

You said, we did and matters arising report

Contamination Project Update

The recent joint contamination project has now been completed, and the final report has been circulated. Overall, the project was a success.

For three consecutive weeks, officers supported crews and engaged directly with residents in areas where recycling had repeatedly been rejected due to contamination. By consistently locking out contaminated bins (not emptying them) and providing clear communication to residents, we saw a notable reduction in contamination levels, resulting in improved acceptance rates for recycling.

As a direct outcome of this work:

- KCC has committed to funding two Contamination Project Officers to support areas with persistent contamination issues.
- These officers will operate across Kent, not solely within Swale, providing wider support to multiple authorities.

In addition:

- SUEZ is developing a contamination reduction plan to support ongoing improvements.
- While the final document is still pending, Alister has encouraged SUEZ to align this plan with the findings and successes of the recent project.

Battery Fire Communications

Work to develop a battery fire awareness video is ongoing:

- Contact has been made with Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS); however, responses have been delayed despite follow-ups.
- KFRS have confirmed someone will be in touch, but no update has been received to date.

In the meantime:

- KCC Greener Kent are producing communications on battery fire risks, which we will promote via our social media channels.
- Members may also wish to follow the Greener Kent Facebook page, which regularly shares useful waste-related information.

This remains an active area, and further follow-up with KFRS will continue.

Recycling Bags and Side Waste

Clear recycling bags are only provided from Swale House for residents on bag collection services.

- We do not routinely supply bags to residents.
- Residents are advised to:
 - Use a cardboard box for side waste, or
 - Purchase clear bags independently.

New Resident Stickers

- New bin stickers have been produced in-house by the print team.
- Implementation is still being reviewed due to practical challenges:
 - The stickers are difficult to peel, which may increase delivery time when applied by crews.
- A redesign may be required to improve usability.

Additionally:

- Officers are currently sticking communal bins as part of the rollout of food waste and recycling services.
- If residents require stickers, the team can assist directly.
- We do have resident packs which will be distributed to any residents that order a new set of bins

Household Waste & Recycling Centres (HWRCs)

- Information on acceptable waste types is available via the KCC website
- Residents can use the online tool to check what items can be taken, including whether charges apply.

School Engagement (SUEZ Social Value)

- SUEZ's Social Value Officer continues to experience challenges engaging schools.
- Despite outreach to several schools, responses have been limited.
- This work will continue in an effort to increase education and awareness around recycling.

Service Update

- From 31 March 2026, all households in the borough now have access to food waste and recycling collections.
- Members are encouraged to report any properties that may have been missed so this can be addressed promptly.

Recycling Update

- Tetra Pak cartons are now accepted in the blue recycling bins.