

NORTH SOMERSET LIFE

SUMMER 2020



**Communities
coming together
during coronavirus**

Thank you

from North Somerset councillors



Dear reader...

Since I wrote for the last edition of *Life* a great deal has changed, indeed much more may be different between me writing and you receiving your copy! My first comment must be to say thank you so much to all our residents, those innumerable volunteers who have helped keep people safe and cared for in our communities, our emergency, health, care and key workers who have looked after us all during the pandemic and, of course, to all our staff at North Somerset Council. This is all new for all of us and the way we have all come together has been amazing. Thank you all!

Having got over the initial impacts of the pandemic we now need to work just as hard over the next stages. Health-wise the virus has not gone away and we must remain alert to its potential to do harm in all that we do, following social distancing guidance, so that we keep ourselves and those around us safe. Businesses will need to adapt to the new norms of life and

that will take time and effort. North Somerset Council, along with central government, is already looking at how we can help in that recovery and how we must all do things differently, both as a council and as a community.

There is also a looming financial challenge for us all, with the government safety net being slowly removed as business, education and leisure come back to life. These also affect this council and its ability to provide us all with vital services for the community, from waste and recycling through to looking after our most vulnerable citizens and everything in between. We are grateful for the support already given, but our estimates are that we shall have a £20m gap in our finances by next April, unless central government offers more money for local councils to provide vital support for our communities. As we are not allowed by law to have anything other than a balanced budget, you can imagine

the concerns this is raising among all your councillors and the wider North Somerset community as we plan for this potential shortfall.

Please do continue to keep up all your efforts in our community, however large or small, it all matters! And please stay safe.

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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North Somerset Council does not endorse or recommend any commercial products or services advertising in *Life* magazine.

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.

Find out about North Somerset's wartime past

Communities in North Somerset came together – but celebrated apart – to mark VE Day during lockdown.

Now North Somerset will be marking the 75th anniversary of VJ Day – Victory over Japan – this summer.

It takes place on Saturday 15 August and is the anniversary of when imperial Japan surrendered in World War Two and brought the war to an end.

Cllr David Shopland – current chairman of North Somerset Council – has written a tribute to the ordinary men, women and children who lived in North Somerset at the time.

It outlines how the area was affected during the war and the hardships people faced.

Read the piece online at
www.northsomersetlife.wordpress.com/wartimehistory



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Enjoy a full and active retirement at Sandford Station Retirement Village in North Somerset. Our show home is currently closed, however you can still call our sales team on 0117 919 4262 to find out more about living at Sandford Station. www.stmonicastrust.org.uk/villages/sandford-station





Could you make a difference in someone's life?

If lockdown got you thinking about a career change, maybe you could be paid to make a real difference to someone's life?

Shared Lives carers are needed to provide care and support in their own home for adults with a range of different needs.

Care could be provided in a variety of ways – on a daytime basis for up to six hours at a time; short term including overnight stays; medium-term for a few weeks at a time; or long-term where they live with you full-time.

Carers offer different types of support depending on the length of stay, to help the person develop their independence skills.

Shared Lives carers are self-employed, receive competitive rates of pay and do not pay tax on some of their earnings.

Long-term carers have four weeks' paid holiday a year.

No previous experience is necessary.

If you're interested in finding out about becoming a Shared Lives carer, contact the team on **01275 888 368** or email sharedlives@n-somerset.gov.uk



Help to heat your home

Although it's summer, now might be the time to plan ahead and think about how you might heat your home this winter.

WHAM (the Warmer Homes, Advice and Money service) supports North Somerset's most vulnerable residents by giving advice on energy, money, benefits and carrying out home repairs.

If you've spent more time at home because of lockdown you might have higher heating and electricity bills.

WHAM can support you and help lower your bills if you're struggling financially, and advise about making your home safe, secure and warm.

Find out more by calling **0800 082 2234** or visit www.cse.org.uk/covid-support



Missing link of cycleway on its way

Funding has been agreed to build the final section of a £2.09m cycle route running through North Somerset.

Highways England announced in May that it would give North Somerset Council the final £1.2m needed for the scheme to link Clevedon with Weston-super-Mare.

This will enable the missing link to be built – a 1.4km shared-use path for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders linking Wick Road in Wick St Lawrence to Yeo Bank Lane at Kingston Seymour. A bridge over the Congresbury Yeo to keep farm animals and the public separate will also be built.

The path forms the central section of the council's proposed 'Coastal Towns Cycle Route' – a high-quality cycle and pedestrian route between Bristol, Portishead, Clevedon, Weston and Brean.

This section is a 'Pier to Pier' recreational route linking Weston's Grand Pier to Clevedon Pier.

The current journey between the two piers is 27km (17 miles) using main roads, but it will reduce to 21km (13 miles) on minor roads and off-road cycle paths. It will also be attractive to commuters, with a flat and pleasant eight-mile ride from Clevedon to Junction 21 Enterprise Area.

The path will follow an existing farm track built on the former Weston, Clevedon and Portishead railway line, which closed in 1940.

The route is planned to be built in 2021, once the detailed design and procurement process is completed.



Online book of remembrance opens

An online book of remembrance has launched for all those who have died as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The virtual Remember Me book has been created by St Paul's Cathedral but is open for people of all faiths, beliefs or none to contribute to. It is an opportunity to mourn every person who has been lost to COVID-19 and it is intended that it will then become a physical memorial at the cathedral.

Family, friends and carers of those who have died can submit the name, photograph and a short message at www.rememberme2020.uk



Independent living for older people

Older people who need a little extra support to live independently could find their perfect home at a new development in Yatton.

Strawberry Gardens, in Moorhen Road, is an extra-care housing scheme for over-55s who need extra support with day-to-day tasks.

The site is being developed by North Somerset Council in partnership with not-for-profit

retirement provider Housing 21 and Vistry Partnerships and will be ready later this summer.

It features 60 self-contained apartments with additional communal facilities, including a restaurant and residents lounge.

The on-site care team provides personalised care and a 24/7 emergency response service.

Apartments are available for affordable rents or shared ownership.



To apply for a rental apartment, contact North Somerset Council on **01934 888 801**. Visit www.n-somerset.gov.uk/housing-for-older-people for information on eligibility criteria.

For shared ownership sales, contact Housing 21 on **0345 608 4021** or email sales@housing21.org.uk

Term dates for 2021/22 decided

School term dates for the 2021/22 academic year have now been agreed.

The school year is 195 days and includes five in-service days used for staff training.

