

NORTH SOMERSET

WINTER 2021

LIFE

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Dear reader...

The news so far this autumn sadly means we face a winter of turmoil, which adds to the burdens we all have endured for very many months. The darker evenings and colder weather won't help either!

We are learning to live with Covid-19 yet infection is still very prevalent in our community, though increasing vaccination rates are being very effective in reducing the virus's really serious ill effects. Yet we need to continue to be cautious. We go into winter with serious issues in our supply chains, the impacts of both shortages of various skills in the economy and price rises affecting very many of our residents, as well as council services and public transport, plus potential for significant outbreaks of flu and Covid 19. Please do follow up any offers of flu vaccinations - I've had mine - and Covid boosters to help us all keep safe.

As a council we are very mindful of these circumstances and are extremely

grateful for the tireless work of our own staff and our marvellous community partners in looking after our residents and businesses. The ongoing efforts of all of you through North Somerset Together remains invaluable in addressing these challenges. In addition we shall be distributing our share of the government's Household Support Fund, which will help our most vulnerable neighbours. We do hope too that the advice for wintertime in this magazine is useful.

As we move into autumn and towards Christmas, we have a range of events and activities to entertain and, we trust, provide some light relief. We're delighted to be working with Arts Council England and are very proud to be a Priority Place for the South West, which means we shall have a wide range of arts and culture activities coming over the next three years. You will probably have already seen some of the announcements.

While I realise that very many budgets will be tight, I do hope that you will join me and try to get as much of your festive shopping from our brilliant range of local shops and suppliers. Not only do we support local businesses, jobs and families, it all adds to the vibrancy of our towns and villages, and perhaps a first chance for a long time to meet our fellow residents face to face! You might even want to join them on the great walks we always have in Life. This edition uncovers a hidden part of Clevedon's history which I'm looking forward to exploring.

And, as a former Chair of the Avon Fire Authority, I would be very remiss not to point you to the offer for fire safety visits on page 5. Please do take care.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year
Cllr Don Davies, Leader of the Council,
on behalf of the council's Executive

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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.

Plans to preserve hillfort go ahead

Plans to protect Worlebury Camp hillfort in Weston-super-Mare will continue despite a bid for lottery funding being turned down.

North Somerset Council applied to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in August for a £250,000 grant to help preserve the nationally significant Iron Age hillfort.

This application was turned down because the lottery fund was oversubscribed with applications and other projects fitted their objectives more closely.

This was a huge disappointment because it will make it harder to protect and preserve the scheduled monument.

However, the hillfort remains at risk so the council's plans have not changed.

Since the project started, ash dieback disease has spread across the country, including the whole of North Somerset.

It is affecting many trees on the hillfort so this problem will need addressing.

Diseased trees will need to be removed and the council is currently preparing a programme to carry out this work.

The lottery application will also be reviewed to be re-submitted next year.



www.n-somerset.gov.uk/hillfort
www.n-somerset.gov.uk/ashdieback



School given excellent status for pupil wellbeing



Pupils at a North Somerset school are feeling calmer and happier thanks to a new scheme to give them the tools to manage the ups and downs of life better.

Voyage Learning Campus, based across two sites in Weston-super-Mare, is a pupil referral unit that offers alternative educational provision for young people aged five to 16.

It is for pupils who are unable to attend mainstream school due to either health reasons or because they have been permanently excluded.

The school has recently been named as a Thrive Ambassador School for the role it plays in supporting pupil wellbeing and their social and emotional development.

Principal Emma Gundry said: "We have a really diverse group of pupils who are all vulnerable young people and the Thrive Approach helps us to plug the developmental gaps they have, so they can regulate their emotions and feel calmer and happier.

"One of our aims is to be a centre of excellence for children who have experienced difficulties or trauma and Thrive gives us the toolkit and strategies to be able to do that."

www.thriveapproach.com



School admission consultation open

A consultation is now open for admission arrangements for the 2023/24 intake.

Each year schools are required to consult on their school admissions arrangements if there are significant changes to their admissions policies or oversubscription criteria.

For schools that are proposing a change, the consultation for the policies relating to admissions from September 2023 will be available on the relevant school websites, as well as North Somerset Council's website, for six weeks between now and January.

Consultations run by North Somerset Council are available to view online at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/consult



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www.avonfire.gov.uk



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New fund to tackle violence against women and girls

Violence against women and girls will be tackled in North Somerset thanks to new funding.

North Somerset Council and Somerset County Council successfully bid for £324,449 from the Home Office Safer Streets Fund.

The money will be used on both education and protection.

This two-tier approach first aims to change behaviour and stop violent incidents occurring in the first place.

There will be education and awareness-raising in schools, as well as engagement within communities.

Protection means strengthening the response where incidents are prevalent.

The bid is an innovative and collaborative proposal by the two councils covering the whole Somerset policing area. It presents an opportunity to work together and achieve positive outcomes in tackling violence against women and girls across the area.



www.police.uk/StreetSafe



Council commitment to armed forces community

A silver award has been given to North Somerset Council for its commitment to its Armed Forces Covenant and the armed forces community.

North Somerset Council has retained its silver status in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme.

The scheme has three levels - bronze, silver and gold – for organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support for defence and the armed forces community.

To achieve silver, organisations must demonstrate that the armed forces community are not unfairly disadvantaged as part of their recruitment policies.

They must also ensure their workforce is aware of their positive policies towards defence people issues for veterans, reserves, cadet force adult volunteers, and spouses and partners of those serving in the armed forces.

The award will last for the next five years.



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Volunteers needed for council panel

Would you like to have your say on how much local councillors are paid?

North Somerset Council is looking for new members for its Independent Remuneration Panel, which is responsible for reviewing the levels of allowances paid to councillors.

A full review of the existing allowance scheme is imminent and so you will need to attend about three or four meetings.

After that, meetings take place as required throughout the year. They are usually held in the early evening, at the council's offices in Weston-super-Mare or Clevedon.

Administrative support is provided and reasonable expenses are paid.

Applicants must have integrity, be able to understand and analyse complex issues, exercise sound judgement in considering evidence, have a keen interest in local government and have a strong connection with North Somerset.

They must not be disqualified from standing as a councillor and must not be a councillor, employee of North Somerset Council (or close relative) or serve on any of its committees or sub committees.

Apply by email or letter with your name, address and work background, and a statement saying why you'd like to be on the panel and what strengths you could bring, along with contact details of two referees.

Write to Sue Bullock, PA to the Leader, North Somerset Council, Town Hall, Walliscote Grove Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1UJ or email leader.pa@n-somerset.gov.uk

Closing date is 5pm on Friday 12 November and interviews will take place from Monday 29 November.

For more information call 01275 884 127



Advice and support for private landlords



Landlords or those planning on becoming one soon are invited to a free event this month to find out what incentives North Somerset Council can offer.

The council's lettings team is hosting the drop-in event from 8.30am to 1pm on Tuesday 9 November at the Stable Games Room, in High Street, Weston-super-Mare.

The team is looking for landlords or owners of empty homes who could provide private rented housing to vulnerable households in the area who need to find a home.

North Somerset Council provides a wide range of free help and support to landlords, including financial incentives.

The event will also have representatives from other organisations, including the National Landlords Code of Excellence (NLCE), Citizens Advice, West Country Savings and Loans, The Centre for Sustainable Energy, the council's housing standards team and the Department for Work and Pensions.

For more information contact the lettings team on **01934 426 483** or email lettingsteam@n-somerset.gov.uk
www.n-somerset.gov.uk/landlordincentivescheme



Special memento for first pupils of new Yatton school



The first pupils of a new primary school in Yatton were given a special memento when it opened in September.

All 20 four and five-year-olds at Chestnut Park Primary School's first reception class received an engraved medal on a ribbon in the school colours.

The children also joined in the ribbon cutting ceremony to open North Somerset's newest school officially.

The school, which will serve Yatton's North End community, initially has 210 places overall, with infrastructure already in place to increase its capacity to 420 places.

The design and build of the £6m school was project-managed by North Somerset Council, who awarded the build contract to Willmott Dixon.

Clevedon Learning Trust will run the school.

During the building work, employment was offered to more

than 20 people who had been previously unemployed for a long time, along with six apprentices.

A stainless steel sculpture of a sea eagle is at the front of the building, created by Clevedon artist Hayley Jones.

The sculpture celebrates the archaeological significance of the site where the school has been built.

A series of archaeological excavations were carried out at North End, Yatton, between 2015 and 2018, before construction started on the Bloor Homes housing development, a care home and the new school.

These excavations, overseen by North Somerset Council's senior archaeologist Cat Lodge, revealed some late prehistoric/Iron Age pits on the school site, one of which contained the claw of a sea eagle.

Time to apply for school places

Now is the time to apply for school places if your child is due to start school next year.

If your child was born between 1 September 2017 and 31 August 2018 they will be due to start reception year in September 2022.

You have until **Saturday 15 January** to make your choice.

It's really important to apply by the closing date or you may not be considered in the first round of applications.

Places can't be reserved for those who apply late, so you'll be less likely to get your preferred school.

You can name up to three preferences and they can be schools both within and outside North Somerset.

Apply online at **www.n-somerset.gov.uk/admissions**

Read the parent guides before applying, as they explain the application process and how to use the online system.



The school will be opening a pre-school class for three to four-year-olds in January. Anyone interested should email **office@chestnutparkschool.org.uk**



If you have any queries call **01275 884 078** or email **admissions@n-somerset.gov.uk**



Have your say on historic stone walls

Join the conversation



Stone walls are an important part of the character and heritage of an area but many in Weston-super-Mare have been lost in recent years.

The loss of retaining stone walls decreases the visual cohesion of an area and can reduce the value of local houses.

The council's Weston Heritage Action Zone has launched a consultation to find out what you think.

Large parts of Weston are included in conservation areas and within these, walls over one-metre high need permission to be removed.

