

NORTH SOMERSET

# Life

**Get active**  
Ideas to kick-start  
a healthy 2010

**Could you foster?**  
Meet families providing  
a home from home



# Welcome

## Dear resident,

Is it really 2010 already? Despite what happened last year I hope you all managed to have a Happy Christmas and an enjoyable New Year's Eve, with not too much extra weight to lose in the next few weeks.

This time of year is when we have to finalise many months work on the council budgets for the financial year starting in April, as well as having some firm ideas for the following year. When we started, we estimated that we would need to find £19m of savings over the next two years, which included the additional cost of the likely increase in demand for care services.

We have managed to get the 'gap' down to about £6m so far and most of that is in 2011, so there is still time to work on it. We have not set the council tax increase yet because so many different issues change so quickly but, as we promised, we will keep it as low as possible. Did you know that our council tax is already £184 cheaper than Bristol and we get much better services?

We spend about £400m a year and only £80m of this comes from council tax. In April we will print an easy guide to where all the money comes from and what it is spent on.

I have become more aware of dementia care over the last few months. With people living longer nowadays, a recent forecast said that

nearly half of us could suffer from dementia at some stage. It has also become apparent that a number of younger people are also suffering from this truly dreadful condition. It is heartbreaking to see the effect it has but we do not seem to know much about it or how best to help families cope. This council is working on ways to increase the support we can give to those working on prevention and coping skills. It is a very difficult subject to talk about but we cannot ignore it.

Over the next year we are going to add some different features to this magazine, local characters, unusual jobs and more places of interest. All suggestions welcome. I would also like to add more items of news, to tell you what the council is really doing, not what you may have read in the press covering part of our district. Some headlines lately have been outrageous and untrue. This magazine has never been politically-biased and items about the council are always checked for accuracy and fairness.

I'm told that 58 per cent of women and only 55 per cent of men think they are best at sorting out technological problems with household equipment. At least I'm still needed to get rid of spiders.

**Councillor Nigel Ashton**  
Leader of North Somerset Council

## Coming in next month's issue

- **Beyond the crunch**  
How North Somerset is coping with recession



- **Crime and disorder**  
Drugs and anti-social behaviour crackdown
- **Keeping people moving**  
Community transport in Nailsea

Your next issue of *Life* will be delivered from 1 February



This publication is available in large print, Braille or audio formats on request. Help is also available for people who require council information in languages other than English.

Contact 01275 884 139

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01934 888 888

8am–6pm Mon–Fri



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01934 888 802

8am–6pm Mon–Fri

streetsandopenspaces@n-somerset.gov.uk



#### Care Connect for all adult social services enquiries:

01275 888 801

8am–6pm Mon–Fri

care.connect@n-somerset.gov.uk

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01934 622 669

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01934 418 194

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www.n-somerset.gov.uk

## Tourist Information Centre

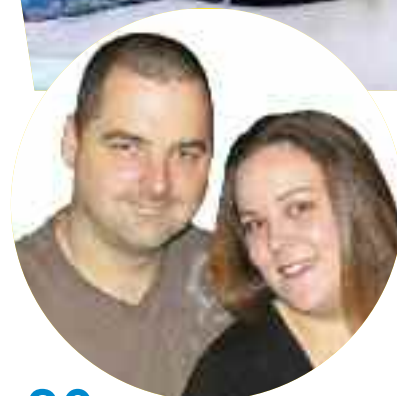
**Phone** 01934 888 800

**Online** [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/tic](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/tic)  
[www.visitsomerset.co.uk](http://www.visitsomerset.co.uk)

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## Public services **oneplace** working together

Public services within North Somerset are working hard together to meet the needs of local people.

North Somerset Council and its key partners were put through a tough review last year by government watchdog the Audit Commission to see how well they work together to achieve their long-term goals of delivering better results for local people.

Results from the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) have now been published on the Oneplace website and show good work is being done.

The CAA judges how well the council, police, health organisations and housing bodies deal with priorities such as health, the local economy and community safety.

The assessment shows that the council is 'performing well' and that in North Somerset:

- quality of life is good and 85 per cent of people are satisfied with the area as a place to live
- the council has a good track record of delivering high-quality services and good value for money
- most young people are in education, employment or training despite the recession
- crime is generally falling and people feel safer
- care services for older people are considered to be high quality.

The CAA replaces the star rating which the Audit Commission previously gave councils.

[www.audit-commission.gov.uk/oneplace](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/oneplace)



## Surviving a stroke

Stroke survivors who want to improve their confidence and learn new skills can now join a free course.

The course, run by North Somerset Stroke Service and the Community Learning Service, takes place on Fridays from February to June in Worle.

Meet new people, try out new skills during taster sessions, explore options you may not have considered before, and gain an OCN qualification in personal development skills.

To book a place contact Debs Munton, community stroke development worker.

[deborah.munton@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:deborah.munton@n-somerset.gov.uk) • 01934 426 625



## Moving house made easy

Tenants in North Somerset who want to downsize to a smaller more manageable property can now get help with moving.

NSHousing, in partnership with North Somerset Council, is offering assistance to its tenants, from getting removal quotes to help with disconnection of mains services and sorting out carpets and furnishings.

A specialist support worker will guide NSHousing tenants through the moving process and give advice about registering with HomeChoice and 'bidding' on potential new homes.

A cash grant of £1,000 will also be given, along with £500 for every bedroom tenants give up.

For more information call tenancy support worker Natasha James.

01275 398 414



## Befriend a child in care

Residents in North Somerset who have a few spare hours each month are needed to help make a difference to a young person's life.

Independent visitors befriend, support and encourage a young person in care by sharing activities and spending quality one-to-one time together once a month.

Active, caring and trustworthy visitors are now being recruited by the organisation Reconstruct.

Suzanne Davies: 01225 780 145  
[yourvoice@reconstruct.co.uk](mailto:yourvoice@reconstruct.co.uk)  
[www.reconstruct.co.uk](http://www.reconstruct.co.uk)





# School term date consultation

Term dates for the 2011/12 school year are now under review and anyone interested in children's education is invited to have their say.

Parents, carers, teachers, support staff, governors and head teachers can all take part in the consultation to decide school and holiday dates for community and voluntary-controlled schools in the area.

School organisation manager Tony Pearle said: "This is a yearly process and we try to agree dates with neighbouring authorities to ensure consistency and continuity throughout the area.

"This takes into account families who may live in one authority but have children attending school in another."

The dates proposed take into account the wishes of schools to retain a 195-day calendar, which allows staff development days to be set within term time.

Consultation closes on **Friday 22 January**

Write to Tony Pearle  
School Organisation Manager  
North Somerset Council, Town Hall  
Weston-super-Mare  
BS23 1UJ

Term	Day	From	Day	To	No. Days
1	Thurs	1 September 2011	Fri	21 October 2011	37
2	Mon	31 October 2011	Fri	16 December 2011	35
3	Tues	3 January 2012	Fri	10 February 2012	29
4	Mon	20 February 2012	Fri	30 March 2012	30
5	Mon	16 April 2012	Fri	25 May 2012	29
6	Mon	4 June 2012	Fri	20 July 2012	35

[tony.pearle@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:tony.pearle@n-somerset.gov.uk) • [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/econsult](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/econsult)



## Home security improvements

Landlords in Weston-super-Mare could now receive financial help to improve home security for their tenants.

The incentive is being offered by the North Somerset Property Accreditation Scheme, which accredits properties to prove private rented accommodation is good quality and well-managed.

To benefit from free home security landlords must apply for the scheme and get their property accredited.

Other benefits include discounts with local companies, one-stop safety advice, and a dedicated hotline for housing benefit queries.

Caroline Crossley,  
Accreditation Officer:  
01934 426 885  
propertyaccreditation  
@n-somerset.gov.uk



## Bus timetables on your mobile phone

Texts cost 25p plus standard network charges



**Text**  **to 84268** for  
times of next buses from this stop  
*(only 25p plus the standard charge from your service provider)*

Bus users in North Somerset can now get timetable information direct to their mobile phones.

Many bus stops now have information boxes at the bottom of their timetable displays which contain unique codes.

Text the unique code to **84268** and receive a message back with the next scheduled departures from that stop. Save the code of your local stop to get timetable information wherever you are and whenever you need it.

