

Mendip Monthly – September 2021

For our parishes, towns and city council

Council meets again ‘in person’ post-pandemic



Above: View of Full Council
Below: Leader and Deputy Leader, MDC,
Cllrs Ros Wyke and Barry O’Leary



Mendip District Council has held its first 'in person' Full Council meeting in 18 months.

Council business has continued in earnest throughout COVID, and several Full Council meetings have taken place virtually during that time, however the last physical meeting at the campus in Shepton Mallet was in March 2020.

There were 34 Members present on the night, with four Councillors joining via MS Teams. Some Council Officers and members of the public were also in attendance, with three residents requesting to speak about items featured in the full agenda.

Deputy Chair of Mendip District Council, Cllr Nick Cottle, oversaw business which began at 6.30pm and concluded three and a half hours later at 10pm. The event was live-streamed. COVID measures were in force.

A High Court ruling earlier this year confirmed all councils must cease remote proceedings for formal public committee meetings, and that Members must return to face-to-face meetings once more if they wanted their vote to count.

Councillors, though clearly delighted to meet up again after many months apart, did express disappointment for those colleagues who felt unable to attend due to ongoing health conditions and concerns.

Mendip Monthly News Roundup

1st-30th September

Council offices in Mendip re-open to visitors after Covid crisis

Face-to-face visitors are welcome to Mendip's offices in Shepton Mallet. Residents who feel the need to talk to staff in person, will find the Council campus doors open Monday to Friday. www.mendip.gov.uk/councilaccesspoints However, with variants still circulating in communities, customers are encouraged to contact Mendip online or by telephone in the first instance.

You'll find links to our online forms and systems on the relevant service webpages mendip.gov.uk/ourservices

Mendip has a contact centre open five days a week to help with queries. Call 0300 303 8588 Monday to Friday 8.30am-5pm. If you are contacting us out of hours, and your call is an emergency, please select option 4, then option 5. Local rate call tariffs apply. www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10284/Council-offices-in-Mendip-re-open-to-visitors-after-Covid-crisis

Council votes to pedestrianise rural roads to curb fly-tipping menace

Mendip District Council has voted to ban vehicles from a fly-tipping hotspot near Frome. At a meeting of Full Council, Monday 27th September, members agreed Berkley Lane and Dark Lane should be pedestrianised to prevent ongoing environmental crime in the area. It follows a recent consultation of local landowners, businesses and residents who overwhelmingly backed the idea of road closures to curb the fly-tipping menace.

And while the Council was in session, a live operation was taking place at the Frome site involving Mendip enforcement officers working with local police.

Rubbish dumped at the Frome hotspot accounts for 12% of all fly-tipping incidents on public land in Mendip. Costs to clear the waste amount to more than £50,000 each year. Fly tipping is an environmental crime, and the Council will look to take enforcement action wherever possible.

You can call our customer service team on 0300 303 8588 or go to our website: [Fly Tipping](#)

www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10448/Council-votes-to-pedestrianise-rural-roads-to-curb-fly-tipping-menace

Mendip urges community to 'have their say' on Shepton town centre regeneration plans

Mendip District Council have commissioned environmental and planning consultants LUC to develop a Masterplan for Shepton Mallet town centre. The Masterplan will form the basis for funding bids for future regeneration and environmental projects in the town.

The consultants have identified a range of issues and opportunities based on mapping many key features and characteristics in the town and their initial discussions with Shepton Town Council. LUC will be launching these opportunities online for consultation with residents during October.

Consultation with the local community is taking place over the coming weeks through a Consultation Hub until 1st November. Look out for opportunities to be involved and help shape the future for Shepton Mallet town centre.

The online consultation portal is live and here: www.mendip.gov.uk/sci

If you have any questions on the masterplan and the online portal, please contact the Planning Policy team by email at PlanningPolicy@mendip.gov.uk
www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10453/Mendip-urges-community-to-have-their-say-on-Shepton-town-centre-regeneration-plans

Food festival finale was held in Wells

The popular food and drink events delivered four Little eat:Festivals in Street, Glastonbury, Wells and Shepton Mallet during the summer, showcasing around 20 of Somerset's finest local producers at each venue. The events were commissioned by Mendip District Council, with monies from the European Regional Development Fund (EDRF).

www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10330/Sun-shines-on-final-Little-eat-Festival-this-Summer

Big Community Switch - autumn auction is still open

The iChoosr Big Community Switch autumn auction is now open for Mendip residents to register their interest in collectively switching energy suppliers. A chance to reduce your carbon footprint and save money. Auction opens until **12 October** and you can register your interest here: <https://bigcommunityswitch.co.uk/mendip/home>.