It's proposed that an Article 4 Direction is introduced for these areas, meaning owners will need to seek planning permission to remove any external stone wall.

The consultation runs until 5pm on Tuesday 7 December.

Find out more at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/stonewalls
Feedback can be emailed to planning.policy@n-somerset.gov.uk

Hard copies of the documents are also at Weston Library.



Other ways to have you say

• Speak at council meetings

Any resident, business ratepayer or someone entitled to vote in North Somerset can request a slot to speak at council meetings.

This might be Full Council, the Executive, the planning and regulatory committee or policy and scrutiny panels.

Find out more at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/how-speak-council-meetings, email committee.administration@n-somerset.gov.uk or call 01934 634 900.

• Question councillors on social media

Facebook Live chats take place every month so you can ask questions to executive members of the council.

Visit www.facebook.com/NorthSomersetCouncil. The chats are saved on the page for you to watch later if you can't make the live event.

• Comment on consultations

All consultations run by North Somerset Council are listed at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/consult

Sign up to receive email alerts when new ones are opened.

If you haven't got internet access at home, posters are put up in libraries every month listing current consultations and contact details, including a phone number.

• Public notices

Public and legal notices covering a range of council matters can be viewed online at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/notices



Stay safe this winter

Winter is around the corner so now is the time to make sure you're prepared for the months ahead.



The coronavirus pandemic is still with us and although we're in a better place than last winter because of the high level of vaccinations and antibodies in the population, it's still important to continue to follow the latest public health guidance.

Getting vaccinated, wearing a face mask, washing your hands and getting tested will help protect you, people around you, and the NHS.

North Somerset Council continues to keep essential services going but it must also prepare for any of the usual issues which might arise if bad weather hits our area.

This edition of *Life* includes information about keeping warm and well at home, getting around, support available to communities and more.

Keep it handy over the coming months because you never know when you might need it.



Preparing for winter weather

The Met Office has winter weather advice at www.metoffice.gov.uk/weatherready

If weather becomes severe this winter, North Somerset Council will give updates on council services at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/disruption

Keep informed

Sign up to monthly *Life* updates by email to stay informed about news and events in North Somerset.

Visit www.northsomersetlife.co.uk

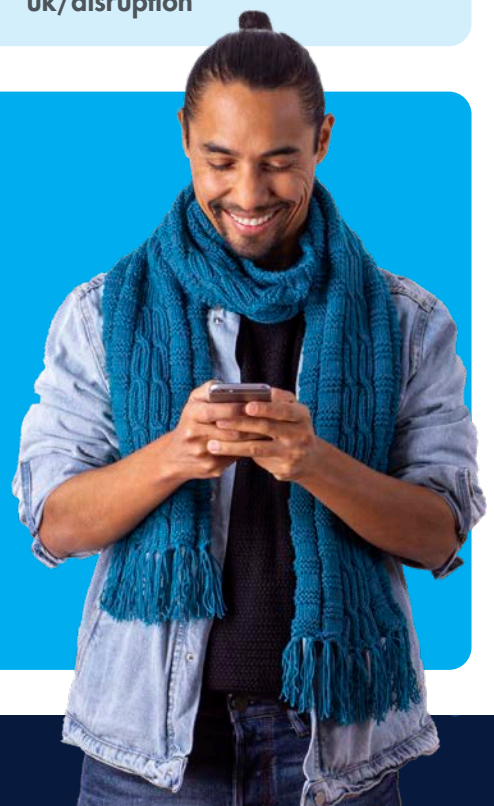
The council's social media feeds will also be regularly updated.



NorthSomersetCouncil



@NorthSomersetC





How to access council services

If you want to stock up on library books or burn off those Christmas calories this winter, check opening times of venues before you head out the door.

Opening times usually change over the festive period and will be listed at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/festive

Also keep an eye out for any changing coronavirus restrictions throughout winter, as things may need to change at short notice.

For many people, going online remains the quickest and easiest way of accessing many services if you need to contact the council directly.

You can report it, request or pay for it at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/connect

Town Hall

The Town Hall reception, in Walliscote Grove Road, Weston-super-Mare, is only open to visitors who have booked an appointment in advance.

If you have an enquiry about a council service, call 01934 888 888 first.

Ask for the service you want and an appointment will be arranged if it can't be resolved over the phone.

Please follow any social distancing guidelines that may still be in place when visiting.

Weston Library, within the Town Hall, is open.



Libraries

Libraries are open for visitors to use computers, print documents, browse shelves, and borrow books and other items.

Children's events such as story time sessions are running but may still have limited places available.

Changing public health advice over winter may mean some services have to change so look online or contact your local library for the latest information before you set out.

Find details of your local library at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/libraries

The online library has an expanded range of free eBooks, eAudiobooks, digital newspapers and magazines to download.

You can also use family history site Ancestry and consult the Britannica encyclopedia online from home.

Visit www.n-somerset.gov.uk/onlinelibrary

Leisure centres

Opening hours vary at different centres. Find contact details for your local one at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/leisurecentres



Flu and Covid vaccines vital this winter

Both flu and coronavirus will be circulating this winter so get your vaccinations when you're eligible to ensure maximum protection.



Research shows that those infected with both viruses are more than twice as likely to die as someone with coronavirus alone.

So get both your flu and Covid vaccines to protect yourself and your friends and family this winter.

Booster Covid jabs available

A coronavirus booster vaccine dose is available to those most at risk from Covid-19, including over-50s and people aged over 16 with a long-term health condition.

The booster jab gives longer-term protection against getting seriously ill and is available to those who have had their second dose more than six months ago.

It is available for free on the NHS and, if you're eligible, you will be invited when it's your turn.

Keep testing to reduce the spread

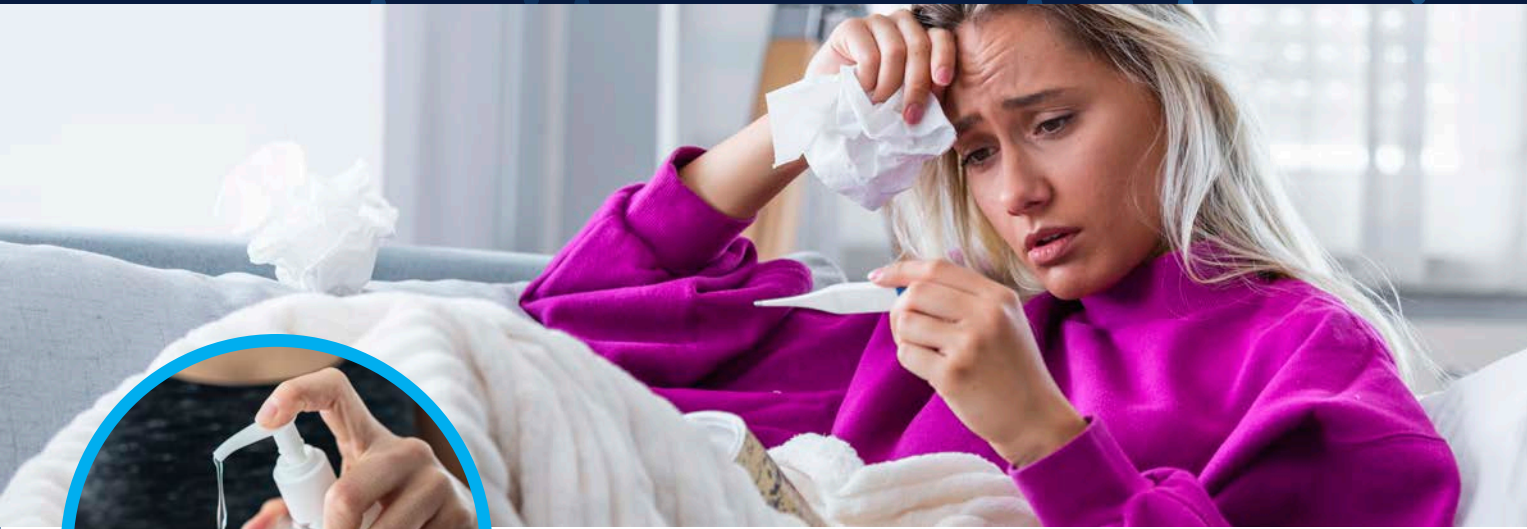
Research shows that one-in-three people with coronavirus don't have symptoms but could still pass it onto others.

Rapid tests that you do at home when you don't have symptoms can help stop the spread as well as putting your mind at ease before meeting up with friends and family.

Everyone can get home test kits and are encouraged to do these tests twice a week.

Find out more about testing at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/rapidtesting





Protection from coronavirus

The advice remains the same – wash hands, wear face coverings, make space, let in fresh air, take the right test at the right time, and get vaccinated.

We know these things work and they will help reduce the risk of coronavirus over the coming months.

If you have symptoms, no matter how mild, you must self-isolate and book a test, either online at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 119.

Reducing the spread of seasonal flu

Flu is a viral infection which can be passed on through air particles when people talk, cough or sneeze.

The main symptoms include a high temperature or fever of 38°C or above, tiredness and weakness, a headache, general aches and pains, and a dry, chesty cough.

It can knock you out for several days but for more vulnerable people - such as over-65s, those with long-term health issues or pregnant women - it can lead to serious illness, hospitalisation and death.

Reducing the spread means fewer people experience complications and there is less demand on GP practices, pharmacies and hospitals.

The best protection is the vaccine. Those most at risk of developing complications or becoming particularly unwell can get the vaccine free of charge from their GP or pharmacy.

If you're pregnant you can also get the vaccine through your local maternity service.

Adults who aren't eligible for a free flu jab can get one for about £10 at pharmacies and supermarkets.

Most people recover at home in a week but people with chronic conditions or who are over 65 should call NHS 111.

www.n-somerset.gov.uk/flu
www.nhs.uk/flu



If you need medical help but it's not an emergency, call the free NHS helpline 111 or go to 111.nhs.uk

Fully trained advisers will advise you on which health service you need and how to access it.



