

Councillor Update

*From your
Unitary Councillors
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**Somerset
Council**

Somerset to get £50 million for flood defences



Great news for Somerset! The Government has announced £50 million of funding to help improve flood resilience across the county, following the severe flooding experienced during this winter's storms. The investment comes after Floods Minister Emma Hardy visited Somerset earlier this year to see first-hand the impact that flooding has had on local communities.

The funding will support a two-year programme of work aimed at reducing flood risk, improving preparedness and strengthening Somerset's long-term resilience to the effects of climate change. Potential projects include engineering and infrastructure improvements in high-risk areas, natural flood management schemes, property-level flood protection measures and a review of lessons learned from recent flood events.

Somerset Council has welcomed the announcement and says it will work closely with partners and local communities to develop plans for how the funding is used. Residents and businesses will have opportunities to help shape the programme, ensuring the investment delivers practical, lasting benefits and helps protect communities across Somerset for years to come.

M5 Closures Spark Fresh Debate Over Somerset Roads



Anyone travelling through Somerset will be familiar with the disruption that follows an M5 closure. What begins as an incident on the motorway can quickly spill onto local A-roads, causing long delays for drivers, residents and businesses.

Somerset Council Leader Bill Revans has raised concerns that these closures are happening with “significant regularity” and says the surrounding road network is struggling to cope with the resulting diversion traffic. He argues that Somerset’s roads were never designed to handle motorway-level volumes and is calling for closer cooperation between Somerset Council, National Highways and Avon and Somerset Police.

Avon and Somerset Police have acknowledged that some A-roads experience “huge volumes of traffic” during closures and say improving traffic flow and reviewing signal systems could help reduce disruption. National Highways has also confirmed it will continue working with partners to explore improvements.

The debate highlights a broader issue about how Somerset manages pressure on its transport network. Options being discussed include better diversion planning, smarter traffic management and longer-term infrastructure improvements.

Somerset shines on screen with major film boost



Somerset continues to cement its reputation as a popular filming destination, thanks to the work of the local film office Screen Somerset. Last summer, the region hosted filming for the upcoming *Masters of the Universe* movie, with scenes shot at two of Somerset's most recognisable landmarks: Wells Cathedral and Wookey Hole Caves.

The production is estimated to have contributed around £6.6 million to the local economy in the last financial year, highlighting the growing impact of film and television activity across the county.

To celebrate the film's release, Wells Film Centre hosted a special charity screening on 3 June in support of MediCinema, a UK charity that brings cinema experiences to hospital patients. Tickets are priced at £10 and include a drink. The film features Somerset actor James Purefoy in a leading role as King Randor, alongside Nicholas Galitzine, Jared Leto, Camila Mendes and Idris Elba.

Somerset locations are also continuing to appear on television screens. Axbridge once again features in Season 2 of *A Good Girl's Guide to Murder*, produced for Netflix and the BBC, standing in as the fictional town of Little Kilton.

From historic landmarks to small market towns, Somerset is proving itself a striking backdrop for global productions.

Please don't bin it: a quick battery reminder



If there's one takeaway from recent local fires at a recycling facility in Taunton and a collection lorry, it's this: batteries don't belong in your rubbish bin.

Somerset Council and contractor **SUEZ** have reminded residents that lithium-ion batteries and vapes are a growing fire risk in waste systems — and the cause is often something as simple as a “dead” device thrown away without a second thought.

Even when they stop working, these batteries can still hold enough energy to ignite if crushed or damaged during collection and sorting.

What not to do

- Don't put batteries or vapes in your rubbish or recycling bins
- Don't assume small items are safe

What to do instead

- Place batteries and vapes in a small, clear tied bag
- Leave it on top of your recycling bin (where accepted locally)
- Take gas canisters to a recycling centre



*Best wishes to you all,
Andy and Mike*

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