

# NORTH SOMERSET LIFE

Winter 2023



Welcome to  
**North  
Somerset**

Keep warm and  
well this winter



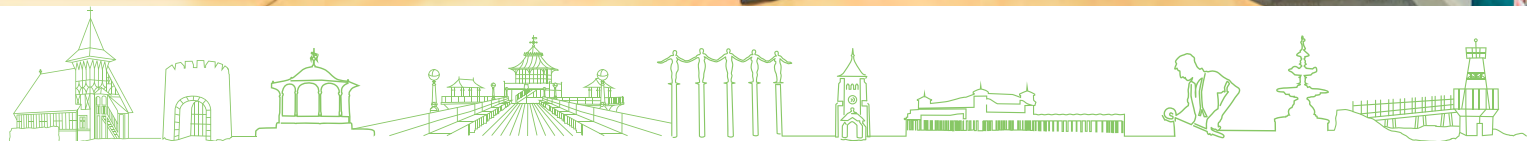
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Open, fairer, greener



# Dear Reader

In the last few months, there has been a lot of media coverage on the financial pressures facing local services. There have been some councils around the country that have effectively been found bankrupt and unable to pay their bills. North Somerset is not in that territory. Despite how it might feel when you receive your annual council tax bill, for many years we have been a low spending, low taxing council. Our council tax bills are among the lowest in the country and our spending per head of population is very low, reflecting our commitment to working as efficiently and effectively as we can. We don't get everything right, of course, but we do try.

However, like every council in the country, the effects of inflation, the National Living Wage, energy costs and ongoing increasing demand for services are all adding millions in extra costs just to keep services standing still. Our ability to mitigate these stark pressures is being continuously hampered by single-year funding settlements from government, one-off grants tied to

specific projects – that we are not allowed to spend on other things - and uncertainty due to repeated delays to funding reforms.

The Government needs to come up with a long-term plan to fund local services sufficiently. This must include greater financial certainty for councils through multi-year funding and more clarity on reforms so we can plan effectively, balance competing pressures across different service areas and maximise the impact of our spending.

Over the last few weeks, together with my councillor colleagues, I have been out and about across North Somerset listening to residents about your priorities. We've spoken to hundreds of people and heard from even more through our engagement survey.

We've got an enormous financial challenge facing us with savings of £50m needed to balance the books over the next four years. We are determined to do our best to protect the services that matter most to you as we navigate this challenge.

In this latest edition of *Life*, we've got several important updates for residents, including on the continued local support available with the cost of living, the vital role of our fostering services in supporting children and young people and a helpful reminder about winter waste and recycling services.

**Cllr Mike Bell**

**The Executive**

**Cllr Mike Bell, Leader of North Somerset Council**

**Cllr Catherine Gibbons, Deputy Leader**

**Cllr Mark Canniford**

**Cllr James Clayton**

**Cllr Jenna Ho Marris**

**Cllr Mike Solomon**

**Cllr Annemieke Waite**

**Cllr Roger Whitfield**

**Cllr Hannah Young**

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

This publication is available in large print, Braille or audio formats on request. Help is also available for people who require council information in languages other than English.

# What to do with recycling and waste in severe weather

**Icy conditions or snow-covered roads might impact recycling and waste collections this winter.**

**If severe weather hits our area and collections are disrupted, here's the advice to follow:**

## General waste

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

## Food caddy and recycling boxes

Put these out on your normal day. If not collected by 7pm, take them in and put them out again the following week on your normal day.

## Garden waste

Put out on your usual day. If not emptied, take back in and put out again the following month on your scheduled day.

Over the Christmas period, collection dates will vary slightly to allow for the bank holidays.

Updated calendars with the revised festive dates are available from [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/calendars](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/calendars).

Also look on social media for updates.


## How you can help:


- put bins and containers out by 6.30am on your collection day.
- please wash, squash and sort your recycling
- remove all packaging from inside large cardboard boxes and flatten and break up the cardboard to the size of your recycling box
- extra general waste that doesn't fit in your black bin won't be

collected and should be taken to a recycling centre or stored until your next collection

- help neighbours who may have difficulties
- if collections are missed from a whole street, you can check the missed roads report on the council's website to see if the issue is already known. Visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/missedcollection](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/missedcollection)

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

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

 [ns\\_recycling](https://twitter.com/ns_recycling)

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

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

Find out more about how to reduce, reuse and recycle waste at Christmas on page 18.

# Clevedon review findings to be announced

**The results of a review into recent changes to The Beach and Hill Road in Clevedon are expected in November.**

The scheme, which intended to improve access in Clevedon for pedestrians and cyclists, has been the subject of an independent review delivering on a commitment made by North Somerset Council in May.

The project was designed to support North Somerset's commitment to providing sustainable travel routes to encourage more cycling and walking as well as reducing car travel.

Some of the changes have received negative feedback from residents and businesses.

The first stage of the scheme focused on the Hill Road area and included widening pavements on the

north side of the road, new crossing points, road resurfacing, new road markings, a one-way system, the contraflow cycle lane and a 20mph limit.

The second stage of works to The Beach provided a new 20mph limit, public realm improvements, new crossing points and a segregated cycle lane, forming the start and end point of the Pier to Pier Way.





## Ten new projects to improve bus services

**Proposals for 10 new projects have been announced to create sustainable bus networks across the region.**

The schemes aim to reduce bus delays and increase reliability of services along key routes in North Somerset where buses are regularly delayed.

The work will be undertaken as part of the government-funded Bus Service Improvement Plan, which aims to create a sustainable bus network across the region.

The proposed areas are:

- A38 (Churchill Junction and Lime Kiln roundabout)

- A370 and Weston-super-Mare (Backwell, A370/B3440 slip road, Bristol Road/Walford Avenue/Queensway Worle, Worle High Street)
- A369 (Rownham Hill)
- Clevedon (B3133 Southern Way/Central Way roundabout, Ettlingen Way roundabout, Tickenham Road/Northern Way roundabout).

Early engagement with local people is now taking place to create plans for these 10 areas.

The infrastructure schemes will focus on saving journey minutes from each individual scheme,

with a knock-on effect of time savings across the network, which will reduce long-term bus service operating costs.

The aim is to create long-term, self-sustaining bus services that will be commercially viable in the future.

The Bus Service Improvement Plan is the council's major investment programme, run in partnership with the West of England Combined Authority.

Find out more and get involved in the engagement at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/bsip](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/bsip)

After the May local elections, the new partnership administration of North Somerset Council committed to engage openly with the public through the review. Two public meetings were held in Clevedon as part of the process.

The review, which was conducted by transport specialists AECOM, also sought feedback from local councillors, residents, businesses, voluntary organisations and other stakeholders.

The review will make high level recommendations on the scheme and suggestions on any improvements or changes that should be considered.

Councillors have committed to making the decisions about the outcomes of the review in a public forum.

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





## New recycling trial to help sorting

**A campaign is launching early next year to encourage and support more residents to separate their recycling by material type.**

Well sorted recycling boxes help speed up collections, improve the quality of kerbside recycling and help tackle the climate emergency.

Six thousand properties across North Somerset will take part in a trial, using an additional bag for recycling plastics and cans.

The trial will see whether an extra container will help reduce non-recyclable black bin waste, as well

as whether it makes it easier for residents to separate recycling by material groups.

North Somerset currently has an excellent track record for recycling but the council is working with North Somerset Environment Company, the arm's length organisation supplying recycling and waste services, to improve it even further.

In May, the Quatro system was trialled, which uses larger bins with four compartments, three wheels and a lid, picked up by a specialist collection vehicle.

Participants responded very positively overall and feedback showed that the trial bin made it easier for them to sort their recycling and waste.

A full operational and financial analysis is now being carried out and, depending on results, the council will decide whether to proceed with a more in-depth second Quatro trial.

The properties selected for the upcoming sorting trial will be contacted directly in the coming months with more information.

## Home energy grants available

**Low-income households in North Somerset without gas central heating can still apply for funding to install energy-saving, low carbon heating measures in their homes.**

North Somerset Council has partnered with Bath and North East Somerset Council and Bristol City Council on Bright Green Homes project, administered by Bristol City Leap.

A wide range of insulation and low-carbon technologies can be funded.

To qualify you must meet these criteria:

- your property must not use gas central heating – this is only open to people who use oil, wood, LPG or electric heating systems
- have a combined annual household income of £31,000 or lower

- live in North Somerset.

Complete the online questionnaire at [www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/56OGQZ](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/56OGQZ).

If you have any questions email [domestic@bristolcityleap.co.uk](mailto:domestic@bristolcityleap.co.uk), visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/BGH](https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/BGH) or call 0117 352 1180.

Together with the other councils, North Somerset Council successfully bid for £11m government funding to help local households install technologies which reduce carbon emissions and lower energy costs.



## Time to apply for primary school places

**If your child is due to start primary school next year, or transfer from infant to junior, now is the time to apply.**



All children born between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2020 can start school in September 2024.

Applications must be made by **Monday 15 January**.

Up to three preferences can be submitted. Please put three, including your local school.

Make sure you submit your application before the deadline to avoid risking missing out on a preferred place.

Find out more and apply at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/admissions](https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/admissions).



## Pier to Pier Way to open in the spring

**A long-awaited cycling and walking route between Weston-super-Mare and Clevedon will open in the spring.**

The Pier to Pier Way is a new 13-mile route designed to appeal to commuters, leisure users and tourists.

It features quiet roads and new or improved traffic-free sections and is a 'missing link' and the central section of the North Somerset Coastal Towns Cycle Route.

The new route, which has been funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, Sustrans, National Highways and North Somerset Council, includes several areas of improvement at Tutshill Sluice, Marshalls Field and Clevedon seafront.

The opening of the route has been delayed after works had to be paused at Tutshill Sluice

due to further discussions with landowners regarding access arrangements.

A new farm track will separate the existing farm use from the public path and this must be completed before work on the main path can be finished.

The bridges and cycle route will still be used as an agricultural track until the new bridge is fully connected by the new track.

North Somerset Council has now received tender submissions and selected a contractor for the farm track and a start date has been agreed.

Once the track is finished, work to complete the public path can be finalised.

