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Agenda

Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday, 8 July 2026
Time 7.00 pm
Venue: Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT

Membership:

Councillors Shelley Cheesman, Alex Eyre, James Hunt, Carole Jackson, Elliott Jayes (Vice-Chair), Peter Marchington, Claire Martin, Charlie Miller, Kieran Mishchuk, Pete Neal, Ashley Shiel, Paul Stephen, Sarah Stephen, Terry Thompson and Dolley Wooster (Chair)

Quorum = 5

Pages

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(d) Anyone unable to use the stairs should make themselves known during this agenda item.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 May 2026 (Minute Nos. 18 – 19) as a correct record.

4. Declarations of Interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their families or friends.

The Chair will ask Members if they have any disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) or disclosable non-pecuniary interests (DNPIs) to declare in respect of items on the agenda. Members with a DPI in an item must leave the room for that item and may not participate in the debate or vote.

Aside from disclosable interests, where a fair-minded and informed observer would think there was a real possibility that a Member might be biased or predetermined on an item, the Member should declare this and leave the room while that item is considered.

Members who are in any doubt about interests, bias or predetermination should contact the monitoring officer for advice prior to the meeting.

5. Matters Arising

Update from the Chair on any matters from the previous meeting or upcoming agenda items relating to this committee.

6. Chairs Briefing

Items for Noting

7. Forward Decisions Plan

Items for Decision by the Committee

Issued on 30 June 2026

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in alternative formats. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, please contact **democraticservices@swale.gov.uk**. To find out more about the work of this meeting, please visit www.swale.gov.uk.

Chief Executive, Swale Borough Council,
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT

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Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee	
Meeting Date	8 July 2026
Report Title	Barton's Point Coastal Park - Future Management
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Martyn Cassell, Head of Environment and Leisure
Lead Officer	Steven Gale, Greenspaces Officer
Classification	**Open**
Recommendations	1. That the Bartons Point Working Group recommendations 1-8 contained in section 2.6 of the report be agreed. 2. That Officers progress the EOI's as recommended by the Working Group 1-2 contained in section 2.6 of the report.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides the recommendations for proposed future management of Barton's Point Coastal Park following the Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee's resolution to instigate a Member Working Group to steer Officers to further consider future management options for the park in light of the recent ecological survey.

1.2 The report summarises the work of the Member Working Group, its considerations and ultimately the recommendations for this Committee to consider.

2 Background, Context and Proposals

2.1 Following Member ambitions to explore opportunities to improve the offering at Barton's Point Coastal Park and generate more commercial income, the Council sought Expressions of Interest (EOI) to manage the various elements of the site in 2022. The EOI generated interest and a preferred operator was selected, but a key risk to these plans was the need for planning permission and especially the ecology and biodiversity on the site and the need to mitigate any concerns raised.

2.2 Subsequently a specialist company, Bakewell were instructed, undertook the necessary work and produced a report detailing the sensitivity and importance of the site and producing key recommendations. This presented a substantial challenge for any significant site development and as a result withdrawal of the preferred EOI bidder and the need to further consider options for future management direction. Economy and Property Committee at its meeting on 8 October 2025, referred the issue to the Environmental Services & Climate Change Committee with a request that they be updated on property related matters.

2.3 Environmental Services & Climate Change Committee agreed at its meeting on 12 November 2025 (minute no.458(1)11/25) to instigate a Member working group and following agreement on the individual Member participation, the cross political working group met on three occasions, 21 January, 20 February and 27 March 2026. Terms of reference were agreed at the first meeting along with appointment of Chair and Vice Chair and the second and third meetings of the group were held on site at Barton's Point Coastal Park.

2.4 In addition to the setting up of the Working Group the Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee also requested (minute nos. 458(2&3)/11/25) that the Working Group consider removing the mains drainage project from the capital programme and to write to key users informing them of the ecology report. Officers wrote to all stakeholders and provided a copy of the ecology report for information.

2.5 The Working Group focused on the following key topics to make its recommendations:

- Interim café offering – arrangements for the coming season until late October 2026, opening hours, quality of offer.
- Grounds maintenance and ecology report recommendations – potential and cost for increasing biodiversity and a site Ranger presence, management plan, desire for "Friends" or community group activity, desire and ambition for Green Flag Award status.
- Lake management – current and future usage type and levels (Sea Cadets/concession/public), potential and options for sensitive area protection and signage.
- Other site users – impacts on other site users, their current lease/licence agreements, better coordination of activity and development.
- Drainage project – updated estimates/costs of £218,000 capital and £6,350 per annum estimated revenue running costs, importance of site infrastructure, options for other improvements, potential for other external funding.
- Events – appropriateness and type of events and site activities, evaluation of disturbance, community focus.
- Future management options – Options for focus with ecology or leisure offering, habitat bank and biodiversity credits, understanding of Property Team EOI process, Member desire for community focus.

2.6 The Working Group made the following recommendations:

1. Concession - that the new concession at Barton's Point adopt a clear strategic aspiration to operate with strong community values, embedding community engagement and participation at the centre of its service model potentially looking at an operator who is a CIC, VCS or the Parish Council. The concession should contribute positively to the social value of the site by facilitating programmes, events, and activities that strengthen local connections and promote inclusive use of the area, while at least maintaining the budgeted rental income of £5,010.

2. Education - a second EOI should be advertised for the use of site for outdoor learning. This should seek to include collaboration with local organisations, schools, CIC's, VCS's and community partners to create meaningful learning opportunities that support wellbeing, environmental awareness, and lifelong learning objectives. The group further recommends that the Greenspaces Ranger has oversight of the park to help encourage education.

3. Grounds Maintenance - that the Greenspace Team should:

- Aim to achieve green flag status on site within two years.
- Continues to manage the site as per the current contract specification making minor adjusts to improve ecology where resource allows.
- Explore the viability of re-opening the northern part of the park, where the former dirt bike track was located.

4. Lake Management and Usage - that current usage remains the same i.e. no power boat usage except for safety boat. New signage should be installed close to the lake entrances that highlights the ecological importance of the southern lake edge. The group further recommends that buoys are installed to show a visual barrier from the lake edge.

5. Other Site Users – to notify other site users of the ecological importance of the site and to start annual stakeholder meetings to strengthen communication.

6. Events – to continue to allow events such as fairs, circus etc. but to ensure they are planned around site ecology and that they undertake full and appropriate event planning in association with the Safety Advisory Group.

7. Drainage Project – that existing capital funding of £51,640 should be retained for the drainage project. Other sources of funding should be sought to complete the project, such as through other external organisations or seeking further capital funding. Achieving grant funding for this type of project will be challenging. Members could decide to request that further SBC capital funding be debated amongst other capital requests as part of the budget setting process. Progress in gathering the required funding should be reviewed after 18 months.

8. Long Term Management - that the site remains under SBC ownership "with a local voice i.e. parish council" and that the Greenspace Team continues to manage the site with an awareness and management plan in place to preserve the ecology and habitat. Two new EOI's are advertised for the site, a café offering and a separate outdoor education operator and that consideration is given to allocating time and resource for the Greenspaces Ranger to attend site in order to support the establishment of a Friends of /community group

2.7 It is proposed the Working Group will have one further meeting to update the Members on outcomes and progress.

3 Recommendations

3.1 That the Bartons Point Working Group Recommendations 1-8 contained in the report at section 2.6 be agreed.

3.2 That Officers progress the EOI's as recommended by the Working Group 1-2 contained in section 2.6 of the report.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

4.1 The Bartons Point Working Group considered several issues and options for each of the focus areas using information and evidence provided by Officers from various Council teams, external organisations and stakeholders. There is clear desire for an improved "offer" at the site and an overwhelming need to balance between the ecological benefits and community activity.

4.2 The current café concession is a temporary measure until 23 October 2026, so "do nothing" is not an option to meet Council financial standing orders. Overly ambitious commercial ideas contain significant risk in planning terms as evidenced by the previously failed EOI and preferred operator.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 The Working Group met site stakeholders at its meeting on 27 March 2026.

5.2 Officers consulted with Natural England and Bird Wise in order to provide ecological and potential disturbance information to Council Members.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	With the change in direction from maximising income from the asset to ecology and potentially leisure, this moves from Economy to Environment theme of the Plan.
Financial, Resource and Property	It is proposed that two EOI's or lots be advertised to secure a long-term café and lake management concession and education operator for the site. This should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity to try to ensure that any new operator can open at the start of the season Easter 2027. Through this continued proposed commercial and leisure/education activity, it is believed that the current revenue

	assumed rental income of £5,010 and overall site income level of £7,750 should at least be maintained. The cost of a new management plan, improved lake signage and buoyage at an estimated cost of £4,000 can be covered by the existing revenue budget over the next two financial years. Recommendation for greater oversight of the site through redeployment of Greenspaces Ranger hours, following the proposed transfer of Oare Gunpowder Works Country Park to Faversham Town Council. Recommendation that the current Capital allocation for £51,640, committed to the drainage project be retained and that further funding of up to £167,000 be sought to complete the project. Research and estimates indicate that the implications of running costs on the revenue budget would be lower at £6,350 to the £11,500 currently experienced for cesspit emptying. Progress should be reviewed after 18 months.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Any future EOI's and subsequent agreements would need to follow the Council's financial standing orders and Property Asset Strategy.
Crime and Disorder	The facilities on site suffer a level of anti-social behaviour given its remote nature, but potential increased oversight and improved commercial and community "ownership" would increase natural surveillance.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The site is a sensitive and valuable ecological resource. Potential for additional future habitat and biodiversity credits to off-set of carbon emissions are still being explored with the Planning Team and the Adonis Blue feasibility work.
Health and Wellbeing	The provision of high quality, local open spaces and parklands is vital to supporting community health and well-being. A further developed habitat bank would also assist in air quality and wider health and well-being.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	Not applicable.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	There are continued financial and operational risk within options being recommended. The site is currently managed by the Council and inspected on a regular basis.

Equality and Diversity	No decisions in this report are thought to negatively impact any of the protected characteristics.
Privacy and Data Protection	No implications.
Local Government Reorganisation	No current known implications.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

None.

8 Background Papers

None.

Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee Meeting	
Meeting Date	08/07/2026
Report Title	Annual performance report for waste collection and street cleansing service 2025/26
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regenerations and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Martyn Cassell, Head of Environment and Leisure
Lead Officer	Kelly Mehmet, Environmental Contract Manager
Classification	**Open**
Recommendations	1. To discuss the contents and approve publication of the report on the council website.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

1.1 This is the second Swale Borough Council annual waste collection and street cleansing report covering the service performance from April 2025 to March 2026. The report provides an evaluation of the performance and identifies strengths and weaknesses which will provide a focus on where resources should be directed for the year ahead.

2 Background, Context and Proposals

2.1 The current waste and street cleansing contract started in March 2024 in partnership with Ashford Borough Council and Maidstone Borough Council. The contract covers waste collections for all three councils and street cleansing in Ashford and Swale Boroughs.

2.2 Following a difficult first year which resulted in poor performance, officers focussed on making improvements to the waste collections as a priority. As the service settled the second year of the contract has allowed officers to focus on making improvements to the street cleansing service.

2.3 Officers have taken Members feedback into account following the first annual performance report and subsequent mid-year update and have produced the Annual Performance Report for 2025/26 (see appendix I)

2.4 Suez have produced their own annual report for the Mid Kent contract (see appendix II) along with a Social Values report for 2025/26 (see appendix III)

3 Recommendations

3.1 To discuss the contents and approve publication of the report on the council website.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

4.1 Do nothing – The council are not statutorily obliged to produce an annual report.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 The first annual performance report was presented to Members in July 2025 and a mid-year update provided in November 2025. Members provided comments which have been considered for the 2025/26 annual performance report.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The waste collection and street cleansing contract is the council's largest contract and it impacts every resident in the borough. Therefore, it is relevant to many of the corporate priorities.
Financial, Resource and Property	The costs of this contract will be reported in the end of year financial reports. The streets element of the contract is circa £2.4m and the waste collection element is circa £4.9m. Garden waste income for 25/26 was £1,204,973 and Bulky waste income for 25/26 was £126,265. In 2025/26, £2.31M was received as Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility payments. DEFRA suggest that similar payments will be made in 26/27, but it is not clear what the future beyond 26/27 will be and if any other funding streams will be affected as a result of the pEPR payments.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	The council are legally required to provide waste collection and street cleansing services.
Crime and Disorder	The street cleansing element of the contract includes removal of fly tipping, litter, graffiti and fly posting which helps to prevent further offences and keep the borough clean.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	Refuse Collection Vehicles have electric bin lifts and are Euro VI compliant to reduce emissions. There are also 2 fully electric caged vehicles used for street cleansing. Street cleansing zoning for an AQMA (Air Quality Management Area) in Sittingbourne has been upgraded to provide more frequent sweeping in order to improve the air quality in the area. Officers continue to work with

	Suez to review options for the use of Hydo-treated Vegetable Oil (HVO) as a fuel for vehicles across the Mid Kent Partnership.
Health and Wellbeing	The waste and street cleansing contract creates a cleaner, safer and more attractive environment which can help to support both physical and mental wellbeing across the community.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	Waste collection routes have been designed to ensure peak times around schools are avoided. Particular attention is paid to assisted collections and clinical collections in order to support vulnerable residents.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	Key operational risks such as manual handling, vehicle movements, hazardous waste exposure and interactions with the public are systematically identified, assessed and controlled through safe systems of work. All operatives receive comprehensive training, and strict procedures are in place for handling hazardous or clinical waste. The contract promotes a proactive safety culture, encouraging staff engagement, near-miss reporting and ongoing communication.
Equality and Diversity	The service provides for every resident in the borough. Additional measures have been implemented to ensure all residents have access to the waste collection service. For example, residents can request 'assisted collections' if they are unable to put bins out themselves. The contractor also collects clinical waste and sharps from residents on prescribed medication.
Privacy and Data Protection	None.
Local Government Reorganisation	Possible challenges around transition, governance and service alignment. Mid Kent partners have aligned their services under the one contract. Other potential LGR partners deliver different service models and methodologies. There is a potential to deliver more efficient, resilient and environmentally sustainable services at scale. However, significant changes would be required to do so. The current contract does not expire until 2032.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Annual Waste and Street Cleansing Report 2025/26
- Appendix II: Suez Mid Kent Annual Report 2025/26
- Appendix III: Social Values Report 2025/26

8 Background Papers

The 2024/25 Annual performance report can be found here: (Public Pack)Agenda Document for Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee, 10/07/2025 19:00

Swale BOROUGH COUNCIL

Annual Performance Report 2025/26

Waste collection and street cleansing service

Comment from Chair of Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee

The 2025/2026 Waste and Street cleansing Annual performance report shows the significant progress that has been achieved since the previous reporting period. This can be seen in the positive trajectory shown in the data provided and is testament to the commitment and collaborative efforts of all involved.

It is recognised that there are still improvements to be made and the coming year will be critical in sustaining momentum, addressing remaining challenges and delivering further improvements in efficiency, environmental impact and the quality of the service provided.

Cllr Dolley Wooster – Chair of Committee

Introduction

This is the second annual performance report since the start of the eight year waste and street cleansing contract in March 2024. The contract includes waste collection for Mid Kent covering Ashford Borough Council, Maidstone Borough Council and Swale Borough Council. The contract also includes street cleansing services for Ashford Borough Council and Swale Borough Council.

The waste collection element of the contract covers the collection of all domestic refuse streams which includes recycling, refuse, food, garden, clinical and bulky items. The street cleansing element of the contract covers manual street cleansing, mechanical sweeping, litter and dog bin emptying, fly tip removal, fly posting removal and graffiti removal.

Management and monitoring of the contract is carried out by the Contracts and Resources team including Contract Monitoring Officers, Environmental Campaigns and Performance Officer, Temporary Waste and Street Cleansing Project Officer, Environmental Contract Manager and the Environmental Services Manager. The team work closely with the Environmental Response Team who are responsible for waste enforcement activities in Swale.

The Contract in Numbers

Waste collection in Swale for 2025/26

Collections	Over 140,000 scheduled collections every week
Households serviced each week in Swale	67,912
Number of collection operatives and drivers in Swale	79 (31 drivers and 48 loaders)
Number of SBC owned vehicles for waste collection in Swale	28 (any additional hire/ purchased vehicles are funded by Suez)
Tonnes of dry recycling collected and recycled in 25/26	10,351
Tonnes of residual waste collected in 25/26	31,804.19
Tonnes of compostable (food and garden) in 25/26	9,757
Total bulky collections undertaken in 2025	3,741
Garden subscribers at end of 25/26	20,161
Number of ad hoc clinical collections in 25/26	5,504
% of staff for Suez that live locally	92.79%
Estimated recycling rate (tbc later in year)	36.33% (this shows a 2% increase on last years figure of 34.9%)

Street Cleansing

Number of litter and dog bins in Swale which are serviced by Suez	1,323
Length of roads in Swale to be kept clean (including High Speed Roads)	1,095,404 metres – in addition to this there are over 30,000 metres of footpaths and bridleways and 69,000 square metres of car parks to cleanse
Number of vehicles for street cleansing (with some being fully electric)	13 – including 3 x mechanical sweepers
Number of street cleansing operatives and drivers	31
Fly tips removed in 2025/26	2,660
Offensive graffiti removed in 2025/26	37
Street litter arisings	861 tonnes
Highways mechanical sweepings	257 tonnes

Key achievements in 2025/26

Introduced alternate weekly collections - Officers have introduced alternate weekly collections for the small number of individual properties that remained on a weekly refuse collection. This ensures that all residents across the borough now receive the same level of service and it encourages everyone to utilise the services provided and recycle as much as possible. This was successfully completed in March 2026.

All residents now receive a food waste service – All communal properties and the small number of individual properties that were not currently on the food waste scheme were delivered a food waste bin, information leaflets and a roll of compostable food bags. Officers worked closely with management companies and residents to assess storage capacity and addressed any concerns raised about the scheme.

Food waste campaigns - Officers worked closely with KCC.Stickers were placed on all refuse bins asking residents not to place food waste into the residual waste bins. A free roll of compostable liners and information leaflets were also put through resident's letter box providing information on the food waste scheme and how to request a food waste bin. This resulted in a large increase in food bins being provided to residents and ultimately food waste being diverted from the residual bins and into the waste food stream. 41% more food waste was collected in 25/26 compared to the previous year (the highest increase across Kent).

Contamination campaigns - KCC and SBC officers started trials for a contamination campaign in Swale. The campaign will be extended to the rest of Kent. Officers accompanied three collection crews on their rounds, checking for contamination in the recycling bins. Any contaminated bins were photographed, marked with an information hanger and information leaflets were posted through resident's doors. There were a number of positive interactions on site with residents. Officers then followed up with a letter to any properties where contamination was present advising of the consequences if contamination persists.

Simpler recycling and EPR funding - SBC received Extended Producer Responsibility funding to assist with the new Simpler Recycling regulations. This legialstion required local authorities to provide food waste and dry recycling to all residential properties by 31st March 2026. Funding was used to purchase containers, provide information for residents and employ a Temporary Waste and Street Cleansing project officer and a Waste Comms officer to deliver the various projects mentioned above. The changes aim to standardise collections, reduce confusion for residents and improve recycling rates across England.

Performance

Collections

Bin collection performance has continued to improve throughout the year. Missed bins are down in Swale by 95.5% from last year. 99.68% of all rounds were completed on their scheduled day.

Figure 1.1 – Monthly % Completion rate for Swale. The chart shows that as the year progressed, nearly all collections took place on their scheduled day.

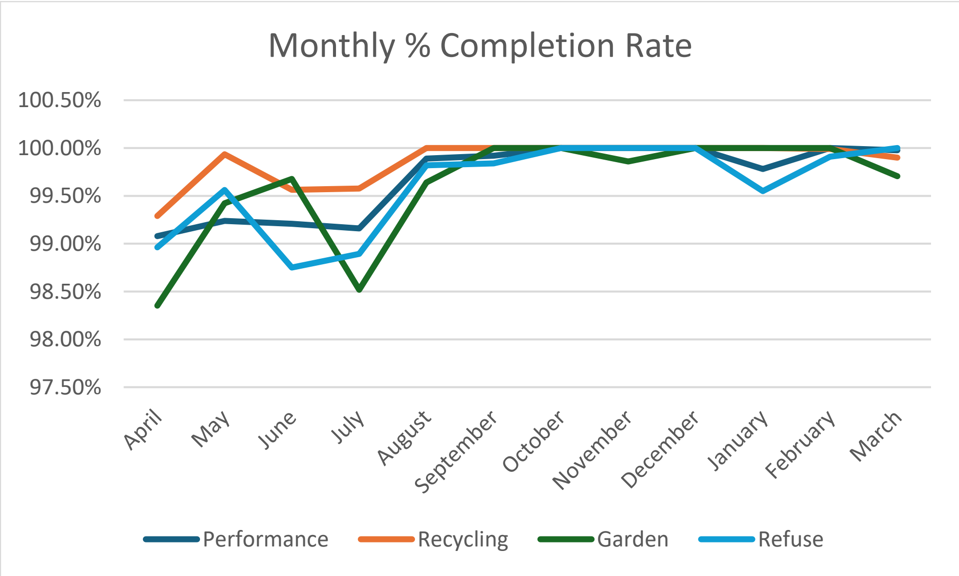


Figure 1.2 – The chart below shows the number of residual missed collections in 25/26, showing an improvement across the year.

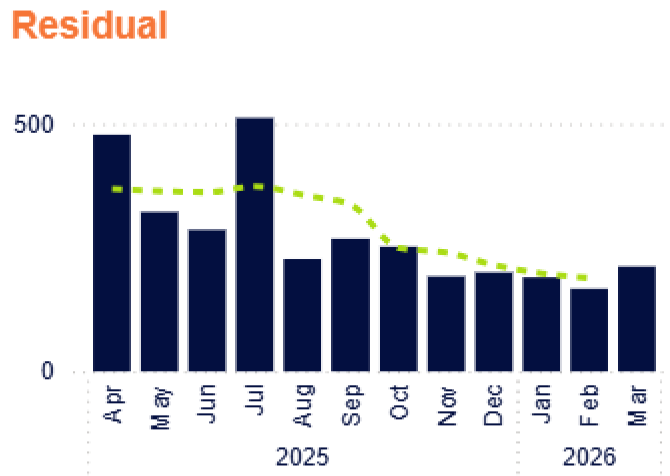


Figure 1.3 – The chart below shows the number of recycling missed collections in 25/26 showing an improvement across the year.

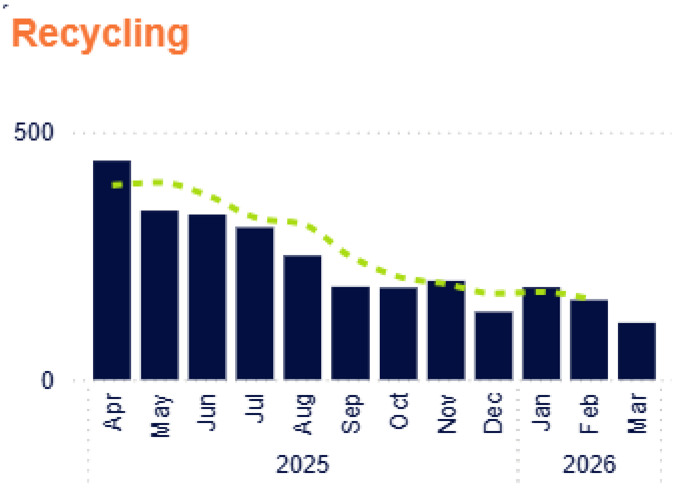


Figure 1.4 – The chart below shows the number of garden waste missed collections in 25/26.

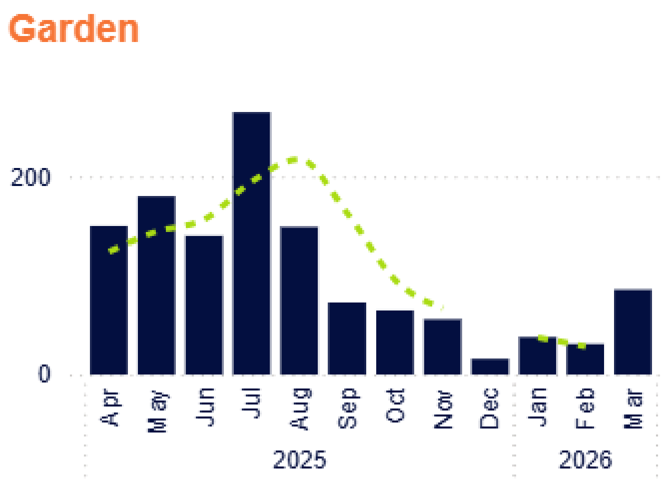


Figure 1.5 – The chart below shows the number of food waste missed collections in 25/26. The spike in July was due to the increase in residents using the food waste service following the food waste sticker campaign.

