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SOMERSET

SPRING 2020

LIFE

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North Somerset's  
future**



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# Dear reader...

As the new year springs into life in our gardens and green spaces, we in North Somerset are working to find our own green shoots. Residents are aware of the financial challenges we still face. There is a central government budget due in March and their new administration has promised much, but, as yet, very little is there to help us. And any extra money we have is largely through raising more cash from us as residents rather than any substantial funding from the centre. We have been 'allowed' again to raise a special precept of 2 per cent of council tax for social care, but that unfortunately does not address the underlying flawed funding system for social care, which has been the subject of many promised but so far undelivered proposal papers by a number of previous governments.

In the context of North Somerset, to balance our budget we have had to cover a £5m cut in funding as well as £11m of extra cost pressures to deliver our existing services, with more adults needing help and more children coming into council care, as well as wage and other cost increases.

Residents will well know we always look after our most vulnerable citizens as our biggest priority and so we have to do both less elsewhere in some cases and find ways to provide services in different ways. The latter also gives us the opportunity to offer choices to address the climate emergency challenges we face.

We can influence how much car use we encourage by looking at car parking costs. Currently all council tax payers support our 'free' car parking through council tax, as on average the car parks cost the council £50,000 each per year. It would be great for all if there were fewer cars on the roads, for the health of those not using their cars and those already walking and cycling. As a start, I would ask as many of you as are able to join me in a kilometre challenge this spring, make any journey less than 1,000 metres either on foot or on a bicycle. It's amazing how much more I see, how much more I talk to my neighbours and how much less lethargic I feel.

We are also supporting residents to make different decisions about their garden waste. Given our cost pressures, asking all to contribute to the garden waste service through council tax, when many have no garden, and then cut vital services is just not fair. And the impact on our environment of moving around large amounts of green waste when that could be composted must be something we need to do less of. Realising that we need to assist people to start composting, free and subsidised composting bins will be available.

Cllr Don Davies

## The Executive

Cllr Don Davies (Independent)  
Leader of North Somerset Council  
Cllr Mike Bell (Liberal Democrat)  
Deputy Leader  
Cllr Mark Canniford (Liberal Democrat)  
Cllr Ashley Cartman (Liberal Democrat)  
Cllr Caritas Charles (Independent)  
Cllr Catherine Gibbons (Labour)  
Cllr Bridget Petty (Green)  
Cllr James Tonkin (Independent)

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This publication is available in large print, Braille or audio formats on request. Help is also available for people who require council information in languages other than English.

# Zero Carbon group launches in North Somerset

**Grassroots organisations are coming together across North Somerset to tackle climate change.**

Volunteers have set up Zero Carbon North Somerset, a partnership of organisations coming together to encourage people to live within their allowable carbon footprint.

The organisation will provide a way to put individuals in touch with local groups, identify funding to take action, and to collect information and feedback to North Somerset Council.

A new website – [www.zerocarbonnorthsomerset.org](http://www.zerocarbonnorthsomerset.org) – has launched.

It features the top 10 tips for climate action:

1. know your carbon footprint
2. change to a renewable energy provider
3. insulate your home
4. use active travel
5. move your money to an ethical bank
6. try a seasonal, organic, plant-based diet
7. join a local group
8. fly less
9. buy well, less or second-hand
10. tell your friends.

Find out more at [www.zerocarbonnorthsomerset.org](http://www.zerocarbonnorthsomerset.org)

Read more about the climate emergency on page 26.



## Bestselling author to visit Portishead

**Bestselling author Rosanna Ley is visiting Portishead library this month to talk about her latest work.**

Find out how she writes and researches her books, which are set in places like the Italian Riviera, Burma and Havana.

Her two latest books are *The Lemon Tree Hotel* and *From Venice With Love*.

Rosanna can be heard at Portishead library from 7-9pm, on Tuesday 17 March.

Tickets are free but booking in advance is essential.

Visit [www.n-somersetlibraries.eventbrite.com](http://www.n-somersetlibraries.eventbrite.com)

## Volunteers needed to help bereaved relatives

Could you provide emotional and practical support to someone attending an inquest?

Being told about the last moments of your loved one's life can be hard but having someone there to help can make the process less traumatic.

Avon Coroner's Court in Flax Bourton is now looking for more volunteers to join the Coroners' Court Support Service (CCSS).

Volunteers from CCSS are there to listen and offer emotional support and practical help to bereaved families, witnesses and others attending an inquest.

Anyone interested can email [info@ccsupport.org.uk](mailto:info@ccsupport.org.uk) or call 07534 149 962.

[www.coronerscourtsupportservice.org.uk](http://www.coronerscourtsupportservice.org.uk)





## Local partnership helps tilt the balance for birdlife

For more information about the Hinkley Connection Project and National Grid's work visit [www.hinkleyconnection.co.uk](http://www.hinkleyconnection.co.uk)

**Wading birds are being encouraged to the marshy wetland near Tickenham thanks to the installation of a specially-designed tilting weir.**

National Grid has partnered with a local landowner Stewart Plant and Natural England to install the weir on the Tickenham Moor Site of Special Scientific Interest near the Causeway, between Nailsea and Tickenham.

The weir, built to a Dutch design adapted for the site, retains and raises water levels, so creating a more reliable feeding and breeding ground.

The idea was proposed during consultation on the Hinkley Connection Project by local resident and North Somerset Conservation Advisor for Natural England, Mary Trump.

Mary said: "The wetlands are a precious resource and the tilting weir is an impressive feature.

"Unlike traditional sluices it can be safely and accurately adjusted.

"This means we get just the right amount of water to support flora and fauna year-round, creating stability for existing wildlife and attracting wintering wildfowl and wading birds.

**"Peat moors like this also assist with carbon capture and flood mitigation."**

## Exhibition of Gypsy and Traveller history opens soon

**The history of Gypsies and Travellers is being celebrated during an exhibition at Weston Museum from next month.**

The free exhibition will combine recordings of oral histories from Travellers who live locally, as well

as facts, photographs and artefacts to create a vibrant and interactive experience.

It runs from April to June in the Community Gallery, to coincide with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month in June.

This national event was established in 2008 to challenge stereotypes and raise awareness of different groups of Travellers.

Find out more about events at Weston Museum, in Burlington Street, at [www.westonmuseum.org](http://www.westonmuseum.org)

## Communities to come together to mark **VE Day**

Towns, villages and organisations across North Somerset are being encouraged to come together to mark **VE Day** in their local communities.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the end of World War Two in Europe (Victory in Europe) and in the Far East (Victory in Japan).

To mark VE Day, the bank holiday in early May is being moved to Friday 8 May to enable communities to organise their own VE75 activities across the weekend.



Activities could include a street party, poems read by local dignitaries, a short service, the call of a town crier, or more.

Tag any events with #VEDay75NS on social media, so people in North Somerset can find details of your event.

VJ Day activities will take place on Saturday 15 August.

[www.veday75.org](http://www.veday75.org)



## Change lives and earn a bonus

**Hundreds of pounds are on offer to people in North Somerset who become new recruits into the care industry.**

If you want to make a difference to people's lives and help someone stay independent in their own home, a career in care could be for you.

Three of the council's contracted providers are now giving you the chance to top-up earnings with bonuses as an added incentive.

If you join Alliance Living Care, Nobilis Care or Notaro Homecare

in their hospital discharge, reablement, end-of-life or dementia teams, you will be eligible for a Proud to Care bonus every six months of employment, thanks to the scheme run with North Somerset Council.

More than £100,000 has been paid out in the last six months, with an average bonus of about £300.

Community care and support staff work various hours and are paid between £8.50 and £11 per hour, plus mileage.

For more information about working in care call:

- Weston-super-Mare – Alliance Living Care **0300 012 1447**
- Clevedon and Portishead – Nobilis **01275 595 557**
- Worle, Nailsea, Congresbury and rural areas – Notaro Homecare **01934 422 800**

Or visit

[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/proudtocare](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/proudtocare)



# Could you help a child read this summer?

**Volunteers are needed this summer to help run a popular reading challenge in libraries throughout North Somerset.**

The annual Summer Reading Challenge encourages children aged four to 11 to keep reading throughout the summer holidays and have fun visiting the library.

This year's challenge – Silly Squad – runs from Saturday 11 July to Saturday 5 September and volunteers aged 14 and over are

needed to talk to children about the books they have read and hand out rewards.

Flexible sessions are available and full training is given.

You do not need any previous experience of volunteering or working in a library.



To apply or for more information visit [www.northsomersetlibraryvolunteers.wordpress.com](http://www.northsomersetlibraryvolunteers.wordpress.com), email [library.volunteers@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:library.volunteers@n-somerset.gov.uk) or call **01275 888 864** or **01934 426 657**.

Applications are open from Monday 6 April to Monday 1 June 2020.



## Are you fostering privately?

**Private foster carers are being reminded they need to inform North Somerset Council about their living arrangements.**

Private fostering is an informal arrangement when a child under 16 (or 18 if disabled) stays with someone who is not a close relative for more than 28 continuous days.

A close relative is a step-parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt, whether of full blood, half blood or marriage.

Examples of private fostering might include:

- a teenager living with the family of a boyfriend or girlfriend
- children living with a friend's family as a result of parental separation, divorce or arguments at home
- children sent to this country for education or health reasons by parents who live abroad.

Anyone who is privately fostering, or aware of a private fostering arrangement, can contact North Somerset Council on **01275 888 808** or [cyps.careconnect@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:cyps.careconnect@n-somerset.gov.uk)

# Get the latest news straight into your inbox

Stay up-to-date with council news, events and services by signing up to the *North Somerset Life* email newsletter.

