



Waste Collection Re-route and Service Information Paper

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September 2024



Re-route Background

In summer of 2023, the council instructed Bristol Waste Company to develop a recovery plan to make efficiencies within the company to reduce the need for inflationary increases and reduce any losses. The recovery plan developed by the company included a saving of £250k for operational efficiencies. This plan was approved at the Shareholder at start of September 2023. Following this Bristol Waste started to engage with the client team around the re-route.

The original re-route's proposal included:

- Removing two rounds from recycling collections to generate a £250k saving;
 - Rebalance the 1.6 million additional collections per year accommodated since routes were designed
 - Moving approximately 8,000 properties across the city to fortnightly refuse collections from weekly collection
 - Adapt to increased recycling demand and material volumes
 - Introduce an additional a narrow access refuse vehicle to overcome growing challenges with parking and narrow access
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Background continued...

October 2023

The re-route was approved in mid-October subject to some changes to parts of the proposal. Amended proposals included reducing the number of properties moving from weekly collection to fortnightly to approximately 2,000 to minimise impacts on street scene.

This change was requested to account for further research required to understand the impacts of moving to fortnightly collections on those properties identified for the change. Also, other service improvements such as non-standard collections may be required to progress further before these properties could be reviewed.

Bristol Waste had to redesign the new rounds to reabsorb the 6,000 weekly collections whilst maintaining that services were delivered on the same collection day. The biggest challenge was ensuring that both services were collected on the same day.

The re-route was implemented mid-November 2023 to ensure there would be time to allow residents to adjust ahead of the busy Christmas period and to allow Bristol Waste to start realising some savings, in line with the agreed recovery plan.

Re-route Phase 2

February 2024

It became clear that the impacts were not resolvable with the current operational plan. Issues experienced were:

- Larger number of dropped roads and consistently dropped roads – highest concentration in the north of the city
- Increase in missed collections
- Increase in missed assisted collections
- Increase in failures to return to missed assisted collections

Bristol Waste was tasked with resolving these operational issues. The re-absorption of the weekly collections led to an imbalance where, refuse collections were too heavy on a Wednesday and recycling was too heavy on a Thursday impacting the end of the week.

By the end of February 2024, Bristol Waste proposed a second phase to the re-route which would:

- Decouple the collection day of refuse and recycling for approximately 2,700 households in Southville/Bedminster to enable the heavy recycling on a Thursday to be spread to a Wednesday
- Decouple the collection day of refuse and recycling for 500 properties in Montpellier to spread demand on narrow access vehicle

This proposal was not approved as it was viewed that decoupling would provide residents with a less effective service and there were concerns that the approach would negatively impact on recycling.

Re-route Phase 2 continued

April 2024

Bristol Waste proposed a revised re-route in mid-April 2024 to:

- Continue to change the collection days for recycling of 2,700 properties in Southville and 500 properties in Montpelier (but keeping refuse and recycling collections on the same day)
- With further 3,600 properties changing days on recycling
- An additional refuse collection round to be added on a Wednesday
- Further changes to recycling and refuse rounds occurred operationally but these changes would not have been seen by residents

This approach was approved and agreed that it would be implemented with effect from the week commencing 22nd May 2024.

Re-route Phase 3

June 2024

It became clear within three weeks of the second phase of the re-route being operational, the service did not meet the performance levels expected. As a result, Bristol Waste proposed additional resources to support the frontline 38 recycling rounds.

This was achieved by:

- Analysing recycling collection rounds to identify repeatedly dropped roads
- Temporarily creating four additional recycling rounds created to take work from the recycling collection rounds that had consistent dropped roads
- This was implemented on 8th July 2024

These changes greatly improved the number of dropped roads experienced between April and June. However, further improvements in performance were needed for the service to reach pre-reroute service levels.

The introduction of additional rounds would impact on Bristol Waste not achieving their 're-route savings'.