Term 1 – Thursday 2 September 2021 to Friday 22 October 2021

Term 2 – Monday 1 November 2021 to Friday 17 December 2021

Term 3 – Tuesday 4 January 2022 to Friday 18 February 2022

Term 4 – Monday 28 February 2022 to Friday 8 April 2022

Term 5 – Monday 25 April 2022 to Friday 27 May 2022

Term 6 – Monday 6 June 2022 to Friday 22 July 2022

Foundation, trust, academy and voluntary-aided schools set their own term dates and may differ from North Somerset Council-run ones.

Check individual schools for their term dates.

www.n-somerset.gov.uk/termdates

Report any child neglect concerns

Lockdown increased tensions for many families and children were more at risk of being neglected, a leading charity has warned.

Crimestoppers estimates that one-in-10 children have experienced neglect and this is likely to have increased during the global pandemic – so report any concerns to the charity completely confidentially.

Neglect can include children not getting enough to eat or drink, being exposed to danger and violence, or having dishevelled or dirty clothes.

It was feared that during the lockdown, children could be exposed to domestic abuse, maybe because parents or carers have increased drink or drug abuse problems, or unsupported mental health issues.



Crimestoppers chief executive Mark Hallas said: "Abuse during childhood can leave long-lasting negative impacts into adult life and impair development and ability to achieve.

"Remember it's better to be safe than sorry. Help is out there."

Speak up, stop crime and stay safe by calling Crimestoppers 100 per cent anonymously on **0800 555 111**.

www.nspcc.org.uk • www.childline.org.uk
www.barnardos.org.uk • www.childrenssociety.org.uk



Have concerns over the welfare of a child?

Want to remain anonymous?

Speak up by contacting our charity.

CrimeStoppers.
0800 555 111
100% anonymous. Always.



Delivering meals on wheels

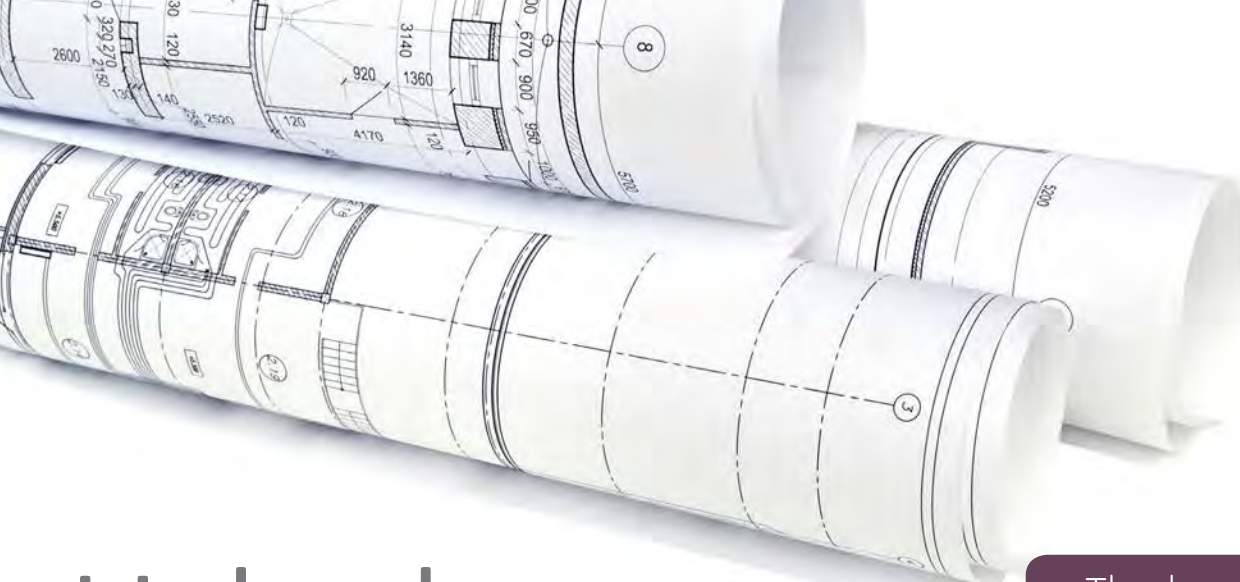
Delicious hot meals continued to be delivered to vulnerable residents across North Somerset throughout the lockdown period.

Meals on wheels is a lifeline for many people and more than 100 extra people signed up to the service in March and April.

Delivery drivers wore PPE and, where possible, meals were left on doorsteps to keep self-isolating residents safe.

Drivers also continued to carry out their essential welfare check on recipients.

Find out more by calling **01275 882 155**, emailing commmeals@n-somerset.gov.uk or visiting www.n-somerset.gov.uk/communitymeals



Help shape North Somerset's future

The big
conversation



Residents and businesses in North Somerset can soon have their say on how future growth in North Somerset will be shaped.

The North Somerset Local Plan will guide housing, business investment, transport and infrastructure in the area until 2038.

A two-part consultation will take place this year and local people, community groups, businesses and organisations are invited to have their say and help influence it.

The first stage is due to take place this summer and will focus on the challenges facing North Somerset and what issues need to be addressed.

The responses received will then help inform the second consultation phase, which will focus on the choices around future

development. This is anticipated to take place in the autumn.

Earlier this year North Somerset executive members also agreed to write to the government to challenge the basis for forecast housing growth, particularly in light of the longer term economic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis and climate emergency.



At the time of *Life* going to print, details about the consultation were still being confirmed. Visit www.n-somerset.gov.uk/new-local-plan or keep on eye on the council's website, social media feeds and in the local press for details of its launch.



Community strength during the coronavirus crisis

Life changed beyond recognition earlier this year when the country went into lockdown to combat the spread of coronavirus.

Within a matter of days, everyone had to adapt to very new and different ways of living in both their home and work lives.

Across towns and villages, local people rallied round to ensure those in need had the support they

needed, whether it was help with shopping trips, medicine collection, phone calls, or a friendly wave through the window.

North Somerset Council joined forces with charities, local groups, businesses and concerned residents to respond rapidly to the COVID-19 crisis.

The council also had to keep essential services – such as social care, community meals, waste and recycling and highway

This special edition of *Life* celebrates how the council, community groups, local businesses and residents came together to support each other during the coronavirus crisis.

Read on to find out more.

maintenance – running as normal during the crisis.

During the first month of coronavirus lockdown North Somerset Council....