Mendip continues to take action to protect tenants' rights during the pandemic

Mendip District Council has a statutory duty to monitor the condition of privately rented properties in the district to ensure residents live in safe, healthy and warm homes. The Council can take informal and formal legal action to improve housing standards to ensure properties are free from significant hazards, and that houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) are appropriately managed to a safe standard. The Council will enforce against landlords who do not comply with housing standards law. During 2020-2021, the Council took informal action to improve property conditions over 200 times and issued 28 formal notices.

If you are worried about any hazards in your home and your landlord isn't listening to you, contact our PSH team email PrivateSectorHousing@mendip.gov.uk. Or you can call 0300 3038588.

Condolences: Cllr Ralph Clark, Former Street Councillor and Chairman of Mendip District Council

A minute's silence was held at Mendip's Cabinet on Monday (Sept 6th, 2021) to remember former Councillor, colleague, and treasured friend, Ralph Clark. Mr Clark was the first Chairman of Mendip District Council (1974-1976) He was Mendip District Councillor and County Councillor for Street for many years, and well-known across the whole area. Leader of Mendip District Council, Cllr Ros Wyke, said:

"Ralph had a great sense of duty and a wide range of interests. But most of all, he loved people. Thank you Ralph. You will be missed by so many of us."

You can read the tribute in full here:

www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10332/Condolences-Ralph-Clark-Former-Street-Councillor-and-first-Chairman-of-Mendip-District-Council

Election Results

Election Results for Town Councillor for Shepton Mallet East Ward, Shepton Mallet Town Council

Martin Berkeley, of the Future Shepton Party, was duly elected on Wednesday 8th September 2021.

www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10255/Results-for-Shepton-Mallet-East-Ward-Shepton-Mallet-Town-Council

Election Results for Wells St Thomas' Ward, Wells City Council

Denise Denis, of the Wells Independents, was duly elected on Thursday 30th September 2021.

www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10294/Results-for-Wells-St-Thomas-Ward-Wells-City-Council

Election Results for Wells St Cuthbert' Ward, Wells City Council

Amanda Bayley, Liberal Democrat, was duly elected on Thursday 30th September 2021.

www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10313/Results-for-Wells-St-Cuthbert-Ward-Wells-City-Council

Grants offered/promoted this month

Mendip District Council has many grants available to support businesses, local organisations, voluntary and green groups. Here is a summary of grants promoted throughout September – please note, some are still taking applications.

For our businesses:

Business Revitalisation Grant for Mendip – closing soon!

Applications close **5pm on 11th October**

www.mendip.gov.uk/revitalisegrant

COVID-19: Business Grants - ongoing

www.mendip.gov.uk/businessgrants

The Mendip Tourism Grant - open until Monday, 1st November 2021

Mendip District Council has launched a one-off £50K fund to help boost visitor numbers, increase spending in the area and promote Mendip as a 'go-to destination' in Somerset.

Applications are open now. Full criteria and eligibility terms can be found here:

www.mendip.gov.uk/mts

Press release: www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10357/Mendip-launches-Tourism-Grant-to-support-year-round-visitor-economy

For our residents:

New fast-track home improvement option for Mendip's disabled residents who want to live at home - ongoing

Mendip District Council has always supported disabled people with the costs of home adaptations, to help them live independently and safely. Disabled Facilities Grants are means-tested grants of up to £30,000, and are available following a referral from an Occupational Therapist. Examples of the life-changing facilities and fixtures available include stairlifts, level access shower rooms, heating improvements, better access, and room conversions and extensions.

www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10272/New-fast-track-home-improvement-option-for-Mendip-s-disabled-residents-who-want-to-live-at-home

Grants for residents to enable safer, healthier and warmer homes - ongoing

www.mendip.gov.uk/energyefficiencyfinance

For our communities:

Communities Fund – closed on 30th September

<https://www.mendip.gov.uk/cf>

Climate and Ecological Emergency Fund – closed on 30th September

<https://www.mendip.gov.uk/ccf>

The Future Farm Resilience Programme

This exciting new programme began in September and is FREE to all farmers and land managers who are based in Somerset. These topics are being delivered through a programme of workshops. The programme also offers farmers free one-to-one sessions with a business advisor to help them map out their future plans and cash flows to take account of the diminishing farm payments.