The route will open in the spring with an official launch and ride.

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

## New on-street car-sharing club launches



**A new pay-as-you-go car rental scheme has launched in Weston-super-Mare.**

The hybrid petrol car is operated by CoWheels, one of the largest car club operators in the UK, and is parked on Birnbeck Road near the seafront.

To celebrate the launch, CoWheels is offering Weston residents free membership to the club plus £15 driver credit.

Car clubs offer residents a convenient alternative to private vehicle ownership, particularly in locations where parking is limited.

This new location is in addition to two other car clubs in North Somerset.

These are operated by Enterprise and can be found at Enterprise Rent-A-Car, in Winterstoke Road, Weston-super-Mare, and the Marina Gardens development, in Martingale Way, Portishead.

It's hoped that car clubs will become a more common sight across North Somerset.

Find out more at [www.co-wheels.org.uk/weston-super-mare](http://www.co-wheels.org.uk/weston-super-mare)

## Find where your home loses heat

**Find out exactly where your home is losing energy this winter by borrowing a thermal camera.**

Fifteen thermal imaging cameras are available to borrow for free from any North Somerset library, including mobile libraries, for one week.

The cameras use infrared technology to find heat loss spots in the home.

In North Somerset, energy consumption in our homes accounts for 25 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions.

Common reasons include small gaps around doors, windows and exterior outlets like letterboxes, and connections to outside such as plumbing fixtures.

Visit your local library or find out more at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/thermalcamera](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/thermalcamera)





## Knife Angel coming to North Somerset

**An iconic statue created from more than 100,000 knives and blades is coming to North Somerset next spring.**

Knife Angel was designed as a national monument against violence and aggression and is formed out of knives and blades confiscated by the UK's 43 police forces.

The 27-foot statue will be on display in the Italian Gardens, in Weston-super-Mare, throughout May as part of a nationwide tour, following a successful bid from the North Somerset Violence Reduction Unit.

Organisations and community groups will also curate a month-long programme of activities, all themed on violent crime, during its stay.

A knife amnesty will also take place that month, with anyone able to dispose of blades with no questions asked and no fear of reprisals.



## Free Carbon Literacy training for all

**Do you need inspiration to kickstart your journey to net zero?**

To mark global Carbon Literacy Action Day on Monday 4 December, North Somerset Council is hosting a free training day for local people and businesses.

Carbon Literacy training, which usually costs £125 per person, will help you understand the implications of climate change, how to save energy costs, and inspire you to make changes at home and work.

There will be a line-up of industry-specific guest speakers at the event, held at the Winter Gardens in Weston-super-Mare.

North Somerset Council remains committed to tackling the climate emergency and is continuing to work towards becoming a carbon neutral area by 2030, despite the recent rollback in the UK government's Net Zero goals.

Register your interest in the free event at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/carbonliteracy](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/carbonliteracy)

The training has been funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Find out more at [www.innorthsomerset.co.uk/ukspf](http://www.innorthsomerset.co.uk/ukspf)

## Contacting the council if you don't have internet access



**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. Ask for the service you want and you'll be put through.

Lines are open 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday (Care Connect line open 8am-6pm, Monday to Friday).

If you can go online to access council services, please do so. 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.

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

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



# Consultation continues on new plan and budget for North Somerset

Have your say on what the priorities should be for North Somerset Council over the next four years.

During September and October, the first stage of engagement took place about the over-arching strategic plan and budget which will drive council priorities over the coming years.

Hundreds of people took the opportunity to get involved in this extensive period of engagement, at in-person events and online.

Survey results have been collated and all responses and feedback will help inform the development of the draft corporate plan and budget.

Formal consultation on the draft plan and budget will be launching in November so there is another chance to have your say if you haven't already.

This will include face-to-face sessions which anyone can attend, an online survey, meetings with representative community organisations such as town and parish councils and community groups, and a North Somerset Live event on social media.

Face-to-face sessions are planned throughout North Somerset. There is no need to book, please just turn up:

- Hangstones Pavillion, Yatton  
Mon 27 November 6.30-7.30pm
- Tithe Barn, Nailsea  
Fri 1 December 6.30-7.30pm
- Castlewood, Clevedon  
Mon 4 December 6.30-7.30pm
- Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare  
Wed 6 December 6.30-7.30pm.
- Folk Hall, Portishead: Wed  
13 December 6.30pm to 7.30pm

For up-to-date information follow North Somerset Council on social media, or ask at your local library.

**f NorthSomersetCouncil**  
**ⓧ NorthSomersetC**



## Other ways to have you 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)





# Continued financial support this winter

Winter will soon be here and many people are still facing painful choices as cost-of-living pressures continue.

Although typical annual energy bills will fall slightly over the coming months, the price is still higher than recent years and vulnerable households will still need protecting.

Added to this, inflation and interest rates remain high, which is affecting food prices, rents and mortgage rates.

North Somerset Council wants its residents to feel warm, safe and well this winter.

Last year it set up a multi-agency taskforce with key partners to help and support residents during these financially challenging times, and this work is still on-going.

In September, the council put its name to an open letter to the Prime Minister, along with a group

of consumer organisations and charities, to ask for urgent action to introduce a social tariff for energy.

This is something that is desperately needed by low-income households as winter approaches and temperatures drop, to avoid finding themselves in fuel poverty.

If you need support to cover the cost of essentials this winter, contact the council or an agency listed here.





## Welcoming places to stay warm

Community living rooms will once again open across North Somerset this winter.

Last winter, community living rooms were set up in local buildings, libraries, places of worship and sports centres, as welcoming places where people could meet others, access information about support available, enjoy a hot drink and stay warm.

The initiative is running again this year and more information, along with a map of locations, will be available at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/communitylivingrooms](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/communitylivingrooms)



## Where to go for help

For a round-up of advice and guidance visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/col](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/col) or search #NorthSomersetTogether on social media.

If you're struggling, Citizens Advice Bureau North Somerset can help. It has an advice shop in the Sovereign, Weston-super-Mare, and runs outreach sessions across North Somerset. For more information visit [www.nscab.org.uk/get-advice](http://www.nscab.org.uk/get-advice) or call 0808 278 7973.

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) or pick up a copy at your local library.

Age UK Somerset provides information and advice to older people, their families and carers. Visit [www.ageuk.org.uk/somerset](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/somerset),

email [infoandadvice@ageuksomerset.org.uk](mailto:infoandadvice@ageuksomerset.org.uk) or call 01823 345 610.

Christians Against Poverty gives debt advice and on-going support if you have a debt problem or are in financial difficulty. Visit [www.capuk.org](http://www.capuk.org) or call 0800 328 0006.

If you need help to start a new claim for Universal Credit, contact the Help to Claim team on 0800 144 8444.

If 'breathing space' to sort out your debts would help, visit [www.nationaldebtline.org](http://www.nationaldebtline.org)

Short-term financial help in an emergency might be available through the council's Welfare Provision Scheme.



In the last year, the council has more than doubled its welfare support budgets and supported significantly more vulnerable residents with financial support, food vouchers, energy and goods.

For more information and to apply visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wps](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wps)



# Help for households

Soaring food and energy prices have been a worry for many people over the last year but support is still available for households across North Somerset.

North Somerset Council wants to do all it can to help residents with energy, food, water, transport and housing bills.

Here is a round-up of what you may be entitled to...



## Housing

We all need a safe roof over our heads but rising costs are making this more difficult for people.

As the Bank of England base rate has risen, so have mortgage interest rates and rents, putting more people under extra strain.

If you're on a low income you may be eligible for housing benefit, a council tax reduction or a discretionary housing payment. Visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/benefits-and-support](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/benefits-and-support)



Also visit [www.entitledto.co.uk](http://www.entitledto.co.uk) to see if you're entitled to any additional benefits.

To help local people this financial year, North Somerset Council gave an extra £25 discount from the 2023/24 council tax bill to the 8,300 households who receive council tax support, along with 1,000 people who receive housing benefit.

A further 3,000 households who have children receiving free school meals but don't receive council tax support automatically got a discount of £22.16.

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)

## Food

Food prices remain high and the weekly shop might be a worry, especially with Christmas around the corner.

If you're struggling to get food, local support is available.

A list of food banks, community larders, lunch clubs and pantries in the area is available on the council's website, at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/foodsupport](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/foodsupport)

Links to local community fridges with discounted food, as well as tips to save money with your shopping, can also be found on the Better Health North Somerset website, at [www.betterhealthns.co.uk/information/food-support](http://www.betterhealthns.co.uk/information/food-support)

Vouchers are needed to access food banks. These can be obtained from the Citizens Advice Bureau, North Somerset Council, or your GP.

Also contact the Hardship Helpline at [www.trusselltrust.org/get-help](http://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help) or call 0808 208 2138 (9am-5pm, Monday-Friday).







## Children and young people

More than 5,200 children and young people in North Somerset – about one in five – receive free school meals.

To help these families, free activity clubs run across the area during school holidays.

As well as a free hot meal or packed lunch, activities include arts, crafts, dance, football, sports, forest school or day trips.

To date, the council has provided 9,200 sessions at 24 different centres as part of this Holiday, Activities and Food programme (HAF), funded by the government.

All eligible children and young people are also being issued with two £60 food vouchers across the 2023/24 financial year. The first was in June and the second will be in November.

Find out more about the HAF programme – and check if your child is eligible – at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/haf](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/haf)

## Energy

Free advice on energy, money, benefits and carrying out home repairs is available to all residents in North Somerset.

The WHAM (Warmer Homes, Advice and Money) programme, run by the Centre for Sustainable Energy, has a team of advisers who can offer free advice on staying warmer and healthier in your home.

This might include how to monitor, check and pay for energy bills; help with budgeting and debt advice; managing energy use and cutting bills; and accessing grants for heating repairs and upgrades.

Helpful leaflets about energy saving and fuel poverty are also on the CSE website.

Visit [www.cse.org.uk](http://www.cse.org.uk), email [home.energy@cse.org.uk](mailto:home.energy@cse.org.uk) or call the free advice line for impartial advice on 0800 082 2234 (10am-4pm, Monday-Friday).