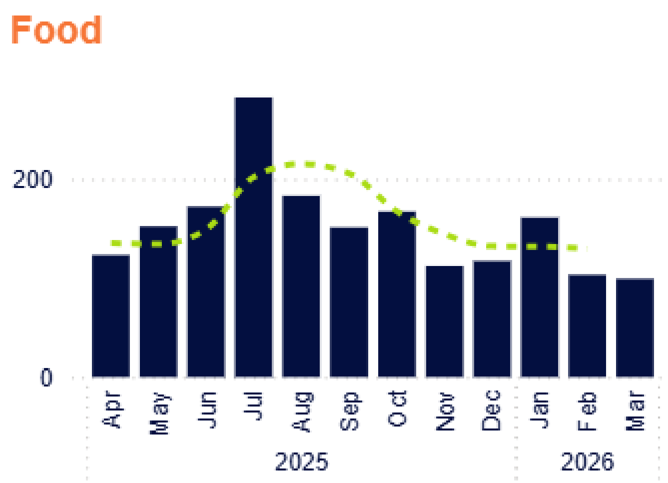


Figure 1.6 – The chart below shows a comparison in the recycling composting rate in Swale for 23/24, 24/25 and 25/26

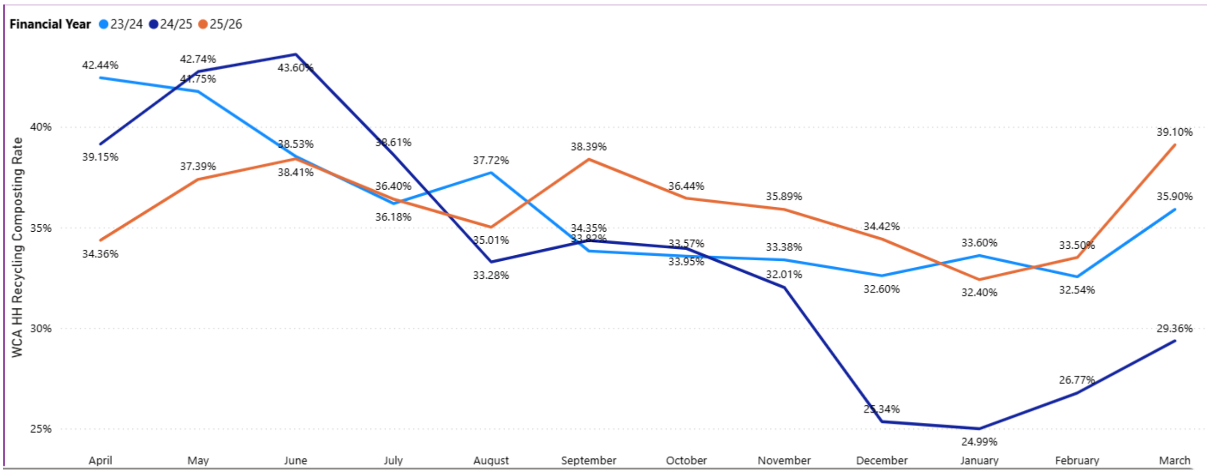
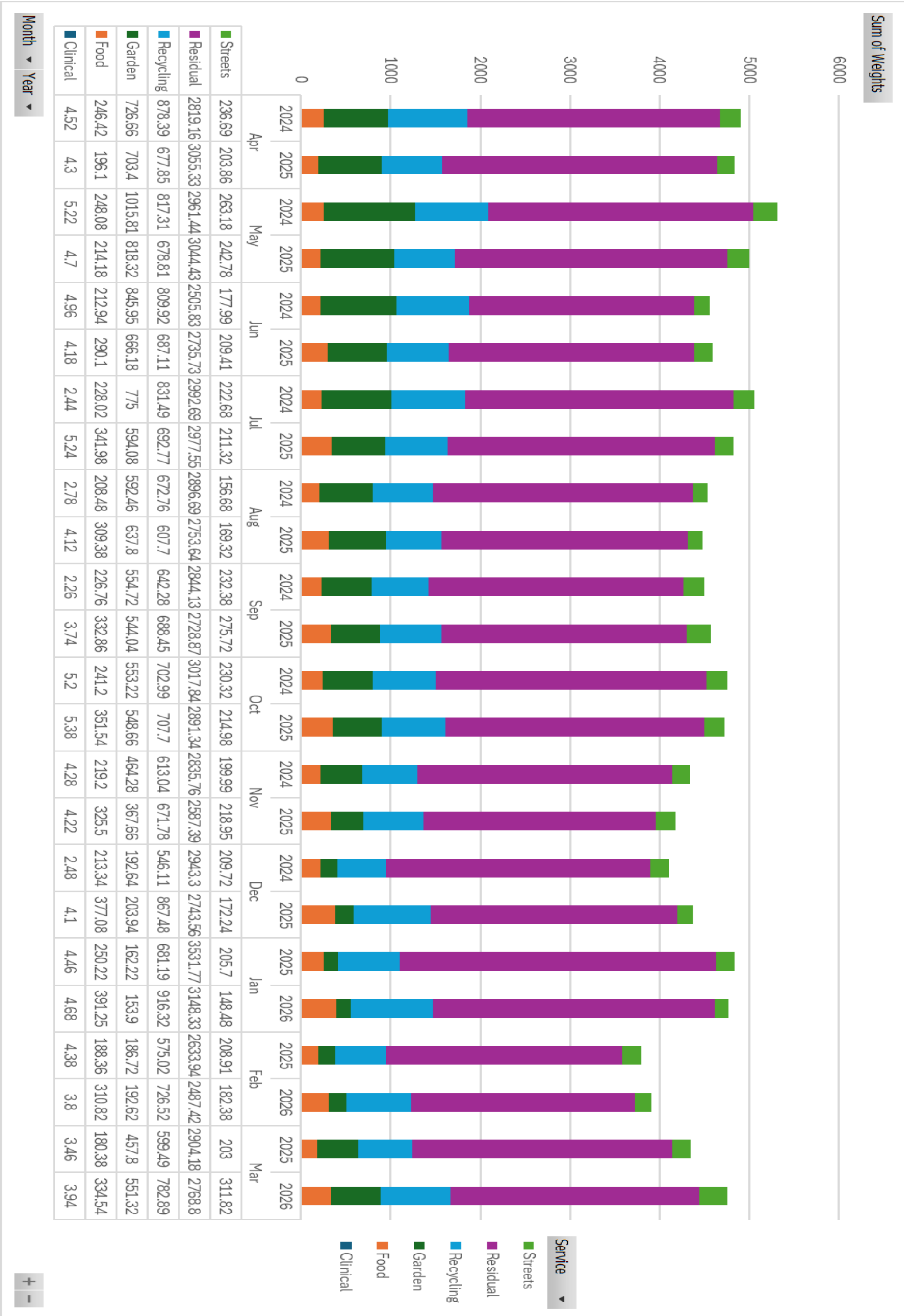


Figure 1.7 – The chart below shows the overall tonnages collected in Swale in 25/26 for Refuse, Recycling, Garden waste and Street cleansing arisings. The data behind the graph shows that food campaigns resulted in a food tonnage increase from June and a corresponding downturn in residual tonnages.



Assisted Collections

Following a request from Councillors, this year officers have been focussing on missed collections for residents that receive an assisted collection. Performance in this area has been closely monitored. Suez managers have been working with crews to make improvements via a range of actions including Tool Box Talks and active monitoring. The impact of this, as can be seen from the graph below. Around 6% of all missed collections are assisted collections. In 24/25 the average number of missed bins per month was 81. In 25/26, this was almost halved at an average of 47 per month across the year and further improvements were made during the last quarter at an average of 36 per month.

Figure 1.8 – Number of missed collections vs Missed Assisted collections – This chart shows the comparison between number of Missed Assisted collections reported vs General Missed collections.

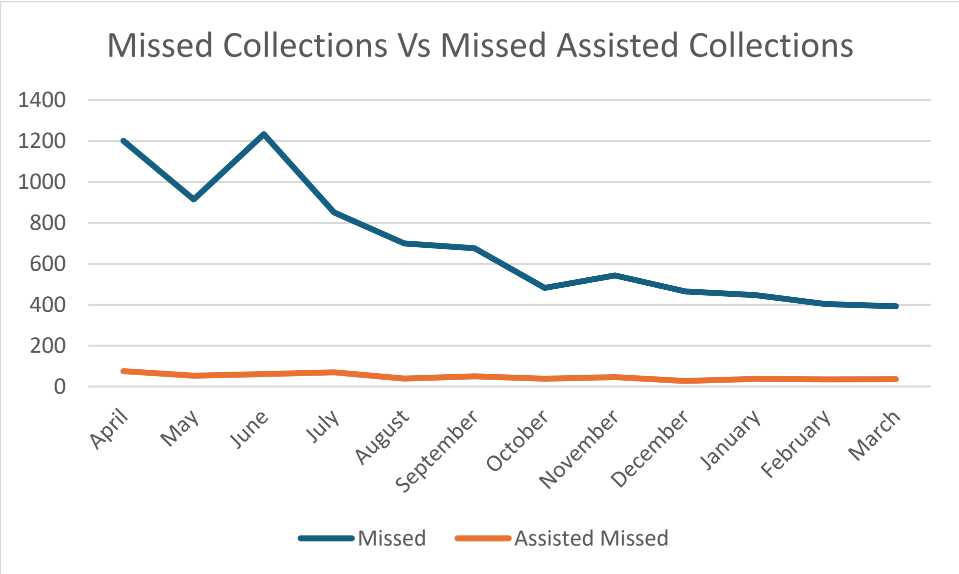


Figure 1.9 – This chart provides a comparison between the number of missed assisted collections reported in 24/25 and 25/26, showing a vast improvement in overall number of missed assisted collections across the year.

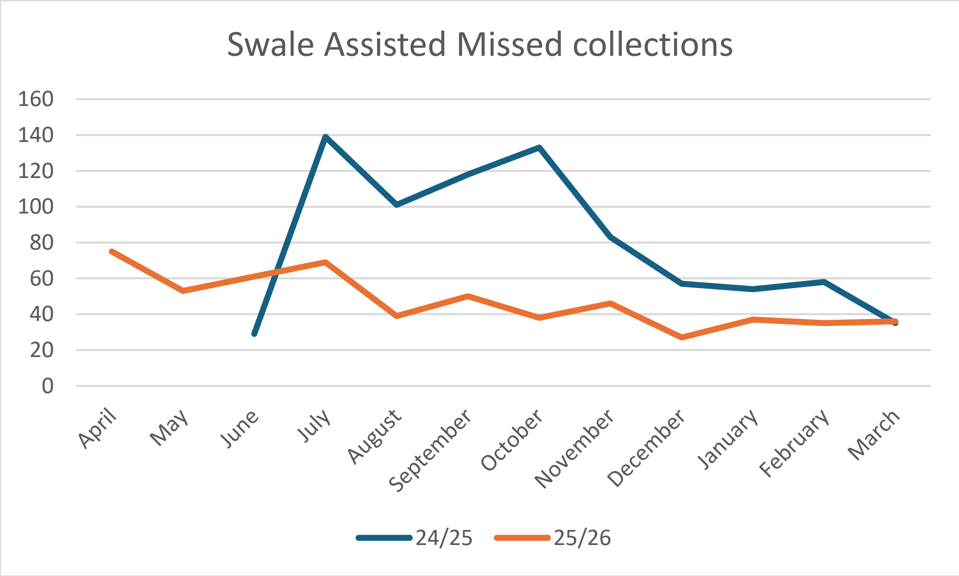


Figure 1.10 – This chart shows the number of Complaints/Comments/Compliments received throughout 2025/26

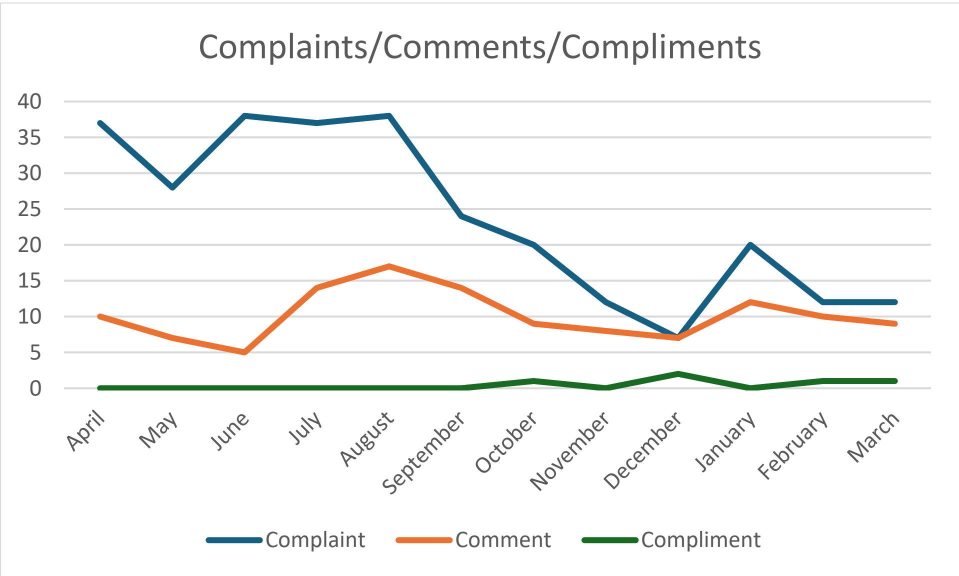


Figure 1.11 shows the breakdown of complaint types for food and refuse. The majority is due to failed delivery of containers which is due to the large increase in requests for food waste containers during the food waste sticker campaign, followed by Attitude/Crew Conduct and Failure to collect missed bin.

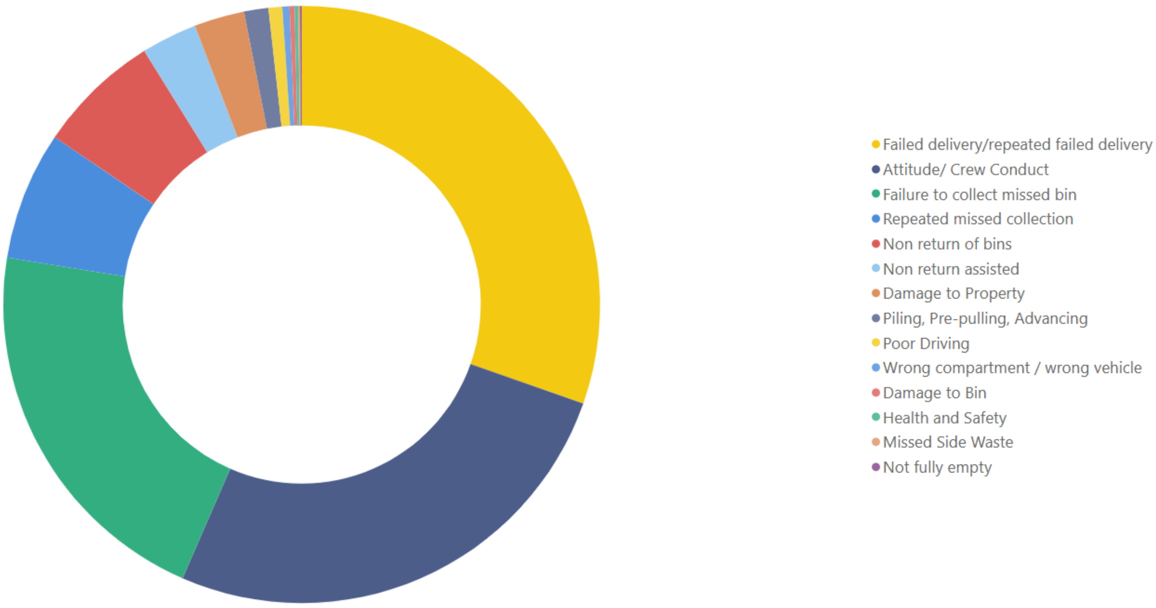


Figure 1.12 shows the breakdown of complaint types for recycling.

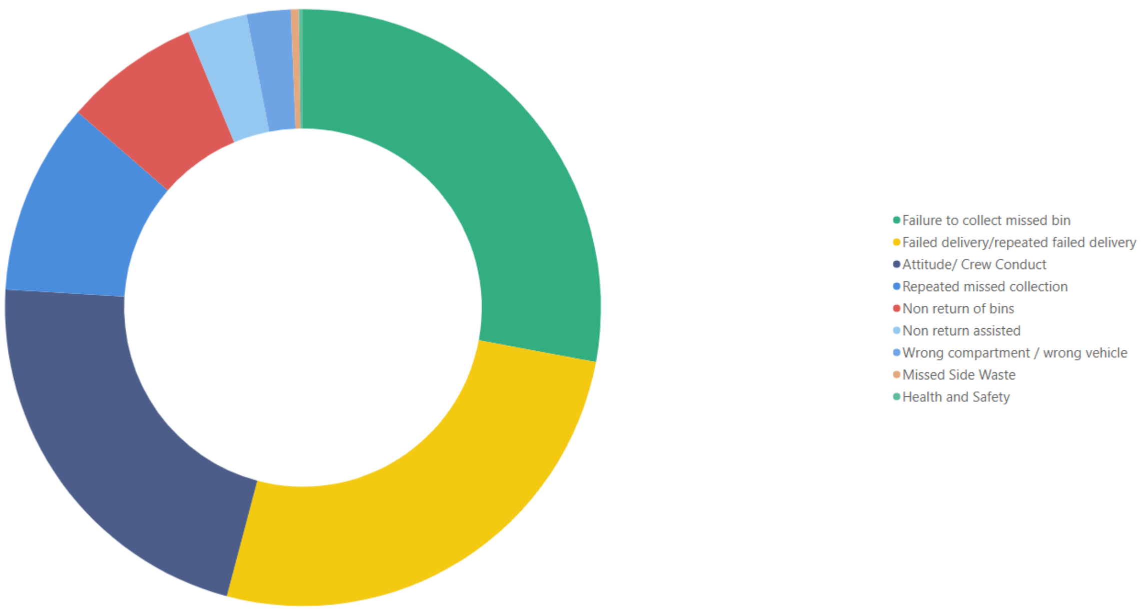
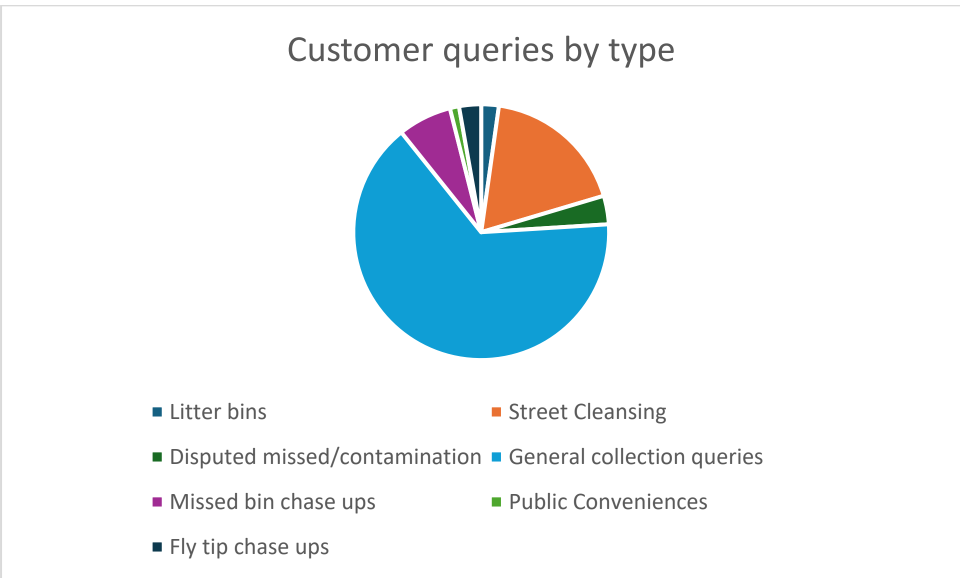


Figure 1.13 – The chart below shows a breakdown of customer queries received by the Contracts team by type. The majority of queries received are regarding general waste collections.



Contamination

Contamination in recycling remains a key challenge. Sampling of recycling at the recycling plant has identified elevated levels of objectionable and prohibited materials in Swale recycling bins. Consequently, this has resulted in a large number of whole loads being rejected at the waste transfer station in Swale. Rejected recycling becomes residual waste that gets incinerated. The cost of waste to energy can be four to five times more expensive than recycling at the material recycling facility. It also removes those materials from the circular economy forever.

Figure 1.14 – shows the types of contaminants found in recycling loads – the 4 main contaminant types are still black sacks, food waste, textiles and sanitary waste

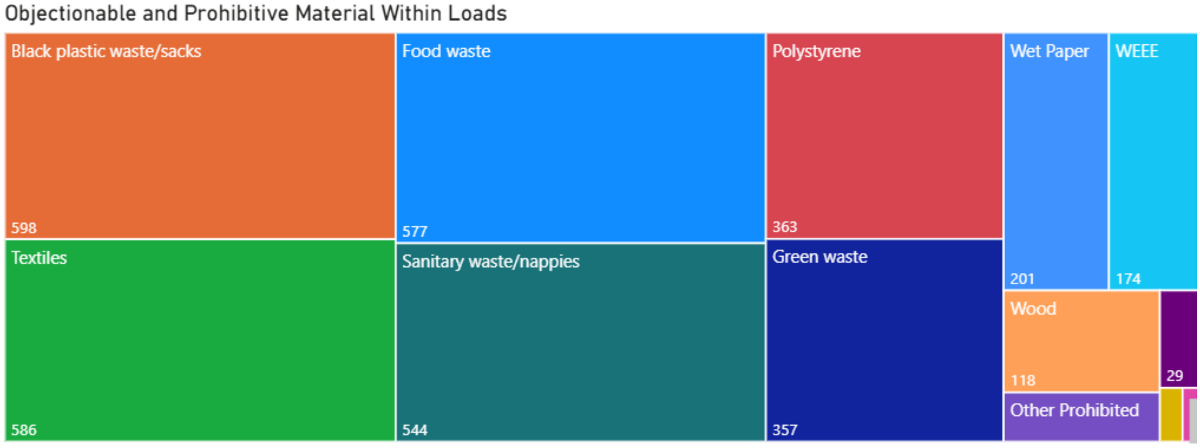


Figure 1.15 – Number of contamination lockouts by crews

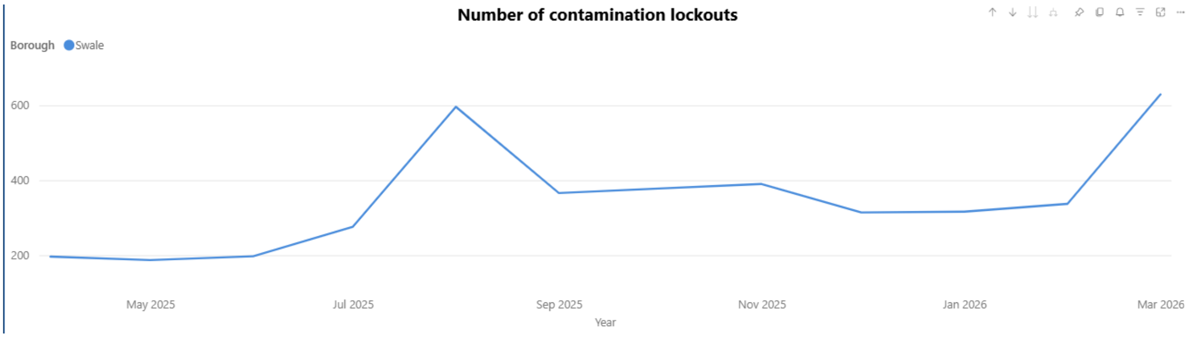


Figure 1.14 –The chart below shows the reasons for contamination lockouts as reported by crews

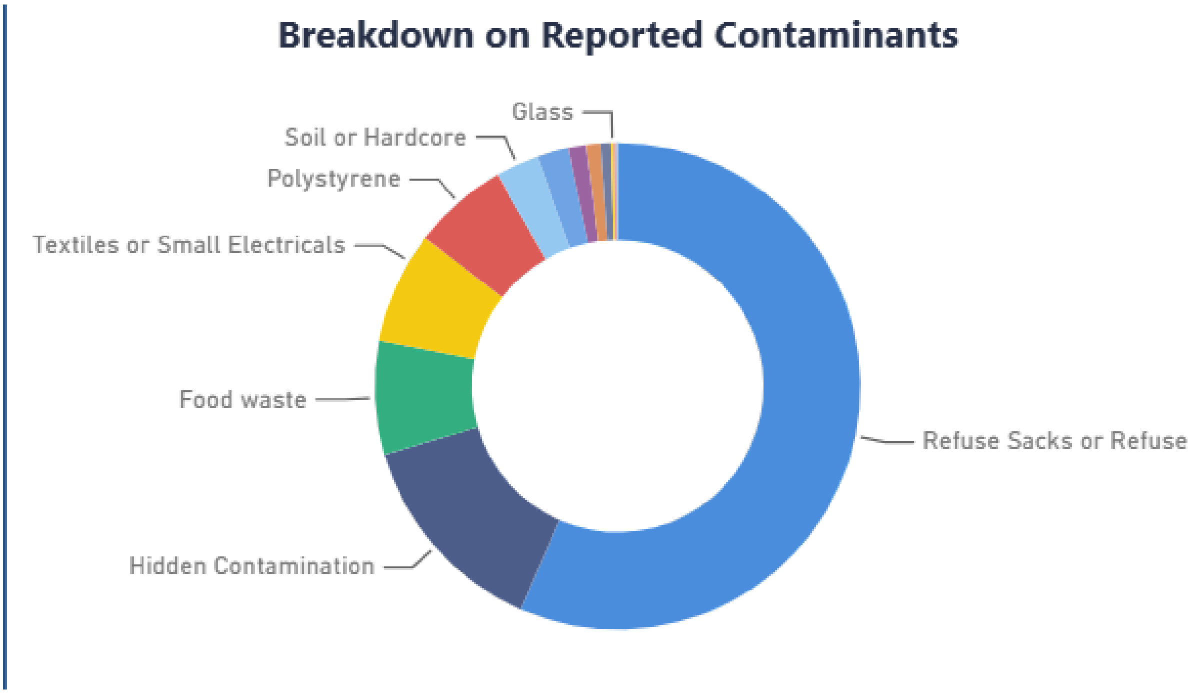


Figure 1.15 – shows the percentage of photographs taken by collection crews to support contamination lockouts, showing an improvement from Year 1 of the contract

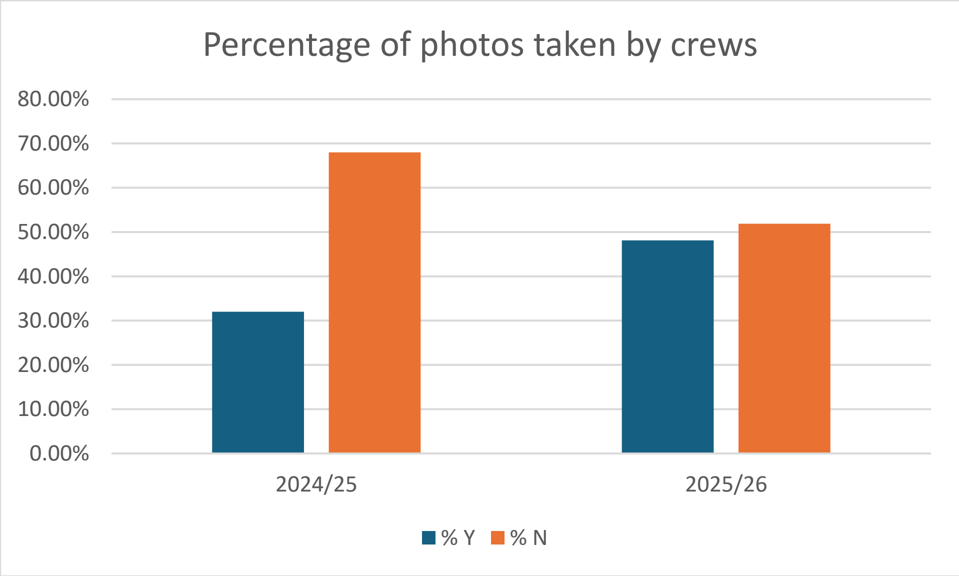
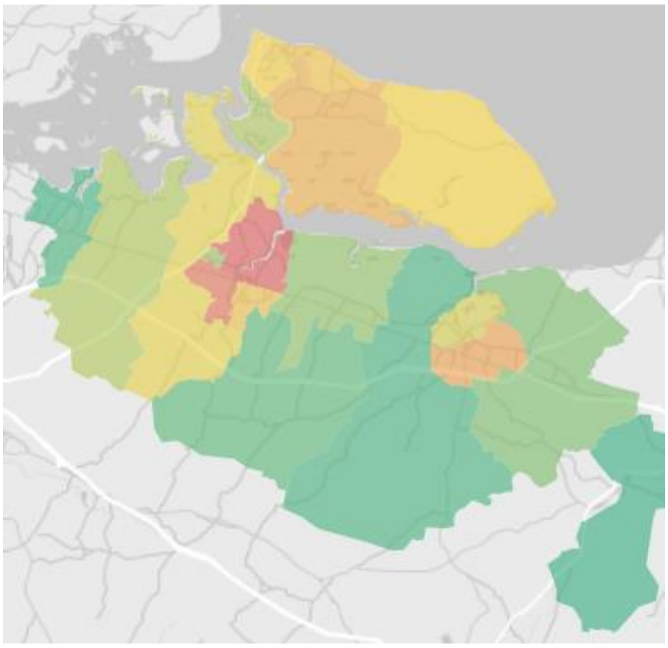


Figure 1.16 – Heat map showing worst affected areas for contamination lockouts. This heat map is created from data inputted by the crews. It shows where bins have been 'locked out' for contamination. The data will become more reliable as more crews lock contaminated bins out on their handheld devices (all crews are expected to take a photograph to show the contaminants).



