



**Welcome to our June issue of Get SuSSed, with all the latest eco news from SSDC and across the district, plus learning resources, funding opportunities and recommended reads, competitions and more!**



## *Hello from Councillor Sarah Dyke our Portfolio Holder for Environment*

This month we've been enjoying some wonderful sunny weather and it's been very apparent that the birds, bees and pollinators have been making up for lost time after last month's wet weather. I've been out and about at our new no mow areas and can

already see new flowers blooming and wildlife making the most of them.

Our Countryside team has been surveying wildlife at Ham Hill and made some exciting discoveries. We also have the results of the electric car and e-bike survey to share with you.

And before I go, I must remind you that Plastic Free July is happening soon, so a great time to stop and think about our plastic use. With the Recycle More scheme rolling out, I think it will be even more apparent how much plastic is in our lives. Check out the feature on the Five R's.

*Best Eco Wishes  
Sarah x*

## SSDC Green News

### **South Somerset District Council No Mow Trials are blooming!**

Last month we told you about the no mow verge conservation trials happening on some verges across South Somerset. These are now marked out and already flourishing. Our Portfolio Holder for Environment Sarah Dyke visited the Cucklington site and told us all about the scheme and how to create our own space for rewilding.



## SSDC Countryside Wildlife Surveys essential to habitat management



Spring has been a busy time of year for the rangers across our countryside sites. As well as managing our sites for visitors to enjoy, they have been busy monitoring the habitat management they do for the wildlife too. This means lots of surveys!

Carrying out wildlife surveys allows us to monitor the populations of important 'key indicator' species such as butterflies, birds, reptiles, bees, wildflowers, water voles and more. The information we record can show changes in population or distribution which can help influence our habitat management works on site. The information also gets shared with the Somerset Environmental Records Centre (SERC) and feeds into national databases to monitor trends and distribution for species nationally.

Surveys for some species require a special licence from Natural England as they are protected by law, such as great crested newts, bats and dormice. The rangers hold the licences themselves or work with licensed surveyors to carry out these surveys in a way that Natural England prescribes so that the animals are not disturbed or harmed.

**A recent bat survey at Ham Hill delighted the rangers, not only with a new species record for the site (Whiskered bat) but also with an unexpected sighting of a glow worm! Survey's always throw up some surprises and it is rewarding to see the wildlife that we manage thriving across our sites. Sometimes we don't record any sightings of the actual animals we are surveying for, like otters at Yeovil Country Park, but seeing the signs that they are present along the river can be just as satisfying and gives us hope that we may one day be able to glimpse these fantastic animals in their natural habitat.**



Most surveys take place between April and June as this is the peak breeding period for much of our wildlife and so they are most active during this time. The surveys are carried out at different times of the day and evening, depending on when species are most active and so breeding bird surveys have seen the rangers out at 5.30am whilst bat surveys don't start until 9.30pm! Reptile and invertebrate surveys continue throughout the summer at more sociable times as they are dependent on the warm weather for their energy.

Whatever the time of day or night, it is certainly an aspect of the job that the rangers find hugely enjoyable and rewarding, after all, it's why they chose conservation as a career in the first place!



### Set up a survey for your local greenspace

We can help support you set up surveys for your local greenspace, please get in touch with us [atssdcenvironment@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:atssdcenvironment@southsomerset.gov.uk). Or you could also explore the local area groups of the [Somerset Wildlife Trust](#) or [species groups](#).

## Recycle More is live!

As of Monday 28th June, the new Recycle More service is live, bringing a new improved recycling service 78,000 South Somerset households.

You should have received posted information from Somerset Waste Partnership and delivery of your new blue bag and be good to go! If you're still not sure how it all works you can find everything you need to know [here](#).



## Electric Transport Car Sharing Survey Results

Thank you to everyone who took part in the electric car and bike sharing survey. The results have now been collected and **you can read the results**[here](#).



## Sharing is Caring



Now that many of us are working from home and using our cars less, there are great ways we can maximise carbon and cost-savings by sharing our car with others. There are several ways we can do this from loaning the vehicle out through a certified hire scheme or sharing journeys to work, school, events or the shops through lift share schemes.

**Interested? Here are some existing solutions already available:**

[Hiya Car](#) - Peer to peer local car rental

[Getaround UK](#) - Rent your own car out

[Karshare](#) - Share your car and rent a car in your local community  
An even better eco option is to lift share – a full car is less carbon-emitting than an unfilled train or coach. Learn more at [Go Car Share](#) and [Liftshare](#).

## Council completes eco-friendly car park extension in Chard

**Boden Street car park in Chard, has received an 'eco-friendly' face lift with a new type of surfacing and low energy lighting bringing many benefits.**



Rather than traditional tarmac, SSDC has used locally sourced, stabilised aggregate to cover the surface of the car park extension. This greatly reduces the energy required in the construction process, and allows water to soak through to underlying soils, reducing pressure on the town centre surface water drainage, and so reduce the risk of flooding. It will also allow us to retain the existing trees because they can continue to access water and root growth can be accommodated without breaking tarmac.

