

## ***Hello from Cllr Sarah Dyke, Environment Portfolio Holder,***

I hope all of our readers had a fantastic holiday season and have kicked off the new year with some eco resolutions!

Here at SSSDC, we have ramped up our work with the other District Councils and Somerset County Council to start looking at how we can collectively reach net-zero across Somerset, and work together to mitigate and adapt to climate change. It is a very exciting time with many new opportunities available with a more collaborative effort from all five councils.

You may have also noticed that Get SuSSed has had a little spruce up! We have taken on our readers feedback and have stripped our newsletter back to give you the content you asked for, and our new colour scheme is moving towards the new Somerset Council branding (how exciting!).

We always welcome further feedback, especially at a time where we are looking at how we can create an environment newsletter that works seamlessly to represent all the councils moving forward. Please let us know if you have any comments [here](#)-your feedback is greatly appreciated!

Now, please enjoy our newsletter!

***Best eco wishes from Sarah x***



## News and events



### **Major incident declared in Somerset**

This month we have seen a combination of snow, ice, unseasonably warm temperatures and a major incident of flooding declared in Somerset. This extreme weather is a direct impact of climate change, and our community must come together to support the mitigation and adaptation to these impacts. We want to hear more about what your ideas for change are, or the changes you are already making within your community, as together we can build a more sustainable Somerset. [Contact us here](#) and find out more about the flooding below.

[Read more](#)

### **Hedge Laying Course taking place in Yeovil Country Park!**

Join our very experienced Ranger, Matt, on 11 March from 10am until 3pm to learn about the art of hedge laying, including the different tools, styles and techniques used. You will also gain insight into the benefits of hedge laying for flora and fauna. Sturdy footwear and clothes you don't mind getting dirty are a must, but gloves can be provided. Tickets are £45 per person and places are very limited so please do not hesitate to book via the [Visit South Somerset website](#), or by contacting the Countryside team directly [here](#).

### **Wrap: The Business of Recycling**

Businesses and organisations already have a 'Duty of Care' to store, transport and dispose of their waste without harming the environment. New legislation is coming in 2023, which will require all businesses, healthcare establishments and academic institutions to separate their recycling.

Somerset has been chosen as one of five areas to pilot a new business support programme to inform and prepare businesses for the new recycling regulations. Somerset County Council (SCC) and Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) are working with WRAP, a global sustainability charity, to deliver the pilot, which will take place for 10 weeks between February 13 and April 23.

WRAP will monitor the impact and results of the pilots. The findings will be used to help shape and improve the final content of the Business Recycling website before

it is rolled out nationally. For more information, please contact [greenbusinesssupport@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:greenbusinesssupport@somerset.gov.uk).

## Looking to plant trees this season?

Reimagining the Levels are offering grants to support the planting of woodland or hedgerow during this planting season, which runs until March. Individuals and community groups alike can apply, or even just get in contact if you would like to dedicate some time volunteering and supporting others. Please contact their liaison, Kate, [here](#) for more information, or [visit their website](#).



## HVO fuel update

A HVO (hydrotreated vegetable oil) tank is now fully installed at the Lufton Depot in Yeovil, and the fuel arrived late last month! HVO is made from recycled vegetable oil and has much lower carbon and particulate emission levels than fossil fuel diesel.

The HVO fuel is now powering two large sweepers, and if the trial is successful, we will look to add more compatible vehicles later down the line. Unfortunately, older vehicles cannot use HVO due to the age of the engine and some newer vehicles cannot use HVO under their warranty, so we are currently fairly limited to which vehicles can be used. Despite this, we are positive about the trial and invested in trying to run as many vehicles as possible off of HVO as we transition to electrified transport over the coming years.



## Review of COP15

Our very own Environment specialist Josh has written a summary of the recently held COP15 below!