The e-newsletter is a monthly round-up of what's happening in the area, including school holiday events, consultations, offers, recycling updates, travel initiatives and more.



Subscribe online and stay informed at [www.northsomersetlife.co.uk](http://www.northsomersetlife.co.uk)

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# Have your say about your neighbourhood

The big conversation 

**Ambitious strategies are being drawn up in North Somerset to keep delivering much-valued services.**

North Somerset Council is now looking into how some of its services are currently run and what changes could be made in the future – and it needs your input.

The council is committed to being open and transparent and a number of consultations are now running with residents and other stakeholders.

These consultations are being grouped together as 'Your Neighbourhood', bringing them together so the council can understand the bigger picture while also showing how each proposal or strategy works on its own.

Your views are now needed to shape what comes next in these services:

- garden waste
- leisure and sports centres
- libraries
- parks and open spaces
- street cleaning.

The council is particularly interested in ideas about how it might work with local communities and stakeholders to create effective partnerships, pool resources where possible and take advantage of income generation opportunities to make these valued services as efficient and sustainable as possible.

 Read more about the garden waste collection changes on **pages 30-31**.

## Speak to officers

Public engagement and drop-in sessions will take place this month for people to speak to council officers in person and find out more.

Tell officers about your ideas for your local area at one of these sessions:

- **Monday 2 March**, 1.30-3.30pm – Sovereign Centre Weston-super-Mare
- **Monday 9 March**, 6-8pm – Tithe Barn, Nailsea
- **Tuesday 10 March**, noon-2pm – For All Healthy Living Centre, Weston-super-Mare
- **Thursday 12 March**, 6-8pm – Somerset Hall, Portishead
- **Tuesday 17 March**, 6-8pm – The Barn, Clevedon
- **Wednesday 18 March**, 6-8pm – Yatton Library
- **Tuesday 24 March**, 5-7pm – Long Ashton Community Centre
- **Thursday 26 March**, 6-8pm – Winscombe Community Centre
- **Tuesday 31 March**, 6-8pm – The Campus Weston-super-Mare



Find out more about the Your Neighbourhood consultations, read FAQs and have your say online at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/yourneighbourhood](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/yourneighbourhood)

Join the conversation 

# Innovative programme to re

## Have you ever thought of fostering but worried about what support you might get?

To give you extra encouragement, an innovative support network has now launched in North Somerset for foster families to connect with each other and share information, experiences and activities.



North Somerset Council has become the first fostering agency in the South West to implement the Mockingbird Family Model.

This programme is led by the Fostering Network and has been created to support both foster carers and the children they look after.

The Mockingbird programme sets up a network 'constellation' of up to 10 fostering families and up to 18 children who are supported by 'hub' home carers.

Hub carers offer peer support to other carers and children in their constellation, as well as training and organising regular activities for everyone.

These social events give the children and young people the chance to spend time together, which helps normalise their experience of being looked after.

The first constellation launched in December and North Somerset Council hopes to have the second one ready to launch within the next six months.

The ambition is to eventually have the programme available to all fostering families, carers, children and young people who are looked after and their families within North Somerset.



Above: Mockingbird Hub home carers Nick and Fran with their homemade banner.

time to care...

# Fostering North Somerset



**Nick and Fran**, who have been foster carers for four years, are the hub home carers in the first constellation.

Nick said: "It is not a radically new way of doing things. In fact, it is quite simple, which is why it works so well."

"It takes those aspects of support that already exist within extended families and informal foster carer networks, and provides a framework to enable all that good work to continue and flourish."

# revolutionise fostering service



The programme offers foster carer-led advice, guidance and emotional and social support, as well as formal and informal training opportunities, planned and unplanned sleepovers and whole community social activities.

**Jo and Martin** have been foster carers for eight years.

Jo said: "Being part of this programme is like having an extended therapeutic family, knowing we have so much immediate support will enrich our fostering journey."

"For the children, it will provide a network of friends to share amazing experiences with, which will make them feel safe and secure."

Feedback from the Mockingbird programme shows that it provides home life stability for children who are looked after and reduces the number of moves they may experience.

It also provides both the foster carers and children and young

people with a strong network of authentic and trusted relationships.

If siblings are looked after in different families, it gives them a regular and safe space to meet and spend time together.

The stability in relationships and placements that Mockingbird provides helps to support fostering families in times of crisis, transition and times of celebration.

The council also hopes that this new model will attract more people to become foster carers in the first place.

More are urgently needed and the council's ambition is to recruit 20 new carers in 2020.

Mark Reynolds, from North Somerset's fostering team, said: "If we can achieve this it will help to ensure that children from our community who need foster care can be placed within North Somerset."

"If not, external placements could be anywhere in England, away from familiar environments such

as schools, friends and hobbies, which provide comfort at a time when it is needed most."

The Mockingbird programme is being piloted in North Somerset thanks to funding from the Home Office Trusted Relationships Grant and support from the Fostering Network.

Find out more at [www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/mockingbird](http://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/mockingbird)

## Could you foster?



If you're interested in fostering now or in the future, North Somerset's fostering team would love to hear from you.

Call **01275 888 999** for more information or visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/fostering)

@fosteringnorthsomerset  
 fosteringNS



# Budget and council tax set for year ahead

**Council tax bills for the year ahead are being sent out to households across North Somerset this month.**

Last month councillors set the budget and council tax levels for the new financial year.

At the time of *Life* going to print, a rise of 1.99 per cent was expected. In addition to this, a 2 per cent levy is also being added specifically to help fund the increasing costs and demand for adult social care.

The demands on the council's services continue to increase and financial austerity has not gone away.

A further £5.2m of savings needed to be identified on top of those already made to ensure a balanced budget for 2020/21.

And looking forward, a further £19m of savings still need to be identified for the period 2021-2024.

Richard Penska, interim head of finance at North Somerset Council, said:

"Making savings is never an easy thing to do but we have a targeted financial strategy to minimise the impacts.

"This includes developing sustainable local income streams from business and housing growth, managing demand for services and promoting independence, being more efficient and transforming our services so they are more accessible."



**For every £100 the council receives to fund services, it spends:**



caring for adults



helping children and young people



on housing benefit and preventing homelessness



on support services such as elections



collecting waste and recycling and looking after the countryside



## Where does the money go?

Council tax is charged by local councils to help fund the services they provide.

For every £100 North Somerset Council has to spend on funding services from its net revenue budget, almost £60 of this goes on caring for adults who need help and supporting local children and young people to give them the best start in life.

This leaves less than £40 to spend on all the other council services – recycling and waste collections, parks and open spaces, leisure centres, libraries and more.

## What can I expect to pay?

This year's anticipated rise of 1.99 per cent, plus the 2 per cent levy for adult social care, means an average Band D household would pay £1,433.50 in 2020/21 for North Somerset's share of the council tax bill – about £27.57 a week.

The final bill also includes charges for Avon and Somerset Police Authority, Avon Fire and Rescue, and town and parish councils.

North Somerset Council has no control over the level of these charges.

## Manage your council tax bill online

Sign up for e-billing to view and download your latest council tax bill online at a time to suit you.

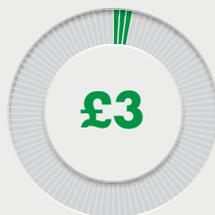
Through MyAccount you can also access many other council services, such as reporting issues regarding streets, roads, parks and more.

Visit

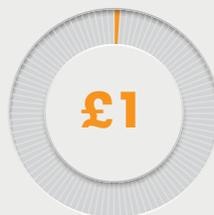
[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/myaccount](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/myaccount)



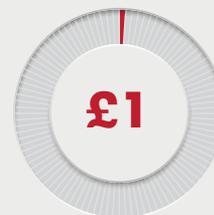
fixing and maintaining roads and public transport



helping people stay healthy



planning new homes, schools and roads



on online services to improve customer access



running libraries, registration services and Trading Standards

# Creating an **OPEN, FAIRER AND GREENER** North Somerset

**Open, fairer and greener is the vision for the area set out in North Somerset Council's new corporate plan.**

The corporate plan is the overarching strategic document for the council, which sets out the vision, aims and objectives for the next four years.

It is an important tool to help focus efforts and resources on the right things.

The document, which was expected to be approved by councillors last month, outlines big, urgent issues which need to be tackled – such as climate change, reducing inequality and engaging better with residents.

However, the ambitions also need to be realistic.

Chief executive Jo Walker said: "We want North Somerset to be a great, sustainable and fair place to live, work and visit.

"But we can't achieve this ambition alone. We all need to get involved in shaping our future together and harness the great opportunity we have to achieve more for our people and place."

There are many issues to consider.

Austerity over the last 10 years means that some North Somerset residents have seen their living standards fall, and the council wants to close the inequality gap.

The growing population also creates pressures and there is an increasing demand for adult social care services.

One of the greatest challenges is balancing the pressing need for housing, infrastructure and local employment, while tackling the climate emergency and preserving the beautiful natural environment and built heritage.

The council can't do everything on its own so will need to work with partners, volunteers and community groups.

Jo added: "Over the past 10 years we have become increasingly successful at working with partners to achieve more together, and this must continue.

"We must also work more closely with our communities, enabling them to have a greater say and involvement in shaping the future.

"Working together as a community, we can become more successful and a place that delivers positive futures for everyone."

Residents, local organisations and businesses had the chance to shape the council's visions, aims and priorities for the area during a consultation exercise.

Focus groups were held around North Somerset followed by an online consultation. Nearly 200 responses were received from residents and organisations.



North Somerset Council's vision is to be

# OPEN, FAIR AND GREEN.

The priorities are for North Somerset to be:

a thriving and sustainable place

a council which empowers and cares about people

an open and enabling organisation.