Sustainable travel team: 01934 426 426 • For local bus timetables visit [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk)



## Claim the benefit you are entitled to

Residents in North Somerset who are struggling to pay their household bills are being urged to check if they are eligible for benefits.

North Somerset Council's partner organisation Liberata, which provides the revenues and benefits services, works to maximise the income that people claiming benefit can get.

Liberata is keen to talk to people who do not currently claim benefit but may be eligible for help if they have recently been made redundant, lost their job, retired, or had a reduction in household income for any reason.

In addition, since November child benefit is now not classed as income when council tax and housing benefit

is calculated. This means more than 6,000 people in North Somerset have benefitted from this change and 350 more have been identified, generating a possible £300,000 into the local economy.

People who had previously not claimed benefit because of their child benefit income can contact Liberata to see if they are now eligible.

### Liberata surgeries:

**Clevedon** 1-2 Marson Road  
Fridays, 11am-2.30pm

**Pill Resource Centre** 4 Baltic Place  
alternate Thursdays  
(from 14 January), 11am-noon

**Portishead housing office**  
Martingale Way  
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11am-1pm

**South Weston housing office**  
5/6 St Andrews Parade  
Tuesdays, 9.30-11am

**Worle housing office**  
7 The Maltings, High Street  
Tuesdays, 2-3.30pm

## Discover digital TV

The digital TV switchover is only two months away so North Somerset residents who have questions can get them answered during a roadshow.

Find out about the digital TV options, ask general or technical questions, or learn more about the Switchover Help Scheme during the Digital UK tour.

Visit the roadshow:

**Tuesday 12 and Wednesday 13 January** – Morrison's, Locking Gate, Weston-super-Mare

**Thursday 14 January** – ASDA, Phillips Road, Weston-super-Mare

**Saturday 27 February** – Morrison's, Locking Gate, Weston-super-Mare

**Sunday 28 February** – Morrison's, The Triangle Centre, Clevedon

**Saturday 6 March** – Pages Court, High Street, Yatton

**Sunday 7 March** – Co-op, Wyndham Way, Portishead

01934 888 136 or 01934 888 138 • [westoncontactcentre@liberata.com](mailto:westoncontactcentre@liberata.com)  
[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/benefitscalculator](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/benefitscalculator)



Digital UK: 08456 50 50 50  
[www.digitaluk.co.uk](http://www.digitaluk.co.uk)



## Snow White winners

The winners of the Snow White panto tickets in November's *Life* were Jan Harris from Portishead, Val Cave from Nailsea, and Julia Burgoyne from Clevedon.

Each won a family ticket to this year's show at the Playhouse Theatre in Weston-super-Mare. Congratulations.



## Don't keep your library secret

Library users could win some top prizes this spring if they recommend friends and family sign up to their local branch.

Anyone who recommends that a friend or relative joins a North Somerset library will be entered into a prize draw with the chance of winning a variety of prizes, including

a flat-screen digital TV, digital camera and vouchers for Amazon.

The offer starts this month and runs until the end of April.



Ask at your local library for details or visit [www.librarieswest.org.uk](http://www.librarieswest.org.uk)  
For more information call 01934 411 411





## Green-fingered volunteers needed

Local nature reserves, parks and woodlands across North Somerset are enjoyed by thousands of visitors every year but few may realise a dedicated band of volunteers helps sustain them.

During the last year volunteers dedicated more than 3,500 hours to help conserve and protect sites throughout the district.

Groups are based in Weston Woods, Sand Bay and Jubilee Park in Weston-super-Mare, Abbots Pool in Abbots Leigh, Nowhere Woods in Nailsea, and Watchhouse Hill in Pill.

Claire Courtier, a ranger with North Somerset Council, said: "Volunteer groups cater for people of all ages

and abilities. We complete a range of projects and there is a cycle of tasks depending on the seasons, so people won't get bored of doing the same thing.

"Our current volunteers play a valued role in maintaining our sites so a very big thank-you to everyone!"

Volunteering is a fun way to keep active, learn new skills and meet like-minded people. No previous experience is necessary and an experienced leader will guide people through a range of activities. Outdoor clothing and footwear is needed but protective equipment, tools and refreshments are provided.

Claire Courtier: 01934 621 802 or 07771 554 126  
[countryside.vols@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:countryside.vols@n-somerset.gov.uk)



## Help for drug users

The council wants to hear from residents who know drug users to find out about the support and help available.

Wendy Ruddick 01934 426 909  
[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/drugsupport](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/drugsupport)



## Circus skills

Children can try their hands at circus skills during a free play session in Weston-super-Mare this month.

Performers and face painters will be at the event, run by @Play, from 2-4pm on Saturday 16 January at Grove Park.

Balancing the budget books  
 p26



## Support for people with MS

People with Multiple Sclerosis, their carers and families can now get information and support thanks to a new local branch of a national charity.

The North Somerset branch of the MS Society launched at the end of last year and will hold monthly meetings and social events.

Phillip Sinclair 0800 111 4780  
 Geoff Brittan 01934 624 969



## College open evening

Weston College is opening up its doors this month for potential students to discover the opportunities available.

Knightstone and University Campuses will be open from 5-8.30pm on Tuesday 19 January.

Find out about the courses and facilities available, including A levels, work-related qualifications, diplomas, apprenticeships and training.

The next open evening at Knightstone Campus will be Wednesday 10 March, from 5-8pm.

## Driving in icy weather

Drivers are being urged to take care in freezing conditions as winter weather sets in.

A map of North Somerset's salting routes is available to download from the council's website, along with hints and tips about driving in hazardous conditions.

[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/saltingandgritting](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/saltingandgritting)



# Kick-start a health

New Year celebrations often give way to detox days in January and promises of starting new healthy lifestyles once and for all.

If you are wondering where to start, a trip to your local sports centre could open up a world of opportunity.

Exercise can increase energy levels, help clothes fit better, keep illness at bay and minds sharp.

As a new decade dawns, now could be the perfect time to make a fitness promise and look forward to a healthier future.

## Gordano Sports Centre

Portishead • 01275 843 942

Self defence is proving a hit with people at Gordano Sports Centre. Thai boxing, Senshinryu karate and kickboxing are taught at evening classes throughout the week.

For younger members of the family, a new after-school trampolining class starts on 13 January for five to 10-year-olds.



## Churchill Sports Centre

01934 852 303

Churchill's pool has activities throughout the week, including aqua aerobics, a canoe club, sessions for over 40s and lane swimming. Children's swimming lessons are available with qualified instructors on hand for all activities.

For activities on dry land, choose from street dance, karate, fencing, athletics, Pilates, trampolining or roller hockey.



## The Campus

Weston-super-Mare  
01934 427 427

Get a kick out of martial arts at The Campus, with classes in judo, Wing Chun, Aikido, Tae Kwon Do and Krav Maga throughout the week.

For a more relaxing fitness session, try yoga, Tai Chi or belly dancing.



## Wyvern Sports Centre

Weston-super-Mare • 01934 642 426

New classes for 2010 at Wyvern include circuit training and boxercise to kick start the New Year.

Also available is street dance, athletics, trampolining, indoor climbing, sports-specific instructors and a fully equipped fitness room.

## Swiss Valley Sports Centre

Clevedon • 01275 877 182

Enjoy a Latin American theme at Swiss Valley with both dancing and Zumba, a Latin American aerobics class.

Other classes include karate, Ju-Jitsu, teen dance, Pilates, trampolining, adult badminton and fencing.

**Go4Life**  
North Somerset  
[www.go4life.org](http://www.go4life.org)

Encouraging and helping people to live healthier and more active lives

# Why 2010



**G**yms may seem intimidating places to newcomers who are unsure about the array of complex machines or perceived macho environment.

For disabled people, the hurdles to getting fit may seem even harder but now two leisure centres in North Somerset are helping to make exercise inclusive, not exclusive.

Hutton Moor, in Weston-super-Mare, and Scotch Horn, in Nailsea, are both accredited with the national Inclusive Fitness Initiative scheme, a Sport England lottery-funded project which supports not-for-profit fitness facilities to cater for disabled and non-disabled people.

