

VIADUCT

February 2021

Somerton

Town Council



working with the community



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Sun 10 am - 4 pm
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Somerton, TA11 7HY
office@aardvarkmotors.co.uk

(between Lime Kiln Pub and Podimore Roundabout)

Somerton Town Council - February 2021

Meeting	Date	Time	Venue
Full Council (Planning if required)	9 th Feb 2021	7 pm	Remote Meeting
Land and Properties	23 rd Feb 2021	7 pm	Remote Meeting

Everyone is welcome to attend and there will be opportunities to ask questions.

Planning applications may be viewed on the SSDC websites

All agendas and minutes are available on the STC website

www.somertontowncouncil.gov.uk

Requests from the public for items to be added to the agenda should be notified to the Town Clerk in writing by the first Monday of the month.

DURING LOCKDOWN THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED – The Town Council are working from home. The best way to contact the office is by email:

town.clerk@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk

clerk.assistant@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk

accounts@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk

The main phone number is 01458 272236. If your call is not answered, please leave a message. The answering machine is checked periodically for messages, and you will receive a response once the message is received. A mobile number 07599 029915 can be contacted if the reason for calling is important.

If residents have any issues or questions about anything within this report, or in general, please direct them to the Clerk who will ensure they are answered or forwarded to the relevant councillor or organisation to respond.

BUDGET FOR 2021/22:

At the STC meeting on the 12th January the Council approved the proposed Budget and set the precept for 2021/22. The detail can be found on the STC website.

LANGPORT TRANSPORT GROUP:

The Group has been successful in securing funding under the Restoring Your Railway Fund. The Department for Transport launched this £500 million fund and invited bids with proposals on reinstating axed local services and stations. The funding secured by the Langport Transport Group will go towards a feasibility study into developing a station in the local area.

GRANTS

Grants have been awarded to:

£377 to King Ina C of E Academy PTFA, to provide flu vaccinations for staff

£1000 to Somerton Music and Arts Festival CIC, towards the 2021 Fun Day.

DOG BINS

The Council has received a number of complaints regarding overflowing dog bins around Somerton. STC are working with the District Council on the number of dog bins and levels of collection.

YEOVILTON AVERAGE WEATHER STATISTICS FOR DECEMBER 2020					
	Average Max temp	Average Min temp	Rain mm	Sun hrs	So December 2020 was slightly wetter and sunnier than the long- term average,
Dec Average	9.3	2.6	95.7	59.6	
50yr Average	9.1	2.3	80.4	51.1	
Figures from Met Office Yeovilton website					

News

THANK YOU FROM CHRIS COX

I have been very touched by the many messages of sympathy and support following the passing of my wife Gemma in early December. We will be arranging a celebration of her life in the autumn when hopefully the virus will be behind us and all who knew Gemma can meet up to share memories of her 30 years in Somerton.

THANK YOU TO SOMERTON FIRE SERVICE

I would like to thank our Fire Brigade for first-footing me on New Year's Day! The speed and efficiency of their response to an unnecessary call-out was truly amazing. I had unwittingly triggered off a chain reaction when I unwisely left a saucepan of soup warming up on the cooker while I cautiously crossed the frosty garden to empty my compost bucket. By the time I got back into the house the kitchen was full of smoke and noise. I silenced the smoke alarm but soon discovered that it had been ringing long enough to connect automatically with Somerset Care, who had alerted the Fire Brigade and later rang to make sure I was OK. Within minutes there was a knock on the door and to my astonishment I saw the fire engine disgorging its crew, all in full kit ready for action. I had to explain shamefacedly that it was all a false alarm, and apologised repeatedly for disturbing their bank holiday. They carefully checked that all was well, before leaving. They assured me most politely that they were very glad to find that all was well. They arrived and left so discretely that none of the neighbours emerged on their doorsteps to see what was going on! Mary Stirling.