Find out more about the council's vision, aims and priorities for the area by reading the corporate plan online at

[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/corporateplan](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/corporateplan)

Read more about the climate emergency on **page 26**

## The big conversation



Results showed that 66 per cent of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that it was the right vision for North Somerset; 16 per cent were neutral; and 18 per cent did not agree it was the right vision.

In addition, 73 per cent either agreed or strongly agreed they were the right aims for North Somerset.

# New research highlights national significance of hillfort

New research has further highlighted the national significance of the Iron Age hillfort overlooking Weston-super-Mare – but the site is at risk.

Worlebury Camp Iron Age hillfort is a scheduled monument and one of the most significant in the country because of its prominent coastal location.

However, the hillfort was added to Historic England's Heritage at Risk register in 2016 because of the harm that was being caused to the monument through tree and vegetation growth and vandalism.

Historic England's archaeological survey and investigation team recently completed an analytical earthwork survey of the hillfort and its surrounding landscape.

The research provided further insight into the hillfort and activity during the later prehistoric period and provided recommendations for further work to recover evidence for scientific dating and environmental analysis.

Mark Bowden, senior investigator at Historic England, said: "The hillfort was declared a Heritage at Risk site because of concerns over its deteriorating condition through neglect and vandalism.

"The more effective long-term solution must lie in removing the trees which are causing many of the problems.

"This would also open up the site, explaining and sharing the hillfort's significance and value, and nurturing respect for it."

The hillfort is managed by North Somerset Council with help from volunteers from Worlebury Hillfort Group, Weston Civic Society and Weston Archaeological and Natural History Society.



## Why is the hillfort important?

Worlebury Camp hillfort is the site of Weston's first settlement, built more than 2,000 years ago for defensive purposes.

It is one of only about 50 large hillforts with multiple ramparts in England and provides a detailed insight into Iron Age society in this area.

Significant features include 93 known stone pits, stone ramparts and ditches.

## What are the risks to the site?

When the hillfort was constructed, the rocky outcrop without trees would have been similar in appearance to nearby Sand Point and Brean Down.

The trees (the majority of which are not native species) were planted in the 1820s by the Smyth-Piggotts to provide a game estate.



Clearance of the eastern ramparts carried out by volunteers of Worlebury Hillfort Group

These trees now bring three main risks:

- root erosion of features including pits and ramparts
- erosion caused by tree collapse or leaning trees
- collapse of trees across formal footpaths.

Further damage was caused by quarry excavation on the south side and vandalism of the ramparts over many years.

Some trees were removed in 2005 to create a gladed area, which opened-up an important part of the hillfort and protected many important stone pits.

However, this intervention did little to protect the majority of the site and continuing damage led to it being placed on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register in 2016.

## What next?

North Somerset Council owns and manages a total of 126 hectares on Worlebury Hill.

A management plan was adopted by the council last year and its main objective is to uncover the hillfort, to help reveal the secrets lost for the past 200 years under extensive tree and vegetation growth.

The council must apply for a felling licence to remove trees. This would ask to remove about six hectares within the hillfort's scheduled area, and thin vegetation on the northern cliff by 30 per cent.

This totals about five per cent of the total woodland within Weston Woods.

The felled hillfort area would then return to limestone grassland, with significant biodiversity benefits for the ecology of the area.

This approach supports the council's rewilding policy – to allow

nature to reinstate to a more natural environment. If the felling licence is granted, the council will apply for lottery funding to enable the work to be carried out. Funding would also pay for new information boards at the site.

Subject to funding being approved, it is anticipated that felling will take place next winter, outside the bird nesting season.

View the management plan online at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/hillfort](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/hillfort)

## 5,000 new trees planted



Rewilding and re-planting is under way in North Somerset after 5,000 new trees were planted last month.

The planting is part of a rewilding project to create more habitats and help mitigate the effects of climate change.

The project was agreed last July and officers then identified council-owned verges, parks and open spaces as potential sites.

More than 500 people responded to the recent rewilding

consultation and more than 200 people volunteered to help.

As a result, 5,000 trees – donated by the Woodland Trust – were planted across North Somerset during the February school holiday.

There will be lots more opportunities to get involved in the coming year, as the council will be planting 50,000 trees in total.

To get involved email [rewilding@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:rewilding@n-somerset.gov.uk)





# Make a big difference to your local community

Volunteering can bring many benefits – both for you and your local community.

It can help you gain confidence and learn new skills, meet people, discover hidden talents, and help make a visible difference to society in general.

There are lots of opportunities to choose from but local charity Voluntary Action North Somerset (VANS) can help you find the right one for you, whatever your interests.

The charity launched in 1997 and works to strengthen the voluntary sector by matching volunteers with charities that need support.

It currently represents about 600 organisations, has more than 450 volunteering opportunities advertised, and has about 1,200 people registered on its site.

Opportunities might include improving the environment, spending time with people who would otherwise be lonely, or

supporting organisations to deliver essential services in the community.

Green-fingered Fiona Murphy decided she wanted to make better use of her free time and found a role through VANS as a volunteer gardener at Yeo Valley Children’s Centre.

Two years on and Fiona has made a positive impact at the children’s centre.

Jenny Kingston, from the children’s centre, said: “Fiona has done wonders for the outside space and we couldn’t manage without her.



Joy Waspe

*“The gardens are well kept, the children get excited about being involved in the gardening and Fiona has made new friends, learned a lot more about gardening and physically and mentally benefitted from working outside more.”*





Improvements to the outdoor space of Yeo Valley Children's Centre

Retiree Joy Waspe previously worked for North Somerset Community Partnership (NSCP), which provides community health services in North Somerset.

After retirement she was very active with different commitments but still had time to spare.

Joy said: "I wanted to volunteer and thought – why not my past employer?"

Joy is now a volunteer meet and greeter, welcoming new starters to NSCP on their corporate induction day and supporting NSCP's training team.

She's also a reserve volunteer at The Little Teapot Café in Clevedon's Community Hospital.

Joy said: "Through volunteering, I've had the opportunity to help people I used to work with.

"I enjoy knowing that what I do takes some pressure off the training team, and that what I do is worthwhile."

Volunteering can help build confidence and enable a person to develop work and life skills.

Banwell-based not-for-profit social enterprise Osprey Outdoors runs regular environmental and outdoor courses, such as bushcraft, walking and conservation.

The organisation has used VANS for a couple of years to find volunteers who could help promote the roles and activities they offer.

Wendy Watkins, of Osprey Outdoors, said: "One of the volunteers who joined our conservation volunteering programme was initially accompanied by his support worker.

"Over a period of time, his confidence grew and his support worker was able to just drop him off at the pick-up point.

"He now works as part of the conservation team and engages with them on different topics such as climate change, renewable energy, volunteering and cycling.

"As a direct result of volunteering with us, he's now started volunteering at a local cycle group, demonstrating some of the benefits that volunteering brings to people."

## Number crunching



Tens of millions of people volunteer across the UK every year.

An estimated 20.1 million people volunteered formally with a group, club or organisation at least once during 2017/18, and 11.9 million volunteered at least once a month.

This work contributed more than £17bn to the UK economy, according to the UK Civil Society Almanac last year – the definitive resource on the state of the voluntary sector.

## Volunteering boosts happiness



Researchers at the London School of Economics found that people become happier by volunteering more.

When you give your time to others, you attain a personal sense of accomplishment, which brings about positive effects on your mood.

Volunteers who committed to at least one or two hours every week reaped the fullest benefits.

Find out about how to take action for a happier and more caring world at [www.actionforhappiness.org](http://www.actionforhappiness.org)

**Could you volunteer?**

Search for current volunteering opportunities online at [www.vansweb.org.uk](http://www.vansweb.org.uk)

or call **01934 416 486** to speak to the team directly.



# Council amends £5.3m plan public consultation



Alexandra Parade

## The big conversation

Changes include:

- **Trees** – the layout has been adjusted to retain more mature trees in the centre of Alexandra Parade
- **Taxis** – the existing rank near the Tesco entrance is being retained and extended
- **New green area** – a new green space outside the Tavern Inn the Town will be created
- **Parking spaces** – the planned bus stop on Oxford Street has been moved to make way for a loading and parking bay for shops in Walliscote Road
- **Toilets on Alexandra Parade** – North Somerset Council is working closely with the town council to provide public toilets near the bus interchange
- **Gated pedestrianised zone** – the pedestrianised zone will be gated to eliminate unauthorised driving, apart from during delivery times.

This work is being delivered as part of Weston-super-Mare's regeneration programme, which is delivering improvements to key development sites to encourage investment and attract more people to live in the town centre, thereby creating an improved local economy that is also sensitive and supportive of its vibrant heritage.

**Feedback and ideas from residents, local businesses, the town council and developers have helped shape plans for improvement works in Weston-super-Mare town centre.**

Work is due to start on Regent Street, Alexandra Parade, Station Road and Walliscote Road this spring and will take about nine months to complete.

It will include:

- an improved road layout of Alexandra Parade and Walliscote Road, reducing the volume of traffic in the town centre
- a reduction in the number of vehicles circulating through the town centre and Alexandra Parade during the day. Deliveries to Regent Street will be allowed between 6pm and 10am
- a more attractive entrance to the town with improved landscaping and more than 30 new trees planted

- scattered town centre bus stops brought into one location in Regent Street, creating a more accessible and simpler hub
- enhanced cycling and pedestrian links across the town centre.

The project is being funded by a £4.45m grant from the Department for Transport and the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership Local Growth Fund for public realm, highways and transport improvements to Station Road, Walliscote Road and Alexandra Parade.

