



Somerset Liberal Democrats Tatworth & Forton June 2023

A recycling result to celebrate on Somerset Day

New figures released on Somerset Day show that nine out of ten households in the county are now recycling. Looking at a representative sample of more than 3,000 homes in March this year, 91% were found to be actively recycling and sorting items into their boxes and Bright Blue Bag.

That is up from the 85% when this analysis was last carried out five years ago. And when it comes to food waste recycling the improvements are even better, with 72% of households recycling compared to 62% in the 2018 survey. Industry experts WRAP consider 55% to be a high participation rate for food waste for recycling..

Sorting materials for collection produces high-quality recycling that is easier to get turned into new goods and packaging in the UK. Thanks to the efforts of residents, in 2021-22 an impressive 97.2% of the material collected from Somerset’s kerbsides was recycled in the UK. Sorting recycling also speeds up collections, making life easier for crews and reducing the chance of missed collections.

For more information and news about Somerset Council’s Waste Services visit www.somerset.gov.uk/waste and follow @somersetwaste on Facebook and Twitter.



Extra £5.4m secured for road maintenance after a year of challenges



Somerset Council has netted an additional £5.4m to carry out essential repair works the county’s road network.

This year’s extra funding from the Government recognises the unprecedented facing authorities after a year of extreme weather conditions.

A blistering summer followed by a winter of sustained flooding and freezing temperatures has led to a huge increase in defects on roads across the UK with standing water getting under surfaces and then freezing.

By no means the worst hit, Somerset has a major programme of works to tackle. In January alone 4,347 safety defects (potholes, blocked gullies and other damage) were reported – nearly 50 per cent up on 2022. In total there were 27,671 safety defects for 2022/23, up 3,500 on the previous year. There has been the additional challenge of recent flash flooding.

If you spot a problem on the road you can report it quickly and easily using our online report it function: <https://staging.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/report-a-problem-on-the-road/>

'Bus It' bonus as £2 single bus fare in Somerset is extended to Autumn

The major fare cut is part of a national initiative funded by the Government aimed at boosting bus use while helping passengers to save money. It was due to finish on 30 June having been extended from the end of March. Now thanks to further funding it will continue for another four months and from 1 November fares for single journeys in the county will be capped at £2.50. Welcome news for people in Somerset as the cost of living crisis continues to bite, fuelled in part by high petrol and diesel prices.



The £2 single fare is available from all participating operators. The initiative will apply to the majority of routes in Somerset until 31 October. It's worth remembering that the initiative applies to cross-county services, which means for example you can travel from Street to Bristol for just £2.

Somerset Council and the Somerset Bus Partnership have launched the 'Bus It' campaign to encourage more people to use bus services at a time when some routes are under threat due to lack of use. It's hoped the extended £2 fare will provide a continuing boost to patronage and support these aims.

Since the introduction of the £2 fare cap along with other initiatives in Somerset there's been nearly a 15 per cent increase in bus usage across the county.

Visit the Somerset Council website to find out about ticket deals and calculate how much you could save:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/bus-it-you-know-it-makes-sense/>

Volunteer with Somerset Council



Coronation of HM King Charles III gave volunteering the Royal seal of approval with the Big Help Out attracting thousands of people to give up their time to support others. Now Somerset Council wants to build on that support by encouraging more people to come forward and lend a hand – and there is a wide range of opportunities on offer. Some of those opportunities include:

Volunteer Driver – This role involves supporting adults and young people get to and from things like non-emergency medical appointments and school. This is ideal for anybody over 18 with a full UK driving licence and four-door car; particularly those who enjoy driving and meeting new people. Patients and passengers appreciate the opportunity to chat to their drivers too, since some live in remote or isolated situations.

Route1 Advocacy - Adults are needed across the county to give a helping hand to children and young people who may need a bit of extra support by becoming advocates or independent visitors. Advocates offer short-term one-to-one support to assist a child or young person have a voice at meetings concerning their wellbeing or care. Independent visitors befriend and spend time with a child or young person who is in the care of the Local Authority.

Libraries – There are loads of opportunities with local libraries across the county including, the Home Library Service which enables those who are not able to travel to their local library to still use its services. These roles include supporting events in libraries, supporting people to improve their digital skills and helping with this year's Summer Reading Challenge.

Rights of Way – Opportunities include helping keep your favourite local walk clear from vegetation as an Adopt-a-Path Volunteer to commenting on consultations and draft policy documents as part of the Somerset Local Access forum and others in between.

There are even more opportunities available on the Council's dedicated volunteering website where people can find the currently available and regularly updated opportunities. Keep checking back at

<https://assemblevolunteers.somerset.gov.uk/opportunities>

To keep up to date with latest news around Volunteering with Somerset County Council, please like and follow us here www.facebook.com/volunteeringatsomersetcouncil.