Paid £27m to 2,257 businesses in coronavirus grant payments



Filled 5,945 potholes

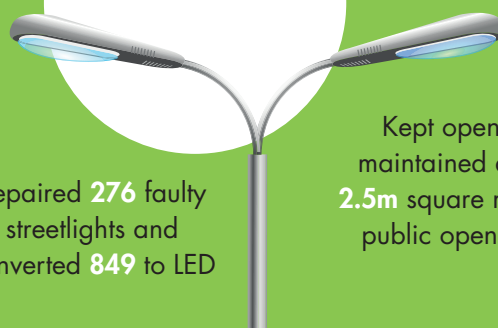


Delivered 11,400 meals on wheels

Linked 4,500 people to local support groups through North Somerset Together



Repaired 276 faulty streetlights and converted 849 to LED



Kept open and maintained around 2.5m square metres of public open space



Made over one million collections of recycling, waste and garden waste, including an extra 70 tonnes of cardboard



Provided library services to 29,700 users with a 700% increase in online members



Handled 21,754 calls into our telephone contact centre





VANS volunteer Ann Molloy



Communities coming together

Community spirit proved to be strong in North Somerset as people rallied round during the pandemic to look after each other and support the most vulnerable residents.

North Somerset Council joined forces with concerned residents, town and parish councils, charities, community groups and businesses to launch a new coalition, North Somerset Together.

The initiative linked socially-isolated residents who had no support from family or friends with organisations that could help them during the pandemic and beyond.

North Somerset Together also connected those who wanted to volunteer or donate with the right organisations, and also signposted businesses to relevant information.

Up until the end of May, North Somerset Together dealt with 1,500 requests for help, including 352 urgent ones.

Of these, more than 95 per cent were passed onto one of the 27 volunteer response networks

delivering Covid-19 support across North Somerset.

The remaining ones were passed immediately to the council's social care service for assessment.

As well as this, more than 5,000 residents also registered for support via the Gov.uk website and were passed down to community response networks.

Following this success, North Somerset Council made a commitment to sustain North Somerset Together as a means of working with communities in the long-term.

Here are just some examples of people working together...



Clevedon Aid

Volunteers from across Clevedon run shopping errands, pick up medicines, run wellbeing and loneliness check-ins and more for local people who are struggling.

Not-for-profit organisation Clevedon Aid launched in early April after retired nurse Henny Starke made a very generous donation to support members of the community whose lives were significantly affected by COVID-19.

Clevedon Aid was established to offer care and wellbeing support, financial support and information.

As well as shopping trips and giving advice, volunteers have teamed up with Teatro Lounge to provide hot meals.

Food store The Veg Box and Clevedon food bank donate supplies, while staff from Teatro Lounge volunteer their time and kitchen to prepare and cook the meals.

Up until the end of May, more than 700 meals had been delivered to doorsteps across the town.

Find out more at www.clevedonaid.org.uk



Clevedon Aid volunteers

A co-ordinated volunteer response

A co-ordinated approach was launched in North Somerset to link individuals wanting to help with those organisations needing additional support during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Voluntary Action North Somerset (VANS) works to develop the voluntary sector locally and more than 300 people registered to volunteer with it during coronavirus.

Volunteers were placed with care homes, mutual aid and community groups, as well as delivering PPE across the area.

Volunteer Ann Molloy said: "I signed up to help my local community.

"VANS communicated with me throughout the whole process and we agreed what area I was interested in.

"As a result, I did the weekly shop for a small residential home managed by The Milestones Trust.

"Shopping for nine residents was challenging but very rewarding.

"It was lovely to interact, albeit socially distanced, with the people at the home."

To find out about volunteering through VANS call **01934 416 486** or visit **www.vansweb.org.uk**



www.n-somerset.gov.uk/together

Community Connect

A free service in North Somerset continues to help people who feel isolated, lonely or lack confidence.

Community Connect is for anyone aged 50 or over who needs help and support to feel part of their community – and it became vital during coronavirus.

Community development co-ordinator Sue Dixon explained how working with other organisations made big differences in people's lives.

She said: "While working with a socially-isolated person in Yatton, we found out they used to love sewing.

"Thanks to connections through the Yatton Mutual Aid group, we found a sewing machine and transported it them.

"This helped connect them to their community, gave them a new hobby, and helped their wellbeing."

Contact Community Connect on **01275 888 803** or **communityconnect@curo-group.co.uk**



www.curo-group.co.uk/communityconnect





Supporting businesses to b

Advice and support continues to be given to businesses of all sizes in North Somerset so they can recover as quickly as possible from the coronavirus downturn.

The pandemic caused many businesses to close temporarily but North Somerset Council helped organisations access support from the government and other trusted sources.

The council also administered the government's small business grant fund, discretionary grants fund, and

retail, hospitality and leisure grant fund.

Up to the end of May, nearly 3,100 grants had been approved and £37.3m paid out.

Local businesses also used the lockdown period to diversify or deliver their products in a new way.

Thousands of free lunches delivered

Free packed lunches were given to families in Weston-super-Mare thanks to a generous local business, help from volunteers and donations from the community.

The Stable co-working space, based in Wadham Street, is usually home to creative and digital businesses but this spring it became a hub for organising and distributing thousands of meals to vulnerable families.

Manager Jemma Coles said: "I was thinking about what would happen to children who were entitled to free school meals if the schools closed and decided we should do something.

"Initially we focused on children but it soon became about families who were self-employed, furloughed, not entitled to funding and struggling to get by."

Jemma worked with Prayag, who runs the Stable Café, along with volunteer drivers from the YMCA.

By the end of May they had delivered 5,000 meals, averaging between 500 and 600 per week, and raised more than £5,000 in donations.

They used more than 700 loaves of bread, 25kg of margarine, 100kg of cheese, 70kg of ham, 5,000 bags of crisps, 1,500 yoghurts, 3,000 cereal bars, 3,000 pieces of fruit and more.

Books, activity packs, story competitions and colouring challenges were also sent out.



Build stronger communities



Cycle solutions for local food delivery

Local businesses adapted and diversified during lockdown to keep operating and serve the community.

Restaurants and cafes could offer takeaway food so Loves Café, in Weston-super-Mare, borrowed an electric bike and trailer so it could deliver hot meals to key workers and others, including NHS staff at Weston General Hospital.

The e-bike is powered by a rechargeable battery which assists cycling up to 15 miles per hour and made journeys quicker and easier.

Manager Anna said "Being an environmentally-focused business, it never sat well with me doing deliveries by car so the electric bike was an obvious solution.

"It made light work of deliveries within our radius and meant we could get a lot more food to our customers in the most efficient way."