A further £850,000 from the same sources has also been awarded for similar works in Regent Street.

Extensive public consultation took place and the proposed plan has been amended as a result of feedback.

# ns following

## Weston High Street store gets Grade II listing

Historic High Street store WHSmith has received Grade II listed status following recent renovations to its façade.

The historic branch of the stationery retailer was built by WHSmith & Son in 1926 and is decorated with local motifs and literary quotes.

It has now been listed at Grade II by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on the advice of Historic England.

The façade's lead panels feature carvings of flowers and animals, and coats of arms of Somerset, Bath, Bristol and Taunton.

Weston-super-Mare itself is not represented because the town's coat of arms was not created until 1928.

The frieze above the windows includes a quote from Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus and is carved in the official font of WHSmith created in 1903 by Arts and Crafts designer Eric Gill.

The shop also had a lending library on the first floor when it first opened and this features neo-Tudor

plaster work of rustic scenes and a man holding a leather-bound book.

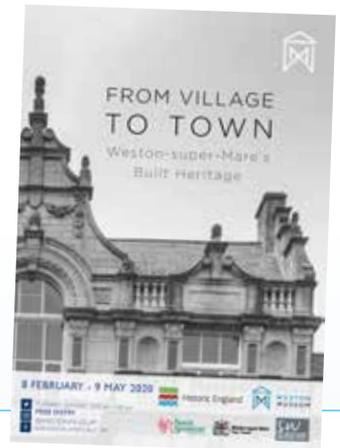
Rebecca Barrett, regional director for Historic England in the South West, said: "As a bookshop and library it has played an important role in the lives of the people of Weston for generations. Its beautiful details add character."

Helen Burgess, group property director at WHSmith, said: "The response from customers and locals following the reconstructive work to the building and fascia has been very positive.

"We are glad that the community continues to enjoy the restored appearance and shopping experience."

The High Street is part of Weston's Heritage Action Zone.

Find out more at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/heritageactionzone](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/heritageactionzone)



Discover how Weston developed from village to town at a new exhibition at the town's museum.

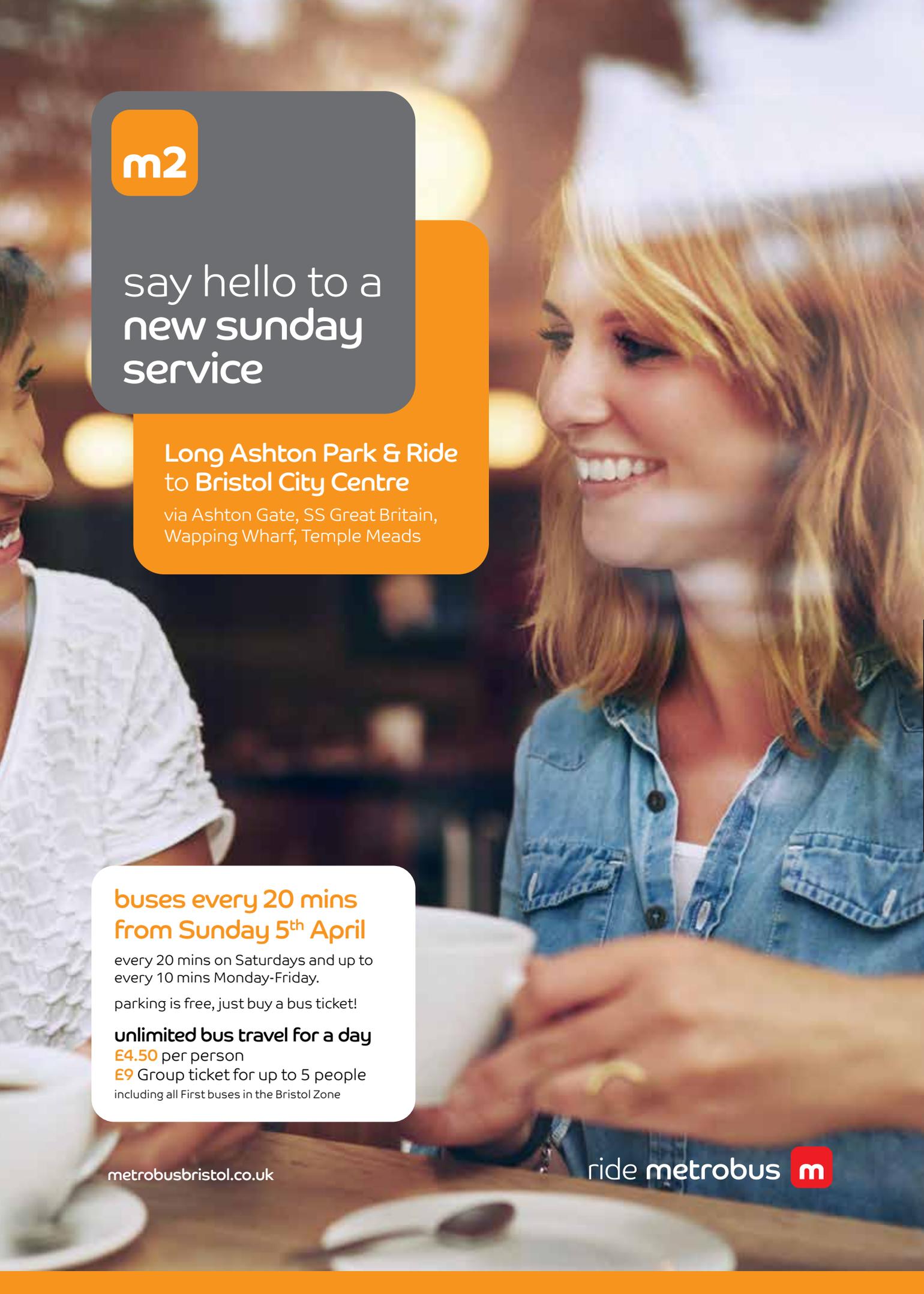
**From Village to Town: Weston-super-Mare's Built Heritage** brings together objects, images and film to tell the story of Weston-super-Mare's architectural development over the past 250 years.

The exhibition has been created by the South West Heritage Trust in partnership with Weston Heritage Action Zone and Historic England.

It is open now until Saturday 9 May, at Weston Museum in Burlington Street.

[www.westonmuseum.org](http://www.westonmuseum.org)





m2

say hello to a  
new **sunday**  
service

**Long Ashton Park & Ride  
to Bristol City Centre**

via Ashton Gate, SS Great Britain,  
Wapping Wharf, Temple Meads

**buses every 20 mins  
from Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April**

every 20 mins on Saturdays and up to  
every 10 mins Monday-Friday.

parking is free, just buy a bus ticket!

**unlimited bus travel for a day**

**£4.50** per person

**£9** Group ticket for up to 5 people  
including all First buses in the Bristol Zone

[metrobusbristol.co.uk](http://metrobusbristol.co.uk)

ride metrobus 

# Creative workshops to boost wellbeing

**An uplifting and celebratory three-day festival focusing on arts and health is coming to Weston-super-Mare next month.**

The Weston Arts + Health Weekender is co-produced by Culture Weston and #UHBristolArts, the arts and culture programme of University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust.

It marks the joining of University Hospitals Bristol and Weston Area Health NHS Trusts and the launch of Culture Weston.

The event runs from Friday 3 to Sunday 5 April, and will showcase the people, places and activity that form the heartbeat of the town.

It will feature dance, theatre, art, music, poetry, storytelling, heritage, food and sport.

There will also be creative workshops and medical humanities seminars for health sector staff, as well as hospital-based arts activities.

The website [www.cultureweston.org.uk](http://www.cultureweston.org.uk), which will list full details, launches early this month.



Photo by Company Chameleon

## Thought-provoking theatre and dynamic dance

Two dance performances will be coming to Weston-super-Mare this spring as part of a year-round programme of professional arts and community engagement for all ages.



Image by Jorge Lizaldi

### Mr and Mrs Clark – Louder is Not Always Clearer

Teacher Jonny is different, growing up deaf in a hearing family. *Louder Is Not Always Clearer* highlights those differences in a warm and humorous way.

The show is accessible to deaf, hard of hearing and hearing audiences, using spoken English, British Sign Language and creative captions.

See it on **Thursday 12 March.**

### Dan Watson – Venus

Dan lost a British holiday camp dance competition as a child, partly because they didn't play his song of choice – Venus by Bananarama.

This performance uses contemporary dance, confessional performance and comedy to re-enact how Dan would like have liked the dance to happen.

The audience are asked to take on the roles of judges, other contestants and enthusiastic family members at the competition.

See it from **7.30pm on Friday 3 April.**



Image by Holly Revell/Rich Rusk

Both shows can be seen at the Blakehay Theatre, in Wadham Street, Weston-super-Mare. Tickets for both cost from £10, from [www.theatreorchard.org.uk/weston](http://www.theatreorchard.org.uk/weston)

# Enjoy bustling Blagdon

Picturesque Blagdon is a thriving community with a long history found within the Mendip Hills.

The village overlooks Blagdon Lake and is popular with walkers, ramblers and fishing enthusiasts.

According to the census in 2011, just over 1,100 people live here and the community feeling is strong.

In 2015 more than 100 residents got together to create The Mosaic on the Mead, a community project funded with support from the Mendip Hills Foundation

It was designed by artist Wendy Phillips and illustrates the great things about living in the village.

There are many social and sports groups, such as the local history group, WI, village lunch, brownies, guides, scouts, tennis, football and cricket.



St Andrew's Church overlooks the lake and can be seen for miles around, with one of the tallest towers in Somerset at 116-foot.