The advice line is part funded through North Somerset Council's allocation of the government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

Low-income families, including those on pension credit, may also be entitled to the Warm Home Discount Scheme to help with energy bills. Visit [www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme](http://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme)

## Short-term financial support

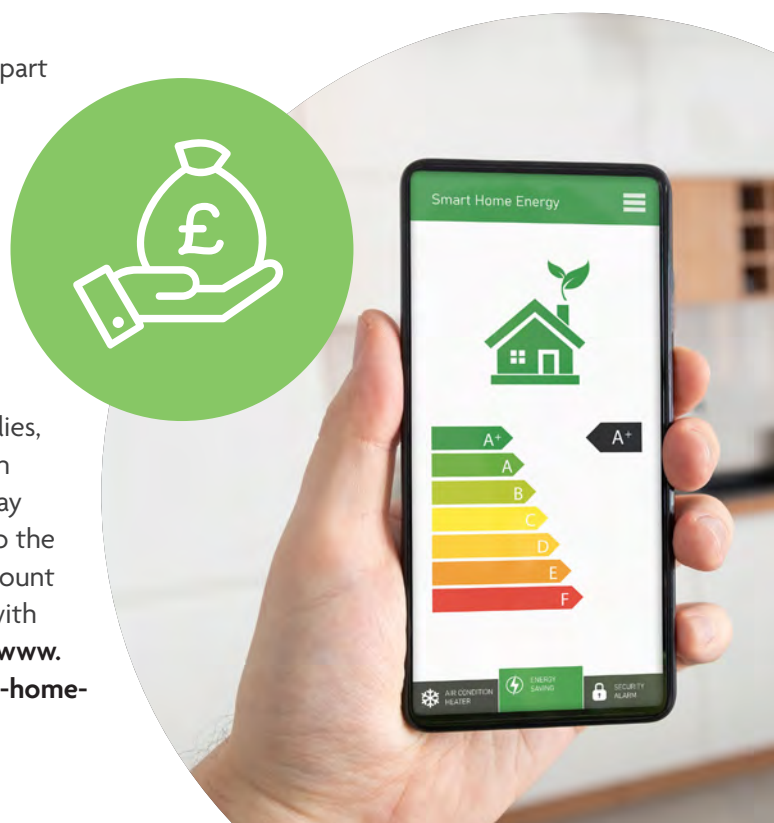
Do you need short-term financial help in an emergency?

Earlier this year North Somerset Council was given a further £2.6m from the government's Household Support Fund, on top of the £4m it had received in previous years, to support those most in need in the area.

The money is being spent on the most vulnerable residents, including families with children, pensioners, care leavers, children eligible for free school meals, as well as those 'just about managing'.

If you need financial support through the Welfare Provision Scheme visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wps](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wps)

The amount of help you get will depend on individual circumstances.





**GET ON BOARD**  **FOR FREE BUS TRAVEL IN YOUR BIRTHDAY MONTH**

Apply for your **FREE BIRTHDAY BUS PASS**, valid across buses in the West of England for the whole of your birthday month.

[www.birthdaybus.co.uk](http://www.birthdaybus.co.uk) Terms and conditions apply

Funded by UK Government Part of the funding provided by the West of England Combined Authority North Somerset Council DAN MORRIS West of England METRO MAYOR travelwest



North Somerset businesses, including Noah's Ark Zoo Farm and Mendip Activity Centre, are backing the free birthday bus campaign.

# Free birthday bus travel

Travel across North Somerset and the West of England Combined Authority areas by bus for free during the whole month of your birthday.

Take this opportunity to hop on the bus as many times as you like during your birthday month, whether it's for your regular commute, to go to the shops, a restaurant, or to spend your weekend exploring our beautiful area.

The innovative birthday bus offer aims to help local people during continued cost-of-living pressures, as well as being a catalyst for bus use and encouraging a long-term shift in travel behaviour.

All the main bus companies – including First and Stagecoach – are part of this initiative, along with the region's WESTlink bookable minibuses.



The offer started in August and will run until the end of July next year.

To apply for a pass just fill in your details online and upload proof of age (such as a picture of your passport, birth certificate or driving licence) and a digital photo.

Your pass will then be made and posted to you.

The scheme is part of a joint investment plan by North Somerset Council and the West of England Combined Authority to encourage more people to use buses.

The organisations have jointly received more than £105m from the Department for Transport to make bus travel faster, more convenient, co-ordinated and better for the environment and your pocket than running a car.

Currently, fewer than one-in-10 regional commutes are made on public transport and the economic impact of congestion costs the West of England £300m a year.

Data collected during the birthday bus offer year will help build a better understanding of how the scheme affected passenger growth and the wider demand for public transport.

To sign up for a free birthday bus pass and for more information visit [www.birthdaybus.co.uk](http://www.birthdaybus.co.uk)



For help or technical support, or if you'd like a paper application form, email [birthdaybus@talktosam.co.uk](mailto:birthdaybus@talktosam.co.uk)

Paper applications can be posted to the technical support team. Just put 'Freepost SWSAL' on an envelope, no postage payment required.

Free internet access is available in all North Somerset libraries if you can't get online at home.

To speak to someone, or if you have problems with your card, call **0300 300 0032**.



# Keep warm and well over winter

**Keeping warm and well over winter is important for everyone but some people are more vulnerable to cold weather than others.**

Staying warm can help prevent infections and other serious health problems such as heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression.

If you're 65 or over, or in an at-risk group, it's particularly important to get medical help as soon as you feel unwell during winter.

Take advice from a pharmacy, GP or the NHS 111 service. In an emergency, go to A&E immediately or call 999.

Also heat your home to a temperature that's comfortable for you, which, if you can, should be at least 18°C in rooms you use regularly.

Make sure you also get all the grants and benefits you're entitled to.

Advice on making your home more energy efficient or help with bills is available from

[www.cse.org.uk/my-home](http://www.cse.org.uk/my-home)



## Get active this winter

Winter can be a challenging time to be active, with cold, wet conditions and fewer daylight hours.

However, keeping active will put you in a better place both physically and mentally.

Getting outside will help increase vitamin D levels, which will boost your immune function and help fight winter viruses.

It will also promote better sleep, which will improve your mood and reduce the chance of experiencing winter blues.

### Here are some ideas:

- **ParkPlay** – 90 minutes of free community play for all ages, every Saturday. In Weston-super-Mare, sessions take place from 9.30am at Castle Batch, Worle; from 10am at Coniston Green; and from noon at Ellenborough Park West. In Clevedon, it takes place from 10.30am at Cherry Avenue. Visit [www.betterhealthns.co.uk/information/parkplay](http://www.betterhealthns.co.uk/information/parkplay)
- **Parkrun** – a free 5km event every Saturday, from 9am at Marine Parade, Weston-super-Mare, and Salhouse Fields, Clevedon. Junior parkrun (for four to 14-year-olds) on Sundays at 9am in Clevedon (seafront bandstand), Weston-super-Mare (Walford Avenue) and Yatton (Hangstones Pavilion). Visit [www.parkrun.org.uk/events](http://www.parkrun.org.uk/events)



- **Health walks** – take place weekly in Clevedon, Long Ashton, Nailsea, Portishead, Weston-super-Mare, Winscombe and Yatton. Visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/healthwalks](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/healthwalks)

For a wide range of indoor activities visit [www.betterhealthns.co.uk/information/active-directory](http://www.betterhealthns.co.uk/information/active-directory)

A free 12-week activity programme recently launched for adults living with a long-term health condition. Steps to Get Active takes place at Hutton Moor Leisure Centre in Weston-super-Mare.

For information about any of these schemes visit [www.betterhealthns.co.uk/get-active](http://www.betterhealthns.co.uk/get-active) or email [getactive@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:getactive@n-somerset.gov.uk)



# Are you ready for winter?

Now is the time to make sure you're prepared for the winter months ahead.

North Somerset Council keeps essential services going during severe weather but there are also things you can do to keep yourself and loved ones safe.

## Stay informed

Any emergency closures to council services will be listed at

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

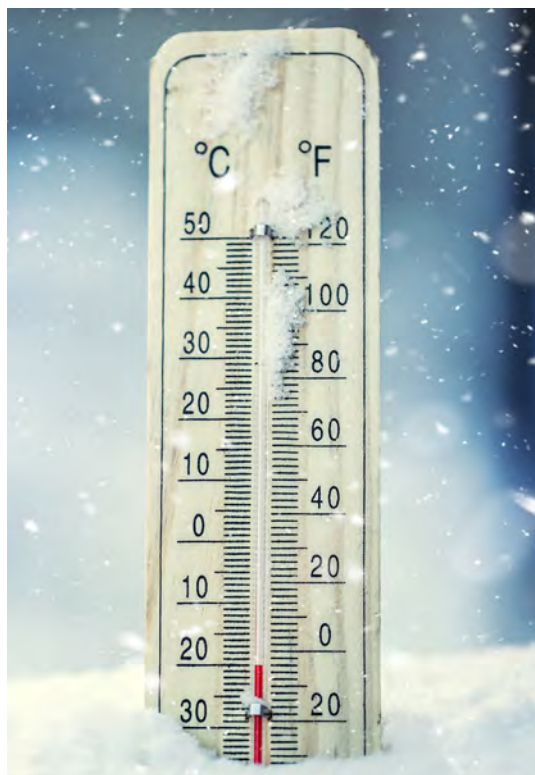
Alerts for extreme weather, such as snow, rain and more recently heat, are sent out from the Met Office. Find out more at

[www.metoffice.gov.uk/weatherready](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weatherready)

Sign up for flood alerts from the Environment Agency at

[www.gov.uk/check-flooding](http://www.gov.uk/check-flooding)

Earlier this year the government launched an emergency alert system which will warn you if there is a danger to life nearby. Find out more at [www.gov.uk/alerts](http://www.gov.uk/alerts)



## Are you a priority?

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

Energy suppliers and utility companies keep a register of more vulnerable customers who need to be given priority in the event of a loss of service.

This means you'll get advance notice of planned power cuts and priority service in an emergency.

