



**For our city, town and parish councils
January 2022**

Help this Winter

Omicron Hospitality & Leisure Grants

The Omicron Grant application is now live for companies registered for business rates and who were trading as of 30 December in Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism.

Please note new restrictions and exclusions apply following updated Government guidance. The Council is advising all businesses to review the latest guidance at [COVID-19: Business Grants](#).

If possible, please try not to contact the Council for general progress updates. By following the instructions online, this will allow us to process large volumes of applications quickly and efficiently, helping our Mendip businesses to bounce back faster.

<https://www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10733/New-250k-funding-boost-for-hospitality-businesses-in-Mendip-open-now>



Mendip Business Hub

Mendip Business Hub is a new online Council service which works with businesses in the district by providing expert advice, guidance, and support. It is a one-stop-shop for information, networking opportunities, consultancy, and events.

Learn more about the Hub and its service here: [Mendip Business Hub](#)

£3.8m to support Somerset households with food and bills

Somerset residents struggling to pay the bills this winter could be eligible for support with the cost of food, energy, water, and other essentials.

Somerset has been allocated £3.8m from the Government's Household Support Fund which will be used to ensure there is a wide range of support available to those who need it between now and the end of March.

£49k funding boost to support landlords improve EPC ratings

Mendip District Council, in partnership with the Centre of Sustainable Energy (CSE), have successfully bid for £49,057 to go towards supporting landlords with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating below Band E, to improve their properties and meet their legal obligations.

The Council and CSE will work together to support Mendip landlords improve their EPC ratings through education, training and events, with the aim of making homes more energy efficient, warmer and cheaper for residents to live in.

If you're a landlord and need help improving the EPC of your property and accessing available grants, please contact the CSE: www.cse.org.uk.

Our Private Sector Housing team are also here to help, please call 0300 303 8588.

Email privatesectorhousing@mendip.gov.uk or visit www.mendip.gov.uk/landlords.

Press Release: <https://www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10701/49k-funding-boost-to-support-landlords-improve-EPC-ratings>

Green Homes Grants available for low-income Mendip residents

Residents across Mendip could benefit from free energy efficiency improvements worth up to £10,000 thanks to receiving a share of a multi-million-pound Government-funded Green Homes Grant Programme, working with E.ON and Happy Energy Solutions.

To be eligible for the grants, the residents of the property must have a low income (receive benefits or have the household income below £30,000 per annum) and the EPC for the property must be rated D, E, F or G. If there is no EPC for your property, you can still apply, and it doesn't matter who your energy supplier is.

To find out if your property has an EPC see:

find-energy-certificate.digital.communities.gov.uk/

You can submit an application at the following website: www.heatsomerset.co.uk/

The scheme runs until March 2022, operating on a first-come, first-served basis.

Press Release: <https://www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10600/Green-Homes-Grants-available-for-low-income-Mendip-residents>

Mendip offers funding to support local organisations

Frome's Missing Links has received £30K through Mendip's Communities Fund and Climate and Ecological Emergency Fund. They will use the money for the construction of a traffic-free multi-user path between Whatcombe Fields in Frome and Great Elm.

When completed this will be a safe travel route for cyclists, walkers and riders, enabling them to avoid a dangerous and hilly stretch of busy roads.

Mendip tackles climate change

Climate change projects Mendip has recently been working on include:

- ✓ Launching a £50k Climate Emergency Fund which will provide 14 projects across the district with money to work towards eco initiatives in the community.
- ✓ Working in partnership with the AONB, Reimagining the Levels and Somerset Wildlife Trust to help plant nearly 7000 trees, restore hedgerows and protect biodiversity.
- ✓ Partnership working with the Centre for Sustainable Energy and the other Somerset Authorities to deliver Green Homes Grants to help improve energy efficiency and decrease the carbon footprint of homes in Mendip.
- ✓ Developing additional planning policies to ensure new housing developments are more sustainable and energy efficient.
- ✓ Working on a project to better understand the emissions from agriculture and how these can be mitigated and reduced.
- ✓ Reporting annually on our own civic emissions as well as monitoring and reporting on emissions across the district.
- ✓ Expanding the Strawberry Line multi-user path, to ensure safe, sustainable travel for residents and visitors to Mendip.

Download the Council's Climate Action Pledge Card and see what small changes you could make to tackle climate change at home:

www.mendip.gov.uk/media/23954/Mendip-Climate-Change-Pledge-Card/pdf/Mendip_Climate_Action_Pledge_card.pdf.

Mendip push on with social housing plans

Press Release: <https://www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10711/Mendip-push-on-with-social-housing-plans>

Elections 2022

The date for Somerset Council elections has been confirmed for **Thursday 5th May 2022**. Some 110 councillors will form a new Somerset Council. Those elected in May

2022 will be county councillors for the first year of their 5-year terms. On 1st April 2023 – vesting day - they become unitary councillors for the new Somerset Council for the remaining 4 years. The new unitary authority will replace Somerset County Council, Mendip, Sedgemoor, Somerset West and Taunton, and South Somerset councils.

City, town and parish council elections also take place on **Thursday 5th May 2022**.

More election info here: <https://www.mendip.gov.uk/article/10641/Elections-2022>

Be a champion for your community

The clock is ticking down on the deadline for candidates to come forward if they want to stand for election in Somerset in May. These are crucial elections for Somerset with the creation of a new, unitary council in April 2023 – the first major change to the way the county is governed in almost 50 years.