The Space@St Andrew's has been created at the back of the church to host a variety of activities, such as Wifi Wednesday.

A red telephone box, outside Body and Soul, in the High Street, has also been converted to a well-used book exchange. Another telephone box holds a defibrillator.



## Get walking

Blagdon sits within the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and many walks can be enjoyed in the local area.

*Life* has previously published walks here, in the June 2014 and March 2015 editions.

View them, and other walks in *Life* since 2012, online at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/walks](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/walks)

The West Mendip Way also passes to the south of Blagdon, part of the 50-mile long-distance Mendip Way trail from Weston-super-Mare to Frome.

Shorter, circular routes are also available to download from [www.mendiphillsaonb.org.uk](http://www.mendiphillsaonb.org.uk)

Choose from a 2.5 mile Blagdon Lake walk, a 3.75 mile Blagdon and Burrington Ham walk, or many more around the Mendip Hills.

Photos by: Julie Chamberlain, Sophie Moore, Matt Pluchino

## Blagdon Lake

**Blagdon Lake is a well-known landmark at the foot of the Mendip Hills.**

It covers 440 acres, has a seven-mile perimeter and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest for its wildflower meadows and bird populations.

The reservoir was constructed in the early 1900s and from its early days has been popular with trout fly fishing anglers.

The Grade II\* listed pumping station is an imposing red brick structure in Jacobean revival style.



The building is currently not open to the public due to extensive work to the site.

Visitors can walk around the north-west corner. The rest of the lake is open to permit holders only (opening from Tuesday 10 March for season ticket holders and Thursday 12 March for the general public).

[www.bristolwaterfisheries.com/lakes/blagdon-lake](http://www.bristolwaterfisheries.com/lakes/blagdon-lake)

## Did you know?

- Blagdon was called Blachedon in the Domesday Book
- Several Roman coins and fragments of Roman pottery have been found in the village
- There were lead and silver workings at Charterhouse, about 1.5 miles uphill to the south of Blagdon
- Writer and educational pioneer Hannah More founded a Sunday School in the village in 1795, after being shocked at the poverty and ignorance in Mendip villages.

## Traditional fun



Blagdon  
church and Village  
Fête

Traditional fun is coming to Blagdon this May when the popular annual Blagdon Church and Village Fete returns.

The event features the ever-popular human fruit machine and more.

Other events in the village include youth week in August (events for local children), Christmas fairs, a Wassail in January and Lantern Parade in February.

Follow  [blagdonvillage](https://www.facebook.com/blagdonvillage) for updates.



## Eat and drink

Quench your thirst and satisfy your hunger at these places:

- The Queen Adelaide  
[www.queenadelaideblagdon.co.uk](http://www.queenadelaideblagdon.co.uk)
- The Seymour Arms  
[www.theseymourarms.com](http://www.theseymourarms.com)
- The New Inn  
[www.newinnblagdon.co.uk](http://www.newinnblagdon.co.uk)
- Yeo Valley HQ canteen  
[www.yeovalley.co.uk/the-canteen](http://www.yeovalley.co.uk/the-canteen)

# Crucial year to tackle climate e



## Now is the time to tackle climate change before it's too late, according to the world's leading authorities.

In January Sir David Attenborough said the moment of crisis had come and that while climate scientists are becoming clearer about the need for a rapid response, the pace of international negotiations is too slow.

The United Nations has also said that 2020 is the crucial year and that inaction is not an option.

Later this year the UN's climate change conference, known as COP26, takes place in Glasgow.

It is seen as an essential step in getting world leaders to set out in detail exactly what they are doing.

The BBC has now begun a year-long series of special programming and coverage, called Our Planet Matters.

It includes new shows and services with features from the BBC weather department and coverage of debates and events across the world.

## North Somerset's climate emergency strategy

A climate emergency was declared in North Somerset early last year an action plan was put together.

North Somerset aims to become a carbon neutral council and a carbon neutral area by 2030.

The climate emergency strategy contains seven key principles which outline how the council will address the causes and consequences of climate change.

## What damage could be done by rising temperatures?



**A global temperature rise of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels is considered to be a moderately safe level of heating and most countries agreed to keep to this during the Paris Agreement of 2015.**

However, a report by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2018 said the world was on course for a rise of 3°C by the end of this century.

If this happens we could see more frequent and intense heatwaves and wildfires; experience severe droughts and floods; lose the ability to grow crops such as rice, maize and wheat; the coral reefs could be wiped out; global sea levels would rise and tens of millions of people be displaced.

The natural world is also at risk and the UN published a report last year which said one million animal and

# emergency



## The big conversation

**About 250 comments were received during the council's consultation on the climate emergency strategy.**

Of these, about 80 per cent of people supported the council's aims of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

Some thought this was unrealistic but many wanted the council to go further or faster.

### Feedback included:

"As a scientist I know that the climate emergency is real. As a parent I believe that action is vital."

"I am convinced by the arguments that global warming and pollution are on the verge of being out of control. I think we have to take action ourselves and not wait for government to grind slowly into action."

"We cannot do this on our own. But we need to be seen to set an example."

"One of the easiest ways to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions is by adopting a lower carbon diet."

"Poor public transport infrastructure needs to be improved with radical upshift in efficiency and convenience for users."

"Overreaction to something we cannot really control could be very disruptive and expensive."

Sign up for future workshops to help develop the action plan. Find out more and read the action plan at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/climatechange](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/climatechange)

## Do you live in a 'green home'?

**Does your home have special green credentials that you would be willing to show off, or would you like to visit one?**

If you live in North Somerset and have exceptional insulation, a living roof, a ground or air source heat pump, solar panels with battery storage, an electric vehicle or more, you could help spread the word about the benefits of such technology.

A Green Open Homes event takes place on Saturday 13 and

Sunday 14 June and participants are needed to open their homes to the public, and visitors are needed to view them.

If you'd like to take part, either as a host or visitor, email [karin.haverson@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:karin.haverson@n-somerset.gov.uk) by the end of April.

plant species were threatened with extinction in the coming decades because of human activity.

A more recent study found that the growth of cities, clearing forests for farming and the soaring demand for fish had significantly altered nearly three-quarters of the land and more than two-thirds of the oceans.

To combat this, rapid and significant changes are needed in energy use, land use, cities and industry.



# Reducing North Somerset's flood risk

Flooding can threaten lives and cause substantial damage to property, infrastructure and land.



**Significant flooding hit North Somerset in 2012 and 2016, exacerbated by wet summers followed by periods of heavy rainfall in the autumn and winter.**

Flooding is a natural process and can't be completely prevented, but the impact can be reduced.

North Somerset Council works to lower flood risks from surface water, ordinary watercourses such as ditches and streams, groundwater, and drainage from the road network.

It works with the Environment Agency and Internal Drainage Board, which is responsible for tidal flooding and main rivers, to find the best ways of reducing the overall risk of flooding.

Trained officers keep an eye on the weather forecasts to respond to potential problems and temporary flood defence systems can be deployed in areas of high risk.

Where homes in towns and villages are at significant risk, extra flood defences may be built.

## Wrington

A £1.4m flood defence scheme was completed in Wrington last year, jointly funded by North Somerset Council, the Environment Agency, Wessex Water and Wrington Parish Council.

This work includes a new two-metre high, 163-metre long bank, known as a flood storage embankment.

It provides an area for excess water to be held when the Rye Brook reaches full capacity.

A culvert has also been built at Garstons Orchard to carry away water.

The culvert is a box with a screen into which overland flood water can run if the brook does break its banks.

Several properties have also received bespoke Property Level Resilience, depending on their need.

This has included flood doors or air brick covers installed, which seal up vents and openings of buildings to prevent floodwater getting in.

Before the scheme was finished, 79 properties were at risk of flooding – 26 with a moderate risk, 42 with a significant risk, and 11 with a very significant risk.

Now, just 13 properties are at moderate risk of flooding.



New flood defences in Wrington



## What you can do

Flooding can happen in even low-risk areas.

To help you prepare, visit the National Flood Forum online for lots of advice about what you can do: [nationalfloodforum.org.uk](http://nationalfloodforum.org.uk)

## Watercourses

Does the bank of a watercourse run through your land?

If so, you are responsible for its maintenance and keeping it clear of obstructions, such as garden rubbish, which can fall in and cause a blockage.

For more advice visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/watercourseownership](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/watercourseownership)

## Stay safe in flooding

Highways teams work hard to keep roads clear, put out warning signs, or close dangerous routes.

Stay safe if you see flooding on the road or a blocked drain and never enter flood water on foot or in your vehicle. Just six inches of fast flowing water can knock you over and there may be hazards under the water which you cannot see.



## Be prepared for flooding

- For more information about flooding visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/flooding](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/flooding)
- Make sure you have the correct level of home insurance
- An online directory developed by the National Flood Forum gives links to products and services to help protect your property, as well as flood resilience advice. Visit [www.bluepages.org.uk](http://www.bluepages.org.uk)
- Sign up for free flood warnings from the Environment Agency at [www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings](http://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings) or call 03459 881 188
- The Met Office weather forecast app, which is available on the Google Play and Apple stores, gives real-time severe weather warnings
- North Somerset's Community Resilience scheme includes trained volunteers who work with highways officers to spot, report, and solve issues such as gullies that need clearing, in their local communities. Find out more about Community Resilience and help prepare your community for an emergency at [www.communityresilience-ns.org.uk](http://www.communityresilience-ns.org.uk)

## Report flooding

- If there is an emergency or danger to life, call 999
- Report flooding to a property (both internal and external) to help the council understand how flooding affects different parts of the area. Download and fill out a form at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/reportpropertyflooding](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/reportpropertyflooding) or call Council Connect on 01934 888 802
- Report road flooding issues online at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/reporthighwayflooding](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/reporthighwayflooding) or call Council Connect on 01934 888 802



# Changes coming to garden waste collections



**Tackling climate change has become a priority for many people. Introducing changes to the garden waste service will have a major impact on North Somerset's climate emergency strategy.**

Due to the council's commitment to encouraging sustainable behaviour and rising cost pressures, the decision was made in January to introduce an annual charge of £50 per bin. This was necessary to promote more eco-friendly methods and make it a self-financing service.

