



Banwell Bypass

Quarterly Community Newsletter September 2025

Welcome to the first edition of the Banwell Bypass quarterly community newsletter.

Each quarter we'll share what's happening on site, introduce you to members of our team, and show you how we're working with local people, schools, charities, and the environment while building the new bypass.

This is a big project for Banwell and the surrounding area, and we know how important it is to keep you updated.



Construction Update

If you've been driving or walking through the area lately, you'll have noticed that large machines are now out in full force and the site is starting to take shape.

The bright, warm summer weather has been on our side, allowing us to make good progress with our early enabling works.

Here's a closer look at what we've achieved so far:

Haul Road

We've built a dedicated haul road through the site. This means construction vehicles can move safely between work areas without needing to use local roads, helping to reduce disruption for the community.



Drainage Works

You may have seen us installing "band drains" these are long, straw-like pipes pushed deep into the ground. They help water drain away naturally, which in turn makes the soil more stable for building on. So far, we have installed 30 thousand of these.

Bridge Preparations

Piling work has begun at Moor Road where we're preparing the foundations for a new link bridge



Road and Ponds construction

Seven new ponds are being created across the scheme to support biodiversity and the drainage. We'll begin the construction of the Southern Link Road which will link Castle Hill A371 and East Street (A368)

Earthworks

Ongoing excavation and land-shaping works are continuing along the future bypass route.

All of this represents real, visible progress as we move from preparation into the main construction phase.

Moor Road Link Bridge

Work has been progressing on the construction of the Moor Road link bridge. This reinforced concrete bridge will span across East Moor Rhyne and the River Banwell. Specialist contractors building the bridge abutments, which will support the installation of the beams and road.

Utilities Upgrades

A significant amount of work is needed to upgrade or divert utilities ahead of the new bypass. Some of the key tasks completed so far include:

- Gas main diversion on Knightcott Road by Wales & West Utilities
- National Grid electricity diversions on Wolvershill Road and Eastermead Lane
- Water diversions on Riverside and new mains installation at the Southern Link Road site by Bristol Water
- Installation of new BT Openreach chambers for communication cables on Knightcott Road



Upcoming Work

Dark Lane Closure

From 29 September 2025, Dark Lane will be closed at the northern end (from Castle Hill). This will turn it into a cul-de-sac accessible only from East Street.

- Residents will still have access from East Street.
- Refuse, recycling and delivery vehicles will also continue to access properties.
- Through traffic will need to use Castle Hill (A371) and East Street (A368) until the new Southern Link Road opens.

River Banwell Bridge

We'll begin preparatory work on the River Banwell bridge; the largest structure on the bypass.

- The bridge will span 32.5m across the river, built from reinforced concrete and steel.
- Specialist teams will be carrying out piling, ground stabilisation and abutment works.
- Some noise and vibration is expected, but strict monitoring will ensure everything stays within safe limits.

Moor Road Link Bridge

Works will continue here with the installation of wing walls, bridge beams and road decks, tying the structure into the new road levels.

Utilities

Ongoing work will continue to divert and upgrade utilities across the scheme, including gas, water, electricity, and telecoms services.

Works on the A371 (Knightcott Road)

Traffic management and local diversions will be in place at different stages while we:

- Clear vegetation and carry out site preparation.
- Install new kerb lines, drainage and utilities.
- Widen footpaths and improve junction layouts.
- Relocate bus stops slightly further west.
- Prepare for new traffic signals and a new access roundabout.

Meet the Contractor Event

A big thank you to everyone who came to our Meet the Contractor event in June.

It was fantastic to see so many residents, local groups, and councillors joining us for a chance to meet the team face-to-face.

We had some great conversations and heard a wide range of questions, comments, and ideas.

Open dialogue with the community is really important to us, and events like this help us make sure the project is delivered with your concerns in mind.

At the event, visitors were also able to see large-scale maps and project plans, which are now on display at Banwell Scout Hut thanks to support from Banwell Parish Council.

If you weren't able to attend, we've added a summary of the most frequently asked questions to the project webpage: [**www.n-somerset.gov.uk/banwellbypass**](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/banwellbypass)





Internal Drainage Board

In early August, we were pleased to host the Somerset Internal Drainage Board (IDB) Board of Trustees as part of their Annual General Meeting.

We've been working closely with the IDB throughout both stages of the project to make sure everything we do complies with regulations for working near watercourses, such as streams and rhynes. Protecting these areas is vital to the success of the bypass and to the local environment.

During their visit, trustees received a presentation from our site team about the collaboration so far, including how we're managing watercourse diversions and putting silt mitigation measures in place. They also

joined us on site to see progress on the Moor Road link bridge, which crosses both the Wear Moor Rhyne and the River Banwell.

It was a great opportunity to show how environmental care, and construction can go hand in hand.





Creating Value Beyond the Bypass

Building a bypass isn't just about roads and bridges; it's also about leaving a positive legacy for the local area.

That's why we're putting effort into what's called social value: giving back to the community through education, charity, sport, and employment. Here's what we've been up to recently:

Inspiring Future Careers

In June, we visited Churchill Academy for a careers session. Students learned about the huge variety of jobs available in construction from engineering to environmental science and even had a challenge to build the strongest playing-card towers.

Supporting Local Charities

We made a donation to Broadway Lodge, helping them transport service users to Glastonbury Festival. Once there, the group helped paint benches, poles, and bins, boosting both wellbeing and the festival environment.

Site-based Fundraising

For several months, our Office Manager Julie Philips has been kindly cooking sausages every Wednesday in support of good causes. Thanks to everyone's generosity, she's raised:

- £80 for Friends of Banwell Primary School
- £80 for Banwell Buddies Village Community Pre- School

Backing Local Sport

We're proud to sponsor Banwell FC Ladies for the upcoming season. We'll be cheering them on and wish the team the best of luck for a successful year ahead!

Looking Ahead

We're preparing to launch new opportunities for apprenticeships and work placements, with a particular focus on creating roles for army veterans.



Protecting the Environment

The Banwell Bypass project runs through a rich natural landscape, and we're committed to protecting it. Here's an update on some of the environmental work happening alongside construction:

Trees

Certain trees along the route are protected by law. We've put barriers and signage in place, so no work happens within set distances, keeping them safe during construction.



Dormice

Dormice are a priority species in the area. To help them, we've:

- Installed fencing that acts like hedgerows so they can cross safely at night.
- Cleared 4km of hedgerow (under licence).
- Created 300m of "dead hedging."
- Installed 73 to provide new habitats.



Bats

Surveys have identified important areas for horseshoe bats and day roosts for pipistrelles, long eared bats and noctules. So far, we've:



Installed 55 bat boxes



Added 1.2 km of bat connectivity fencing





Meet the team: Neil Cutts

In each edition, we'll introduce you to someone working on the project. This time, meet Neil Cutts, Senior Project Manager for Galliford Try.

What's your role on the project?

I manage the site team and all construction activities. That covers everything from safety and environment, to planning and design, to managing our work with North Somerset Council.

What's been a highlight so far?

Securing the main works contract was a huge step forward. Another milestone has been completing the haul road around the site, which keeps heavy construction traffic out of Banwell village.

How did you get into construction?

I studied at UWE Bristol in the 90s and started as an Assistant Site Engineer. Over the years, I've progressed through roles as Engineer, Site Agent, and Construction Manager, before becoming Project Manager.

What do you do outside of work?

I'm a motorsport fan, especially F1, and enjoy walking and cycling in the hills near my home in Wales.

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