

# NORTH SOMERSET

SPRING 2023

# LIFE



## Investing for future generations



# Save time, do it online

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

Sign up for an online account and:

- manage and pay your council tax
- apply for benefits
- let the council know about a road or pavement issue
- register a change of details and also a change of address
- report fly-tipping.



# Dear reader...

As I write this, I can't help reflecting on some big wins for North Somerset since the last issue. I'm very pleased we've been awarded a £20m cash boost for several iconic sites in Weston from the government's Levelling Up Fund (see page 5). We're also pressing ahead with the Portishead rail project. Back in November our multi-million-pound bus service improvement funding was also confirmed by the government - the second-highest award in the country. My thanks to colleagues for securing these big wins.

I'm especially excited that in early April we'll be launching an innovative demand responsive transport (DRT) bus service in North Somerset (see page 10), following some market failures and First Bus withdrawing more of their fixed route services last autumn. The future looks brighter and more sustainable with a fleet of smaller, more agile buses. While it's not a silver bullet, I have high hopes. It's an important step in transforming public transport in North Somerset.

While winter is behind us, the cost-of-living crisis is still biting but I'm heartened with the continued support

we can give to our residents. See more from page 18.

Of course, many other challenges remain. Just like you, the council is feeling the impacts of inflationary pressure associated with rising energy costs and staffing, as well as contract inflation. This is also the 13th year of government-imposed austerity. Finding savings of £17m was not easy and has been achieved through a combination of reducing spending across many areas, while also protecting frontline services and support to our most vulnerable residents wherever possible.

For many years North Somerset has been recognised as a well-run council and our staff continue to do an excellent job with little recognition, so I would like to express my whole-hearted gratitude to all of them. At the same time, I would like to thank you residents for your understanding, given the inevitable impact of some of the savings proposals we need to implement.

Finally, remember local elections take place here in North Somerset on Thursday 4 May. You'll get the opportunity to elect a councillor - or

councillors - to North Somerset Council, as well as your local town or parish council. Find out more on page 16 and please make a note of the key dates. There is also a new government requirement to show voter ID at your polling station on the day of the vote.

Local government is the fourth emergency service and whatever your politics, voting is the most precious right of every citizen. Use your vote.

Cllr Steve Bridger

## The Executive

Cllr Steve Bridger (Independent)  
Leader of North Somerset Council

Cllr Mike Bell (Liberal Democrat)  
Deputy Leader

Cllr Mark Canniford (Liberal Democrat)

Cllr Ashley Cartman  
(Liberal Democrat)

Cllr Catherine Gibbons (Labour)

Cllr Steve Hogg (Independent)

Cllr Bridget Petty (Green)

Cllr Mike Solomon (Independent)

## Contents



- 4** News update
- 10** New bus services coming soon
- 12** Tough decisions for balanced budget
- 14** Protecting services amid budget pressures
- 16** Get ready for local elections
- 18** Cost of living support
- 24** Walk – bluebells near Wrington
- 28** Thousands of new trees
- 34** Spring clean your health and wellbeing
- 40** New visions for Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead
- 44** Restoring damaged flood defences
- 47** Contact details

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.



## Never give up on giving up

**Thousands of smokers decide to quit the habit and begin a healthier lifestyle each year – so could you be one of them?**

No Smoking Day takes place on Wednesday 8 March and it could be the perfect time to try and stub it out for good.

Stopping smoking is the single most important thing you can do for your overall health, as it reduces the risk of heart disease and strokes, as well as developing dementia.

Even if you've tried many times already without success, please don't give up.

Each time you attempt to quit, you're getting one step closer to succeeding for good.

Smokefree North Somerset expert

advisers can support you every step of the way, tripling your chances of success.

Support can be tailored to your needs, including getting stop smoking aids such as Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) on prescription.

Find out more about services available at your GP surgery or local pharmacy, or contact Smokefree North Somerset directly on [smokefree@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:smokefree@n-somerset.gov.uk), call 01275 546 744 or text NSD to 07800 001 316.

[www.betterhealthns.co.uk](http://www.betterhealthns.co.uk)

## Help spring clean local littering hotspots

**Volunteers are needed to help clean up hotspots in their community which have fallen foul to litter, fly tipping or general debris.**

The Great British Spring Clean, organised by anti-littering charity Keep Britain Tidy, runs from Friday 17 March to Sunday 2 April.

The clean-up campaign is now in its eighth year and last year people in North Somerset pledged to collect nearly half a million bags of litter.

North Somerset Council will help, by arranging to have collected waste cleared and lending some litter picking equipment to small events that are scheduled in advance.

Visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/litterpicks](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/litterpicks) for more information.

Town and parish councils may also be organising their own events so look for local publicity.

Sign up to the national campaign at [www.keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved](http://www.keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved)

## Last few days to apply for coronation road closure

**Time is running out if you want to organise a street party to celebrate King Charles III's coronation in May.**

North Somerset Council would love to see local communities across North Somerset get together to join in the celebrations.

However, road closures must be confirmed well in advance and so the deadline to apply is **Friday 10 March**.

The coronation is both a symbolic, religious ceremony and the physical act of placing a crown on a monarch's head.

It formalises the monarch's role as the head of the Church of England and marks the transfer of their title and powers.

The coronation takes place on Saturday 6 May and there will be an extra bank holiday on Monday 8 May.

If you're planning on marking this milestone with a street party, now is the time to apply for a road closure.

Find out all the information and how to apply at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/closearoad](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/closearoad)







Photo courtesy of Paul Blakemore

# £20m cash boost for Weston

**Culture, leisure and retail in Weston-super-Mare will be transformed thanks to £20m of government funding.**

North Somerset Council has received the money through the government's Levelling Up Fund, which is designed to create jobs and boost the economy.

The money will be used to help reinvent iconic heritage buildings in the town, support local businesses, create new jobs, and deliver a year-round experience-led economy for the future.

Several high-profile sites will receive investment, including:

- **Tropicana** – building on the international profile raised by SEE MONSTER, the Tropicana will be enhanced and expanded to create an

attractive, 8,000 capacity facility, with improvements to food and drink facilities.

- **Marine Lake** – year-round facilities will be built for food, drink and leisure.
- **Weston town centre** – more flexible spaces will be created to attract independent, high-quality retail and other uses. Digital and creative design will encourage people to move around the town centre and seafront to discover some of its hidden treasures.
- **Birnbeck Pier** – funding will be used to improve buildings at the shore end of the pier and bring them back into use. This will complement funding already secured to improve the pier structure itself.
- **Grove Park** – the entrance to this beautiful town centre

green space will be improved and the park's buildings repurposed after they've been vacated by Weston-super-Mare Town Council.

The funding will add further momentum to already changing perceptions of Weston, attract further investment, and create a positive cycle of ongoing change and reinvention.

This Levelling Up funding can only be spent on defined areas in Weston-super-Mare, which has a higher level of need than other North Somerset towns.

Government grants offer North Somerset Council the opportunity to invest in local infrastructure, services and communities and so it will always bid for such funding as and when it's available, to support all of North Somerset.



## Good causes benefitting from community lottery

Good causes in North Somerset are already benefitting from extra funds thanks to ticket sales from a local community lottery.

There are now 71 good causes registered with North Somerset Community Lottery, which was set up last year by Voluntary Action North Somerset (VANS) with support from North Somerset Council.

Tickets cost £1, with 50p of this going back to local good causes registered with the lottery. A further 10p goes into a central fund which will be distributed to good causes later this year.

The weekly draw has a jackpot of £25,000 for a matching sequence of six numbers, and other prizes of £2,000, £250, £25 or three free tickets.

One community organisation benefitting from the lottery is Woodspring Junior Football League.

About 100 lottery tickets are bought by supporters each week, giving the league an extra £50 income a week.

This is reducing the strain on the league's funds, and so it now hopes to expand in the future if ticket sales continue.

Local people are also enjoying their lottery wins.

Shaunie Sugg was 'amazed' when she won a once-in-a-lifetime hot air balloon experience for two as the bonus prize in the first draw.

Shaunie's chosen good cause was XTND, a collaborative partnership charity working predominantly with children and families from local primary schools and people in the south ward area of Weston-super-Mare.

So far there have been no £25,000 jackpot winners but five people have won £250 each and there have been lots of smaller prize winners and free tickets awarded.

To buy tickets visit [www.northsomersetcommunitylottery.co.uk](http://www.northsomersetcommunitylottery.co.uk)

Local good causes interested in registering for the lottery as an additional revenue stream can sign up online at [www.northsomersetcommunitylottery.co.uk/good-causes](http://www.northsomersetcommunitylottery.co.uk/good-causes)

## Donations of old electronic devices needed

Donations of old smartphones, tablets and computers are needed to break down the digital divide and help vulnerable residents to get online and improve their opportunities.

North Somerset Council works with non-profit organisation Donate IT to recycle electronic devices – so if you have an old one at home gathering dust please consider donating it to this good cause.

The organisation refurbishes the equipment and then gifts it back to the council, which then distributes it to people who would otherwise be digitally excluded.

Laptops, PCs, tablets, iPads and mobile phones are accepted. Drop them off at Weston library, in the Town Hall, Walliscote Grove Road, or Clevedon library, in Old Church Road.

If donating an Apple device, please make sure you delete your iCloud information first. For more information email [skillssupport@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:skillssupport@n-somerset.gov.uk)

## Get the latest news straight to your inbox

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

Subscribe online and stay informed in-between printed issues of the magazine by visiting [www.northsomersetlife.co.uk](http://www.northsomersetlife.co.uk) and clicking on the 'sign up to our email newsletter' tab.



# Have your say on electric vehicle charging

Have your say on future demand for public electric vehicle charging points across North Somerset.

Currently, 40 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions released in North Somerset are due to transport so this is a key component in tackling the climate emergency and reaching net zero.

At the end of 2022, there were 2,800 registered electric vehicles in North Somerset, most of which are charged at home.

However, this number is expected to rise quickly in the coming years as more people make the switch from petrol and diesel.

It's anticipated there will be more

than 37,000 electric vehicle registrations in North Somerset by 2030, and almost 2,000 publicly accessible charge points will be needed.

Currently there are 92 publicly available charge points across North Somerset, some of which are part of the public sector-led Revive Network and some on private land.

It is anticipated that the private sector will provide a significant proportion of the new ones needed.

However, North Somerset Council estimates it will need to fund more than 600 to fill gaps in the network, using central government grant funding.

The council's electric vehicle strategy sets out the anticipated scale of the charging network required by 2030 and outlines the approach the council plans to take.

View the strategy and have your say by Friday 31 March at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/electric23](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/electric23)



## Volunteers needed to help young readers this summer

**Would you like to help inspire children and young people to keep reading during the long summer holidays?**

Volunteers are needed in all North Somerset libraries to help run the popular Summer Reading Challenge.

The challenge, for children aged four to 11, aims to help prevent the dip in literacy that may occur during the summer holidays.

Volunteers talk to children about the books they have read, help them choose books and hand out rewards.

Flexible volunteering sessions are available for anyone aged 14 and over, between Saturday 8 July and Saturday 9 September.

Full training is provided and no previous experience is necessary.