## Have your say

Consultation is currently under way on the future of garden waste collections in North Somerset.

It forms part of the Your Neighbourhood consultation, which also includes questions about libraries, leisure centres, parks and more.

Many issues about garden waste have not been decided yet so your views are needed, including how to sign up, payment options, bin size, and how to access composting support. The bins belong to North Somerset Council and any unwanted ones will be collected back.

This annual fee will make it comparable to all neighbouring councils.

At the same time, the council will support home and community composting.

Composting is the cheapest and most eco-friendly method of disposing of garden waste, because you can use the nutrient-rich fertiliser in your own garden.

A reduction in the volume of garden waste collected would also mean a vital decrease in vehicle emissions, as less trucks would be needed. Home composting reduces the waste miles travelled to zero.

Join the conversation



Feedback will help inform the design of the service and ensure home composting and other options are available to local communities.

The consultation closes in April and responses will be made public in the summer. If you're currently registered for garden waste, your collections will continue as normal until the new charge is implemented. Residents will be kept informed.

Visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/yourneighbourhood](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/yourneighbourhood)

## Hints for home

Now is the time to give home composting a go if you want to dispose of your garden waste in a more eco-friendly way.

Composting at home is an easy way to recycle garden waste yourself and enjoy the benefits.

It is a natural and inexpensive process which turns your kitchen and garden waste into nutrient-rich garden food.

Compost contains everything your plants need to grow, including nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium, and it even acts as a buffer to soils that are very acidic or alkaline.





## Composting

Composting at home also means you save the equivalent carbon emissions to boiling your kettle for a year or using your washing machine for three months.

There is also no need for extra transportation so it cuts down on vehicle emissions too.

North Somerset Council sells compost bins for £15 or you can pick one up from most garden centres.

Order online at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/composting](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/composting)

Visit [www.recyclenow.com](http://www.recyclenow.com) for more information about how to get started and what items you can put in your compost bin.



 **COMPOSTING**  
IT'S GET DOWN TO EARTH



## Become a litter-picking hero

Help clean up your local neighbourhood by becoming a litter-picking hero.

Environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy is running this year's Great British Spring Clean from Friday 20 March to Monday 13 April and there will be many opportunities to get involved.

Last year, more than 560,000 people took part nationally, doing more than 17,000 clean-ups and collecting more

than 950,000 bags of litter – equivalent to nearly 240,000 full wheelie bins.

Of this, 61 per cent was general waste litter and the other 39 per cent was then recycled.

Keep an eye out for information about this year's litter picks in North Somerset on the council's recycling and waste social media pages, or visit [www.keepbritaintidy.org](http://www.keepbritaintidy.org) and click on the Great British Spring Clean tab.

## Be a year-round litter picker

Volunteers are needed to become year-round litter pickers to help keep their local area tidy.

Register online for the Adopt a Street scheme, choose the street you would like to adopt, and the

council will supply litter picking equipment and safety information to help you.

For more information visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/adoptastreet](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/adoptastreet)

Information contained here applies to households in North Somerset. If you live in Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol or Somerset council areas, you will need to check your local arrangements.

For waste tips, recycling advice and questions, follow the team on social media.

 [ns\\_recycling](https://twitter.com/ns_recycling)

 [NSrecyclingandwaste](https://www.facebook.com/NSrecyclingandwaste)



# Reducing car use brings many benefits



Hopping on a bike or walking short distances instead of using the car can dramatically improve the environment around you.

Walking and cycling brings many benefits for all age groups – it’s a great way to get active, help reduce traffic and improve air quality.

In January, a Department for Transport (DfT) survey showed that 76 per cent of respondents were in favour of reducing motor vehicle usage in urban areas for the sake of the environment.

Also in January, Birmingham – famous for its Spaghetti Junction road network – announced a new transport plan which would ban private cars from driving through the city centre, to encourage walking, cycling and using public transport instead.

Here in North Somerset, the council has worked on a three-year project with Bristol, South Gloucestershire and Bath and North East Somerset councils to encourage sustainable travel.

Schools, businesses and communities have taken part in local and regional projects to reduce car use, thanks for funding from the DfT’s Access Fund.

*Life looks at some successes...*

## Top five reasons for leaving the car at home:

- You’ll avoid the stress of congestion
- You’ll arrive at your destination more alert, ready to learn and work
- You’ll benefit physically, mentally and socially
- You’ll get more quality family time
- You’ll have less impact on the environment.



## Schools

Children have learnt about road safety, carried out travel surveys and enjoyed Bikeability and scooter training as part of a national accreditation scheme for active travel.

In North Somerset, 42 schools took part in the Modeshift STARS, the national school travel awards, and nearly half gained accreditation.



Fifteen schools also received additional free support from walking charity Living Streets to run the year-round walk to school challenge.

Pupils were encouraged to walk to school at least once a week during the whole school year and log their journeys.

Flax Bourton Primary School made great strides and increased active travel at the school by 21 per cent as a result.

The school also set up a Park and Stride group and held two Big Community Walks.

A group of parents were also inspired by the project and completed a sponsored walk along Hadrian's Wall to raise school funds.

Jane Bennet, head teacher at the school, said: "The travel tracker was a great hook for pupils and made them think about it more. We are delighted that pupils and parents supported the initiative."

## Communities

Community groups across North Somerset have benefited from award winning projects.

Boombox Youth Project offers a range of activities for young people living in the South Ward of Weston-super-Mare. 'Bike Fix' sessions, which have

been made possible by council funding, give participants the chance to develop bike maintenance skills and experience



cycling the Brean Down Way and Strawberry Line cycle routes. The project won the 'Excellence in Cycling' category at the Modeshift National Sustainable Travel Awards in November.



eat:Festivals is a social enterprise which runs free food and drink festivals across North Somerset. The council has helped it encourage visitors to walk, cycle and take the bus to its events. This

has included offering free Dr Bike check-ups at the festivals, courtesy of Griffin Cycles. As a result, it was recognised at the Travelwest awards in the Best Motivational Campaign category.

The Travelwest roadshow team continue to spread the word about active travel at public events, offering journey planning and other support. Nearly 200 North Somerset residents have taken part in activities, such as adult cycle training and two-week bike loans. The team also offers security marking and so far has registered nearly 200 bicycles, worth £45,000.

## Businesses

Individuals in workplaces across North Somerset are acting as ambassadors for sustainable travel.

With council support, Active Travel Champions are encouraging colleagues to think of more sustainable ways to get to work.

They do this through initiatives such as the annual Travelwest Challenge, which runs across the West of

England, where participants track their sustainable journeys in the hope of winning prizes.

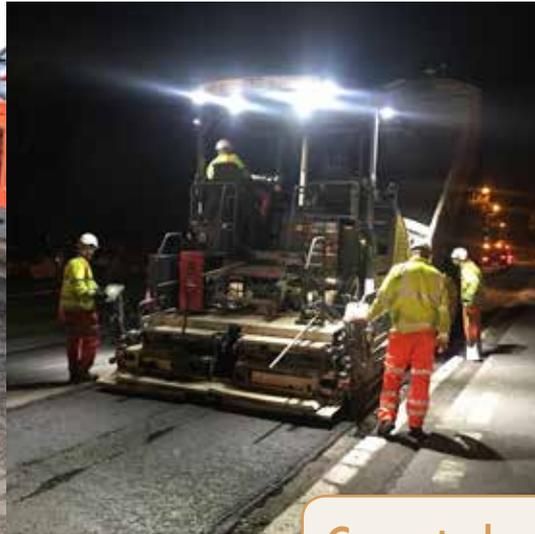
The council's fleet of electric bikes has also been popular for work travel and have covered 2,310 miles in six months.

Businesses were also supported to put in place workplace infrastructure such as cycle parking and changing facilities, with match-funded grants.



Could your child's school or your workplace benefit from sustainable travel initiatives?  
Email the team on [sustainable.travel@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:sustainable.travel@n-somerset.gov.uk)

# The road ahead is p



Road quality in North Somerset is being improved in an environmentally-friendly way thanks to a successful recycling initiative.

Roads in Weston-super-Mare, Portishead and Long Ashton have all been upgraded in the last year by removing the existing road surface, treating it offsite and then relaying in the same location.

The process, part of the council's commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030, is known as 'ex-situ recycling' and has two key benefits:

- **Environmental** – by recycling the existing road surface, huge CO<sub>2</sub> savings are made by not using new asphalt that would need to be extracted, mixed and transported – all using energy.
- **Financial** – huge cost savings are made by not using new materials and not having to dispose of the old road surface.

## What does the recycling process involve?

Ex-situ recycling restores a damaged road by recycling and reusing the existing construction materials to build a new road with the strength and life expectancy of a traditionally-designed carriageway.

It is only used if the whole structure of the road is damaged and if simple resurfacing is not sufficient to repair the carriageway.

Asphalt materials are almost unique among construction products as they can be totally recycled and, in many cases, re-used on the site they were extracted from.

Ex-situ recycling involves rebuilding the lower levels of the road before a new road surface is installed. The process is an alternative to using new materials and helps to

## Case study – Winterstoke Road

Nearly 500 metres of road was recycled at Winterstoke Road in Weston-super-Mare in October.

