

SOMERSET UNITARY COUNCIL REPORT

CLLR SARAH DYKE & CLLR NICOLA CLARK

MAY 2024

This month's casework

Casework continues to be busy throughout the division, with planning and enforcement queries taking a strong lead this month. We are aware that there is a delay in getting enforcement requests dealt with, but please do keep sending these through so that we can action them for you and your residents.

Alongside this we've actioned casework on drain clearance, potholes, obstructed speed limit signs, overgrown verges and lots of other bits and pieces.

Rejected road proposals rejected by Somerset Council

Once again, the road proposals for Henstridge were refused by Somerset Council.

These original road proposals were refused by Somerset Council's planning committee in October 2023 and the same committee has now rejected revised proposals.

Those of you in Henstridge will be familiar with this case and the ongoing concerns about works on the site. If you are interested, you can find out more here -

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c72pdjr00rno>

How you can access our forward plans

We wanted to make sure that you have all of the up-to-date information on what the council is working on, and you can see that here –

<https://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/mgPlansHome.aspx?bcr=1>

The forward plan is a list of the council's key decisions that will be made by:

- Executive Members or by officers who have been delegated authority by the Executive over the next one to four months.
- The Executive as a Committee over the next 12 months (note - non key decisions which are being considered by the Executive are also included).
- Other committees of the council

The plan is updated regularly.

May bank holidays bring changes to waste collections

Somerset Council are reminding residents that waste collections will change during May as bank holidays start and end the month.

During the weeks beginning Monday 6 May, and Monday 27 May, collections of recycling, refuse and garden waste will be one day later than usual.

Please note that we will do our best to attend as many Parish Council meetings as possible, but there may be times when we are unable to attend. We're always happy to chat at any time though, and you can contact us on the numbers above.

SOMERSET UNITARY COUNCIL REPORT

CLLR SARAH DYKE & CLLR NICOLA CLARK

MAY 2024

If your recycling and/or refuse is usually collected on a Monday, then it will be collected on a Tuesday, if your usual day is a Tuesday it will be collected on a Wednesday and so on.

This includes collections that would usually take place on Friday 10 May and Friday 31 May taking place on Saturday 11 May and Saturday 1 June respectively.

With waste collections a day later a higher volume of waste is likely. Squashing, crushing and flattening waste can help to reduce the number of trips that teams need to make to empty their trucks, as well as creating more space in resident's containers.

All 16 recycling sites will be open as usual at weekends, 9am to 4pm. And, if opening on a Monday is part of their normal opening pattern, they will be open on both Bank Holiday Mondays (6 May and 27 May), from 9am to 6pm. For opening times and to find a full list of what can be recycled please visit: www.somerset.gov.uk/recycling-collections

Become a volunteer driver and turn miles into smiles

Somerset Council is working with the NHS on a campaign to recruit more volunteer drivers in the county who can get people without easy access to transport to crucial appointments.

Since Covid-19 the numbers of volunteer drivers in Somerset has reduced by about 67 per cent. These dedicated drivers play a pivotal role in the community, providing essential transportation services to residents so the Council are calling out for new volunteers.

Many residents who need the service live in rural areas with little or no access to public transport and are unable to drive. This can feel isolating and volunteer drivers are able to give a friendly helping hand to help residents access vital medical and social care services. This can be routine NHS appointments and school runs, or lifesaving cancer treatment.

If you are working part-time, a parent, retired or just have some spare time on your hands and you have a car and at least half a day to a day to offer then you can get involved and make a positive impact on people's lives.

As a volunteer driver, you'll receive training and be reimbursed expenses at 45p per mile (or 50p per mile with passengers).

Somerset Council's Lead Member for Transport and Digital, Councillor Richard Wilkins said:

"Volunteering as a driver is not just about getting people from A to B - it's about making a positive difference to people's lives. If you have a car and some spare time, please consider getting involved.

"Whether you're a stay-at-home parent, are retired or work part-time, your car can become a powerful tool for community service.