Contamination Project

In 2024/25, contamination cost over £415,000 across Kent, without including the value of recyclable materials that couldn't be processed and were lost from the circular economy. Swale Borough Council's Environmental Campaigns and Performance Officer teamed up with KCC officers to trial a contamination project across Swale. The aim was to increase communications and engagement on three collection rounds to reduce contamination in mixed recycling by:

- Sending information to residents to remind them what can and can't be recycled
- Locking out (not emptying) recycling bins containing items that could spoil other recycling
- Tagging locked-out bins to provide specific feedback on the problem
- Sending residents a postcard and letter asking them to remove the wrong items and present the bin again on their next scheduled recycling day

By doing this we hoped to give clear kerbside feedback and a consistent consequence when contamination occurs to improve recycling behaviours over time.

The first round of checks across 900 households in Swale confirmed 92% of bins contained good quality recycling. The team reported some very positive conversations with residents. The trial was in its closing stages at the end of the 25/26 reporting period, therefore final data is not yet available. However, officers have reported a vast improvement in the quality of recycling presented in the trial areas.

Under 'Simpler Recycling', from 1st April 2026 Tetra Paks (liquid cartons) are able to be recycled kerbside via the blue bin. Information on the council website has been updated to reflect this.

<u>Food Waste</u>

Between the months of May and June Swale, KCC and other stakeholders ran a very successful food waste sticker campaign. The primary aim of the campaign was to prevent food waste. The secondary aim was to divert unavoidable food waste from being placed in the green residual bin and instead be placed in the food bin. Swale used grant funding to issue over 9,000 free food bins to residents. As a result, Swale had the strongest improved food recycling tonnages in Kent at around 41% increase compared to last year. Much of this food waste was diverted from the residual bin to the food waste bin where it will be used to generate power and produce soil conditioners. This was a remarkable accomplishment. A second phase of the project is currently underway which is expected to result in further increases.

Figure 1.17 shows a copy of the sticker placed on residual waste bins to encourage residents to use their food waste bins.

In parallel with the above campaign, officers worked with Suez to introduce food waste to all communal properties across Swale. This was a requirement under the Simpler Recycling legislation. The legislation stated that all properties must be offered a food waste collection by 1st April 2026. Although most individual premises already receive food collections in Swale, this was not the case for all communal premises. Officers worked closely with management companies and residents which resulted in a smooth transition and compliance with the regulations.

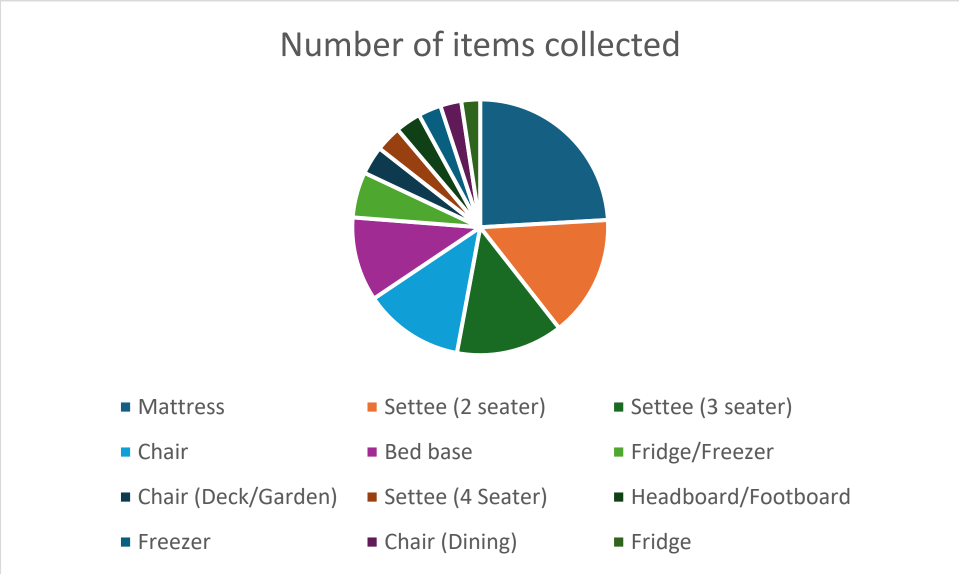
Waste Composition Analysis

KCC carried out a further waste composition analysis across Kent in summer 2025, key findings for Swale are as below:

- In terms of residual waste generation, Swale households were setting out an average of 5.08kg per household per week.
- Food waste was seen to be the major component of residual waste forming 26.7% of the total. Of this waste, 86% is avoidable with 41% of all discarded food still packaged.
- In total 42.9% of residual waste collected could have been recycled at the kerbside – 2.18kg per household per week.

Bulky collections

Figure 1.18 shows the number and types of bulky items collected



Officers have been working closely with Suez on balancing the availability of bulky collection slots across the borough. This has included several amendments to the areas and collection days within the Suez booking system. This has ensured that there is more availability in the areas of highest demand. Recent testing has shown an improvement in availability. This will be monitored and improved further as necessary.

Street Cleansing

A Street Cleansing Project carried out jointly by SBC and Suez has seen an overhaul in routes and rounds for street cleansing. The project involved a complete review of all roads in Swale along with all litter and dog bins. Each litter and dog bin in the borough was visited by Suez to provide an updated GIS location along with a description and condition survey. This data is now being used to update the CORE route planner system. It will also enable QR code stickers on each litter bin to enable residents to report any issues with bins.

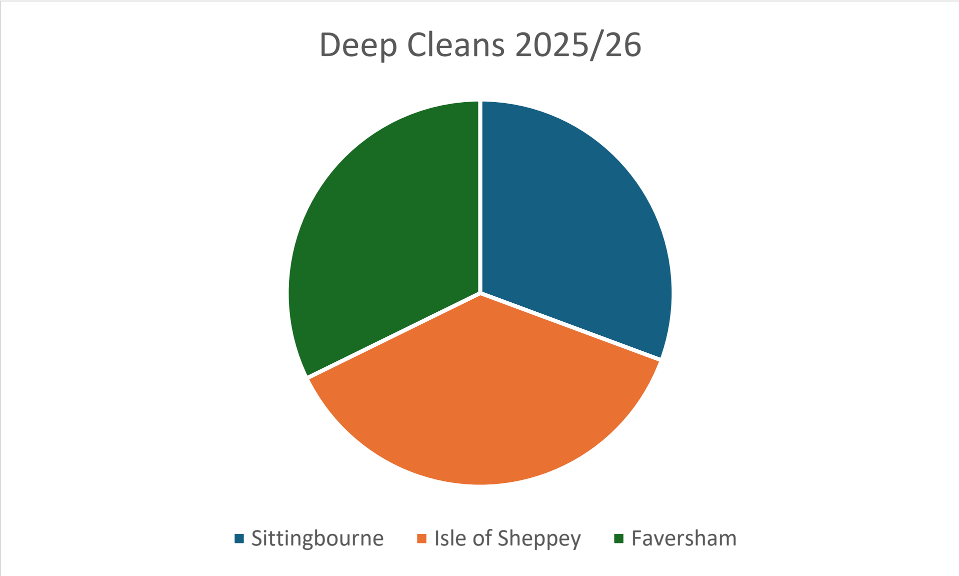
Figure 1.19 – a photo example of a QR code sticker on a litter bin

The audit has highlighted a number of litter bins that are in need of replacement and officers are actioning the replacement in order of priority.

The outcome of the project will enable an improved set of data and an asset register for litter bins. It will also allow officers access to information on when roads have last been cleansed, when they are next due to be cleansed as well as track the routes the street cleansing crews have taken in real time. It will allow officers access to information on when litter and dog bins have been serviced and when they are next due to be serviced. Although this has taken far longer than originally anticipated, it will be a large step forward.

Deep cleans continued weekly throughout the year with a total of 58 cleans taking place (some roads were split over two days due to the size of the road).

Figure 1.20 – The chart below shows the split of deep cleans by area



Leafing season ran slightly later in the year due to the warmer weather. Officers monitored this throughout the leafing season. Some roads were identified throughout the period of the leafing season that were not on the original leafing plan which officers worked with Suez to ensure leaves were cleared and requested to be added to the plan for the coming year.

Figure 1.21 shows the number of graffiti items removed

Number of non offensive graffiti reports	32
Number of offensive graffiti reports	30

Figure 1.22 – This is the number of Dead Animal Reports received in 2025/26

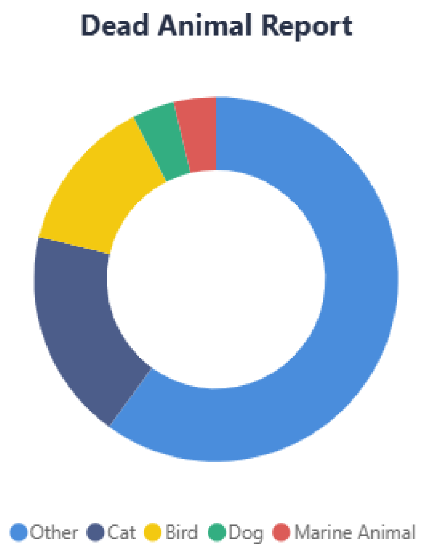
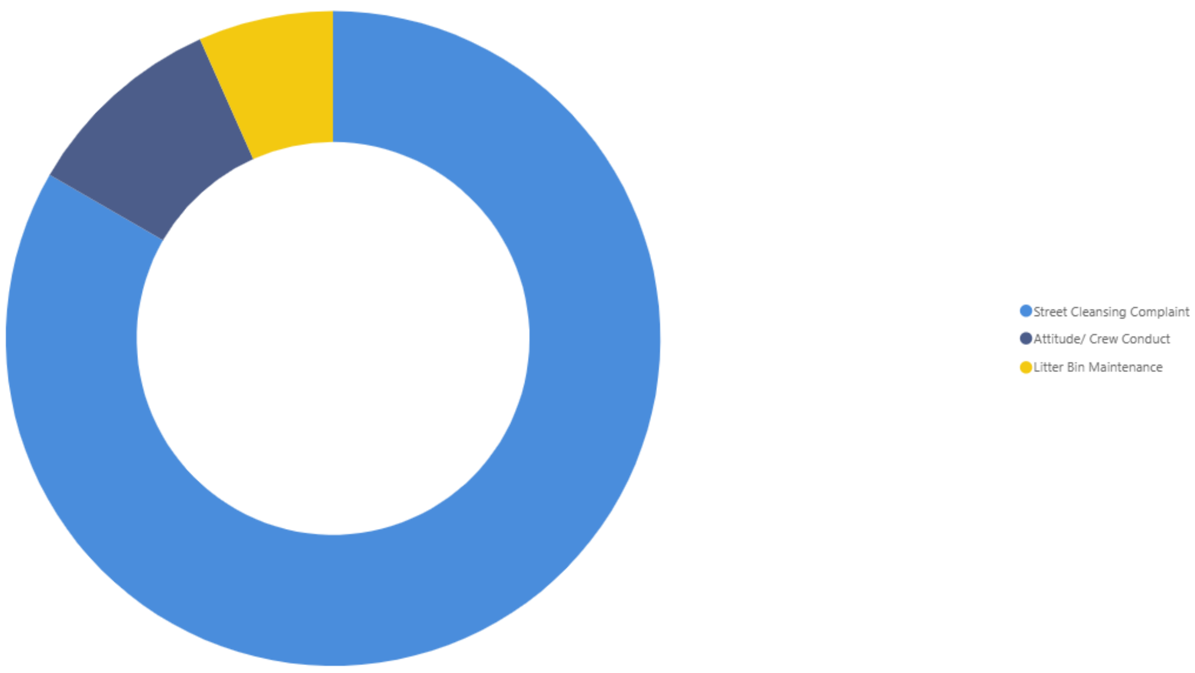


Figure 1.23 – The chart below shows the number of Street cleansing complaints received. There were 38 recorded with the majority being failure to cleanse a street within SLA.



Fly tipping

Figure 1.24 – The chart below shows the number of fly tips by land type showing the majority are on Highways land

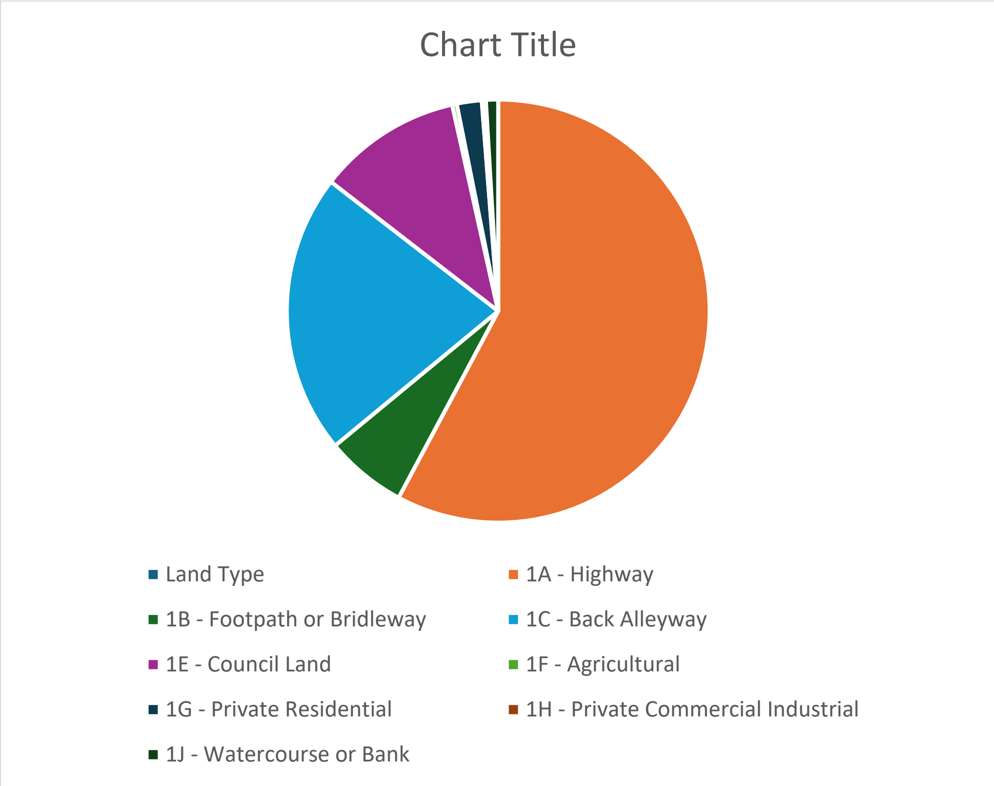


Figure 1.25 – This shows the number of fly tips by waste type – the majority is Other Household Waste, followed by Black Bags Household, White Goods and Construction/Demolition waste

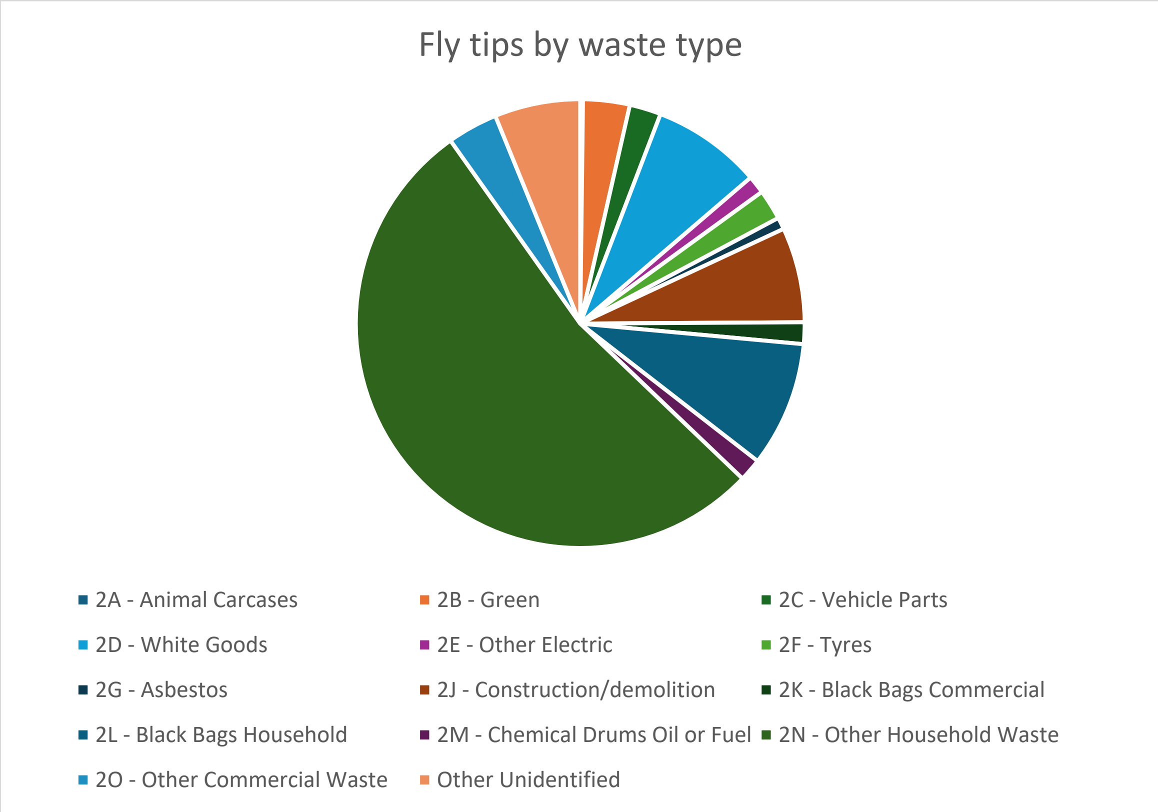
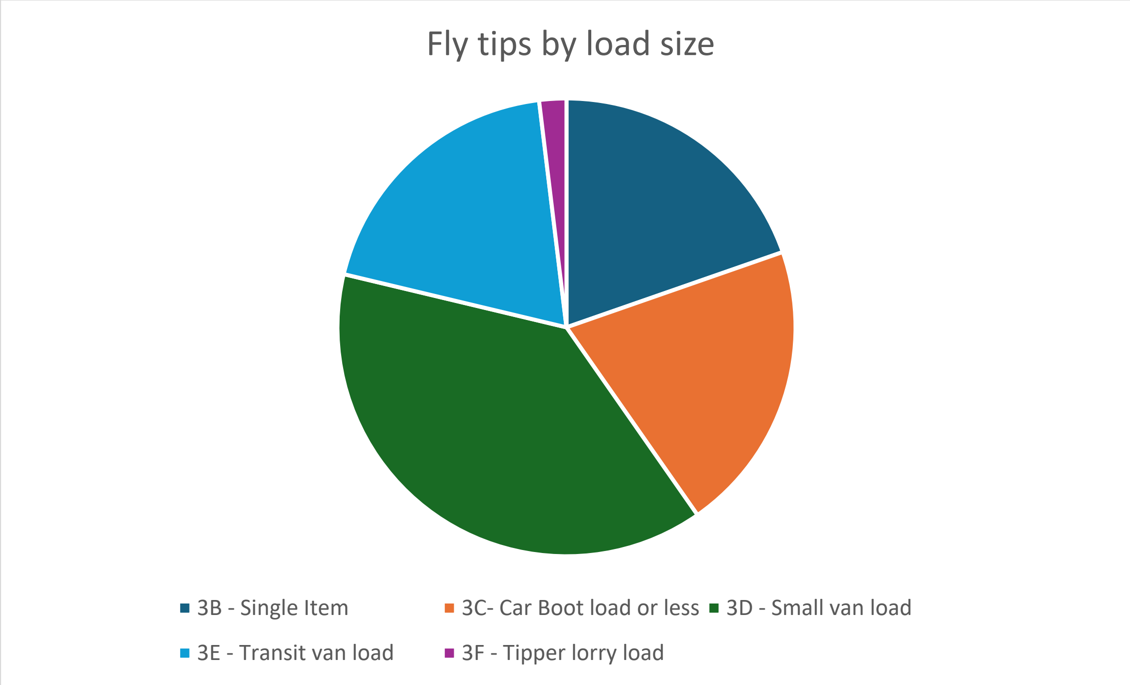


Figure 1.26 – The chart below shows the number of fly tips by load size



- The number of reported fly tips in 25/26 decreased from the previous year. Totals were 2621 for 24/25 and 2600 for 25/26

- The biggest reduction in reporting land type is highways (6.5%).

- ‘Operation Assist’ is an intelligence led operation in partnership with the police where vehicles carrying waste are targeted and checked. There were five Op Assist days with the local Police team in 2025/26. . There has been regular coverage of these multi agency events, showing vehicles & fines on social media platforms.

- The biggest increase in Fly Tipping Land types is back-Alley ways (7.7%) – Focus group and projects to be assessed for 26/27. These projects will likely include the use of overt CCTV cameras in hot spot areas.

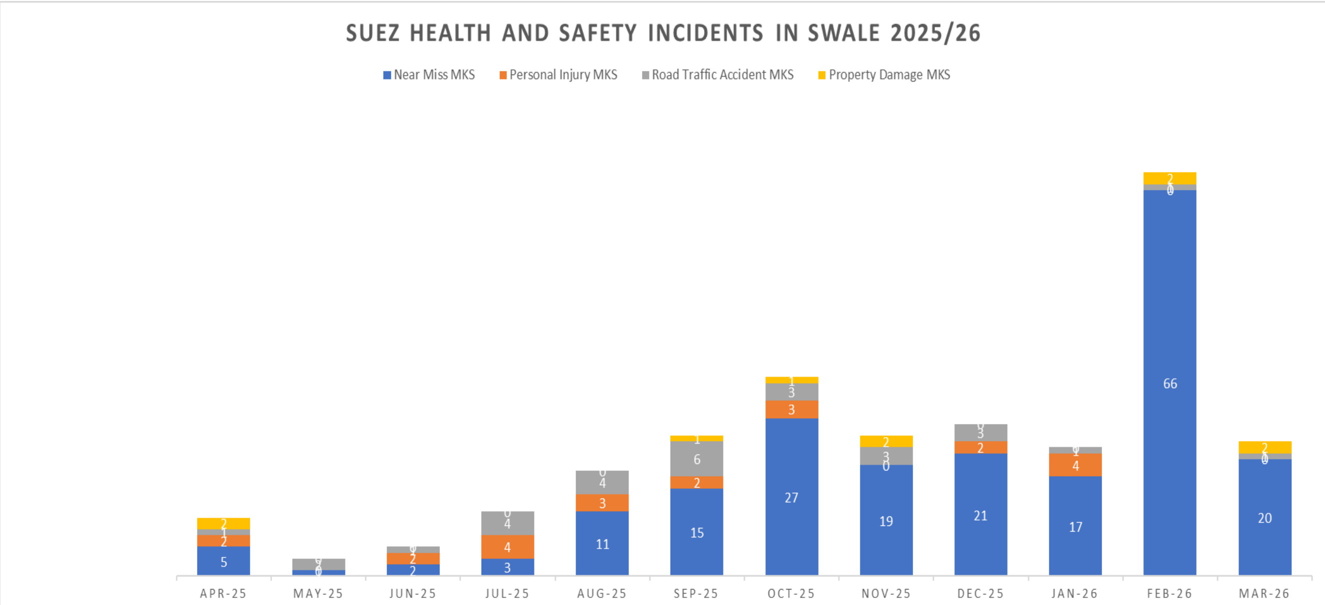
- In general, the EA have been very active in Swale at the Illegal Waste sites. There have been numerous Roadside stop days with the DVSA & Police

Health and Safety

Suez have been working on their proactive reporting and engagement with Health and Safety. Across Mid Kent they have reported:

- 363 near misses
- 2,586 Safety in Mind conversations between crews and supervisors. These are recorded conversations that supervisors will have with crews during their daily Health and Safety monitoring checks discussing issues that may have occurred such as not using the correct PPE.