The £490,000 project involved recycling a 3,330m<sup>2</sup> stretch of this busy route.

The whole project, which was completed using a night closure, also involved fixing footpaths, cleaning and improving the drainage system, relaying kerbs, and replacing damaged ironwork such as drains and manhole covers.

reduce the need to dispose of huge volumes of waste materials.

The existing asphalt materials are excavated from the road (known as 'asphalt planings'), then transported to a processing unit to be used as an ingredient in fresh asphalt mixtures.

The material is brought back to the site to be installed in the lower levels of the new road construction, before a new road surface is installed on top.

# aved with... green



## ad, Weston

The project was led by the council's highway contractors Skanska, with assistance from:

- John Wainwright and Co who completed the on-site surfacing works and transporting of the road surface
- OCL Regeneration for the production of the recycled mixture
- Forest Traffic Services who carried out traffic management, and
- WJ Roadmarkings who marked the road.

## One tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> is equivalent to:

- the average emission of one passenger on a return-flight from Paris to New York
- driving 3,700 miles with a diesel car
- 4,300 kWh of power consumption (which is enough to run a 50" LED TV non-stop for 30 years).



By recycling materials, more than 30 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> were saved during the Winterstoke Road resurfacing works.

This is half the CO<sub>2</sub> that would have been used during traditional road construction.

## Climate emergency

North Somerset Council declared a climate emergency in February 2019 and set a target of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

A series of initiatives, projects and policy changes have been devised to help tackle the climate

emergency, and the measures are set out in the council's Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan.

See the feature on **page 26** for more information.

# Spotlight on parking

## Changes to car parking charges are coming to North Somerset this year and the council wants your help to shape the plans.

Several changes to what and where people will have to pay to park were agreed by councillors at an Executive meeting in January.

However, before plans are finalised, the council is collecting feedback from communities to help it design the best approach for each area.

The proposals were drawn up by a cross-political party working group in response to residents' calls for a fairer approach to parking.

Some tariffs in car parks and on roads in Weston-super-Mare will become cheaper, while fees will be introduced to other areas and charges will become more consistent across North Somerset.

The changes aim to make sure parking is managed in the best and fairest way possible, to encourage turnover of visitors to town centres, to make sure any fees are reasonable, and to cover the costs of enforcement.

The changes also aim to encourage people to choose different ways to travel, which links to the climate emergency declared by the council last year.

Transport teams in the council are now working with councillors and town and parish councils in areas where new charges are proposed to understand any issues.

They will be asking for their feedback and this will be used to finalise plans.



If you have any comments or concerns about these changes then first speak to a representative from your town or parish council or your local ward member for North Somerset, who will forward your comments to the council.

Find details of your local North Somerset councillor online at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/findmycouncillor](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/findmycouncillor)

An online questionnaire is also due to be set up to engage with residents more widely.

The questionnaire will help get people thinking about the key issues and help the council understand how people currently use parking spaces and where they'd like to see changes in the future.



# changes



Join the conversation



As *Life* went to print, it was hoped this would be available in early March. Visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/carparkingreview](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/carparkingreview) to find out more.

Once all the feedback has been collected, transport teams will use it to develop detailed proposals for each area.

A legal process will then follow, which usually includes a statutory consultation, before the council's Executive makes a final decision.

The earliest new charges could come in is the summer, but this will depend on feedback given in the coming weeks.

## Car parks where new charges are proposed:

- Clevedon – Great Western Road East
- Clevedon – Great Western Road West
- Clevedon – Marson Road
- Nailsea – Clevedon Road
- Nailsea – Station Road
- Portishead – Roath Road

## Areas where new on-street charging is proposed:

- Clevedon town centre
- Clevedon Hill Road area
- Clevedon seafront
- Leigh Woods area
- Nailsea town centre
- Portishead town centre

# Violent crime being tackled

Violent crime is being tackled in Weston-super-Mare thanks to a new partnership

Thanks to funding from the Home Office, a Violence Reduction Unit has been set up in the town centre to focus on knife crime, sexual violence, domestic violence, alcohol-related violence, serious youth violence and robbery.

It is being jointly co-ordinated by North Somerset Council and Avon and Somerset Police.

Officers meet weekly to review all crimes in the town centre from the previous seven days, look to identify who is carrying out the serious violence, and develop co-ordinated responses to tackle them.

It has come about after Avon and Somerset Police received £1.16m last year through the Police Crime Commissioner, from a national £35m pot of money from the Home Office.

The same level of funding will also be received this coming financial year to continue the project.

Weston town centre was highlighted as an area experiencing higher levels of serious violence so establishing a Violence Reduction Unit brings opportunities for prevention and early intervention to be identified locally and given a local response.

Community safety manager Howard Pothecary said: "There are already many different strands of work in Weston-super-Mare town centre and it is crucial that all local partner agencies, businesses, the voluntary sector and the community

work together to ensure that these have the greatest impact in tackling serious violence.

"This funding has enabled us to adopt a 'one team' approach, focused on providing sustainable solutions that prevent serious violence problems escalating."

Key agencies involved in the programme include social care, the youth offending service, probation, police, community safety team and schools.

The funding is also being used to support 10 projects and initiatives which relate to tackling serious violent crime in Weston town centre.



*"We want people to enjoy what is one of the best locations in the South West for a night out"*

Howard Pothecary, community safety manager

# ed in Weston

between the council and police.

These include...

- community-based projects aimed at raising awareness of knife crime, sexual abuse and serious youth violence
- funding support services for victims of serious crime, such as domestic abuse and sexual assault
- providing an additional crew member on MAVISbus for three months, the distinctive purple multi-agency vehicle which offers a safe, warm place for people to go on nights out. This new recruit is an expert in identifying, responding and supporting victims of rape, sexual assault or domestic abuse
- funding for teachers and staff to attend workshops to hear people talk first-hand about their experiences within the criminal justice system, to explore the realities and consequences of serious youth violence and how to protect vulnerable young people from being drawn in
- targeted mentoring and wellbeing support for young people who are already, or at risk of becoming, involved in serious violent crime.



As a result of the work of the Violence Reduction Unit, people can now be excluded from the town centre during the night.

The exclusion period is for three months and prohibits the person from entering a defined section of the town centre between 10pm and 5am.

So far, 12 people have been subject to these exclusions.

Howard said: "We want people to enjoy what is one of the best locations in the South West for a night out, safe from any issues that many areas find themselves suffering when alcohol is involved.

"This has been a focus of the Violence Reduction Unit, a small team dedicated to making Weston as safe as possible."



Follow the Safer Stronger North Somerset team on social media for regular updates.

- 🐦 saferstrongerns
- 📘 saferstrongerns

# Enjoy the countryside but be tick aware



**Sunny spring weather gives lots of opportunities to enjoy the countryside but remember the risk of ticks before you head out.**

Ticks are small, spider-like creatures which feed on the blood of animals and people. Their bites can cause serious conditions, including Lyme disease.

They are found throughout the year but are most active between spring and autumn.

They live in damp, shady vegetation, dead leaves or long grass, near to deer, small mammals or wild birds.

Ticks climb onto people or animals as they brush past and bite into the skin.

To avoid being bitten...

- walk on clearly defined paths
- avoid dense vegetation
- wear light-coloured clothing so ticks are easier to spot and brush off
- use repellents such as DEET
- make it a habit to check your clothes and body regularly when you're outdoors and when you get home.



Look out for anything as tiny as a freckle or speck of dirt.

Ticks prefer warm places, especially the groin area, waist, armpits, behind the knee and along hairlines.

Young children are more commonly bitten around the head so check around the neck, behind the ears and scalp.

If you are bitten, remove the tick as soon as possible using sterilised tweezers and grasping as close to your skin as possible.

Pull upwards slowly and firmly, totally removing as much of the tick as you can.

Apply antiseptic to the bite area and keep an eye on it for several weeks.

Contact your GP or call NHS 111 if you begin to feel unwell and tell them you were bitten by a tick. [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/ticks](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/ticks)  
Check for symptoms at [www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease)



## Stub it out this No Smoking Day

**Thousands of smokers across the UK decide to stub it out for good every year and begin a new, healthier lifestyle.**

No Smoking Day, on Wednesday 11 March, is a good time to quit because you will know you're not alone.

Smokefree North Somerset can help you succeed. You are three times more likely to stop with its combination of behavioural support and stop smoking aids.

Support is also available from most GP surgeries and pharmacies throughout North Somerset so contact your local one to see what they offer.



Contact Smokefree North Somerset directly on **01275 546 744** or [www.smokefreenorthsomerset.co.uk](http://www.smokefreenorthsomerset.co.uk)





# disability

# Enabling access for everyone

Disabled people in North Somerset are influencing shops and businesses across the area to be more accessible for everyone.

The Disability Access Group was set up 15 years ago so disabled people could feed back and advise on physical access to businesses and services, including the work of the council.

It has been involved in everything from the refurbishment of the Town Hall in Weston-super-Mare, to the introduction of on-street pay and display schemes, as well as customer services initiatives such as the council's automated operator phone system.

Anthony Rylands, from the council's equalities team, said: "Understanding the needs of disabled people is important to anyone offering a service, running an association or a business."

It's estimated that one-in-five working adults have a disability and that nationally High Street shops are losing £267m and supermarkets £501m annually because of the barriers faced by disabled households.

The Disability Access Group has grown over the years and a wide variety of disabilities are represented within it.

Steve Ledbrook has been a member for many years. He has muscular dystrophy and cannot walk or stand so is now in a wheelchair full-time.