Apply online at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/src-volunteering](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/src-volunteering) or contact your library for a paper application.

For more information email [library.volunteers@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:library.volunteers@n-somerset.gov.uk) or call 01275 888 864.

The closing date for applications is Monday 12 June.



# Access council services at any time

**Report issues or request council services at any time of the day or night by signing up for an online account.**

About 65,000 people have signed up for the council's digital services so they can contact the council at a time that suits them.

Signing up is quick and easy and you only need to do it once.

Create either a residential or business account at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/myaccount](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/myaccount) and follow the steps to validate your email address.

Going online makes it easier for you and also saves the council money, which can then be used to provide essential services to local residents instead.

It also leaves the telephone lines clearer for the most vulnerable customers.

Go online to access:

- **council tax** – view your details, set up a direct debit, make payments, apply for discounts and change your address details
- **housing benefit** – make an application and tell the council about a change in your circumstances
- **business rates** – view your account online
- **environmental problems** – report issues such as graffiti and fly-tipping
- **roads and pavements** – report a pothole or a blocked road drain
- **report** a missed waste collection or ask for a new or replacement bin.

After you report a problem online, officers will add updates to the case to keep you up-to-date on action they've taken. You can view these by logging into your report history.

If you can't get online at home, public computers are available in all North Somerset libraries.

View locations and details at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/libraries)

## Call the council

Help is available over the phone if you, or someone you know, can't access council services online.

The most popular numbers are:

- **council tax and benefits** - 01934 888 144
- **waste and recycling** - 01934 888 802
- **planning** - 01934 888 802
- **roads and pavements** - 01934 888 802
- **housing enquiries** - 01934 426 330
- **Care Connect (adult and children's social care)** - 01934 888 801.

For anything else, call **01934 888 888**. This is an automated service so ask for the service you want.

Lines are open 9am-5pm, Monday-Friday.

The Care Connect line is open 8am-6pm Monday-Friday.





# Have your say on how flooding is managed

Join the conversation



## Have your say on how communities across North Somerset can become more resilient to flooding.

Your views are needed in a consultation about North Somerset Council's updated Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

The strategy sets out the council's objectives and actions for the next 10 years, focusing on how communities can be more resilient to both groundwater and surface water flooding, sometimes known as flash flooding.

Parts of the strategy also cover broader flood risks such as flooding from the sea and large rivers.

Over the last eight years, North Somerset Council has received



external funding and invested £3.2m in large schemes to reduce surface water flood risk in Wrington, and Summer Lane, Weston-super-Mare.

It spends more than £1m each year to maintain road drainage and flood defences, and is starting to use new techniques such as natural flood management and property level flood resilience.

Responses received from the consultation will help shape

the updated strategy to guide future investment and help North Somerset become more flood resilient.

Find out more and have your say by 9am on Thursday 6 April at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/floodriskconsultation](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/floodriskconsultation)

Paper copies are also available at libraries.

Read more about the work being done to repair flood defences in North Somerset on page 44.

## Other ways to have your say

### Speak at council meetings

Any resident, business ratepayer or person 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](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/how-speak-council-meetings), email [committee.administration@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:committee.administration@n-somerset.gov.uk) or call 01934 634 900.

### Comment on consultations

All consultations run by North Somerset Council are listed at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/consult](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/consult)

If you register on the site you can opt in to receive a weekly email about any new consultations.

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 can be viewed online at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/notices](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/notices)



i

# Innovative new bus services launch next month



**Innovative new bus services are launching in North Somerset next month to enable more people to access public transport.**

WESTlink services will run as 'demand responsive transport' (DRT), meaning buses will go where they're needed and run without a set timetable.

Smaller vehicles will be used so they can go to areas that are inaccessible to larger, commercial buses.

North Somerset Council and the West of England Combined Authority have been working together on contracts for these new services, which start running from Monday 3 April.

Buses play a vital role in our communities - they provide essential links to help residents get to school and college, get to work to earn a living, attend medical appointments, shops and generally travel across the area.

A number of supported and commercially operated bus services in North Somerset stopped last

year, so DRT is bringing back public transport to those areas which have traditionally struggled to sustain timetabled services due to low passenger demand.

Buses are also key to our response to the climate emergency.

As well as encouraging more people to use public transport, the smaller vehicles are better for the environment too.

The areas covered by DRT will be adjusted over time to cater for demand but initial areas will include:

- Clevedon/Portishead/Yatton
- Weston-super-Mare (Locking, Hutton, Worlebury and surrounding hamlets)
- the south east of North Somerset, including Bristol Airport
- the south west/south east of North Somerset, including Axbridge in Somerset.

Initially there will be 16 buses in North Somerset running from 7am until 7pm, Monday to Saturday.

Passengers can book their journeys by phone or through a mobile app.

The buses will be available for short trips or to connect to the wider public transport network.

Pricing will be in line with fares for local buses and Diamond Travel concessionary passes will be accepted, along with the West of England multi-operator ticketing for seamless onward travel.



More details about WESTlink launching in North Somerset in April and how to get tickets will be available at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/bsip](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/bsip)





# More bus service improvements on their way

On-demand public transport is the first step in a wider public transport transformation for North Somerset.

Last year the Department for Transport (DfT) announced that North Somerset Council would be awarded almost £48m in capital funding to improve bus services locally over the next three years.

The Bus Service Improvement Plan outlines this major investment programme, in partnership with the West of England Combined Authority.

The funding also includes a pooled revenue fund of £57.5m shared with the combined authority.

This money will make a real difference to local communities, by investing in infrastructure, providing more bus services and reducing the cost of fares across North Somerset.

It will pay for a range of improvements, including:

- an ambitious fares support package to ensure that buses remain excellent value as inflationary costs impact on the bus industry
- a significant increase in the current bus network, delivering a comprehensive network of services with frequency standards matched to the population densities and demands
- higher bus frequencies in towns and urban areas, offering a good range of destinations and connections, including with rail. Major towns should expect a minimum frequency of 60 minutes, with many increased to every 30 or 20 minutes on priority corridors such as the A370, A369 and A38

- a range of bus services to support the 24/7 economy, providing improvements to the early morning, evening, night, and weekend services
- a single bus network with every vehicle and bus stop identifiable as part of the network, through a common brand
- reliable, faster and consistent journey times.

North Somerset Council's ambition is to make public transport available to everyone who needs it.

These improvements will also accelerate the decarbonisation of transport – a key priority for the council as part of its commitment to tackle the climate emergency.

For more information about the Bus Service Improvement Plan visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/bsip](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/bsip)

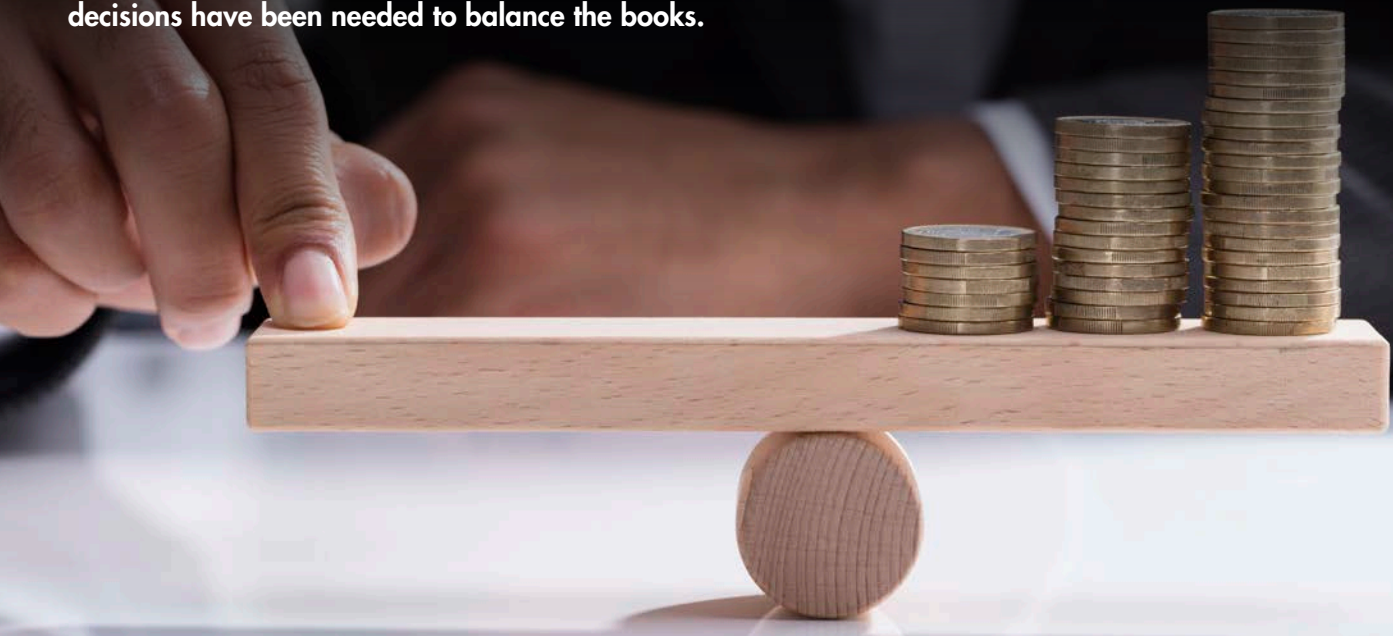
For the latest bus travel information visit Travelwest [www.travelwest.info/bus](http://www.travelwest.info/bus)





# Tough decisions for balanced budget

A new budget has been approved for the financial year ahead but tough decisions have been needed to balance the books.



Like councils across the country, North Somerset faces spiralling inflationary cost pressures and stretched staff resources, as well as increasing demands for services as more residents struggle with the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis.

Budgeting is a year-round process and in the autumn a funding gap of more than £17m was identified for 2023/24.

North Somerset Council has faced more than a decade of austerity so it is no stranger to tackling difficult challenges.

Now, it faces increasing demand for services and less certainty over

funding, as well as escalating costs of supplies and services, and inflationary pressures.

Extra funding from central government to support covid recovery has also come to an end and not been replaced with revised measures to help tackle inflationary increases.

All of these issues have made the task of setting a balanced budget much harder.

Melanie Watts, head of finance at North Somerset Council, said: "Finding savings of £17m was not easy and has been achieved through a combination of reducing

spend across many service areas throughout the council, while also protecting services which support the area's most vulnerable residents wherever possible, and raising council tax."

Because councils across the country face significant financial challenges, central government has raised the limit on how much council tax levels can be increased.

At the time of *Life* going to print, a rise of 4.99 per cent was anticipated, which includes 2 per cent to cover the increasing costs and demands of adult social care services specifically.





While this is an increase on last year's figures, it is half the current level of inflation, which reached a 40-year high last year.

North Somerset Council also has a low council tax base – the third lowest in the region – which means any council tax increase doesn't raise as much additional money for the organisation as in other council areas.

There are difficult times ahead for residents, businesses and the organisation but North Somerset Council is committed to providing the best services it can, delivering a more open, fairer and greener North Somerset.

## What council tax can I expect to pay?

This year's anticipated rise of 4.99 per cent means North Somerset Council's share of the council tax bill for an average Band D household will be £1,627.38 in 2023/24 – about £135.62 a month.