Visit: [Future Farming Resilience | Somerset Business Agency](#) where there is a facility to register your interest and to book on to the events through Eventbrite. Here: www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/somerset-business-agency-18442360127

Planning Matters

Mendip Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Policies

Following hearings in 2019 and 2020, the Inspectors report into the examination of Local Plan Part 2 has been published. The report confirms that the Local Plan and policies are 'sound' and can be adopted subject to 'Main Modifications'. There are no new changes to the Modifications published for public consultation in January 2020 and February 2021. This confirms the additional policies and sites allocated for development in the current version of the draft Plan. The Inspector has also set out his reasons on the need for additional housing in the north east of the district - and the approach to identifying sites.

The report and schedule of modifications can be found on the Local Plan examination page: www.mendip.gov.uk/localplanexamination. This was reported to Cabinet on 4th October with formal adoption at Full Council to follow.

Climate change

Mendip act to help manage persistent flooding issues and help tackle climate change

Mendip District Council is continuing to work with Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) to ensure we act to help manage persistent flooding issues to protect our communities.

Whilst there is no single answer to Somerset's many flooding problems, and different parts of the county have different needs. The Council, and wider organisations such as the Environment Agency are limited in what they can do individually but working together as SRA partners they can achieve more than would otherwise be possible. At the August meeting of Cabinet, the Council reviewed the current arrangements in place and future projects planned within the District, which in most instances also impact the Councils commitments to Climate and Ecological Emergency, as well as the financial distribution of SRA funds and benefits to Mendip specifically.

You can find out more about Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) and their newly published annual report for 2020-21: www.mendip.gov.uk/sra
<https://www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10309/Mendip-act-to-help-manage-persistent-flooding-issues-and-help-tackle-climate-change>

Mendip adopts Carbon Management Plan and launches Pledge Card

Mendip District Council is committed to reducing the organisation's impact on climate change and helping the district move towards carbon neutrality. As a major provider of services for communities, and a significant local employer, the Council recognises the role it plays in tackling emissions and influencing low carbon actions.

Mendip is one of 300 councils nationwide to have declared a climate emergency. In February 2019 it pledged 'to make best endeavours to enable the district to become carbon neutral by 2030'. However recent modelling of emissions showed the best that the district can achieve under present Government policies is a 30% reduction in emissions - way off its carbon neutral target.

[You can find the Carbon Management Plan here.](#)

www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10298/Mendip-leads-by-example-and-adopts-Carbon-Management-Plan

The Pledge Card can be downloaded from the Council's website here: www.mendip.gov.uk/article/8650/Climate-Action

Explore Mendip's **climate change pages** here: www.mendip.gov.uk/climatechange

Housing

Positive progress on social housing delivery in Mendip

Mendip District Council is determined to deliver on its social housing programme in Mendip. It's part of its key priority to '*make Mendip a fairer place*'. The scheme - the first for two decades - promises to create jobs, boost skills and the local economy, while leaving a lasting legacy of social homes offering fair rents for residents.

Here is an update on social housing projects progressing across the district:

Glastonbury and Street

Exchange contracts with Aster for the sale of Norbin's Road Car Park and Cemetery Lane. Planning applications from Aster are expected in the autumn. Norbin's Road will provide six homes, and Cemetery Lane 33 homes.

Frome

Mendip is working with Stonewater to build 18 highly energy-efficient homes on part of the car park at North Parade in Frome. This site attracted central government Land Release Funding during the previous administration. Planning application could be submitted before the end of the year.

Shepton Mallet

To bring forward a development of 15 bungalows and houses with LiveWest as a partner. This is in the early stages of the project and further information will be brought back to members in due course.

www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10329/Positive-progress-on-social-housing-delivery-in-Mendip

Saxonvale

A statement from Mendip District Council: Outline planning approval for Saxonvale, Frome - Decision confirmed



Mendip District Council, as landowner, can confirm outline planning permission for land at Saxonvale, Frome, was approved by Planning Board last night (Wednesday 15th September 2021). This was in line with officer recommendation, and subject to agreement of conditions with developer Acorn Property Group.