Steve said: "Everyone has a different experience. My needs are not the same as someone who is visually impaired."

Steve has worked to encourage shops to change their signage and



Steve Ledbrook

has been involved in discussions about improving access at Weston train station.

He said: "It's better if you can talk to each other because then things can get resolved. You learn to compromise."

"There are some things that can't be done but it's good to know you've had an impact and improved it as much as possible."

To find out about the Disability Access Group and to get involved, contact North Somerset Council's equality and diversity team on **01934 634 989**.





# Creativity flourishing at co-working space

New businesses are thriving and creativity is flourishing at a co-working space in Weston-super-Mare which has more than doubled in size in the last year.

The Stable, in Wadham Street, increased its shared and office space from 3,000 to 7,000 square foot last year.

It offers small businesses, entrepreneurs and start-ups a new place to call home with its collaborative working environment and access to mentoring, networking, advice and workshops.

It is run by a not-for-profit community interest company and has 15 private offices, which are now fully-occupied by local businesses.

There is also hot desking space for up to 40 people and five event/meeting rooms.

As well as this, there is a beauty salon, dance school, café and a meditation/yoga room.

A wide variety of artistic and creative public events take place each month, such as sell-out live music nights, pop-up restaurants, and artisan makers markets.

Jemma Coles took over the running of the building in January last year and said

*“The aim of The Stable is to support the creation of new business.*

*“By providing a collaborative, inspiring place to work and access to support and a wider community,*

## Upcoming events

Creative business training, writers’ nights, drawing courses, speed dating, code clubs, silent movies and yoga retreats are just some of the events coming up at The Stable. For the most up-to-date listing, visit the Facebook page.

 [thestableweston](https://www.facebook.com/thestableweston)

we are ensuring we keep talented entrepreneurs and small business in the area.

“The Stable is a beautiful building, in a great location two minutes from the centre of town.

“We love what we do and love doing our bit to contribute to the local economy.”

The Stable now has a waiting list for private offices but hot desking is available, from £10 a month.

Room hire is from £8 an hour.



Find out more at [www.thestableweston.com](http://www.thestableweston.com)



# Food innovation centre to open soon



West of England  
**LOCAL  
ENTERPRISE  
PARTNERSHIP**

**THE Food Works**  
plan | create | innovate

**JUNC21ON**  
enterprise area



Site manager  
David Nute

**An eagerly-awaited food and drink innovation centre is on track to open in Weston-super-Mare next month.**

The Food WorksSW – the only one of its kind in the South West – is in the Food Enterprise Zone within Junction 21 Enterprise Area.

It will offer 12 food-grade units for food manufacturing, enabling new businesses to start up and providing established businesses with the ideal premises to grow and innovate.

The £11m centre, funded by the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership through the Local Growth Fund, will play a vital part in North Somerset Council's drive to stimulate growth in the local economy.

The centre will include product development facilities for businesses of all sizes to test, develop and reformulate products, as well as meeting rooms, a café and conference facilities to host food-related events and workshops.

The building will be officially handed over to the council in March from contractors Willmott Dixon.

Nottingham-based The Food and Drink Forum will operate it on the council's behalf and site manager David Nute was the first member of staff to be appointed.

He has been joined by innovation manager Zoe Plant and the pair are now working to get the centre ready for its opening in April.

David has worked in the food industry for 40 years, going from a small family bakery to large-scale food manufacturing.

He said: "I want the centre to develop and support local businesses to play a key role in supplying a range of innovative products, to achieve sustained economic growth for both the businesses and surrounding area.

"I am passionate about all aspects of the food industry and gain great satisfaction from products I have taken to market.

"There is no better feeling than seeing a product on a shelf and saying to yourself. 'I was part of that'."

For more information on leasing a food-grade business unit, renting the product development kitchens, booking a meeting room or operating the café, contact The Food and Drink Forum on **0115 975 8810** or email **enquiries@foodanddrinkforum.co.uk**



# Combining independence and support for over-55s

**Independence, friendships and on-site support provide the perfect combination for older people living in extra-care housing developments in North Somerset.**

These developments offer a lifetime home for over-55s who need extra support with day-to-day tasks.

Extra-care housing offers more care and support than sheltered housing and is a real alternative to residential care.

The latest development – Strawberry Gardens – will open soon in Yatton.

It is being developed by North Somerset Council in partnership with not-for-profit retirement provider Housing 21.

This will bring the total number of extra-care housing developments across North Somerset to six.

All have either one or two bedrooms, a lounge, kitchen and level-access shower room, and each development is suitable for wheelchair users throughout.

The community facilities provide an opportunity for new friendships to be formed and social activities to be enjoyed.

There are residents' lounges and a restaurant, as well as a hairdresser, scooter store and guest bedroom for visiting family or friends.



Jean

The on-site care team provides personalised care and a 24/7 emergency response service, to enhance the feeling of safety and security.

Deciding to make the move can be challenging but has been worthwhile for those who have made the leap.

Jean lives at Waverley Court in Portishead. She said:

**“Extra-care housing allows me to do what I want to do.**

“It’s my home. I love my flat, especially my bathroom. I join in activities but like to know that it’s my flat and I can close the door and not see anyone if I choose.”

Couples who may have different levels of need can stay together and live independently in their apartment for as long as possible.

Denis and Patricia have moved from sheltered accommodation into Diamond Court, in Worle, Weston-super-Mare.

Patricia said:

**“We’ve found everyone to be so friendly and helpful and certainly don’t have any regrets about the move.”**

Denis added: “I’ve joined the social committee and helped set up various activities such as a fish and chip supper night.”



Denis and Patricia



### Could you work at Strawberry Gardens?

Radis Care, the on-site care provider at Strawberry Gardens, will be recruiting. Find out more by calling the recruitment line on **0330 100 8150** or email [recruitment@radis.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@radis.co.uk)

## Would you like to live in extra-care housing?

**There are already extra-care housing developments in five places across North Somerset.**

These are:

- Tamar Court, Worle
- Lakeside Court, Worle
- Diamond Court, Worle
- Waverley Court, Portishead
- Sandford Station, Sandford

Certain criteria must be fulfilled to rent a flat in extra-care housing (this does not apply for shared ownership).

You must:

- be 55 or over
- have eligible care needs
- be eligible for North Somerset Council funding
- have a current application for housing via North Somerset Council's HomeChoice scheme
- be a resident in North Somerset.

Strawberry Gardens, in Yatton, opens late spring. It will have 30 two-bedroom flats available to rent through North Somerset Council, as well as 30 two-bedroom flats available to buy on a shared ownership scheme through Housing 21.

If you're interested in applying for a rental flat at Strawberry Gardens, or any of the other developments, call Care Connect on **01934 888 801** and ask for a care assessment for extra-care housing.

For shared ownership sales at Strawberry Gardens, contact Housing 21 on **0345 608 4021** or email [sales@housing21.org.uk](mailto:sales@housing21.org.uk)

Find out more about the options available at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/housing-for-older-people](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/housing-for-older-people)

# Valuable mentoring service gets accreditation

**A mentoring service which offers face-to-face support to young people at risk of offending in North Somerset has been accredited by a national body.**

Junction 21 aims to prevent young people from offending and committing anti-social behaviour.

It matches volunteer mentors with young people aged between 10 and 18, who then usually meet weekly for up to a year.

Mentors are positive role models who engage with the young person to help them reach mutually-agreed targets, such as improved school attendance.

This can help reduce the risk of offending, vulnerability and to motivate them to make positive life choices.

Volunteers also work with young people in the care system and those experiencing mental health issues.

The service is part of North Somerset Council's youth offending and prevention service and aims to give young people effective and individual support to achieve goals, which will have a positive impact on their lives and their communities.

An assessor from the National Council of Voluntary Organisations visited the service at the end of last year and confirmed that Junction

21 had achieved the Approved Provider Standard (APS), recognising its excellent work.

Volunteer mentor Debbie said: "Junction 21 is such a valuable service for both mentees and mentors alike.

"The support you get as a volunteer is second-to-none."

One young person who has benefitted from the service said: "My mentor is absolutely amazing. I don't know where I'd be without her, she is a star."

## Could you become a volunteer mentor?

If you're interested and would like to find out more, contact mentoring co-ordinator Steve Coggins on [junction21@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:junction21@n-somerset.gov.uk) or call 01275 888 360



# North Somerset Life

North Somerset *Life* is published by North Somerset Council and delivered to 100,000 households.

For advertising and sponsorship opportunities contact Will Jenkins: **01934 426 474** or **will.jenkins@n-somerset.gov.uk**

For editorial contact **editor@n-somerset.gov.uk** or **01275 884 139**

The next edition will be delivered from: **Monday 6 July**

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## Contacts

### Call us

For all council services, call **01934 888 888** (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)

Direct numbers for other popular services:

For waste and recycling, road issues, planning and building control: <b>01934 888 802</b> (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)	For council tax and benefits: <b>01934 888 144</b> (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)
	For social services: <b>01275 888 801</b> (Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm)

**Do it online** – report it, request it or pay for it at: **www.n-somerset.gov.uk/connect**

Or go straight to these popular web pages by adding these shortcuts: **www.n-somerset.gov.uk/myaccount /planning /schooladmissions /wastecollections /termdates**




## Tide times

**Check tide times online at** **www.n-somerset.gov.uk/tidetimes**

Tide predictions are computed by the Proudman Oceanographic Laboratory and adjusted for Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) and British Summer Time (BST) differences.

- For Clevedon – add 10 minutes.
- For Portishead – add 18 minutes.




Walks in the area are available to view and download at **www.n-somerset.gov.uk/walks**

29423 0120



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