Anna planned to keep using the bike after lockdown and added: "It has a feel-good factor. Not only by enabling us to provide a service to our community but also morally towards the fight against air pollution and climate change."

Find out more about the borrow a bike scheme on **page 21**.



Support your local shops

Shopping local will help communities thrive in a post-COVID society.

Supporting local businesses means the money stays in the local economy and it could also mean a move towards a simpler way of life – less reliant on travel and consumerism.

In Barrow Gurney, the Princes Motto pub became a takeaway and shop during lockdown.

Landlord Andy Miller – who took over just three days before pubs were told to close – decided to offer a takeaway service with free delivery to anyone in the village as a way of serving the community and getting to know local people.

The front bar was converted into a shop and the range of goods for sale grew quickly.

It proved so popular that Andy is now thinking of making the shop a permanent feature.

For all business assistance and employee support, contact North Somerset Council's economy team on **business@n-somerset.gov.uk** or **01934 426 266**.

For information about grants email **businessgrants@n-somerset.gov.uk**
www.n-somerset.gov.uk/covidbusinesssupport

 **Innorthsomerset**



Support for individuals

If you are struggling financially, you can find out about support available at **www.n-somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus**

Citizens Advice North Somerset – independent advice on employment, debt, benefits and more: **01934 836 200**, **advice@nscab.org.uk**, **www.nscab.org.uk**

Bristol Law Centre – advice about employment, discrimination, immigration/EUSS and housing: **0117 924 8662**, **mail@bristollawcentre.org.uk**, **www.bristollawcentre.org.uk**

Shelter – to help people with bad housing or homelessness: **0344 515 1430**, **www.shelter.org.uk** (urgent out-of-hours **0800 800 4444**)





Learning in an online

Vast swathes of life moved online this year as people used their screens to learn something new, communicate with loved ones or interact with their community virtually.

If you were furloughed from work with time to spare, trying to home school your children, or just looking for a new hobby, there were masses of resources to choose from.

Many services in North Somerset expanded their online offering, so here are some useful ones you can still access...



Surge in online library use

Libraries in North Somerset saw a surge in online membership during lockdown and so more resources were added to keep up with demand.

More ebooks, emagazines and audio books were added to the electronic database for library members to download for free and enjoy at home.

Press Reader, which is available until October, offers 7,000 full digital editions of publications from the UK and around the world, including The Guardian, Bristol Post, Daily Mail and many more.

The new digital comics library has more than 1,500 comics and

graphic novels, including Marvel favourites and other major brands such as Disney, IDW and Dark Horse.

It is available until next April and library members can access an unlimited number of comics at any time for free.

Weekly Rhymetime sessions were also recorded for YouTube so young children and their parents and carers can watch at home.

Other free online resources include Ancestry to research family history, the Encyclopedia Britannica, and the Times Digital Archive, for researching more than 200 years of history through The Times newspaper.



Join the library online at www.librarieswest.org.uk/join

For more information visit www.librarieswest.org.uk/eresources or www.n-somerset.gov.uk/onlinelibrary

If you're new to ebooks and other online resources and would like some help, contact library staff by emailing libraries@n-somerset.gov.uk or calling 01934 426 834.

nslibraries
 NSomLibraries

e world



Could your child join the Silly Squad?

Children in North Somerset are invited to join the Silly Squad.

The annual Summer Reading Challenge, produced by The Reading Agency and delivered by libraries, is back to encourage four to 11-year-olds to keep reading over the summer.

This year's Silly Squad theme is a celebration of fun, happiness and laughter for children, many of whom haven't been at school since March.

The Silly Squad, designed by award-winning author and illustrator Laura Ellen Anderson, is a team of animals who love going on adventures and getting stuck into different funny books.

This year The Reading Agency has created a new online platform to help children keep track of the books they're reading and collect rewards along the way.

Sign up at www.summerreadingchallenge.org.uk

Do you love local history?

Dive into the past and discover what your local neighbourhood was like in years gone by.

Know Your Place North Somerset is an online mapping resource with interactive features that allow you to explore old maps, historic images and data, as well as contribute to the published information yourself.

There is an active Facebook group to join too, with a mystery photo challenge.

A downloadable learning pack is also available, suitable for children in key stages 2, 3 and 4, with themed lessons and activities.



Update your skills

Now might be the time to learn something new to improve your skills, motivation and confidence.

North Somerset Council's community learning team offers a variety of short, fun courses for adults aged 19 and over, and they are free for local residents on certain benefits or with few or no formal qualifications.

Courses moved online during the coronavirus crisis but continued to be led by expert tutors, offering 'live' teaching and support.

Upcoming courses include mindfulness, staying safe online, introduction to British Sign Language, textiles, positive thinking and more.

To enrol on a course or for more information call **07795 390 667** or julie.evans@n-somerset.gov.uk
www.n-somerset.gov.uk/communitylearning

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



Visit

www.kypwest.org.uk, click 'explore the map' and scroll down to North Somerset.

 search for 'Know Your Place North Somerset'

 [KYPNorthSom](https://twitter.com/KYPNorthSom)



Find more ways to improve your wellbeing on **page 30**.

Walk this way

Walking outdoors can bring many benefits to the body and mind so during lockdown people were still encouraged to get an hour's exercise each day.

When the lockdown measures eased, people were given more freedom to get out and about but limiting contact with others remained important.

Life has completed many walks across the beautiful countryside of North Somerset and all walks from 2012 onwards are available to download from www.n-somerset.gov.uk/walks

The Ramblers offers some useful advice about walking outdoors which can still be followed, even if lockdown measures are reduced further this summer:

Be prepared

Some hotspots could be busy and facilities such as car parks, shops and toilets may be closed or have access reduced. Plan ahead and check the relevant website for your destination

Be safe

Support the NHS, emergency services and rescue teams by avoiding riskier outings and abiding by the latest guidance, including that on hygiene and physical distancing

Be considerate

Be sensitive to rural communities if you are travelling further from home to walk. Make sure you follow the Countryside Code.

