

Somerset Council Report

Stoke Sub Hamdon Parish Council 1st July 2026

1 Somerset Matters

-1.1-Somerset's young storytellers invited to turn food recycling into a winning tale

Somerset children are invited to get creative in Somerset Council's latest story writing competition. The competition, which opens today, is being run in partnership with the Council's waste contractors, Biffa and SUEZ.

Building on the successful competition in 2025, the contest will encourage children to explore why and how food should be recycled, using Somerset's food characters as inspiration. In a bid to get everyone using their food recycling service, children aged 4 to 11 can get creative and write a short story on the theme of "The Great Somerset Food Recycling Adventure. A story competition to save the planet – one peel at a time." This year, the partnership is offering a £30 book voucher to the winning entry and five runners-up will each receive a £15 book voucher.

New for this year, one participating Somerset school will also receive a £200 book voucher, thanks to a donation from Biffa. Somerset children are invited to write a short story, no more than 500 words, on the theme of food recycling. Children looking for inspiration can visit someset.gov.uk/FoodCampaign to find out more about the food waste friends. Encouraging young writers to think about their environment and the impact of food recycling, this competition is a wonderful opportunity for Somerset's youth to engage in creative writing and make a positive difference.

In Somerset, 7 out of 10 people recycle their food, however on average, around 21% of a household's general rubbish bin is food (by weight). Recycling food is good for the planet and can be used to create green electricity and fertiliser.

To enter, children must write their stories and send them to recycle@someset.gov.uk by **14 September 2026**. Handwritten or printed copies can also be dropped off at any [Somerset library](#). Entries must include the child's name, age, and their parent or guardian's email address or phone number and location.

For full terms and conditions, please visit someset.gov.uk/FoodCampaign.

-1.2 Help shape Somerset's future: have your say on council priorities

Residents, businesses and community organisations across Somerset are being invited to share their views as Somerset Council launches an early-stage consultation on its budget for 2027/28. The Summer Budget Consultation is the first step in the Council's annual budget-setting process. It aims to understand what matters most to local people before detailed proposals are developed later in the year. Somerset Council delivers a wide range of services across the county, including adult and children's social care, waste collection and recycling, public health, education, highways, libraries and community services. Many of these are statutory services that the Council is required by law to provide.

Like councils across the country, Somerset continues to face growing financial pressures despite saving around £135m since 2023. While the council has moved from financial emergency towards financial recovery, the demand for and cost of delivering services continues to rise meaning ongoing actions are required.

This consultation focuses on priorities – asking people what they value most, and what should guide future decision-making.

Feedback from this stage will help shape the Council's approach to balancing the budget and inform the options that will be brought forward for further consultation later in the year. The consultation is open to

everyone, and all responses will be considered as part of the decision-making process. Residents are encouraged to take part and share their views online:

Have your say on Somerset's budget priorities The consultation closes on Monday 27 July.

-1.3- Somerset projects celebrated with countryside awards success

Two Somerset Council projects have been recognised at this year's Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) Somerset Love Your Countryside Awards, celebrating outstanding work to protect and enhance rural communities.

The Council's Ham Hill Country Park project, "Uncovering Ham Hill's past for its future", received an award recognising its work to improve access to the countryside, protect heritage and connect more people with nature. At the same time, the Council's Rainbow Way housing development in Minehead was also recognised, highlighting the delivery of high-quality, energy-efficient homes for local people.

The award-winning Ham Hill project is a five-year programme supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, focused on improving access, conserving heritage and widening participation. The project has delivered:

- New and improved paths and waymarked trails to make it easier to explore the site
- A new accessible visitor centre with exhibition, café and community facilities
- Improved biodiversity and habitat protection, including support for species such as the Shrill Carder Bee
- New volunteering, learning and community archaeology opportunities
- Enhanced accessibility, including an all-terrain mobility vehicle and improved facilities

The project has also helped increase community involvement, with volunteers playing a key role in managing and protecting the site.

In Minehead, the Rainbow Way development has brought 54 new council homes to the town - the first in a generation. These have been developed working with Homes in Somerset, the Council's housing development delivery partner. The development includes a mix of flats and houses, all designed to be energy efficient and affordable, and prioritised for people with strong local connections. The homes are already fully occupied and are supporting local people with secure, high-quality accommodation while contributing to the Council's wider ambition to deliver more sustainable housing.

-1.4- Introducing 'The Care Show for Somerset'

'The Care Show for Somerset' - a free, drop-in event bringing together organisations from across adult social care in Somerset.