Figure 1.27 – The chart below shows the number of Health and Safety Incidents in Swale. Suez had a push on near miss reporting which resulted in the spike in reports in February 2026



	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26
Property Damage MKS	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	2	2
Road Traffic Accident MKS	1	2	1	4	4	6	3	3	3	1	1	1
Personal Injury MKS	2	0	2	4	3	2	3	0	2	4	0	0
Near Miss MKS	5	1	2	3	11	15	27	19	21	17	66	20

Environmental benefits/healthier communities

Suez introduced 3 #2minclean boards across Swale in partnership with SBC officers. The boards provide free access to litter picking equipment, encouraging members of the public to carry out a quick two minute clean up in the area. The boards were placed at Faversham Swimming pool, Sheppey Leisure Centre and The Hub Café, Sittingbourne. Due to vandalism issues at the Sheppey Leisure Centre site, this board was moved to Queenborough and is being monitored by Queenborough Town Council.

Three WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) roadshows have been delivered across Swale to make recycling easier and more accessible for residents. A total of 330kg was collected from all three events. The most successful was at the Faversham event in Leslie Smith Drive. Other events were held at Rose Street Car park in Sheerness and Milton Country Park in Sittingbourne.

Suez worked in partnership with CXK on the successful 'Upcycle Your Skills' programme. This was a five week program which was designed to boost young people's employability and introduce them to local employers. The project was a huge success which achieved great results. Three of the ten participants secured employment including one participant who was offered a street cleansing position directly with Suez.

In parallel with the Suez annual report, they also produce a social value report attached as Appendix III.

Looking ahead for 26/27

Street Cleansing – SBC and Suez will continue to monitor the new routes and rounds and ensure services and reporting mechanisms continue to improve. There will be a focus on street cleansing and litter bin emptying across the summer period to ensure there are adequate resources during the warmer weather particularly in parks, open spaces and on Swale's beaches.

Further improvements on food participation and recycling – KCC are carrying out a re-run of the sticker campaign to further encourage residents to use the food waste service. Officers will also be keeping a focus on participation rates in communal properties and Holiday camps.

Alternate Weekly collections – Officers will be focussing on moving communal properties to alternate weekly collections wherever possible to fall in line with the rest of the borough and increase recycling rates in Swale.

Contamination **–** Following the success of the contamination trial, we will be working with Suez to extend the project to targeted areas across the borough. New resident information packs have been produced and are being delivered to residents when new bins are delivered. The packs contain all the relevant recycling information residents will need to help reduce contamination.

Simpler Recycling – We will be working with the Kent Resource Partnership to share concerns around the upcoming introduction of recycling plastic films by April 2027. If the date remains in force, decisions will need to be made on how we participate. We will also prepare for the new deposit return schemes for plastic bottles and cans in England by October 2027.

Social Value – Officers will continue to work with Suez on continuing the successful initiatives such as ‘Upcycle your skills’ and the WEEE roadshows as well as new innovative initiatives that are being explored to provide further social value to the residents of Swale.

A further Customer satisfaction survey is planned for later in 2026.

Officers have submitted a bid for funding to place a number of receptacles across the borough for residents to use to recycle their unwanted/damaged small waste electrical and electronic equipment. The initiative will be in partnership with SWEEEP who will empty the bins for recycling. Locations will be confirmed if funding is granted.

We are looking at better ways of measuring performance which will include aligning our benchmarking data with neighbouring authorities. As an example, the KPI for 2026/27 for Missed collections will be measured per 100,000 bins collected as this is the industry practice. Swale will measure performance against the contract value of 75/100,000

Digital waste tracking – This is a Government consultation which proposes replacing paper-based duty-of-care documentation with a single, mandatory UK-Wide digital system. The changes aim to improve data quality, reduce waste crime and streamline compliance.

Officers will continue to work with Suez to ensure that routes and rounds are undertaken in the most effective way. There is a minor re-route planned for 26/27. Where changes are viable and will deliver more resilient rounds in an efficient way then we will work in partnership to ensure these are completed in line with the findings of the scrutiny review.

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Proudly serving communities in Ashford, Maidstone and Swale

Mid Kent annual report

March 2025 to March 2026 (contract year 2)

suez in partnership with Ashford Borough Council, Maidstone Borough Council, Swale Borough Council

Foreword

As we come to the end of the second year of our eight-year contract with the Mid-Kent Waste Partnership, serving the communities of Ashford, Maidstone, and Swale, we have been reflecting on the key milestones and performance improvements.

Our achievements over the past year are in no small part a result of the dedication and hard work of our teams to drive continuous improvement for the communities they serve. Raising and maintaining performance standards to achieve a consistently reliable service is key to earning the trust and confidence of communities across the Partnership area, we do not take this for granted and will continue to strive for excellence across the contract services.

I am proud of our teams who have worked to address the challenges faced in the first contract year and am delighted by the results. With 99.73% completion of rounds and missed collections down by 44.3%, their performance is a true reflection of the dedication and commitment our teams have shown. By embracing the SUEZ culture and applying new lean management tools, we are now delivering above and beyond the agreed service levels across the partnership.

This is especially impressive considering the service expanded to accommodate an additional 7,208 households in the second year of the contract.

We have implemented and sustained significant change in the way we manage the contract, not only has this resulted in an improvement to our core service but to our wider community engagement work as well. It is great to see how many members of staff have taken up the opportunity of our 'A Day A Year To Volunteer' programme, with 122 hours of volunteering completed across the contract.

Across our operations we remain committed to delivering on our strategy which prioritises protecting our environment and creating shared economic and social value for the local communities we serve, alongside the delivery of our core services.

People remain our biggest priority, and we have continued to reinforce that no job is so important that we cannot take the time to do it safely. We have seen improvement across our health and safety indicators, with 2586 safety in mind conversations recorded over the year, demonstrating that our positive proactive safety culture is becoming embedded. We have welcomed 5 apprentices, and 3 work experience students this year as part of our commitment to investing in skills and training in the local area.

We continue to innovate across the service, rolling out our in-cab technology to the street cleansing teams following its introduction to collections in contract year one, and this now supports live tracking and reporting of key performance metrics. This data is discussed every day in our Daily Review Meetings (DRM) allowing supervisors to identify and rectify any challenges on the day they occur.

I am pleased to have seen such a positive change across the contract and look forward to building on the progress and successes delivered in year two. I have no doubt that we will continue to deliver a high quality service to the residents of Ashford, Maidstone, and Swale, continuing to make the areas cleaner and greener.

John Scanlon

CEO, SUEZ recycling and recovery UK

Contents

Introduction

Welcome to our annual report for the Mid Kent Waste Partnership and SUEZ waste, recycling and environmental services contract.

This report is designed to give community members and stakeholders a view of how the Mid Kent Waste Partnership and SUEZ are working together to make a difference for the residents of Ashford, Maidstone and Swale.

Highlights

In the following section, we will review key highlights and milestones of the second contract year (March 2025 – March 2026) to show how our collaboration is contributing to Mid-Kent's Waste Partnership and environmental ambitions.

205,407 households

Household collections, street cleansing and maintenance

7,208 additional properties

services from year 1 to year 2

267 members of staff

214 excluding street cleansing staffing numbers

89.6% of staff live locally

All managers received Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and mental health first aid training

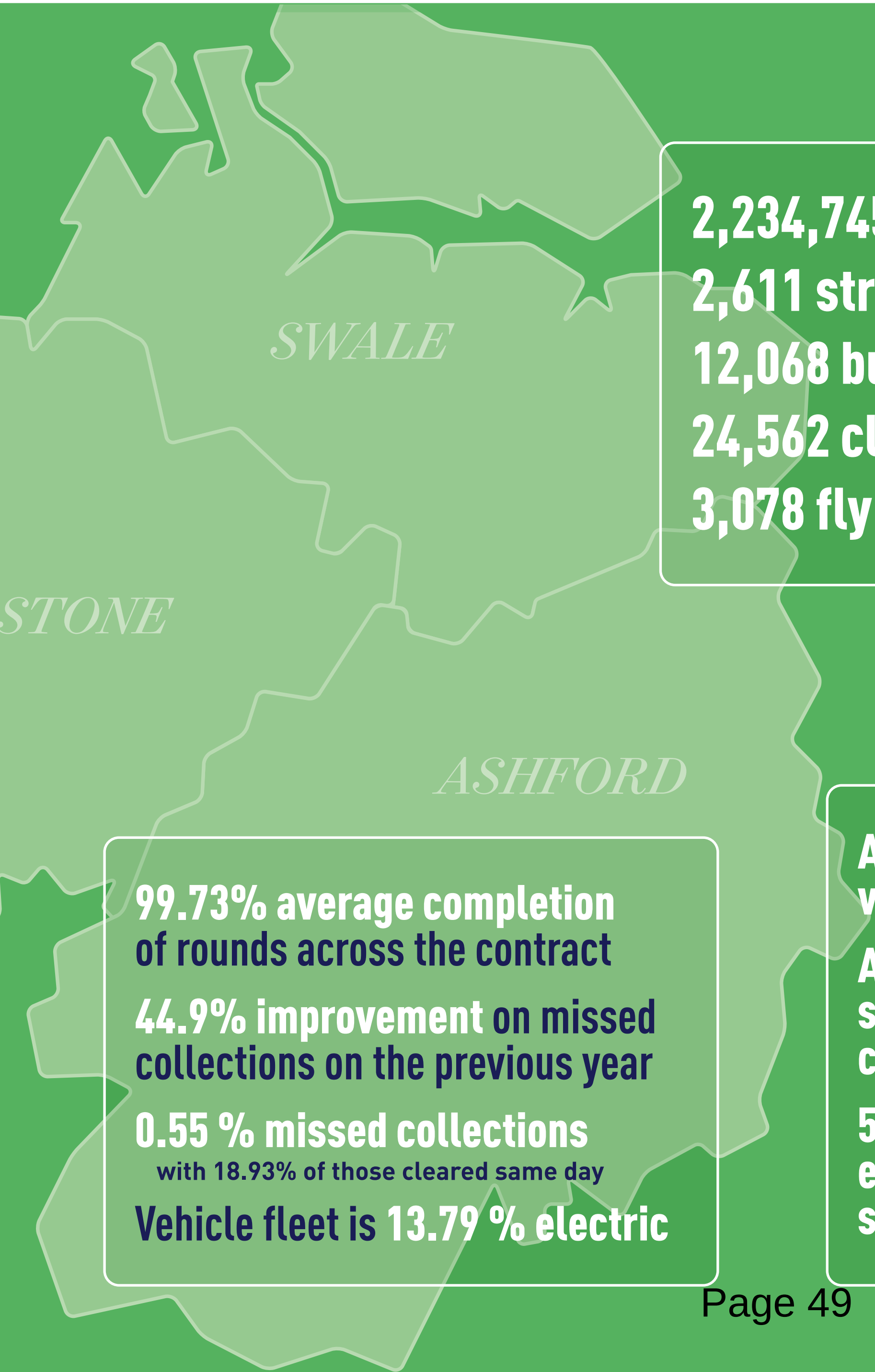
44,9771 tonnes of recycling

22,001 tonnes of garden waste

81,277 tonnes of refuse

4,796 tonnes of street sweepings

Giving an overall recycling rate of 46.9%



2,234,745 m of road cleansed

2,611 street bins serviced

12,068 bulky waste collections

24,562 clinical waste collections

3,078 fly tip removals

99.73% average completion of rounds across the contract

44.9% improvement on missed collections on the previous year

0.55 % missed collections with 18.93% of those cleared same day

Vehicle fleet is 13.79 % electric

A total of 122 hours of volunteering completed

All sustainability minimum standards met across the contract

5 apprentices and 3 work experience placements supported

Operational review

SUEZ commenced the collection and street cleansing contract on 24 March 2024. In the second year of our contract the focus was on process improvement and streamlining of services. We aimed to improve perception of the waste, recycling, and environmental services and deliver consistency in line with other SUEZ municipal contracts.

Waste collection

We deployed 65 vehicles daily, servicing 205,407 properties each week across the three boroughs. We implemented process improvement by tackling the challenges faced in the previous year such as sickness management, holiday planning, and the lack of pro-active reporting by implementing robust processes.

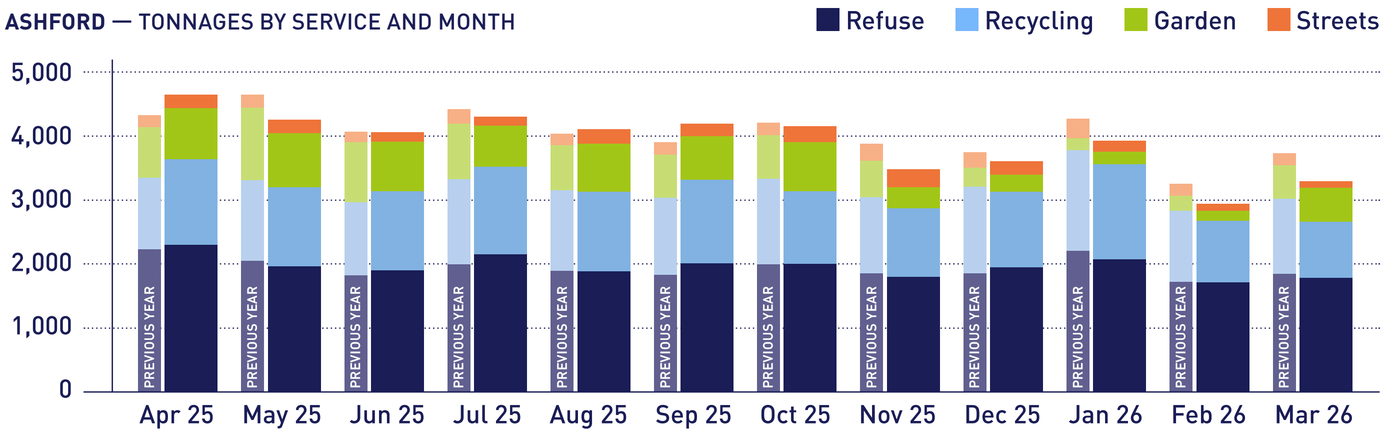
We have introduced our absence monitoring tool (Bradford Factor) which scores absence based on number of occasions and number of days lost on each occasion. This has led to structured review meetings and where required invocation of our disciplinary processes.

We have also implemented daily review meetings (DRM) which are attended by all supervisory staff members and workshop colleagues. We track the following metrics daily and act when they rise above a set threshold:

- Number of accidents (personal and vehicle)
- Lost time accidents / RIDDOR reportable accidents
- Vehicle wheel nut torquing
- Number of gate checks performed (which assesses vehicle compliance when leaving site)
- Vehicle availability
- Staff availability
- Budgeted headcount versus actual headcount
- Absence (planned and unplanned)
- Agency use
- Customer focus areas (missed collections, contamination reports, complaints, etc)

This process is repeated at the Weekly Review Meeting (WRM) which are attended by all contract managers, the contract general manager, and the regional manager.

We planned ahead and during challenging periods such as the festive holidays, we took additional measures to ensure continuity of service. By providing an uninterrupted service we cemented the importance of reaching early agreements on working arrangements (with both crews and partnership offices), including proactive planning, consistent holiday allocation and sickness management, all of which are discussed as part of DRM and WRM.


ASHFORD — TONNAGES BY SERVICE AND MONTH
Refuse
Recycling
Garden
Streets
5,000
4,000
3,000
2,000
1,000
0
PREVIOUS YEAR
Apr 25
May 25
Jun 25
Jul 25
Aug 25
Sep 25
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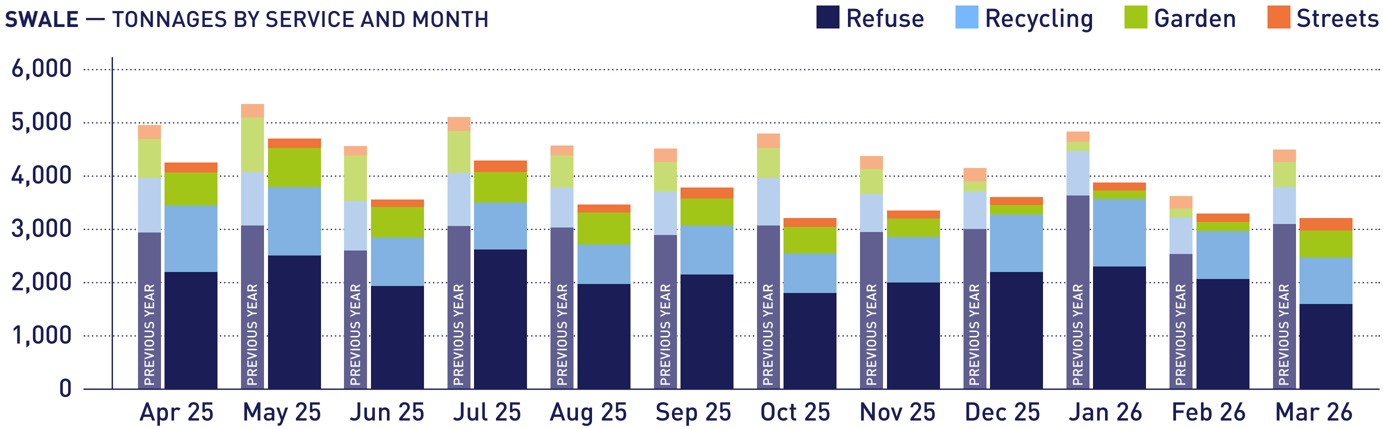
Nov 25
Dec 25
Jan 26
Feb 26
Mar 26


SWALE — TONNAGES BY SERVICE AND MONTH
Refuse
Recycling
Garden
Streets
6,000
5,000
4,000
3,000
2,000
1,000
0
PREVIOUS YEAR
Apr 25
May 25
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Jul 25
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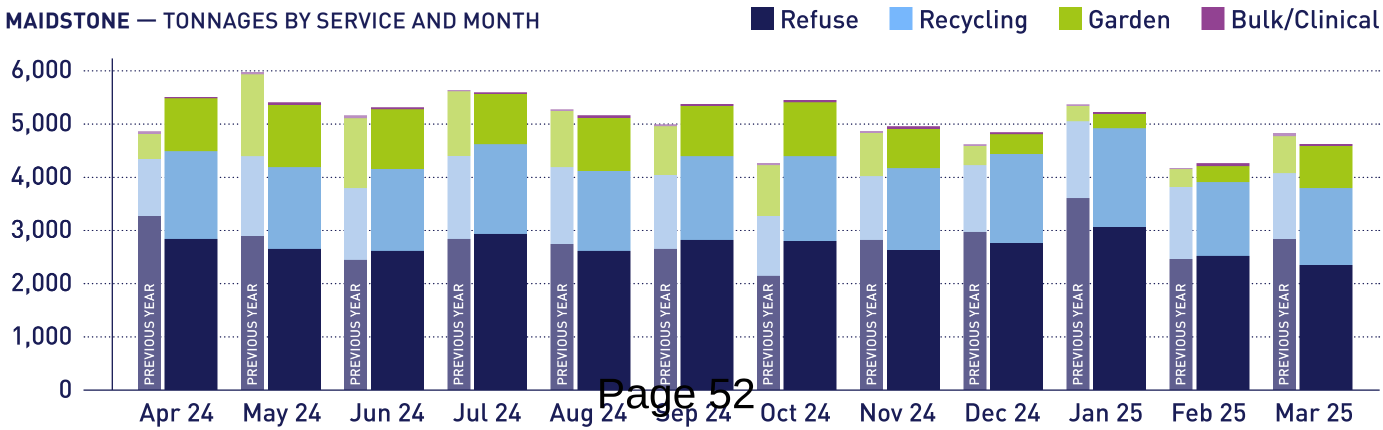
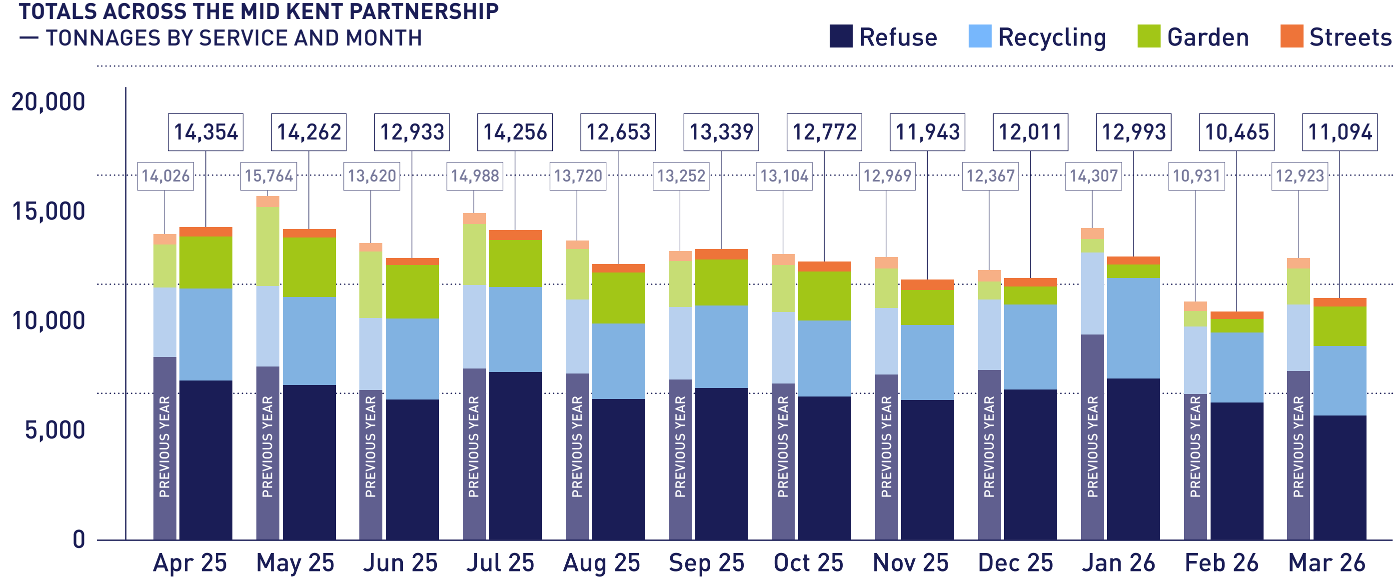
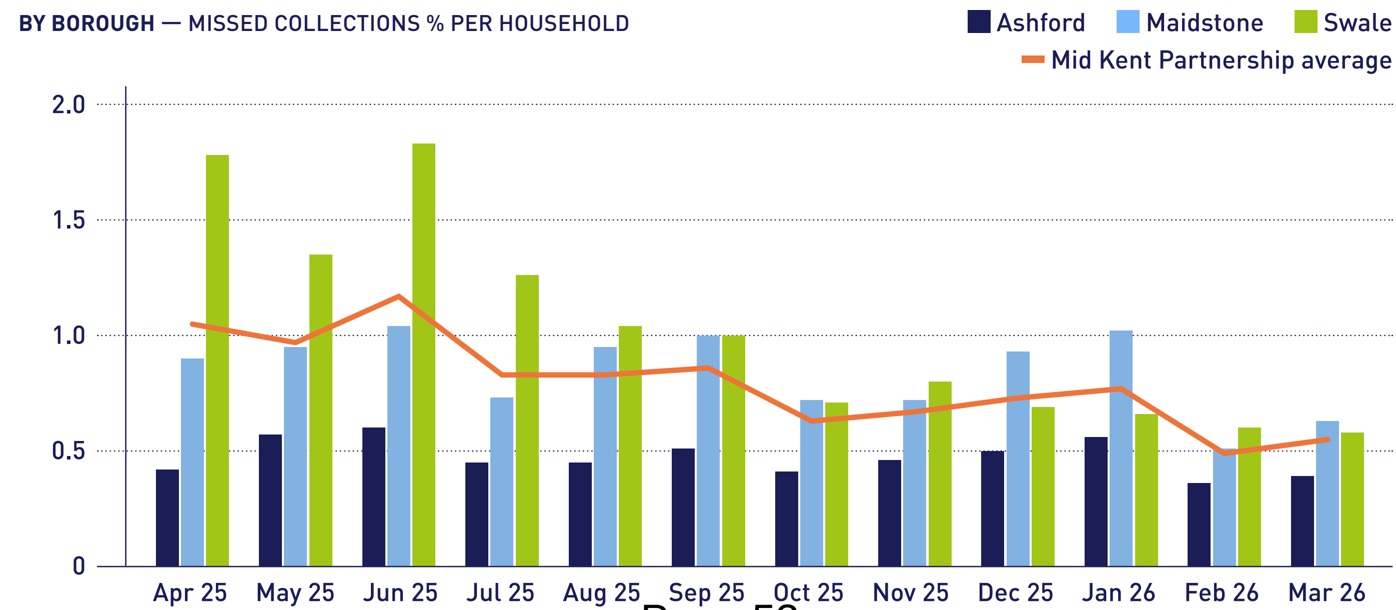
Jan 26
Feb 26
Mar 26


MAIDSTONE — TONNAGES BY SERVICE AND MONTH
Refuse
Recycling
Garden
Bulk/Clinical
6,000
5,000
4,000
3,000
2,000
1,000
0
PREVIOUS YEAR
Apr 24
May 24
Jun 24
Jul 24
Aug 24
Sep 24
Oct 24
Nov 24
Dec 24
Jan 25
Feb 25
Mar 25

TOTALS ACROSS THE MID KENT PARTNERSHIP
— TONNAGES BY SERVICE AND MONTH



BY BOROUGH — MISSED COLLECTIONS % PER HOUSEHOLD



Street cleansing service

In the second year of the contract, our street cleansing service in Ashford and Swale have continued their focus on building a consistent and responsive operation, supported by a dedicated team of 34 crews.