This is £6.45 more a month than last year's average Band D monthly cost of £129.17.

As well as North Somerset Council's charge, the final council tax bill includes charges for Avon and Somerset Police Authority, Avon Fire and Rescue, and town and parish councils.

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

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

You can also access many other council services, such as applying for benefits, letting the council know about road issues, or changing your details through MyAccount.

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



## Council tax discounts for most financially vulnerable

Struggling households in North Somerset are set to get an extra discount on their council tax this year as the cost-of-living crisis continues.

At the time of *Life* going to press, councillors were proposing a £310,000 package of council tax discounts to help the most financially vulnerable residents.

The support package includes:

- more than 8,300 people who currently receive council tax support will automatically get a further £25 discount on their 2023/24 council tax bill
- about 1,000 people who get housing benefit but not council tax support will also get a £25 discount
- a further 3,000 households who have children receiving free school meals but don't receive council tax support will automatically get a discount of £22.16.

These discounts, funded through North Somerset Council's allocation of £310,960 from the government's national Council Tax Support Fund, will be automatically applied for eligible people.





# Protecting services amid budget pressures

Protecting the most vulnerable people in our community while continuing to deliver quality services means North Somerset Council is having to make difficult decisions.

Like all councils across the country, North Somerset Council is seeing its budget squeezed by high inflation and an increasing demand for services, as more residents struggle with the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis.

Last September the council announced there was a funding gap of £17m so tough decisions have had to be made to reduce this and present a robust, balanced budget for the new financial year.

North Somerset Council receives its income from central government grants, council tax and business rates.

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

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

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

As well as protecting key public services, the council has invested in long-term projects to improve services for children and young people, green initiatives and local communities.





Here is a snapshot of some of the services the council provides...



# Get ready for local elections

Local elections will soon take place in North Somerset so you'll get the chance to have your say on who should represent you locally.



On Thursday 4 May, you'll be able to help choose who will take the 50 seats on North Somerset Council and the 436 seats on the area's 39 parish councils.

For the first time, you'll need to show photographic ID at the polling station before being given a ballot paper.

## Why should I vote?

Council services effect us all in some way.

Those elected will have responsibility for deciding how these services are delivered, so it's important that residents take the opportunity to have their say on who these people are.

## What's the difference between North Somerset Council and the parish councils?

North Somerset Council is one of the UK's 47 unitary authorities. It is responsible for the vast majority of services used by residents, from recycling and roads to libraries and social care.

Parish councils tend to be more 'grass roots'. They have fewer decision-making powers or financial clout but perform a vital role for their local community providing valued services.

## Am I allowed to vote?

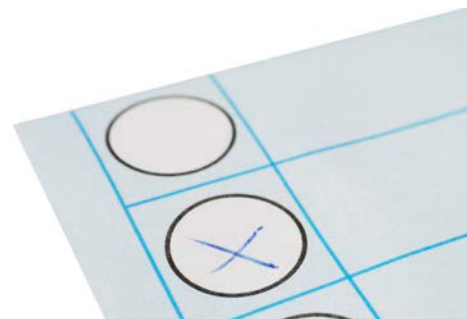
To vote in May's elections you must be:

- on the electoral register
- aged 18 or over
- a British, Commonwealth, Irish or European citizen registered to vote as a UK resident.

The deadline to add your name to the electoral register is Monday 17 April. Visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/localelections](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/localelections) to find out more.

## How do I vote?

- **In person**  
Visit the polling station printed on your poll card between 7am and 10pm on Thursday 4 May
- **By post**  
Complete an application form and return it to the council by 5pm on Tuesday 18 April. Postal ballot papers must be returned before voting closes at 10pm on Thursday 4 May.
- **By proxy**  
A proxy is someone who votes on your behalf. Complete an application form and return it to the council by 5pm on Tuesday 25 April. Reasons for doing this must be given. Both you and your proxy must be registered and eligible to vote. Your proxy must be able to attend your allocated polling station.





## Voter ID

Voters are now required to show photographic identification before being handed a ballot paper at a polling station.

This new requirement, introduced by the government, will apply for the first time at the local elections on Thursday 4 May.

If your photo ID has expired, it will still be accepted if the photograph is still a good likeness of you.

You can use any of the following:

- passport
- driving licence (including provisional)
- blue badge
- certain concessionary travel cards
- identity card with PASS mark (Proof of Age Standards Scheme)

### Key dates

**Tuesday 4 April, 4pm**

Deadline to apply as a candidate

**Wednesday 5 April**

Full list of candidates published

**Monday 17 April, midnight**

Deadline to apply to be added to the electoral register. Postal ballot papers start to go out

**Tuesday 18 April, 5pm**

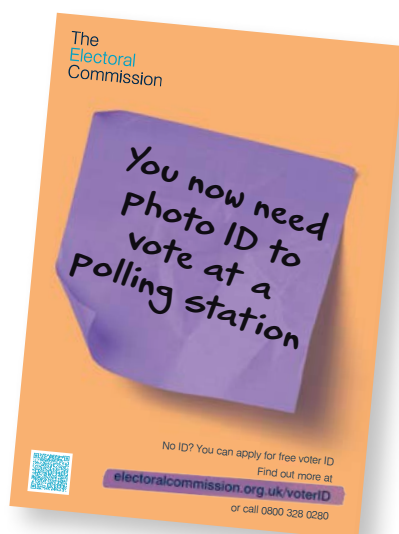
Deadline to apply for a postal vote

**Tuesday 25 April, 5pm –**

Deadline to apply for a proxy vote and deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate

**Thursday 4 May – election day**

Polling stations open 7am-10pm



- biometric immigration document
- defence identity card
- certain national identity cards.

For more information on which forms of photo ID will be accepted, visit [www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID) or call the helpline on 0800 328 0280.

If you don't have an accepted form of photo ID, you can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate online, by post or in-person.

Visit [voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk](http://voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk)

Alternatively, contact North Somerset Council's elections team at [electoral.services@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:electoral.services@n-somerset.gov.uk) or call **01934 634909** to request a paper application or to book an in person appointment.

## When will I find out the result?

All votes will be verified after polls close at 10pm. Counting will then take place on Friday 5 May. Results will be published on the council's website following the declaration.



## Could you be a councillor?

It's not too late to stand as a councillor in North Somerset's local election if you want to make a difference in your community.

The deadline for standing as a candidate is 4pm on Tuesday 4 April.

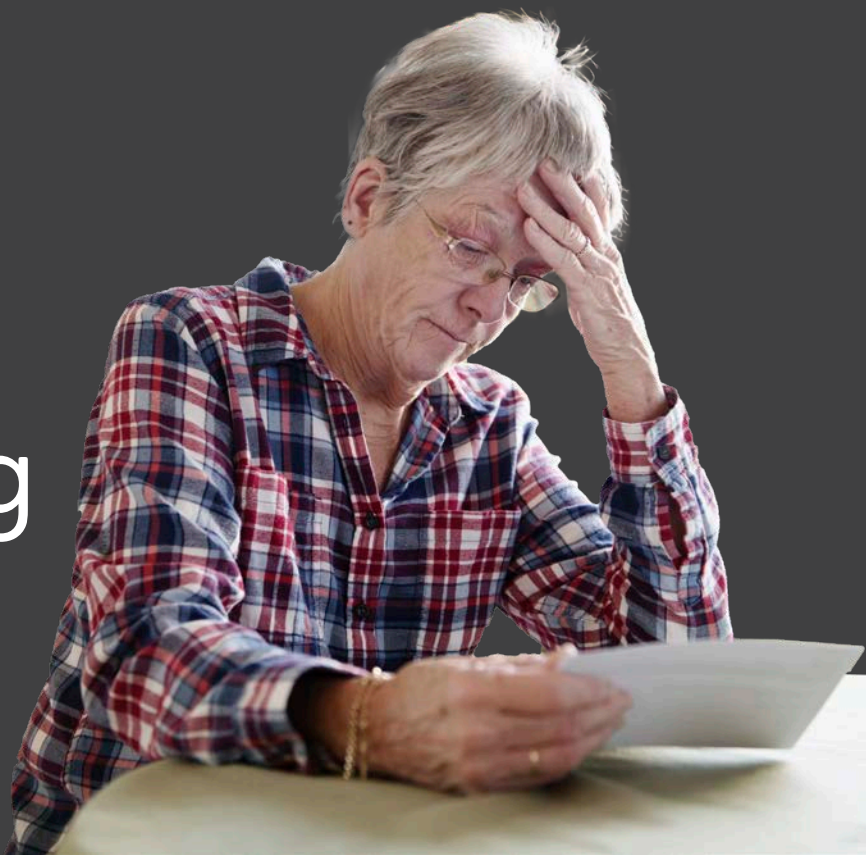
Being an effective councillor requires both commitment and hard work. Councillors must balance the needs and interests of residents with the political party they represent (if any) and the council.

Find out more at [www.gov.uk/government/get-involved/take-part/become-a-councillor](http://www.gov.uk/government/get-involved/take-part/become-a-councillor)





## Continued help during cost-of-living crisis



**Rising costs continue to be a worry for many people but support is still available to see you through the hard times.**

The cost-of-living crisis touched everyone last year, as energy prices soared and inflation reached a 40-year high, pushing up prices of everyday items.

As we move into spring, the days will be getting warmer and longer so there will be less demand for gas and electricity, but you may still need support to make your money stretch further to cover all bills and necessities.

Please remember there is no stigma in asking for help if you need it.

There is an incredible network of organisations and volunteers throughout North Somerset on-hand with support and advice.

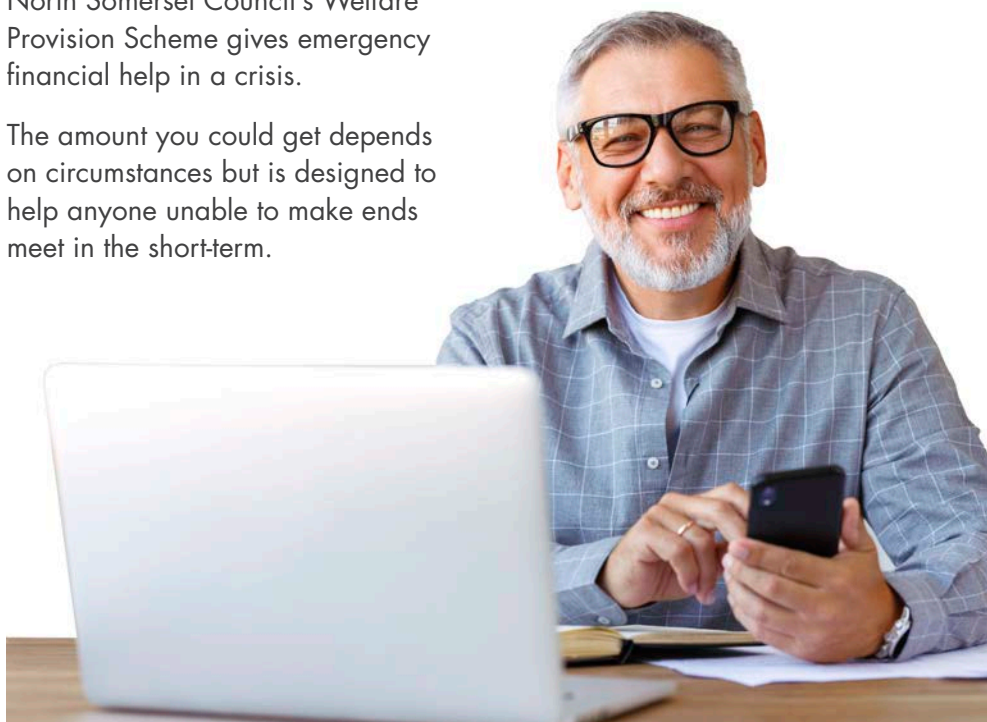
### Emergency short-term help

Short-term financial help is available if you're struggling to pay for gas, electricity, food, clothing, travel or other bills.