Lesson Learnt

Prior to the recent re-routing, the last operational changes to the collection rounds occurred in 2011 and over time the rounds have become unbalanced. On reviewing the exercise, several challenges became evident that impacted the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to plan and implement the required change:

- Bristol Waste lead the project as an operational issue related to their financial recovery plan. A joint Project Board should have been created to agree the parameters of the project with early engagement.
 - There was limited detail provided to the client team on the project before it started, including the aims, scope and engagement plans.
 - Project timetable was influenced by the Bristol Waste financial pressures.
 - Late change in scope – i.e. weekly/fortnightly refuse, impacted effectiveness of service delivery
 - Expertise and knowledge of customer facing teams with council should have taken place during planning phase.
 - Not enough preparation time in programme and baselining of services.
 - Limitations of the real-time collections recording system – ‘Alloy’.
 - There is a need for online reporting of missed collections and a pro-active contact mechanism with residents regarding dropped roads .
 - Dedicated project resource / support is needed for a change in service at this scale.
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Ongoing Challenges

Phase 3 of the re-route is improving performance. There remains several longer-term challenges that need addressing to make the recycling and refuse collections as reliable and efficient as possible. The challenges include:

- Cardboard processing is a limiting factor at main depot (Albert Road), this impacts on the productive time of the recycling crews.
 - The change in recycling materials presented has significantly changed since COVID. Card volumes and card collected are a limiting factor, filling collection vehicles first. This results in vehicles having to offload more frequently.
 - Density of housing (converted properties) has increased coupled with greater car ownership. Has increased the occurrence of parked cars obstructing access to roads.
 - Phase 3 service has reduced the number of spare vehicles for contingency in recycling collection fleet.
 - Increase in number of battery fires from collected materials.
 - Ageing vehicle fleet is resulting in higher levels of repairs and maintenance.
 - It has become harder to source labour to fully crew rounds.
 - Lost time for collection vehicles from traffic network issues.
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Planned Improvements

There are six areas that both Bristol Waste and the council are working on, to further improve service delivery.

Increase processing capacity at main depot (Albert Rd):

- Shift changes to maximise evening process within current permit
- Application to extend processing hours in planning permission

Additional capacity:

- Construction of new waste and recycling storage and sorting facility at Avonmouth depot. This will provide additional processing capacity
- Exploring third party site

Increase spare vehicle contingency by:

- Hiring extra vehicles from the suppliers
 - Potentially hiring additional vehicles from neighbouring authorities
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Planned Improvements continued

Improved missed collection reporting:

- Exploring options for improving online report of missed collections, combined with proactive notifications and alerts

Improve the effectiveness of the Alloy data recording system:

- Working to improve data availability and outputs

Operational changes over time:

- Bristol Waste will continue to monitor performance and re-balance rounds to performance reduce dropped and missed collections.
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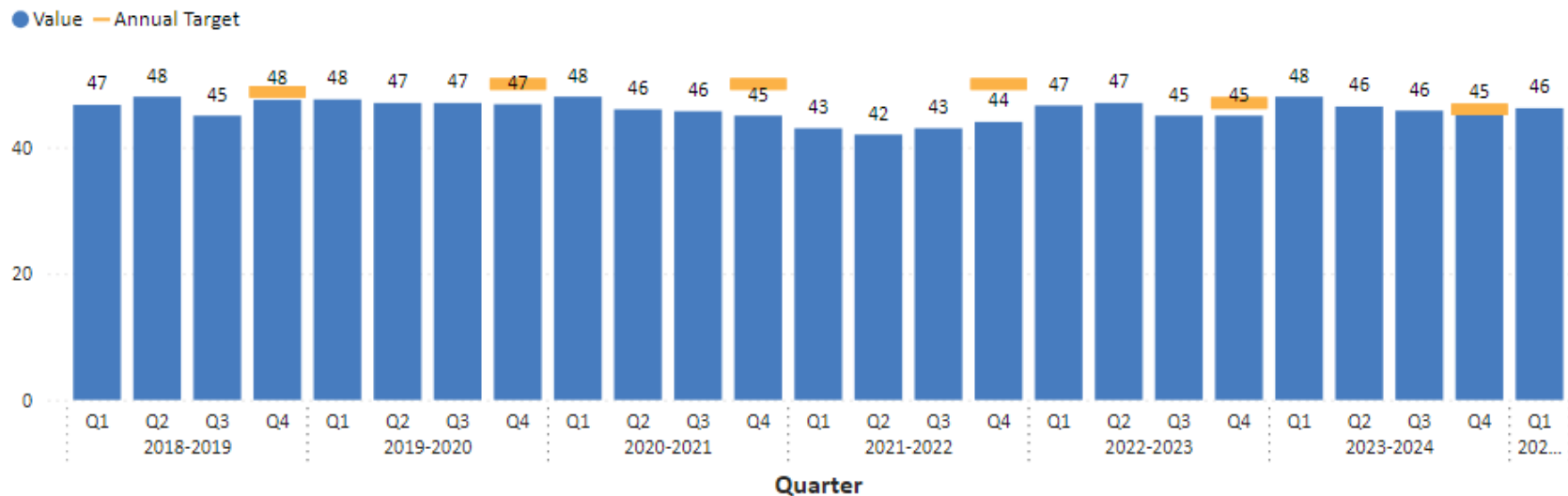