At the end of year two, CORE is now fully integrated into the service which in year three will enable real-time data, monitoring and reporting.

The cleansing timetable ensures there are 8 mobile crews consistently smart sweeping – a technique that grades areas based on how quickly debris builds up and adjusts schedules accordingly – as well as completing their dedicated 'beats' which is transparent in the new system.

There are also dedicated litter bin crews and rapid response teams who deal with fly-tipping, street degradation and any other 'emergency' situations such as RTA cleansing.

We have implemented the same absence management tool, Bradford Factor, for street cleansing.

We have also completed a full audit of litter bin locations, enabling faster response to any issues and easier reporting for residents.

The DRM process for street cleansing follows the same outline as collections tracking:

- Number of accidents (personal and vehicle)
- Lost time accidents / RIDDOR reportable accidents
- Vehicle wheel nut torquing
- Number of Gate Checks performed (which assesses vehicle compliance when leaving site)
- Vehicle availability
- Staff availability
- Budgeted headcount versus actual headcount
- Absence (planned and unplanned)
- Agency use
- Number of streets impacted and assessed
- Customer focus areas (fly tips cleared within required timeframe, number of overflowing litter bins, number of streets below standard, etc)
- Key priorities for contract year three will be embedding new routes and undertaking more pro-active monitoring, building on the work done this year.

- 26 full fortnightly cycles completed for residential areas
- 2,224,745 m of roads cleansed
- 2,611 litter bins serviced
- 102 items of graffiti removed
- 3,078 instances of fly tipping removed
- 336 hazardous waste removals completed

Customer care

During the first half of year two, most of our feedback focused on process implementation and pro-active behaviour and monitoring. This involves logging into the vehicles live cameras to monitor work practices and score crews on compliance. If there is a score lower than expected, our first step thereafter is to have a Safety In Mind (SIM) conversation around the practise that caused concern.

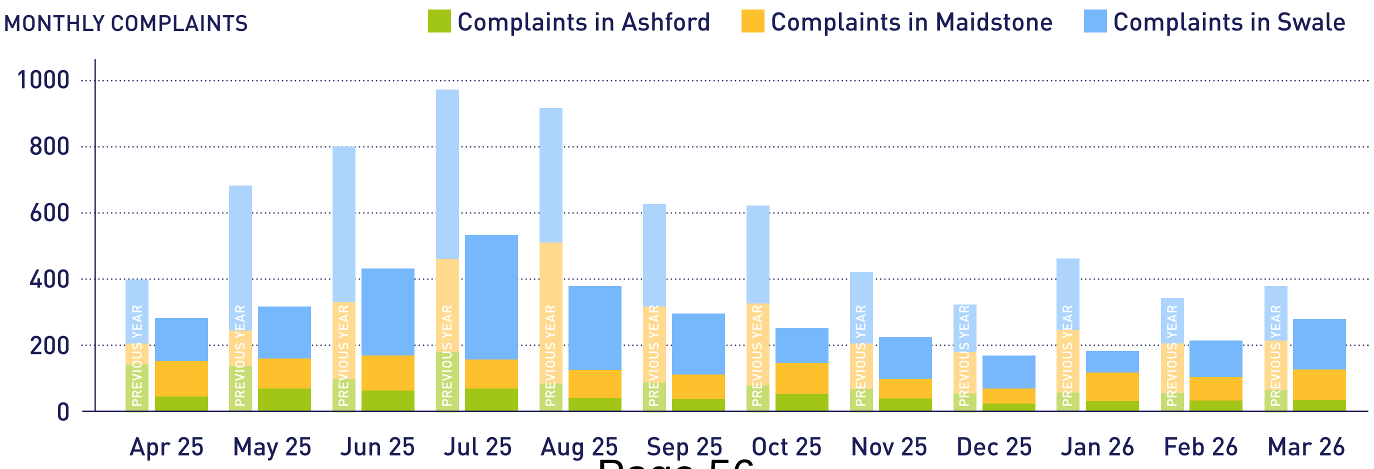
Complaint levels continuously dropped, and performance continuously improved with collection services delivering excellent performance.

Ashford is the benchmark achieving a missed bin rate as low as 0.36%. This has put them at the top of SUEZ's municipal collections table.

> **Just wanted to say the bin collection crew for my area go the extra mile for some residents including myself very pleased with them and they deserve a bit of praise for once"**

With consistent management both Swale and Maidstone have improved month on month, reducing missed collections by 13,949 (41.5 %),

Compliments and positive feedback from residents have been received across the contract which has contributed to employees being nominated and, in some cases, winning our newly introduced employee of the month award.



We have pro-actively engaged with our local communities an example being when we took one of our vehicles out to visit 3-year-old Roman, a very proud "bin man" in the making. Along with the vehicle visit, we took along a Dennis Eagle UK goody bag and his very own toy dust cart.

Thank you all so much for arranging this afternoon. You've no idea how happy Roman is with his 'bin man dust cart' as he calls it. He is so made up and cannot wait to tell his Daddy and brother about today. You've made a little boy very happy. Thank you all. Happy Christmas!"

Crew members who assisted a person in distress in Repton Park were nominated for our UK wide internal Star awards. Having found a collapsed gentleman in the park whilst emptying the bins, they followed their health and safety training and stayed with him, keeping him safe and warm until the medical professionals arrived on the scene.

My mother had fallen out of bed and when she woke up from being on the floor for a while she got up in her night clothes and wondered out into the main car park where she saw the dustmen they asked mum if she was ok and she said no so the man telephoned 999 and mum was taken away to hospital. Mum is ok but my main reason for this email is I want to send those men who helped my mum a massive THANK YOU for staying with mum until an ambulance arrived. Thank you very much."

— Daughter of mum (Susan)

To the guys that have litter picked the Old Ferry Road and Raspberry Hill over the last 2 days. They have made a magnificent job of clearing the litter in the lanes. Instead of hideous litter strewn verges, they have created country lanes to appreciate. Thank you. I know it's their job, and generally a thankless task, but they have done a great job, and it is greatly appreciated."

People

Health, safety and wellbeing are our top priorities. We have one clear objective – zero severe accidents.

Our goals are to:

- Keep everyone safe and well by reducing the number of lost time accidents, aspiring to zero
- Engage our people by maintaining SUEZ as a great place to work with a respectful, inclusive and diverse workforce
- Protect our planet by reducing our carbon emissions to net zero by 2050

During contract year two, we have ensured all operational supervisors, assistant contract managers and contract managers are IOSH trained.

Health and safety reporting

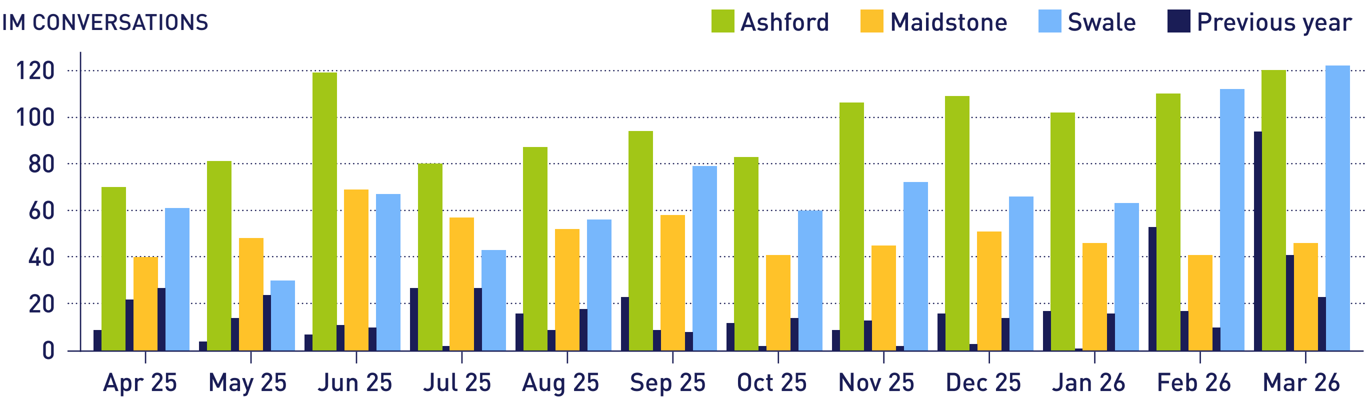
Our teams have increased their proactive reporting and engagement with health and safety. They have recorded 363 near misses, that's a 298% increase from year 1.

In addition, the teams have also started reporting hazard observations. These are instances that have the potential to cause harm but have not yet resulted in a near miss. 420 were reported in contract year 2, which reflects an embedded culture of vigilance and awareness of potential danger.

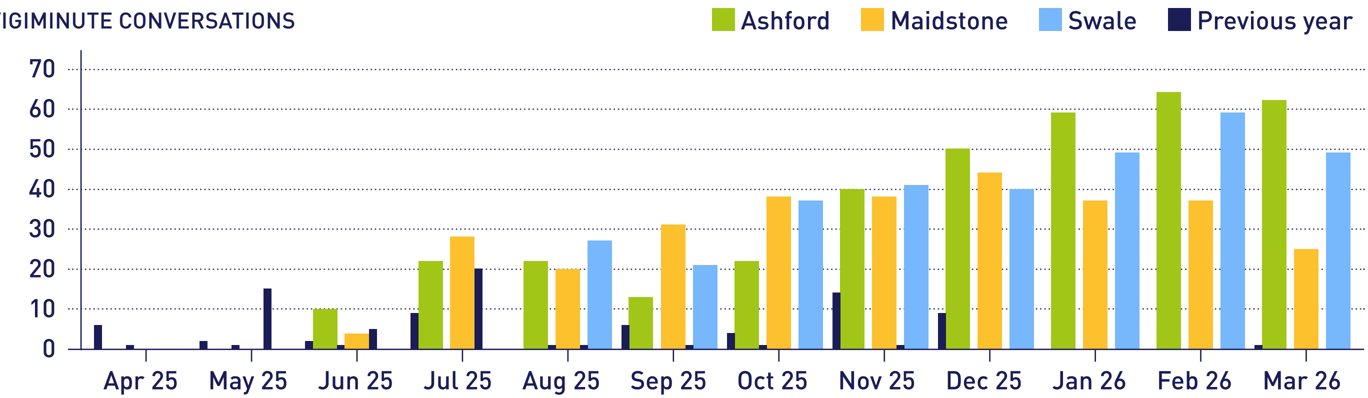
We also facilitated 2,586 'Safety in Mind' conversations between crews and supervisory teams, a 414% increase from contract year 2. Our vigiminutes also increased by 979% from 101 to 989. These leading indicators and their increase from contract year 1 demonstrate our dedication to reinforcing positive behaviours, identifying areas for improvement, and embedding the SUEZ ethos that no job is so important that we cannot take the time to do it safely.

33 personal injuries were recorded, which is a decrease from contract year 1, however we will continue to drive down incidents and our target is always 0. We will continue to encourage open dialogue, accountability, and consistency to reinforce our safety culture and maintain the high bar we have set across the contract. Our priority is always to send everyone home at the end of the day safe and well and we will continue to maintain industry best practice and make improvements to push down incidents.

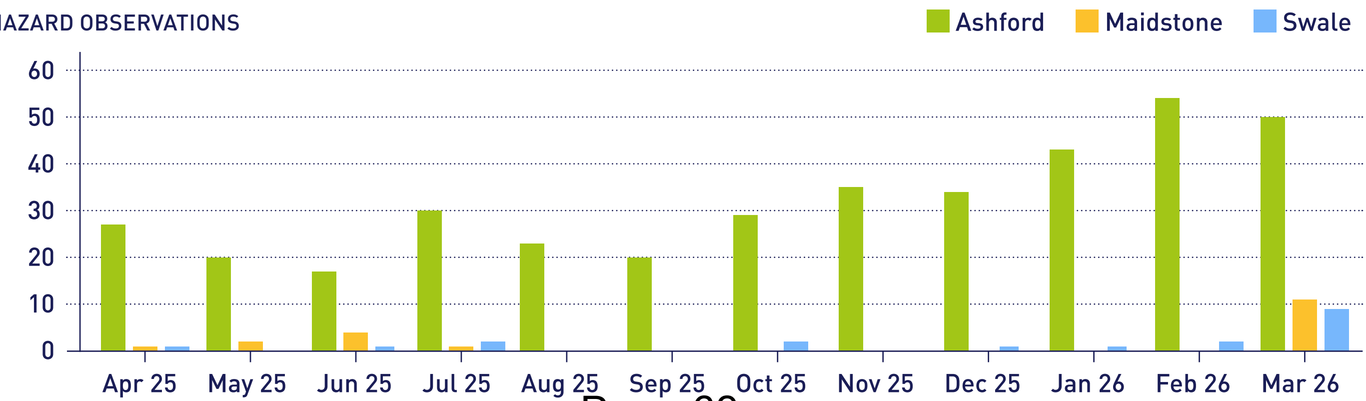
SIM CONVERSATIONS



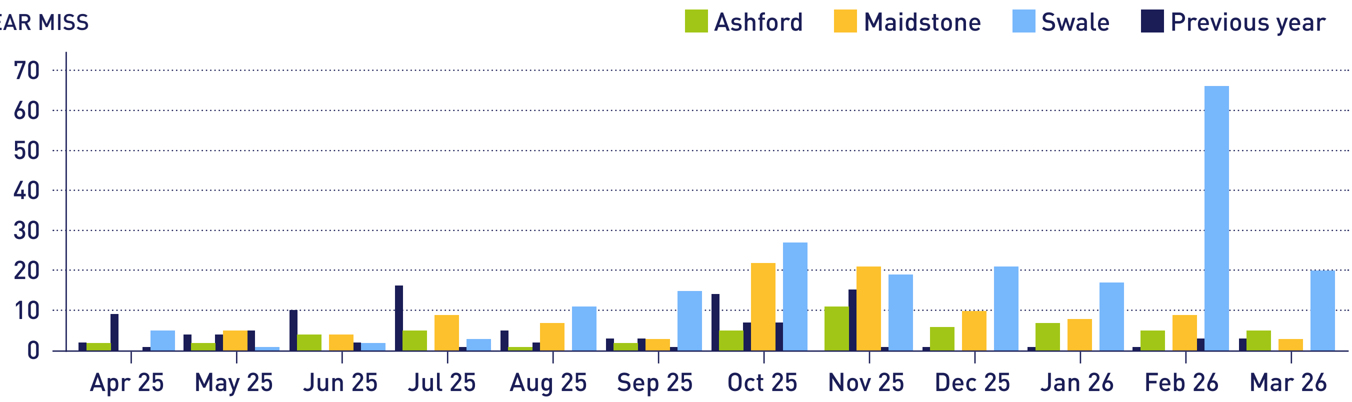
VIGIMINUTE CONVERSATIONS



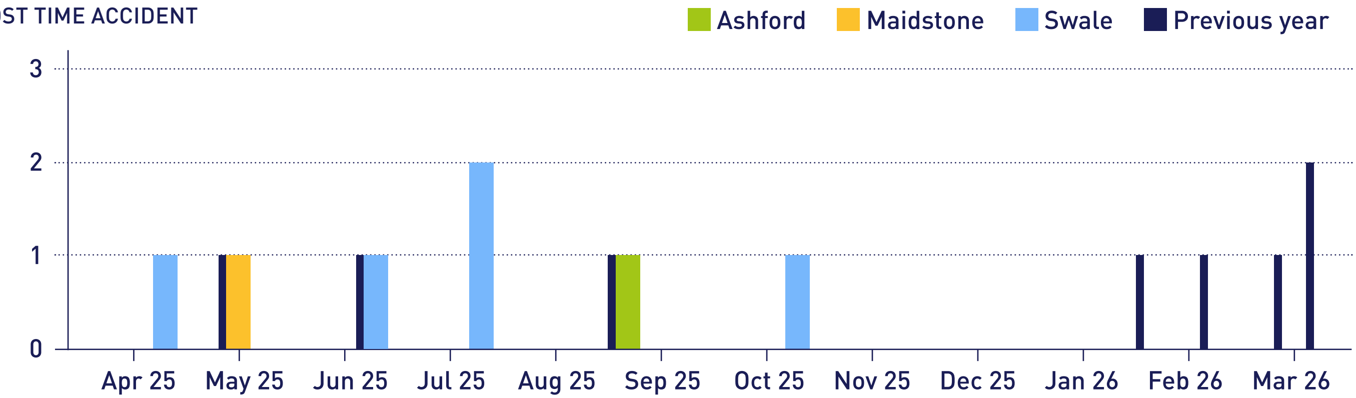
HAZARD OBSERVATIONS



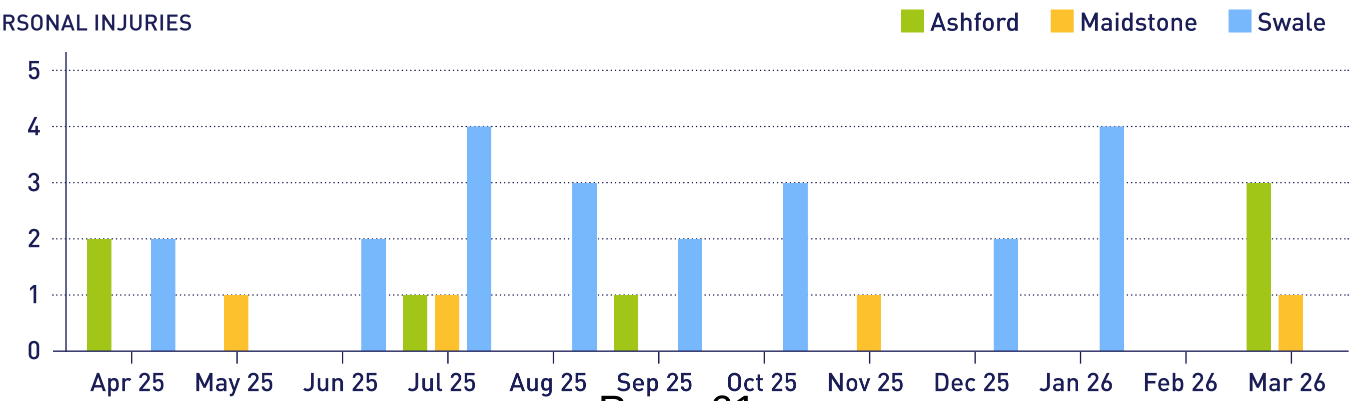
NEAR MISS



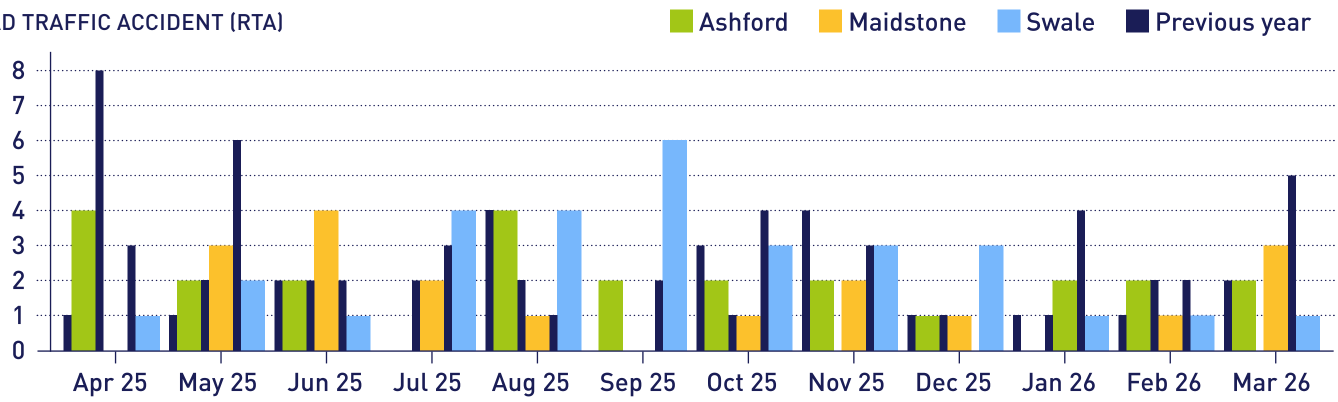
LOST TIME ACCIDENT



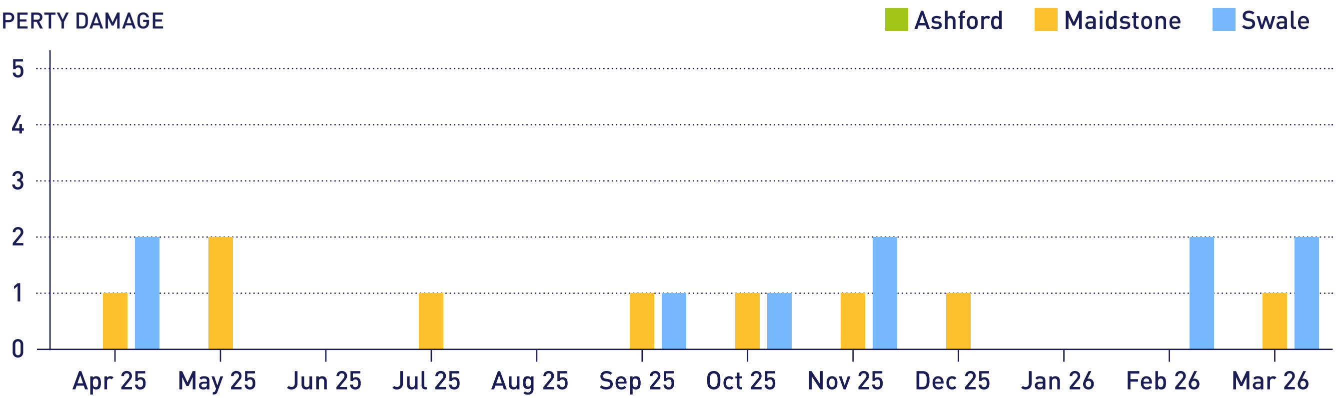
PERSONAL INJURIES



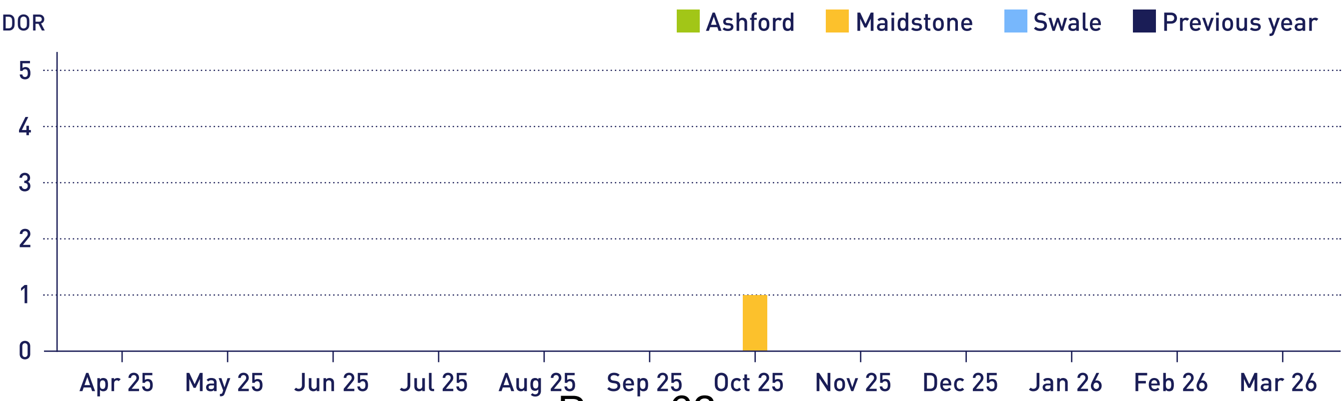
ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENT (RTA)



PROPERTY DAMAGE



RIDDOR



Skilled and engaged workforce

We have introduced a new wellbeing ambassador across the contract, who has undertaken first aid for mental health level 2 and 3, as well as ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) this year alongside all contract supervisors.

They have helped to communicate company-wide wellbeing initiatives, such as our weekly wellbeing webinars, and implement our new employee of the month scheme.

Planet

We provide innovative and competitive solutions for our customers using our expert knowledge, operational know-how and skilled delivery.

Our goals are to:

- Transform our digital landscape by simplifying systems and using next-gen technology to benefit our users and customers
- Enhance and support nature by continuing to improve biodiversity on our sites each year
- Support our communities by inspiring change through local innovative reuse solutions and meaningful social value

Improvement of digital systems

Roll out of CORE across the contract, improved data management, live tracking, and reporting.

Environmental performance and sustainability

GOLD | Top 5% ecovadis Sustainability Rating DEC 2025

We have again achieved gold status in our EcoVadis rating, with a total of 84 out of 100 points – up nine points from the previous year. This puts us within the 98th percentile of companies operating in the materials recovery sector.

Our sustainability champions have completed all of their minimum standards for the year, and logged additional actions, which included:

1. **Recycle** – all members of staff should be able to recycle glass, cans, plastics, paper, cardboard and cartons on site.
2. **Reuse** – there should be an appropriate system in place to reuse PPE on site.
3. **Avoid unnecessary single use items or packaging** – no single use cutlery or cups.
4. **Take action for nature** – every site should do something to improve biodiversity. These actions included bird boxes, bug hotels, litter picking, and installation of 2-minute clean boards.
5. **Connect with our community** – 122 hours of volunteering were completed across the contract. This volunteering included work at food banks, tree planting, and community garden work.