Keep warm and well at home



Freezing winter weather could be on its way so it's worth making sure your home and family is prepared.

Some people are more vulnerable to the effects of the cold than others so look out for friends, relatives and neighbours.

Now is the time to make small checks around the house because a cold, draughty or damp home can have a detrimental effect on your health.

Understand how to use your heating system efficiently and consider installing energy efficient measures which can keep you warm in winter, cool in summer and save you money.

Also ensure you have enough food and medicines to see you through any bad weather spells, drink plenty of warm drinks and have at least one hot meal a day.

Quick jobs for the home include:

- servicing your boiler
- having your chimney/flue swept
- checking any exposed pipes are insulated – make sure everyone knows how to turn the mains water off
- ensuring your home is energy efficient – there are many grants available
- ensuring your gutters are clear and drains flowing freely.

North Somerset Handyperson Service

If you need help undertaking other small jobs around the home, North Somerset Council's handy person service could help.

The service, carried out by AMS Electrical, is available to anyone aged 60 or over, or anyone with a disability who can't carry out the work themselves.

The handy person could carry out a range of home improvement, adaption, maintenance or repair work, such as small plumbing or electrical jobs, clearing paths for access, fixing grab rails, energy efficiency work or more.

It costs £15.60 per hour, for up to three hours per visit, and a maximum of six hours per year.

Call AMS Electrical on 01934 520 116 or email **info@amselectricalservices.co.uk**

Advice and support

This is also available through different agencies:

- information about heating your home, switching supplier, smart meters, renewable energy and reducing fuel bills can be found at **www.cse.org.uk/advice**
- Citizens Advice can also help with switching energy supplier. Visit **www.nscab.org.uk** or call 0808 278 7973
- free gas or electricity smart meters are now available to all households. contact your supplier or visit **www.smartenergygb.org**
- a grant is available if your home is not connected to a gas network. Visit **www.warmwest.org.uk** or call 01656 747 623
- a community bulk oil buying scheme is available through **www.wern.org.uk** or 01275 333 701





Do you need to be a priority?

Do you or a loved one need to be given priority in the event of a power or water cut?

Energy suppliers and utility companies keep a register of their more vulnerable customers so they know who needs more support in the event of a loss of service.

This means you'll get advance notice of planned power cuts and priority support in an emergency, such as heating and cooking facilities.

It's free to join the priority register. To be eligible, you must either:

- have reached your state pension age
- be disabled or have a long-term medical condition
- be recovering from an injury
- have a hearing or sight condition or additional communication needs
- be pregnant or have children under five, or
- be in a vulnerable situation, including a temporary change in your circumstances.

Get in touch with your utility suppliers for more information and to register, or visit www.ofgem.gov.uk/energy-advice-households



- visit www.gov.uk for information about national schemes, including the Warm Home Discount scheme, Charis Grants for park home owners (or call 0330 555 9424), the Winter Fuel Payment and Cold Weather Payment
- financial help may be available if you're struggling to pay your energy and water bills. If you are in fuel poverty, contact your own energy supplier, visit www.cse.org.uk or call 0800 082 2234
- if you're having difficulty paying your water bill, visit www.wessexwater.co.uk or call 0345 600 3600.
- Visit www.nhs.uk/keep-warm-keep-well for health advice.

Emergency alert service set to launch

A new emergency alert service is being launched by the government this autumn.

Emergency alerts will be sent to mobile phones and tablets if there is a threat or hazard and risk to life, such as severe flooding, extreme weather or terrorist incidents.

You'll receive advice about how to stay safe.

The alert will be broadcast from mobile phone masts and every compatible mobile phone or tablet in range will receive it.

Alerts will only ever be sent by the emergency services or government.

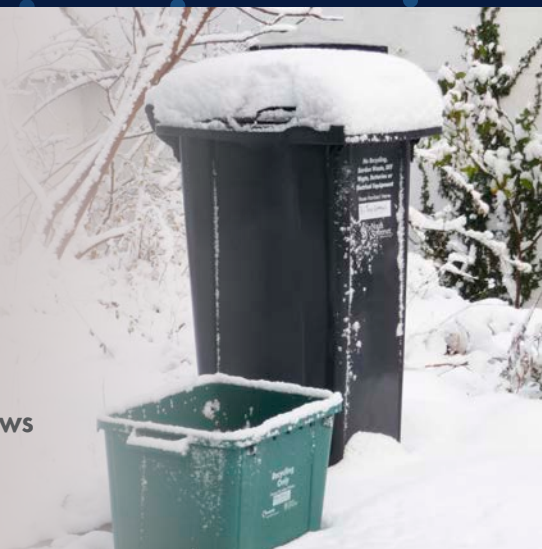
Find out more about how it will work at www.gov.uk/alerts





What to do with recycling and waste in severe weather

Severe winter weather could impact recycling and waste collections if crews are faced with icy conditions or snowy roads.



Here's the advice to follow if collections are disrupted this winter:

General waste: put your black wheelie bin or bags out on your normal collection day. If it's not collected, leave it out and crews will be back as soon as possible.

Food caddy and recycling boxes: put these out on your normal day. If not collected by 7pm, take them in and put them out again the following week on your normal day.

Garden waste: put out on your usual day. If not emptied, take them back in then put out again the following month on your scheduled day.

The dates for collections over winter are still to be confirmed. Check online at: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/calendars

How you can help:

- put bins and containers out by 6.30am on your collection day. To help crews in changeable weather conditions, the start time is now 6.30am year-round
- please wash, squash and sort your recycling
- remove packaging from inside large cardboard boxes and flatten the cardboard to the size of your recycling box
- crews empty thousands of boxes each day so keeping containers clean and tidy is important. Wipe handles down before and after use



Follow the recycling team on social media for the latest updates:

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

www.n-somerset.gov.uk/recycling

www.n-somerset.gov.uk/calendars

Find out more about recycling Christmas waste on page 28.

Check if your road has been missed at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/missedcollection



Funding available for local community groups

Many charities have struggled since the pandemic began because of less income coming in – but their services are needed more than ever.

As winter sets in, now might be the time that local community groups need extra support.

North Somerset Council and its partners which make up North Somerset Partnership have worked with Quartet Community Foundation to launch a new grant programme to support local charitable activity where a small amount of funding can make a big difference.

The North Somerset Realising Potential Fund, which offers grants of up to £2,000, is a rolling, open-ended fund rather than a one-off grant programme so this gives more opportunities for those in the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.

It is open to groups which respond to the needs and aspirations of disadvantaged local people.

Read Easy Weston was the first group to receive funding, using the grant to provide free literary coaching across the town to those who struggle with reading.

Julie Newman, from Quartet Community Foundation, said: "Since the pandemic began so many North Somerset charities and organisations have done amazing work supporting our local communities.

"But their hard work isn't over yet and many now need support themselves so they can be there through the Covid recovery.

"This grant programme will help them ensure everyone has a fair chance of a good life."

Find out more at www.quartetcf.org.uk/apply-for-a-grant

Communities still coming together

North Somerset Together continues to provide practical support to communities throughout the area.



The partnership formed last March as an emergency response to the coronavirus crisis but is now the basis for new relationships between the council and community organisations such as charities, mutual aid groups, town and parish councils, local faith groups, businesses and volunteers.

If you need support, whether financial challenges or health and wellbeing issues, you can find links to local organisations.

Find information and support at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/together or call 01934 427 437.



Read Easy Weston super-Mare was awarded £2,000



Use public transport safely this winter

Buses and trains are almost back to normal capacity after services were reduced last year to maintain social distancing and limit the spread of coronavirus.

As we now head into winter, it's important to continue using common sense to reduce the risk of the virus in our communities.

Wearing a face mask is still recommended on public transport and in crowded settings.

You might also consider travelling at off-peak times, using quieter stations, or keeping changes to a minimum if you can.

Walking or cycling for part of your journey, such as the first or last mile, would be even better.

Real-time updates could help plan your journey before stepping outside, which will be more important when the worst winter weather approaches.

Operators of both commercial public transport services and North Somerset Council's supported buses will decide whether services can operate in severe weather.

North Somerset Council's Integrated Transport Unit works closely with operators to collate the latest information.

ITU manager Carl Nicholson said: "When poor weather is forecast, we liaise with bus operators to ensure timely and accurate information is available.

"This means monitoring social media feeds, discussing plans and sharing updates.

"Where appropriate, we also display updates on the electronic real-time information screens at bus stops.

"If snow arrives overnight, we will aim to get our first update out at about 7am."

Follow your local bus operator on social media or visit their website for the latest information during any disruption.

To see live timetables and suggested public transport services for your journey visit **www.traveline.info**

The free UK Bus Checker app for smartphones also shows live bus and train arrivals.



Schools

Schools and colleges make their own decisions about reducing opening hours or shutting completely during bad weather.

Decisions will be made at the earliest opportunity so check their websites for updates.

School transport is usually run by independent operators so if a school does remain open, the operator will decide whether buses can run safely.

Updates about any disruption to home to school transport will also be on the council's website at **www.n-somerset.gov.uk/hometoschooltransport**

Follow the council's travel and roads social media accounts for updates:

NStravelandroads

NSpublictransport

@NStravel_roads





Drive safely this winter

A fleet of gritters will help keep major routes in North Somerset passable in most conditions this winter.

The six bright yellow vehicles operate across North Somerset and work round-the-clock when the temperature drops.

Each gritter tends to operate in its named area, so look out for Burrington, Bleadon-cold, Nailski, Portishead, Weston-scooper-Mare and Sleetholm.

The fleet is co-ordinated by highways engineers who work on schemes all year to improve the condition of the area's roads, then become winter specialists from October to provide cover seven days a week.

Last winter, the gritters went out 52 times, used 2,400 tonnes of salt and gritted 9,857 miles of road.

January was the busiest month with the gritters going out 23 times in total.

This year the fleet will support North Somerset Council's commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030 by switching to Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel.