Data relating to the re-route

Impact on Recycling Rate

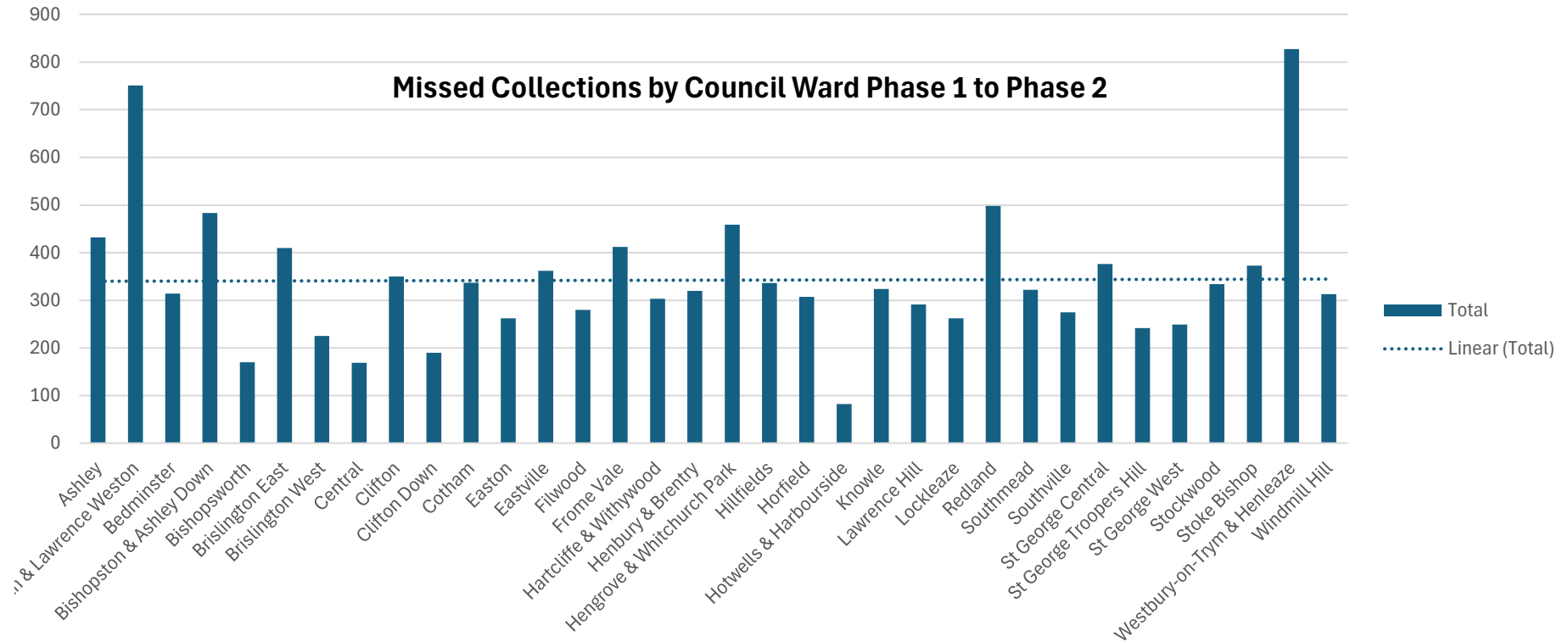
Since Covid in 2020, Bristol has seen a reduction in the city's recycling rate. The performance has remained static at 46%. The past seven quarters highlight that there is no discernible link between re-route and the drop in the recycling rate. The reduction could be partly attributable to a drop off in citywide information campaigns since 2017 to encourage residents to recycle and inform households how to do so.