We'd love our members to come along, make connections and see what support, services and solutions are available.

Event details

Tuesday 14 July 2026

10am–2pm (drop in any time)

Wellsprings Leisure Centre, Cheddon Road, Taunton, TA2 7QP

Free entry - no registration needed, just turn up on the day

What to expect on the day

The Care Show for Somerset is a relaxed, accessible exhibition where you can:

- Meet a broad range of organisations offering services, support and solutions for adult social care
- Discover new ideas and practical support that may help in day-to-day delivery
- Have conversations with peers, partners and local organisations in one place
- Pick up information and resources to take away

There are no presentations or workshops - it's simply an opportunity to browse, talk to exhibitors, and make useful connections.

Who should attend?

Everyone with an interest in adult social care is welcome - including:

- Adult health and social care providers
- Community and voluntary sector organisations
- Partners and stakeholders from across the system
- Anyone who wants to understand more about adult social care in Somerset

Please share with your communities

We'd really appreciate your help to spread the word. Please forward this email and/or share the flyer with anyone who you think may be interested.

For more information, please visit the RCPA website.

For more information contact:

Name: Vicky Chipchase

Email: Vicky.chipchase@somerset.gov.uk

-1.5- Full Business Case for A38 Major Road Network submitted to Government

Improvement works planned for one of the county's major transport arteries have taken an important step forward following the submission of the Full Business Case for the A38 Major Road Network project to the Department for Transport (DfT).

Developed and delivered in partnership with North Somerset Council, the A38 Major Road Network looks to better connect communities by improving options for getting around – including by active and sustainable travel – whilst also addressing journey reliability times and road safety.

The project includes works at nine locations along the A38 running between Barrow Street junction at Barrow Tanks and the Edithmead Roundabout (M5 J22). Each upgrade is carefully designed to complement one another, future proofing the A38 to tackle the pressures that come with economic and population growth.

The Department for Transport will now look at the final proposals and take a decision on the approval of funds needed to build the project.

2 - Local Issues

2.1 - Roadside trees at East Stoke – Included in the next contract out for tender now. Still awaiting details of this tender. Ongoing monitoring. Work anticipated End July/August

2.2 - Traffic and Road Safety - Request to update lines and 'SLOW' at the end of West Street to improve visual notification of junction, complete. New pole sign expected to be placed for earlier notification of junction This has been agreed, no known date for it to be done at this time.

New speed data taken by Avon and Somerset Police indicating no significant concern that would prompt further action or active measures by them at this time. Work back on the programme as potholing closes.

2.3 - Brocks Mount – John N to follow up with officers on confirming the current situation and seek solutions to outstanding missing digital plans and data. Update awaited.

2.4 - Stoke drainage Survey - Report shared with Highways for comment and action. Productive meeting with John N, to which he will put forward requests for more in depth inspections to then ascertain the work that needs to be carried out to rectify broken gullies and damaged pipes. Paper docs

issued which assisted in full understanding whilst discussions and walk around took place. Action plan being produced.

2.5 – Seawall – Discussed and viewed condition and concerns during drainage meeting. Communications between SC and the Duchy proposed to look for solutions before further deterioration and possible collapse. Awaiting response

Regards Emily and John

Report it first: useful Links to share with your communities

Visit Report a problem on the road: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/report-a-problem-on-the-road/>

Potholes and road damage

Somerset Council repair potholes and other road defects, and maintain our roads, for the safe access of all road users:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/potholes-and-road-damage/>

For traffic updates and roadworks follow @travelsomerset on X and Facebook.

Live travel information

<https://www.travelsomerset.co.uk/>

Report a problem with a street light

We maintain and repair street lights to national standards to provide safe access to all road users:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/report-a-problem-with-a-street-light/>

Roads, travel and parking, road signs, markings and lighting

Includes information about non-illuminated bollards, pedestrian crossings, requesting a village nameplate and how to apply for a new road sign Speed limits: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/road-signs-bollards-and-road-markings/>

Speed limits

Request information about new or existing traffic calming measures:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/speed-limits/>

Traffic lights

We maintain over 200 traffic light locations throughout the county

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/traffic-lights/>

Street and roadworks

We maintain the roads and pavements that are managed at public expense in Somerset

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/street-and-roadworks/>

Sign-up for the latest climate news:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/environment-and-food-safety/climate-and-ecological-emergency/newsletter-sign-up/>.