HVO fuel reduces the carbon associated with fuel usage by 90 per cent.

It is produced entirely from renewable raw materials, including vegetable oils, animal fats, cooking oils, fish fats and corn oils, all of which are recovered from current industry practices and/or waste processing operations.

Check salting routes

Find out which roads near your home or work are gritted by visiting the interactive map online.

Visit www.n-somerset.gov.uk/salting-routes for more information and to find the gritting map.

Care for your car

Many garages offer free 'winter checks' for cars so consider booking yours in.

Also check fluid levels, that bulbs are in good working order, wipers are working effectively, and check the tyres for tread and pressure.

If it snows, consider if your journey is essential - do not travel unless you need to.

If you do drive, stick to the main roads if you can and carry a bag of essential items should you get stuck.

Follow the gritters

Each gritter can spread between five and 12 tonnes of salt every time they go out, and travel on average 62 miles per run.

Follow on social media for updates:

NStravelandroads

@NStravel_roads





Helping businesses survive and thrive

Lockdowns and restrictions to tackle Covid had an unprecedented impact on businesses throughout North Somerset - but help is at hand for them to survive and thrive.



North Somerset Council has offered free advice and guidance to businesses throughout the pandemic, as well as developing new initiatives and distributing millions of pounds in various government grants.

It has also agreed strategies to rebuild the local economy in a resilient way that will bring in investment, create new jobs and generate opportunities.

It's still an exceptionally challenging time though so, as we head into winter, make sure you take advantage of the support that's available, whether you run a business, are self-employed, currently unemployed or looking to retrain in a new field.



Are you accessing all the business support available?

Business owners across North Somerset can access a wide range of advice thanks to a new dedicated service.

North Somerset Council has launched a direct business support service which can provide as much or as little help as you need.

Whether you are a new start-up or long-established trader, you can find out...

- how to implement changes in the workplace to ensure a safe working environment
- about financial support available as a result of the pandemic
- how to recruit or upskill staff and what government incentives exist, such as Kickstart, apprenticeships and traineeships
- how to take advantage of digital and virtual platforms to increase market reach and sales
- whether diversifying or targeting your business to meet changing consumer demands would benefit you
- what you can do to work towards reducing your carbon emissions
- how start-ups can make the next step to opening their own premises in town centres, whether permanent or temporary.



For more information email the economy team on **business@n-somerset.gov.uk**



Help for job hunters

Employment and training support is available if you're looking for work or need help deciding which path to take.

Opportunity North Somerset is the first point of contact for anyone who needs advice and guidance to take on new challenges or to develop new skills with confidence.

Special hubs have opened in libraries to offer impartial advice and help job seekers achieve their personal and professional goals.

Weston resident Gary Williams accessed the service this year.

He said: "I was a market trader for over 20 years, dealing in fresh fruit and veg, but lost my job when the pandemic struck.



Businesses and training providers at an Opportunity North Somerset showcase event in September

"I was only two years from retirement so was unsure about what my options were and what available jobs would be a good fit.

"Through Opportunity North Somerset, I arranged a one-to-one employment session at my local library hub where I could speak with an adviser to highlight my skills, identify new positions, and boost my confidence.

"After getting an interview at Brunello Lounge, I was even able to book a follow-up session to help me complete my online application pack.

"I'm now working at Brunello and it's been fantastic to get back into the community.

"I even get to help with the fruit and veg deliveries in the morning, so it feels like I'm back on track."

To find out more about the service or book a session at one of the hubs, visit www.innorthsomerset.co.uk/opportunitynorthsomerset or email skillsupport@n-somerset.gov.uk

Shop your local high street this Christmas

Find unique gifts and help your local high street thrive by shopping at independent shops and businesses this festive time.

Local shops, producers, growers, traders and hospitality venues are still feeling the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and need our support to bounce back.

There are many reasons to shop local. It keeps money circulating in the local economy, jobs in the community, gives a unique identity to a town, and is better for the environment as it cuts transport emissions.

Free virtual smartphone town guides have been developed for Weston-super-Mare, Clevedon,

Nailsea and Portishead to help find what you're looking for.

These digital town guides help you find what's on offer at your favourite shop or venue, and you can collect loyalty points for spending your money locally.

These points can then be used to claim a choice of rewards, such as discounts at other participating venues.



Register for free at www.localrewards.chat enter your town to find the local offers.

Businesses can also sign up for free. For more information contact the economy team at business@n-somerset.gov.uk

Get specialist advice if you need it

Seek specialist advice if you continue to face challenges. If you're struggling financially, Citizens Advice North Somerset can give independent advice on employment, debt, benefits and more.

Call 0808 278 7973, email advice@nscab.org.uk or visit www.nscab.org.uk





Stay active till spring



Staying active over winter can do a lot of good for both your mental and physical wellbeing.

Although the days are shorter, there are still plenty of ways to get out on foot or two wheels if you prepare well and wrap up warm, whether you walk or cycle for fun, fitness or commuting.

Sustainable travel charity Sustrans has some top tips to feel safe in the saddle, such as keeping your feet warm, wearing waterproofs, keeping your bike in top condition, and taking it slowly.

Read them all at tinyurl.com/wintercyclingtips

You can also find inspiration to join local walking groups or discover new routes in your area at www.go4life.org/walking-cycling

Win bikes and kit this winter

Prizes such as new bikes and top-brand equipment are on offer during a big bike challenge this winter.



Love to Ride, North Somerset's cycle challenge website, hosts regular events to motivate you to ride whatever the weather.

This December is Winter Wheelers. Simply sign up as an individual or with colleagues and log all your rides to be in with the chance of winning prizes.

Stay motivated with lovetoride.net/northsomerset

Helping businesses be more active

Free sustainable travel advice and support is available to businesses throughout North Somerset.

This year, free e-bike fleet trials have been undertaken by Bristol Port Company, The Stable creative hub and Backwell School; free bike stands have been collected by North Somerset Environment Company, Ascot Media Group and Langford's Churchill Memorial Hall. Electric cargo bike grants (from the Energy Saving Trust) have been secured by Weston's For All Healthy Living Centre and the North Somerset Community Scrapstore.

If you want information to help your business take up active travel and reduce its carbon emissions visit www.travelwest.info/businesses

Could you be an active travel champion?

Could you inspire colleagues to walk and cycle more at your workplace?

Active travel champions have access to a range of free resources to help spread the word, such as free Dr Bike mechanic visits, bike stands, roadshows and more.

Visit www.travelwest.info/offers



For more information about these active travel schemes in North Somerset email Kerry on sustainable.travel@n-somerset.gov.uk

Add some sparkle this winter

Let some light into your life and brighten up those winter days with some spectacular illuminated displays. Weston Carnival might be postponed this year but there are other ways to enjoy light displays over the coming months...



Lullaby

Sound and light will be brightening up Weston-super-Mare this month as part of a new piece of public art.

Internationally-acclaimed Bristol-based artist Luke Jerram is bringing new installation Lullaby to the town.

Streets will shine, decorated bikes will create a cycling spectacle, and magical sounds will be heard in neighbourhoods as evening falls.

The event, presented by Theatre Orchard, takes place on Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 November in central Weston-super-Mare and Worle.

More details will be available at www.theatreorchard.org.uk

Glow

See some sparkle in a Weston-super-Mare park next February.

Glow in Grove Park will see the natural landscape transformed into a wondrous winter wonderland filled with glittering light installations and activities.

The event is being produced in partnership with Culture Weston and Weston Town Council.

Keep an eye on www.cultureweston.org.uk for updates.



Lots of festive-themed events are being planned across the area.

Find details and get up-to-date-listings at:

www.visit-westonsupermare.com • www.nailseatown.com/whats-on
www.discovercleveland.co.uk



Walk through Clevedon's military past

Discover Clevedon's military history from as early as the 9th century on this circular route. The walk comes courtesy of Phil Curme, chairperson of Clevedon Pier and Heritage Trust.

Walk information

Distance: 5.3 miles

Difficulty: medium

Duration: allow three hours

How to get there

By car: The walk starts at Six Ways. Park considerately on residential streets

For bus timetables visit
www.travelinesw.com

Start at Six Ways and head up Bellevue Road, towards the Zig Zag path off Hill Road.

Halfway up the Zig Zag, turn around to admire the view. Steep and Flat Holm islands were staging posts for Viking raids in the 9th century. More recently, they were fortified to protect the harbours in the Severn estuary from French and German invaders.

At the top of the Zig Zag, cross Dial Hill Road and take the footpath directly ahead. Then take the right-hand fork to the top of Dial Hill.

This is the site of one of the UK's 1,563 Royal Observer Corps nuclear fallout bunkers, operational from 1959 to 1991.

Go down the hill by following the path which runs alongside the cricket field.

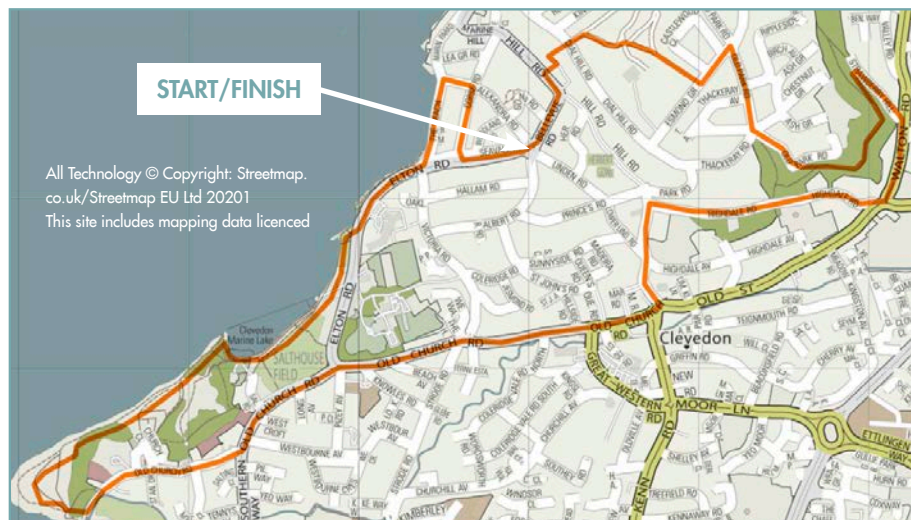
Turn left into Esmond Grove, then right into Old Park Road. Cross the junction with Thackeray Road and continue on Old Park Road, which veers to the left.