Healthier communities

The contract has generated over £100,000 in social value this year via activities such as the 'Upcycle Your Skills' employability program, the KMFM 'Give A Gift' campaign, classroom session, and our waste electrical roadshows. Our LOOP report will give a deep dive into the Social Value created over the year.

Profit

Together we strive to achieve success in all areas – social and environmental, operational and financial – for SUEZ and all those we work with.

Our goals are to:

- Improve our profitability by focusing on continuous improvement and delivering efficiency in everything we do
- Grow our business
- Invest in our future

5S and Lean methodology

During contract year two, all managers, the contract general manager, and the regional manager attended SUEZ's Lean academy – a 4-day course introducing Lean methodology and techniques to improve process efficiency. This has enabled all managers to prepare a 'lean' project for delivery during contract year three.

All depots have undergone regular 5S audits – which examine workplace organisation with the aim of improving safety, eliminating process waste, improving efficiency, reducing downtime and improving performance.

5S audits are completed on site with the aim of identifying improvement opportunities and moving towards a continuous improvement management system (CIMS) audit which are completed across the UK business by trained practitioners. During year two we have moved through the levels, bronze, silver, and gold, assessed against the standards of other municipal contracts. Gold level is a huge achievement representing operational excellence and dedication.

Looking ahead

As we move into Year three, our focus shifts from initial mobilisation and stabilisation to optimisation and long-term resilience. The priority now is to implement the balanced collection rounds and ensure these changes are fully embedded, delivering consistent performance, improved efficiency and a reliable service experience for residents. Our work in year three will also include the addition of new collection services such as flexible plastics and the expansion of food waste to ensure compliance with new simpler recycling legislation.

We will continue to fine-tune street cleansing operations, using data, local insight and operational feedback to refine routes, frequencies and resource allocation. This iterative approach will enable us to respond to seasonal demands, evolving community needs and emerging environmental priorities while maintaining high standards of cleanliness across the boroughs.

Equally important in this phase is the continued development and maturity of our partnership management structure. Year three will see a stronger emphasis on collaborative governance, clear accountability and proactive communication between all stakeholders. By strengthening these relationships, it will support more agile decision-making, drive innovation and ensure that the contract delivers sustained value over its full term.

Sustainability and social value will remain central to our approach as the contract matures. In Year three, we will build on early initiatives by further reducing emissions through route optimisation, fleet efficiency and the exploration of alternative fuels and technologies. We will also continue to drive improvements in recycling performance and waste reduction, supporting the authority's wider environmental ambitions.

Alongside environmental priorities, we are committed to delivering meaningful social value within the communities we serve. This includes creating local employment and training opportunities, engaging with residents and community groups, and supporting initiatives that enhance wellbeing and civic pride. By embedding sustainability and social value into day-to-day operations, we aim to ensure that the contract not only delivers high-quality services but also contributes positively to the local environment and community.

Together, these priorities position us to build on the solid foundations established in the earlier years, ensuring that the service not only performs effectively today but continues to evolve and improve for the future.

Certification and legal compliance

Certificate GB94/3233

The management system of

SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK Ltd

UK Head Office SUEZ House, Grenfell Road Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 1ES United Kingdom

has been assessed and certified as meeting the requirements of

ISO 9001:2015

For the following activities

The Scope of Registration appears on page 2 of this certificate

This certificate is valid from 13 December 2025 until 27 September 2028 and remains valid subject to satisfactory surveillance audits.
Issue 61. Certified since 12 May 1994
Certified activities performed by additional sites are listed on subsequent pages.

L. Moran

Authorised by
Liz Moran
Business Manager

SGS United Kingdom Ltd
Rossmore Business Park, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH65 3EN, UK
t +44 (0)151 350-6666 - www.sgs.com

Page 1 / 22

Certificate GB94/3233, continued

SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK Ltd

ISO 9001:2015

Issue 61

The collection, transport, sorting, separation, treatment, recycling, recovery and disposal of controlled waste—including household, municipal, commercial and industrial waste (including hazardous and difficult waste).

This includes:

- The operation of logistics depots, vehicle workshops, energy from waste plants, materials recycling facilities, household waste recycling facilities, transfer stations, composting facilities, wood processing facilities, landfill sites, gas utilisation plants, and associated procurement activities.
- The administration functions associated with the above activities.
- The collection, transport, separation, treatment, recycling and recovery of materials for the production of compost.
- The collection, transport, sorting, separation, treatment, recycling, recovery and disposal of wood.
- The administration functions associated with security shredding operations.

The sampling and laboratory analysis of and reporting on waters, waste waters and organic wastes.

Provision of Ice pigging, chlorination and specialist pipe services.

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Page 2 / 22

Certificate GB99/50556

SGS

The management system of

SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK Ltd

UK Head Office SUEZ House, Grenfell Road Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 1ES United Kingdom

has been assessed and certified as meeting the requirements of

ISO 14001:2015

For the following activities

The Scope of Registration appears on page 2 of this certificate

This certificate is valid from 13 December 2025 until 27 September 2028 and remains valid subject to satisfactory surveillance audits.

Issue 53. Certified since 03 June 1999

Certified activities performed by additional sites are listed on subsequent pages.

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Page 1 / 22

Certificate GB99/50556, continued

SGS

SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK Ltd

ISO 14001:2015

Issue 53

The collection, transport, sorting, separation, treatment, recycling, recovery and disposal of controlled waste—including household, municipal, commercial and industrial waste (including hazardous and difficult waste).

This includes:

- The operation of logistics depots, vehicle workshops, energy from waste plants, materials recycling facilities, household waste recycling facilities, transfer stations, composting facilities, wood processing facilities, landfill sites, gas utilisation plants, and associated procurement activities.
- The administration functions associated with the above activities.
- The collection, transport, separation, treatment, recycling and recovery of materials for the production of compost.
- The collection, transport, sorting, separation, treatment, recycling, recovery and disposal of wood.
- The administration functions associated with security shredding operations.

The sampling and laboratory analysis of and reporting on waters, waste waters and organic wastes.

Provision of Ice pigging, chlorination and specialist pipe services.

Page 2 / 22

Certification and legal compliance

Certificate GB09/79537

The management system of

SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK Ltd

UK Head Office SUEZ House, Grenfell Road Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 1ES United Kingdom

has been assessed and certified as meeting the requirements of

ISO 45001:2018

For the following activities

The Scope of Registration appears on page 2 of this certificate

This certificate is valid from 13 December 2025 until 27 September 2028 and remains valid subject to satisfactory surveillance audits.

Issue 31. Certified since 27 September 2019

Certified activities performed by additional sites are listed on subsequent pages.

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ISO 45001 SGS

UKAS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS 0005

Page 1 / 22

Certificate GB09/79537, continued

SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK Ltd

ISO 45001:2018

Issue 31

The collection, transport, sorting, separation, treatment, recycling, recovery and disposal of controlled waste—including household, municipal, commercial and industrial waste (including hazardous and difficult waste).

This includes:

- The operation of logistics depots, vehicle workshops, energy from waste plants, materials recycling facilities, household waste recycling facilities, transfer stations, composting facilities, wood processing facilities, landfill sites, gas utilisation plants, and associated procurement activities.
- The administration functions associated with the above activities.
- The collection, transport, separation, treatment, recycling and recovery of materials for the production of compost.
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ISO 45001 SGS

UKAS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS 0005

Page 2 / 22


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Mid Kent Waste Partnership social value and impact report

01 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

suez

Introduction

This report provides an overview of the social value generated during Year 2 of SUEZ's contract with the Mid Kent Waste Partnership. This analysis is based on 63 monetised metrics, with total social value calculated at £10,485,076.10, a 65.3% increase on the revised Year 1 figure £6,341,180.23.

In this report, the Year 1 data has been revised and updated to reflect metric changes and ensure the data comparisons provided in this report truly reflect the generated value. As a result, the values from Year 1 have increased which is detailed in this report.

Social value refers to the combined environmental, social and economic impacts an organisation creates. This includes outcomes such as providing jobs and training, as well as protecting the environment. By understanding and quantifying these effects, we can capture the wider contribution of our services beyond their immediate function.

Included in this report is a breakdown of how social value is created through economic, social and environmental impacts. We will also distinguish between the social value generated through the delivery of core services and the specific value delivered against the contractual social value commitments. This approach highlights that the contractual commitments represent only part of the overall impacts, whilst showcasing the additional value SUEZ brings through its core service delivery.

Several factors have contributed to the changes observed between Year 1 and Year 2. The most significant driver is the increased maturity of the contract, with Year 2 reflecting a more established and embedded approach to delivering social value. This includes expanded training provision, the introduction of new apprenticeship opportunities, and more consistent delivery of community and wellbeing initiatives. Improvements in data capture have also played a key role, with Year 2 benefiting from clearer reporting processes, the introduction of new metrics, and complete recording of activities.

Approach to social value

At SUEZ, creating social value is at the heart of what we do. We recognise that our role goes beyond delivering essential environmental services and that we are also a partner in supporting thriving, resilient communities.

We track our impact using a bespoke social value measurement framework underpinned by the National Social Value Standard (SVS) through the Loop platform. This gives us a robust and credible way of assessing outcomes across economic, social, and environmental dimensions. In the UK, our custom dashboard enables us to monitor 88 KPIs across wellbeing, employment, community initiatives, supply chain activity, and environmental enhancements. This ensures that our results are consistent, transparent, and aligned with best practice.

It is important to note that the figures reported here are specific to SUEZ and are not designed to be compared directly with those of other organisations. The purpose of using the bespoke Loop tool is to enable us to track our own performance year on year, recognising that other organisations may use different metrics, even if they are also working with Loop. In addition, the Loop platform is regularly updated, which may require us to revisit and adjust previously reported figures in future years. This ensures that comparisons are always made on a like-for-like basis and reflect the most up-to-date methodology.

Revised social value figures from 2024

In line with best practice, the social value figures originally published for Year 1 have been recalculated using the updated 2024 National Social Value Standard (SVS) and the most recent proxy values within the Loop platform. These updates mean that some of the values reported last year have changed, even though the underlying activities delivered during the period remain the same.

These updates include refreshed proxy values, revised carbon factors, and updated national data sets such as inflation, salary benchmarks, and wellbeing weightings. These changes affect the monetised value of activities, but not the activities themselves. Recalculating the figures ensures that all values presented in this report are based on the most current methodology and can therefore be compared on a consistent, like-for-like basis.

Using the updated SVS 2024 framework, the recalculated total social value for Year 1 is £6,341,180.23, compared with the originally reported £4,149,373.47.

Key changes

- A1 (Jobs – General) now generates £3,955,093.56, compared with £1,637,286.63 previously
- Carbon-related metrics (E644, E654, E636) have been updated to reflect revised emissions factors and carbon pricing
- Community and wellbeing metrics (D2, SUEZ21, B8) now use refreshed national weightings

Together, these updates ensure that the Year 1 figures now reflect the most accurate and up-to-date valuation framework available.

Limitations and considerations

While this report provides a comprehensive overview of the social value generated through the contract, there are several considerations to bear in mind when interpreting the results. Some metrics were introduced for the first time in Year 2, meaning percentage changes cannot be calculated for these areas. A small number of activities rely on information provided by external partners, which may affect the timing or completeness of reporting. Environmental metrics are particularly sensitive to changes in national carbon factors and pricing, which can influence year on year comparisons.

The recalculation of Year 1 figures using the updated SVS 2024 framework means that the baseline has shifted; while this ensures more accurate comparisons, it also means that previously published figures will differ from those presented here.

Although monetised social value provides a useful way to quantify impact, many of the benefits delivered through the contract extend beyond what can be captured in financial terms. These include strengthened relationships with community organisations, increased visibility and trust in local services, improved wellbeing and confidence among participants in programmes such as Upcycle Your Skills, and the positive cultural impact of initiatives like Mental Health First Aid and A Day A Year to Volunteer. These qualitative outcomes play an important role in shaping the long-term social and environmental benefits of the contract and should be recognised alongside the monetised results.

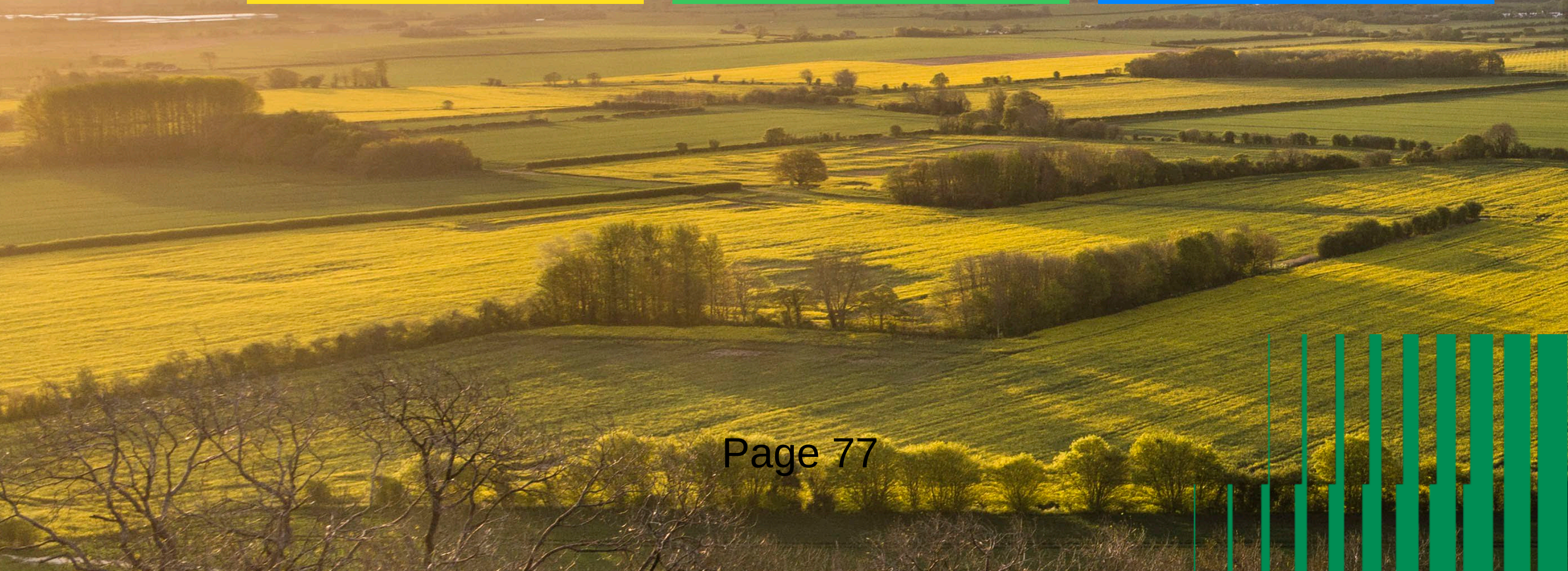
Headline figures for Year 2

Total social value achieved for the Mid Kent Waste Partnership	Social value ROI % for the Mid Kent Waste Partnership	Social value ROI ratio for the Mid Kent Waste Partnership
£10,485,076.10	**219.64%**	**£2.20**

Social	Environmental	Economic
£65,482.15	**-£834,492.24**	**£11,254,086.19**

Achieved total social value from contractual commitments	Social value ROI % from contractual commitments	Social value ROI ratio from contractual commitments
£91,539.54	**129.91%**	**£1.30**

Social	Environmental	Economic
£32,964.64	**£365.13**	**£58,209.77**



	Whole contract Yr 1	Whole contract Yr 2	% change
Total SV generated	£6,341,180.23	£10,485,076.10	+65.3%
Social Value ROI	£1.83 / 183.31%	£2.20/ 219.64%	+20.2% / +19.8%
Social	£26,459.05	£65,482.15	+147.5%
Environmental	£-164,190.95	£ -834,492.24	–408.3%
Economic	£6,478,912.13	£11,254,086.19	+73.7%
Total contract spend	£3,459,182.74	£4,773,775.38	+38.0%

	Social value commitments Yr 1	Social value commitments Yr 2	% change
Total SV generated	£17,367.38	£91,539.54	+427.1%
Social Value ROI	£0.84 / 3.52%	£1.30 / 129.91%	+54.8% / +3,589%
Social	£694.45	£32,964.64	+4,646%
Environmental	£314.01	£365.13	+16.3%
Economic	£16,358.92	£58,209.77	+255.9%
Total contract spend	£20,795	£70,461.11	+238.8%

Impact by theme

This reporting period demonstrates the significant positive impact created through the contract, with a total social value of £10,485,076.10 generated across economic, social, and environmental outcomes. This represents a 65.3% increase on Year 1 and reflects the continued strengthening of the partnership's ability to deliver meaningful benefits for communities across Maidstone, Ashford and Swale.

The overall social value return on investment (ROI) for the whole contract has risen from 183.31% to 219.64%, a 19.8% increase, with the ROI ratio improving from £1.83 to £2.20. This means that for every £1 invested through the contract, £2.20 of additional social, economic, and environmental value is being created. Importantly, this figure represents tangible benefits for local communities and the environment in Maidstone, Ashford and Swale.

Across the three core areas, the contract continues to deliver substantial economic benefits, increasing from £6.48m to £11.3m, a 73.7% uplift driven by local employment, supply chain activity, and productivity gains. Social value outcomes have also strengthened significantly, rising from £26,459.05 to £65,482.15, a 147.5% increase, reflecting deeper engagement with schools, community organisations, and residents.

If we focus specifically on the contractual social value commitments, the outcomes achieved in Year 2 equate to £91,539.54 in social value generated, representing a return on investment of £1.30 (129.89%), a 54.8% increase on the revised Year 1 baseline. These commitments go beyond the core collection and cleansing services, requiring the delivery of targeted social and environmental initiatives, managed by a dedicated team.

This achievement highlights the continued growth and maturity of the partnership in Year 2. From engaging with local schools and delivering employment and skills programmes, to volunteering with community organisations and supporting local initiatives, the impact extends far beyond the headline figures. By embedding social value into the way we work, we are not only delivering essential services, but we are creating sustained social, economic, and environmental benefits with long term impact for Ashford, Maidstone, and Swale.

Economic impact

The most significant contribution was generated in the economic domain, with a total value of £11,254,086.19, a 73.7% increase on year 1. This figure reflects the direct and indirect ways our activities have strengthened the local economy, through job creation, support for local supply chains, training and skills development, and investment that circulates back into communities. These are detailed further in Figure 1 below.

A total of fourteen metrics has been used to calculate the economic value generated during year 2 of the Mid Kent Partnership contract (see Figure 1). These measures provide a well-rounded picture of how our activities have contributed to the local economy. They cover a range of factors including employment opportunities created, spend with local suppliers, support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), training and skills development, and other forms of investment that circulate money back into the community. By applying this multi-metric approach, we can demonstrate not only the scale of the financial impact delivered but also the breadth of ways in which value has been created for people, businesses, and the wider economy.

Figure 1 – Details of metrics used to calculate the generated economic value for Year 2 of the Mid Kent Waste Partnership

Metric	Description	Achieved	Achieved value	% change
C10 - Monetised - Supply chain - Payments made within 30 days	£s spent with suppliers in the UK where payments were made within 30 days.	£186,206.95	£709.11	+26.5%
C3 - Monetised - Supply chain - Supply chain spending - Small business	£s spent in the UK where it related to a small sized business.	£800,668.30	£28,051.76	+32.9%
C4 - Monetised - Supply chain - Supply chain spending - Medium business	£s spent in the UK where it related to a medium sized business.	£541,056.83	£9,478.08	+6.6%
C5 - Monetised - Supply chain - Supply chain spending - Large business	£s spent in the UK where it related to a large sized business.	£223,583.19	£1,958.33	–37.1%
A1 - Monetised - Employment and economic - Jobs - General	This metric represents all the jobs in your organisation which are not apprenticeships. This is recorded as full-time equivalents (FTEs).	380.5 FTE	£4,737,906.10	n/a
A2 - Monetised - Employment and economic - Gross operating surplus	This metric represents the economic value of an organisation aside from the income paid in wages. This portion of value is referred to as gross operating surplus and combined with wages makes up gross value added.	n/a	£6,250,498.75	n/a
B8 - Monetised - Health, training, and skills - Training - Hourly - General	Total number of hours of training provided.	929 Hours	£24,817.71	+10,222%
SUEZ24 – Monetised - Health, training, and skills – Training – Hourly - Health and safety training	Total number of hours of health and safety training provided.	501.91 Hours	£11,170.75	n/a
B34 - Monetised - Health, training, and skills – Health- organisation-wide interventions – health promotion	The value is based off two hours per week.	271 Stakeholders	£220.16	n/a
B4 - Monetised - Health, training, and skills – General – Mentoring relationship	Total number of official mentoring relationships that the reporting organisation is responsible for.	2 Relationships	£13,409.72	n/a

Metric	Description	Achieved	Achieved value	% change
SUEZ18 - Monetised – Environmental – Tonnes (any items) - waste re-use – Tonnes (any items)	The number of tonnes of items that has been allocated for re-use in the particular period by the reporting organisation.	0.3 Tonnes	£811.85	n/a
A5 - Monetised – employment and economic – Level 3 – Apprenticeships – Level 3	This metric represents all the apprenticeships within an organisation within each level. This is recorded as FTEs.	5 FTEs	£221,232.25	n/a
B29 - Monetised – Health, training and skills – Mental Health First Aid – Health – Organisation wide interventions – mental health first aid	The intervention is typically two full days over two weeks.	8 Stakeholders	£2,467.28	n/a
B2 - Monetised – Health, training and skills – careers advice or guidance	Number of stakeholders that are receiving unique careers information or guidance, i.e. in an annual report	3 Stakeholders	£219.67	n/a

The largest contributors to the economic value achieved by the contract in year 2 is general employment and gross operating surplus.

General Employment (A1) accounts for 380.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, generating £4,737,906.10 in monetised social value. This reflects the direct impact of the contract on local employment, providing stable jobs and income for individuals while supporting workforce development and creating opportunities that benefit the wider community.

Gross Operating Surplus (A2) represents the value generated by the organisation beyond wages, totalling £6,250,498.75. This is not profit, but a standard measure of the wider economic contribution captured through the contract. It reflects the resources and activity that support operations, services, and supply chains, and makes up a substantial portion of the total economic value achieved (£11,254,086.19). Together with wages, it highlights how the contract contributes to the broader economy and delivers long-term social and economic benefits for communities.

Across the supply chain, the contract continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to supporting small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).

Spending with small businesses increased from £602,379.49 to £800,668.30, a 32.9% uplift, while spending with medium sized businesses rose from £507,506.05 to £541,056.83, a 6.6% increase.

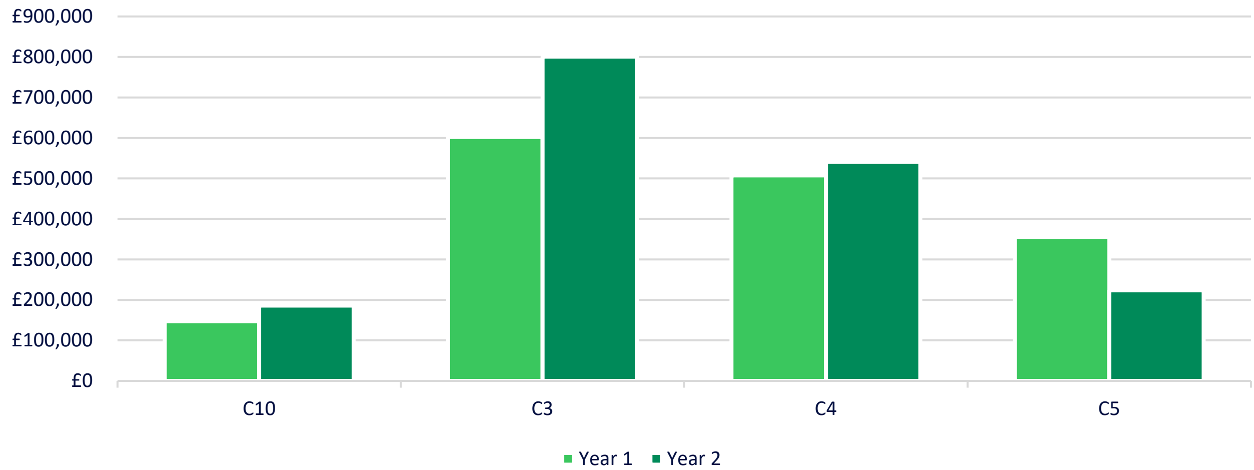
These gains reflect a deliberate shift towards procurement with a broader and more diverse SME supplier base. Spending with large businesses decreased from £355,246.21 to £223,583.19, a 37.1% reduction, demonstrating a conscious rebalancing of procurement activity in favour of SMEs.

This approach aligns with wider social value objectives by strengthening opportunities for smaller suppliers and contributing to a more inclusive and resilient supply chain.

General training delivery increased significantly in Year 2, rising from 9 hours to 929 hours, with the monetised value increasing from £197.00 to £24,817.71. This reflects the substantial amount of training delivered through Upcycle Your Skills and other workforce development activities, which were recorded much more fully in Year 2.

In addition to general training, Year 2 also captured 501.91 hours of health and safety training under the SUEZ 24 metric, generating £11,170.75 in social value. This represents the first year of reporting for this measure and provides a clear baseline for tracking future health and safety engagement across the workforce.