Recycling, Composting and Reuse Rate (%)



Missed Collection Data – Re-route Phase 1

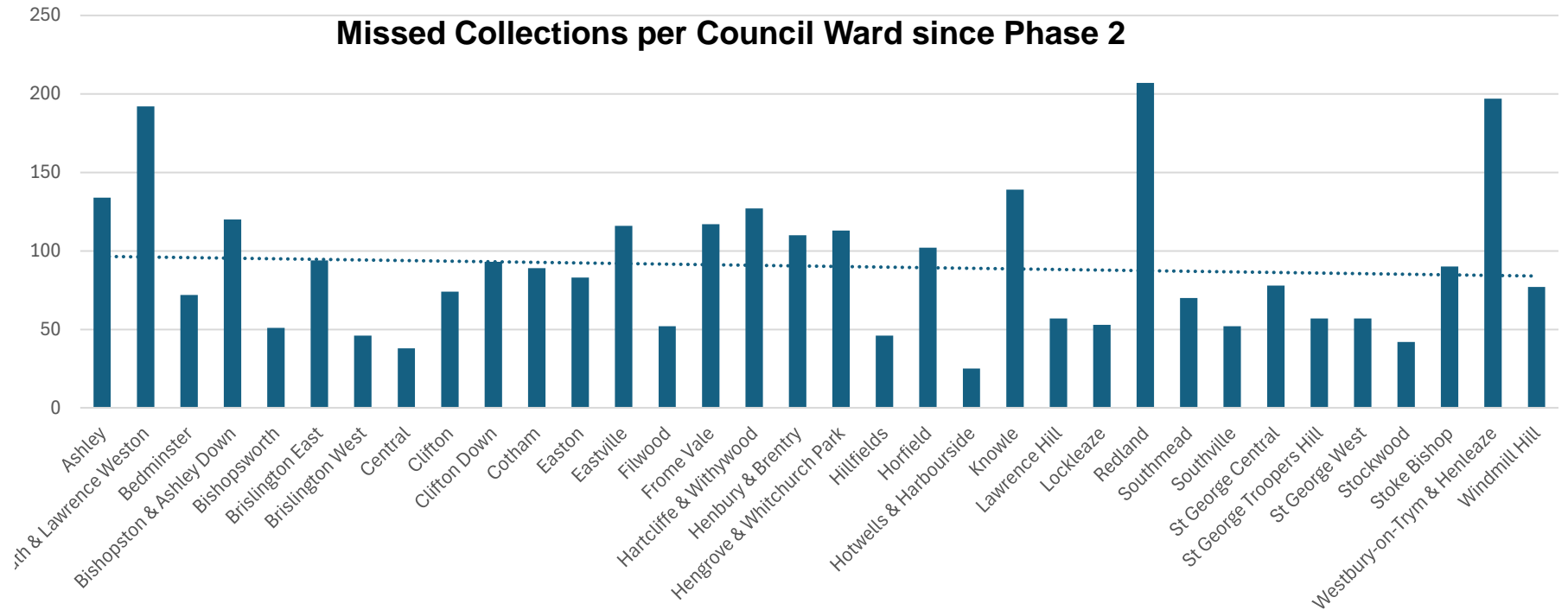
There were 11,640 missed collections during Phase 1 of the re-route project. The table below shows performance by ward. Thursday's were consistently the worst day for missed collections following an accumulation of missed collections from Monday and Wednesdays. This impacted on the remainder of the week, specifically in the wards of Lawrence Weston and Westbury on Trym and Henleaze.