After a couple of hundred metres, take the footpath directly ahead where the road bends right.

Go through a metal kissing gate and follow the path down the east side of Strawberry Hill.

At the bottom, turn right down to the junction. Turn right again and you will see the East Clevedon Shrine.

This Wayside Cross was built as a war memorial in 1918, naming parishioners killed during the First World War.



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Continue walking south to a roundabout just beyond The Old Inn.

Look out for a white house behind the stone wall opposite the car park. This was the home of Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Burges, who was awarded the Victoria Cross for outstanding leadership in the Balkans in 1918.

Turn right up Highdale Road. At the top, turn left down Chapel Hill until Marson Road on the right-hand side. Clevedon British School Memorial is just around the corner, built into the wall at the entrance to Chapel Court.



Walk to the bottom of Chapel Hill. Turn right at the bottom, then left at the clocktower.

The Railway Memorial is on the right-hand side, close to the site of the now demolished Great Western Railway station. It commemorates the men and women who travelled to France and Belgium to serve during the two World Wars.



Follow the road to the right passing Queen's Square, the Baptist church and a steam train mural.

Pause at the Curzon cinema to see the shrapnel damage to its façade. Clevedon was hit by bombs on 4 January 1941.



Continue down Old Church Road all the way to Salthouse Fields. Keep left, staying on Old Church Road.

Continue to St Andrew's Church. Go through the gate and find the Durbin grave plot three rows back on the right. Fred Durbin was a Clevedonian who died at the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863.



Leave through the side gate, left of the church door. Turn right and go past Battery Cottages, then right onto Poet's Walk towards Battery Point. Two gun platforms used from 1859-1908 can be seen here.

Continue around the headland. Sand Point can be seen, which was a restricted military area until 2009. At low tide you can see two shipwrecks.

These were deliberately sunk to be used for bombing practice.

Continue on Poet's Walk, past Marine Lake, and up toward the pier.

Modern flats known as 'Oaklands' are on the right. They were built on the site of the Oaklands Red Cross Auxiliary Hospital, where more than 3,500 casualties were treated during the First World War.

A little further on, the Peace Memorial is on your right. It was built in 1903 to commemorate local men killed during the Second Anglo-Boer War.



Turn right into Alexandra Road, then left into Pier Copse. After the First World War an Austrian howitzer (short barrelled cannon) was given to Clevedon as a war relic. It was located in Pier Copse but has now gone.

At the top of Alexandra Road turn right into Copse Road. Go up the steps at the end, passing Copse Road Chapel which was bombed in 1941.

Turn left into Elton Road. A blue plaque outside number one commemorates nurse Edith Cavell who was shot by a German firing squad.

Return to Six Ways.

A more detailed pdf of this walk is available at www.discoverclevedon.com. For more of Phil Curme's military-inspired walks around North Somerset visit www.walkingthebattlefields.com



Action on climate emergency needed

A huge moment has arrived in the struggle to avoid the worst aspects of a climate emergency.



More than 190 world leaders are visiting Glasgow this month for COP26 - the UN's global climate change summit.

A breakthrough agreement is needed to cut global emissions and limit temperature rise, to adapt to climate change and protect communities and natural habitats.

Temperatures are already rising and even in the last few months we've seen communities across the world being affected by heatwaves, floods and wildfires.

Climate change, habitat loss and pollution are also affecting plants, insects and animals, with many species facing extinction.

Here in the UK, Government research published earlier this year found that 85 per cent of people are concerned about the impacts of climate change.

North Somerset Council has declared a climate and nature emergency with ambitious aims to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and restore and improve wildlife habitats.

It can feel overwhelming to know where to begin but it's important to remember that it's not too late to start making some changes.

The council has launched its Climate Action North Somerset campaign to support everyone who is concerned about climate change to do their bit and reduce their carbon emissions.

The campaign will run over the next 12 months and feature information about everyday steps that people can take, whether they are just starting to make changes or need inspiration to go a step further.

Together we can make a real difference.

If everyone in North Somerset reduced their carbon emissions by one tonne over the next year, we'd save more than 200,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide being released into the atmosphere.

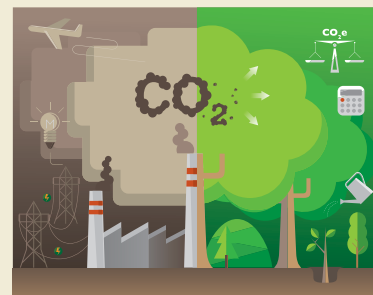


Know your carbon footprint

It's helpful to work out your current carbon footprint before making any changes.

Lots of free online calculators are available, often with tips to reduce your emissions.

You could join a team with your friends at Giki Zero. Just type **zero.giki.earth** into your search bar.



Spread the word!

- ✓ Join the Climate Action North Somerset Facebook group to share tips and ideas
- f climateactionNS**
- ✓ Let your MP know that tackling climate change is a priority for you
- ✓ Could you convince friends and family to make changes too as well as colleagues and managers at your workplace?

Small changes start at home

Focusing on small changes that can have an impact in your own home is a great place to start if you're not sure where to begin. It's never too late to start and even if you think individual actions won't make a difference – they do when those actions are multiplied by many individuals.

Clothing

Why?

Fast fashion generates high greenhouse gas emissions and excessive waste.



✓ Simple switch

Wash clothes at a lower temperature so they last longer

✓✓ Doable change

Buy second hand – check out local charity shops or online preloved clothes stores such as Vinted, Depop and Etsy. If you need to buy new, try to buy better quality, organic items that will last longer

✓✓✓ Tricky but worth it

Take a break from fast fashion. Challenge yourself not to buy any new clothing for three months.

Finances

Why?

Most high street banks and many private pensions are heavily invested in fossil fuels.

✓ Simple switch

Move your ISA or savings account to a more sustainable bank or building society so it can be invested in green projects

✓✓ Doable change

Move your current account to a greener bank or building society

✓✓✓ Tricky but worth it

Check where your pension-provider invests your money. Move to a more sustainable provider to ensure your money is having a positive impact



Refuse, reduce, reuse and refill, recycle

Why?

45 per cent of waste put in black bins in North Somerset could have been recycled



✓ Simple switch

Recycle everything you can, including electrical items and food waste. Many supermarkets now collect soft plastics too

✓✓ Doable change

Reuse and refill where possible. There are several zero waste shops in North Somerset to fill your own containers

✓✓✓ Tricky but worth it

Adopt a no-landfill mantra. Refuse to buy anything that cannot be reused or recycled, look for minimal packaging and items made from already recycled materials

See page 28 for tips on reducing waste at Christmas.

Read North Somerset's low carbon action plan at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/climatechange

Cut down on waste this Christmas

Recycling rates rocket over the Christmas and New Year period.

In the five festive weeks of last year, almost 3,400 tonnes of recycling was collected in North Somerset.

This was 24 per cent more than in an average week in 2020 and 270 tonnes more than Christmas 2019.

The amount of food waste collected also rose by 14 per cent.

This is incredible – but this year we want to do even better by reducing the amount of waste we have in the first place.



No wrapping paper recycling this year

No wrapping paper of any kind can be recycled this year.

Wrapping paper is difficult to recycle because there are so many varieties and most are mixed with unrecyclable items such as foil, glitter, ribbon, and tape.

If the amount of incorrect material is too high, the whole load will be rejected by the paper mill.

It will then be disposed of as general waste, resulting in high costs and transport emissions.

So please re-use your wrapping paper or put in your black bin, where it will be taken to the Energy From Waste plant in Avonmouth.

Eco-friendly alternatives:

- **brown paper** – can be recycled with cardboard (just take off any tape or decorative items)
- **packaging** – a spare cardboard box or jiffy bag can be decorated
- **fabric** - bring colour to your presents. Scarves, tea towels, handkerchiefs, bandanas, or large napkins could be used. Wrap objects in various shapes by learning the traditional Japanese cloth-folding technique, furoshiki
- **old maps or newspaper** – create a vintage look but avoid maps with a plastic lining

- **jars, tins or gift bags** - a lovely, reusable way to display gifts
- **baskets** – feels homely and rustic
- **children's artwork.**



Recycle your real Christmas tree

Repurposing real Christmas trees is the most sustainable solution to unwanted trees.

North Somerset Council is working with local organisations again this year to help unwanted trees become a useful resource.

Organisations accepting trees are:

- Noah's Ark Zoo and Farm, Wraxall
- St Peter's Hospice 'Just Giving' scheme
- Weston Rotary and Young Farmers for 'Pines for Pounds' scheme

Last year's Christmas tree collections raised more than £26,000 for the charities involved.

The majority of trees from these collections are cut down into chippings so they can be repurposed for land regeneration.

Drop off or collection details will be announced nearer the time. Please choose your nearest organisation to cut down on travel.

Keep any eye on social media for updates.

 **NSrecyclingandwaste**
 **ns_recycling**

Residents signed up to the kerbside garden waste service can also put their real trees out on their first garden waste collection date in January (up to 2m high minus pot and decorations).



Extra Christmas recycling

If you have large amounts of recycling, group materials together and put a little out each week, to help crews finish collections and reach every household.

Place any extra Christmas recycling out for collection as single materials in separate loosely-tied bags, or in another box.



A small amount of extra card will be collected if it's flattened to the size of your recycling box and placed alongside your box.

Remove any polystyrene packaging and as much sticky tape as possible.