North Somerset Council's Welfare Provision Scheme gives emergency financial help in a crisis.

The amount you could get depends on circumstances but is designed to help anyone unable to make ends meet in the short-term.

Apply online at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wps](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wps) or call 01934 888 035 or 0800 138 5665, from 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday.







## Free managing your money workshop

Do you need support to manage your money, bills and debt better?

Useful tips and advice will be given during the free, three-hour face-to-face workshop on Monday 20 March.

It will cover basic budgeting, meal planning and shopping, managing debt and saving money, and how to find best deals with energy and broadband providers.

The session, run by the council's community learning team in partnership with Alliance Homes, is free for anyone living in North Somerset aged 19 and over.

Places are prioritised for those with few or no qualifications or on certain benefits.

Everyone who completes it will get a £20 shopping voucher.

The session take place at 65 High Street, Nailsea, from 10am to 1pm.

Find out more and book your place by emailing [julie.evans@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:julie.evans@n-somerset.gov.uk) or calling 07795 390 667.

## Housing costs

Rising housing costs mean more and more people are worrying about paying their rent or mortgage.

If you're struggling, contact your landlord or lender to let them know.

While this can be difficult to do, it's the first step to getting things sorted and they may be able to offer help and advice.

Free debt advice agency The National Debtline may also help you to apply for 'breathing space', a government scheme to give you extra time to sort out your debt problems. Visit [www.nationaldebtline.org](http://www.nationaldebtline.org)

Use a free online calculator to find out if you're entitled to any extra benefits to boost your income. Visit [www.entitledto.co.uk](http://www.entitledto.co.uk)

If you or someone you know is being threatened with homelessness due to rent or mortgage arrears, contact the council's homeless prevention team on 01934 426 330 or email [hp.triage@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:hp.triage@n-somerset.gov.uk)



For a round-up of advice and guidance about the cost-of-living crisis, visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/col](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/col)

It includes help with bills, childcare costs, housing support and more.

North Somerset Together can provide practical support through a network of local volunteers. Visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/together](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/together)

North Somerset Council has worked with the Independent Food Aid Network and the Trussell Trust to produce a leaflet to help if you're worried about money. Visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/worryingaboutmoneyleaflet](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/worryingaboutmoneyleaflet)

Citizen's Advice North Somerset offers free, independent advice on benefits, housing, employment, debt and more. A new shop has opened at The Sovereign, in Weston-super-Mare, with outreach locations across North Somerset. Visit [www.nscab.org.uk](http://www.nscab.org.uk) or call 0808 278 7973.





# Libraries providing vital support

**Public libraries serve an essential purpose in society, as spaces where people can meet, learn and exchange ideas.**

They've also taken on a new role during the cost-of-living crisis, as safe and welcoming community living rooms where people can go to keep warm and enjoy a little company.

Although the weather is now getting warmer, the libraries continue to offer lots of help, mostly for free.

Libraries give people access to books, digital resources, learning materials, safe workspaces and skills development to help them achieve their best.

One local member said: "The library is an essential tool for the community.

"Reading is good for education, knowledge and expanding views on the world at large."

Another said: "We come to the library nearly every week. It's such an asset."

Take a trip to your local library – or access the services online – to find out everything on offer.

## Something to read

More than 2.5 million items are available to borrow through North Somerset's libraries, part of LibrariesWest.

Whether you want to find out about managing your finances, shopping on a budget, DIY, crafts or more, there is something for every subject.

To support your health and wellbeing, the Reading Well collection of books is available in all libraries. They cover mental health, dementia, long-term conditions and specially chosen books to support children and teens' mental health.

It's free to borrow and reserve books and you can have up to 20 at a time. Visit [www.librarieswest.org.uk](http://www.librarieswest.org.uk)

## eBooks and more

Free eBooks, eAudiobooks, digital magazines and newspapers are available to download.

They are available through the BorrowBox and Libby apps, or visit [www.borrowbox.com/librarieswest](http://www.borrowbox.com/librarieswest) or [www.libbyapp.com](http://www.libbyapp.com)

For a round-up of online services visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/onlinelibrary](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/onlinelibrary)

## Events

Free events and activities take place at libraries, from author visits to children's storytelling, Lego clubs, and more.

Visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/libraryevents](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/libraryevents) for the most up-to-date details.





## Computers

All libraries have free-to-use computers, internet access and wi-fi, and you can print for a small charge per page.

If you need help getting online, volunteer-run sessions take place regularly. You can also bring your own tablet or phone.

Digital exclusion can be a real problem as it cuts people off from basic activities most take for granted, such as accessing job adverts, finding essential health information and using digitised public services.

To combat this, free sim cards and mobile data are available through libraries for people who can't afford them.

Ask at your local library for details.

## Could you volunteer?

Would you like to meet new people, learn new skills, improve your CV or help your community?

Volunteers are needed to help with children's activities, to deliver books to people who can't get to a library, to help people with their digital skills and more.

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

## Compare prices and cut costs

### Audio books

Audible service (month) £7.99  
BorrowBox app **free**

### e-books

Kindle unlimited (month) £7.99  
BorrowBox app **free**

### Magazines

Annual subscription £30-£50  
Libby app **free**

### Newspapers

Daily newspaper digital edition £65/year  
Press Reader **free**

### Books

New books subscription boxes - average (month) £20  
Borrowing bestsellers **free**

### Family history

Ancestry genealogy subscription (month) £19.99  
Ancestry library edition **free**

### Pre-school activity

Weekly singing class £5/class  
Rhymetime session **free**

Joining the library is free. Just visit your local branch with some ID or fill in the online form at [www.librarieswest.org.uk/join](http://www.librarieswest.org.uk/join)

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

 NSLLibraries

 NSomLibraries



## Nailsea Library moving home

Nailsea Library will soon be moving into its new home in the town centre.

The library is relocating to Colliers Walk, in a site formerly occupied by HSBC bank.

The move, planned to take place before the summer, forms part of the council's strategy to have modern, accessible libraries where people can go to benefit from a variety of services.

The library's 50-year-old building in Somerset Square is in poor condition, in need of roof repair, is very energy inefficient, and doesn't meet modern accessibility standards.

The new accessible space will modernise the service for Nailsea and the surrounding community.

Read the library strategy for 2021-31 at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/librariesstrategy](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/librariesstrategy)



# Dealing with damp problems

**Many people lowered their central heating thermostats this winter as energy prices soared.**

While this will have helped cut the cost of rising bills, it could lead to problems further on, such as damp, mould and even health issues.

North Somerset Council has information available to help homeowners and tenants and is working closely with a number of partners, such as voluntary organisations, to provide information for residents on how they can reduce condensation and access grants to make home improvements.

Some damp is caused by condensation, when the air can't hold the moisture and tiny drops of water appear.

Warm, moist air condenses on cool walls, particularly in rooms that naturally generate a lot of air moisture such as kitchens and bathrooms.

It can also occur where the air is still, such as the corners of rooms, behind furniture or inside wardrobes.

Damp can cause mould on walls and furniture and lead to rot in wooden window frames.

Ways to reduce condensation are:

- produce less moisture – keep lids on pans, dry clothes outdoors if possible, avoid using paraffin/bottled gas heaters
- increase ventilation – close doors when cooking or bathing to keep the steam in one room, and open a window and make sure extractor fans work properly
- improve insulation and draughtproof your home – fully insulate your loft and cavity walls (if you have them), and draughtproof windows and doors
- heat your home a little more, when possible, by drawing curtains or blinds to keep in the warmth, and moving furniture away from radiators.

## Other forms of damp

Penetrating damp is moisture entering the house, whether through leaking pipes, a damaged roof, blocked gutters, gaps around window frames or cracked rendering and brickwork.

Rising damp is due to a defective or non-existent damp course. This will leave a 'tide mark' about 1m above the floor.

## Where to go for help

For a round-up of services available through North Somerset Council visit

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

The Centre for Sustainable Energy has advice leaflets on many subjects, including dealing with condensation, damp and mould. Visit

**[www.cse.org.uk/advice-leaflets](http://www.cse.org.uk/advice-leaflets)**

Housing charity Shelter offers advice to tenants in rented homes. Visit **[www.shelter.org.uk/housing\\_advice](http://www.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice)**

Citizens Advice also has advice at **[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/repairs-in-rented-housing](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/repairs-in-rented-housing)**

Government advice on ways to save energy around the home can be found at **[www.gov.uk/improve-energy-efficiency](http://www.gov.uk/improve-energy-efficiency)**







# Celebrate art, culture, music and more this spring

Celebrate the start of spring with community events to lift the spirit. Culture, music, art and food will provide something for all the family to enjoy.



## Exhibition of Quentin Blake illustrations

**Now until Saturday 3 June**

Artwork by much-loved illustrator Quentin Blake is now on show at Weston Museum.

Quentin Blake: Illustrating Verse is the first ever exhibition dedicated to Blake's illustrations for poetry.

It features artwork for popular nursery rhymes such as The Owl and the Pussycat and classic stories including Alice in Wonderland, as well as previously unseen works from Blake's archive.

This includes sketchbooks and rough drawings showing the creation of characters for Roald Dahl's novel Charlie and the Chocolate Factory and his own Mr Magnolia.

This touring exhibition, on loan from the Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration, can be seen until Saturday 3 June at Weston Museum, in Burlington Street, Weston-super-Mare. The museum is free to enter but closed Sundays and Mondays.



## Portishead Spring Show

**Saturday 11 March**

Talented gardening enthusiasts, bakers and artists will be showcasing and selling their flowers, fruit, vegetables, cakes and crafts at this show to celebrate the start of spring.

Whether you are taking part or just visiting, the event is an afternoon out for all the family, with teas, coffee and light lunches served.

Visit from 12.30pm to 4.30pm at the Folk Hall, in the High Street. Admission is 50p, with free admission for children.

## eat:Festivals

Italian Gardens, Weston-super-Mare – **Saturday 29 April**

Queens Square and Alexandra Road, Clevedon – **Saturday 20 May**

Find a great range of local food and drink producers, awesome street food and free entertainment when the popular eat:Festivals return to North Somerset. Each festival is open 10am to 4pm. Free to attend. [www.eatfestivals.org](http://www.eatfestivals.org)

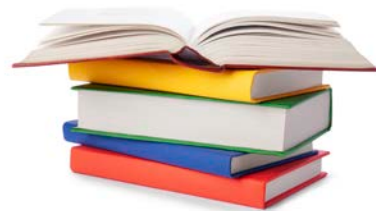
## Clevedon Literary Festival

**Friday 9 to Sunday 11 June**

Poetry, prose, performance, art and music will light up Clevedon soon.