Councillors are ordinary people doing an extraordinary job. People from all walks of life can bring something special to their council, whether it's at a county level or hyper-local. If you are interested in standing for election, at county or city, town, and parish level you can find out more here:

<https://www.local.gov.uk/be-councillor>

<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/local-elections>

Key dates:

Notice of election published – 21 March 2022

Nominations accepted from – 22 March 2022

Deadline for candidates' nominations – 5 April 2022

Statement of persons nominated published – 6 April 2022

Deadline to register to vote – 14 April 2022

Close of postal vote applications – 19 April 2022

Polling Day – Thursday 5 May 2022

Count of votes and declarations of results – 6 & 7 May 2022

Pre-election period

The Notice of Election will be posted on 21st March. This means the pre-election period (previously known as purdah) will come into force from **21st March – 5th May**. The period of sensitivity preceding the local elections means particular care should be taken in the weeks preceding the elections - in this case from 21st March.

Planning News

Consultation on Supplementary Planning Document; Design and Amenity of New Development, Guidance For Interpretation of Local Plan Policy DP7.

In February 2019 Mendip District Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency pledging to make best endeavours to enable the District to be carbon neutral by 2030. Energy efficiency in domestic and non-domestic buildings, decarbonising heating systems and renewable energy are all important to the move towards carbon neutrality.

Mendip Local Plan Part 1 includes Policy DP7, Design and Amenity of New Development. The policy makes clear that development should be well designed, creating developments that are useable, durable, adaptable, sustainable and attractive.

The Council is asking for views on a new Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which aims to help applicants demonstrate how their proposal meets the requirements of DP7, including the need to ensure that resource efficiency, sustainable construction and renewable energy have been included.

A Net Zero Carbon Toolkit providing further technical guidance has been endorsed by the Council alongside the SPD.

Comments are invited on the draft SPD between **14th January 2022 and 11th February 2022.**

The SPD can be viewed at www.mendip.gov.uk/sci where a consultation response form is also available to download. Any queries should be directed to the planning policy team planningpolicy@mendip.gov.uk or by phone on 0300 303 8588.

Mendip adopts Local Plan

The second part of Mendip District Council's Local Plan (LPP2) reached its final stage and was adopted, at a recent meeting of Full Council. It follows Local Plan Part 1 (LPP1) which was adopted by Mendip in 2014.

All the information, including the Inspectors report can be found on Mendip's website here: <https://www.mendip.gov.uk/localplanpart2>

Climate Change

Tree Update

Mendip is working with Reimagining the Levels, the AONB and Somerset Wildlife Trust, using Queens Green Canopy funds to go towards:

- Planting 7000+ trees
- Establishing a tree nursery
- Hedgerow restoration
- Looking to establish Tree Warden networks in Mendip

We are working with the Tree Council who provide funding for tree planting, training for volunteers, monthly updates and regional networking opportunities. Looking to trial this in Mendip working with Parishes to determine what they would like from a Tree Warden network. If you would be interested in taking part please contact climate@mendip.gov.uk

Carbon Literacy Training

Raising awareness of where your best efforts can be directed in tackling climate change and how to talk to people about climate change. Free bespoke training for Parish and Town Council's across Somerset:

Full days online training 10am – 5pm. Run by ClimateGuide.

<https://climateguide.co.uk/>

- Thursday 3rd February 2022 10am-5pm (City & Town Council Event)

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/somerset-county-council-carbon-literacy-for-town-city-councils-tickets-170363995296>

- Wednesday 9th February 2022 10am-5pm (Parish Council Event)

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/somerset-county-council-carbon-literacy-for-parish-councils-tickets-170363427598>

Current Funding Opportunities – click on links below

Free retrofit assessments through MDC before end of March 2022, contact PSH_Enquiries@mendip.gov.uk if interested.

[Education activities and resources – Somerset Waste Partnership](#)

£500 for schools to participate in the Eco-Schools programme.

[UK Community Tree Planting - International Tree Foundation](#)

Applications for up to 5000 free trees for small scale projects

Reimagining the Levels Mendip and Somerset Rivers Authority

[RTL | Stewardship and Vision on The Somerset Levels\(reimaginingthelevels.org.uk\)](https://reimaginingthelevels.org.uk)

[How to apply for a natural environment investment readiness fund grant - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

£10,000 - £100,000 towards establishing environmental projects that can generate revenue such as carbon credits & biodiversity units

[Orchards for Schools free orchard and hedgerow packs \(treecouncil.org.uk\)](https://treecouncil.org.uk)

Free fruit tree and hedgerow packs

Woodland Trust Tree Packs:

[Free Trees for Schools and Communities - Woodland Trust](https://www.woodlandtrust.co.uk)

Free Nature and Wellbeing Course

Somerset Wildlife Trust are offering a free Nature and Wellbeing course at A Patch Wilder from Wednesday 23rd February. Book yourself onto the course [HERE](#). More information can be found below.

[Somerset Nature Connections | Somerset Wildlife Trust](#)

Somerset Health Walks

Would you like to find out more about walking or where you can take part in Somerset? There are so many benefits from health walking - we're sure you'll see a difference in yourself even after your first walk!

Click on the links below to see what's going on in your area.

[Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership - Somerset Health Walks \(sasp.co.uk\)](https://sasp.co.uk)

Youth Engagement – can you help?

Mendip is seeking to widen our youth engagement, to ensure their voices are heard and represented in local government.

- ❖ Do you, in your capacity as city, town and parish councils, have any formal/informal links with local community youth organisations?
- ❖ What structures, mechanisms and processes do you have in place to ensure young people are engaged and heard in your area?
- ❖ Do you have some great examples of your connections with youth groups?
 - May be you are not formally engaged or linked-in, but know of an amazing, active youth group in your community. We'd appreciate their name and/or contact details.

Please help us build a picture of youth engagement across Mendip, we'd be most grateful for your time and input on this.

Please email: media@mendip.gov.uk placing 'Youth Engagement' in the subject line.

Thank you.

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

Contact: Ally Laing, media@mendip.gov.uk

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