GUIDE DOG CHALLENGE

My grateful thanks for supporting me on my 100 challenge for Guide Dogs. With your help and generosity we raised £740. This will go a long way to help train the dogs so that those who have sight problems will have a trusted companion at their side. Thank you. Liz Roddie, volunteer and member of Somerton Branch for Guide Dogs.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

On the 6th January 2021 I was going about my daily employment as a COVID Compliance Warden for South Somerset District Council in Somerton, tasked with removing the signage that was no longer applicable as we all find ourselves in full lockdown. Many 'good mornings' were exchanged with folk out and about and I have to say I had not come across anybody who did not want to engage in pleasantries. Having collected all the signs and making my way through the High Street back to my car I was shocked to hear a woman shout aggressively up the road 'you wanna get a better job' I turned round and wished my abuser 'good morning' and carried on walking. I wanted all who read this to know that I consider that I have a good job, one that means I meet some very lovely Somerset folk, whilst we manage this very difficult situation together. Chatting with shop keepers, shoppers and residents, sharing important information and generally being a listening ear, what better job can there be? So I wish all your readers well, especially the mystery lady who would like me to work elsewhere.

Happy New Year. Jo

60 YEAR WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to Arthur and Juliet Hughes who will be celebrating their Diamond 60 year Wedding Anniversary on 25th Feb. With love from Family and Friends. XXX

SOMERTON U3A

As we are unable to hold our meetings in Edgar Hall, we are increasing our monthly online events to twice a month. The first Zoom meeting will be held on Friday 12th February at 11.00 "The Art of Trickery" - Ian Kemble will talk about magicians depicted in paintings. The second meeting on Friday 26th February at 11.00 will be "Is anyone there?" - Bob Mizon talks about astronomy; Bob a retired French teacher used to inspire his pupils with his talks on the stars - all in perfect French! We have over 50 interest groups and each month more of them are meeting by Zoom. Our monthly online newsletter gives members the opportunity to see what activities are taking place. For further information, or if you are interested in joining, visit the Somerton U3A website or email membership@SomertonU3A.uk.

SOMERTON MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVAL ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION 2021

The exhibition is open for all amateur needle workers, artists, photographers and sculptors to display their work with the opportunity to have some of the work displayed virtually on the festival website. As in previous years we are planning to have a variety of workshops running alongside the exhibition which includes the return of some old favourites and some new taster sessions to challenge your craft skills. If you wish to enter work for the exhibition please contact Jackie on 07778006543 or visit the festival website at www.somertonartsfestival.co.uk and download the entry forms. Please also check out the website for our latest Covid updates.

MESSAGES FROM THE PATIENTS' PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

Covid-19 vaccinations. At the time of writing, the vaccination programme for our area (Somerset South-West) has been delivered from the Henshayes Centre in Crewkerne. This location was identified due to the restrictions associated with vaccine storage (at a very low temperature) and the need to move supplies swiftly from the specialised storage facility to suitable (licenced) premises. All the GP practices within the area have provided additional staff to work across weekends to administer the vaccine. However, with the arrival of the 'Oxford' (and, in due course a third) vaccine it will become possible for patients to receive their vaccination at a local practice, once deliveries arrive. Please be assured that patients will be contacted with an invitation to receive a vaccination so please do not contact the surgery directly.

Phoning. Telephone calls to Buttercross Health Centre in December were again very high (almost 6000), despite the practice being closed for several days over the holiday period. While every day is busy, the 'response time' tends to be greater between 8am and midday so delaying your (non-urgent) call until the afternoon should reduce waiting time. Where appropriate, the 'askmyGP' system can be used. It has certainly proved its worth in assisting patients with their concerns. When the system has received a message - which can be sent any time of day or night, seven days a week - a clinician applies a triage assessment and may refer the patient's request to a colleague to ensure the most prompt and appropriate response. This could be via a phone call, an email or could even be a video call but should a consultation at the surgery be required, an 'in-person' appointment will be scheduled. If you have yet to register with 'askmyGP', please do give it serious consideration.

We are still seeking to fill TWO vacancies for PPG membership and would especially welcome enquiries from folk in the age bracket 20-45 and/or those with a young family to enable the PPG membership to better represent the community as a whole. You can find out more by contacting us via email at somppg@gmail.com.

RUNNING IN SOMERTON

I moved to Somerton in November 2020 and am a former international cross-country and road runner who runs every day but also has over 40 years' experience of coaching endurance athletes up to and including National Champions. [I hold a UK Athletics Endurance Performance Coaching Licence]. On my runs I have seen lots of people out running in Somerton and on the surrounding lanes but looking on the England Athletics website there is no running group in Somerton – the closest groups being Langport Runners and Street Striders (where I mentored one of their Coaches through his UK Coach in Running Fitness qualification).