Twenty-five-year-old Kelly Yates, from Weston-super-Mare, has been a regular visitor to Hutton Moor leisure centre for about a year.

She has muscle weakness in her hands and feet because of Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease, a condition where nerves to the muscles do not work properly.

Kelly said: "I'm really enjoying coming here and it gets me out of the house for an hour or so. I can't do a lot of exercise because of the wheelchair but coming here and working on the machines helps a lot."

Instructor Sue Lilly said: "The initiative is not just about the centre or staff, it's also about the equipment and with the funding we have been able to buy new machines which can be adapted for different needs.

"It has really taken off and we have a really good base of people who come regularly."

Two free trials are given as part of the initiative for people to see what it is like and if they can make use of the equipment. A fitness programme is then worked out for users to follow.

Kelly added: "I would recommend it because there are a lot of different exercises you can do and all the staff are friendly."



*Fitness for everyone*

Kelly Yates with instructor Sue Lilly


Hutton Moor Leisure Centre, Weston-super-Mare: 01934 425 900  
Scotch Horn Leisure Centre, Nailsea: 01275 856 965  
[www.inclusivefitness.org](http://www.inclusivefitness.org) • [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/leisurecentres](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/leisurecentres)



# Get up... and get active

Sometimes promises of renewed health and vigour just aren't quite enough to motivate people to switch off their TV, put on their trainers, and head into the great outdoors.

If you're someone who makes regular promises to get fit but never quite gets round to doing it, then the Go4Life reward card could be the gentle push you need.



Go4Life is a North Somerset Council initiative which aims to encourage adults to become more active and healthy. It is targeted at those who currently do less than 90 minutes of physical activity a week.

The new reward card encourages people to do 12 fitness sessions within three months to be entered into a free



Encouraging and helping people to live healthier and more active lives

prize draw with the chance of winning £50 of sport shop vouchers.

Sessions can include health walks, community-run classes, or any activity within a gym or leisure environment such as swimming, badminton or squash.

Everyone who returns their completed card will receive a Go4Life pack including a free pedometer (subject to availability) and be entered into the prize draw.

Reward cards are available from leisure centres, libraries or [www.go4life.org](http://www.go4life.org). The closing date is Wednesday 31 March.

For more information call  
01275 812 057  
[go4life@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:go4life@n-somerset.gov.uk)

## Learn to live a healthy lifestyle

Discover the benefits of getting active and eating well during the first Go4Life healthy lifestyle course starting next month.

The course will look at physical activity, healthy eating, emotional health and wellbeing, as well as possible barriers to fitness that people face.

It starts on Monday 22 February and is open to all North Somerset residents over the age of 19, including volunteer and community groups, organisations and businesses.

Attendance is free but people must register in advance.

For more information call  
01275 812 057  
[go4life@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:go4life@n-somerset.gov.uk)



## Run North Somerset

**F**orrest Gump ran across America from coast to coast during the Oscar-winning movie of the same name and now a similar challenge is set for North Somerset residents.

A Go4Life goodie bag is up for grabs for people who run the equivalent distance of Clifton Suspension Bridge in Bristol to the beach at Weston-super-Mare.

Build running into your fitness regime and keep track of how far you go each time during the challenge, whether it is in the gym, outdoors or as part of a charity race.

Track your progress by picking up a chart at libraries, leisure centres or [www.go4life.org](http://www.go4life.org)



01275 810 995  
[www.go4life.org](http://www.go4life.org)



## MAKE 2010 YOUR YEAR TO BECOME SMOKE FREE!

A grandmother-of-three from North Somerset has finally kicked her 48-year smoking habit.

With help from NHS North Somerset's Stop Smoking Service, 61-year-old Cejay packed in smoking after a hospital stay last February.

She started smoking at 13 and at first felt angry at giving up her beloved cigarettes. Several months on, though, she couldn't imagine ever smoking again. Cejay received help and support at a drop-in clinic at Tesco, Weston-super-Mare, and was joined by her husband. They have saved an astounding £3,764 as a result of quitting.

She said: "The best things about it are not smelling of smoke, being better off financially and, not least, improved health."

"Go for it – it will be the best thing you have ever done. I never thought I would want to give up but if I can, anyone can."

If you're thinking of making 2010 smoke-free, contact the NHS stop smoking service at your local GP practice or pharmacy. **You're four times more likely to succeed.**

Patches and gum are free if you don't pay for prescriptions. Don't worry if you've stopped before and taken a step back – most people take more than one go to succeed.

Last year more than 1,300 people in North Somerset were helped to successfully quit their habit.



**Visit a drop-in clinic:**  
**For All Healthy Living Centre,** Weston-super-Mare, 6.30-7.45pm every Tuesday from 5 January for six weeks

**Tesco café,** Weston-super-Mare 6.30-7.45pm every Wednesday  
**Working Men's Club,** Orchard Street, Weston-super-Mare 11am-1pm every Saturday from 16 January until the end of March

NHS North Somerset stop smoking service: **01275 546 744**  
[sts@nsomerset-pct.nhs.uk](mailto:sts@nsomerset-pct.nhs.uk)



North Somerset



**SMOKEFREE**

# Going uphill in Uphill

Enjoy d



## Walk information

**Distance:** about 3 miles

**Difficulty:** medium/hard – some steep uphill sections. Loose stones and muddy paths. Wear wellies in winter

**Accessibility:** 1 stile (kissing gates at other fences). Path through Uphill Nature Reserve is wheelchair-friendly

**Duration:** about 2.5 hrs

**Map:** OS Explorer 153

**Refreshments:** Pubs and restaurants in Uphill

**Public toilets:** Links Road

## How to get there

### Car

From the A370, turn into Uphill Road South. On-road parking

### Bus

Service 5 runs from Weston-super-Mare town centre to Uphill



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## Dramatic views across both land and sea during this energetic walk

From Uphill Road South, near the junction with the A370, there is a gate into the Woodland Trust's Plantation and Bluebell Field. A number of paths lead through the woodland but head away from the road towards the top right, where a little wooden bridge leads back out onto Coldharbour Lane, a stone track.

Turn left out of the woods and walk straight ahead, across the golf course. The public footpath continues straight ahead, up a little dirt track behind the stone wall. Go up and over the mound, taking care on the steep descent onto the beach.

Turn left at the beach, heading towards the car park. Join Links Road and follow this until you get to Uphill Sluice. Uphill lies below the high tide level so a sluice, which prevents high tide flooding, has existed here since 1606.

Turn into the car park here and follow the road past Uphill Boat Centre. Further on the left you will see a preserved lime kiln, which was built between 1780 and 1850 to provide lime to make the Mendip soils less acidic, for mortar, and to whiten houses.

Go through the kissing gate into Uphill Nature Reserve, which currently has a Green Flag award, making it one of the best green spaces in the country.

Follow the path through the reserve, with the quarry (which was used from the 1800s to 1940s) on your



left. On your left you will also pass a 19th century powder house, used to store explosives for blasting the quarry stone.

Continue through a gate, towards the brow of the hill, with views across Brean Down behind you. Go through another gate to leave the nature reserve and follow the path downhill. Before going through the next gate, veer back round to your right to join the West Mendip Way footpath.

Cross the field, go through kissing gates to cross a little wooden bridge, and keep to the left edge of the field. The path veers uphill but a smaller path

veers downhill on the left. Cross a stile and follow this path, which runs alongside the River Axe, back towards Uphill Boat Centre.

Cut through the boat yard to rejoin Links Road and turn right. The public footpath continues on the right, just past the turning for Old Church Road. This is a steep climb to the top of the hill and St Nicholas Church but the views are worth it.

Walk through the graveyard and turn left at the end of the path through another gate. Walk straight ahead, across the brow of the hill, past the tower. The tower stands on the site of an old windmill and was built as a beacon.

Climb to the top to enjoy views across the Mendips, Quantocks, and Glastonbury Tor.

Continue ahead and at the woodland, keep to the right edge of the field, which then joins Folly Lane. Bear right and a quick left onto Uphill Road South. Here you can walk back to the starting point, with a short public footpath behind the church to cut the corner off.