For crew safety, put all glass in the box and make sure it is visible.

You could also use your nearest recycling centre.

Different vehicles may be used to collect recycling because Christmas is such a busy period. It will be separated and recycled as normal.

Make sustainable choices

Many favourite Christmas items are difficult to recycle but times are changing so there is now more opportunity to make sustainable choices.

- **crackers** - get crafty and make your own, or choose a reusable, recyclable, or plastic free option.
- **advent calendars** – opt for reusable ones where you can insert a daily gift in the pockets
- **cards** - either make your own or support a charity if you buy. Always recycle cards unless they are glittery



- **food** – reduce waste by planning ahead and sticking to a shopping list, measure out ingredients to get the right portion size, and use your freezer to save for another day. Visit **www.lovefoodhatewaste.com** for leftover recipe ideas. Use your brown kitchen caddy for scraps
- **sweet wrappers** – buy in bulk so not individually wrapped and put out in bowls. Plastic film wrappers need to go in the bin. Aluminium foil is recyclable but needs to be rolled together to the size of a tennis ball
- **cardboard packaging** – try and opt for reduced packaging if buying online. Try to consolidate orders so they might be delivered on the same day.

Tackling loneliness this winter



Winter nights are closing in and this dark, cold weather means we'll be staying at home more - which can increase feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Humans are social beings and connections with others can help us feel better about ourselves.

However, if we experience social isolation and loneliness it can make us feel anxious, depressed or unwell.

It can have physical effects such as weakening our immune systems, increasing risks of heart disease and strokes, and contributing to memory decline.

So look out for yourself and loved ones and get any support that will help you get through the short winter days and long, dark nights.

More ways to get social

Getting outdoors, meeting others or trying new experiences might seem daunting but can really help if you're feeling low or worried, as well as being fun.

Support is available to help you access local services from people who will listen to you.

A GP or health professional might offer 'social prescribing' rather than a solution through tablets. If you think this could help, ask your GP to refer you to their link worker.

This approach recognises that someone's health and wellbeing can be affected by a range of factors including how and where they live.

Cookery, gardening, arts activities, events and groups in your local community are some of the things that could be offered, as well as providing information about staying independent at home.

In North Somerset, over-50s can use Community Connect, a social prescribing service for those feeling isolated or lonely and want a bit of help.

It is delivered by Curo, a housing association providing care and support across the West of England.

Find out more at www.curo-group.co.uk/communityconnect or call 01275 888 803.

You can also contact North Somerset Council's Care Connect if you need help with financial challenges or advice on mental and physical wellbeing. Call 01275 888 801.

Free mental health support

A free and confidential mental health service has launched in North Somerset to support you if you feel like you can't cope.

VitaMinds works in partnership with the NHS to offer a range of short-term psychological therapies to you get back on track.

You don't need to visit a GP to get help. Make a self-referral through the website at www.vitahealthgroup.co.uk or call 0333 200 1893.



Stay safe online

Scammers and fraudsters take advantage of people, and those who are more isolated might be more at risk.

If you're alone at home you might be more likely to strike up 'friendships' with strangers online or take part in telephone lottery draws.

Visit www.getsafeonline.org for information and advice about protecting yourself online, whether shopping, banking, using social media or more.

You can also find advice on the Avon and Somerset Police website at www.avonandsomerset.police.uk or www.actionfraud.police.uk/a-z-of-fraud

Could you help your local community?

The coronavirus pandemic showed how individuals and communities can rally round quickly to support the most vulnerable residents.

At the start of the pandemic, North Somerset Together was formed to co-ordinate an emergency response and link socially isolated residents with the organisations that could help them.

Volunteers from towns and villages formed local groups to deliver food and medicines, make wellbeing calls, help care for animals and much more.

If you would like to volunteer or have a particular skill to share, Voluntary Action North Somerset (VANS) can help you find opportunities.

VANS works to develop the voluntary sector locally and more than 300 people registered to volunteer at the start of the coronavirus crisis.

Visit www.vansweb.org.uk, email info@vansmail.org.uk or call 01934 416 486.



Could you help your local community?

Your acts of kindness have helped people through difficult times, bringing joy to others and reducing loneliness.

Kindness can be shown in many ways, whether it's just passing the time of day with someone, a friendly phone call or a card to say hello.

We can continue to challenge ourselves to brighten someone's day, with the 60/6 challenge – spending a minimum of 60 minutes over the next six weeks carrying out random acts of kindness.

www.randomactsofkindness.org



Find out how agencies are working together to support people who feel isolated and lonely.

The police are running a Facebook Live discussion at 2pm on Thursday 25 November. They will be joined by a local GP, officers from North Somerset Council and Curo, talking about the impact of loneliness and how they can work together better.

Search for the 'Portishead, Clevedon and Nailsea Neighbourhood Policing' page on Facebook for details and to watch the live discussion.



Investing in North Somerset's Great Lakes



Compacted silt being excavated earlier this year

Exciting plans to rejuvenate North Somerset's three coastal lakes are moving forward.

Earlier this year North Somerset Council pledged £700,000 to improve Clevedon's Marine Lake, Weston-super-Mare's Marine Lake, and the Lake Grounds in Portishead.

These three sites are very different in their geography, the amount of people who use them, and the way in which they're used.

Therefore, a different approach is needed to ensure local priorities are met at each site.

Life takes a look at how things are progressing...

Marine Lake, Weston-super-Mare

Work to restore Weston's Marine Lake into a community hub for water sports and outdoor swimming is continuing behind the scenes.

An estimated 35,000 tonnes of compacted silt had clogged up the lake over the years, making it almost impossible to swim in.

North Somerset Council pledged £300,000 to bring it back into use and in April it applied to the government's Marine Management Organisation (MMO) for a licence to remove the accumulated silt mechanically.

The lake closed to the public in April to allow the high spring tides to flush out naturally as much silt as possible.

It was meant to reopen for summer but health and safety concerns about the depth and consistency of the silt meant it remained closed.

Two faulty sluice gates were removed to allow the lake to drain fully.

In September a contract was signed to replace the damaged sluice gates with new strengthened ones.

These new sluice gates will enable the council to control water levels in the lake and empty it when needed.

At the time of *Life* going to print, the council was still clarifying some key issues with the MMO about the application, while also working with contractors and dredging experts to prepare for work starting as soon as the licence is issued.



Portishead Lake Grounds

Ideas and priorities for improving Portishead's Lake Grounds have been outlined in a recent consultation.

North Somerset Council wants the Lake Grounds to be a regionally renowned, attractive, biodiverse and fun park for visitors of all ages.

A joint consultation by the council and Portishead Town Council took place this summer to find out what people think about the site and what the priorities should be.

More than 1,000 responses were received and almost three

quarters of these already had a positive opinion about the Lake Grounds.

The top priority for people is to dredge the lake, followed by improving the toilet facilities, improving the play area and rewilding part of the lake.

A few things were highlighted as needing improvement, such as silt in the lake.

A large number of people also said they would be interested in being involved or volunteering in future.

Both councils will use the results of the consultation to update the Lake Grounds management and

investment plan and allocate capital funding for the highest priorities.

Additional funding, from grants, other organisations or fundraising, will also be sought.



Marine Lake, Clevedon

New projects to improve Clevedon's Marine Lake, seafront and Salthouse Fields are coming thanks to almost £150,000 of funding.

North Somerset Council granted the money to community groups working around the lake earlier this year.

Many groups take an active role in managing and maintaining the various sites and help provide valued facilities for local people and visitors.

The grants total £149,000 and the organisations are also contributing an additional £64,000 towards their projects.

The new projects are:

- MARLENS received £60,000 for two separate projects – installing an eco pod next to

the lake which will provide a disabled changing room and toilets, a classroom and other community facilities; and a new boat storage facility at the existing building next to the crazy golf

- Clevedon Skate Project received £35,000 to provide a shipping container on Salthouse Fields which will be used for storage and a base for outreach projects
- Clevedon Pilot Gig Club received £20,000 to construct a storage building which will house their two wooden heritage gigs and associated equipment, and to give the club a long-term base and identity in Clevedon
- £20,000 has been identified for Friends of

Clevedon Slipway Group to help deliver civil construction works to restore and protect Clevedon slipway

- Clevedon Pier and Heritage Trust received £14,000 to create an all-weather community space at the seaward end of the Grade I-listed Clevedon Pier.

These organisations are now meeting with council officers to draw up their designs and project plans.





Managing your money

Balancing the budget books remains a tricky task as the coronavirus pandemic continues to impact North Somerset Council significantly.

Local authorities were at the forefront of the pandemic response and demand and costs increased as more people turned to the council for help during the crisis.

During this time, income was also lost because some facilities were closed for long periods.

The council also had to continue delivering essential services, such as recycling and waste collections, maintaining roads and pavements, and keeping streets clean.

A strong financial footing is needed for the area's recovery but this is a huge challenge following a decade of reduced government funding.

Chancellor Rishi Sunak was due to deliver his autumn budget and spending review at the end of October, after this issue of *Life* went to print.

For the latest information and North Somerset Council's reaction to the budget, visit www.n-somerset.gov.uk/news

Statement of accounts

Every year North Somerset Council publishes its statement of accounts to give local people information about the council's income and expenditure.

This round-up looks at the previous financial year, from April 2020 to March 2021.

As a public authority, the council is responsible for ensuring its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and it is used economically, efficiently and effectively.

This means having robust systems and processes in place and valid reasons for its actions and decisions.

The statement of accounts is a complex financial document so here in *Life* is a summary.

The figures listed here are from the council's draft accounts, which remain subject to an audit at the time of *Life* going to print.

A full version of the statement of accounts is available at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/accounts
The audited accounts will be uploaded once the audit is finished.



Income and outgoings

Income for North Somerset Council comes from central government grants, council tax and business rates.

This money is used to cover the cost of services. In 2020/21 this added up to...