I would be very keen to set up a running group in Somerton or even just facilitate like-minded individuals getting together (when lockdown allows). If you would be interested in getting involved, please contact me (Keith Brackstone) by email at coachkeith53@gmail.com or on 07999-511366. I haven't charged athletes for coaching and I don't intend to start now but would like to help my new local community in my retirement.

KIRKHAM STREET FIELD COMMUNITY TRUST UPDATE

May 2021 prove a happier year for us all! Thank you to all for the contributions donated since the Christmas appeal, so encouraging! We are still awaiting the results from the application to the Climate Change Emergency Fund and we are seeking donations from within Somerset and across the country.

Even though the deadline of 31st December 2020 has passed, we are talking to the County Council about saving Kirkham Street Field. As you already know, we have raised almost £120,000 in cash and promises and we have now received an offer of a donation of £100,000 with the condition that further match funding is sought. Any suggestions for this please let us know. Contact Judith Hurley on 273079. Thank you for your on-going support and interest. The Trustees of Kirkham Street Field.

SLIMMING WORLD 'AT HOME'

You may have had a leaflet through your door or seen a poster in town. You may have assumed that like most other things, we are in lockdown. However, it is business as usual at Somerton Slimming World!

150 members lost a fabulous 11 stones 13 1/2 pounds in this second week in January as I write this! No hunger or humiliation, whilst those of us who can, stay at home to stay safe. Lots of things are outside our control at the moment but making a decision to take control of a healthier and happier life is something we can all choose right now. Whether you have been a member of Slimming World before, seen someone do well with it or never tried it, is it time to give it a go? You can receive all the benefits of the fabulous package of support, care and learning of the real life group from the comfort of your own home. For more information, please give Annya a call on 07971 957691.

ACEARTS

As this goes to press, we are still in lockdown and therefore our shop and gallery are closed. The planned Evolver Prize exhibition can be seen virtually, via links on our website at www.acearts.co.uk where you can also find our always open on-line shop. We continue to add new products with lots of lovely ideas for gifts for any event, including Valentines Day. Please also see our website, Facebook or Instagram for further updates and news.

LITTER COLLECTING

Recently I was out getting my daily exercise with my wife and I noticed a lady and her son collecting lots of litter along the road edges and ditches. I stopped to thank her and asked how much time she spent on collecting the litter on "Somerton's behalf". It transpires that the lady in question collects a lot of litter all round Somerton and puts it into large black bin bags and then later returns in her car to collect the litter to take to the recycling centre. On my walk alone I noticed that they had filled about four black bin bags. I was amazed by the efforts of her and her son, especially when I was told that they do it regularly on a voluntarily basis..... "Amazing"

I just feel that verbal thank you was not enough and that I just had to write to the Viaduct so that I could thank her publicly. I know the lady and her son's name but won't mention it as I do not wish to embarrass them, but they know who I am writing about.

So, may I ask the Viaduct to say a BIG THANK YOU on behalf of the residents of Somerton.

SOMERTON GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Our volunteers are here to help if you need shopping or prescriptions collected, occasional gardening tasks, or advice about other services. We are also able to make regular supportive phone calls to anyone feeling anxious or lonely. One thing we are unfortunately unable to help with at present is transport, due to Covid restrictions.

The contact numbers for our service are below, so do give us a ring if you think we may be able to help. The service is free and available to people of any age or family circumstances, not just those who are self-isolating.

01458 253414 West Somerton (incl. Patch Meadows and Northfield)

01458 258947 South Somerton (incl. St. Cleers and Polham Lane)

01458 274101 North Somerton (incl. Etsome and West End)

01458 273367 East Somerton (from Behind Berry to Pestors Lane)

If you have some free time and would like to volunteer with Good Neighbours, do contact Sheila Crothers on 01458 273287 or crothers4@outlook.com

SOMERTON MARKET

Unfortunately, due to the national lockdown we currently do not know when Somerton Market will be able to start up again in 2021. There will be no market in February, but if the situation does change and we are able to schedule the market for the first Friday in March, we will endeavour to let everyone know as soon as possible.