### Did you know?

Walks previously published in *Life* can be downloaded in PDF format from the council's website. Visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/lifewalks](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/lifewalks)



# Keep warm and well this winter



**Bridget Kidd**

**W**inter weather can be tough so vulnerable and elderly people may need extra support to escape the cold.

For people living in draughty old homes or pensioners struggling to pay rising fuel bills, now is the perfect time to discover what free or discounted services are available.

Bridget Kidd has lived in her St Georges home in Weston-super-Mare for more than 20 years and recently visited a Safe and Warm event to take advantage of free electric blanket testing.

Bridget said: "The blanket was getting very hot at the plug but I didn't think it was dangerous.

"They failed it but gave me a new one for free. I was so surprised but the officer told me it was cheaper to have a new blanket than to call out the fire brigade."

Safe and Warm events, hosted by the North Somerset Affordable Warmth Partnership which includes the council, Avon Fire and Rescue

Service, Avon and Somerset Police and other agencies, take place regularly. Advice is given about home energy efficiency, reducing fuel bills, home security and fire safety.

Bridget has also had her walls and loft insulated through the government Warm Front scheme, a visit from North Somerset Care and Repair Handyvan to fit a new handrail on her staircase, and new security locks from the police Bobby Van.

Bridget added: "It's so nice that people care. There are so many great services out there."

During 2009 four Safe and Warm sessions were held in North Somerset. Free electric blanket tests were carried out by Avon Fire and Rescue with North Somerset Trading Standards. Of 137 blankets tested, 46 failed and 37 were replaced, funded by the Electrical Safety Council.

Trading Standards manager Derek Wilkins said: "We are determined to protect local residents from the risk of

fire and electrocution associated with faulty, old electrical blankets."

The next Safe and Warm event takes place in February.

## Warm Streets

Free and discounted cavity wall and loft insulation is available through the fuel poverty reduction project Warm Streets.

The project is managed by the Centre for Sustainable Energy with North Somerset Council and an energy supplier.

Houses in targeted areas are sent letters offering surveys and insulation. Homes in Clevedon, Banwell, Winscombe and Portishead may be contacted during January.

**Kim Herivel, home energy efficiency officer: 01934 426 686**  
[kim.herivel@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:kim.herivel@n-somerset.gov.uk)



**Warm Streets or Warm Front Grant: 0800 512 012**

The Playhouse Theatre	16-17
Winter Gardens	17
Events across the area	18

# Entertainment from around the world

Music and dance from around the world will descend on North Somerset this month during a popular event to celebrate diversity.

Visitors can enjoy a host of entertainment at the annual Your North Somerset celebration at the Winter Gardens, in Weston-super-Mare, on Sunday 24 January.

Attractions will include traditional singing from Polish community groups and Greek and Bangladeshi dancing.

Food lovers can enjoy taste sensations from around the globe and face painting, henna tattoos and eyebrow threading will be just some of the free activities on offer for people to try throughout the afternoon.

The event, jointly hosted by the council, NHS North Somerset and Avon and Somerset Police, is now in its fifth year and aims to celebrate diversity and the many cultures and groups throughout North Somerset.

As well as entertainment, there will be information and advice on a range of issues, including community safety, employment and benefits. Staff from the council, health, housing, police, voluntary groups and other agencies will be on hand to answer questions.

Your North Somerset takes place on Sunday 24 January, from noon to 4pm, at the Winter Gardens in Weston-super-Mare. Entry is free.



For more information call **01934 634 832** or email [equality@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:equality@n-somerset.gov.uk)

Keep up-to-date with events and activities across North Somerset with the What's On e-newsletter. Email [whatson@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:whatson@n-somerset.gov.uk) to receive the update.

For up-to-date listings visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/events](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/events) or call the Tourist Information Centre on 01934 888 800.



# THE PLAYHOUSE

WESTON · SUPER · MARE

www.theplayhouse.co.uk

High Street, Weston-super-Mare BS23 1HP

## February

**Mon 1** 6.30pm  
**Dance Their Socks Off 2**  
 £5 • Under 18s £3

**Wed 3 - Fri 5** 7pm  
 Thur matinee 10am  
**Churchill School present**  
**Into the Woods**  
 £10 • Under 18s £5

**Sat 6** 7.30pm  
**Elvis on Tour**  
**The Legend Continues**  
 £19.50, £18.50

**Tue 9** 2.30pm and 7.30pm  
**Creation - The Film**  
 Evening £4.50 • Concessions £4  
 Matinee £3.50  
 Free entry to Film Society members



**Sat 6** 7.30pm  
**Elvis on Tour - The Legend Con**  
 Join the UK's most successful impersonator and finalist World's Greatest Elvis, King, in a full evening tribute to the early d swivelling, the '68 and Elvis's Las Veg With his outstanding singers, Lee's spec of Elvis Presley or 'must see'!! Don't [www.elvis-theshow](http://www.elvis-theshow)  
 £19.50, £18.50

**Last chance to see**  
**Snow White**  
 - until Sunday 10 January

**Sat 20** 7.30pm  
**Boycie and Marlene**

Boycie and Marlene were two of the best loved characters from the hit BBC sitcom Only Fools and Horses and its spin-off series The Green Green Grass. This show offers you the chance to meet Boycie (John Challis) and Marlene (Sue Holderness), share in some of the shows' most memorable moments, ask questions and discover things that we didn't see on our screens.  
 £14 • Concessions £12



**Thur 11 7.30pm**  
**Vampires Rock**

£18.50

**Sat 13 - Sun 14 7.30pm (Sat)**  
2.30pm and 6.30pm (Sun)

**Jayne Elizabeth Stage School**  
**present**

**The Journey**

£11.50 • Concessions / students £7.50

**Thur 18 - Fri 19 1pm and 4.30pm**

**Bruce James Productions present**

**The Adventures of Robin Hood**

£9 • Children £7.50, Family ticket £28  
Groups 10+ £7 each

**Sat 20 7.30pm**

**Boycie and Marlene**

£14 • Concessions £12

**Sun 21 7.30pm**

**The Bohemians**

£15, £13

**Wed 24 - Thur 25 10.30am-2pm**

**Shakespeare 4 Kidz present**

**Macbeth**

£9.50 • School parties one teacher free  
per 10 children paid for

**Sat 27 - Sun 28 6.30pm (Sat)**

2.30pm and 6.30pm (Sun)

**The Dance Company**  
**present**

£9.50 • Concessions £8

**WINTER GARDENS**  
WESTON - SUPER - MARE

[www.thewintergardens.com](http://www.thewintergardens.com)



## Special Events

### Your North Somerset

A celebration of diversity in  
North Somerset

**Sunday 24 January noon-4pm**

For details see page 15

### Evening Social Dance

Hosted by Mark Helmore

**Saturday 23 January 8-11.30pm**

Tickets £7

### Charity Social Dance

In aid of Weston Hospicecare

**Friday 19 February 8-11.30pm**

Presented by Mark and Tracy Helmore  
and Sue Burroughs

Tickets £6 (£6.50 on the night)

Contact Mark 01934 518 750

or Sue 01934 621 281

### CD and Record Fair

**Fri 20 - Sat 21 February**

Cassettes, Videos and DVDs

Contact Martin Saunders

01543 250 677

Mobile 07885 700 063

### CSF Superstar Wrestling

**Saturday 27 February**

**Doors 7pm, event 7.30-10pm.**

Tickets available on the door or in  
advance from the Winter Gardens.

Six hard hitting professional bouts  
featuring 20 of the top wrestlers in  
the country.

Event suitable for all the family. More  
information at [www.csfwrestling.co.uk](http://www.csfwrestling.co.uk)

Tickets £10 adult (16 and over) and  
£8 concessions.

To book tickets for any Playhouse or  
Winter Gardens event call the Box Office

**01934 64 55 44**

Cheques should be made payable to North Somerset Council.  
Bookings should be paid for within four working days.