Additional information was put before councillors for clarity and transparency purposes following the recent receipt and publication of the Local Plan Part 2 Inspectors Report, and also in response to a solicitors 'Judicial Review - Pre-Action protocol letter'.

Planning Board took the opportunity to endorse their previous decision - to grant outline planning permission for the Frome development - which was first approved back in January this year. The item was carried; 7 voted for, and 6 voted against.

www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10360/A-statement-from-Mendip-District-Council-Outline-planning-approval-for-Saxonvale-Frome-Decision-confirmed

Five Frome residents recruited as clearance work begins at Saxonvale

A Mendip District Council pledge to bring prosperity and jobs to Frome through the Saxonvale development in Somerset, is paying off. Five Frome residents have just been recruited to work at the project, which is located in the heart of the town on the banks of the River Frome. Balfour Beatty have been commissioned by Mendip to clear the site prior to development, using a Homes England grant worth close to £4million.

For more information about Saxonvale, visit: <https://saxonvaleredevlopment.org/www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10290/Five-Frome-residents-recruited-as-clearance-work-begins-at-Saxonvale-heritage-site>

Glastonbury Town Deal updates

Glastonbury Town Deal projects formally confirmed to Government, bringing £23.6m investment closer

The confirmation paperwork for all 12 projects outlined in Glastonbury's Town Investment Plan has been formally submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. This is the next step in a process that should bring £23.6m of investment into the town. The Town Deal Board and MDC will now focus on developing the detailed Business Cases as required by the government, with all Business Cases needing to be submitted by 28th June 2022.

www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10327/Glastonbury-Town-Deal-projects-formally-confirmed-to-Government-bringing-23-6m-investment-closer

First open day event announced for Glastonbury Town Deal projects

The first in a series of community-focused open day events about the Glastonbury Town Deal projects were held on 1st and 2nd October. This focused on the St Dunstan's House Community and Wellbeing Centre project, which aims to provide a Covid-secure hub where local community groups and organisations can meet, learn and do business, helping to grow the economy, reduce deprivation, and improve health and wellbeing for local residents.

www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10367/First-open-day-event-announced-for-Glastonbury-Town-Deal-projects

For further information, visit: www.mendip.gov.uk/glastotowndeal

Read the published TIP here: www.mendip.gov.uk/towninvestmentplan

From our Partners

Electric Bike and Car Survey ended – results imminent!

Mendip ran an electric bike and car survey, and the results are back. We are assessing them now with the not-for-profit Co Cars – a social enterprise firm that already successfully runs a network of shared, low and zero-emission cars and bikes across the South West. Watch this space ... If you would like further information on Co Cars, including full details of their current locations and pricing, visit www.co-cars.co.uk.

Somerset Waste Partnership - Recycle More is recycling (a lot) more ...

Somerset's new Recycle More service has already delivered thousands of extra tonnes of recycling and proved extremely popular among residents using it, councillors heard today (24th September).

Launched in Mendip in October last year and South Somerset at the end of June, it is estimated that the expanded weekly collections have produced more than 6,000 extra tonnes of recycling - including more than 1,000 tonnes of extra plastic.

Over the first 44 weeks, Mendip has seen an average weekly increase of more than 100 tonnes and week. In the first 12 weeks in larger South Somerset, the average is estimated as being more than 130 extra tonnes a week.

And a customer survey in Mendip found that a remarkable 84% of respondents preferred their new Recycle More service to the previous recycling regime, an almost identical figure to the approval rating Recycle More received when it was trialed in Taunton Deane.

At the end of Recycle Week, the impressive latest recycling figures were discussed at a meeting of the 10 councillor who make up Somerset Waste Board, which governs Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP). Board members heard about improved reliability of collections, the restart of garden waste collections and final preparations for bringing Recycle More to the Taunton Deane area this November. After Taunton Deane, the new service is due to be rolled-out in Sedgemoor and West Somerset in early 2022. somersetwaste.gov.uk/recycle-more

Unitary News

New Joint Committee to help establish Somerset's unitary council

A new Joint Committee to steer the move to a new single council for Somerset has been proposed by the leaders of the five existing Councils in the county.

In July of this year the then Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government confirmed that Somerset would move to a single unitary council from April 2023.

A number of democratic decisions and actions will need to be taken over the next few months before the new unitary council is established in 2023. The Leaders of the existing five councils in Somerset are therefore proposing to set up a new Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Joint Committee to oversee the process and work collaboratively on their behalf. Each individual council will need to discuss and take a formal decision before the Joint Committee is approved.