Clevedon's Literary Festival, called More Than Words, aims to share and celebrate the written and spoken word and related art forms for the benefit of the local community.

Find out more about the event and keep up-to-date on news at [www.clevedonliteraryfestival.uk](http://www.clevedonliteraryfestival.uk)



For the most up-to-date event listings, go online at:

[www.discoverclevedon.co.uk](http://www.discoverclevedon.co.uk)

[www.nailseatown.com/whats-on](http://www.nailseatown.com/whats-on)

[www.visitportishead.net](http://www.visitportishead.net)

[www.visit-westonsupermare.com](http://www.visit-westonsupermare.com)







# Walk through splendid bluebell woods near Wrington

Walk along some splendid paths from Wrington and see delightful bluebell woods this spring. This walk comes courtesy of Tony Harden, author of two local walking booklets being sold to support local nature reserves.

### Walk information

- **Distance:** 4 miles
- **Difficulty:** easy/medium
- **Estimated time:** about 1 hour 45 mins

### How to get there

The walk starts in Broad Street, in the centre of Wrington. Please park considerably, either in Broad Street or nearby roads.

For bus timetables visit [www.travelinesw.com](http://www.travelinesw.com)

Find out about public rights of way in North Somerset at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/publicrightsofway](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/publicrightsofway)

Begin at Mother Hen coffee shop in Broad Street. Go past the Golden Lion pub, around the corner to the left and up the High Street.

As you reach the house named Rockbarton on your right, turn right through the pedestrian gate and up the narrow-sided Dring (1).

At the top of the Dring, on the right, is an arch from the village hospital dated 1626.

Turn right at the top onto Roper's Lane and then first left at Ropers Lodge (2).

Follow the tarmac road and then track. After the kissing gate, continue up along the hedge past the small stone barn on your right.

Above the barn is a stone lined dew pond used historically to water cattle.

At the next kissing gate (3), turn right where the path joins Bullhouse Lane. This lane is steep







in parts and stony. At the top turn left at the T-junction with Wrington Hill (4).

Walk up the road. The first house on your right, Park Cottage, has a wonderful garden. It often opens to the public as part of the National Garden Scheme.

Continue along the road with the delightful bluebell beech wood on your right. Feel free to go through it but don't walk on the bluebells. Bluebells usually look their best in April/May but can vary.

At the end of the beech wood, just after Woodside Cottage, turn left up the track on your left into Congresbury Wood. Note the giraffe sculpture in the garden and rustic garden gates (5).

Bear right, then through the green gate and on for about 800 metres, passing a house on your right. At the fork, bear right downhill (6) and turn left at the signed footpath just before Woolmers. This goes steeply uphill. Then turn right (7), back onto the track.

Bear right at the first fork, then right again. After 20 metres turn left, going slightly downhill, all the time keeping the old stone wall visible to your left.

Turn left on the marked path, going through a gap in the stone wall. Then go left again, bearing slightly uphill. This path is a delight as it winds through the trees. Look out for mature yew trees, which distinguish the old woods from the 1950s forestation. Ignore all side paths.

After 600 metres the path comes to a valley and path junction (8). Bear right down the valley and

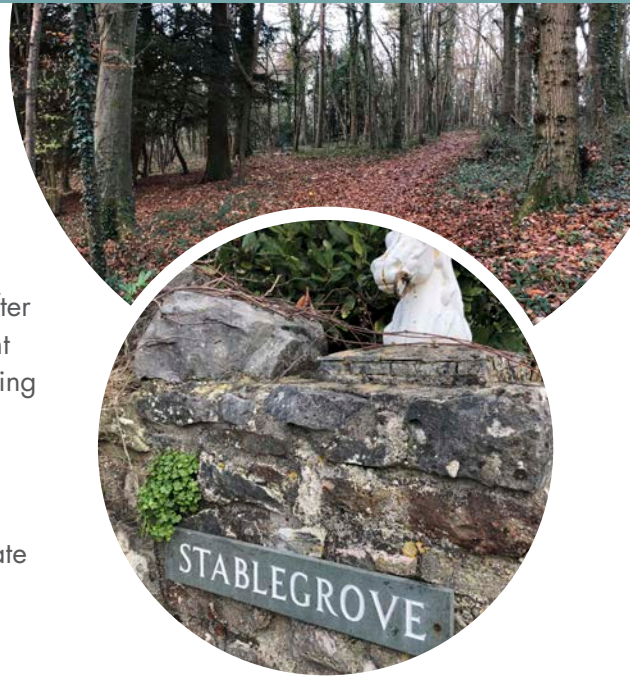
drop down through the wood to the bottom of the hill, ignoring all side paths.

Eventually you'll see a five-bar metal gate into a field to your right. Ignore this and after a further 20 metres, turn right into the field through the kissing gate (9).

Follow the field's left edge to another footpath gate. Go through this and onto a private drive, which is also a public footpath.

At West Hay Road (10), cross over slightly to the left and, just before the Wrington Millennium stone, walk down the lane. It bends right then left at the bottom. Immediately to the left of West Hay Farm, squeeze through a stone gap into a straight path (11).

At the bottom of the path, go through the pedestrian gate and then diagonally across the field to the gate (12). Bear left.



Heading just to the left of Wrington church, go across the fields through six metal pedestrian gates. Follow the path along the stream at the back of the houses until you come to a further gate. Turn right here through another gate, down the alley, to come out in Ladywell. Turn left to return to your starting point at the café.

Tony Harden's two booklets each feature 10 walks. They cost £5 each with profits supporting local nature reserves. Buy from Mother Hen Café (open Thursday, Friday, Saturday), in Broad Street, Wrington, or from [tonyhardenuk@gmail.com](mailto:tonyhardenuk@gmail.com), for £7 including postage.

**Do you know any great walks in North Somerset? If there is somewhere you like exploring and think others would too, email your ideas to [editor@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:editor@n-somerset.gov.uk)**



# Take action on climate

**Make 2023 the year you take climate action and join the effort to tackle the climate emergency.**

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

Climate change is already here but it's important to remember that we all have the power to do something about it and play our part in making North Somerset a healthier, happier and greener place to live and work.

If everyone in North Somerset reduced their emissions by at least one tonne over the next year, together we'd save more than 216,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases being released into the atmosphere.

Many actions which reduce emissions also have additional benefits which can improve our lives and communities in other ways.

These co-benefits include improved health and wellbeing, saving money, better air quality, and less pressure on the NHS.

## Five climate actions to take today...

It might feel overwhelming thinking about all the ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and take the road to net zero.



Here are five simple things you can start doing from today:

**1 Transport** – walk, wheel or cycle short trips

**2 Energy** – take shorter showers

**3 Food** – have at least one meat-free day a week

**4 Rewild** – green your spaces with plants

**5 Talk** – tell your friends and family what you're doing and why.

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

## Greenhouse gas emission levels

Greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide and methane, need to be reduced drastically to limit temperature rise and protect from heatwaves, flooding and wildfires.

Here in North Somerset, our greenhouse gas emissions come from:

- transport – **40 per cent**
- energy use at home – **25 per cent**
- business energy use – **21 per cent**
- farming (agriculture, forestry and land use) – **10 per cent**
- waste – **4 per cent**

Use a free online calculator to measure your household's emissions by working out your carbon footprint. Search for the Climate Action North Somerset team on [zero.giki.earth](https://zero.giki.earth)





# mate

## CLIMATE ACTION

### NORTH SOMERSET

#### Together we can make a difference

There are lots of ways to do your bit if you want to get more involved in climate activity and reduce your carbon footprint.

- ✓ Some are a **simple switch**
- ✓✓ Many are a **doable change** which need a bit more planning
- ✓✓✓ Others are **tricky** but worth it



#### Transport

✓ If you have to travel by car, use fuel efficiently: gently press the accelerator and brakes, lower your speed on motorways to 60mph and use cruise control on long trips.

✓✓ Discover North Somerset's many cycle routes. Free adult cycle training is available if you need more confidence on two wheels. Book up to two private sessions with an instructor and improve your road skills. Find out more at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/cycling](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/cycling)

✓✓✓ When it's time to get a different car, consider switching to an electric vehicle.



#### Energy

✓ When cooking, use a microwave instead of the hob and a slow cooker or air fryer instead of the oven, as both are a lot more energy efficient

✓✓ Switch to a renewable energy provider. The Energy Saving Trust has identified suppliers who buy renewable electricity directly from UK generators, such as wind or solar farms. This provides a clear benefit to the UK renewable industry. Visit [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)

✓✓✓ Investigate the possibility of installing solar panels to power your home.



#### Food

✓ Buy from UK farmers – many are already working towards becoming net zero and raising animal welfare standards

✓✓ Aim to eat more plant-based protein, such as lentils and beans, instead of animal-based foods which have a much higher carbon footprint. To get you started you could try using a 50/50 mixture of meat and plant-based proteins when cooking meals with mince, as the texture is similar.

✓✓✓ Try growing your own fruit and vegetables. You can use containers and plant pots if you don't have much outdoor space.



For more advice on reducing your carbon footprint visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/climateaction](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/climateaction)

It's important to remember that it's not too late to start taking climate action, and help create a healthier, happier, greener North Somerset.

North Somerset Council would love to hear about the actions you're taking to reduce your household's greenhouse gas emissions. Email your stories to [climate.emergency@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:climate.emergency@n-somerset.gov.uk)

Join the Climate Action North Somerset Facebook group for more ideas:  
 [climateactionNS](https://www.facebook.com/climateactionNS)



# Thousands of new trees bring benefits to North Somerset



**Tens of thousands of trees are being planted across North Somerset to bring wide-ranging benefits to people, animals and the planet.**

In the last couple of years, North Somerset Council has planted 30,000 new young trees across the area as part of its commitment to rewilding and tackling the climate emergency.

Trees bring many health and wellbeing benefits. They can boost our mental health, give shade, encourage outdoor activity, and provide habitats and food for wildlife to flourish.

They support and regulate ecosystems, cool the air, capture carbon dioxide and produce oxygen, and bear fruits and leaf litter which contributes to soil development.

After the council declared a climate emergency in 2019, tree planting

sessions began in 2020, when covid restrictions allowed.

Hundreds of volunteers helped plant new young trees, donated by The Woodland Trust. New cardboard tree guards were also funded by the Forest of Avon Trust, replacing plastic spiral guards.

Last year, North Somerset Council worked with volunteer groups, including Sustainable Clevedon and Friends of Trendlewood Park in Nailsea, along with town and parish councils, to plant 150 large trees and a further 2,000 young trees.

New cherry trees were also planted along the Boulevard, in Weston-super-Mare, thanks to funding from Weston Civic Society.

To continue with this work, the council has been able to set up a new tree team thanks to funding from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Woodland

Creation Accelerator Fund, and the Woodland Trust's Emergency Tree Fund.