Please mention **Life** when booking your tickets

# Local Events

## January

### CLUBS AND EVENTS

#### Every Monday

**West Hill senior citizens club** 1.45-3.30pm, Avon Way Hall, Portishead. 01275 849 080

**Kewstoke arts and crafts group** 2-4pm, Kewstoke Village Hall. 01934 628 309

#### Wednesday 13 and 27

**Weston Society of Arts** 2pm, Victoria Methodist Church Hall, Station Road, Weston-super-Mare

#### Thursday 21 – Saturday 23

**Dick Whittington** Clevedon Comedy Club pantomime 7.30pm, Princes Hall, Clevedon.

#### Thursday 28

**Bristol Sailors Club** 7.30pm. For people interested in sailing. British Legion Hall, Long Ashton. 01275 462 985

#### Every Friday

**Good Companions senior citizens club** 9-11.30am, Somerset Hall, Portishead. 01275 848 059

**Partially Sighted and Blind Club** 10.30am-3pm, Pembroke Court, Clevedon. 01275 872 559

### VILLAGE MARKETS

**Saturday 9** **Yatton** 10am-noon, Village Hall

**Abbots Leigh** 10am-noon

**Saturday 16** **Claverham** 10am-noon, Village Hall

**Bleadon** 9am-12.30pm, Coronation Halls

**Saturday 23** **Kenn** 10am-noon, Village Hall

### COMMUNITY CAFES

01934 529 320

**Wednesday 13** **Corpus Christi Church Hall**,

Weston-super-Mare  
10.30-11.30am

**Friday 15** **Wesley Centre, High Street**,  
Portishead – 10am-1pm

**Monday 18** **St Augustine's Church Hall**  
The Green, Locking – 10am-1pm

**Thursday 21** **Winscombe Community Centre**  
9.30-11am

**Friday 22** **Claverham Village Hall** 9am-1pm

**Wednesday 27** **Nightjar pub**, Mead Vale  
10.15-11.30am

### DANCE

#### Every Sunday

**Dancing and music** 7.30-10.30pm, Hutton Moor leisure centre, Weston-super-Mare. £4.50. 01934 518 529

#### Every Monday

**Line dancing** 10-11am, Clevedon Community Centre

#### Every Tuesday

**Nailesea Sequence Dance Club** 1.30-4pm, Scotch Horn Leisure Centre. 01275 873 033

**Social tea dance** 2.30-5pm, Clevedon Community Centre

**Avon Dance Club** 7.30-10.30pm, Somerset Hall, Portishead. 01275 848 059

**Easton-in-Gordano Dance Club** 7.45-10.15pm, Church Hall. 01275 374 291

**Weston Folk Dance Club** 8-10pm, Corpus Christi Church Hall, Weston-super-Mare. 01934 514 226

**Backwell Sequence Dance Club** 8-10.15pm, WI Hall, Station Road, Backwell. 01275 462 366

**Ballroom and sequence** 8-11pm, Town and Country Lodge, Bridgwater Road. 0117 9778 200

#### Every Wednesday

**Line dancing** 10.45-11.45am  
Clevedon Community Centre

**Sequence Tea Dance** 2-4pm, Somerset Hall, Portishead. 01275 848 059

**Banwell Sequence Dance Club** 8-10.30pm, Banwell Village Hall. 01275 873 033

#### Every Thursday

**Line dancing** 11am-1pm, Folk Hall, Portishead

**Yatton Sequence Dance Club** 2-4.30pm, Claverham Village Hall. 01934 838 906

#### Every Friday

**Clevedon Sequence Dance Club** 8-10.45pm, Walton St. Mary's Church Hall, Clevedon. 01275 873 314

#### Second Friday of month

**Social dance** 8-11pm, Hutton Village Hall. £4.50. 01934 420 620

#### Last Friday of month

**Social dance** 8-11pm, St James Hall, Winscombe. £4.50. 01934 420 620

### MUSIC

#### First Thurs of month

**Weston organ and keyboard club** 7.30pm, Somerset Suite, Weston-super-Mare Football Club. £5 members, £6 non-members. 01934 812 401

#### Every Friday

**North Somerset Community Brass Band** 7.30-9.30pm, Puxton and Hewish Village Hall. 01275 397 582

**Congresbury Brass Band** 7.30-9.30pm, Memorial Hall, Congresbury. 01275 849 611 / 07986 007 829

#### Wednesday 20

**Jazz at the Orange** 8-11pm, Prince of Orange Inn, Yatton. £7 or £8 on door. 01934 832 193

More listings available at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/events](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/events)



This voucher entitles the bearer to free entry of North Somerset Museum if accompanied by a full paying adult.

One voucher per person, valid until Saturday 31 January 2010.



## Soak up some history this winter

People in Weston-super-Mare can escape the cold winter weather this month while soaking up some history at North Somerset Museum.

*Life* has teamed up with the Burlington Street museum to offer 'buy one get one free' entry throughout January.

Discover the history of the region and visit the shop for its wide selection of gifts including jewellery, stationery, bags, pretty soaps and candles

packaged with buttons and bows and a good range of wooden and educational toys for children.

There is a fine selection of local history and walking books together with pictures, postcards, CDs and DVDs.

You can complete your visit with a cuppa in the courtyard café.

North Somerset Museum, in Burlington Street, Weston-super-Mare, is open from Monday to Saturday, 10am-4.30pm.

01934 621 028 • [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/museum](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/museum)



# Delve into a good book

Curling up with a good book could be the perfect way to spend long winter evenings but joining a reading group could give it an added dimension.

Discussing books with like-minded individuals can offer fresh viewpoints and tempt readers to try books they might not otherwise pick up.

People with writing aspirations could gain new ideas and motivation while reading groups also provide opportunities for people to make new friends from all walks of life.

North Somerset libraries can help readers find a group or help set up a new one.

Ask for the 'reading groups in libraries' leaflet or download a start-up guide from the Libraries West website. Reviews from reading groups can also be posted online.

Library-sponsored reading groups are held in:

- Worle
- Clevedon
- Nailsea
- Portishead
- Long Ashton and
- Pill.



01934 426 388 • [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/readinggroups](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/readinggroups) • [www.librarieswest.org.uk](http://www.librarieswest.org.uk)



WESTON  
COLLEGE

# New year New future

**FLEXIBLE work-related and leisure courses starting January 2010**

A wide range of flexible, work-related and leisure courses starting in 2010 including:

■ Electrical ■ Hair ■ Beauty ■ IT ■ AAT ■ Access to HE ■ Fitness Instructing

■ Art and Design... We also offer Apprenticeships in 53 different job related areas.

Call now on **01934 411 411**, email [enquiries@weston.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@weston.ac.uk) or visit [www.weston.ac.uk](http://www.weston.ac.uk)

**Open Day**

Tues 19th January

5pm - 8.30pm

For details call

01934 411 411

# Providing a ho

**P**roviding a stable home for vulnerable children in need can be tough – but it can also be one of the most rewarding things you can ever do.

There is a national shortage of foster carers in the UK and more are urgently needed in North Somerset to help keep up with demand.

*Life* met two families to find out what it is really like...

## It's a privilege to help

Jacky Bush and her husband Malcolm, from Langford, have welcomed more than 70 children and young people into their home since they began fostering 24 years ago.

Photographs line the walls of their lounge, of their own four children and those they have fostered.

Jacky said: "The children tend to stay with us a long time and a lot keep in touch once they've gone.

"You do your best by them and treat them like your own. I love it when they go back to

their parents but if they can't, we prepare them for adoption.

"Their parents are just ordinary people in extraordinary situations. It doesn't necessarily make them bad. We are here to offer a stable environment until the long-term plans are in place, whatever that may be."

The couple began fostering when Jacky decided to stay at home to bring up their own children.

She said: "It's good to start when your own children are young because they never know any different. They have learnt to be tolerant and have learnt about some of the horrible things in life without experiencing them first hand.

"I couldn't imagine not fostering. It's about being involved in their lives and education. If you can teach a child how to love and be loved you are giving them that sense of security.

"Becoming a parent is probably one of the most challenging but most rewarding things you can do. Being able to do that for someone else's child is a privilege."



North Somerset Council is looking for people with everyday skills to make a huge difference to a young person's life and help shape their future.

There are currently 86 foster carers in North Somerset but more are needed. You do not need to be married, own your own home or have qualifications but you do need time, space, patience, energy and the commitment to support a child or young person through a difficult period in their life.

Expert training and support is given, as well as fees and allowances to cover all costs.

