

An Olympic Performance For Weymouth & Portland

Specialist Fleet Services (SFS) first started working with Weymouth & Portland Borough Council in 2005 when they took over an existing 7 + 7 year contract hire and maintenance agreement for the Authority's entire fleet of vehicles.

Less than 12 months into running the Authority's purpose built, 4-bay workshop and SFS had already achieved significant service improvements. The contract was extended for a further 7 years until 2016. Since then SFS has assisted Weymouth & Portland on initiatives designed to improve the efficiency of the service, including a demonstration programme examining RCV's available in the market place.

Weymouth & Portland's fleet currently stands at around 60 vehicles minus Highways, which is now under the remit of Dorset County Council, all of which are sourced and/or maintained by SFS. These include RCV's, sweepers, vans, tippers, ride-on mowers and grounds equipment, plus some specialist vehicles such as a 44 tonne tractor unit with two Ejector trailers used for the transfer of bulk waste from the Authority's transfer station, and a Barber Surf rake for cleaning Weymouth's Quality Coast Award central beach. To date, SFS have replaced 28 vehicles from the original fleet.

Well known for delivering value added services, SFS also assists with compliance checks and 'O' licence audits, as well as organising training and operator training, apprenticeship schemes and regular fleet checks to ensure a good standard of operator husbandry.

A big challenge facing Weymouth & Portland in 2012 was the Olympic games. The waters of Weymouth Bay and Portland Harbour played host to

the sailing events for both the London 2012 Olympic and the Paralympic games. It was the largest venue outside London, with up to 60,000 visitors each day.

SFS were a key partner in helping Weymouth & Portland prepare for the impact of the games on waste collection and street cleansing in the area. During Summer 2011, as part of negotiations for the replacement of the compact sweepers, SFS provided 4x Schmidt Swingo compact sweepers and also secured an additional machine, provided for the whole period of the Olympic games, at no extra cost.

Workshop staff were on permanent standby, stock levels for parts were increased, an additional van was put into service to maximise engineer availability, plus SFS has its own network of floating mobile engineers to call upon if needed. For the most part residents had their refuse and recycling collected as normal but perhaps an hour or two earlier than usual. Street cleansing vehicles operated on a continual basis between 4am and 12 midnight from 26 July-12 August

Mike Haines, Head of Operations & Transport, Weymouth & Portland Borough Council said: "We were well prepared, especially with SFS on our side. We had additional vehicles, a plan for cover plus a call out programme. SFS also made sure that all vehicle inspections and services worked around the Olympics, plus the vehicles were inspected daily, as soon as they returned from service. Every step was taken to minimise any vehicle downtime."

Mike added: "SFS are experts at what they do. They keep our fleet and the workshop running at optimum levels and there is great communication between both parties."

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The logo for Paragon Bank features the word 'paragon' in a dark blue, lowercase, sans-serif font, followed by the word 'bank' in a green, lowercase, sans-serif font. A small green starburst graphic is positioned above the letter 'a' in 'paragon'.