It's free to join but you must be eligible. For instance, you might need medical equipment which requires a power supply, have poor or no sense of smell, or would struggle to answer

the door or get help in an emergency.

You might still be able to register for other reasons, such as needing short-term support after a stay in hospital.

Each company compiles their own list so you'll need to contact your individual utility suppliers to register with each one.

For more information visit [www.ofgem.gov.uk/getting-extra-help-priority-services-register](http://www.ofgem.gov.uk/getting-extra-help-priority-services-register)



# Getting around

**Travel around North Somerset and beyond safely this winter.**




**Driving** – many garages offer free ‘winter checks’ for cars. Also check fluid levels, that bulbs are in good working order, wipers work effectively, and that tyres have decent tread and pressure. During snowfall consider if your journey is essential – do not travel unless you need to and have breakdown cover in place. If you do drive, stick to main roads if possible and carry essential items, such as bottled water, food, a warm blanket and phone charger. Find out which roads in North Somerset are gritted at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/winterroads](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/winterroads)

**Public transport** – live timetables and suggested public transport services can be found at [www.travelwest.info](http://www.travelwest.info)

**Schools** – schools and colleges make their own decisions about reducing opening hours or closing during bad weather. Check the school’s website or social media accounts for updates.

School transport is usually run by independent operators so if a school remains open, the operator will decide whether buses can run safely. Any disruptions to home to school transport will be announced on the council’s website at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/hometoschooltransport](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/hometoschooltransport)

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

-  **NStravelandroads**
-  **NSpublictransport**
-  **NStravel\_roads**

## Festive council opening hours



Council buildings usually change their opening hours during the festive period. Before heading out, check [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/festive](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/festive)

For many people, going online remains the quickest and easiest way of accessing council services. Report it, request or pay for it at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/connect](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/connect)

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

If you have an enquiry about a council service, call **01934 888 888** first. This is an automated service so ask for the service you want and you will be put through to the right department.

If you can’t call or use digital services, face-to-face support can be accessed at libraries. Find details of your local library at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/libraries).

Opening hours vary at leisure centres over Christmas. Find contact details for your local one at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/leisurecentres](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/leisurecentres).

## Could you help to clear snow?

Volunteer snow wardens across North Somerset help clear essential routes in their local community during severe weather – could you join them?

To join the scheme, you just need to register and complete a short online learning module.

You’ll then be issued with a snow shovel, hi-vis vest, gloves and ID badge and be introduced to any existing volunteers in your area.

Find out more on the Voluntary Action North Somerset website at [www.vansweb.org.uk](http://www.vansweb.org.uk), click on the ‘our projects’ tab, and then Community Resilience North Somerset. Or call 01934 416 486.



# Reducing festive food w

**More food waste is created at Christmas than at any other time of year.**



**Last year in North Somerset, an extra 47 tonnes of food waste was collected in the week following Christmas Day compared with a normal week.**

Whether its mince pies, turkey and trimmings or platters of cheese and biscuits, it wouldn't be Christmas without all the food.

However, it's important to make the most of what we buy, especially as cost-of-living pressures continue.

Reducing food waste can help save you money so here are some top tips:

- use food from your freezer in the run-up to the festive period so you have plenty of space for leftovers
- reduce the amount of food you buy in the first place by checking your cupboards, fridge and freezer before shopping
- plan what you'll eat each day, allocating any days for leftovers, going away or eating out

- write a shopping list and stick to it so you only buy what you need
- store food in the right place so it lasts for longer, keeping an eye on date labels, and have an 'eat me first' shelf
- make fantastic recipes from leftovers, such as turkey curry, or ham, leek and cranberry pie. Find ideas and recipes at [www.lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com)
- recycle what you can't eat, such as turkey bones, solid fat, fruit and veg peelings and plate scrapings.

## Festive collection dates

Recycling and waste collection dates change over the festive period to allow for bank holidays.

Calendars for these revised dates are available to download from the council website from November.

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

Garden waste subscribers will also see their collections become monthly in December, January and February.

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

## Collecting Christmas recycling

**An additional 202 tonnes of recycling was collected in North Somerset last year in the week following Christmas Day.**

With so much recycling, now is the best time to start sorting your boxes if you don't already.

A well-sorted box helps speed up collections and gives crews a better chance of getting round all households.

If you have large amounts, group materials together and put out a little each week.

Other tips include:

- place any extra recycling out for collection as single materials in separate loosely-tied bags, or in another box
- a small amount of extra cardboard will be collected if it's flattened and broken down to the size of your recycling box and placed next to your box
- remove all polystyrene packaging and as much sticky tape as possible



## Waste



## Real Christmas trees

If you're buying a real tree this year, it's useful to know what to do with it afterwards.

North Somerset Council collects real Christmas trees (up to two metres high and minus the pot and decorations) from properties signed up to the garden waste service.

Put it out next to your garden waste bin on your first garden waste collection in January.

Trees can also be taken to any of the three recycling centres in North Somerset, at Weston-super-Mare, Backwell and Portishead.

In January this year, more than 2,700 real trees were donated to St Peter's Hospice in Long Ashton and Weston-super-Mare Rotary Club for Weston Hospicecare, raising £38,912 for charity.

Noah's Ark Zoo, in Wraxall, repurposed 3,000 trees - three times the donations it received in the first year of the scheme.

The trees are used to enhance animal habitat and provide enrichment for the zoo grounds. Follow on social media for updates on this year's charity schemes.

 NSrecyclingandwaste

 ns\_recycling



- for crew safety, put all glass in your recycling box and make sure it's visible.

Extra recycling can also be taken to your nearest recycling centre. Visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/recyclingcentres](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/recyclingcentres)



## Chose sustainable alternatives to wrapping paper

**Wrapping paper cannot be put in your recycling box and must be put in your black bin.**

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

Consider an eco-friendly alternative to create a unique gift.

Simply using brown paper and decorating it with stamps or drawings could create a personalised present for a loved one.



## Have a local, low impact Christmas



**Typical households in the UK spend an extra £700 in December preparing for Christmas – but could you reduce this spending and your carbon footprint at the same time?**

An increasing proportion of this extra money is spent with online retailers who ship vast quantities of items manufactured in other countries across the globe to the UK.

Huge amounts of land, raw materials, energy and fuel are needed to produce and transport these items, creating greenhouse gas emissions which drive climate change.

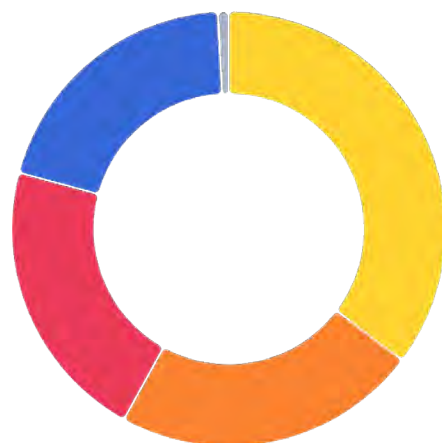
Here in North Somerset, emissions as a result of our consumption of goods and services is far higher than those created by our transport or energy use – accounting for more than a third of the total carbon footprint for households.

There are many ways we can all have a truly enjoyable, more meaningful Christmas, which has less impact on the planet and also saves money.

**16.3 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e\***  
per-household consumption  
footprint (p.a.)

### Emissions breakdown (tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e)

● Consumption of goods and services	5.75
● Food and diet	3.7
● Housing	3.44
● Travel	3.26
● Waste	0.13



\*CO<sub>2</sub>e is “carbon dioxide equivalent”. This represents a number of different gases collectively as one common unit, and is a standard unit of measurement in carbon accounting.





## Buy local this Christmas

**Giving and receiving Christmas presents is a lovely tradition but there is a way to do this which minimises emissions, reduces your carbon footprint and saves money.**

Locally produced items travel a far shorter distance than those bought from large online retailers so the products produce much lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Supporting local, independent businesses also means more of your money stays in the local economy and supports your community.

Find these local businesses in our town centres, at markets, or in local Facebook makers groups.

Also visit the Made in North Somerset website for local businesses and creatives.

Visit [made.innorthsomerset.co.uk](http://made.innorthsomerset.co.uk)

Join the Climate Action North Somerset Facebook group for more ideas and top tips for a more sustainable Christmas:

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



## Cut the carbon footprint of presents

If you're looking for a specific item, try online pre-loved shops such as Vinted, eBay or Depop for second-hand clothing, gifts, decorations or more.

Narrow down your search by filtering by brand, item and size.

If you're doing a 'secret Santa' with friends or work colleagues, suggest that all gifts must be second-hand, making it much easier to find something low cost and fun.

## Buy less

Special experiences rather than 'stuff' can make a unique gift.

Consider vouchers for classes, an activity or day out, or annual memberships for local attractions.

A charitable donation can also be a wonderful gift and spark meaningful conversations, such as planting trees, offsetting greenhouse gas emissions, sponsoring an animal, or a donation to a clean water charity.

Or consider joining forces with other family members to buy one bigger, meaningful gift rather than individual ones.

## The ethical tree of gift purchasing



# Fairs, food and fun this festive time



The holiday season is fast approaching and there are lots of ways to enjoy it here in North Somerset.

Take the opportunity to meet up with friends and family and discover some festive treats on your doorstep.

This is a small selection of events so check local noticeboards and social media for up-to-date listings. Also check with organisers nearer the time to confirm details.



Tuesday 7 November to Sunday 7 January

## **Icescape**

Tropicana, Weston seafront

Get your skates on – the largest outdoor covered ice rink in the country is returning.

[www.icescape-tropicana.co.uk](http://www.icescape-tropicana.co.uk)

Friday 10 November, from 7pm

## **Weston-super-Mare Carnival**

See the dazzling display of illuminated carnival floats.

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

Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 December, 10am-3pm.

## **Christmas Market**

Weston Museum, Burlington Street

Local stallholders, Santa, and children's trail.

[www.westonmuseum.org/events](http://www.westonmuseum.org/events)

Saturday 2 December

## **eat:Weston**

Italian Gardens and Winter Gardens.

[www.eatfestivals.org](http://www.eatfestivals.org)

Sunday 10 December, 2-6pm

## **A Posset Christmas Market**

Portishead High Street

An array of stalls selling gifts, food and drink, and a fun fair.