The LGR Joint Committee would oversee the implementation plan and development of the new unitary council's constitution and budget, along with providing collaborative decision-making in areas which could impact on the position of the new unitary council. It is proposed the LGR Joint Committee meetings will be open to the public to attend in venues around the county. It will be made up of 9 members, including the five Council Leaders and four Somerset County Councillors.

Full details here: www.mendip.gov.uk/folgis

Events and Campaigns

Here's just some of the other local and national campaigns Mendip's Marketing and Media Team have supported during September on social media:

- The Tourism Awards - South West. Deadline for entries ended midnight, 12 September.
- [Gas Safety Week](#), to help keep local communities safe.
- We reminded residents that the COVID19 vaccination centre is open at Shape Mendip in Shepton Mallet.
- We encouraged attendance to the local Eat Festivals so residents could enjoy artisan food and drink, as well as music and entertainers.
- By-elections in Wells (City Council) and Shepton – we sent reminders.

- The Big Community Switch – we are continuing to encourage Mendip residents to sign up, save money and help reduce their carbon footprint with their 100% renewable energy.
 - We promoted our green grant and communities fund – apply before 30 September!
 - **!!NEW!!** We're promoting our grants. Please share news about our Tourism Grant for Mendip and Business Revitalisation Grant in Mendip **!!NEW!!**
 - We encouraged households to check the right information on the electoral register, so they are ready to vote in upcoming elections.
 - We flew the flag for Merchant Navy Day on September 3rd.
 - On 9 September at 9am we observed a two-minute silence to remember all who have been killed as a result of their service to our nation on #999day www.999day.org.uk
 - World Suicide Prevention was on 10 September. This year we continued to encourage people to undertake suicide prevention training, [Let's talk about Suicide](#).
 - We have been promoting Mendip Landlord's Training –Tuesday, 21 September www.mendip.gov.uk/landlordforum
 - We supported the GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK! 18-26 September
 - And also, Warm Homes Week [#WarmHomesWeek](#)
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Parish Forums return

Parish Forums are back, so please save the dates. We'd love to see you there.

Virtual Parish Forum – 12th October @ 6:15pm

The agenda is still being finalised and will include an update from the Leader and training on the new Planning Consultee Access system.

The Planning Department have introduced a new Consultee Access system to improve the way we seek and receive consultation responses on applications under consideration by the Development Management Team of Mendip District Council. We are offering a catch-up training session via MS Teams for those that missed earlier sessions.

The training will be a practical session designed for the clerk or councillor who submits comments to the planning department. Your chair may also wish to attend. Please share this invitation with the appropriate member of your council.

Future meeting dates are below. They will all continue to be virtual at this time.

9th November 2021 @6:15pm

14th December 2021 @6:15pm

11th January 2022 @6:15pm

8th February 2022 @6:15pm

8th March 2022 @6:15pm

September: Councillors on the airwaves

BBC Radio Somerset

7th September 2021

'Changing Places' facilities in Mendip

Cllr Liz Leyshon spoke on the breakfast show at 7.30am.

Listen and shuffle to 1hrs:33mins <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p09snfkj>

Glastonbury FM, Community Show

Thursday 9th at 9am and 4pm community shows

You can listen to Cllr Ros Wyke, Leader of Mendip District Council talking about the Climate and Ecological Fund and the Community Fund.

<https://www.gfm.org.uk/listen-again/>

BBC Radio, Matt Faulkner Show (PM)

Thursday 9th September 4.50pm

NASS Festival, Cllr Barry O'Leary

Click here to listen: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p09snfyx>

BBC Radio Somerset (Claire Carter, Breakfast Show)

Monday 13th September

Weeding, statement from MDC read out on air following a complaint from Cllr Nick Dove from Frome Town Council.

Click to listen : <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p09t447s>

BBC Radio Somerset (Claire Carter, Breakfast Show)

Wednesday 15th September

Topic: Saxonvale

Click here to listen, through the programme as a news item and bulletin:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p09t44bq>

BBC Radio Somerset

28th September 2021

CLlr Heather Shearer talks about the Council voting to pedestrianise Dark Lane and Berkley Lane to tackle fly-tipping.

Listen here from 2 hr 49mins 22 secs:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p09v97s6>

Mendip Monthly is compiled and issued by Mendip's Marketing and Media Team.

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