The aggregate was sourced locally from Chard quarry and so transportation was kept to a minimum and the previous lighting has also been replaced with new low energy LED fittings. These will contribute to a significant reduction in the use of electricity and the overall carbon footprint of the project. You can find out more about Chard Regeneration on our microsite at [www.chardregeneration.co.uk](http://www.chardregeneration.co.uk)

## Parish Environment Champions

Helpful advice for  
Parish & Town Councils

20 actions parish and town councils can take on the climate and nature emergency

Parish and Town Councils can get some really good advice on actions they can take in their community to combat climate change.

Visit the [Climate Action website](#) to get the low down on what your parish could do to

make where you live a greener healthier place.

Don't forget we're also here to help, so if you have any questions on how you could make a difference where you live, please contact us at [ssdcenvironment@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:ssdcenvironment@southsomerset.gov.uk)

## COP26 Request for Best Practice Prompts

Has your Town or Parish Council declared a climate emergency? Are you working towards mitigating and adapting to climate change to reach local net zero?



We know there are some fantastic environmental initiatives happening across our parishes, which could be shared to benefit other local authorities.

So, ahead of this year's COP26 summit in Glasgow, we're being asked to showcase local council's work to the rest of local government.

COP26 are looking for universal tools, templates, and policies which other councils can use and adapt to their own local areas, in order to share good practice. If every council contributes one piece of learning; they can gather many rewards for the whole of local government.

If your Parish Council has some notable practice to share please submit it through [this form](#) by the **9th of July**, and we'd love to learn more about what you are doing too! So if you could please also share with us at [ssdcenvironment@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:ssdcenvironment@southsomerset.gov.uk) that would be wonderful!

## Advice to Government 2021 Progress Report to Parliament

The Climate Change Committee's annual assessment of UK progress in reducing emissions and biennial assessment of progress in adapting to climate change. This double report – Progress in reducing emissions and Progress in adapting to climate change provides a comprehensive overview of the UK Government's progress to date on reducing emissions and adapting to climate change. **Together, the assessment offers more than 200 policy recommendations covering every part of Government. Read the full report and recommendations [here](#)**

## Independent Assessment of UK Climate Risk

The Adaptation Committee's Independent Assessment of UK Climate Risk sets out the priority climate change risks and opportunities for the UK. The report draws on an extensive programme of analysis, consultation and consideration by the Committee involving over 450 people, 130 organisations and more than 1,500 pages of evidence and analysis.

In support of this advice report, the Committee for Climate Change has created a dedicated website [www.ukclimaterisk.org](http://www.ukclimaterisk.org) to host all of the outputs from the UK Climate Risk Independent Assessment (CCRA3), including: Technical Report, National Summaries, Sector Briefings, Research & Supporting Analysis. The technical report also highlights "**The largest future flood risk is evident in coastal areas including the top three risk locations of Hull, the City of Portsmouth and Sedgemoor District Council**"

Would you like to get to know other Parish Environment

## CATCH UP OVER COFFEE



### Champions?

We would like to help you get to know other environment champions across the district. To help kickstart this, we can help by setting up some informal one to one "coffee/tea and catch up sessions", where you can have a conversation with another environment champion. If you're interested, let us know and we'll link you up. Just email [ssdcenvironment@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:ssdcenvironment@southsomerset.gov.uk) to register your interest.

## Community Green Initiatives



### Pedal for the Planet!

At the end of last year, Muchelney Parish Meeting with Kingsbury Episcopi Parish Council applied to the Somerset Climate Emergency Community Fund for a project to promote and encourage cycling among residents. We were delighted to secure the funding and now 'Pedal for the Planet' will deliver a series of free workshops and activities over the summer months to promote safe and fun cycling for everyone. Did you know that residents

of small rural villages like these make the highest annual number of car journeys? By swapping car for bike for short, local journeys we can make a real difference to our personal carbon emissions - and it's good for our health and wellbeing too.

Local business HubLife (based at New Cross Court, West Lambrook) will be delivering activities ranging from fun balance bike sessions for little ones through to bike maintenance and safe cycling workshops. There will be something for all ages and abilities. We're also going to map and digitise local cycling routes starting and ending in the parishes so there will be no excuse not to get on your bike more often.

To find out more, including where and when the events will be happening please visit and follow the project's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/PedalForThePlanetMuchelney](https://www.facebook.com/PedalForThePlanetMuchelney) or look out for notices in the Muchelney and Kingsbury Episcopi community spaces and on noticeboards.



## Somerset County Council

### The Fight Against Ash Dieback in Somerset

Ash Dieback disease (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) has spread throughout much of the country, with many trees already dead or dying. Somerset has a high density of ash trees, meaning the impact from it will be highly significant, with big changes to our landscape.

SSDC is working to manage diseased ash trees on our own estates and with Somerset County Council (SCC) for those affecting highways in the district.



Visit the [SCC website](#) to find out more or [check out this document](#) which gives a good overview of symptoms and identifying affected trees, as well as what you can do if you think you've got or know of a diseased ash tree.

## Volunteering

