Will achieve the modelled £1.1m saving

Removes 260 tonnes of flex plastics per annum

the equivalent to 158 shipping containers now not being burnt at energy from waste

158

Food Waste Achieving 21%

– exceeding modelled 10%

Increase in recycling rate

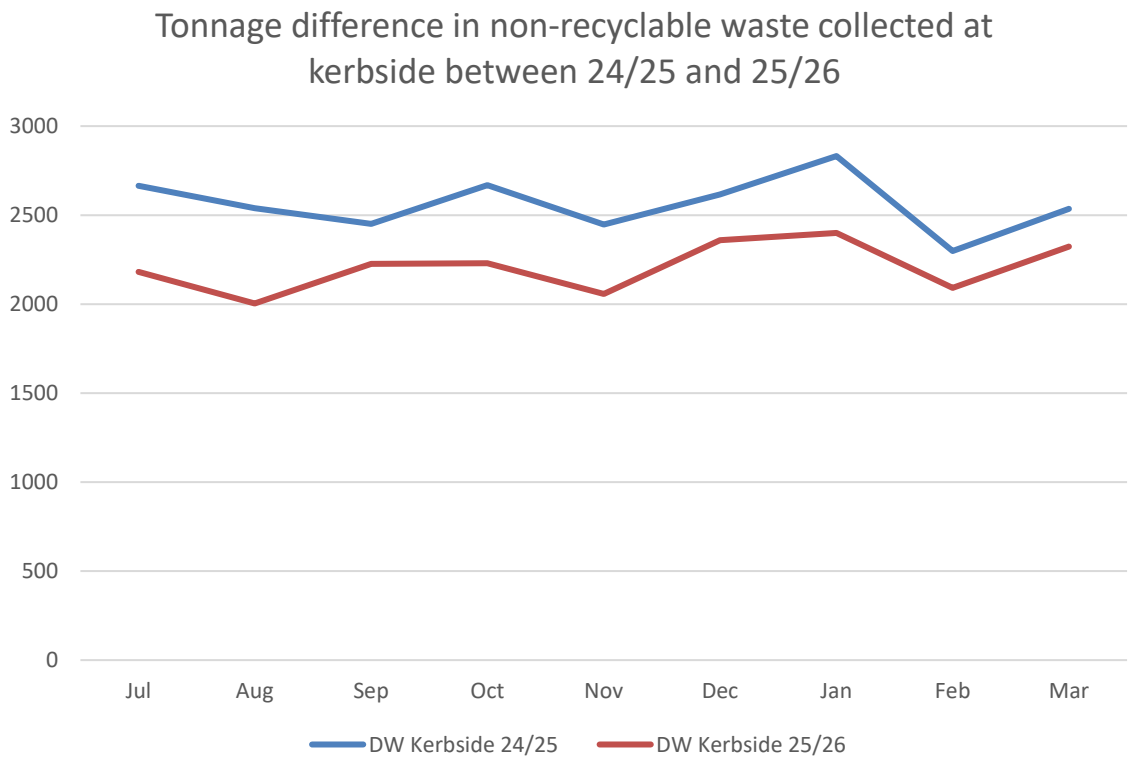
from **59%** to **63%**

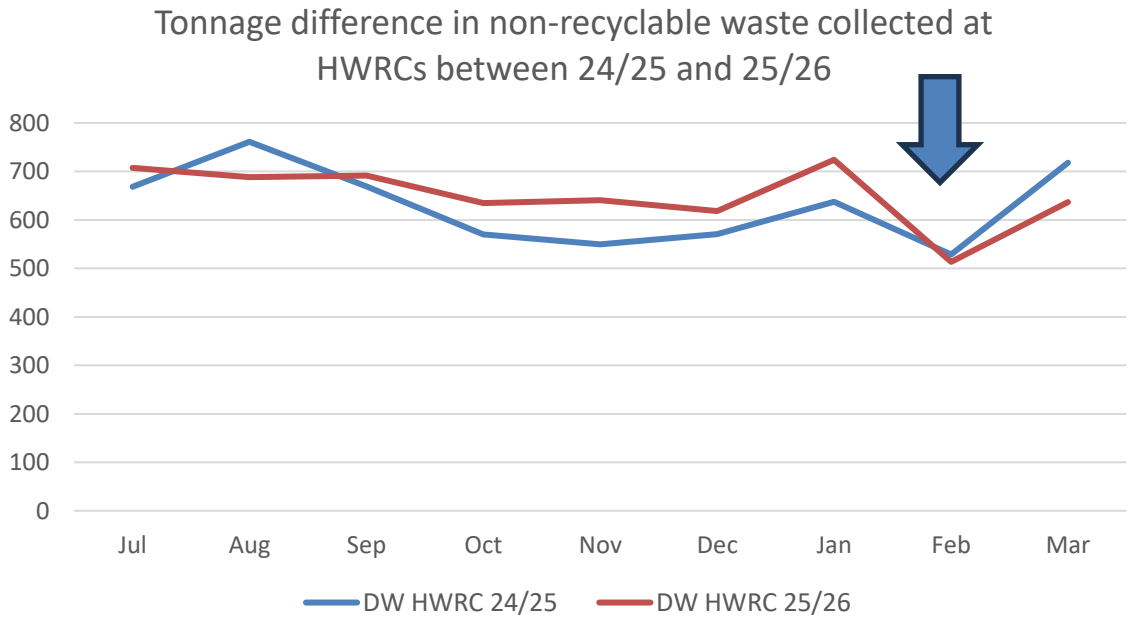
High Participation Rate for Soft Plastics