01275 888 999

fostering@n-somerset.gov.uk

www.n-somerset.gov.uk/fostering



Jacky Bush

# me from home

## Helping children blossom

Emma Billington-Drew, of Wedmore, joined North Somerset Council as a foster carer a year ago after providing care for a private fostering agency for the previous three years.

She said: "I couldn't have any more children after my daughter was born so it was something I'd always thought about. Luckily we have the space to do it."

Since starting, Emma and her husband Tom have fostered 14 children and young people, as well as mother and baby assessments where the parents have moved in too.

She is now studying for NVQ qualifications and said: "The training we have received from North Somerset has been outstanding. It makes you feel you are part of a team and making a valid contribution.

"Fostering is about providing a home from home but it goes beyond just offering a person somewhere to stay. It's about empowering them so they can be independent.

"Day-to-day achievements are a highlight. You know the children are feeling comfortable in your home when they start to push the boundaries. It's great to see them blossom, make friends, and be no different to other children. It's also taught my daughter to have more empathy and not be quick to judge.

"Sometimes it's hard work, sometimes it's heartbreaking, mostly it's rewarding and it's absolutely worth it. I can't imagine not doing it."

'I couldn't imagine not fostering'

Emma Billington-Drew  
and husband Tom



# Shaping the future of North Somerset

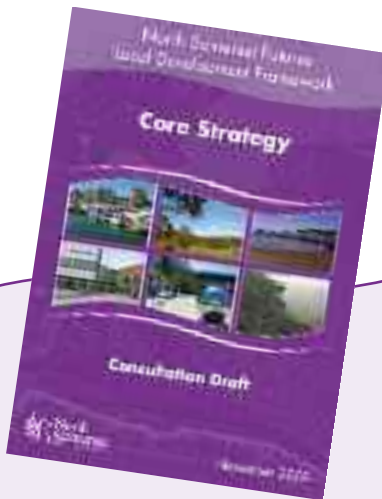


**P**lans to develop North Somerset during the next two decades are taking shape and residents now have another chance to make their voices heard on a number of key issues.

The Core Strategy document outlines the main areas for growth and development in North Somerset up until 2026. A series of information sessions will be held this month for people to find out more.

Major decisions are being made about how North Somerset will grow and prosper and how new developments will benefit the wider community.

In October 2007 residents were asked what they thought the main issues were and how they should be addressed. These views were taken on-board and since then plans have moved forward thanks to new advice and information.



The Core Strategy also contains policies for:

- caring for the environment
- meeting the challenges of climate change
- creating a prosperous economy
- creating strong, safe and healthy communities
- supporting sustainable development.

Local people can now have a second opportunity to give their views on the plans for the area.

## What has changed since the first plan?

North Somerset Council is **not** supporting the Government's Regional Spatial Strategy proposals to build a new community the size of Clevedon south west of Bristol.

The council is saying **no** to reducing Green Belt protection for North Somerset and **no** to 9,000 extra homes as an urban extension at south west Bristol.

## What about elsewhere?

### Weston-super-Mare

Significant growth in Weston-super-Mare is being considered. This includes an urban extension of 9,000 homes balanced with thousands of new jobs for the town.

# Future of North Somerset



Get vocal - be heard



## Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead

These towns are no longer the focus for housing growth so the emphasis instead will be on creating strong, sustainable communities, reducing the impact of traffic and providing jobs, services and homes that people need.

## Villages and countryside

Development outside the four main towns will be limited to reduce unnecessary travel and protect other areas from over-development.

Where small-scale development is justified, any new jobs, schools, local housing, shops or other facilities should be provided within 12 main 'service villages'.

These are Banwell, Backwell, Churchill, Congresbury, Pill/Easton-in-Gordano, Hutton, Locking, Long Ashton, Uphill, Winscombe, Wrington and Yatton.

People living in other areas should see very little new development unless there is a specific, justified, local need.

## Find out more

You can meet planning officers and find out more about how the Core Strategy might affect you by attending a series of drop-in sessions this month.

Anyone who wants to find out more or get involved can see the Consultation Draft Core Strategy document and summary leaflet Shaping North Somerset's Future on the council's website, in local libraries and at the drop-in sessions. Visit [www.consult-ldf.n-somerset.gov.uk](http://www.consult-ldf.n-somerset.gov.uk) to submit your views online.

Consultation closes on

**Friday 19 February**

01934 426 775

[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/corestrategy)



## Meet your planner:

- **Locking Village Hall**  
Grenville Avenue  
Wednesday 13 January, 4.30-8pm
- **Hutton Village Hall**  
Main Road  
Friday 15 January, 3-8pm
- **The Campus, Highlands Lane**  
Weston-super-Mare  
Monday 18 January, 3-8pm
- **Nailsea Town Council**  
Church House, Silver Street  
Wednesday 20 January, 3.30-7pm
- **Portishead, Folk Hall Foyer**  
95 High Street  
Thursday 21 January, 3-8pm
- **Clevedon Town Council**  
44 Old Street  
Monday 25 January, 3-8pm
- **Long Ashton Village Hall**  
Community Centre, Keedwell Hill  
Wednesday 27 January, 3-8pm

# A recycling revolution for North Somerset

North Somerset Council's new and improved waste and recycling collections will be introduced across the area later this year, completely revolutionising the way everyone deals with their waste.

*Life* has been finding out what people in North Somerset think of the changes.



I wanted to let you know how exciting the newly approved recycling revolution is. I am delighted that the council has voted for it. It will make a huge difference and I sincerely hope that residents in North Somerset will embrace the new plan and start recycling (more)!

Angela, Clevedon

Excellent news about revised waste and recycling arrangements. Well done.

Julian, Backwell

For most residents, the new system will be:

Every week



food waste

recycling\*

Every other week



green waste

non-recyclable waste

*\*As well as paper, cans, tins, shoes, textiles and glass, additional materials including plastics, food and drinks cartons, all types of cardboard, mobile phones and batteries will be collected.*

**BRAVO!** The new scheme sounds brilliant and I believe it will make a real difference.

Louise, Weston-super-Mare

Your article on the decisions regarding recycling and waste management indicate a level of consideration I had despaired of seeing in government (national or local).

It seems as though people's needs and opinions have been sought and sensible solutions put forward. The proposals appear practical and viable in the long-term.

Zena, Claverham

**It's going to take me time to sort my rubbish into these different containers. What benefit is to me? Will I get a reduction in Council Tax?**

David, Weston-super-Mare

*There won't be a reduction in council tax as a result of the new collections arrangements – however there won't have to be huge increases in council tax to pay the ever-increasing taxes and fines associated with sending waste to landfill either.*

*The council currently pays £65 for each tonne of waste sent to landfill. £40 of this is landfill tax and this increases by £8 a tonne each year, if we send the same amount of waste to landfill this year it will cost council tax payers over £4.2million, or £48 per household, just to get rid of the rubbish.*

*Waste is a shared responsibility between the council and residents – as producers of waste, residents have a responsibility to reduce the amount sent to landfill. The council has the responsibility to collect and dispose of the waste in the most sustainable manner possible.*

*We are doing our bit to make recycling in North Somerset as easy as possible, but we can only recycle as much as you separate from your rubbish, so we need you to use your recycling services and maximise the amount of recycling you put out.*

**What a joy to read about the council's new waste disposal/recycling policy! It seems that at last our voices are being heard. People with limited space at home, without transport or who need more than a little encouragement to recycle will not travel to a recycling centre to dispose of their plastics.**

Cathy, Barrow Gurney



**Looking forward to the new recycling arrangements. I'm sure they will work well once people get used to the idea.**

Bob, Portishead

**I am very pleased to see we will be recycling many more types of waste than at present, my only concern is the collection of waste food, as pig swill was banned in 2001 and waste cooked food is no good for composting.**

Mervyn, Dundry

*Cooked food waste, including meat and fish, can't be home composted, but can be composted at a specialist treatment facility. All the food waste collected from North Somerset households will be taken to a treatment facility and heated to over 60 degrees Celsius to kill any bacteria. This is to make sure the council complies with the 2005 Animal By-Products Regulations. The product of this process will be used as a soil enricher. The green garden waste will be collected and composted separately.*

**Along with many other houses, mine has a steep driveway leading directly onto the road. There is a set of steep steps up to the house and it would be totally impractical to have a wheelie bin.**

Judith, Kewstoke

*Only those residents with space to safely store a wheeled bin will receive one, this is not a 'one size fits all' scheme. Wheeled bins are a safe, clean and hygienic way for household rubbish to be stored and collected.*

*They deter rats, foxes and other vermin because they can't be torn open – wheeled bins mean cleaner streets with less litter.*



**The council will write to every household before any of the changes begin. If you don't feel the solution you've been offered is suitable for your household or property type you will have the opportunity to contact the council to discuss this before the collections change.**

**For more information about the changes to waste and recycling collections go to [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/revolution](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/revolution)**

 **recycle**  
for North Somerset

# Balancing the budget books



**V**alue for money is a key concern as the country copes with the worst recession since the 1930s.

Tough decisions on spending will therefore be taken next month when North Somerset Council's executive members finalise the budget and council tax levels for the next financial year.

