



## Somerset Liberal Democrats Chard South April 2025



### Work starts to protect dam at Chard Reservoir Local Nature Reserve

Work is starting on Somerset Council's major scheme to strengthen Chard Reservoir's barrier and help protect the dam from extreme future flooding events. The project, part funded by Somerset Rivers Authority, involves building a 'wave wall' to reduce the risk of the reservoir failing, culvert reconstruction, and re-grading the Anglers' car park.

Contractor Kier will be carrying out the work – expected to be completed by the summer - and there will be some disruption to traffic until a full road closure along Chaffcombe Lane is implemented from 28 April for around ten weeks. Pedestrian access to the reservoir will remain open during this time. The Anglers' car park will remain open for anglers only, with access from the Chaffcombe side. All other visitors to the nature reserve are advised to park at Oaklands car park (TA20 1HU). A diversion will be in place during the works.



Councillor Graham Oakes, Somerset Council's Lead Member for Public Health, Environment, and Climate Change, said: "It is vital that we do this work to make the reservoir more resilient and to protect local communities from the devastating effects of the dam failing. "Chard Reservoir is a beautiful place to visit and enjoy and I am glad that people will still be able to access it during the works." Councillor Mike Stanton, Chair of Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA), said: "The SRA's core purpose is to reduce the risks and impacts of flooding, which is why we agreed to make a significant contribution towards the costs of this work. It will decrease flood risks for nearly 1,000 properties and benefit a wide area from Chard down to Muchelney, so it's great to see it getting underway."

Chard Reservoir was owned by South Somerset District Council until the unitary Somerset Council came into being in April 2023 when ownership passed to the new council.

The need for the wall was identified during an independent safety audit and is a legal requirement under the Reservoirs Safety Act. Somerset Council has worked closely with specialist engineers Stillwater Associates who designed the scheme. A full ecological survey has been undertaken and wildlife in the area will be monitored throughout the duration of the work. A small number of self-seeded trees along the dam's crest were removed or cut back earlier this year in preparation for the work.

### More time to recycle, Somerset's recycling sites revert to summer hours

All 16 of Somerset Council's recycling sites will soon revert to their spring/summer opening schedule. From **Tuesday, 1 April 2025**, sites will be open from 9am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 4pm at the weekend. Opening days vary across sites midweek, however, all sites are open on a Saturday and Sunday.

Residents wishing to take their waste to the recycling site should [check online](#) for opening days.

Materials accepted at recycling sites will vary, residents should check ahead before they visit. There are [queue cameras](#) at Bridgwater (Saltlands), Chard, Highbridge, Minehead, Street, Taunton (Priorswood), Wellington (Poole), Wells (Dulcote), and Yeovil (opening days for these sites vary



# 51 tonnes of plastic bags and wrapping out of the bin thanks to Somerset residents

Somerset is 1 of 10 councils taking part in the national, Government-backed [FlexCollect trial](#) and the latest figures show that 51 tonnes have been collected in the trial area in and around Frome. That equates to preventing around 217,000 15-litre bags full of plastic bags and wrapping from being binned since May 2023, and instead being turned into new products and packaging. Around 26,000 residents in the east of the county are involved in the trial. The plastic packaging is collected for recycling with residents' weekly kerbside collections. Residents are asked to fill bags with packaging including, crisps packets, bread bags and plastic netting.



Matthew Canning, Contract Director at SUEZ recycling and recovery UK said: Collecting 51 tonnes of flexible packaging highlights the potential for diverting more waste into recycling and moving towards a more circular economy. The engagement from residents has been really encouraging. We are really proud to be part of this pioneering initiative and look forward to continuing this trial.

As part of the Government's new Simpler Recycling law, collection of plastic bags and wrapping will be expanded across the county and all households in the UK will need to be offered the service by April 2027. Recycled plastic bags and wrapping can be used to make a range of new plastic products such as, plastic packaging, 'bags for life', boxes, bins, and agricultural and construction materials. The trial was part of a larger £3m Flexible Plastic Fund 'FlexCollect' project, which involved 10 local authorities across England, and aimed to inform government and industry on how plastic bags and wrapping should be added to existing household collection services.

Residents who are not part of the trial can take their plastic bags and wrapping to local recycling points, often found in supermarkets. Recycle Now's [search function](#) can be used to find locations. For more information and news about Somerset Council's Waste Services, visit the [Bins, Recycling and Waste](#) page and follow [@SomersetWaste](#) on [Facebook](#) and [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#).

## Volunteer Driver (South Somerset)

Transporting Somerset provides crucial transport for eligible non-emergency NHS patients and social care users enabling them to get to various locations across the county and further afield. This is a rewarding opportunity for you to provide practical support for people within your community. You will be supported by a Transport Officer from the Transporting Somerset team. Each of these journeys connected people to services that they would otherwise miss out on. Some volunteer drivers also provide school or college transport. You will need to notify your car insurance provider that you are a volunteer driver and as such your annual mileage may increase. If you are accepted as a weekday volunteer driver, there may be opportunities to do evening and weekend trips as well. Volunteers **say** I feel this is an opportunity to help those in the community It gets me out I enjoy driving as I live on my own and meeting people



**Requirements** Own 4 door car (mileage expenses paid), DBS (at no cost to volunteer), Current full driving licence with no more than 6 points, Basic IT skills - sending and receiving emails, and attending online meetings, Undertake an induction and training, Reliable and punctual, Helpful and caring manner with a friendly disposition, Good social skills are needed as often drivers will be transporting vulnerable people and Ability to commit to at least half a day's driving a week

Please contact the Recruitment Manager on 07855 285464 / [gemma.ruffle@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:gemma.ruffle@somerset.gov.uk)

## Keeping in Contact

**COME AND TALK WITH US  
AT A LIB DEM SURGERY**

**FIRST SATURDAY IN THE MONTH  
With your Town and Unitary Councillors**

AT THE GUILDHALL, CHARD  10am to 12pm

You can meet with me to discuss any concerns or for help by dropping into my monthly surgery or I can arrange an appointment on a day and time that suits you or feel free to give me a call on 07736 310805 or email [Jason.baker@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Jason.baker@somerset.gov.uk)