Figure 2 – Year-on-year comparison of supplier chain spending



- C10 - Supply Chain - Payments made within 30 days.
- C3 - Supply Chain Spending - Small Businesses
- C4 - Supply Chain Spending - Medium Businesses
- C5 - Supply Chain Spending - Large Businesses

Economic impact generated by the contractual social value initiatives

Economic value continues to be the most significant contributor to the contractual social value commitments, generating £58,209.77 in Year 2. This represents a 256% increase compared with the revised Year 1 baseline and reflects both the scale and the depth of economic activity delivered through the contract. The uplift is driven by a combination of expanded training provision, new apprenticeship opportunities, mentoring partnerships, and the wider economic contribution captured through gross operating surplus.

The most significant contributor to economic value in Year 2 is the introduction of a Level 3 Business Administrator apprenticeship, generating £28,227.49 This reflects the long-term economic benefit associated with higher-level skills development, including increased earning potential, improved job security, and enhanced productivity. Apprenticeships also support succession planning and help build a skilled local workforce, aligning with the partnership's commitment to creating sustainable employment pathways.

Alongside apprenticeships, the contract delivered 922 hours of training through the Upcycle Your Skills programmes, delivered across all three Mid Kent boroughs. These programmes generated £24,663.50 in economic value and represent a significant expansion compared with Year 1.

-CASE STUDY-

Apprenticeships at SUEZ

Supporting skills development and creating opportunities for people to build long-term careers is an important part of how we deliver social value across Mid Kent. This year we expanded our apprenticeship programme to support both new starters and existing colleagues.

We welcomed a new Level 3 Business Administrator apprentice who is helping to deliver social value activity across the contract while gaining experience in community engagement, reporting and project management. We also recruited two new technical apprentices, an apprentice LGV technician and a large vehicle service and maintenance technician, strengthening future capability within our fleet and workshop teams.

Alongside these new roles, two existing colleagues continued their professional development through apprenticeships. One is completing a Level 3 Business Administration apprenticeship, and another is working towards a Level 3 Team Leader qualification. Supporting internal progression in this way reflects our commitment to upskilling our workforce and helping colleagues gain recognised qualifications that support their growth.

Together these apprenticeships demonstrate our investment in people and our focus on building a skilled and confident workforce that supports the long-term success of the Mid Kent contract.

-CASE STUDY-

Upcycle Your Skills

Upcycle Your Skills is a five week* employability programme designed to boost young people's** confidence, skills and readiness for work, while connecting them directly with local employers. Delivered in partnership with CXK and the Mid Kent councils, the programme supports young people who are not currently in education, employment or training (NEET), or who are at risk of becoming so.

Across Mid Kent, 37 people completed the programme in Year 1, engaging in a blend of personalised one-to-one support and interactive group learning. Each participant began with an individual goalsetting session to identify aspirations, barriers and development needs. This was followed by twice weekly sessions covering essential employability skills including teamwork, communication, CV writing, interview preparation, and exploring local training, apprenticeships and employment pathways. The programme "focused on building confidence, developing essential employability skills and increasing exposure to local employers".

A defining strength of Upcycle Your Skills is the direct access it provides to employers. Participants took part in employer led activities such as Guess My Job, My Career in Pictures, and mini careers fairs, which brought learning into a real-world context and increased participants' understanding of local labour market opportunities. Young people also gained behind the scenes insight into SUEZ operations, including sustainability priorities, repair and reuse, and emerging technologies such as electric refuse vehicles.

Crucially, SUEZ offered participants the opportunity to interview for live vacancies, creating a clear and tangible route into employment. This approach has already delivered real outcomes: in Swale, one CXK beneficiary has already been offered a Street Cleanser role with SUEZ after impressing them in her interview. In Maidstone, 27% of participants secured employment by the end of the programme, and 18% progressed into further training.

The programme's impact extended beyond employment outcomes. Participants reported significant increases in confidence, communication skills and belief in their ability to succeed. In Maidstone, confidence ratings rose from 20% at the start to 75% by the end, and the proportion of young people who felt prepared to find work increased from 30% to 75%. In Swale, 100% of participants finished the programme feeling confident in their ability to achieve their goals, compared with 50% at the start.

In Ashford, 57% felt they could learn what they needed from the programme to achieve their goals and by the end 100% felt the course had exceeded their expectations.

Participants themselves described the programme as transformative. One young person shared: "Taking part in this programme has changed my life ten times for the better. It has helped with my self-confidence, making friends and my wellbeing." Another reflected: "I feel so supported and happy with how much I've achieved and learnt."

By combining personalised support, practical skill building and meaningful employer engagement, Upcycle Your Skills has created a supportive environment where young people can grow, explore new opportunities and take confident steps towards their future. The programme demonstrates how targeted social value initiatives can deliver measurable, lifechanging outcomes for individuals and communities across Mid Kent.

By investing in high-quality, community focused training programmes, the contract is contributing directly to improved employability outcomes, increased confidence and skills among participants, and stronger pathways into work. This approach not only delivers immediate social and economic value but also supports long-term resilience and opportunity across Mid Kent.

*In Ashford, the programme was two weeks long.

**In Ashford, the programme was open to long-term job seekers aged 18+.

As part of our continued commitment to staff wellbeing and creating a psychologically safe workplace, six members of staff completed Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training during Year 2. This programme equips participants with the confidence to recognise signs of poor mental health, provide initial support, and guide colleagues towards appropriate professional help. The training generated £2,467.28 in social and economic value and embeds our wellbeing and inclusion culture by ensuring that mental health is openly supported across our sites.

Alongside this, two colleagues undertook Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) - an intensive, internationally recognised course that prepares individuals to provide life-assisting, suicide-prevention support. Together, MHFA and ASIST demonstrate our commitment to equipping staff with the skills, confidence, and knowledge to support one another and contribute to a safer, more resilient workforce.

Compared with Year 1, the economic value generated in Year 2 is not only larger but also more diverse. This more mature workforce reflects a shift from foundational activity in Year 1 to a more strategic and embedded approach in Year 2, where economic value is generated through both direct delivery and long-term capability building.

Social impact

In the second year of the contract, the Mid Kent service generated £65,482.15 in social value, delivered across a wide range of community, education, wellbeing, and volunteering activities. While this represents a smaller proportion of the overall social value compared with the economic contribution of employment, these activities capture some of the most direct and meaningful impacts on local people, community organisations, and the wider region.

Figure 2 – Social value achieved across social impact metrics for Year 2 of the Mid Kent Waste Partnership (excluding metric A1 and A5)

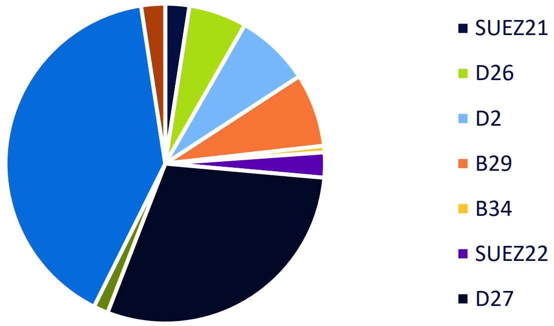


Figure 3 – Details of metrics used to calculate the generated social value for Year 2 of the Mid Kent Waste Partnership

Metric	Description	Achieved	Achieved value	% change
A5 - Monetised - Employment and economic – Level 3- Apprenticeships	This metric represents all the jobs in your organisation which are not apprenticeships. This is recorded as full-time equivalents (FTEs). The duration can also be altered accordingly.	5 FTEs	£221,232.30	5 FTEs
SUEZ21 - Monetised - Community - Stakeholder engagement - Hourly - Education	Stakeholder engagement and consultation events, recorded as hours. Examples include: community consultation events, business briefings, individual meetings with community and third parties, design consultations and site visits. This only includes the hours input from staff.	41.5 hours	£812.84	+374.99%
D26 - Monetised - Community - Donations - Cash donations	Donations to heritage groups, local, national and/or international charities, groups, initiatives or events. Can include in-kind donations of goods, materials and services.	£2,045	1955.20	+488.03%
D2 - Monetised - Community - Volunteering - Hourly - Full impact	The number of hours volunteered by staff during working hours or are compensated through time off in lieu or additional pay. This metric includes both the wellbeing benefit to the volunteer and a standardised assumption on the impact of the volunteering itself. If enough evidence is available on the specific impact of that volunteering and it can be captured separately with other SVS metrics, then please use the 'Impact on volunteer' metric which just includes the volunteer wellbeing impact and therefore can be combined with other metrics.	114 hours	£2,508.28	+1,387.20%
B29 - Health, training, and skills – Mental Health First Aid – Health – Organisation-wide intervention – Mental health First Aid	The intervention is typically two full days over two weeks. The duration should be adjusted to take account of the length of intervention. For more information refer to the 'Organisational universal-level approaches' NICE evidence.	8 Stakeholders	£2,467.28	n/a

Metric	Description	Achieved	Achieved value	% change
B34 - Health, training, and skills – Health - Organisation-wide intervention – Health promotion	The value is based off two hours per week. The duration should be adjusted to take account of the length of the intervention. For more information refer to the 'Organisational universal-level approaches' NICE evidence.	271 Stakeholders	£220.16	n/a
B4 - Health, training, and skills – general – mentoring relationship	Total number of official mentoring relationships that the reporting organisation is responsible for. The duration can be altered to impact value. Typically, a mentoring relationship should involve at least an hour a month.	2 Relationships	£13,409.72	n/a
D27 – Community – In-kind donations – Donations	Donations to heritage groups, local, national and/or international charities, groups, initiatives or events. Can include in-kind donations of goods, materials and services.	£10,350.00	£9,832.50	n/a
SUEZ18 – Environmental – Tonnes (any items) - Waste re-use – Tonnes (any items)	The number of tonnes of items that has been allocated for re-use in the particular period by the reporting organisation. This should include all items not under the existing items that are available.	0.3 Tonnes	£811.85	
SUEZ22 – Community – Stakeholder engagement – Hourly – Community	Stakeholder engagement and consultation events, recorded as hours. Examples include: community consultation events, business briefings, individual meetings with community and third parties, design consultations and site visits. This only includes the hours input from staff.	53 Hours	£846.47	
SUEZ23 – Community – Industry – Stakeholder engagement – Hourly – Industry	Stakeholder engagement and consultation events, recorded as hours. Examples include: community consultation events, business briefings, individual meetings with community and third parties, design consultations and site visits. This only includes the hours input from staff.	25 Hours	£492.33	

-CASE STUDY-

British Heart Foundation

Over a two-week period, eight Mid Kent colleagues volunteered at the British Heart Foundation's (BHF) Maidstone and Sittingbourne stores through SUEZ's Day a Year to Volunteer initiative. Volunteers supported a range of essential retail tasks - from tagging and rotating stock, to organising textiles and maintaining clean, customer-ready spaces - providing valuable operational support to the charity's teams.

In addition to hands on help, the activity generated further impact through SUEZ's volunteering scheme, which donates £5 per logged volunteer day to our charity partners Macmillan Cancer Support and British Heart Foundation.

The experience was positive for both colleagues and store teams. Employees gained insight into the vital role volunteers play in charity operations, with many expressing interests in returning. BHF staff praised the volunteers as a "massive help" who brought enthusiasm and a willingness to get involved in any task.

This activity delivered practical support for local BHF stores, enhanced employee understanding of the charity sector, and showcased SUEZ's commitment to responsible business and community volunteering.

British Heart Foundation

Volunteering activity increased significantly in Year 2, with colleagues contributing 114 hours of time with multiple charities. This generated £2,508.28 in social value and supported a wide range of community organisations, including foodbanks, community centres, charity distribution hubs, and local events. These activities not only provide direct benefit to local residents but also strengthen relationships between SUEZ teams and the communities we serve.

Cash donations made through the contract generated £1,955.20 in social value, reflecting the positive impact these contributions created for local communities. This includes £500 donated via the SUEZ SCOPE Fund to the Swale Community Care Project, which supported the delivery of Christmas food parcels for families in need. A further £300 was donated to Maidstone CAN as a thank you for hosting our teams at their Repair Café events throughout the year, strengthening our shared commitment to reuse and community engagement.

In addition, £1,245 was donated to the KMFM Give a Gift campaign. These donations demonstrate our ongoing commitment to supporting grassroots organisations and responding to local priorities.

-CASE STUDY-

KMFM Give a Gift

This year, the Mid Kent SUEZ team proudly supported the KMFM Give a Gift campaign, which provides Christmas presents for children and young people across Kent who may otherwise go without. After hearing the appeal on the radio, our Ashford Contract Manager, Ryan Hinton, encouraged the team to get involved, and colleagues quickly came together to raise over £1,200.

Representatives from the team were invited to KMFM to meet the campaign organisers and to see the scale of donations made. The visit also included an opportunity to speak on air about our fundraising, helping to raise awareness and encourage others to support the campaign. The experience reflected the generosity and teamwork across Mid Kent and demonstrated how collective action can make a meaningful difference to local families during the festive season.

-CASE STUDY-

Blue Monday

Blue Monday is often described as one of the most challenging days of the year for wellbeing, with post-Christmas pressures and "New Year, new me" expectations contributing to low mood for many people. To support colleagues during this period, the Mid Kent social value team created and distributed small wellbeing packs across all depots as a simple reminder to pause, check in, and look after themselves during the working day.

The packs were handed out by supervisors in Maidstone and made available on site in Ashford and Swale for crews to collect during their breaks. Each one included signposting to internal and national wellbeing resources, ensuring that anyone who needed additional support knew where to find it. This thoughtful initiative reached 271 colleagues and formed part of our wider commitment to promoting a psychologically safe and supportive workplace.

While a small gesture, the activity helped bring a moment of positivity to teams during a traditionally difficult time of year and reinforced the message that wellbeing matters across the Mid Kent contract.

Social value generated by the contractual social and environmental initiatives

The contractual commitments delivered £32,964.64 in social value during Year 2, reflecting a substantial expansion in community-focused activity across Ashford, Maidstone, and Swale. This year's programme demonstrates a maturing and increasingly embedded approach to social value delivery, with a strong emphasis on community engagement, volunteering, education, wellbeing, and targeted support for local residents. The breadth of activity delivered across 42 monetised metrics highlights the partnership's commitment to supporting people and strengthening community resilience.

Stakeholder engagement remained a core part of the social value programme, with over 70 hours of education, community, and industry engagement delivered across the region. This included school visits, careers events, and participation in local initiatives. These sessions generated £1,682.54 in social value and provided opportunities for young people and residents to learn about recycling, sustainability, careers in the waste sector, and the role of SUEZ in their community.

Careers guidance also formed an important part of this year's activity, with three individuals receiving tailored careers advice and support through work experience placements, generating £219.67 in social value. This work helps build pathways into employment and supports young people and jobseekers to develop confidence, skills, and awareness of opportunities within the sector.

In kind donations (D27) totalled £9,832.50 in Year 2 and include the installation of six new 2 Minute Clean Boards across Swale and Maidstone. These boards were introduced following the success of the pilot board installed in Ashford during Year 1, which demonstrated strong public engagement and consistent use by local residents.

The expansion of the scheme in Year 2 reflects the positive response from residents and the value of providing practical, accessible tools that empower communities to take pride in their surroundings.

-CASE STUDY-

#2minclean boards

The 2 Minute Clean Boards provide free access to litter picking equipment, enabling people to carry out quick, two minute clean ups while out in their communities. Each board includes grabbers, bags and simple guidance, making it easy for anyone to take part without needing to bring their own equipment or join an organised group. By placing the boards in high footfall areas, the initiative encourages spontaneous action, supports cleaner public spaces and helps build a sense of shared responsibility for the local environment.

Environmental impact

In the second year of the contract, the Mid Kent waste Partnership continued to manage substantial volumes of waste across a range of streams and treatment routes. While the waste streams broadly follow the same structure as the previous year, the inclusion of a few additional metrics provides a more complete picture of the contract's environmental footprint.

Figure 4 – Details of metrics used to calculate the generated environmental value for Year 2 of the Mid Kent Waste Partnership

Metric	Description	Achieved	Achieved value	% change
E644 – monetised – environmental – composting – refuse – Organic: garden waste	Waste disposed during the reporting period.	-22,001.47 Tonnes	£36,245.16	-5.88
E654 – monetised – environmental – recycling – refuse - recycling	Waste disposed during the reporting period.	-44,970.93 Tonnes	£177,401.07	+13.66
E636 – monetised – environmental - combustion – refuse – household residual waste	Waste disposed during the reporting period.	-81,276.640 Tonnes	£-320,619.64	-10.71
E13 – monetised – environmental – Diesel (average biofuel blend) - Fuel – Liquid Fuel – Diesel (average Biofuel blend)	Fuel used in period.	1,150,867.00 Tonnes	£-727,883.96	n/a
SUEZ20 – monetised – environmental – planters or nature beneficial planting -	The number of planters or nature beneficial planting.	2 Planters	£354.92	n/a
SUEZ18 – monetised – environmental –waste reuse – tonnes (any items)	The number of tonnes of items that has been allocated for re-use in the particular period by the reporting organisation.	0.3 Tonnes	£811.85	n/a
E657 – monetised – environmental – recycling – Metal - Recycling	Waste disposed in the relevant reporting period.	1.52 Tonnes	£-5.99	n/a
E641 – monetised – environmental – anaerobic digestion - waste disposal – refuse – Organic: food and drink waste	Waste disposed in the relevant reporting period.	1.95 Tonnes	£-3.21	n/a

A total of 22,001 tonnes of garden waste were collected and sent for composting. This generated £36,245.16 in environmental value. Composting remains a lower carbon treatment route for organic material, avoiding the higher emissions associated with landfill or combustion. The positive value reflects the environmental benefit of diverting biodegradable waste into a circular process that returns nutrients to soil and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

Recycling continues to deliver the largest positive environmental contribution within the contract. This year, 44,970 tonnes of recyclable materials were collected, generating £177,401.07 in environmental value. This represents a 4,794 tonne increase on Year 1, an 11.93% uplift, and a 13.78% increase in environmental value. Recycling has a particularly high impact because it reduces the need for raw materials, conserves energy, and lowers carbon emissions compared with producing goods from virgin resources. This strong year on year improvement reflects both operational effectiveness and demonstrates the impact of sustained efforts to encourage residents to recycle more.

Residual waste remains the largest single waste stream, with 81,276 tonnes sent for energy from waste treatment. This produced -£320,619.64 in environmental value. When comparing absolute tonnage, residual waste decreased by 11,159 tonnes compared with Year 1 - a 12.07% reduction. This is a significant improvement and indicates progress in waste prevention and diversion efforts. Although combustion generates emissions, the model recognises the carbon benefit of energy recovery compared with landfill, where methane emissions would be substantially higher.

The contract recorded 1,150,867 litres of diesel consumption, resulting in a negative environmental value of £727,883.96. Fuel use remains one of the most carbon intensive aspects of our operations, reflecting emissions from collection vehicles and site activities. We continue to focus on reducing this impact through fleet optimisation, efficient routing, and ongoing work to support drivers in improving on road efficiency. In addition, four electric vehicles are now operating within our street cleaning fleet, helping to reduce emissions in areas where it is currently most viable.

-CASE STUDY-

People and planet

At SUEZ, we recognise that sustainability is not only about reducing our environmental impact but also about creating long-term social value for our community. By embedding sustainable practices into everyday operations, we contribute to a healthier environment, support our communities, and promote responsible behaviours across our organisation.

Across our three depots, we have introduced a range of positive initiatives to play our part in sustainability. From installing bird boxes and bug hotels to support local biodiversity, to encouraging our team members to take part in volunteering opportunities throughout the year, we are committed to making a meaningful difference.

We remain dedicated to maintaining these standards and continually seeking new ways to improve. By balancing the needs of people, planet, and prosperity in the way we operate, we ensure our actions create lasting environmental and social value.

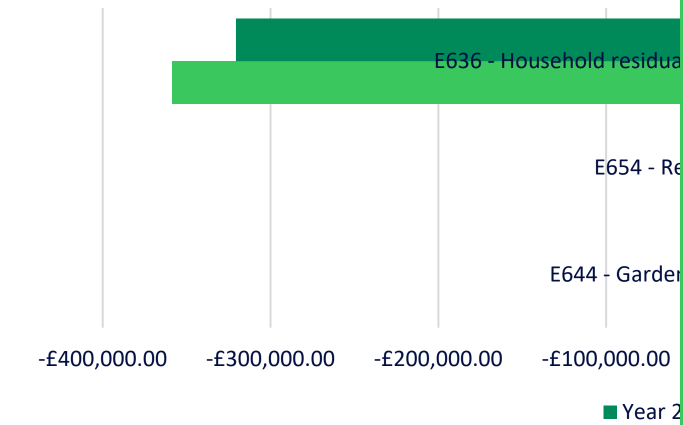
In addition to the measurable environmental impacts shown through waste tonnages and associated carbon outcomes, at SUEZ we are guided by a set of sustainability principles that shape everyday decision-making. These principles provide a consistent framework across all sites to help reduce consumption, cut waste, and protect natural resources.

The focus areas include reducing single use items, lowering energy, fuel, and water consumption, encouraging reuse and recycling, and promoting sustainable purchasing. They also extend to wider actions such as supporting biodiversity, engaging with local communities, and encouraging sustainable travel. Together, these standards ensure that sustainability is embedded not just in the outcomes of the contract, but also in the way our services are delivered.

Each site has a sustainability champion who helps colleagues put these principles into practice, ensuring that environmental improvements are continually driven forward at a local level. This means that, alongside the large-scale environmental benefits achieved through waste diversion and carbon savings, the contract also delivers everyday actions that support long-term sustainability in Mid Kent.

Figure 5 – Environmental value generated by waste

Metric
E644 - Monetised - Environmental - Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e) - Option B - use tool to sum components of CO2e - Wa disposal (CO2e) - Refuse - Organic: garden waste - Composting
E654 - Monetised - Environmental - Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e) - Option B - use tool to sum components of CO2e - Wa disposal (CO2e) - Refuse - Recycling
E636 - Monetised - Environmental - Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e) - Option B - use tool to sum components of CO2e - Wa disposal (CO2e) - Refuse - Household residual waste - Combus



Environmental impact generated by the contractual social value initiatives

The contractual commitments generated £365.13 in environmental value during Year 2, delivered through a small but focused set of activities supporting biodiversity, reuse, and recycling. Although environmental value represents the smallest proportion of the overall social value portfolio, it is important to recognise that these figures do not fully capture the wider effects of these initiatives.

For example, promotional activity linked to WEEE roadshows is likely to have contributed to increased public awareness and behavioural change, potentially driving higher levels of recycling beyond those directly measured.

As such, the reported value should be considered alongside these indirect environmental benefits, which support the

-CASE STUDY-

WEEE roadshows

To make recycling easier and more accessible for residents across Mid Kent, the SUEZ team delivered a series of nine WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) roadshows in community locations throughout the year. These events invited residents to drop off unwanted electrical items in convenient, walkable spaces, helping to remove barriers such as transport, mobility challenges or limited access to household waste sites.

Across the nine roadshows, the team collected 1.52 tonnes of small electricals, preventing valuable materials from entering the residual waste stream and supporting more sustainable disposal habits. The roadshows also created opportunities for meaningful engagement, with residents' keen to learn more about responsible recycling.

High attendance rates and positive feedback demonstrated an appreciation for accessible recycling initiatives. By bringing WEEE recycling directly into town centres and community hubs, the roadshows helped raise awareness, encourage positive behaviour change and strengthen connections between SUEZ and the communities we serve.

These events highlight how practical, community focused initiatives can deliver both environmental and social value, supporting residents to take small but impactful steps towards a more sustainable Mid Kent.

resources. In this reporting year, the activity generated a positive environmental value of £6.01, reflecting the carbon savings achieved through recovering and reprocessing metals. Although the value is modest due to the relatively small tonnage, it demonstrates the environmental benefit of targeted community engagement initiatives such as the WEEE roadshows.

The second carbon metric captures 1.95 tonnes of food waste processed through anaerobic digestion (E641), collected via Swale's dedicated pumpkin-disposal bins used in the days following Halloween. This seasonal initiative helped residents divert pumpkins from residual waste and supported a more sustainable treatment route and is something we will look to expand across all three boroughs in contract Year 3.

Anaerobic digestion generated a positive environmental value of £3.21, reflecting the carbon benefits of converting food waste into renewable energy and nutrient rich digestate. While the tonnage is small, the metric demonstrates the value of community focused interventions that encourage residents to separate food waste for treatment through a circular, energy producing process.

Looking forward

Year 2 marks a significant step forward in the maturity and impact of the Mid Kent Waste Partnership contract. The partnership has delivered £10.4 million in social value, a 64.1% increase on the recalculated Year 1 baseline, demonstrating not only the scale of activity delivered but also the growing depth and quality of outcomes across economic, social, and environmental themes. This progress reflects a more embedded approach to social value, stronger networks and community connections. Our ongoing commitment to finding new ways to grow our social value contribution will remain an important part of how we move into Year 3.

As we look ahead, this momentum provides a strong foundation for even greater impact. The team is already exploring new ways to enrich engagement, strengthen partnerships and make our social value contributions bigger, better and more responsive to local needs. With stronger networks, clearer insight and a growing culture of collaboration across the contract, the partnership is well placed to continue delivering positive, lasting benefits for the communities of Ashford, Maidstone and Swale.

Looking forward, we are excited to continue to work in partnership with Ashford, Maidstone and Swale Borough Councils to identify innovative ways of maximising value, ensuring the contract consistently delivers outcomes that extend well beyond its core services.

SUEZ in the UK,
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Environment Services and Climate Change Committee	
Meeting Date	8th July 2026
Report Title	Public Conveniences Review and Community Toilet Scheme Update
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Martyn Cassell, Head of Environment and Leisure (for service provision)
Lead Officer	Alister Andrews, Environmental Services Manager
Classification	**Open**
Recommendations	1. That members discuss the next steps for those facilities not being transferred to other organisations and advise if they support further closures to create additional savings to deliver the Medium-Term Financial Plan and fund the costs of a Community Toilet Scheme. 2. To endorse the Community Toilet Scheme selection criteria (2.23 – 2.36) based on location, operating hours, facilities and longevity of interested businesses and for Members to identify how the scheme will be funded sustainably. 3. To agree the reimbursement figures for approved scheme members once sustainable funding has been identified. 4. To refer to Policy and Resources Committee should the costs of any decisions exceed the available budget.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

1.1 To update members on the award of contract for the provision of Minor Maintenance and Cleansing of Public Conveniences.