For more at www.ramblers.org.uk/advice



The Countryside Code

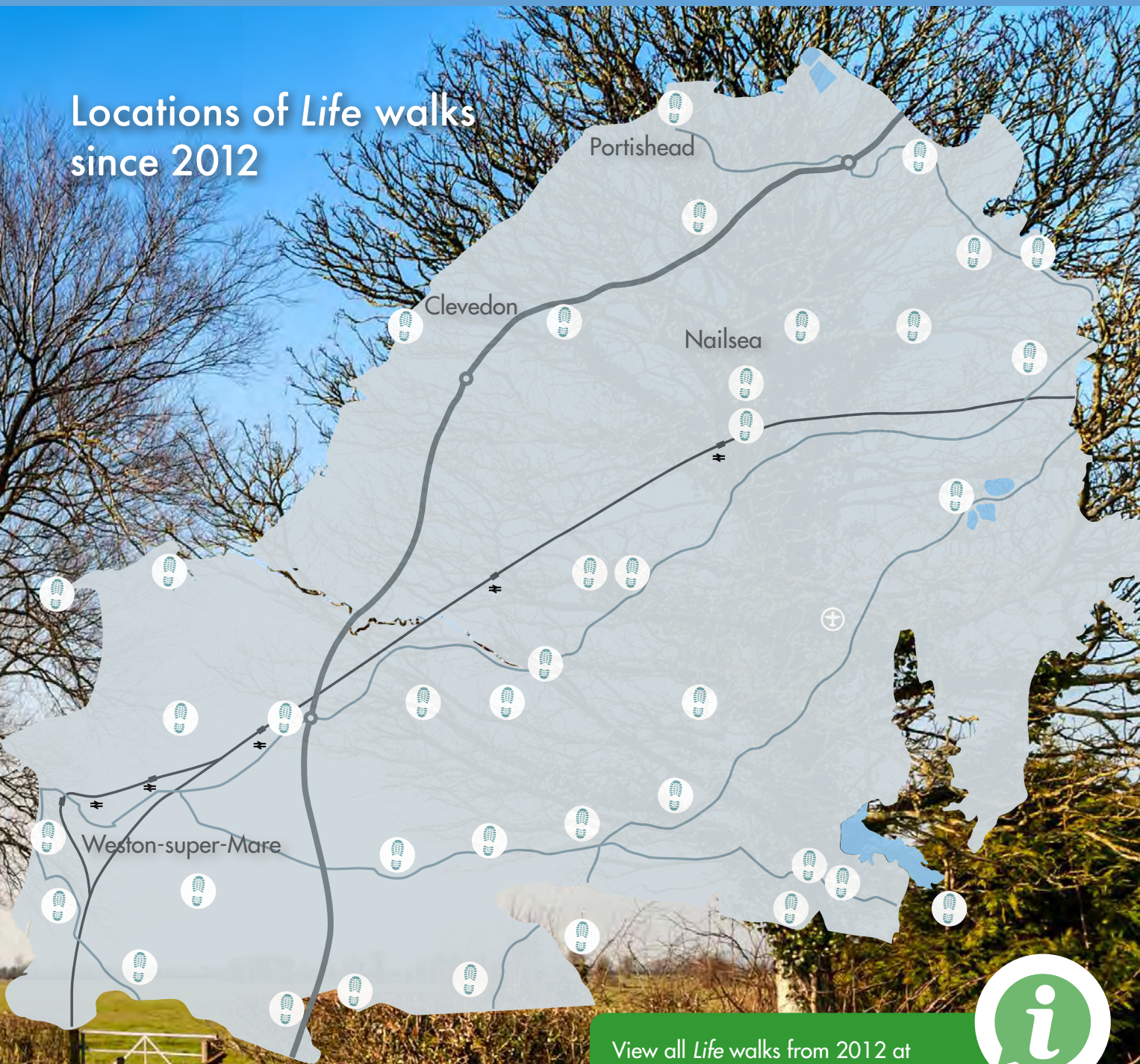
Respect other people

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths unless wider access is available.

Protect the natural environment

- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under effective control

Locations of *Life* walks since 2012



Enjoy the outdoors

- Plan ahead and be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs.

View all *Life* walks from 2012 at
www.n-somerset.gov.uk/walks



Please note, while these walks were correct at the time of printing, there might be some slight changes since then.

Please use common sense and follow the route markings and signs you see.

Recycling rates rocket

Recycling rates increased dramatically this spring as people stayed at home during lockdown.

All household waste – including recycling, food waste and non-recyclable wheelie bin waste – increased by 17 per cent from the beginning of March to the end of May, compared with the same period last year.

This amounted to an extra 12kg of waste per household and some weeks crews were collecting more cardboard than at Christmas.

There was an extra 4.7kg per household of cardboard and an extra 4.1kg per household of glass.

Crews worked longer hours to collect all the extra recycling and waste being produced and the hundreds of messages of thanks, kind notes and gestures of



appreciation helped boost morale and kept them going during tough times.

Well-sorted recycling boxes are key to collecting everyone's recycling every week, whether in lockdown or not, so please keep up the great work.

Parking carefully in the road is also essential – if a recycling truck can't get past then neither can an emergency vehicle.

Some other good habits to continue with include keeping your



containers clean and washing your hands before and after handling them. All this will help keep crews and local communities safe.

Sort your recycling to help crews

Crews can empty recycling boxes in just 20 seconds if they are sorted correctly but it can take up to two minutes if the contents are mixed together.

Wash and squash your recycling, group materials together and fold cardboard to fit into the box.

If you spot recycling crews outside your home, why not time them to see how long it takes to empty your sorted boxes?

Post the results on social media using the hashtag #20SecondChallenge

Find out what goes in each box at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/recycling





Have you tried home composting?

Garden waste collections are usually at their busiest during spring and summer as people spend long sunny days tidying up their outside spaces.

The council was able to keep the garden waste service running throughout the lockdown but some collections were disrupted due to coronavirus and it was necessary to close the recycling centres. This meant some people had to find alternative ways of dealing with their garden waste, such as home composting.

Home composting kits are available for £15 through North Somerset Council's website and it is the perfect way to dispose of your garden waste in a more eco-friendly way.

Composting is a natural and inexpensive process which turns your kitchen and garden waste into nutrient-rich garden food, and it contains everything your plants need to grow including nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium.

Composting at home also means less transport is needed so it cuts down on vehicle emissions.

The council would also like to hear from anyone who is an experienced home composter and would like to provide help, support and advice to novice home composters. Email wasteman@n-somerset.gov.uk or call **01934 888 802**.

Find out more and order a compost bin online at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/composting



The big conversation 

Garden waste consultation

A consultation took place earlier this year on the future of garden waste collections in North Somerset.

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

Results are expected to be released later in the summer. Keep an eye on social media and in the local press for details.

 **NSrecyclingandwaste**
 **ns_recycling**

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 local arrangements.





Tackling carbon emissions in a post-COVID world

Carbon dioxide emissions fell dramatically across the world during the coronavirus pandemic as people stayed home to stay safe.

