

Climate change adaptation: protecting North Somerset

Climate change adaptation refers to the process of **adjusting our lifestyles and practices** to cope with the current and expected **impacts of climate change**.

Changing how we do things now will increase our resilience to climate change effects in the future.

In North Somerset, current and expected impacts of climate change include:

- warmer and drier summers, likely to break temperature records
- wetter and warmer winters
- more extreme weather events, including devastating flooding
- sea level rise

Our climate change adaptation strategy (see www.n-somerset.gov.uk/climateadaptation) brings together **expert knowledge** on adapting to climate change and applies it specifically to North Somerset.

The strategy sets out the adaptations needed to **protect North Somerset** against the effects of extreme weather and continue to **deliver our services effectively**.

In the event of **extreme weather events** caused by climate change, there are many actions residents can take to minimise impacts and build resilience:

Drought and water shortages

- installing water butts at the base of down spouts to store rainwater for non-drinking purposes
- contact your water provider to get a free water meter installed to encourage efficient water use
- take shorter showers and consider installing a low-flow showerhead
- let your lawn grow – longer grass allows roots to grow deeper and keep more soil moisture, requiring less watering
- make sure you have a full load of washing when using your washing machine and opt for an eco-setting, cooler temperature or faster cycle
- add a bird bath or bowls of fresh water in an outdoor space to provide relief for birds, insects and hedgehogs, who will be suffering.



Extreme heat

- ensure your home is insulated to a high standard
- aim for double or triple glazed windows, with shading through curtains, tinted windows, shutters or trees planted outside
- choose energy efficient appliances and turn appliances off when not in use
- incorporate more plants to increase shade and provide a cooling effect
- during extreme heat, wear light, loose fitting cotton clothing and avoid physical exertion and being outside during the hottest parts of the day.

Flooding

- ensure rainwater can be directed off your roof through well-maintained gutters and down spouts
- if you have a garden, plant resilient native plants with deep roots which can soak up water runoff
- if you have a paved outdoor space, add potted plants to help absorb rainfall
- ensure your roof is in good repair to protect your home from heavy rainwater and check for loose tiles at least once a year, especially after extreme weather events
- try swapping hard outdoor surfaces for gravel or loose stone or decking where appropriate to make it easier for water to absorb into the ground
- if you live in an area at risk of flooding, consider installing water resistant measures inside your home such as steel skirting boards, solid flooring, door and window guards and temporary flood barriers.

Extreme cold

- install pipe insulation to prevent your pipes from freezing
- try using hot water bottles or electric blankets to keep you warm, but never use them at the same time
- avoid travelling on roads when it is icy and snowing as the risk of accidents is higher
- protect potted plants from frost by bringing them inside
- try to keep your home at a constant temperature of around 18 degrees Celsius
- aim to reduce drafts in your home to stop heat escaping.

For more information about our climate adaptation strategy go to www.n-somerset.gov.uk/climateadaption.