

**SOMERSET COUNCIL**  
**Norton St Philip Parish Council**  
**Cllr Dawn Denton**  
**June 2024**

**Somerset Press Releases:** You can view all the Somerset County Council press releases for the last month using this link: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/newsroom/>

**Bath Rugby licence:** The residents of Farleigh Hungerford are concerned about the breaches in the licence for the Bath Rugby venue. Cllr Adam Boyden and I are meeting with the residents on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June to discuss further. The council's local Enforcement Officer and his deputy have left the council, so Enforcement will be difficult. But I have been reassured that there will be someone to support.

**Balls Lane litter:** I have reported this to the Neighbourhood Services team but have not heard if anything has been actioned on this stretch of road.

**Flooding:** I did a walk around the ponds with George Hutchins to understand how this water system works. This will help to support the village-wide flooding report that I believe the parish council is putting together for the flood team at the council. Please advise of anything further in this regard.

**Longmead development:** Due to a migraine, I was unable to attend the meeting with the Planning Liaison Officer in relation to the work needed to complete this development. She did send me a full timeline of events since the start of the process, which I have forwarded onto residents. I will chase this month and see if we are any closer to getting the legalities sorted out to get the work underway.

**Voluntary redundancies update:** In total 201 applications for voluntary redundancy have been accepted by Somerset Council. Within this number are 49 voluntary redundancies, where costs to the council exceeded £100,000 each. The total cost of the voluntary redundancies is £12.8m with an expected ongoing wage bill reduction of £8.2m. The Council needs to save around £40m from the pay bill by reducing the number of staff and managers, including senior directors, approximately 25% of staff in total.

**Compulsory redundancies update:** The Council has launched a 45-day consultation on restructuring which could lead to a significant reduction in Executive and Service Directors. The consultation runs from mid-May to June with those being made redundant leaving the authority between November and March 2025. Consultation on restructuring and any consequent redundancies at lower tier levels will take place later in the summer.

**General Election Voter Registration:** For residents who have recently turned 18 or just moved home, it is important to act to ensure that they are registered to vote in the General Election. The deadline to register is midnight on Tuesday 18 June. Applications can be made online at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) The deadline to apply for a postal vote is 5pm Wednesday 19 June.

Those who are registered to vote at the polling station but do not have an accepted photo ID can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate before the deadline at 5pm on Wednesday 26 June via: [www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate](http://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate) The deadline to apply for a proxy vote is 5pm on Wednesday 26 June.

**Safe disposal of small gas canisters:** Due to the increasing number of gas canisters being put out with recycling, crews have had to manually check recycling ahead of the automated sorting process to avoid fires. This year alone, more than 1,000 gas canisters fires have been avoided. The small canisters, mainly used for camping gas stoves, are often mistakenly put in the kerbside recycling 'Bright Blue Bag'. The bag can be used to recycle empty aerosol bottles but should never be used to dispose of gas canisters. Gas canisters must be taken a local household recycling site.

**Call for sites to offset future developments:** Somerset Council is seeking submissions of land for the potential delivery of phosphate mitigation schemes and Biodiversity Net Gain to support the delivery of new development in Somerset. The "call for sites" aims to gauge the level of interest from landowners, land promoters and land managers, with sites put forward to be assessed through a transparent process and criteria. Prioritised phosphate mitigation sites will go on to negotiate a legal agreement and where eligible, a price for the Council to purchase the arising P-Credits using some of the £9.6m secured from the Government's Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund. Biodiversity Net Gain schemes will go on to negotiate a legal agreement, which can then be logged on the national biodiversity gain sites register, and then sold on to developers. Further information can be found at <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/environmental-call-for-sites/>

**Road surface dressing:** Somerset Council's new partner Kiely Bros are launching a programme of road repairs across the County's network this month. Kiely were awarded a four-year contract from 1 April to carry out a wide range of services, including surface dressing and will be introducing a new piece of machinery known as the Multipatcher, which is a vehicle that can carry out small scale surface dressing works, but also repair a range of other defects. Once preparation work is done, the surface treatments programme, which includes surface dressing, starts in July. Details of this year programme can be found at <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/surface-dressing/>

**Volunteer to help Home Library Service Users:** Volunteers are needed across Somerset to help keep a vital library lifeline thriving. The Home Library Service (HLS) is looking for people who can lead teams of volunteers in Bridgwater, Wellington, Yeovil, Frome, Chard and Crewkerne. The HLS is free and available to anyone who cannot visit a library in person – the housebound, carers, or people vulnerable because of their health. The Lead Volunteers liaise with Somerset Libraries, keep in touch with local volunteers and arrange cover for sickness, and use their local knowledge to support customers and the Home Library Service

**Highways Fine for Nextfibre Networks:** Broadband provider Nextfibre Networks Ltd has received fines and charges totalling more than £11k after pleading guilty to two offences in Somerset which magistrates said posed a danger to pedestrians. Somerset Council prosecuted the firm following works carried out in Bridgwater. Nextfibre Networks Ltd admitted failing to install proper traffic management to ensure the safety of pedestrians while working in two of the town's streets in breach of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991. Along with the two charges in Somerset, Nextfibre Networks Ltd also pleaded guilty to nine similar charges in Devon and had to pay a total of £30k in fines and charges.

Best wishes,

*Dawn*