A study published in May in the Nature Climate Change journal showed that daily carbon emissions had declined 17 per cent globally compared with average levels in 2019.

However, emissions were expected to rise again once lockdown restrictions lifted so a permanent change in the way we live is needed to sustain the decline.

North Somerset Council declared a climate emergency last year and developed an action plan to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Nikki Webb is the council's climate emergency project manager and said: "My job is to adapt and drive

forward our strategy and action plan in a post-COVID world.

"We need to ensure our lives in North Somerset are not contributing to a much larger crisis and are prepared and resilient to the effects of future crises."

In North Somerset, 40 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions come from road transport and another 26 per cent from running our homes, such as heating, lighting and appliances.

Nikki said: "For those of us lucky enough to be able to work from home, this really helps to reduce emissions from road transport. But we then need to make sure that our home energy use, and therefore bills and emissions, don't go up.

"We are adapting our climate emergency and action plan to our new world and how we live and travel will need to adapt too."

How to reduce your climate footprint at home



Climate researchers have put together a list of the best ways of reducing your carbon footprint:

1. live car-free
2. drive a battery electric car
3. take one less long-haul flight each year
4. buy renewable power
5. use public transport
6. insulate your home well
7. switch to a mainly vegan diet
8. use a heat pump
9. better methods of cooking in developing countries
10. use renewable energy to heat buildings.



Read North Somerset Council's climate emergency strategy at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/climatechange

Read about North Somerset's rewilding and tall grass programme on **page 22**.

Calculate your own carbon footprint at www.wwf.org.uk/footprint





Popularity soaring for pedal power

Cycling has soared in popularity since people took to their bikes for their daily exercise during lockdown.

Bike sales have boomed and people dusted off their old cycles to get some exercise and explore their local area while maintaining social distance.

To help make space for cycling and walking, and following government guidance, work has been carried out in key exercise spots and retail locations. Making use of road space means people walking can socially distance more easily. Temporary cycle lanes have also been created.

During lockdown and as it eased, North Somerset Council's sustainable travel team continued its work around cycling and walking and helped supply bikes to people needing to get to work.

The Borrow a Bike scheme, working with bike shop The Bicycle Chain, was made available to key workers and those needing to travel to work.

Loves café, in Weston-super-Mare, borrowed an electric bike and trailer to run a six-month trial delivering hot meals to local people and key workers at Weston General Hospital.

Manager Anna said: "Having this amazing electric bike broadened our opportunity to bring our products and services to people's front doors."

A special fleet of 18 'Super-mare-cycles' has also been made exclusively available for staff at Weston General Hospital to get to work.

Cycling to work can improve both your physical and mental health, while giving the perfect opportunity for exercise instead of sitting in your car or on public transport.

Read more about Loves café and its food delivery service on **page 12**.

Find out about borrowing a bike for up to four weeks at www.betterbybike.info/loanbikes

Help promote walking and cycling in your workplace

Would you like more cycling and walking facilities at your workplace?

Businesses in North Somerset can apply for up to £3,000 in match funding for new facilities, such as bike trailers, new or improved cycle parking or storage facilities, or pool bikes for staff.

Applications are reviewed weekly and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

Download a form from travelwest.info/businesses/north-somerset and return it to sustainable.travel@n-somerset.gov.uk

The cycle to work scheme also allows employees to buy a tax-free bike through monthly instalments, saving between 25 and 39 per cent off the retail price.

Find out more at www.betterbybike.info/cycle-work-scheme

Grass growing taller to



Tree planting in Weston-super-Mare



Tall grass in Nailsea

Grass is now growing taller in open spaces across North Somerset to help create extra habitats for bees, insects and small mammals to flourish.

North Somerset Council had already planned to create tall grass areas as part of its rewilding programme but because of coronavirus, more sites have been introduced this year than originally planned.

When the lockdown started, the usual grass cutting programme was scaled-back because fewer staff were able to work and other

areas of work needed prioritising, such as removing hazardous waste and supporting the recycling and waste collections.

So this meant it was the right time to allow more grass to grow taller.

North Somerset Council's natural environment officer Samantha Phillips said: "Given the strong support from residents for more rewilding, and with staff redeployed to support our response to COVID-19, it was the right time to leave more grass to grow.

"We know that many insect species and birds have suffered from a lack of flowers and wild

grasses so this will give something back to the bees and insects that we all need."

This summer tall grass is being allowed to grow across 100,000 square metres of open space, about a quarter of the total land identified for tall grass management.

The remainder will be converted to tall grass over the next two years.

The council's rewilding programme began in February when about 400 volunteers helped plant 5,000 young trees in parks and open spaces across the area.

Another 45,000 trees are planned to be planted over the next two years.

Where will the tall grass be?

Normal grass cutting is still taking place across the locations identified but areas have been set aside for tall grass management.

Each site is signposted with a blue heart symbol to identify it as a rewilding area.

Weston-super-Mare Clevedon

Castle Batch
Queensway
Walford Avenue
Broadway

Highdale Road
Tickenham Road
Northern Way
Teignmouth Road and
Moor Lane

Nailsea/Wraxall

Pound Lane
(fire station end)
Scotch Horn and
Hawthorn Way
Elm Farm
(detail to be agreed
with parish council)
Rhyne View
Stock Way South

help biodiversity flourish



Volunteers in Portishead



Rewilding in Yatton

In total, both the rewilding and tall grass initiatives will result in 25 hectares of new woodland and about 40 hectares of tall grass areas over a three-year period, which will help create biodiversity and mitigate the effects of climate change. The success of the rewilding scheme is weather dependent.

North Somerset Council declared a climate emergency last year and aims to become a carbon neutral council and a carbon neutral area by 2030.

Find out more at
www.n-somerset.gov.uk/rewilding



Portishead

Battery Point
Lake Grounds and Picnic Grounds
Merlin Park

Plans to preserve hillfort delayed

Plans to uncover the Iron Age hillfort in Weston-super-Mare for the first time in 200 years have been delayed because of the coronavirus crisis.

Plans for Worlebury Camp include removing vegetation and tree growth to prevent further damage to the Scheduled Monument, which has been on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register since 2016.

North Somerset Council applied to the Forestry Commission for a felling licence to remove about six hectares of woodland in the hillfort area and carry out thinning of the northern cliff by 30 per cent, returning the area to limestone grassland.

If this licence is approved the council will then apply to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a grant to carry out the necessary work.

However, both the Forestry Commission and the National Lottery postponed their usual application process due to coronavirus.