Funding has also been received from the Forestry Commission's Local Authority Treescape Fund to continue planting both smaller and larger trees in local communities across the area.

Tree planting is a critical component in the council's fight against climate change, set out in the Green Infrastructure Strategy.

In total, the council aims to create between 40 and 60 hectares of new woodland.

Read more at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/greeninfrastructurestrategy](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/greeninfrastructurestrategy) and [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/rewilding](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/rewilding)





## Trees for The Queen

An oak tree has been planted in Weston-super-Mare in memory of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The memorial tree, sourced from Chew Valley Trees, was planted in Ashcombe Park in January and a commemorative plaque was unveiled to mark the occasion.

It joins the oak tree planted last January as part of The Queen's Green Canopy project to mark her Platinum Jubilee.

This initiative encouraged people to plant a tree to help create a lasting legacy and have a positive impact on the environment.



North Somerset Council donated 60 native trees to town and parish councils and voluntary groups as part of this project.

Read more about The Queen's Green Canopy at [www.queenscanopy.org](http://www.queenscanopy.org)

## Covid memorial trees

Five hundred trees are being planted across North Somerset in memory of local people who lost their lives during the covid pandemic.

The trees, planted using money from the Local Authority Treescape Fund, will create tranquil spaces for reflection.

Details of these memorial tree locations will be published on the council's website when available, at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/trees](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/trees)



## Tackling ash dieback

Ash dieback – a disease with no cure that kills about 85 per cent of ash trees – has spread across the country and is now in North Somerset.

It is the most significant tree disease to affect the UK since Dutch elm disease.

Ash dieback is a difficult disease to manage so tree removal is inevitable, especially in higher risk areas.

North Somerset Council manages about 75,000 to 80,000 ash trees, located in parks, public woodland and the sides of roads.

A survey was conducted in summer 2021 to understand the extent of the problem and infected trees are now being removed.

Two teams of tree surgeons, provided by the council's contractor Glendale, are working across the area in different roles.

One is specifically working on ash trees affected by disease, while the other carries out both urgent and maintenance work.

As a council committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030, cutting down trees is not a decision taken lightly.

Where trees are alongside highways, the work is being carried out using large forestry-style machinery rather than more traditional methods.

This is the safest and most efficient way of felling trees on the roadside but it is disruptive, so usually a road closure is needed.

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



For more information about how North Somerset Council looks after trees visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/trees](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/trees)








# Get green fingers this spring

**There has never been a better time to start composting.**



Home composting is the most environmentally friendly – and cheapest – way of dealing with garden waste.

During this cost-of-living crisis, the added benefits of composting are:

-  **no need to buy compost for the garden**
-  **no need for a garden waste subscription**
-  **no more fuel spent on trips to the recycling centre.**

Compost is a nutrient-rich food for the garden which helps improve soil structure, maintains moisture levels and keeps a balanced pH range.

A waste audit of North Somerset bins in 2019 showed that, on average, 34 per cent of the black bin could have been composted.

Therefore, composting will help reduce what's in your bin and in turn reduce the cost of waste disposal in North Somerset.

For help and advice to get started, or to overcome a challenge you've had in the past, the master composters are on-hand to help.

Email [gardenwaste@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:gardenwaste@n-somerset.gov.uk)



## Renew your garden waste service



Garden waste customers are being contacted about renewing the service.

Customers who provided an email address when registering will receive an email. Those who signed up by phone without providing an email address will receive a letter in the post.

If you're not currently signed up but would like to do so, visit the website for more information:

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

Also follow the team on social media for the latest updates.

-  NSrecyclingandwaste
-  ns\_recycling





## Help speed up crews by sorting your boxes

What's the best way to sort your box and help speed up crews?

*Life spoke to the waste minimisation team to get the lowdown on common questions.*

**Q** Why did the recycling crew collect everything apart from the Pringles tube?

**A** Pringles tubes can't be recycled in your kerbside box, along with black plastic, soft plastic film lids, plastic bags and crisp packets.

If one or two items in your box are not recyclable, crews will leave them behind and collect the rest. If this happens, check what has been left and remove any incorrect items before your next collection.

**Q** Why did the crew leave the big pile of cardboard next to my boxes?

**A** Cardboard must be flattened or cut down so it's the size of your recycling box. If it's bigger, it won't fit in the cardboard compartment on the lorry.

Some weeks a lot of cardboard is collected. If the compartment on the vehicle is already getting full, crews leave excess card behind to make sure they can collect at least some card from every property. Try putting a little out each week if you've had lots of deliveries.

**Q** Why were all my neighbours' boxes collected but not mine?

**A** The crew could have made a mistake and simply missed yours, as each recycling crew collects from about 625 properties each day. Report a missed collection online at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/missedcollection](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/missedcollection)

Crews also check boxes before they empty them. If a box has too many incorrect items in it, they will leave it behind. The same applies if the box is very mixed. When boxes are unsorted, it is difficult to see what is in the bottom. This means they can't tell if any dangerous items, such as broken glass or knives, are in the box.

Please check regularly what you can recycle and sort your boxes neatly to help avoid this problem from happening.

**Q** What should I do with lids, from jam jars, bottles, etc?

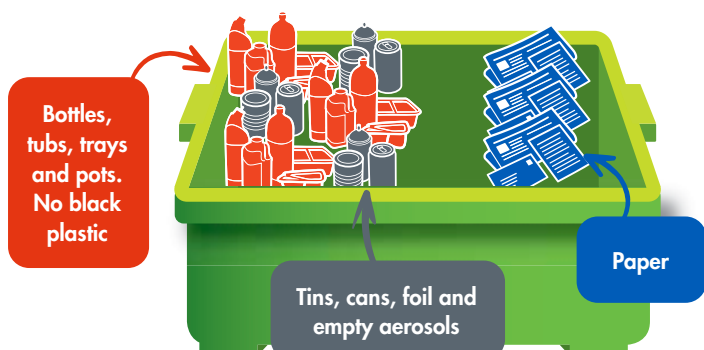
**A** Take the lids off everything and recycle them with like-for-like material. For example, metal lids from wine bottles and jam jars would go in your metal recycling.

**Q** Should I wash my recycling before it goes in my boxes?

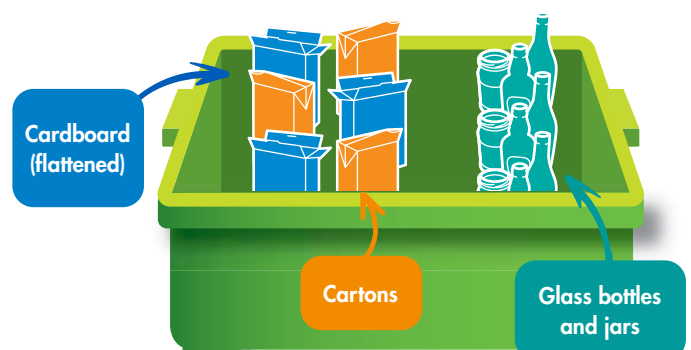
**A** Please make sure all food packaging is emptied and rinsed before recycling. It doesn't have to be spotless but it helps the crew, as they hand sort materials into the lorry compartments. It means crews don't get residue on their uniforms, it helps to keep your boxes cleaner and less smelly, and makes the job a bit nicer.



### BOX 1 – Plastic and cans together – paper separate



### BOX 2 – Card and cartons together – glass separate





# Get ready to party for Pride



A colourful party celebrating freedom, equality, diversity and inclusion is heading to a North Somerset beach this summer.

Weston-super-Mare is set to host the national UK Pride festival on the Beach Lawns on Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 July.

There will be music, comedy, Pride-inspired fashion and more, and everyone is welcome.

Nabila Marrow is chair of the LGBTQ+ staff forum at North Somerset Council.

She said: "To participate in Pride is both an act of resistance as well as a celebration: the ability to love and be yourself out loud.

"I grew up in Australia and marriage equality was not achieved there until 2017, after a publicly debated referendum.

"It was very emotional and triggering for much of the LGBTQ+ community.

"Prior to this, the Marriage Amendment Bill 2004 was passed to strictly define marriage as 'the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others', meaning that Australia did not only lack marriage equality – it banned it.

"Though marriage equality was achieved here in the UK in 2014 (with Northern Ireland in 2020), members of the LGBTQ+ community continue to experience discrimination.

"In the UK, we are extremely lucky to be able to participate in a Pride event safely, which is why I am passionate about the celebration of us as a community, how far we have come, and pay homage to those who bravely come before us."

A local Pride event took place in Weston last summer and Nabila said: "If last year's event was a preview of the love and dedication we have to our community, then this year's will certainly be an extravaganza."

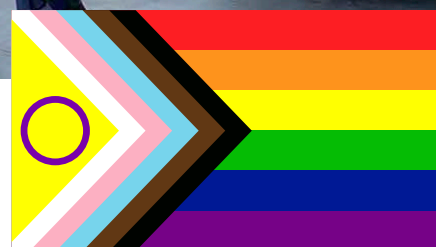


Nabila Marrow (right) with her wife Kerry at Weston-super-Mare Pride last year





Weston Pride in 2022



## Diversity embraced at North Somerset Council

Diversity is embraced at North Somerset Council as it places fairness at the heart of its corporate vision.

The council wants to make North Somerset a welcoming and great place for people to live, work and visit.

To do this, it works to reduce inequalities and empower communities to promote opportunity for everyone.




The council regularly engages with a wide range of communities, such as ethnically diverse groups, disabled people's groups, LGBTQ+ communities and people from a wide range of ages.

It works closely with third sector organisations to collaborate best practices and also supports and promotes local events, to raise awareness of the importance and benefits of a diverse community.

Louise Roberts, inclusion and corporate development manager at North Somerset Council, said: "We take our role as community leader seriously and want to encourage open conversations, and look to continue to improve and create a more inclusive society."



Pride event details correct at time of *Life* going to print. For up-to-date news visit [www.prideinweston.com](http://www.prideinweston.com) or follow the team on social media.

 [prideinweston](https://www.facebook.com/prideinweston)  
 [pride.in.weston](https://www.instagram.com/pride.in.weston)  
 [UKPrideNetwork](https://twitter.com/UKPrideNetwork)





# Spring clean your way to better health

**Now might be the perfect time to spring clean your health and wellbeing.**

If your fitness New Year's resolutions have faded, the new season could be the inspiration you need to get back on track.

North Somerset Council wants to empower people to live healthier lives – so whether you want to lose weight, get more active, stop smoking, drink less alcohol or eat more healthily, there is lots of support available locally to help you reach your goals.



## Take a health MOT

Take a health and wellbeing MOT to see where you are now, where you want to be and how to get there.

The Better Health North Somerset website has a self-assessment questionnaire to give you personalised feedback on ways to improve your health and wellbeing, with links to local services depending on your answers.

You may also be eligible for one-to-one or group support with the council's healthy lifestyle advisers.

Advisers can help you generate your own, tailored plan for becoming and staying more active.

Together, you can look at how you could access any help, including free or low-cost organised exercise sessions. They can support you to prepare for any setbacks and help you to plot a range of paths to achieve your goals.

Questions might include your three main reasons for becoming more active, what difference you'd like to see in four weeks or four months, or what help you need to achieve your goals.