## See sparkling Christmas lights

- **Clevedon** – Activities and entertainment for all ages will kick-start the festive season in Clevedon on **Thursday 23 November**. The evening of entertainment, in Queens Square, will include a Santa's Grotto, live music, food and market stalls, along with the Christmas lights switch-on.
- **Portishead** – The countdown is on until Portishead's Christmas light switch-on on **Monday 27 November**. Visit the High Street from 6.15pm, with the lights turned on at 6.45pm.
- **Weston-super-Mare** – This year's Christmas lights switch-on event will be an all-day affair, on **Saturday 2 December**. Organised by Weston Town Council and Weston BID, a Christmas edition of the popular eat:Weston food and drink festival will open at 10am in both the Italian Gardens and Winter Gardens. The lights switch-on will then take place at 5pm at the Christmas tree in the Italian Gardens, or under the Sovereign canopy if it's raining. Free parking is available at the Sovereign after 3pm.
- **Nailsea** – No details at time of *Life* going to print. Look on social media for updates or visit [www.nailseatown.com/whats-on](http://www.nailseatown.com/whats-on)

# Visit a local market

Locally produced items can make unique Christmas gifts and help support the people who live and work here in North Somerset.

Lots of markets are taking place over the coming weeks so pop along to support these independent traders and small businesses.

Monday 13 November  
**Cricket Club Christmas Market**  
Weston-super-Mare

Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 November  
**Mendip Christmas Fair**  
Aldwick Court Farm, Redhill

Friday 24 November  
**Christmas Market Shopping Night**  
Tropicana, Weston

Saturday 25 November  
**Dowlais Farm Christmas Fair**  
Clevedon

Saturday 2 December  
**Vintage Christmas Market**  
St Paul's Church, Walliscote Road, Weston

**Bleadon Christmas Market**  
Bleadon Village Green

**Portishead Christmas Market**  
Somerset Hall

**Traditional Christmas Fair**  
Hutton Village Hall



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

[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)

Or catch up with the latest events on social media:

@discovclevedon  
 @visitportishead  
 @westonseafont  
 @theatreorchard  
 @superwestonmare  
 @superculturewsm





# Dramatic views from Dolebury Warren

Hike up to the top of Dolebury Warren for spectacular views across North Somerset, from the site of an imposing Iron Age hill fort built more than 2,500 years ago.

**Dolebury Warren is a wonderful place to walk at any time of the year, with views from the top on a clear day across the Mendip Hills and towards Wales.**

It is a Site of Special Scientific Interest for its grassland, heathland and scrub, which support a great variety of wildlife.

An Iron Age hill fort was built about 500BC and the ramparts can still be seen clearly. It is a Scheduled Monument because of its long history.

From the car park at Dolebury Bottom, go through the wooden gate and join the wide, rocky path into the woodland. It can get very muddy in parts so wear suitable footwear.

Keep following the main, wide path through the trees).

At a fork in the path, next to the Rowberrow Warren sign, take the left-hand path (following the light blue waymarker).

It becomes a narrow path here through the trees and shrubbery.

Continue ahead at the next junction.

At the wide t-junction, with the field visible ahead of you through the trees, turn left.

Shortly on your left-hand side is the entrance to Dolebury Warren, through one of six newly installed kissing gates. Follow the wide, grassy path ahead of you.







## Walk information

**Distance:** about 2.8 miles

**Difficulty:** medium/hard – rocky, uneven paths which can get very muddy in wet weather. Wear suitable footwear.

Wide/accessible kissing gates have been installed at the top of Dolebury Warren this year and are suitable for all-terrain off-road mobility vehicles. These gates are on the gentler slopes leading up to the ancient settlement, meaning people in countryside scooters (known as Trampers) can access the site.

The first section of this route, along the bridleway/rocky path, should be accessible to these vehicles but please look carefully at the photos to check the terrain before heading out. The full circular route isn't available for Trampers as there is a smaller wooden gate at the end, so you'll need to retrace your journey from the top of Dolebury Warren.

**Estimated time:** about two hours

**Map:** OS Explorer 141

For a definitive map showing all public rights of way in North Somerset visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/publicrightsofway](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/publicrightsofway)

After the next kissing gate, where the path forks, veer to the right-hand side of the trees. Then follow the waymarker pointing left, into the woodland.

When you come out of the wooded area, you'll be back in the open. Continue ahead, through another kissing gate, towards the brow of the Iron Age fort.

The double ramparts of the Iron Age hillfort are evident.

Continue in the same direction over the summit of the fort and start the descent, following the main, wide path.

This becomes a gravel, then rocky, path. Exit through the wooden gate, then turn left at the end, past the pink house.

This will take you back to the lane, and car park.



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## How to get there

Park at Dolebury Bottom, at the end of Doleberrow, off the A38 just south of Churchill. This is a small car park and space is limited to four or five cars.

If full, try Churchill Memorial Hall car park in Ladymead Lane. You can then access Dolebury Warren from the north (check the OS map for public footpaths).



# Increased incentives to encourage more foster carers

Fostering  
North Somerset

More foster carers are urgently needed in North Somerset to help look after the area's most vulnerable children and teenagers.



North Somerset Council wants to make it as easy as possible for people to become foster carers so earlier this year it **scrapped council tax and increased allowance payments** for its in-house foster carers.

This council tax discount applies to all existing fostering households as well as future ones.

The council brought in these incentives to give you more money in your pocket to best support the children in your care, especially during these cost-of-living pressures.

There are more than 220 children and young people in care in North Somerset and a shortage of in-house carers means a number of these are in unregulated placements or with private agency carers, meaning they could be moved many miles from their familiar surroundings.

Having more foster carers in North Somerset means a greater number of these children are able to stay within the area.

This means they can maintain valuable links with their local family, friends and communities, rather than being moved to a different county or local authority.

## What do I need to become a foster carer?

**To become a foster carer you must have:**

- a spare room
- time in your day to dedicate to looking after a child
- be aged 21 or over.

People from all backgrounds are accepted. The council welcomes applications from people of all ages, genders, ethnicities, no matter your relationship status or sexual orientation.

Various options are available depending on how many hours a week you can commit, including short-term care, urgent care or longer placements.

This means you can still have a full-time job, live in rented accommodation, be a single-person household, or still have biological children living at home.







# Training and support

Free training and support is given to all foster carers. You'll always have someone to turn to for help and advice.

Even before registering, the council will help you and your family learn more about how to foster, plus other skills such as first aid, behavioural training, working as a team with other childcare professionals, and more.

Once registered, you'll undertake mandatory basic training in the first year.

Further training is then available, as well as professional development opportunities, including caring for children with learning difficulties or additional needs.

Foster carers are recognised for their commitment to training with increased fees, based on assessed skills and experience.

Having access to a strong support system can also be vital. North Somerset Council has adopted the Fostering Network's Mockingbird Family Model.

This provides respite care, peer support, regular joint planning and training, and social activities to the connected families.

One foster home acts as a hub for others, offering planned and emergency sleepovers, as well as advice, training and support to between six and 10 other foster families.

This approach aims to improve placement stability for the child and the fostering family, and help them build stronger relationships.

Louisa Loveridge, fostering team manager at North Somerset Council, said: "Our Mockingbird carers are very friendly, experienced and supportive.




"We're also proud that we have permanent and highly skilled supervising social workers and team managers, allowing our carers to build positive relationships with the team around the child."

Other perks to fostering with North Somerset Council include free access to North Somerset leisure centres for your whole family, all year round, as well as free membership to the Fostering Network, which gives you a range of further benefits.

If you're ready to start your fostering journey, or just want to find out more information about the process, please get in touch.

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)

For the latest updates follow Fostering North Somerset on social media:

 **FosteringNorthSomerset**  
 **FosteringNS**  
 **FosteringNorthSomerset**



# Tree planting season is here

**Trees bring many benefits to both people and the planet so protecting woodland is important to us all.**

Trees are home to a wealth of wildlife, they can improve our quality of life and help make us mentally and physically healthier, and they are one of the best ways to tackle the climate emergency.

In the last few years, tens of thousands of new trees have been planted across the area by North Somerset Council working with hundreds of volunteers.

Young trees were donated by The Woodland Trust while the Forest of Avon Trust funded new cardboard tree guards.

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

To continue this work, earlier this

year the council received £150,000 from the government's £7.8m Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund to employ two new officers whose roles are dedicated to planning and developing new woodland in our area.

Their first priority is to identify where planting would be suitable and be of benefit to the community and nature.

Now the tree planting season is under way, these officers will be co-ordinating new planting projects as well as running volunteer planting sessions.

New wildlife and woodland expansion officer Jack Bowman has a background in community-led projects.

He said: "I'm really excited about my new role and think I could really make a difference by reaching out

to landowners and helping them use their land to benefit both the climate and wildlife."



**Wildlife and woodland expansion officer Jack Bowman**



# Inspiration for your garden

**Trees add character and charm to gardens, bringing beauty across all seasons.**

All gardens, however small, can benefit from having a tree so consider what would work well in your space.

If you need inspiration, the *Acer griseum* (paper bark maple) is small tree which is perfect for gardens.

It is slow growing and highly decorative, with beautiful autumn colour and a wonderful 'paper' like reddish orange bark.

Many other trees are suitable for gardens. The Royal Horticultural Society lists recommended ones at [www.rhs.org.uk/trees](http://www.rhs.org.uk/trees)



Colleague Harry Lloyd said: "It has been fascinating exploring how I can make improvements to the environment across North Somerset."

"I'll be focussing on areas that have low tree canopy cover and working with the community to get trees in the ground, at the same time as building resilience for climate change."

Natural environment manager Esther Coffin-Smith said: "Our Green Infrastructure Strategy has ambitious targets to increase tree canopy by 25 per cent on North Somerset Council's land and encourage an increase of 30 per cent on all other land by 2030."

"Our two new officers will give us more opportunity to tap into funding and help us realise these ambitions."



## Become a tree champion

**Could you help plant, protect and promote trees in your local area?**

Tree wardens are needed to undertake a variety of projects, such as arranging local tree planting days, pruning and caring for street trees, raising funds, or going into schools to talk about the importance of trees.