Achieving 5 tonnes /week — exceeding modelled 2.5

Black bin waste

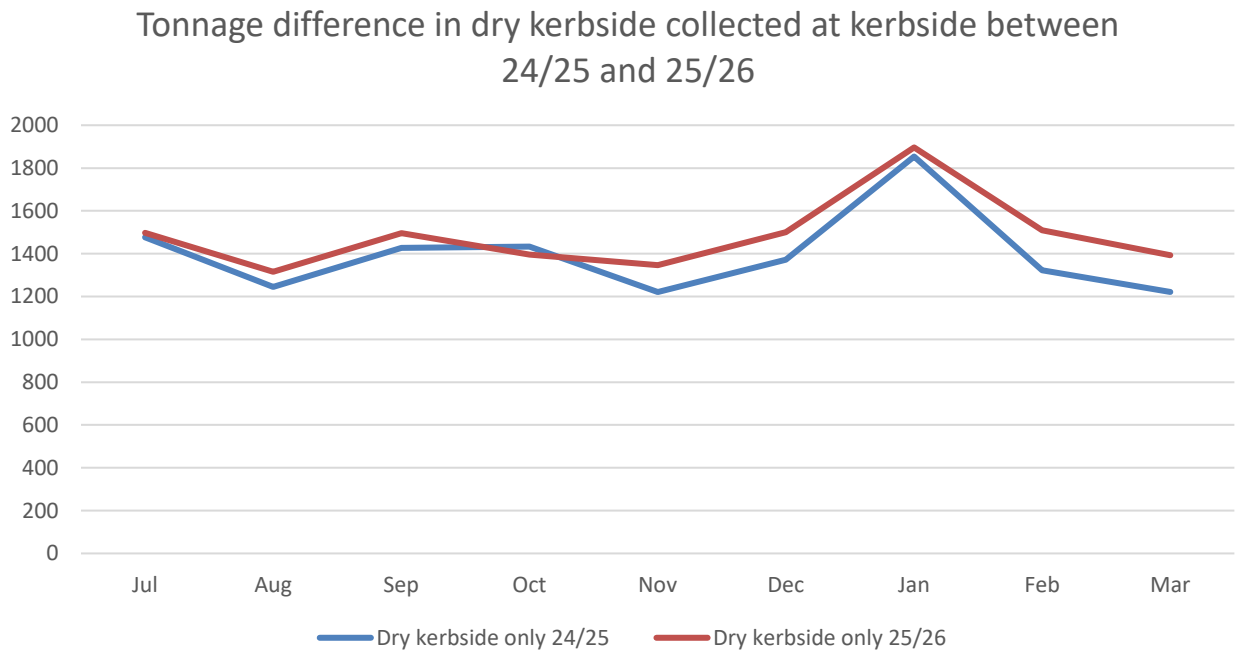
- Non-recyclable waste has dropped significantly compared to previous years.
- Has been a small increase (3.9%) of non-recyclable waste at recycling centres. This reduced (-14%) with the introduction of the booking system in February 2026.





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Dry recycling



MATERIAL	Percentage Change 24/25 to 25/26
Glass - Mixed	-0.05%
HH Batteries	76.22%
Small WEEE	-24.10%
Cans - Aluminium	22.23%
Cans - Steel	13.54%
Cardboard & Paper	8.24%
Plastics and Soft Plastics	8.99%
Textiles	-7.90%

Food Waste



December's Christmas food waste was the most we've ever collected and a 27% increase on previous year (pre three weekly).

Questions?