Councillors are spending more than £400m providing services this financial year, from running schools and maintaining the road network to looking after the ever-growing elderly population.

Last June a medium-term financial plan was published which gave a two-year

forecast and outlined the challenges ahead.

A funding shortfall of £18.4m for 2010/11 and 2011/12 was forecast and since then the council has worked hard to ease cost pressures and identify further savings.

Despite increases in costs relating to child care and adult care, together with an anticipated reduction in government grant for 2011/12, the gap now stands at £7.2m. This is £2.5m in 2010/11 and £4.7m in 2011/12.

## Investment in vital services

**F**ifteen key issues were highlighted in the medium-term financial plan, based on the characteristics of North Somerset's population and the challenges it faces.

As a result, major services are getting a funding boost in the 2010/11 budget:

- Children and young people's service – **7 per cent** budget increase to reflect the huge increase in the number of looked-after children.
- Adult social services and housing – **3 per cent** budget increase to cope with the demands of a growing elderly population.



### Pay freeze

The council's budget assumes an anticipated pay freeze will be brought in for North Somerset Council staff for the next two financial years. This is in line with current inflation calculations.

	June 09 £M	October 09 £M	Movement £M
Inflation	+10.9	+7.9	-3
Demographics	+5.7	+6.5	+0.8
Capital programme, financing and investment income	+1.4	+2.5	+1.1
Other pressures	+3.1	+0.8	-2.3
<b>Total pressures</b>	<b>+21.1</b>	<b>+17.7</b>	<b>-3.4</b>
Less savings and additional income	0	-8.1	-8.1
Less additional govt grant	-2.7	-1.7	+1
Less additional council tax income from improved taxbase	0	-0.7	-0.7
<b>Savings/income needed 2010-12</b>	<b>18.4</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>-11.2</b>

Figures correct at time of going to press. Consultations take place ahead of the budget being formerly adopted by full council on 23 February, meaning figures may change between now and then.



## Working together

**C**entral government cuts of up to 20 per cent are expected in the near future so partnership working between local organisations has never been more important.

Last November the North Somerset Partnership met with a range of organisations in North Somerset to discuss ways of coping with life after the recession.

The partnership includes the public sector (such as the council, Avon and Somerset Police, Avon Fire and Rescue and NHS North Somerset), business (such as Bristol International Airport and North Somerset Enterprise Agency) and voluntary and community groups (such as Community Action, VANS and NSHousing).

A number of ideas to tackle key issues were discussed, including:

- Better co-ordination of services to meet health and social care needs of older people
- Improving access to affordable housing
- Promoting a North Somerset identity to attract new business
- Supporting the significant role of voluntary and community sectors.

These will be explored further by the partnership.

[www.northsomersetpartnership.co.uk](http://www.northsomersetpartnership.co.uk)

We need to be prepared. Budget cuts are coming whichever government comes in so we need to plan ahead.

We need to push on and find ways to deliver services even more efficiently. Those who are prepared are those who will survive.

We need to do all we can to protect our frontline services and those staff

who deliver them. Just putting council tax up isn't the answer and that would be unfair on people in these difficult times.

We already have the second lowest council tax in the South West and we are also the number one performing unitary authority in the country. That doesn't happen by accident.

It's not just about throwing more money at things, it's about how we deliver services and we have proved we can do it well. The challenge for the next two years is to maintain our excellent performance while further reducing our costs.

**Cllr Nigel Ashton,**  
Leader of North  
Somerset Council



## Council could cut costs in Clevedon

**P**lans to establish a North Somerset Council office in the north of the district could be finalised this month.

Councillors will decide at a meeting on Tuesday 5 January whether to buy the former Clerical Medical offices at the Castlewood site in Clevedon. The acquisition of the site would allow the council to reduce the number of sites it operates from and improve service delivery through closer working between services.

**This would achieve greater economies of scale and avoid future costs on inadequate premises.**

**If councillors agree to buy Castlewood and dispose of other leased and owned properties, savings could be made within four years of the purchase according to a financial analysis.**





# Help stamp out hate

Everyone has the right to live without fear of hatred so a new campaign has been launched to encourage victims or witnesses of hate incidents to report their experiences.



The Responding to Hate Incidents in North Somerset partnership includes North Somerset Council, Avon and Somerset Police, NHS North Somerset, registered social landlords, Weston College, North Somerset Citizens Advice Bureau, Educational Action Challenging Homophobia, Somerset Race Equality Council, Support Against Racist Incidents and Victim Support.

A partnership of organisations in North Somerset is working to make a difference by strengthening the ways people can report hate incidents.

Someone is targeted during a hate incident because they are believed to be different. It may take many forms, including physical, verbal or written abuse, and be motivated by prejudices against someone's race, faith, sexual orientation, age, gender or disability.

Miss B was racially abused by another customer in a shop in Weston-super-Mare. She reported it and received support from Somerset Racial Equality Council, Victim Support and the police, and the perpetrator was caught and prosecuted.

She said: "The support I received was fantastic and there are now posters around the store promoting zero tolerance of racist abuse by customers."

Mr R was beaten up and called homophobic names while walking home after a night out. He reported it and received support from Educational Action Challenging Homophobia, in arranging counselling and working with a housing officer to arrange a move.

Louise Roberts, from North Somerset Council, said: "We want to encourage people to come forward

to report incidents so they can get the appropriate support.

"We work with agencies, such as the police and voluntary groups, to make sure effective action is taken to stop further incidents or to take action against the perpetrator."

## Report a hate incident

Reporting centres are working with the police.

If you or your property are in danger call **999** or **0845 456 7000** for non-emergencies.

**Or...**

**Call**  
**01934 888 801**  
(8am to 6pm Mon-Fri)

**Online**  
Download a form from  
[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/equalities](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/equalities)

**In person**  
Report in person at police stations, council offices, libraries, housing offices, Weston College, the For All Healthy Living Centre and Citizen's Advice Bureau in Weston-super-Mare



Responding to Hate Incidents in North Somerset

**D**omestic abuse can have long-term effects on children so victims are being encouraged to come forward and get support.

North Somerset's refuge for domestic abuse victims, Gemini, has appointed a specialist worker to help children and young people put their experiences behind them.



The impact domestic abuse has on children is one of the main reasons why a victim will decide to leave an abusive relationship.

The children's worker, who is there thanks to funding from Children in Need, said: "My role is to support children and help families see what services are available. I help get children into nurseries, schools, or one-to-one tutoring for the older ones.



"It's about trying to get a sense of normality and stability. It can be hard because when families come to the refuge, it's a very different environment and they have to learn to share things.

"The thing to remember is that there is support out there and they're not on their own."

Gemini provides accommodation for up to 14 families who have fled domestic abuse.

Free 24-hour national domestic violence helpline (run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge) 0808 2000 247



[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/domesticabuse](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/domesticabuse)  
[www.endabuse.org.uk](http://www.endabuse.org.uk)

## Did you know?

- Every year police in North Somerset receive about 2,000 reports of domestic abuse
- North Somerset agencies hold monthly meetings to discuss the highest risk domestic abuse cases. Every year the lives of about 200 children are discussed at these meetings
- It is estimated that 200,000 children in the UK live in households where there is a known risk of domestic abuse and violence
- Studies show that children from households with a background of domestic violence are two and a half times more likely to develop anti-social and aggressive behaviour in later life
- About 50 per cent of children living with domestic abuse have been badly hit or beaten and are more likely to experience sexual and emotional abuse



# Caring for Children in need

# Help END electrical waste



**E**lectrical waste is one of the fastest growing types in the UK but of 154 million products bought last year, only 10 per cent were recycled.

