**Reopening the recycling centres FAQs**

**When are the recycling centres reopening?**

We will be re-opening Weston-super-Mare recycling centre (Aisecome Way) on the 18May for essential journies only.

In line with government guidance, we ask that you only use the recycling centre if it is essential to do so. A visit to the recycling centre must only be made if your waste cannot be disposed of via kerbside collections, or safely stored at home. Ask yourself, is it necessary to visit, or could it wait? Keep communities and crews safe.

You will notice significant changes to how the site will operate. There will be social distancing measures in place to ensure the safety of staff and residents. This will mean fewer people allowed on the site at one time. Please be considerate to others and be aware that a visit may result in much longer waiting times than normal.

Portishead and Backwell recycling centres will open in the following weeks, but we face greater challenges with traffic management around these sites in order to ensure they can be operated safely

We are working hard towards opening all North Somerset recycling centres as soon as possible and will update our social media and website with more information when details are finalised.

**Why are you only reopening Weston?**

The layout of Weston means it is easier to operate social distancing and other site safety measures. Portishead and Backwell recycling centres will open in the following weeks, but we face greater challenges with traffic management around these sites in order to ensure this is done safely.

We are working hard towards opening all North Somerset recycling centres as soon as possible and will update our social media and website with more information when details are finalised.

**When will you open Backwell and Portishead sites?**

We are planning to reopen these sites as soon as possible. We will update residents as soon as the dates are finalised. Please check the website and social media for further information.

**Can I travel to Weston if I live closer to Backwell or Portishead?**

Unless you are unable to store waste at your property without it causing a hazard to your health do not travel. If Weston is not your nearest recycling centre, you should continue to store your waste at home and the other sites will be open soon for essential journeys.

**What would be classed as an essential journey to a recycling centre?**

Journeys to HWRCs must only be undertaken if your waste or recycling cannot be stored at home safely or disposed of safely by other means. By this, we mean the waste cannot be stored without causing risk of injury, health or harm. No other reason for the journey would be considered a legitimate purpose. If you can temporarily store your waste or recycling in a way that does not pose a risk to yours or others safety or human health, then you must do so.

Examples of this would include:

* broken furniture or household items such as a smashed mirror which could cause injury, especially if you have small children in the house
* a build-up of excess non-recyclable waste, where storing sacks is leading to health problems, such as bags being opened by animals

**Are there any changes to the items being accepted?**

We will accept all items as normal, however please make full use of your kerbside recycling and if you can store the items at home, please do so for the time being. Journeys to the recycling centre are not classed as essential unless the waste would cause a hazard.

**Will staff be able to help with unloading?**

Staff will not be able to help you unload your car or lift items into bins due to social distancing restrictions. Please don’t bring anything that one person cannot carry themselves, as only one person is allowed out of your vehicle whilst on site.

**How many people can visit?**

One person from each household will be allowed out to dispose of your waste – If you need someone else to drive the car or need help with your waste due to a disability, then one person from your household can accompany you.

**Do I need to do anything differently before I make a journey?**

* You should not visit if you are:
  + extremely vulnerable and are remaining at home for shielding purposes
  + symptomatic with coronavirus (COVID-19)
  + in a 14-day household isolation.
* Only make a journey if your items cannot be recycled at kerbside or safely stored at home.
* If your items could be used by someone else, please set them aside until the charity shops re-open. Charities will need all our support.
* Sort your items when you pack your car. Split them into the different material types, so that when you get to the centre you won’t waste time sorting from the back of your car.
* Only pack items which you can lift into the skips on your own. Staff at the site won’t be able to help you unload and only one person will be allowed outside each vehicle. Exceptions will be made for people with mobility issues, where two people should unload from the same vehicle.
* No trailers are allowed during these arrangements, as they take up more room on site and take longer to offload.
* Use a mapping app with the live traffic layer turned on. This will help gauge how busy the roads are near the centre before you travel.
* Check North Somerset’s recycling and waste social media page, which will have regular updates.

**What social distancing measures will be in place?**

You will need to stay 2m clear of other people, so you will be asked to wait until a bay is free to unload your waste. There will be reduced numbers of cars onto site, so there may be long queues. Please follow all signage and staff instructions. Only one person will be allowed at each container to deposit material. Residents will need to wait until that container is clear before using it.

**Do I have to book a slot to visit?**

We are not running a booking system, however in common with centres elsewhere in the country, we are trying to keep queues down by asking people with number plates ending in an odd number to visit Weston’s recycling centre on a Monday, Thursday or Saturday, and even number plates to visit on a Wednesday, Friday or Sunday, with any plate accepted on Tuesday.

If your number plate is AB59 REY then your number plate is odd. CD62 WST would be even.

We also suggest you check how busy the roads around the site are before making a journey. You can do this using journey planners such as google maps or AA route planner.

**Are there restrictions on the number of times I can visit?**

You should only be making a journey to a recycling centre if you cannot safely store your waste at home. Due to the changes being made at the sites and the delays this will cause, we are asking residents to consider only visiting the sites once per month whilst these changes are in place. This will reduce waiting times for residents.

ANPR is in operation at sites and if you are making very frequent trips you may be asked to return home without unloading your waste.

**Can I walk waste into site?**

No, you must arrive and leave by car for your own and others safety.