Contact the healthy lifestyles advisers at [healthylifestyles@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:healthylifestyles@n-somerset.gov.uk) or call 01934 427 661.

Fill in the online questionnaire at [www.betterhealthns.co.uk](http://www.betterhealthns.co.uk) and click on the 'self assessment' button.

## Find your perfect exercise fit

If you're looking to do more and get fitter, the active directory is a great place to start.

The online resource was updated earlier this year and provides information on a range of physical activity sessions for all ages and abilities, from yoga and martial arts to tennis and fitness classes.

Activities cater for beginners, those returning to exercise and those who want to try something new in a fun and social environment.

Find an activity near you at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/activedirectory](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/activedirectory)





## Fun, free games in local parks

Start your Saturdays with fun and games when free activity sessions start soon in four parks in Weston-super-Mare.

ParkPlay sessions are for everyone, with free games and activities for people of all ages and abilities to get together and have fun.



The initiative aims to encourage everyone to be more active and bring communities together in a safe, welcoming and inclusive way.

They'll last for two hours and could include activities from football and dodgeball to tag and frisbee.

No experience, fitness level or skills are needed, and all equipment is provided.

Sessions will be tailored by play leaders. If you're interested in becoming a leader, please get in touch.

ParkPlay sessions will run on Saturday mornings in different parks on different weeks, at Castle



Batch, Ellenborough Park West, Jubilee Park and Millennium Green.

Check for dates and locations at [www.betterhealthns.co.uk/information/parkplay](http://www.betterhealthns.co.uk/information/parkplay)

[www.park-play.com](http://www.park-play.com)



## Bringing neighbourhoods together through play

Could your community benefit from a traffic-free day of play?

Play Your Way is a council scheme where local people can apply for a road closure for a community event where families can have fun and play games together outside without the fear of traffic.

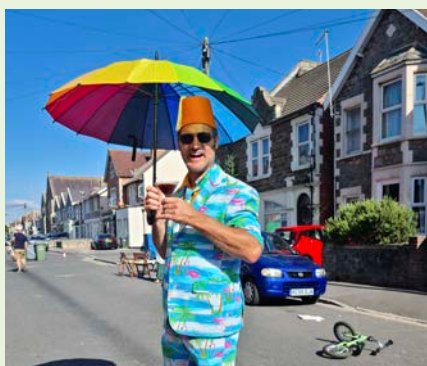
Using the principles of the national Playing Out organisation, Play Your Way aims to improve the health and wellbeing of children and families, reduce social isolation for residents that live alone, and empower residents to create a more cohesive neighbourhood.

Residents of Moorland Road, in Weston-super-Mare, have already hosted some sessions.

Organiser Emma Gliddon said: "They were lots of fun for the

children but also forged some inter-generational links which we're still benefiting from today.

"Older residents got to meet the young families, have a chat and learn each other's names, which has led to greater harmony.



"We're better connected to each other than before the events. I met neighbours that I had never seen, although I've lived here for 10 years."

If you're interested in closing your street under this scheme, contact the physical activity team on 01275 882 730 or [getactive@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:getactive@n-somerset.gov.uk)

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

[www.playingout.net](http://www.playingout.net)



For more information about physical activity in North Somerset visit [www.betterhealthns.co.uk](http://www.betterhealthns.co.uk), email [getactive@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:getactive@n-somerset.gov.uk) or call 01275 882 730.

BetterHealthNS BetterHealth\_NS





We  
**urgently**  
need more foster  
families to ensure our  
children can stay in the  
community they trust.

Make a difference,  
**Be** the difference

time to care...

**F**ostering  
North Somerset



To receive an information pack or attend one of our regular  
information sessions, call us or fill in our online enquiry form.

01275 888 999  
[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/fostering)





# Change a life by becoming a foster carer



## Would you like to help change the life of a vulnerable child or young person?

North Somerset Council needs more people to become foster carers and help care for children and young people in our community.

Fostering helps to improve lives by providing a loving family home when children are most in need.

Having more local foster carers means more young people can move out of residential homes and into stable family environments.

There are many different reasons why a child might be placed into foster care and the number needing placements continues to rise across the UK.

If the covid pandemic got you thinking about a career move, or the current cost of living crisis is bringing you job uncertainty, now might be the time to make a new career from foster care.

Foster carer Sally said:

***"It is, without a doubt, one of the most rewarding and fulfilling things I've ever done."***

"I couldn't be more grateful to North Somerset Council for the support they've given me over the years.

"The team are always there to offer friendly help and advice. I feel part of an amazing community and have a strong support network around me to help with anything I need."

## Why foster with North Somerset Council?

Fostering with North Somerset Council means children can remain local to the area they know, attend the same school, and maintain links with family and friends.

The council's fostering service, which is 100 per cent not-for-profit, offers a wide range of benefits.

Carers have a comprehensive free training package and on-going support and advice, and financial support is given through a weekly allowance and weekly fee.

There are different types of fostering options to choose from, depending on your lifestyle and whether you can commit full-time or part-time.



Find out more by emailing [fostering@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:fostering@n-somerset.gov.uk), calling **01275 888 999** or visiting [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/fostering)

Follow the team on social media for regular updates.

-  [FosteringNorthSomerset](#)
-  [FosteringNS](#)





# SEE MONSTER

## garden to open this spring

A tranquil garden is being created on Weston's seafront as part of the legacy of SEE MONSTER.

The one-of-a-kind art installation closed in November after an eight-week run, with an estimated half a million people engaging with the structure.

Now plants from the installation are being repurposed to create a SEE MONSTER community garden at the southern end of the Beach Lawns.

The location has been chosen to encourage more people to visit that end of the beach, to keep the coastal planting on the seafront, and to encourage more traders in that area.

The garden, which will open in the spring, will be shaped like the helideck from the Monster.

It will include more than 1,000 plants, shrubs and trees from the Monster, as well as sleepers to

create attractive raised beds, and a boules area for the local community to enjoy as a family sport.

SEE MONSTER brought hundreds of thousands of visitors to the area during its time in North Somerset.

The drone shows, during the opening of the Monster, highlighted what can be done with new technologies and brought tens of thousands of people to the seafront.

Community think tank groups were created and are continuing to collaborate in different ways.

More than 70,000 school children, young people, scouts, youth groups and students undertook educational trips on board.



Planting from the See Monster gardens is being repurposed for the new Beach Lawns garden.



SEE MONSTER was one of ten major projects commissioned by UNBOXED: Creativity which took place across the UK last year.





Artist Morag Myerscough at the launch of Super Wonder Shrine



## Colourful shrine lighting up High Street

A vibrant piece of public art is now lighting up Weston-super-Mare's High Street.

Super Wonder Shrine has been co-created by internationally-acclaimed public realm artist Morag Myerscough, with local artists and residents.

The timber-built bandstand-shaped structure is adorned with bold and colourful patterns and words from the community.

It is part of 21st Century super Shrines, a pioneering heritage project managed by Culture Weston in collaboration with North Somerset Council.

The final painting and pattern application of the structure was carried out by local creatives and more than 45 students from Weston College.

It features sheltered seating, a small performance area, words of wonder from local people, and an interior roof that bursts with dog names, including Morag's dog Elvis.

It has been established as part of the four-year High Street Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) cultural programme, funded by Historic England, in partnership with Arts Council England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

There are plans to develop a curated programme of free, outdoor 'happenings' at the Shrine in the months ahead, presented by Culture Weston.

These will include music, spoken word and art, alongside a regular people's platform of community activities.

Events will be publicised on the Culture Weston website. Visit [www.cultureweston.org.uk/whats-on](http://www.cultureweston.org.uk/whats-on) and filter by venue, searching for Super Wonder Shrine.

The temporary artwork is expected to be in place for the duration of the 21st Century super Shrines programme, which finishes in 2024.

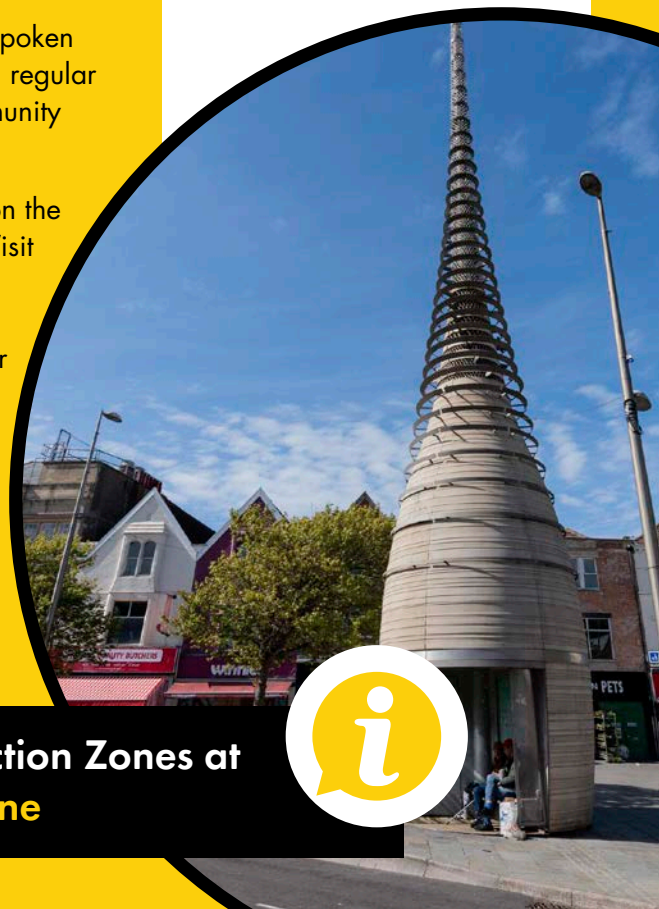
## Take a tour of the town

Explore the art, architecture and history of Weston-super-Mare by following a tour of the town this spring,

Several walks have now been uploaded onto the Super Weston website, including the Weston Wallz street art trail, the Gems of Weston architecture trail, and the Historic England Heritage Tour.

All tours are level and on pavements, making them wheelchair, pushchair and dog friendly.

See the interactive maps at [www.superweston.net/explore/tours](http://www.superweston.net/explore/tours)



Find out more about Weston's Heritage Action Zones at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/heritageactionzone](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/heritageactionzone)



# New visions for North Somerset towns



Visions for the future of Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead have been created as part of new placemaking strategies for the towns.

The strategies have been developed by North Somerset Council in partnership with town councils, local businesses and community networks and is the first time specific placemaking visions have been created for these towns.

Extensive engagement and consultation have taken place, with workshops, surveys at public events and online questionnaires helping to generate ideas and identify potential projects.

More than 2,400 people helped to develop the Clevedon and Nailsea strategies, which focus on ways to improve the town centres and how to meet the changing needs of communities.



They look at how key locations such as Queen's Square in Clevedon and the Crown Glass and High Street areas of Nailsea could be shaped in the future.

For Portishead, a new development framework has been prepared which focuses on how the area between the marina, Wyndham Way and High Street might evolve over the next 10 to 15 years, through new homes, jobs and active transport links.

The strategies now provide a springboard to continue developing ideas and delivering these plans.