No experience is needed, just a love of trees and a few hours to spare.

Find out more at [www.treecouncil.org.uk/tree-wardens](http://www.treecouncil.org.uk/tree-wardens)

Find out more about tree planting in North Somerset, including the area's Covid memorial trees and how the council manages trees in protected areas, at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/trees](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/trees)

Read North Somerset Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/greeninfrastructurestrategy](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/greeninfrastructurestrategy)

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



# Making Weston super

**Transforming spaces into vibrant engaging places which encourage connection and improve wellbeing is the aim of the Super Weston placemaking strategy.**

The 10-year strategy brings together arts and culture, leisure and activity, workspaces, heritage and architecture to show how Weston-super-Mare can become a greener, healthier and more prosperous place for people to live and work.

It has been developed by North Somerset Council and its partners, along with input from the local community.

Arts and culture play a big part in this, which the council has supported for a number of years.

In 2021 North Somerset, with a focus on Weston, was chosen as an Arts Council Priority Place, recognising the need for increased investment.

To help deliver the Super Weston vision, earlier this year North Somerset Council successfully bid for £20m from the government's Levelling Up Fund.

This investment is focussing on high-profile sites across the town

centre and seafront to transform the cultural, leisure and retail experiences for residents, business, and visitors.

The programme will reinvigorate iconic heritage buildings and sites, support local businesses, create new jobs, and deliver a year-round experience-led economy for the future.

Projects include refurbishing the Tropicana and increasing its capacity to create an attractive, viable venue; improvements to Marine Lake; funding towards Birnbeck Pier; refurbishing town centre retail and hospitality units; redesigning the entrance to Grove Park; and an improved wayfinding system to connect the main parts of the town.

One way of showcasing this placemaking work is through the We Are Super Weston podcast.

These fortnightly online interviews launched in May and feature conversations with people who

play significant roles in the local community.

Guests have included Fiona Matthews and Tom Newman from Super Culture, Anna Southwell from Loves Café, Prayag Rajpura of Dark Arts Rebel Kitchen, John Telling from recycling and waste management company Towns, and Ben Peters, an adventurer involved in various local charities.

The Super Weston team has also produced a series of videos showcasing lesser-known aspects of Weston, in collaboration with local filmmaker Siddiqui Media.

The Super Weston initiative is funded by North Somerset Council, Weston-super-Mare Town Council, Weston Business Improvement District, and The Grand Pier as part of the Weston Place Agency activity.

Stay updated with Super Weston projects and listen to the podcast at [www.superweston.net](http://www.superweston.net)



Photos courtesy of Neil Donaghue, Nodpics





# Moving forward with Birnbeck Pier

**Architects and engineers have been appointed to develop detailed plans for bringing much-loved Birnbeck Pier back into use.**

North Somerset Council bought the historic Grade II\* pier and island in July in an agreement with the RNLI, so work can now gather pace to save the derelict Victorian pier from further decline.

The three phases of funding to start the necessary work are:

- emergency funding of £3.55m from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to strengthen the pier 'legs'

- the first payment of £234,760 from a £4.52m funding pot from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to develop detailed proposals for the restoration and reuse of Birnbeck's buildings, and
- £4.4m from the Levelling Up Fund.

It is a very large and technically complicated project so will take several years to complete in various stages.

The restoration will first focus on urgent repairs and work to the landward side buildings, due to be carried out during 2024/25.

It's hoped that repairs to the legs of the pier structure and partial restoration of the deck will begin in 2025, subject to surveys, design work and the relevant permissions.

A later part of the project will see the other buildings and structures on the island restored and the site more fully opened to the public, expected to take place in 2026 and 2027.

It is hoped that once complete, the site will be managed by Birnbeck Regeneration Trust.

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



Find out more about North Somerset Council's placemaking strategy and Levelling Up funding at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/placemaking](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/placemaking)



# Celebrating Weston's



## Culture and heritage is being celebrated in Weston-super-Mare as a scheme to unlock potential in the town draws to a close.

During the last six years, Weston has received almost £2m from Historic England through two Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) projects.

Investment was given to places that are rich in heritage, to bring them back to life, attract more residents, tourists, businesses and investors, and therefore create economic growth.

Weston was one of the first places in the country to achieve this status.

The first Great Weston Heritage Action Zone ended in September last year, and the second High Street Heritage Action Zone will come to an end in March.

Money has been used to refurbish business units sympathetically through the Shopfront Enhancement Scheme, and bring arts and culture

to the town, such as the Super Wonder Shrine in the High Street and GLOW Light Festival in Grove Park.

An exhibition is now on at Weston Museum, in Burlington Street, to celebrate the fantastic community engagement work which has been achieved during this time.

It features creative work by primary-aged school children participating in the project.

The exhibition runs until Saturday 2 March and entrance is free. Find out more at [www.westonmuseum.org/events](http://www.westonmuseum.org/events)

The Sovereign in Weston will also host an exhibition during January and February to celebrate the High Street Heritage Action Zone,

## New businesses blooming in restored units

**New businesses have brought three empty shop units in Weston-super-Mare's town centre back to life.**

Four, six and eight Walliscote Road were restored this summer thanks to funding through the High Street Heritage Action Zone.

Sustenance Bakery, at number eight, opened in October.

Manager Kelli Rapson has a long family history in the town, as her great great aunt

lived in Magdala Buildings, the same angled block where the bakery is now based.

Kelli said: "I was thrilled to find the unit and love the restored exterior. It's so good to be opening a bakery in the heart of Weston and in such a beautiful building."

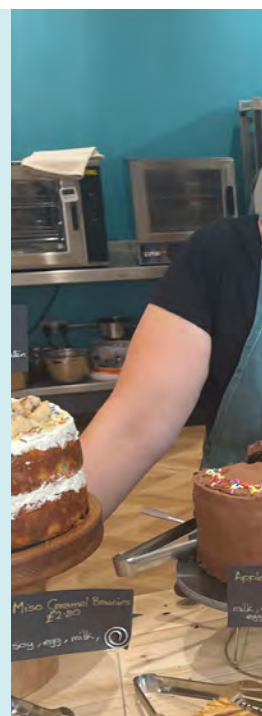
Mimi's Thai Bistro also opened at number six this autumn.

Mimi said: "I'm so happy to have the opportunity to open a small Thai bistro in the

centre of Weston.

"I'm also very grateful to Historic England, the council and the landlord for renovating and transforming the shop to the wonderful space it is now.

"It's warm and energy efficient. We're using induction cookers, as I believe we should no longer rely on fossil fuels and do all we can to protect the earth."





# culture and heritage

delivered by North Somerset Council and Super Culture.

Visitors will be able to explore images of the building enhancement work, as well as finding out more about the cultural engagement over the last four years.

The exhibition, in Unit 27 of the Sovereign, will also show plans for the next five years.

It runs from 10am to 3pm, from:

- Thursday 18 to Sunday 21 January
- Thursday 25 to Sunday 28 January
- Thursday 1 to Sunday 4 February
- Thursday 9 to Sunday 11 February.

Top left: The Super Wonder Shrine, in the High Street, is a multi-use events and performance space.

Left: Artist Chila Kumari Burman and her pigeon, at GLOW Light Festival. Photos courtesy of Paul Blakemore.



Kelli Rapson at Sustenance Bakery



## The Plaza comes to town

**Film goers will soon be able to enjoy a night out at their choice of cinemas in Weston-super-Mare as new owners take over the former Odeon building.**

Independent cinema chain Merlin Cinemas bought the building in August following its closure in June.

The British independent cinema chain specialises in operating character, and predominantly coastal, cinemas. It already runs 17 across the country, mostly in the south west of England.

Chris Wilkes, property and development manager at Merlin Cinemas, said: "We have a great deal of experience managing historic buildings and recognise the importance of this beautiful Art Deco building in the heart of Weston-super-Mare."

"We're delighted to add it to our portfolio of individual, unique and special cinemas."

"We're developing a short and long-term investment plan to improve the building, including the listed features."

"One of our key priorities is to value and promote the Compton Organ, which we know is much-loved by local residents and visitors alike."

Keep up with the latest news from Merlin Cinemas by signing up to its newsletter. Visit

**[www.merlincinemas.co.uk](http://www.merlincinemas.co.uk)**

Also follow on social media for details of offers and discount cards:

- f merlincinemas
- 📷 merlincinemas
- 📱 merlin\_cinemas

## What are Heritage Action Zones?

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



# Community projects

**Community organisations, charities, social enterprises and businesses across North Somerset are making a big difference in their local communities.**

Thanks to funding from the government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), these organisations are running workshops, cultural events, counselling and more.

*Life* takes a look at some of the projects already under way...



Funded by  
UK Government

## Sharing the experiences of refugees

**True stories of refugees have been brought to life to help children gain a greater understanding of the world.**

Earlier this year storyteller Michael Loader, founder of Somerset Storyfest, visited primary schools in Winford, Churchill and Nailsea to talk about countries and cultures unjustly affected by socio-political unrest.

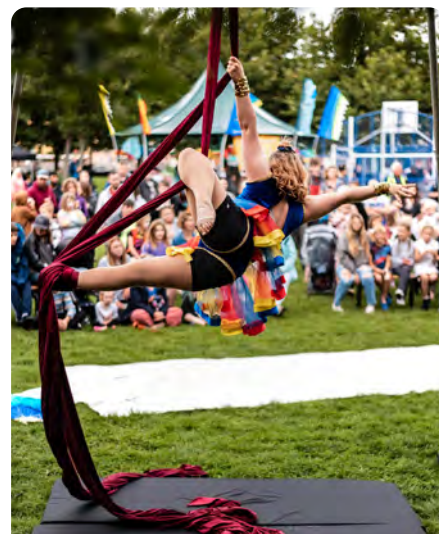
The One Tree—Many Branches refugee project included creative activities about evacuating German families in WWII, fleeing military occupation in Sudan, and escaping Pakistan due to religious intolerance.

Michael Loader said: "It was an absolute thrill to receive a UKSPF community grant to fund visits to schools, to share the lived experiences of refugees.