Missed Collection Data – Re-route Phase 2 & 3

There have been 3,070 missed collections since the implementation of Phase 2 of the re-route project. On average, across comparable periods in Phase 1, missed collections have halved.

Missed Collections per Council Ward since Phase 2



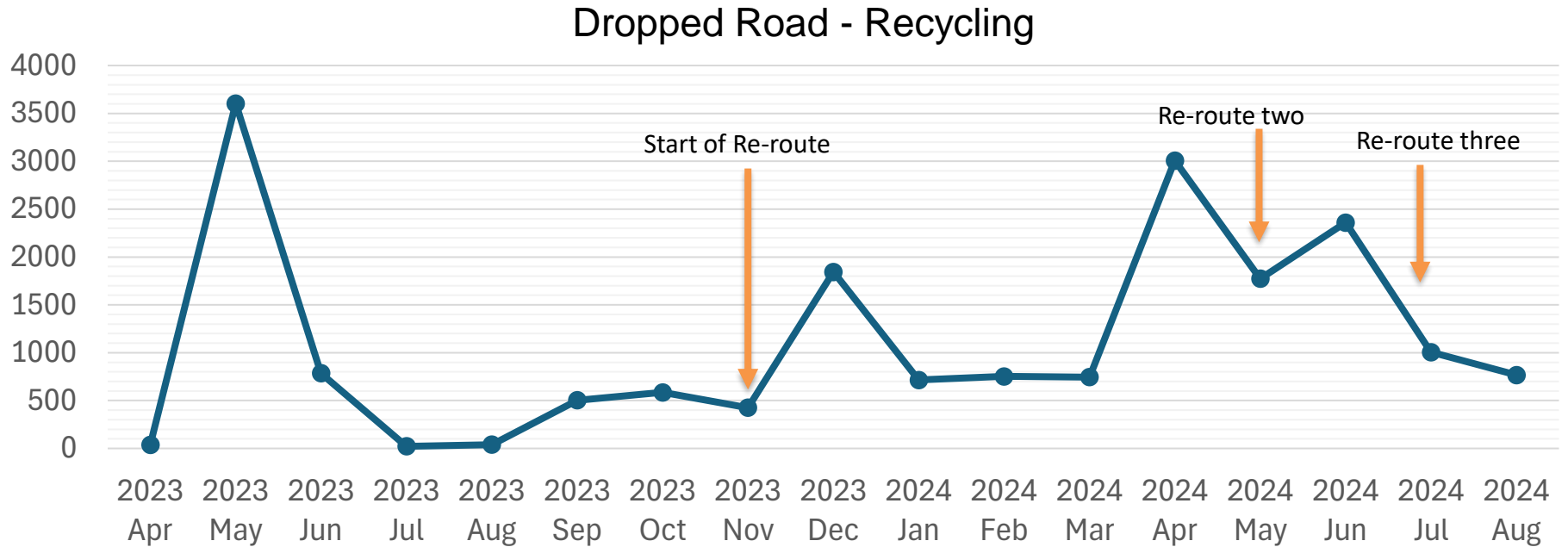
Map of most affected areas

Wards with the highest levels of disruption



Dropped Roads Data – Recycling Collection

The spike in performance in May 2023 was a result of Bristol Waste’s response to an internal incident and the impact of the Coronation Bank Holiday. Number of dropped roads increased slightly from November 2023 to March 24 (including the challenges presented during Christmas). The increase in April 2024 was result of Bristol Waste’s whole staff event. Performance improved during the summer. It is anticipated that September 2024 will show a further drop.



Dropped Roads Data Refuse Collection

The number of dropped roads is approximately a third of recycling. There is little correlation to the performance impact of the re-route and the two similar spikes identified in equivalent figures for recycling dropped roads. The spike in performance in October 2023 was related to driver shortages due to combination of sickness, staff leave and the lack of available agency drivers.

Other factors affect the performance of the refuse collection fleet such as: availability of the Energy Recovery Centres, traffic to Avonmouth (Portway), and fires on collection vehicles due to the hazardous materials collected (e.g. batteries). The August 2024 spike is due to road closures in Avonmouth.