Photo courtesy of Paul Blakemore





Artist's impression of Nailsea, courtesy of Design West

## Clevedon

Clevedon's vision will build on the town's heritage and identity, encouraging communities to generate local investment, support health and wellbeing and look to tackle climate change.

Opportunities include:

- improvements to Queens Square
- a town centre bus and cycle hub
- improved street scene at Old Church Road between the Curzon Cinema and clock tower
- improved cultural and community facilities at Clevedon Library
- new homes for local people, including genuinely affordable housing.



Artist's impression of Clevedon, courtesy of Design West

## Nailsea

Placemaking activity will contribute to the town's green and contemporary identity, renewing the town centre as a destination.

Opportunities include:

- establishing a Business Improvement District (BID)
- a new and accessible location for Nailsea Library along Colliers Walk
- regeneration of the former college building and current library building
- phased regeneration of Crown Glass Centre
- High Street improvements
- a town centre bus and cycle hub
- new homes for local people including genuinely affordable housing.

## Portishead

A long-term development framework for the area envisages:



- the new Portishead Rail line and station
- new bus, walking and cycling infrastructure
- increased levels of employment including through industrial space, studios and workspace
- new homes, including genuinely affordable housing
- new community infrastructure, including school places and space for doctors, dentists, nurseries and community space
- ideas for expanded leisure.

To read more about the plans for Portishead, visit

[www.wyndhamway.co.uk](http://www.wyndhamway.co.uk)

To read the strategies for Clevedon and Nailsea visit

[www.twotowns.place](http://www.twotowns.place)





# Portishead rail **steams ahead**



Artist's impression of Pill station

## **Progress continues to be made on the long-awaited reopening of the Portishead to Bristol rail line.**

The scheme is set to connect 50,000 residents back into the rail network by providing a regular train service with an estimated journey time of just 23 minutes.

Contractors have now been appointed to get started on detailed design of the line and its new stations at Portishead and Pill, following planning permission granted by the Department for Transport in November last year.

North Somerset Council expects detailed design to be undertaken throughout this year.

When completed, it will send a final business case for the scheme to the government, so they can decide whether to give

the green light to get started with construction.

In the meantime, you might see officers out and about in hi-vis jackets around the local area.

Detailed surveys are being carried out and ecology enabling works in preparation for the main construction to begin in 2024 following business case approval.

The reopened line will provide better connections for Portishead

and Pill and also offer a more sustainable alternative to getting around by car.

It will cut traffic on the A369/M5 and therefore help towards the council's aim of becoming net zero by 2030.



Find out more about Portishead rail and keep updated on the scheme throughout the year at [www.metrowestphase1.org](http://www.metrowestphase1.org)



Stay up-to-date on the Banwell bypass planning application at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/banwellbypass](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/banwellbypass)



# Baytree pupils make their mark



## **Colourful fingerprints and handprints of pupils from Baytree School are decorating steel beams used in the construction of the new school site in Clevedon.**

The school is being expanded to meet growing need, from a single site in Weston-super-Mare that supports 72 children to two sites offering about 120 school places.

Baytree caters to children with profound and complex learning difficulties so it's important that pupils are given inclusive ways to feel a part of the building work.

A number of beams that now make up the steel frame at the Clevedon site were brought into the classroom for pupils to decorate.

Pupils then attended a ceremony to celebrate the completion of the

steel frame and to see progress on the £18m project.

As well as enabling pupils to make their mark on the building, it was also a reminder of the positive impact that the project will have on local families and the SEND community.

Head teacher Ed Bowen-Roberts said: "As a school community, we are so thrilled to see the progress to date.

"All our learners have really enjoyed being a part of the process, especially the interactive workshops, which really helped to bring the build to life."

The new building is tailored to a range of different needs, with adaptations such as integral hoists for children with limited mobility, sensory rooms, facilities across a single storey for those unable to use stairs, and outdoor space.

Though the decorative handprints will be covered up during construction, they will be commemorated in the reception area of the new building when it opens, during the 2023/24 academic year.

Find out more about the expansion at  
[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/baytreeexpansion](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/baytreeexpansion)



# Restoring damaged coastal flood defences

**Storm damaged Victorian sea walls in Clevedon and Weston-super-Mare are being repaired and restored to improve their resilience as flood defences.**

North Somerset Council is investing £400,000 to repair the sea walls and carry out other proactive work.

These sea walls act as barriers against flooding from extreme weather and rising sea levels caused by climate change.

Sea levels are rising by 3mm to 5.2mm a year, more than double the rate of increase in the early part of last century.

There is uncertainty about how quickly this will continue, depending on different carbon emission scenarios.

More extreme weather patterns, with larger storms happening more often, are also predicted, but these are being planned for in shoreline management plans.

North Somerset Council wants the area to be a place where people can live safely and happily, so it is working with the Environment Agency and other partners to develop short-term and long-term plans to cope with current and future flooding hazards.

**The current repair work to the Victorian sea walls has been split into four phases:**

## **Phase 1 – Anchor Head, Weston-super-Mare**

Storm Eunice caused damage to the sea wall in February last year, so an emergency repair was carried out last summer. Traditional techniques and materials were used to repair the wall, including reclaimed stone from the failed section.



BEFORE



AFTER

## **Phase 2 – The Beach, Clevedon**

An emergency repair was needed after a storm in October last year left a hole under the slipway that extended to the base of the sea wall. This work was completed in November.



BEFORE



AFTER

## **Phase 3 – Anchor Head, Weston-super-Mare**

Specialist repair work, which will see contractors abseiling down the sea wall, is planned to take place this spring. This will involve repairing cracks in the wall, as well as replacing mortar and missing stone blocks.

## **Phase 4 – Marine Lake, Clevedon**

Mortar will be replaced, vegetation removed and coping stones repaired in a wall near Marine Lake. This will take place later this year.



# Are you at risk from flooding?

**1 in 4** Properties in North Somerset are at risk of flooding



**2/3** of UK adults haven't checked if their home is at risk in the last 12 months



## North Somerset

is at higher risk of flooding than most of England

## Young people

are less aware of their risk of flooding

## Almost half

of 18-34 year olds wouldn't know what to do if they received a flood warning



Know your risk. Check your post code: [www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk](http://www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk)



Be aware of your own household risk and know what to do if there is a flood warning.

Get more information about flooding in your local area and sign up for flood alerts from the Environment Agency at [www.gov.uk/check-flooding](http://www.gov.uk/check-flooding)

North Somerset's coastal flood defences are a combination of walls (in Clevedon, Pill and Weston-super-Mare), earth embankments (Portishead and Woodspring Bay), and sand dunes (Sand Bay, Uphill and Weston).



As a result of these defences, each year there is only a very low or low risk of coastal flooding.

Check your risk at [www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk](http://www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk)

North Somerset Council is updating its Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, which looks at ways to make our area more flood resilient.

A consultation launched last month to find out what people think about this strategy.

Read more on page 9 and have your say before Thursday 9 April at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/floodriskconsultation](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/floodriskconsultation)

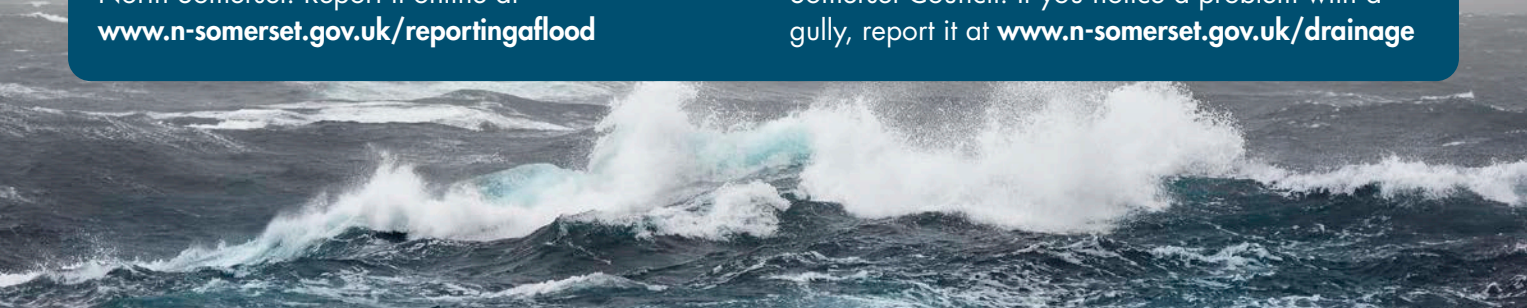
Find out more about at flooding and drainage at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/flooding](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/flooding)

### Report a flood

Informing the council when your home or business has been flooded will help the organisation to better understand where flooding is happening across North Somerset. Report it online at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/reportingaflood](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/reportingaflood)

### Report a road drainage problem

Thousands of gullies on public land and their connections to the drainage system along roads are maintained by North Somerset Council. If you notice a problem with a gully, report it at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/drainage](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/drainage)



# Flexible and fulfilling work as personal assistants

**Job hunters who are searching for fulfilling yet flexible work could find their perfect role as personal assistants in the care sector.**

Personal assistants support a person in their own homes as well as in the community, helping them to live their life as independently as possible.

This might mean helping them with personal care, learning new skills, regaining independence or getting out and about and enjoying life.

Personal assistants can be employed directly by the person receiving the care, or self-employed.

The role offers flexibility so you can work the hours to suit you, fitting in with other commitments.

North Somerset-based personal assistant Annie is self-employed with a young family.

She said: "Being self-employed means I can work when it suits me, during school hours and some evenings.

*"I can still take my children to school and pick them up, which is important to me."*

*"It's rewarding work and I've built relationships with the people I support."*

Anyone can be a personal assistant and you do not always need previous experience.

The important thing is to enjoy helping people to live the life they want in the way they choose.



If you're interested in becoming a personal assistant, or already are one and would like to join North Somerset Council's register, email [jennifer.monks@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:jennifer.monks@n-somerset.gov.uk) or search 'personal assistants' at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/onlineirectory](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/onlineirectory)

Find out more about being a personal assistant at [www.skillsforcare.org.uk](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk) or find other job opportunities in care at [www.beproudtocare.co.uk](http://www.beproudtocare.co.uk)





# North Somerset Life

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

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

For advertising and sponsorship opportunities contact  
**tim.brown@n-somerset.gov.uk**

The next edition will be delivered in **Summer 2023**.

Your copy should be delivered with your post unless you use Royal Mail's opt-out service to block unaddressed mail.

View back issues at  
**www.northsomersetlife.co.uk**



Get the  
**latest news  
straight into  
your inbox**



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



Subscribe online and stay informed at  
**www.northsomersetlife.co.uk**



## Contacts

### Call us

If you would like help to access additional information about any of the subjects covered in this magazine, call the contact centre on **01934 888 888** (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm). This is an automated service so you'll need to ask for the service you are looking for.

Direct numbers for other popular services:

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

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

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





## Tide times

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

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

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




Walks in the area are available to view and download at **www.northsomersetlife.co.uk**



# REMEMBER TO

1- Register to vote

2- Check my  
photo ID

3- Vote at a  
polling station!

No ID? You can apply for free voter ID

Find out more at

[electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID](https://electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID)

or call 0800 328 0280