"I always come away with such respect for our facilitators, who have the courage, resilience and hope of finding something better and building a new life after losing everything."

One teacher said: "I was moved to tears in parts and the children were in awe of the bravery and courage of those involved."

One pupil added: "My parents had to leave their country before I was born so it made me think about what it was like for them."



## Thriving culture

**Community-led creative projects have been able to grow and thrive in Weston-super-Mare thanks to UKSPF funding.**

This summer, local arts organisation Super Culture presented the popular Party on the Green family festival, while creative, environmentally themed workshops were led by South Weston Activity Network (SWAN), a charity which co-ordinates activities for children, young people and families.

An on-going programme is also taking place at Front Room Theatre, in Dolphin Square, to feature and support local artists.

Front Room offers the space and opportunity to talk about work being made, which is encouraging new approaches from community members with ideas for work to be developed and shared.

See [www.frontroomwsm.com](http://www.frontroomwsm.com) and [www.superculture.org.uk](http://www.superculture.org.uk) for more information.



# making a difference

## Aftercare for addiction

**Counselling, one-to-one sessions and group therapy are taking place during new sessions aimed at building confidence and reducing stigma for those in recovery from addiction.**

The Aftercare service started in April for participants leaving Broadway Lodge and other treatment centres in Weston-super-Mare.

Funding from UKSPF has also gone towards social activities to help build interpersonal skills and enable peer support in recovery, including a day at Thorpe Park theme park.



One recent participant, Eddie, now has a clear vision for his future after recently completing several industry-recognised building groundworks training modules at Weston College.

A trainer said: "Eddie is an excellent recovery ambassador, and willingly offers support and guidance to his peers."

## Overcoming barriers to finding work

**People who are facing barriers to employment are being helped into work thanks to a Weston-based organisation.**



RENEW has been set up to specifically provide opportunities to people who want to work but face barriers, such as language issues and lack of experience.

The project uses UKSPF funding to develop employment skills through paid and unpaid work, which is also proving to be good for wellbeing.

One participant (pictured left), who arrived in the UK a year ago from Kyiv in Ukraine, had previous qualifications in banking and accounting, with seven years' work experience.

She is currently working as a cleaner but has now gained a Level 1 English at Weston College and has been offered a part-time book keeping job at RENEW.

She is now planning a work experience placement at an accountant's firm.

## Comedy and more at the Curzon

**Comedy nights, author talks, screenings with live musical accompaniment and special events are now taking place at Clevedon's cinema,**

The Curzon Cinema and Arts launched Season One, a series of 47 curated screenings and live events between September and December, thanks to a £9,900 UKSPF grant.



The season explores themes of adventure and the natural world, how local roots are nurtured by global ideas, and the interaction of music and film.

For tickets and information visit **[www.curzon.org.uk](http://www.curzon.org.uk)**

Find out more about the UK Shared Prosperity Fund at **[www.innorthsomerset.co.uk/ukspf](http://www.innorthsomerset.co.uk/ukspf)**





# Managing the council's money

**Long-standing financial pressures mean North Somerset Council must work hard to balance the books each year.**

**The authority, like others around the country, is dealing with rising costs and inflation, a higher demand for services, and reduced income.**

This comes on top of the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis, Covid and 12 years of central government austerity measures.

Budget setting is a year-round process and potential risks are identified throughout the 12 months, with officers working hard to understand issues and put mitigations in place before they become real pressures.

In September, North Somerset Council predicted an overspend of £2m for this current financial year but work is being done to close this gap by the year-end in March 2024.

However, for the next financial year – 2024/25 – a £17m gap is currently predicted, rising to a £50m gap over the next four years.

North Somerset Council is currently drafting its four-year corporate plan and this autumn it held a six-week consultation so local people could say what they thought the priorities should be and where the money should go.

In-person events took place so people could speak to councillors face-to-face, along with an online survey.

Understanding what communities value the most, as well as the things they think are less important, will help the council prioritise public money in the right places.

The council remains ambitious and wants to provide good services that people value, but delivering savings to meet the financial target will be extremely challenging and may mean difficult decisions need to be made about services in the area.

Keep updated by signing up the *Life* e-newsletter at [www.northsomersetlife.co.uk](http://www.northsomersetlife.co.uk), or follow the council on social media.

 **NorthSomersetCouncil**

 **NorthSomersetC**



## Statement of accounts

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

This round-up looks at the previous financial year, from April 2022 to March 2023.

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

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

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

The figures listed here are from the council's audited accounts.

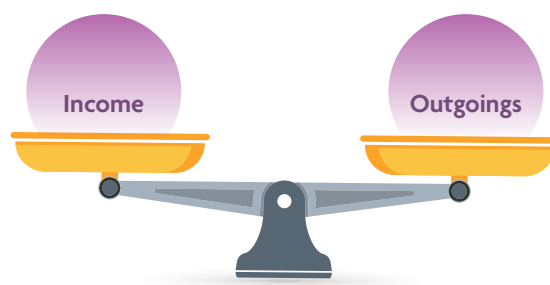
**A full version of the statement of accounts is available at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/accounts](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/accounts)**



# Income and outgoings

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

This money is then used to cover the cost of providing services. In 2022/23 this added up to....



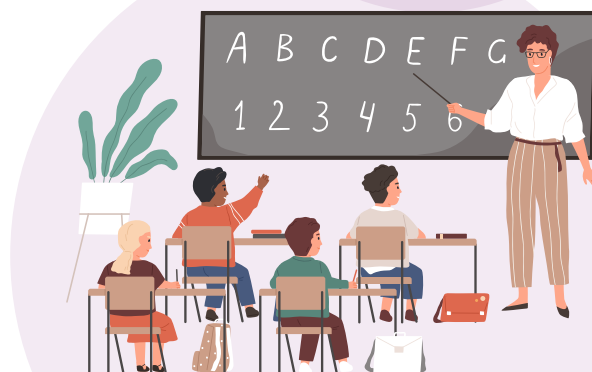
## Income (where the money comes from):

Service-related government grants	£224.6m
Council tax	£130.8m
Fees and charges	£57.7m
Business rates	£44.7m
General government grants	£6.5m
<b>Total</b>	<b>£464.3m</b>



## Outgoings (what it's spent on):

Adult social care	£115.4m
Place (recycling and waste, parks, etc)	£86.1m
Schools	£63m
Other corporate services	£45.8m
Children's services	£42.9m
Non-service	£41.1m
Housing benefits	£40.1m
Public health	£16.7m
Housing services	£6.4m
Financing and investments	£5.9m
Transfers to general and earmarked reserves	£0.9m
<b>Total</b>	<b>£464.3m</b>





## Capital investment

Capital investments continued to be a prominent feature of North Somerset Council's finances during 2022/23.

During the year, more than £66m was spent on improving existing assets and delivering new facilities. There was continued investment in schools and in new infrastructure, such as continued work on the new Banwell bypass and construction of the new expansion of Winterstoke Hundred Academy in Locking Parklands, as well as the existing road network.



## Balance sheet at year-end

The balance sheet shows the council's financial position on 31 March 2023, at the end of the financial year.

It's a snapshot of the assets the council owns, the liabilities it owes, and the reserves it has available to fund future expenditure.

Despite pressures on council finances, it maintained prudent levels of reserves at the year-end.

### The council's net assets:

Property, plant and equipment	£411.3m
Money owed to the council and investments	£229.5m
Investment property	£51.1m
Other long-term assets	£13.1m
Other long-term liabilities	-£23.3m
Money owed by the council	-£151.2m
Long-term borrowing	-£139.8m
Pension liabilities	-£102.5m
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>£288.2m</b>

### Which are financed by:

Earmarked reserves	£89.6m
Other usable reserves	£20m
General fund balance	£10.2m
Unusable reserves	£168.4m
<b>Total reserves</b>	<b>£288.2m</b>

## Capital spending in 2022/23

### What the money is spent on:

Schools	£28.9m
Transport/infrastructure	£11.1m
Road maintenance and streets lighting	£9.5m
Other capital investment	£7.8m
Housing	£5.4m
Strategic/regeneration projects	£3.7m
<b>Total</b>	<b>£66.4m</b>

### Where the money comes from:

Government grants and contributions	£53.3m
Borrowing	£5.9m
Reserves and balances (revenue)	£4.1m
Sales of assets (capital receipts)	£3.1m
<b>Total</b>	<b>£66.4m</b>



# Looking ahead

**Escalating costs beyond available budgets continue to be felt by North Somerset Council, in a similar way to many other individuals, businesses and other public sector bodies.**

Therefore, increasingly difficult decisions need to be made in the years ahead.

By law, the council must prepare and agree a deliverable budget for the next financial year.

However, in September the latest figures showed that the council's finances had deteriorated and it would need to close a £50m gap within the next four years, including a £17m gap in 2024/25 alone.

All aspects of the council's financial planning are reviewed continually and, given the worsening economic backdrop, there will inevitably be changes to services and reduced activities in some areas.

There is also likely to be an increase in council tax. Support will remain for those households unable to pay.

The last thing the council wants to do is to add to residents' financial burdens so it will do all it can to minimise the impact of any increases.

More details about the 2023/24 budget and its impact on council tax will be available in *Life* next year.

For more regular updates, sign up to the *Life* e-newsletter at [www.northsomersetlife.co.uk](http://www.northsomersetlife.co.uk)

A full version of the council's accounts for 2022/23 is available at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/accounts](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/accounts)

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

For more information, call the finance team on 01934 634 618.



# Hard work continues behind the scenes to develop Banwell bypass

Construction of the long-awaited Banwell bypass is expected to begin early next year.

Planning permission was granted for the scheme in March and since then lots of hard work has taken place to make it a reality, including North Somerset Council and the government both committing to additional funding.

The bypass will remove a traffic pinch point in the village so cut journey times and better connect communities by improving access between Weston-super-Mare and the A38.

Not only this, the scheme also includes miles of new walking, cycling and horse-riding routes, so enabling more opportunities for sustainable travel as the council works to reach net zero by 2030.

In addition, the design includes features to protect local wildlife, such as bats, badgers and otters, as well as creation of new ponds, woodland and wetland.