RED CROSS FUND RAISING – TOTAL EXPERIENCE CORNER

In case you missed it last month! To help raise funds for Langport & District Red Cross Group whilst our usual openings are suspended I have written up the story of my year teaching in the bush of Jamaica. It is called Total Experience Corner and is available on Amazon. With chapter titles including Rule Britannia in the Blue Mountains, How Not To Make Tea, Another Lovely Funeral, Mirror on the Ceiling, Five in a Bed, Gold Teats, The Gut Buster, Taking a Machete to a Banana, There's a Crocodile Behind You, and Birthday Suits in Hedonism laugh along with the author and his wife as they fall in love with Jamaica and its peoples. Reviews have been very pleasing. I have a limited number of copies of the book at £12 (£3 off) including postage (if out of Somerton). Phone 01458 273085, e-mail cox.cj@btinternet.com, or put a request through my door at 2 Camden Road (part of West End). Chris Cox.



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HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW SOMERTON?

Last month's picture showed a road sign on the wall of the Post Office, where West Street splits into Sutton Road (B3165) and Langport Road (B3153). It is cast iron with raised letters, numbers and arrows; the latter have glass beads in them to reflect vehicle headlights. A preliminary survey of various websites with galleries of photos of signs has not shown up anything quite the same elsewhere. I believe it may date from the 1930s.

This month's picture is again a "Where is it?" As can be seen from the inscription, it is one of the Great Western Railway Company's boundary markers dating from 1912, six years after the railway was fully opened through Somerton. It is alongside a public footpath.



BUS TIMES CHANGED

Due to the continuing coronavirus lockdown, bus frequency has been reduced. An updated list is included in this copy of Viaduct and on the community website www.somerton.co.uk. If you need any help, do get in touch by email or phone (details on the list). Martyn Smith.

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Ads should be provided in pdf format and sized at full, half or quarter A5 page size as appropriate. To advertise in Viaduct contact us on: 01458 272236 or viaduct@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk.

SOMERTON BUS TIMES with effect from 18th January 2021

SERVICES TO/FROM YEOVIL													NOTES
NS													
54	77	54	77	54	77	54	77	54	77	54	77	77	NS Does not run Saturdays
Somerton Sq	0750	0807	0930	1102	1230	1357	1530	1652	1830	1947			
Yeovil	0823	0841	1003	1136	1303	1431	1603	1726	1903	2021			
									NS				First 54 service leaves Yeovil and Somerton later on Saturday
	77	54	77	54	77	54	77	54	54	77			
Yeovil	0555	0655*	0850	1015	1145	1315	1440	1615	1707	1735			
Somerton Sq	0626	0720*	0921	1043	1216	1343	1511	1643	1735	1806			
* 10 minutes later on Saturday													
SERVICES TO/FROM YEOVIL						SERVICES TO/FROM YEOVIL							
					NS								
Somerton Sq	0720*	1043	1343	1643	1735	Somerton Sq	0626	0921	1216	1511	1806		
Langport	0732*	1055	1355	1655	1747	Street	0649	0944	1239	1534	1829		
Taunton	0822	1132	1432	1732	1824	Wells	0715	1010	1305	1600	1855		
* 13 minutes later on Saturday													
NS													
Taunton	0700	0840	1140	1440	1740	Wells	0720	1015	1310	1605	1900		
Langport	0737	0917	1217	1517	1817	Street	0744	1039	1334	1629	1924		
Somerton Sq	0750	0930	1230	1530	1830	Somerton Sq	0807	1102	1357	1652	1947		
Note: ALL services to Yeovil will travel via the Square and West Street.						Produced by MARTYN SMITH							
The 54 from Taunton will go Pound Pool, Behind Berry, North St, Broad St, Market Place, West St, Pound Pool and Behind Berry for a second time						01458 273058							
						email: martyrand sue@hotmail.com							



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This months cover photo was taken from Cedar Grove looking towards the viaduct, taken by Sandie Jotcham, Cedar Grove on 15th December 2020.

Potential cover photos can be sent as email attachments to viaduct@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk. Please include some details about the picture: place, subject and date taken, and your full name.

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