1.2 To update Members on the asset transfer discussions and the impact of those on the budget for the service.

1.3 To agree the next steps for facilities that are not being transferred.

1.4 Discuss and agree the Community Toilet Scheme (CTS) criteria and the extent of service provision considering the limited available budgets.

2 Background, Context and Proposals

2.1 On 12th November 2025, the Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee agreed the recommendations from the Public Conveniences Review. The recommendations aimed to align the service with the allocated budget.

2.2 Three public conveniences were closed (White House in Minster; Milton Regis High Street; and The Forum in Sittingbourne). Seven other facilities were considered for asset transfer (Oare Gunpowder Works Visitors Centre; Central Car Park, Faversham; Rose Street, Sheerness; Beachfields, Sheerness; Leysdown Beach Services; The Spinney, Leysdown; Queenborough Park).

2.3 In the Autumn of 2025 discussions were held with the relevant Parish and Town Councils in relation to the toilets listed as having potential to be transferred. The outcome of these discussions has been that only Oare Gunpowder Works is proceeding as a potential transfer to the Faversham Town Council, as part of a wider assignment of the lease on Oare Gunpowder Works Country Park. This transfer will result in a contractual servicing saving of £1.7K pa.

2.4 Whilst there had been early, potential interest in asset transfer and detailed information was provided, as matters stand no other Town or Parish Council has sought to progress a transfer against the other properties, indicating that if they were not at clear risk of closure they would not be considered. Minster Parish Council did suggest they may consider transfer if it included the Little Oyster car park as well as the toilet.

2.5 The new public convenience contract was awarded in March 2026 to open, close, maintain and clean the public toilets in Swale. The winning bid had a value of £299.3K pa. The new contract commenced on 1st May 2026.

2.6 The current available budget is £300K, which balances the contractual costs for 2026/27. Members previously made a decision to implement a £100K saving in public conveniences – which reduced the budget from £350K to £250K in 2026-27. However, an additional £50K contribution was added as a contingency to recognise the expected increase in contract costs arising for a new contract, meaning that current savings achieved total £50k. To date, not closing/transferring sufficient toilets has therefore not delivered the required saving.

2.7 In November 2025, the Environment Services and Climate Change Committee discussed a paper on the transfer or closure of some facilities which detailed some further facilities that could be considered. More accurate financial estimates are now available for contract savings at some of these facilities.

Figure 1 to show estimated contractual savings if some previously identified facilities are closed or transferred.

Location	**Estimated saving if facility is closed or transferred**
Central Car Park, Faversham	£36.5K
The Spinney, Leysdown	£8.7K
Queenborough Park	£9.1K
Oare Gunpowder Works	£1.7K

2.8 At the November 2025 Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee meeting, Members proposed and supported an amendment for the Community Toilet Scheme (CTS) to be introduced in the areas impacted by toilet closures and then expanded over time so that it is borough-wide.

2.9 The closure or transfer of facilities could potentially fund the Community Toilet Scheme that Members supported (see figure 1 and figure 2 for financial details). Without additional funds or savings identified then there is currently no available budget to launch a Community Toilet Scheme.

2.10 If Members agree to progress with a Community Toilet Scheme, then further funds will be required based upon the size of the scheme that Members would like to implement. As an example, based on an estimated six businesses joining the CTS and receiving up to £1300 per annum, there would be additional cost of £7,800 for reimbursements. The CTS was intended to be funded via savings made from the closure or asset transfer of existing public conveniences. [*For illustration purposes only, Transferring or closing Faversham Central Toilet would result in a contract saving of £36.5K pa. Replacing the service with six Community Toilets across the town would provide wider access to facilities and cost around £7.8K pa in recompense to the service providers (plus an estimated £3.8K pa officer time for inspections of the additional facilities). However, this would result in an overall saving pa of around £25K.]*

2.11 Councils establish Community Toilet Schemes in collaboration with businesses to ensure that clean and accessible toilet facilities are available to the public at no cost, enhancing convenience and public health. These schemes have been largely successfully across the UK, since they were first introduced nearly 20 years ago.

2.12 The more local businesses that take part in a Community Toilet Scheme, mean there are more public toilet options available for residents and visitors.

2.13 Local authorities that operate Community Toilet Schemes are able to provide fewer purpose-built public facilities in these areas. The maintenance and upkeep costs of the CTS facilities are shared between the local business and the local authority.

2.14 Residents and visitors who use the Community Toilet Scheme facilities lead to increased foot traffic to well-placed participating businesses. This increase in foot traffic can lead to higher sales and economic benefits for the local economy.

2.15 In addition to Council Officers inspections, local businesses regularly inspect and clean their toilets. This often leads to high hygiene standards and are less likely to be vandalised compared to standalone public toilets.

2.16 Participating businesses can benefit from positive publicity and enhanced reputation for contributing to the community. Businesses that are a part of a Community Toilet Scheme have a sense of pride and responsibility.

2.17 Across Kent there are several existing Community Toilet Schemes. Some Local authorities argue that the Community Toilet Scheme provides a cost-effective, cleaner alternative to traditional public toilets and it is the main solution for some town centres.

2.18 Maidstone Borough Council's Community Toilet Scheme operates within the town centre and has 9 businesses that participate.

2.19 Ashford Borough Council's Community Toilet Scheme also operates within its town centre where there are 11 businesses that participate.

2.20 Gravesham Borough Council's Community Toilet Scheme has 6 businesses that participate across Gravesend.

2.21 Dover Town Council also reports having at least 2 businesses in their Community Toilet Scheme.

2.22 There are a wide range of businesses that operate within Swale. However, to ensure a fair and transparent process, without over provision and therefore higher costs, the selection of businesses to take part in Swale Borough Council's Community Toilet Scheme should follow an agreed set of criteria. Sections 2.23 - 2.36 cover the proposed criteria for our scheme.

2.23 **Location** - The most important factor in determining whether a business can join the Community Toilet Scheme is the location of the business. Businesses must be well placed with a priority towards locations that Swale maintained public conveniences have been closed.

2.24 Factors that determine the criteria are distance to nearest public convenience and the population it serves.

2.25 In order to benefit residents, visitors and the businesses themselves and prevent oversupply, no other public toilet (including Community Toilet Scheme toilets) should be available within a 1 mile (1.6 km) radius. That is, businesses interested in the scheme must meet the first aspect of the location criteria where there are no other public toilets within a 1 mile (1.6 km) radius.

2.26 The population served by a business wishing to take part in the Community Toilet Scheme must be substantial. Priority is given to locations in town centres, beachfronts or those that serve people who are particularly vulnerable. Businesses taking part in the Community Toilet Scheme cannot be in remote locations that will not make a significant impact. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

2.27 **Operating Hours** - Local businesses may operate on the days and hours that best suits their needs and still be a part of the Community Toilet Scheme.

2.28 Nonetheless, to ensure that residents and visitors can best benefit from public toilets there are requirements on how often business will offer their facilities. Specifically, the number of days the Community Toilet Scheme business operate and the amounts of hours they are open for in a given week.

2.29 To meet the operating hours criteria, businesses are expected to operate a minimum of 6 days each week.

2.30 Businesses must also be open to members of the public at least 42 hours each week.

2.31 **Facilities** - Inclusive public toilets are designed to serve the widest range of users, providing features such as wheelchair access and baby-changing facilities. Despite this, many businesses may not always have these facilities available.

2.32 All businesses are required to have wheelchair access to members of the public who want to use toilets free of charge.

2.33 Baby changing facilities are not a requirement of the facility's criteria. Though, businesses with baby changing facilities are prioritised.

2.34 **Longevity** - It is important that businesses that take part in the Community Toilet Scheme remain a part of the scheme as long as possible. Businesses that withdraw from the scheme causes reputational damage as well as administrative burdens.

2.35 To mitigate high turnover rates within the Community Toilet Scheme, only businesses that have a proven track record of stability can take part in the scheme. Many sources indicate that 50% or more of small businesses fail within five years. As such, the Community Toilet Scheme only accepts applicants that have been trading for 5 years or more. This does not apply to franchises who already have a track record of trading successfully.

2.36 **Reimbursements** - Every business that takes part in the Community Toilet Scheme is eligible for contributions towards upkeep. The amount awarded is dependent on the opening hours and facilities available. The business will be responsible for procuring all consumables, cleansing and maintenance.

2.36

Opening Hours of Facilities	Wheelchair access	Baby Change Facility	Award (annually)
42	Yes	No	£700
42	Yes	Yes	£800
43 – 50	Yes	No	£800
43 – 50	Yes	Yes	£900
51 - 58	Yes	No	£900
51 - 58	Yes	Yes	£1,000
59 - 66	Yes	No	£1,000
59 - 66	Yes	Yes	£1,100
67 - 74	Yes	No	£1,100
67 - 74	Yes	Yes	£1,200
74+	Yes	No	£1,200
74+	Yes	Yes	£1,300

Figure 2 to show financial reimbursements for schemes accepted onto the community toilet scheme.

3 Recommendations

3.1 That members discuss the next steps for those facilities not being transferred to other organisations and advise if they support further closures to create additional savings to deliver the Medium-Term Financial Plan and fund the costs of a Community Toilet Scheme.

3.2 To endorse the Community Toilet Scheme selection criteria based on location, operating hours, facilities and longevity of interested businesses and for Members to identify how the scheme will be funded sustainably

3.3 To agree the reimbursement figures for approved scheme members once sustainable funding has been identified.

3.4 To refer to Policy and Resources Committee should the costs of any decisions exceed the available budget.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

4.1 **Option 1** - The ‘do nothing’ option would be to not implement the Community Toilet Scheme. This option was rejected as the CTS scheme would offer a ‘value for money’ option to provide additional clean and accessible toilet facilities at convenient locations. Businesses, residents, visitors and Members have indicated support for the Community Toilet Scheme. However, the option to not introduce the CTS may be a valid option if there are no funds identified for the CTS scheme.

4.2 **Option 2** - Offer businesses no reimbursement for allowing residents and visitors to use their facilities. Although this would be the most financially beneficial option for the Council, this would not encourage collaboration with businesses and is unlikely to attract any scheme participants.

4.3 **Option 3** - To offer businesses more financial incentives would potentially attract more scheme participants. However, this option would negatively affect the Council's financial position more than the current proposals.

4.4 **Option 4** - To encourage a more extensive uptake of Community toilets, including in areas where the council currently has public facilities (paragraph 2.25 suggests proposes not to open a community toilet within 1 mile of a public toilet). With a successful network of community toilets in place then the council facilities could be closed to fund the costs of the CTS and make necessary savings. 'Invest to Save' funding streams may need to be identified in the short term for this option. The new contract was set up to allow the removal of some facilities in some areas at no additional charge i.e if an asset was to be transferred or closed.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 Businesses that initially expressed an interest in the Community Toilet Scheme were asked how much it currently cost to maintain their toilets. They were also asked what percentage of contributions they think would be suitable from the Council towards the upkeep of facilities. This helped formulate figures in Figure 2.

5.2 Fifty-three businesses across the borough were engaged with. Six advised that they would be interested in joining the Community Toilet Scheme and three said that they would not. The remainder did not respond.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The Community Toilet Scheme supports several Corporate Plan objectives. These include 'Running the Council' by working within our resources and delivering in a transparent and efficient way. The 'Economy' objective is supported through working with businesses to increase customer footfall and free facilities for local people.
Financial, Resource and Property	The Environment Services and Climate Change Committee delegated authority to the Section 151 Officer and Head of Legal to award a Provision of Minor Maintenance and Cleansing of Public Conveniences Contract to the winning bid.

	Following a full procurement exercise, the Provision of Minor Maintenance and Cleansing of Public Conveniences Contract cost increased from the previous tender several years earlier. This is primarily due to inflation and the uncertainty risks associated with several facilities that were anticipated to be closed or transferred to Town and Parish Councils pending negotiations. The new contract cost from 2026/27 is £299.3K. Members previously made a decision to implement a £100K saving in public conveniences – which reduced the budget from £350K to £250K in 2026-27. However, an additional £50K contribution was added as a contingency during budget setting to recognise the expected increase in contract costs. Work to date alongside facility closures have resulted in an overall £50K saving towards the £100K target set by Members. There is currently no budget to fund a Community Toilet Scheme without a new funding stream or savings such as transfers or closures being identified. Based on an estimated six businesses joining the CTS and receiving up to £1300 per annum, there would be additional cost of £7,800 for reimbursements. Swale Council Officers will be required to undertake regular compliance inspections at any Community Toilet Schemes. Inspections currently take place at public conveniences so resources will depend upon how many current facilities close and how many new Community Toilets activate. Based upon an estimate of 3 hours per month to encompass all related activities (travel, inspection, report, feedback, resolutions etc), the workload equates to 0.02FTE pa per facility. This is the cost equivalent of £773 pa per facility. This report invites discussion on the next steps for those facilities not being transferred to other organisations. Further closures would produce additional savings to support the Medium-Term Financial Plan.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	There is no statutory requirement for the Council to provide public conveniences. Legal officers have viewed the proposed selection criteria and created an associated agreement document for representatives of

	participating businesses to sign once accepted onto the Community Toilet Scheme.
Crime and Disorder	Public conveniences can be subjected to vandalism. Private facilities which are part of a business are less likely to get vandalised.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	None
Health and Wellbeing	The provision of public conveniences can bring health and wellbeing benefits to members of the public. Residents with health issues may rely on public toilets when making decisions to visit local areas. A Community Toilet Scheme may result in more toilets being available making them more accessible to residents.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	Toilet provision is important to some vulnerable residents. Public conveniences may be particularly beneficial for older people, those with disabilities, pregnant women and children.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	There is risk of reputational damage if the ‘community toilet’ scheme fails to meet commitments. Through regular inspections, legal agreements and intensive promotion, these risks are minimised. There is a risk that decisions to close SBC toilets are based on information that cannot be sustained e.g. community toilet operators may close the overall business or decide not continue with the scheme in the long term.
Equality and Diversity	The introduction of Community Toilet Scheme facilities positively impacts particular groups, including older people, families with small children, disabled people and pregnant women. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken as part of the Public Conveniences Review in 2025. Closures clearly can impact some protected characteristics which is why clear evidence based decision is required.
Privacy and Data Protection	None.
Local Government Reorganisation	Many other Local Authorities already operate a community toilet scheme.

7 Appendices

Appendix I: Equality Impact Assessment for Community Toilet Scheme.

8 Background Papers

12 November 2025, Environmental Services and Climate Change - Public Conveniences Review - Consultation Outcome
https://democracy.swale.gov.uk/documents/s32014/Environmental%20Services%20and%20Climate%20Change%20-%20Public%20Conveniences%20Review%20Consultation%20Outcome.pdf

Equality Impact Assessment for the initial public conveniences review
https://democracy.swale.gov.uk/documents/s32016/Appendix%20II%20-%20Equality%20Impact%20Assessment.pdf

Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a document that summarises how the council has had due regard to the public sector equality duty (Equality Act 2010) in decision-making.

When to assess

An EIA should be carried out when you are changing, removing or introducing a new service, policy or function. The assessment should be proportionate; a major financial decision will need to be assessed more closely than a minor policy change.

Public sector equality duty

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the council, when exercising public functions, to have due regard to the need to:

1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

These are known as the three aims of the general equality duty.

Protected characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 sets out nine protected characteristics that apply to the equality duty:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership*
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Ethnicity
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

*For marriage and civil partnership, only the first aim of the duty applies in relation to employment.

We also ask you to consider other socially excluded groups, which could include people who are geographically isolated from services, with low literacy skills or living in poverty or low incomes; this may impact on aspirations, health or other areas of their life which are not protected by the Equality Act, but should be considered when delivering services.

Due regard

To 'have due regard' means that in making decisions and in its other day-to-day activities the council must consciously consider the need to do the things set out in the general equality duty: eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

How much regard is 'due' will depend on the circumstances and in particular on the relevance of the aims in the general equality duty to the decision or function in question. The greater the relevance and potential impact, the higher the regard required by the duty. The three aims of the duty may be more relevant to some functions than others; or they may be more relevant to some protected characteristics than others.

Collecting and using equality information

The Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) states that 'Having due regard to the aims of the general equality duty requires public authorities to have an adequate evidence base for their decision making'. We need to make sure that we understand the potential impact of decisions on people with different protected characteristics. This will help us to reduce or remove unhelpful impacts. We need to consider this information before and as decisions are being made.

There are a number of publications and websites that may be useful in understanding the profile of users of a service, or those who may be affected.

- The Office for National Statistics Neighbourhoods website https://www.ons.gov.uk/
- Kent County Council Facts and Figures about Kent http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/information-and-data/Facts-and-figures-about-Kent
- Public health and social care data http://www.kpho.org.uk/search?mode=results&queries_exclude_query=no&queries_excludefromsearch_query=yes&queries_keyword_query=Swale

At this stage you may find that you need further information and will need to undertake engagement or consultation. Identify the gaps in your knowledge and take steps to fill these.

Case law principles

A number of principles have been established by the courts in relation to the equality duty and due regard:

- Decision-makers in public authorities must be aware of their duty to have 'due regard' to the equality duty
- Due regard is fulfilled before and at the time a particular policy is under consideration as well as at the time a decision is taken. Due regard involves a conscious approach and state of mind.
- A public authority cannot satisfy the duty by justifying a decision after it has been taken.
- The duty must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision.
- The person completing the EIA should have knowledge and understanding of the service, policy, strategy, practice, plan.
- The duty is a non-delegable one. The duty will always remain the responsibility of the public authority.
- A public authority is responsible for ensuring that any contracted organisations which provide services on their behalf can comply with the duty, are required in contracts to comply with it, and do comply in practice.
- The duty is a continuing one. It applies when a service, policy, strategy, practice or plan is developed or agreed, and when it is implemented or reviewed.
- It is good practice for those exercising public functions to keep an accurate record showing that they have actually considered the general duty and pondered relevant questions. Proper record keeping encourages transparency and will discipline those carrying out the relevant function to undertake the duty conscientiously.
- The general equality duty is not a duty to achieve a result, it is a duty to have due regard to the need achieve the aims of the duty.
- A public authority will need to consider whether it has sufficient information to assess the effects of the policy, or the way a function is being carried out, on the aims set out in the general equality duty.
- A public authority cannot avoid complying with the duty by claiming that it does not have enough resources to do so.

Lead officer:	Alister Andrews, Environmental Services Manager
Decision maker:	Environment and Climate Change Committee
People involved:	Martyn Cassell, Head of Environment and Leisure (for service provision) Andre Bowen, Service Improvement and Project Manager

Decision: • Policy, project, service, contract • Review, change, new, stop	• New service - Introduction of a Community Toilet Scheme
Date of decision: The date when the final decision is made. The EIA must be complete before this point and inform the final decision.	08th July 2026
Summary of the decision: • Aims and objectives • Key actions • Expected outcomes • Who will be affected and how? • How many people will be affected?	Local authorities that operate community toilet schemes are able to reduce the costs of public toilets provision. The maintenance and upkeep costs are shared between the local business and the local authority. The key actions are; (1) To endorse the Community Toilet Scheme selection criteria based on location, operating hours, facilities and longevity of interested businesses. (2) To agree the reimbursements for approved scheme members. (3) To identify how the scheme can be funded sustainably. The expected outcomes include; • Support the Corporate Plan objective of 'Running the Council' by working within our resources and delivering in a transparent and efficient way. • Support the Corporate Plan objective of 'Economy' objective is supported through working with businesses to increase customer footfall and free facilities for local people. • Support the Corporate Equality Scheme priority 'Supporting vulnerable residents - by supporting Swale's more vulnerable residents, particularly those with a disability'. • Support more local businesses to take part in a community toilet scheme, leading to more public toilet options available for residents and visitors. This can make areas more attractive to tourists, enhancing the overall visitor experience. Any member of the public, including residents, visitors and tourists will be affected. The proposals affect all the wards' local residents as well as visitors, tourists and residents from neighbouring wards.
Information and research: • Outline the information and research that has informed the decision. • Include sources and key findings. • Include information on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics.	Local government councils establish Community Toilet Schemes in collaboration with businesses to ensure that clean and accessible toilet facilities are available to the public at no cost, enhancing convenience and public health. These schemes have been largely successful across the UK, since they were first introduced nearly 20 years ago. That is; • The more local businesses that take part in a community toilet scheme, mean there are more public toilet options available for residents and visitors including the elderly, people with a disability, pregnant women and children. More availability means that the distance to travel should reduce based upon the likelihood that there will be more facilities available. • Residents and visitors who use the nearest public toilets available leads to increased foot traffic to well-placed

	participating businesses. This increase in foot traffic can lead to higher sales and economic benefits for the local economy. • Across Kent there several Community Toilet Schemes across various authorities. • Consulted potential businesses suitable for the proposed Community Toilet Scheme. • Some homeless residents use current public convenience facilities. Homeless persons should still be able to use any new CTS premises and a range of SBC facilities will remain in key locations. • The paper discusses the financial risks of over-supply of public conveniences. A proposal suggests an agreed distance between facilities of 1 mile or more when reviewing suitability. One mile may seem excessive to some individuals with certain protected characteristics. The intention is to have facilities in busy areas such as town centres but not in every square mile of the borough. Members may discuss and suggest alternative acceptance criteria.
Consultation: • Has there been specific consultation on this decision? • What were the results of the consultation? • Did the consultation analysis reveal any difference in views across the protected characteristics? • Can any conclusions be drawn from the analysis on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics?	A public consultation lasting 12 weeks was opened to Swale residents, visitors, community groups and businesses to ensure as many people could take part. There were also posters in all the public toilet facilities, posters in all Council offices along with paper forms, advertised on the Swale website and social media, shared with the local press, Area Committee presentations and directly contacting representative organisations (such as, Swale CVS, Age UK, Swale Seniors Forum, Freedom Centre and others). Six businesses have expressed an interest in allowing members of the public to use their toilets without purchasing any goods or paying a fee. The recommended fees for joining the CTS were proposed after reviewing the costs in other areas where schemes already operate successfully.

Is the decision relevant to the aims of the equality duty?
Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC's PSED Technical Guidance - https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-technical-guidance

Aim	Yes/No
1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	No
2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	Yes
3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	No

Assess the relevance of the decision to people with different protected characteristics and assess the impact of the decision on people with different protected characteristics.
When assessing relevance and impact, make it clear who the assessment applies to within the protected characteristic category. For example, a decision may have high relevance for young people but low relevance for older people; it may have a positive impact on women but a neutral impact on men.

Characteristic	Relevance to decision High/Medium/Low/None	Impact of decision Positive/Negative/Neutral
Age	Medium	Positive
Disability	Medium	Positive
Gender reassignment	None	Neutral
Marriage and civil partnership	None	Neutral
Pregnancy and maternity	Medium	Positive
Ethnicity	None	Neutral
Religion or belief	None	Neutral
Sex	None	Neutral
Sexual orientation	None	Neutral
Other socially excluded groups[1] - Homeless persons	None	Neutral

Conclusion:	**Summarise this conclusion in the body of your report**
• Consider how due regard has been had to the equality duty, from start to finish. • There should be no unlawful discrimination arising from the decision. Advise on the overall equality implications that should be taken into account in the final decision, considering relevance and impact.	The introduction of Community Toilet Scheme facilities positively impacts particular groups, including older people, families with small children, disabled people and pregnant women. Age - as people age, the prevalence of health problems and disabilities rises. Conditions that require older persons to use toilet facilities more frequently. Younger people - families with young children may be impacted by a reduction in facilities, particular if facilities with baby changing are reduced. The new Community Toilet Scheme will favour premises with baby changing facilities, but premises will not be rejected from consideration if they do not have these facilities. Currently, there is no legal requirement to provide baby changing facilities as there is no duty to provide public conveniences. Disability - access to public toilets can affect how disabled people participate in daily activities, especially those with diseases that necessitate regular use of facilities (e.g., Crohn's disease, prostate cancer, IBD, and colitis). People who require accessible toilets could also be disproportionately impacted, both in terms of the location for those with mobility issues and the availability of disabled public toilets. Pregnancy - pregnant women are also more likely have frequent use of toilet facilities. The Council does not have a statutory responsibility to provide public conveniences, but in order to continue to be able to provide a service it is recommended to work with local businesses. Swale residents and visitors will be informed about the locations of publicly accessible toilets. This will enable them to plan their journeys more effectively, whether shopping, socialising, or visiting local attractions. Clear signage will direct people to the nearest available facilities, ensuring greater awareness and ease of access. Socially excluded groups - A CTS scheme should be open to all persons including homeless individuals.

[1] Other socially excluded groups could include those with literacy issues, people living in poverty or on low incomes or people who are geographically isolated from services

	Further promotion of the incentivised Community Toilet Scheme will attract local businesses to make suitable facilities available to the public.

Timing

- Having ‘due regard’ is a state of mind. It should be considered at the inception of any decision.
- Due regard should be considered throughout the development of the decision. Notes should be taken on how due regard to the equality duty has been considered through research, meetings, project teams, committees and consultations.
- The completion of the EIA is a way of effectively summarising the due regard shown to the equality duty throughout the development of the decision. The completed EIA must inform the final decision-making process. The decision-maker must be aware of the duty and the completed EIA.

Full technical guidance on the public sector equality duty can be found at:
https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-technical-guidance

Please send the EIA in draft to Janet Dart in the Comms and Policy Team (janetdart@swale.gov.uk) who will review it with colleagues and let you have any comments or suggested changes.

This Equality Impact Assessment should form an appendix to any EMT/SMT or committee report relating to the decision, and a summary should be included in the ‘Equality and Diversity’ section of the standard committee report template under ‘Section 6 – Implications’.