Other design features to help reduce the impacts of traffic on nearby roads are also part of the scheme and will be completed before the bypass opens.

Following planning permission being granted and overcoming challenges caused by inflation and rising costs in the construction industry, North

Somerset is now awaiting the outcome of a public inquiry into the scheme's Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs).

The inquiry took place over the summer, where an independent inspector appointed by the Secretary of State listened to evidence about the acquisition of land needed to build the bypass.

At the time of *Life* going to print, the Secretary of State was due to decide whether the CPOs could go ahead.

If the CPOs are given the green light, early ecological works can begin, ensuring the safe relocation of wildlife along the bypass route.

More updates will be available in the coming months as work gets under way.

Sign up to the *Life* e-newsletter for regular updates. Visit [www.northsomersetlife.co.uk](http://www.northsomersetlife.co.uk) and click on 'sign up to our email newsletter'.

Also follow North Somerset Council on social media:

 **NorthSomersetCouncil**

 **NorthSomersetC**







For all the latest updates on Banwell bypass progress, including a detailed map, visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/banwellbypass](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/banwellbypass)



# Working hard to tackle anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour can cause misery to people's lives so action is being taken here in North Somerset.

Left unchecked, anti-social behaviour can have an overwhelming impact on its victims and, in some cases, the wider community.

North Somerset Council's Safer Stronger team works in partnership with Avon and Somerset Police and other agencies to deliver initiatives to tackle anti-social behaviour, as well as advising people on crime prevention and support for victims of crime.

Community response officers provide a highly-visible front line service in this work, acting

as the eyes and ears in the local community. They deal with issues such as street drinking, dog control and neighbour disputes.

To highlight these issues, from this autumn the council is organising two days of action each month.




One of these will focus on anti-social behaviour while the other focuses on environmental crimes such as fly-tipping.

During these days of action, council officers will be joined by representatives from partner

agencies, such as the police and housing associations, to host community engagement events.

There will also be more presence in known hot spots.

Find out when these days of action are taking place by following the Safer Stronger team on social media:

 [saferstrongerns](#)  
 [SaferStrongerNS](#)  
 [SaferStrongerNS](#)



## What is anti-social behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour is defined as 'behaviour by a person which causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as the person'.

There are three main categories, depending on how many people are affected:

● **personal** – when a person targets a specific individual or group

● **nuisance** – when a person causes trouble, annoyance or suffering to a community

● **environmental** – when a person's actions affect the wider environment, such as public spaces or buildings.





## Street drinking clampdown

North Somerset's first Criminal Behaviour Order was issued this summer in a crackdown on street drinking and associated anti-social behaviour.



In June, a man was successfully prosecuted after he pleaded guilty to breaches of a public space protection order and one breach of a community protection notice.

North Somerset Council is committed to reducing street drinking and anti-social behaviour and this prosecution marked the start of the council's anti-street drinking campaign 'Operation Dry Street'.



## Acting on concerns

A new close circuit television (CCTV) camera has been installed in Grove Park, in Weston-super-Mare, following requests from local residents.

People reported that they felt vulnerable and unsafe in the park and were concerned about increased drug use.

High-visibility patrols were also increased in the area as a result of these concerns.



These actions were taken following reports made through the anonymous StreetSafe service.

To report any concerns, visit [www.police.uk/streetsafe](http://www.police.uk/streetsafe) or download the free StreetSafe app.



particular nuisance or problem in a specific area that is detrimental to the local community's quality of life.

The orders work by imposing conditions on the use of that area which apply to everyone. They might set out blanket restrictions or be targeted against certain behaviours by certain groups at certain times.

PSPOs were first introduced in North Somerset in 2017 and are reviewed every three years.

They were reviewed this year and a consultation took place in the summer to ask people what they thought of existing PSPOs and proposed changes to them.

The council's executive members approved the changes in September and they will be implemented this autumn.

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

## Making public spaces more welcoming

**Public spaces should be welcoming for all and so North Somerset Council has reinforced its tools for ensuring everyone can use and enjoy them.**

Public Space Protection Orders, or PSPOs, are intended to deal with a

Read North Somerset Council's anti-social behaviour strategy at [www.saferstrongerns.co.uk/safercommunitiesplan](http://www.saferstrongerns.co.uk/safercommunitiesplan)

Find out about different types of anti-social behaviour at [www.saferstrongerns.co.uk/asb](http://www.saferstrongerns.co.uk/asb)

Find out about the tools and powers of community response officers at [www.saferstrongerns.co.uk/community-response](http://www.saferstrongerns.co.uk/community-response)

Report all incidents of antisocial behaviour to the police on 101 or visit [www.saferstrongerns.co.uk/reportasb](http://www.saferstrongerns.co.uk/reportasb)

In an emergency, always call **999**.

If you have reported the same anti-social behaviour issue to the council or any other agency, including the police or housing associations, three or more times and don't feel enough has been done, you can request a case review. Find out more at [www.saferstrongerns.co.uk/asbcasereview](http://www.saferstrongerns.co.uk/asbcasereview)

# A multitude of meaningful jobs at North Somerset Council

Do you want a job that makes a real difference to your local community?

The New Year will soon be here and many people see it as a time to question where they currently are and what changes they might want to make over the next 12 months.

If you want a job which contributes to society and makes a meaningful difference to local people, see what North Somerset Council can offer.

Working for the council is a great way to become involved in exciting projects happening across the area, whether that's improving bus services, roads and town planning, or influencing sustainable and environmental work as part of the council's bid to reach net zero by 2030.

Lesley Riney, HR recruitment manager at North Somerset Council, said:

***"You will be surprised at the number of different roles we have."***

***"If you are innovative, full of creative ideas and want to make a difference, we want to hear from you."***

***"Whether you want to progress within your chosen field or want a career change, we can help you reach your goals and aspirations."***

## Opportunities include:

- working with the vital children's services team to care for and support families and young children across North Somerset
- joining the top-rated adults' social services teams to help make a real difference to the lives of local people and communities
- working with the public transport team to develop the bus network and help make it people's first choice for shorter journeys
- finding a role in your chosen career, whether you're an archaeologist or architect, engineer or ecologist, solicitor or tree surgeon, park ranger or psychologist, or more.







**excellent pension  
scheme**



**flexible  
working**



**professional  
development**



**generous  
annual leave**



**electric car purchase  
scheme**



**wellbeing  
support**



**staff recognition  
awards**



**family  
leave**



North Somerset Council is proud to be an inclusive employer and engages in local events throughout the year to celebrate the area's diverse community.

Staff forum groups allow all staff to be represented, influence policy and shape how the organisation works.

The council works to ensure its values of integrity, respect, innovation, care and collaboration are embedded across the organisation.

A wellbeing team can also provide coaching and training to teams and individuals.

Flexible working practices and family-friendly policies also allow staff to have a good work-life balance.

## Useful links

For public transport jobs visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/bsipjobs](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/bsipjobs)

For jobs in children's social care visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/childrensocialcarejobs](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/childrensocialcarejobs)

For openings in the care sector visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/proudtocare](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/proudtocare)

For training courses visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/training-courses](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/training-courses)

Find more opportunities, including volunteering and apprenticeships, at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/jobs](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/jobs)

If there are no suitable vacancies for you at the moment, get in touch with the recruitment team by emailing [recruitment@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@n-somerset.gov.uk) or calling 01934 427 444 to speak to someone who will be able to put you in touch with the relevant member of staff.



# Find your little big thing for your mental health



**The last few years have been tough but there are little things we can do each day to improve our mental health.**

Research suggests that up to 10 million people in England will need either new or additional mental health support as a direct consequence of the Covid pandemic.

Since then we've also had the cost-of-living crisis so money worries might also be weighing heavily on your mind.

There are many little things we can do to lift our mood or ease anxiety

so it's important to find out what works for you. This might be as simple as walking in nature, prioritising our sleep or opening up to a friend.

Our little thing, if we keep doing it, will make a big difference to how we feel.

The Every Mind Matters website has useful tools and tips, including a quick quiz to get your personalised mind plan.

This plan offers hints and tips on managing common mental health problems, such as stress, anxiety and problems sleeping.

Visit [www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters)

## Mental health support

Charities and services work across North Somerset to help people take control of their lives and build a better future.

For a round-up of information and links visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/mentalhealth](https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/mentalhealth)

- **Second Step** aims to help people develop skills to manage their own mental wellbeing and recovery, through group courses and activities. Visit [www.second-step.co.uk](https://www.second-step.co.uk)
- **Talk Club** is a talking and listening group for men aged 18+. Find out more at [www.talkclub.org](https://www.talkclub.org)
- **Talking therapies** is available if you're feeling depressed, stressed,

anxious or dealing with common psychological or emotional issues. Self-refer at [www.vitahealthgroup.org.uk](https://www.vitahealthgroup.org.uk) or call 0333 200 1893.

- Non-clinical mental wellbeing support is available through the **social prescribing** scheme, which aims to help people to improve their physical and mental wellbeing by connecting them with local services and activities. Ask your GP about their link worker or social prescriber.

If you are in crisis and need immediate support dial NHS 111 or call the Samaritans for free on 116 123. Call 999 if you need help for a medical emergency.





# North Somerset Life

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

For advertising and sponsorship opportunities contact [tim.brown@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:tim.brown@n-somerset.gov.uk)

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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](http://www.northsomersetlife.co.uk)



## Get the latest news straight into your inbox



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Subscribe online and stay informed at [www.northsomersetlife.co.uk](http://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:

**01934 888 802**

(Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)

For council tax and benefits:

**01934 888 144**

(Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)

For social services:

**01275 888 801**

(Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm)



**Do it online** – report it, request it or pay for it at:

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

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



## Tide times

Check tide times online at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/tidetimes](http://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](http://www.northsomersetlife.co.uk)





# **recycle** for North Somerset

New recycling and waste collection calendars for December onwards can be downloaded from November.

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

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

Thank you to crews for their hard work this year and also to all residents for your recycling efforts.

In the last year, black bin waste reduced by 27kg per household compared to the year before.

Let's keep this going into 2024.



Let's keep  
reducing,  
reusing, and  
recycling  
into 2024