Income: where the money comes from

Service-related government grants	£198.2m
Council tax	£117.1m
Fees and charges	£56.8m
Business rates	£41.6m
General government grants	£12.6m
Total	£426.3m

Expenditure: where the money goes

Adult social care	£115m
Development and environment	£86.3m
Schools	£57.6m
Housing benefits	£44.7m
Children and young people	£38.3m
Transfers to general and earmarked reserves	£30.1m
Other corporate services	£26.5m
Public health	£11.7m
Financing and investments	£10.4m
Housing services	£4.7m
Non-service	£1m
Total	£426.3m





Capital investments



Capital investment continued to be a prominent feature of North Somerset Council's finances during 2020-21, despite the coronavirus pandemic.

This year, more than £40m has been spent on improving existing assets and delivering new facilities, such as new primary schools in Locking Parklands and Yatton.

Investment and progress has also been made in major transport projects for the area, including the Portishead MetroWest Rail Link, North South Link Road in Weston-super-Mare and Banwell Bypass.

There has also been more than £10m investment in the existing road network and street lighting.

About 18,500 street lights throughout North Somerset are being replaced to save energy and reduce maintenance costs.

Non-LED lanterns are being replaced with low energy LEDs to conserve energy and help the environment by reducing carbon emissions.

Capital spending in 2020/21

What the money is spent on:

Transport/infrastructure	£13.7m
Road maintenance and street lighting	£10m
Schools	£8.1m
Other capital investment	£4.5m
Housing	£3.3m
Strategic/regeneration projects	£1.8m
Other transport	£0.5m
Total	£41.9m

Where the money comes from:

Government grants and contributions	£32.5m
Reserves and balances	£3.7m
Borrowing	£3.3m
Sale of assets (capital receipts)	£2.4m
Total	£41.9m

Balance sheet at financial year-end

The balance sheet shows the council's financial position on 31 March 2021, at the end of the financial year. It is a snapshot of the assets the council owns, the liabilities it owes and the reserves it has available to fund future expenditure.

The pandemic continued to impact on the value of the council's property and other balances at the year-end.

Despite this, prudent levels of reserves were maintained.

The council's net assets:

Property, plant and equipment	£353.5m
Money owed to the council and investments	£162.6m
Investment property	£45.5m
Other long-term assets	£13.5m
Other long-term liabilities	-£24.4m
Money owed by the council	-£113.6m
Long-term borrowing	-£161.5m
Pension liabilities	-£268.2m
Net assets	£7.4m

Which are financed by:

Earmarked reserves	£41.6m
Other usable reserves	£15.1m
General fund balance	£9m
Unusable reserves	-£58.3
Total reserves	£7.4m



Continuing Covid pressures

Coronavirus caused significant financial implications in many areas of North Somerset Council's budget.

Considerable additional resources were put into services to ensure the most vulnerable people were cared for and that businesses and the local economy were protected where possible.

While the Government provided an extensive range of funding and support measures, there were wide-ranging impacts on the delivery of local services.

Spending increased to provide an emergency response but at the same time, income decreased because some facilities were closed for long periods.

Moving on from Covid pressures, there is increased demand for adult social care services.

In September the Government announced a 1.25 per cent tax rise, a new levy specifically to support social care.

A white paper on reforming social care and integrating it with healthcare is also expected.

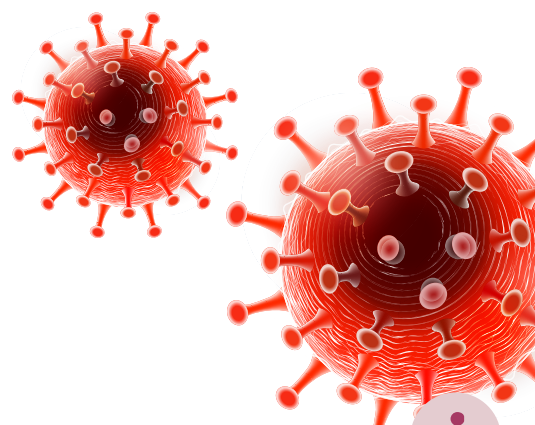
This is potentially a significant change for the care sector so North Somerset Council is looking at what impacts this will have on the council and residents when it is implemented.

At the time of *Life* going to print, the council was also waiting to hear the chancellor's budget for the year ahead so didn't have specific figures about future funding.

There are still unknown factors which could influence how much the council needs to spend on services or how much income it will receive to pay for them.

Despite this, North Somerset Council will continue to do all it can to support its residents, communities and local businesses, to keep key services running, and ensure those who need help get it.

More details about the 2022/23 budget and its impact on council tax will be available in *Life* next spring.



A full version of the council's statement of accounts for 2020/21 is available at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/accounts

Paper copies of the annual accounts are available by writing to Melanie Watts, Head of Finance, North Somerset Council, Town Hall, Walliscote Grove Road, Weston-super-Mare BS23 1UJ.

For more information call the finance team: **01934 634 618**



Transforming Weston through culture



In Memoriam art installation by Luke Jerram, on Weston beach in September as part of Arts + Health Week

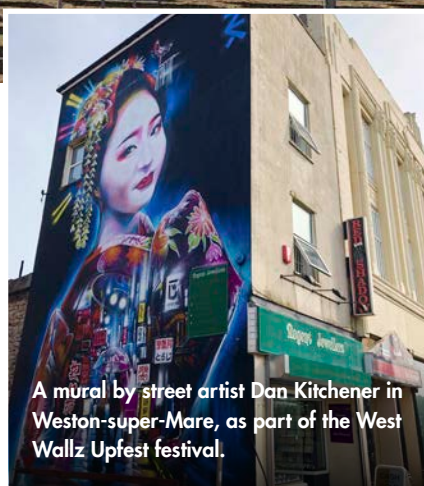
Heritage and culture will play a central role in helping Weston-super-Mare's recovery from Covid.

Arts Council England announced in September that North Somerset would be one of its 11 priority places across the South West for the next few years, with a focus on Weston.

Its three-year Let's Create strategy is a roadmap for supporting communities in their recovery from the pandemic.

It is intended to give more people the opportunity to enjoy excellent cultural experiences in their communities and neighbourhoods.

Fostering the area's heritage and cultural assets is part of North Somerset Council's placemaking strategy.



A mural by street artist Dan Kitchener in Weston-super-Mare, as part of the West Wallz Upfest festival.

In September, internationally renowned Bristol-based artist Luke Jerram created a temporary art installation on the beach as a memorial to those lost through Covid.

In Memoriam was a poignant installation made from hospital bed

sheets, created as part of Arts + Health Week in partnership with Culture Weston and University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Trust.

Also in September, huge murals began appearing on the side of town centre buildings as part of Weston Walls, a spin-off of Bristol's urban paint festival Upfest.

North Somerset Council wants to make North Somerset a distinctive place for arts and culture and it is hoped this three-year partnership with Arts Council England will deliver even more for residents, visitors and the creative sector.

www.n-somerset.gov.uk/westonvision

Find out more about Arts Council England at www.artscouncil.org.uk



Facelift for Victorian seafront shelters

Three Victorian shelters on Weston's seafront are set to be renovated to their former glory.

The 19th century shelters have fallen into disrepair over the last few years and plans to renovate them were put back due to the pandemic.

The listed shelters will now be restored by a specialist contractor after funds were raised from a variety of sources, including a contribution from Weston Civic Society, North Somerset Council, small grants, and local donations.

An application for Listed Building Consent is being submitted and work is expected to start early next year.



Frontage of historic pub to be restored

The original façade of a historic town centre pub in Weston-super-Mare is set to be restored.

Fork 'n' Ale Taproom and Kitchen, on Walliscote Road, is the second business in the town to take advantage of the Heritage Action Zone's Shopfront Enhancement Scheme.

The Grade II listed building, now an independent restaurant, bar and music venue, was constructed in the mid-19th century.

It has had many identities over the years, including the Bristol and Exeter, The Town Crier and Bonds.

Work will include:

- restoring the frontage to its original façade
- re-instating original stained-glass windows
- bringing back to life a parapet that was lost in the early 1980s.

Fork 'n' Ale landlord Andrew Bidmead said: "This building has played a key part in

Weston's history and community and I'm honoured to be able to bring it back to what it looked like in the 19th century."

The first business to take advantage of the shopfront enhancement grant was Walker and Ling department store on the High Street, with a beautiful mosaic re-instated on its frontage.

Improving the appearance of shopfronts and investing in heritage and conservation is important for economic growth, because it can encourage more footfall and trade.

Work on Fork 'n' Ale is due to start at the beginning of next year and take about six weeks to complete.

The shop front grant scheme is funded by Historic England and open to priority properties within the High Street Heritage Action Zone in Weston.

More shopfront enhancements will be developed next year.



Banwell bypass route chosen

The route for the long-awaited Banwell bypass has been chosen following an extensive summer consultation and a technical review of the options.

Route 2, to the north of Banwell, was chosen after being reviewed against a range of objectives.

These included its ability to improve traffic congestion, air quality and noise, as well as any potential environmental impact and the opportunities to improve public spaces, encourage walking and cycling, and boost biodiversity.

More than 1,100 residents and businesses from across North Somerset gave their views and provided lots of helpful feedback which will play an important role in the next stage of the bypass' design.

Respondents said how they currently use the roads around Banwell, which of the three bypass routes they preferred, and what else could be done to improve the area in the future.

Suggestions included better cycling routes through Banwell which could connect to the Strawberry Line; new allotments, parks and community gardens; improvements



to horse riding routes; and traffic calming measures to reduce speeds in the surrounding area, making the roads safer for everyone.

By asking for views at such an early stage in the project, local priorities can be considered in the design process from the very beginning.

What next?

The design team will now start the next phase of work - developing the chosen bypass route from a line on a map into a road that's ready to become a reality.

They will start by looking at the route, the findings from their technical investigations and surveys along that route, and consultation feedback.