Please note that we will do our best to attend as many Parish Council meetings as possible, but there may be times when we are unable to attend. We're always happy to chat at any time though, and you can contact us on the numbers above.

SOMERSET UNITARY COUNCIL REPORT CLLR SARAH DYKE & CLLR NICOLA CLARK MAY 2024

You could find yourself enjoying the beautiful Somerset scenery while providing vital assistance to those in need.

“At the same time, you can offer a listening ear and a bit of companionship—it’s an incredibly rewarding and heartwarming experience.

Our dedicated team of volunteers are a wonderful group, helping to play a part in making this a resilient, healthy and caring Somerset.”

Lucy, a volunteer driver said:

“Being a volunteer driver is really fulfilling as it allows me to meet new people, hear their stories whilst making a difference to someone’s day”.

Criteria for becoming a volunteer driver:

- Own 5 door car
- DBS (at no cost to volunteer)
- Current full driving licence with no more than 6 points
- Basic IT skills such as email and online meetings
- Undertake induction and training
- Reliable and punctual
- Helpful and caring manner with a friendly disposition
- Good social skills

Register your interest and apply today at <https://volunteering.somerset.gov.uk/drive>

Storm Henk Property Flood resilience repair grant scheme

The Government offered financial support to help households, businesses and farmers recover from the flooding caused by Storm Henk between 2-12 January 2024.

88 households and 9 businesses have benefited from one of the four schemes which have now closed.

- Community Recovery Grants
- Council Tax discounts for 2023/24
- Business Recovery Grants
- Business rates discounts for 2023/24

DEFRA will be opening the Property Flood Resilience Scheme which Somerset Council will administer on their behalf. Defra have provided us with strict guidelines on how this grant should be delivered. This is a more complicated process than the four previous schemes, with the onus

Please note that we will do our best to attend as many Parish Council meetings as possible, but there may be times when we are unable to attend. We're always happy to chat at any time though, and you can contact us on the numbers above.

SOMERSET UNITARY COUNCIL REPORT

CLLR SARAH DYKE & CLLR NICOLA CLARK

MAY 2024

being on the householder to do much of the application and work, for which they will then be reimbursed. Typically, a large expense is getting a surveyor's report. Householders can then decide from the results of the report whether or not to continue with their application. The cost of getting a surveyor's report is at the householders' expense. If they continue with the claim, they will be reimbursed. However, if they decide not to continue, they will have to bear the cost of the surveyor's report.

What is Property Flood Resilience?

This is designed to be a longer-term flood resilience measure. Property Flood Resilience refers to any measure that can be applied to a building to make people and property less vulnerable to the physical impacts of flooding.

The purpose of the Property Flood Resilience (PFR) repair grant scheme is to assist home and business owners to improve the flood resilience of their individual properties when they repair them after a flood. The outcome from this funding should be that if flooding were to reoccur, damage levels would be considerably lower, and property owners and businesses could return to their properties much more quickly.

The grant is available to improve the flood resilience of a property; it is not compensation for flood damage, nor is it to be used for speculative work. It is for improvements to a property to reduce future flood damage. Only fully completed works that improve the flood resilience of a property will be reimbursed.

The deadline for submitting an Expression of Interest is 30st May, 2024. Grants are up to £5,000 per application. This scheme will run until 2025.

Full details on how to start the application process will be updated on our webpage shortly. Applicants need to submit an expression of interest to start the application.

Deadline for submission of a full application is 31st December 2024. However, there may be many actions for the homeowner to complete before they can submit the full application with the surveyor's report and evidence of the value quote for work.

<p>Cllr Sarah Dyke</p> <p>sarah.dyke@somerset.gov.uk</p>	<p>Cllr Nicola Clark</p> <p>07429 831737 / 01935 840667</p> <p>nicola.clark@somerset.gov.uk</p>
---	--

Please note that we will do our best to attend as many Parish Council meetings as possible, but there may be times when we are unable to attend. We're always happy to chat at any time though, and you can contact us on the numbers above.