Tree felling can only take place during the winter so the earliest start date will now be the winter of 2021/22, subject to the felling licence approval and lottery funding.



North Somerset Council is continuing to work with volunteers and the local community to manage the hillfort in the meantime.

View the management plan online at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/hillfort





Innovative food centre open for business

An innovative new food and drink centre in Weston-super-Mare is providing valuable support to help businesses from across the region succeed.

The Food Works^{SW} opened in April to offer state-of-the-art facilities and specialist technical support.

The centre has been well placed to help businesses respond to the impacts of coronavirus. Some food and drink businesses have experienced increased demand but many others have seen orders cancelled and their business hit hard.

The technical team at the Food Works^{SW} is supporting many of

these businesses, whether they need to diversify, scale-up, or explore online sales and delivery.

Webinars are available to help businesses resolve common issues and further training programmes will be launched this summer.

This support is targeted at those looking to start-up or change their business model, or more established business needing specific technical advice.

The Food Works^{SW} contains 12 food-grade business units of various sizes and a number of these are now let.

The first tenant moved in during

May – organic ready meal manufacturer Field Doctor.

Bakery start-up The Perfect Treat also took a short-term hire of a commercial kitchen.

The £11m centre is based within Junction 21 Enterprise Area.

It was developed by North Somerset Council after it won funding from the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership, through the Local Growth Fund.

In April the council handed over control of the centre to Nottingham-based The Food and Drink Forum on a 15-year contract.



All photos courtesy of Nick Whimsier Photography



www.foodworks-sw.co.uk

Facebook: @foodworks_sw

Twitter: @foodworks_sw

For more information about leasing one of the business units, email enquiries@foodworks-sw.co.uk or call 01934 411 272.

Repairing and maintaining roads during lockdown

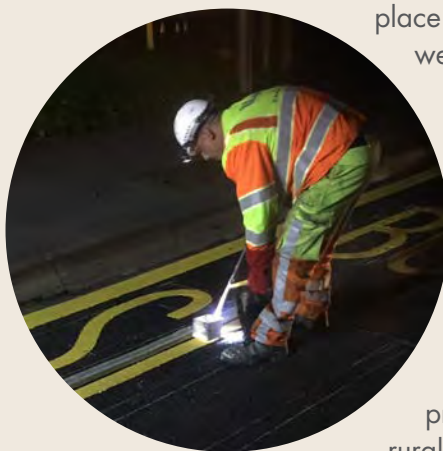
Highway repairs and maintenance continued in North Somerset during the lockdown to ensure roads stayed safe and accessible for key workers and those travelling for essential tasks.

North Somerset Council continued its critical repair and maintenance works programme and also carried out some improvement schemes where government advice on construction works and social distancing could be complied with.

During May about £500,000 of work was carried out, including...

- dealing with out-of-hours emergencies
- repairing about 5,000 potholes
- cleansing about 1,300 gullies
- carrying out patching and resurfacing projects, including Wyndham Way in Portishead
- using a jetter to carry out drainage investigations
- resurfacing two footpaths, including Wansborough Road outside Priory School
- improving various signs and road markings.

North Somerset Council worked alongside its partners Skanska, Centregreat and Dynniq to ensure the latest government advice was adhered to, to protect staff and the public.



The social distancing control measures put in place at the highways depot in Sandford were recognised and promoted by Skanska as an example of best practice in COVID-19 risk mitigations.

These included staggering start times to reduce staff contact daily briefings about the latest advice, additional vehicles used for people to travel around, work being prioritised to focus on strategic and rural areas and avoid urban ones, and office-based staff working from home.

The team also took advantage of the reduction in traffic to work on key routes, such as gully emptying on the A38.



Report road or pavement problems – including potholes and faulty streetlights – at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/connect

Reporting issues online means the problem will get logged and sent directly to the relevant team or officer for them to deal with.

For the latest information follow the team on social media at www.facebook.com/NStravelandroads and www.twitter.com/NStravel_roads



Helping vulnerable people settle in North Somerset

Vulnerable families who have fled their war-torn homes are managing to settle in North Somerset despite the impact of coronavirus.

North Somerset Council supports 11 families who have resettled in the area after fleeing the devastating war in Syria.

Caroline Crossley is the project officer for the council's vulnerable persons resettlement scheme and said: "Working alongside families that have been through the most atrocious and challenging situations is humbling."

The coronavirus crisis made things more difficult but, with support from volunteers, the council adapted to find new ways to support them.

Shena Deuchars is a volunteer with Refugees Welcome North Somerset and a landlord to one of the families.

She said: "We have helped collect food parcels and learning packs from local schools to deliver to families, as well as surplus food donated by local supermarkets.

"We've also helped to repair bike brakes so that the children can ride around the garden and continued to have conversations in English, while maintaining the two metre social distancing rules."

A private Facebook page – VPRS Families in North Somerset – was set up to help families connect and share useful resources.

Families were also able to communicate any concerns and share positive news with Caroline and her colleagues through video calls.

Ramadan, an important event in the Muslim calendar, took place during the pandemic but families were still able to celebrate.

Nour Al Ahmad, mum to Ibrahim and Zeinab, shared some of the fun craft activities they had been doing at home on the Facebook page.

Nour said: "It was difficult getting used to staying inside but we used the Ramadan celebrations to stay positive.

"I enjoyed spending quality time with the children and spent nearly two hours cutting moons and colouring letters.

"Life has been tiring at times but I'm hopeful things will soon return to normal."



Would you like to help vulnerable families settle in North Somerset? Contact Caroline Crossley on **01934 427 275** or caroline.crossley@n-somerset.gov.uk for more information.



Being at home shouldn't mean being at risk



Lockdown caused stress and uncertainty for many families but also meant those experiencing domestic abuse were trapped at home with their abuser.

Domestic abuse will never be tolerated, no matter how unusual or difficult the circumstances, and support continued to be available to those in North Somerset who needed it.

Local domestic abuse support is delivered by Next Link. It provides safe houses for families, single women, women with complex needs and men, as well as independent specialist support for high-risk victims, and community outreach

support for low or medium-risk victims.

One woman was referred in April after her ex-partner's abuse and harassment towards her and her children escalated during lockdown.

She had wanted to leave for some time because of his controlling, threatening and physically abusive behaviour but felt trapped.

Next Link were able to provide legal support, safety planning and an offer of safe accommodation. She decided to leave and was supported to move into a refuge with her children.

Chief executive Carol Metters said:

"Our message to all victims is that we are here to help make them and their children safe.