*In Montreal between the 7th - 19th of December 2022, 195 country representatives came together as part of **COP15, the principle UN biodiversity conference**, where they **agreed a deal** to protect 30 per cent of land and sea on the planet by 2030.*

*This has been commended by many for progressing the previous protections set in 2010 at Biodiversity COP 10 (which unfortunately were not met), however others suggest this is akin to the historic and outdated model of human-exclusive conservation known as "fortress conservation".*

[Read full article here](#)



## FREE Sustainable Transport for Business Event

Transport is one of the most significant sectors for carbon emission, so change is essential if we are to make progress towards net zero. This online event taking place on 8 March from 2.00pm - 3.45pm, gives businesses the opportunity to consider transport developments and actions to achieve sustainable transport solutions. The webinar is open to any business in Somerset that uses vehicles for work purposes, including cars, vans or heavy goods vehicles, or any business whose employees commute to the workplace. For more information and to secure your ticket, [click here](#).



## Somerset switches on to repair and reuse

Somerset's Fixy project is successfully switching more people on to the idea of repair and reuse of electricals, a survey has found. More than 90% of Fixy event attendees who completed the survey said they were 'very' or 'quite' likely to get something repaired for reuse.

With the Fixy van visiting many more communities in the coming weeks, Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) wants everyone to make 2023 the year they love their stuff for longer.

Fixy is a grant-funded initiative run by SWP and Resource Futures, supporting and promoting Somerset's fantastic network of volunteer-led repair groups, whilst also attending repair events to provide practical help with tools, spares and safety testing.

For more information about these events and the regular repair café sessions run by volunteers, visit the [Somerset Waste website](#).

## Skills to Deliver Housing Retrofit Webinar

Finding the right teams for retrofit programmes in housing is essential to achieve energy-efficient buildings that keep residents' bills down. This session on 16 February at 11am, will consider what expertise will be needed and where the skills gaps are for both short and long-term retrofit delivery, featuring our very own Environment Specialist, Cara Naden, as a guest speaker! [Click here](#) to register your interest.

### Ham Hill's stories to come to life with support from the Wolfson Foundation!

The Countryside Team at South Somerset District Council are delighted to announce that grant support from the Wolfson Foundation will help bring to life Ham Hill's rich tapestry of heritage stories, as part of the 'Uncovering Ham Hill's past for its future' project.

Thanks to a £74,200 grant from the Wolfson Foundation, a permanent exhibition in the new Visitor Centre (due to open in Autumn 2024) will be created, based around key themes, with the aim of engaging and exciting visitors to Ham Hill as a focus for human settlement and activity over thousands of years.

To keep up to date with the progress of 'Uncovering Ham Hill's past for its future' project please [click here](#).

[Read full article here](#)



### Your Green Pension

If you have a pension, you have the power to make a difference. Greening your pension is 21 times more effective at reducing your carbon footprint than giving up flying, going veggie and switching your energy provider combined.

Pension funds often invest into companies that do harm and accelerate climate change. But it doesn't have to be this way!

Now you are armed with this knowledge, it's time to take action, and Make My Money Matter can help by supporting the search for more ethical and eco-friendly investments.

[Green my pension!](#)

## Safe & Warm Somerset's NEW energy outreach worker

Atha has been going around Somerset sharing energy-saving advice that helps people stay warm and reduce their bills. Atha's available to talk to local groups or attend events to support as many people as possible to keep safe and warm at home. If you're interested, send her an email [here!](#)

The recent cold snap is also highlighting how many homes are leaking heat through poorly insulated walls and draughty windows and doors. This leads to an increase in bills and carbon emissions as heat is being wasted. If you're wondering how to make your home more energy efficient you can find out some top tips, what grants are currently available, and how to call the Centre for Sustainable Energy for advice [on our website](#).

## Recommended Reading and Ones to Watch



### [The Climate Book, created by Greta Thunberg](#)

This essential guide to mitigating climate change and helping change the world comes to you from the world's leading climate activist, Greta Thunberg.

### [Islands of Abandonment: Life in the Post-Human Landscape, by Cal Flynn](#)

In this book, Flynn takes us across the globe to some of the most haunting abandoned places, exploring how nature continues to flourish in humanity's absence.



### [The Hairy Bikers Go Local- BBC iPlayer](#)

The Hairy Bikers are back on our screens with their new TV show, 'The Hairy Bikers Go Local'. In this series they explore the UK on their new electric motor bikes, in search of the best local restaurants and local suppliers.

### [The Minimalists: Less Is Now- Netflix](#)

This insightful documentary explores how humans have become obsessed with 'stuff', and how de-cluttering your home and living a minimalistic lifestyle can support your mental

wellbeing.



And finally...



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