About a quarter of people buy new electrical goods for Christmas but many old items such as kettles, cameras, mobile phones and toys are thrown away or gather dust at the back of a cupboard.

The majority of electrical waste ends up in landfill but because of lead and toxins which contaminate soil and water they are classified as hazardous.

The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive encourages people to reuse, repair and recycle electrical goods because they contain materials which can be salvaged.

An average iron contains enough steel to produce 13 steel cans, while other materials found in electrical goods can include plastics, ceramics and precious metals.



Recycling helps to save natural finite resources and reduces the environmental and health risks associated with sending electrical goods to landfill.



Websites such as Gumtree and Freecycle give residents in North Somerset the opportunity to give products away. Many charities also accept electrical products and often collect items from homes for a donation. Some companies now pay for old mobile phones too, an excellent way to get paid for recycling.

## Local charities

accepting electronic items

Who?	What?
Sofa Project	all electrical items
Refurbiz	all electrical items
Emmaus Bristol	small electrical items
Byteback	computers
Computers for African Schools	computers
Cartridges4charity	ink cartridges

Retailers such as Currys, PC World, TK Maxx and Game also accept old electrical goods when you buy new items from them. Check with the store first.



You can recycle your electrical goods at recycling centres at Backwell, Portishead and Weston-super-Mare. Look out for pink electrical signs or ask an attendant.

For more information about recycling your waste electrical equipment go to [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/weee](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/weee)



# Letters to the Editor

Send your letters to  
**Editor, North Somerset Life,**  
**North Somerset Council,**  
**Room 165, Town Hall,**  
**Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1UJ** or  
 email [editor@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:editor@n-somerset.gov.uk)

Letters submitted without a valid name and address will not be considered for publication. Please tell us if you do not want your details published. Due to space restrictions, letters may be edited.

## Dear Editor,

Just a note of thanks to the hedge cutters around Barton. As a resident I am very impressed with the work they do year after year. The hedges look so neat and well-ordered, and are a shining example to other authorities. Please thank them.

*Elisabeth Sanders, Winscombe*

## Editor's reply:

*Many thanks for your letter and I am pleased the work done by our streets and open spaces team is appreciated. I'll make sure your comments are passed on.*

## Dear Editor,

I have been searching your website for information about children's playgrounds as I have two grandchildren (who are two and five) staying for a few days. How can I find out where to take them?

## Steve Makin, website editor:

*North Somerset Council maintains a number of public parks and about 40 children's play areas throughout the district. They are inspected twice a week to make sure they are safe to use.*

*Our website lists full details about where they are and what facilities are available at each one.*

*To find out more visit*  
**([www.n-somerset.gov.uk/playareas](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/playareas))**

*The website also has a wealth of information about other activities you may find useful for entertaining young children, such as our leisure centres*  
**([www.n-somerset.gov.uk/leisurecentres](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/leisurecentres))**.

*A great resource is the*  
**Directory for Children, Young People and Families**  
**([www.n-somersetcsd.org.uk](http://www.n-somersetcsd.org.uk))**, which is an online database of local events, services, and organisations. Here you will find a variety of activities, such as details about story sessions at local libraries or special events for under fives at the museum.

*I hope this helps and the children enjoy their stay!*

## Walk correction:

Please note the walk featured in December's *Life* around Long Ashton should start in Rayens Cross Road, not Rayens Close as mentioned. Apologies for any confusion.

# www.n-somerset.gov.uk/tic Tide times for Weston-super-Mare

## Tide Facts

	Date	High water		Low water		High water		Low water	
		Time	Height (M)	Time	Height (M)	Time	Height (M)	Time	Height (M)
Approximate high water times at:		<b>am</b>		<b>January 2010</b>		<b>pm</b>			
Clevedon: 10 min	1 Fri	06:46	12.10	00:21	1.07	19:16	12.13	12:47	0.96
Portishead: 18 min	2 Sat	07:36	12.45	01:09	0.83	20:04	12.37	13:37	0.73
later than Weston-super-Mare.	3 Sun	08:22	12.63	01:58	0.68	20:51	12.40	14:26	0.62
	4 Mon	09:09	12.58	02:47	0.67	21:37	12.18	15:17	0.68
	5 Tue	09:55	12.27	03:36	0.82	22:23	11.72	16:05	0.91
	6 Wed	10:42	11.73	04:23	1.10	23:09	11.08	16:52	1.27
	7 Thur	11:30	11.04	05:10	1.48	23:58	10.38	17:40	1.71
Weather conditions which differ from the average will have an effect on the differences between predicted and actual tide times.	8 Fri	-	-	06:02	1.93	12:23	10.32	18:32	2.19
Strong winds can hold the tide in or push the tide out. Air pressure can also cause fluctuations in predicted levels.	9 Sat	00:55	9.74	07:01	2.41	13:24	9.70	19:35	2.63
Tidal predictions for Weston-super-Mare have been computed by the Proudman Oceanographic Laboratory. Copyright reserved.	10 Sun	02:02	9.34	08:12	2.75	14:34	9.35	20:48	2.82
	11 Mon	03:16	9.33	09:22	2.72	15:52	9.42	21:52	2.64
	12 Tue	04:27	9.73	10:22	2.40	16:57	9.83	22:47	2.26
	13 Wed	05:23	10.29	11:11	2.01	17:49	10.32	23:32	1.90
	14 Thur	06:09	10.78	11:52	1.72	18:32	10.70	-	-
	15 Fri	06:49	11.09	00:10	1.67	19:10	10.92	12:29	1.56
	16 Sat	07:25	11.24	00:46	1.56	19:43	11.04	13:05	1.49
	17 Sun	07:58	11.30	01:20	1.53	20:13	11.11	13:39	1.46
	18 Mon	08:29	11.32	01:53	1.52	20:43	11.14	14:12	1.44
	19 Tue	08:58	11.27	02:24	1.52	21:12	11.06	14:45	1.46
	20 Wed	09:29	11.05	02:55	1.58	21:43	10.77	15:18	1.59
	21 Thur	10:02	10.64	03:27	1.76	22:14	10.32	15:52	1.84
	22 Fri	10:34	10.12	04:00	2.03	22:49	9.83	16:26	2.14
	23 Sat	11:10	9.62	04:38	2.32	23:29	9.38	17:06	2.44
	24 Sun	11:59	9.19	05:26	2.63	-	-	18:04	2.76
	25 Mon	00:30	9.00	06:35	2.97	13:23	8.91	19:28	3.05
	26 Tue	02:08	8.98	08:26	3.08	14:58	9.22	21:15	2.74
	27 Wed	03:33	9.64	09:48	2.46	16:13	10.02	22:17	2.07
	28 Thur	04:43	10.59	10:47	1.79	17:19	10.94	23:16	1.46
	29 Fri	05:44	11.51	11:47	1.19	18:16	11.77	-	-
	30 Sat	06:38	12.26	00:12	0.91	19:06	12.38	12:39	0.66
	31 Sun	07:25	12.77	01:02	0.46	19:52	12.75	13:28	0.27
<b>You can buy 2010/11 tide timetables from Weston-super-Mare Tourist Information Centre for £1.50.</b>		<b>am</b>		<b>February 2010</b>		<b>pm</b>			
	1 Mon	08:09	13.06	01:47	0.18	20:35	12.87	14:15	0.10
	2 Tue	08:52	13.06	02:33	0.12	21:17	12.67	15:00	0.20
	3 Wed	09:34	12.70	03:17	0.33	21:57	12.13	15:40	0.55
	4 Thur	10:15	12.02	03:56	0.74	22:37	11.33	16:18	1.06

# WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER

We work with key partners in local public, private and community organisations for a better North Somerset.

The 2009 Comprehensive Area Assessment proves we are fully committed to ensuring local people get the best from life.

- Good work is being done to improve the quality of life for the most disadvantaged people
- Most young people are in education, employment or training, despite the recession
- Crime is generally falling and people feel safer
- Core services for older people are considered to be high quality

**oneplace**