Using these, they will draw up a more detailed design, making suggestions for the additional features and improvements that can help the bypass meet as many local priorities as possible.

North Somerset Council wants to build a bypass that works for the people of the area, which is why your views are vital.

There will be another chance to have your say in a follow-up consultation on the more detailed designs early next year.



Read more about the Banwell bypass and stay up-to-date with the scheme at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/banwellbypass



Kickstarting careers in construction

Young people are getting their foot on the career ladder thanks to a new work experience scheme.

Kickstart is a government-funded initiative which provides fully paid work placements to 16 to 24-year-olds who are currently claiming Universal Credit.

North Somerset resident Ahmed has taken up a six-month placement with Kier and is now getting hands-on experience working on the new expansion of Winterstoke Hundred Academy in Locking Parklands, Weston-super-Mare.

Ahmed said: "This is a new chapter for me and this placement will give me a great opportunity to learn and gain experience.

"I'm enjoying being part of the team who are helping me with a new beginning on my career journey."

Planning permission for the secondary school expansion was granted in September.

Construction is due to start this year with the facilities open to pupils by 2023.

The building, funded through Homes England's Housing Infrastructure Fund, will offer 900 school places.

Opportunities to access jobs and training play a crucial part in developments such as this.

In addition to Kickstart placements, plans for Winterstoke Hundred Academy include a learning pavilion.

This will provide young people and adults the chance to learn the latest methods of environmentally-friendly construction and find out more about jobs in the growing green construction industry.



Ahmed and his colleague Emma

The pavilion is expected to open in 2022.

Find out more about the expansion of Winterstoke Hundred Academy at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/whae

Find out more about the Kickstart scheme and how to access local opportunities at kickstart.campaign.gov.uk

Get the latest news about major projects in North Somerset at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/hif





Making invisible disabilities visible

Do you or a loved one have a hidden disability?

Some disabilities are not immediately obvious to others so daily life can be more demanding.

You might not be treated with compassion or understanding if people can't see or understand the challenges you face.

North Somerset Council is working alongside Clevedon, Nailsea, Portishead and Weston-super-Mare town councils to raise awareness of the issues and train staff to recognise when someone might need extra support.

The councils joined the national Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme in September, an initiative where people can wear a discreet lanyard showing pictures of sunflowers to indicate they have a hidden disability and may need extra help or a little more time.



The scheme launched in 2016 and has been adopted by many supermarkets, railway and coach stations, leisure facilities, the NHS, emergency services, and an increasing number of small and large businesses and organisations.

In North Somerset, the lanyard will be recognised in public settings such as libraries, children's centres, the Tropicana in Weston-super-Mare and Somerset Hall in Portishead.

Staff working in these venues have been trained so they'll know the types of support which you might need if they see you wearing one.

You can also pick up a lanyard for free from these venues.

Louise Roberts, inclusion and corporate development manager at North Somerset Council, said: "An estimated one-in-five people in the UK have a disability, with 80 per cent of them having a hidden disability.

"Disability can make daily life more demanding and people are affected in different ways.

"It can be painful, exhausting, and isolating. Without visible evidence of a disability, it is frequently difficult for others to acknowledge the challenges faced and, as a consequence, sympathy and understanding can often be in short supply.

"We're keen to make sure that people feel welcome and confident using any of our buildings, knowing that they'll be treated with the care and compassion they might need."

North Somerset People First is a local charity which promotes and encourages people with a learning disability, difficulty, or autism to speak up for themselves and empower them to be in control of their own lives.

Chief executive Michelle Burnett said: "This scheme is an important way to support our members.

"Some lack confidence in social situations and knowing that there is a discreet way of letting people know they might need a bit of extra support is an extremely positive thing.

"We would encourage as many people as possible to recognise the significance of the sunflower and treat those who wear it with patience and kindness."

Paul White, chief executive of Hidden Disabilities Sunflower, said: "We are delighted by the joint commitment of the councils to train customer-facing staff to recognise and support people wearing the sunflower lanyard."

What are hidden disabilities?

By their very nature, non-visible disabilities do not have physical signs.

They include learning difficulties, mental health issues, as well as mobility, speech, visual or hearing impairments.

They can also include asthma, lung conditions, chronic illnesses such as renal failure, or sleep disorders which significantly impact day-to-day life.

If you have a hidden disability and feel you would benefit from wearing a Sunflower lanyard, then do.

Wearing the lanyard is not a 'fast track' through any system but it will alert staff that you might need some extra time or assistance.



"I wear mine at the airport, train station and bank. It's really vital in those places if you need help and support."

Danny Cooke,
North Somerset resident

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More local businesses are encouraged to join the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme.

Find out more at www.hiddendisabilitiesstore.com

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[sunflowerlanyardsscheme](#)

Ground-breaking project tackles serious violence



Photo courtesy of Tender

Education, mentoring and drama workshops are helping to reduce violent crime in North Somerset thanks to a ground-breaking project.

The Violence Reduction Unit launched in Weston-super-Mare in 2019 and has now expanded to cover the whole of North Somerset.

It is a multi-agency response to tackling serious violence, using both proactive awareness raising and reactive work when an incident occurs.

Individuals who are at risk of involvement in serious violence are referred to the Violence Reduction Unit by different agencies, such as social care, the youth offending service, probation, police, community safety team and schools.

They are then given the necessary support depending on their individual circumstances.

This might be intensive mentoring with a young person who is heavily involved in county lines drug dealing, or education around knife crime, sexual violence, domestic abuse, alcohol-related violence, serious youth violence or robbery.

One of the many projects running this year is a healthy relationship programme in schools across North Somerset to promote positive attitudes.

The sessions are delivered by Tender, an arts charity which uses drama and creative projects to tackle social issues such as boundaries, consent and empathy.

In July, Avon and Somerset Police received an additional £1m from the Home Office to fund Violence Reduction Units across the region.

The Office of the Avon and Somerset Police Crime Commissioner devolved the funding to the five local authorities within its area to ensure that opportunities for prevention of serious violence and early intervention were considered and delivered at a local level.

The North Somerset VRU is co-ordinated by North Somerset Council's safer stronger communities service.

This year's funding has helped to ensure these projects and initiatives for young people and adults can continue or be set up:

- boxing clubs at Eiseys Community Gym in Clevedon and Our Way Our Say in Weston-super-Mare
- healthy relationship workshops in schools, delivered by arts charity Tender



- mentoring, delivered by community engagement charity ROC and social inequality charity the St Giles Trust
- parent/carer awareness webinars about county lines drug dealing and knife crime
- professional webinars covering various topics on serious violence
- purchasing knife detection wands
- funding MAVISbus, the distinctive purple multi-agency vehicle which offers a safe space and support for people enjoying nights out in Weston town centre.

North Somerset VRU co-ordinator Clair Sandilands said: "While different types of work have been commissioned to tackle serious violence, it is still crucial that all local agencies, businesses, volunteers and the community work together because that can have the greatest impact."

Future plans include a violence awareness day in the north of North Somerset, following a successful day in Weston in May, and knife crime awareness workshops for young people thought to be carrying and involved in knife incidents.

Building commitment through boxing clubs

Boxing clubs are building confidence and commitment in young people throughout North Somerset.

Simon Flett, from Eiseys Community Gym in Clevedon, said: "I feel we are making a difference on so many levels.

"We enjoy the work and are building great relationships with the young fellas.

"For instance, the home and school behaviour of one of our young participants has really improved.

"He's gone from getting hundreds of negatives at school to just a handful, plus he's been complimented by some teachers for his behaviour and learning.

"He looks forward to the sessions every week and has never missed one."



Would you like to get involved?

Contact the team at the Violence Reduction Unit if you'd like to know more about its work or get involved.

Current volunteering opportunities are available, including the need for qualified boxing coaches, community mentors across Weston and Worle, and medical professionals who can help to deliver workshops to help educate young people about the risk of knife injuries.

Email vr@n-somerset.gov.uk or visit www.n-somerset.gov.uk/vru

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New state-of-the-art CCTV cameras installed



Old analogue CCTV cameras throughout North Somerset have been upgraded to state-of-the-art digital ones to provide clearer and better images and increase safety for local people.

The new 80 public surveillance cameras in Weston-super-Mare, Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead will help when evidence is being provided in prosecutions.

Cameras can also maintain public order, prevent anti-social behaviour and provide reassurance.

The previous system had been in place for 20 years and was fast becoming obsolete.

New technology allows the police to log into the network – where authorised – and access the cameras remotely from agreed locations.

The upgrade also includes separate mobile cameras which can be deployed to hotspots to deal with any issues, such as anti-social behaviour and littering.

The cameras are operated by North Somerset Council from the Emergency Control Centre and are helping to make the area a safer place to live, work and do business.

Clevedon, Nailsea, Portishead and Weston-super-Mare town councils all made financial contributions to the new system.

The control room is staffed 24-hours-a-day, 365 days a year, by a team of 10 fully trained operators who follow current guidelines and legislation.

It has been awarded the Surveillance Camera Commissioner's Certification of Compliance following a rigorous assessment by the National Security Inspectorate.

The team also deals with emergency out-of-hours calls to the council, lone worker monitoring, and provides a dedicated operator for the night-time Carelink service.



The Emergency Control Room is part of the Safer Stronger North Somerset service, a partnership of agencies working together on a range of priorities to keep residents and visitors safe.

CCTV operators have direct radio communication with the police, council enforcement officers, businesses and street wardens.



Find out more about Safer Stronger North Somerset at www.saferstrongerns.co.uk

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For more information about the Emergency Control Centre email cctv@n-somerset.gov.uk

North Somerset Life

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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. Click on the North Somerset walks tab at **www.northsomersetlife.co.uk**



Download your new recycling and waste collection calendars for December onwards from mid-November.



They'll include the dates for collections over the festive period

Thank you to all our residents for your patience and understanding during this challenging year.

Visit **www.n-somerset.gov.uk/calendars**

