

Case Study: South Ayrshire Council & MyBins

Transforming Waste Communication Through Digital Innovation

Overview

South Ayrshire Council (SAC) adopted the MyBins app in 2021 to modernise how waste and recycling information is delivered to residents. At a time when collection services were becoming increasingly complex and costly to communicate through traditional methods, SAC identified the need for a more efficient, digital-first approach.

Since launching MyBins, the council has significantly improved how it communicates with householders. What began as a digital alternative to printed calendars has evolved into a trusted, multi-functional communication platform that supports both residents and internal operations.

The Challenge

Waste collection in South Ayrshire is far from simple. The service operates across multiple collection streams on varying schedules, including weekly food waste, three-weekly residual waste, separate four-weekly recycling collections (such as plastics, metals and paper/card), and six-weekly glass collections. This level of complexity created a high potential for confusion among residents.

Historically, SAC relied heavily on printed calendars to communicate these schedules, including laminated versions designed for long-term household use. However, as part of wider cost-saving measures, the council reduced its print output, moving to an on-request model. While this reduced expenditure, it also left a gap in how residents accessed timely and accurate information.

At the same time, demand on customer service teams remained high, with frequent enquiries about collection dates and service updates. SAC needed a solution that could simplify communication, reduce reliance on print, and improve the overall customer experience.

The Solution

The MyBins app, developed by Alasdair and Alex Meldrum, was introduced to South Ayrshire Council as a ready-built digital solution designed to deliver personalised collection information

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directly to residents. Originally developed independently and later rolled out to local authorities across Scotland, MyBins provided SAC with an established platform that could be implemented without the need for in-house development.

Following a period of testing and data validation—particularly to ensure the accuracy of collection routes and schedules—the app officially launched in December 2021 as part of a three-year contract.

From the outset, the app was positioned as more than just a replacement for printed calendars. It was designed to act as a central communication hub, providing residents with real-time updates, service information, and guidance on waste and recycling.

The success of the initial rollout led to a contract renewal in December 2024, reinforcing the value the platform had already delivered. Building on this momentum, SAC began transitioning to the UK-wide MyBins app in early 2026, going live on the new platform in February and encouraging residents to migrate.

Adoption and Growth

Adoption of the original South Ayrshire MyBins app was strong, reflecting both resident demand and effective promotion by the council.

By December 2024, the locally branded app had achieved:

- Over **26,000 downloads** across iOS and Android
- Strong user satisfaction, with ratings of **4.34 on Google** and **4.6 on Apple**
- Overall uptake remains at approximately **45% of households**

Promotion of the app has been supported through social media activity and recommendations from the council’s customer contact centre, where staff regularly direct residents to MyBins for collection information and service updates.

Following the transition to the new UK-wide MyBins app, South Ayrshire Council is currently supporting residents through the migration process, with the rollout progressing smoothly and resident engagement continuing to grow. This continued momentum demonstrates both the success of the original rollout and the council’s commitment to modernising communication with residents through a scalable national platform.

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Impact and Benefits

The introduction of MyBins has delivered clear operational and customer benefits. By providing residents with instant access to their collection schedules, the app has helped reduce confusion and minimise missed collections. At the same time, it has played a key role in reducing demand on customer service teams, as fewer residents need to call in for basic information.

Beyond collection dates, the app has become an important communication channel. SAC uses it to send push notifications about service disruptions, such as adverse weather or vehicle breakdowns, allowing residents to stay informed in real time. It also provides guidance on what materials go into each bin and offers direct links to additional services, including bulky waste uplifts.

This combination of functionality has transformed the app from a simple calendar into a broader engagement tool, supporting both service delivery and public awareness.

Customer Perspective

John Morrison, Waste Strategy Co-Ordinator at South Ayrshire Council, summarised the experience:

“It’s been a great success... one of the best things we’ve done. Our householders like it, they find it useful, and the feedback has been very positive.”

He also highlighted the app’s reliability and ease of use:

“I tend to forget about it because it’s just working away there in the background quietly without any disruption — and in our business, that’s a huge bonus.”

Importantly, Morrison emphasised the app’s broader role:

“It’s a collection calendar, but it does so much more—it’s a communication and information tool.”

Looking Ahead

With a strong foundation in place, South Ayrshire Council is now focused on growing adoption of the new UK-wide MyBins app. The move supports greater scalability and consistency, while continuing to deliver the reliable, user-friendly experience residents have come to expect.

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South Ayrshire Council is also part of a wider transition towards the new MyBins platform across local government. Dundee City Council and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar are currently implementing the same solution, with further rollouts planned across additional Scottish and English councils in the future.

As adoption continues to grow nationally, MyBins is becoming an increasingly valuable tool for councils looking to modernise resident communication, improve service accessibility, and reduce reliance on traditional print-based methods.

Conclusion

The partnership between South Ayrshire Council and MyBins highlights the value of digital transformation in local government services. By moving away from traditional communication methods and adopting a flexible, real-time platform, SAC has been able to simplify complex services, improve resident satisfaction, and reduce operational pressures.

MyBins has become an integral part of the council's waste strategy—not just as a collection calendar, but as a dependable and effective communication tool that continues to evolve alongside the needs of the community.



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