"Our extensive experience of supporting victims has shown that those who receive support go on to build safe fulfilling lives free from violence and abuse."

Another woman who received support said: "I was really scared about coming forward as I didn't think anyone would believe me.

"He said so many times that people would think I'm crazy but Next Link helped me realise I wasn't and got me out really quickly."



Need help?



In an emergency call **999**. If you can't speak, press **55** when prompted

If you need support for yourself or someone else, call Next Link on **0800 4700 280** (available 24/7) or access its live chat facility online at www.nextlinkhousing.co.uk

For a round-up of all support services and discussion forums, visit www.saferstrongerns.co.uk/domesticabuse



Huge High Street mural honours key workers

Key workers who kept vital services going during the coronavirus pandemic have been immortalised in a huge mural in Weston-super-Mare's High Street.

The large mural, on the hoarding of the former M&S store, features 27 different key workers set against the backdrop of Weston's seafront, with the town's piers, Steepholt Island, Brean Down and the Red Arrows also featuring.

The work was the brainchild of local artist Martin D'Arcy and North Somerset councillor Mike Solomon, who were both keen to ensure

a fitting tribute to the many local workers who supported residents through the pandemic.

It took three weeks to complete and Martin was supported by other local artists and businesses who helped fund the project.

Martin said: "The hoarding was a blank canvas crying out for some artistic attention.

"I was keen to pay tribute to the many people who have carried on working during the pandemic to keep us all safe and well."

The artwork features care workers, doctors, nurses, police officers, fire officers, refuse collectors, drivers, shop workers and teachers.

Martin added: "It was a pleasure to paint the hoarding and every day we received positive comments from passers-by as we added to the artwork."

Mike said: "I hope the mural goes some way to showing the town's appreciation for the tremendous work the key workers have done and continue to do."

Martin and Mike are keen to develop more large-scale murals locally, both in Weston and other parts of North Somerset.

Follow the footsteps of Hans Price

Follow the footsteps of Victorian architect Hans Fowler Price during a guided walk around Weston-super-Mare.

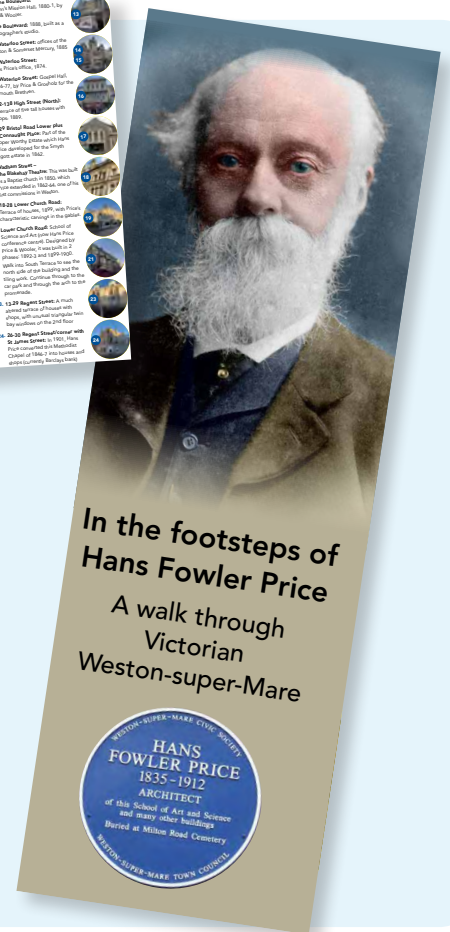
Hans Price worked in Weston for more than 50 years in the late 19th century and was responsible for many of the town's best-known buildings, including schools, places of worship, the Weston Mercury newspaper office and extension to the Town Hall.



This new walk around the town centre highlights some of these buildings.

It was devised by North Somerset Council in partnership with Historic England, as part of the Great Weston Heritage Action Zone initiative.

The walk, all on flat terrain, takes about an hour to complete at a steady pace. Find it online at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/heritageactionzone



Could you grow a 'living fence'?

Growing a 'living fence' around your property could bring many benefits and help improve the look of your street.

A living fence is a permanent hedge that is tight and tough enough to serve almost any of the functions of a manufactured timber fence.

More and more people are opting for this green, durable landscaping, which can enhance the natural character of an area.

Living fences protect soil, are less expensive than timber fences, absorb carbon as they grow, act as windbreaks and sound barriers, and offer privacy from neighbours and street traffic.

Depending on the species you choose, it can also provide food and shelter for local wildlife.

There are many varieties to choose from, including beech, yew, or a native mix including hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, holly, or more.



Find out more about living fences at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/livingfences or visit www.rhs.org.uk/hedges



Five ways to look after your wellbeing

Coronavirus encouraged us all to think about how we look after ourselves and others.

Being at home for long periods and avoiding other people undoubtedly put a strain on our mental and emotional wellbeing.

However, there are some simple steps which can improve how we feel on a day-to-day basis.

Can you bring the Five Ways to Wellbeing into your daily routine?



Connect

Relationships boost our mood and help us through difficult times. They can be developed in person, by phone or online. Even listening to a chatty radio station or putting up photographs of people we care about can help us connect.

A problem shared lightens the load but if you can't talk to friends or family, there are other people you can speak to. Search for 'NHS recommended helplines' in your search engine.

Keep learning

Learning can boost your confidence so try something new or rediscover an old interest. You could pick up a book, listen to a podcast, research an interesting subject or download an app to develop new skills.

Access digital services from the library service at www.librarieswest.org.uk

Be active

Being active improves your mood, sleeping habits and concentration, while reducing stress and depression. Try walking, cycling, gardening or find online activities at www.sportengland.org/stayinworkout



Simple activities that make us breathless, such as going up and down stairs or cleaning vigorously, are also important for health. If

you can turn daily tasks into a mini workout or build exercise into a daily routine, you may be surprised at how much better you feel.

Take notice

Becoming more aware of our senses, as well as our thoughts and feelings, can change how we feel about life and help us cope better with challenges. This could be as simple as appreciating nature, taking photographs, or thinking of things you are thankful for each day.



Give

Kindness improves feelings of self-worth and connection with others. Thank someone for what they've done, phone to offer support, or give someone a gift. You'll make their day and feel good yourself. Researchers also found that people became happier by volunteering more.

www.mind.org.uk • www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters • www.actionforhappiness.org
For volunteering opportunities in North Somerset visit www.vansweb.org.uk



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For council tax and benefits:
01934 888 144
(Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)
For social services:
01275 888 801
(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**



Thank you

North Somerset
key workers