

Rode
SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL
Cllr Dawn Denton

AUGUST 2022

It has been a brilliant month for enjoying the sunshine, but not great for the lawns. But I did manage to get out and about to meet people and find connection opportunities for the community.

Commonwealth Community: I headed north to Bristol to meet with the Commonwealth Club in Clifton. I am hoping to find opportunities outside of Bristol to support and celebrate the wide range of cultures we have in the Frome North area.

Full Council Meeting: I am very sad that at the Council Meeting on the 20th of July, the council was not able to put in emergency measures to support those in the most need due to the global economic crisis. But we continue to push for more help and will keep you updated as we receive the relevant information. An ecological emergency was declared to protect Somerset's natural environment and biodiversity, alongside the Climate Emergency. I personally will be pushing to ensure there is a follow up plan for the ethical and green discarding of the electric car and bus batteries, which does not seem to be part of the conversation and strategy at this stage.

Conservative Leader Elections: I was invited to a members' event at the home of MP Marcus Fysh outside Yeovil, to meet the Conservative Party Leader candidate, Liz Truss. A lot has been promised but we managed to narrow her down to her top 3 priorities:

- *Cost of living crisis*
- *Tackling the NHS backlog*
- *The war in Ukraine*

Frome Festival: The annual festival was yet again a huge success with over 7,000 tickets sold for over 200 events. The record-breaking event is moving into a new phase with the retirement of Martin Dimery as the Festival Creative Director. Adam Laughton is also the Creative Producer at Wiltshire Music Centre in Bradford on Avon. We look forward to his input and flair in 2023!

Recycling and Waste collections: There has been a lot of disruption due to the hot weather, but the Somerset Waste Partnership makes sure the collections are done as soon as possible. And the crews are starting earlier to ensure they are out of the sun at the hottest time of the day. Please check their website and social channels for updates.

Frome Literary Festival: The first Frome Literary Festival is launching on 15th September and will run until 24th September. The exciting family programme of books and culture will be focusing on the theme of 'beyond the book', so keep an eye on social for updates and collect a programme at Hunting Raven Books in Frome.

Local Community Networks: The pilot programme, currently being run in Frome (for families and children) has made amazing progress. The final geography of the proposed LCN's, which was due last month, is now expected over the summer with more details as to their constitution and responsibilities. But our community has taken action to collect data from Frome town and all the villages north, east, south and west of the town. It has been a big task, but this means we can slot into the finalised programme much easier. All local parish councils are invited to attend to ensure this programme remains about local issues and concerns.

World Breastfeeding week: Somerset County Council's Public Health Team are encouraging people to nominate public places that are 'positive about breastfeeding.' World Breastfeeding Week seeks to inform, educate and empower workplaces and communities to strengthen their capacity to provide and sustain breast-feeding friendly environments for families.

[https://cypsomersethealth.org/?ks=1&page=positive about breastfeeding](https://cypsomersethealth.org/?ks=1&page=positive%20about%20breastfeeding)

Wheelchair and community equipment: Somerset County Council and NHS Somerset are this month launching a new Community Equipment and Wheelchair Service to help people live more independently. The new collaborative service will provide a range of equipment to help people live independently, offering loans to people for as long they need them. The service will also include delivery and fitting, servicing, collection, and recycling. More information is available at www.somerset.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/equipment-to-help-you/

Tackling violence against women and girls: Somerset County and North Somerset Council's have jointly secured an additional £317,694 from the Home Office Safer Streets Fund to continue to make public spaces and streets safer for women and girls. This additional funding will allow the councils to focus on anti-social behaviour concerns that contribute to the fear of Violence

against Women and Girls (VAWG) by targeting resources at four locations – Taunton, Bridgwater, Weston-super-Mare and Yeovil. The areas identified experience VAWG related crime, anti-social behaviour and low feelings of safety for people within those communities.

Somerset Business Climate Summit: The Somerset Business Climate Summit 2022 will take place at Queens College in Taunton on Wednesday 21st September between 10am and 1pm. The Summit will highlight best practice and raise awareness of the opportunities and challenges for businesses as we shift toward a low carbon economy. Businesses will be encouraged examine their current business models and make pledges to reduce their carbon footprints. Details can be found at www.somerset.gov.uk/climate-emergency/climate-emergency-businesses/climate-summit/

Buses: There is substantial threat to the buses servicing the Frome North area. It is vital for communities to remain connected and maintain independence. The loss of buses has a huge impact in all areas of small communities such as the villages in our area. There is still time to tackle the proposed cuts due in October (on especially the D2 service between Frome and Bath). Bus usage post pandemic is only at 65-70% capacity. There are also about 113,000 people in Somerset who are eligible and receive free bus travel across the county. This costs the county about £5 million pounds per year. With the price of fuel and the cost of living, as well as in support of the Climate Emergency, as a council, we are hoping to encourage more people to get into the habit of using the bus. More users mean less need for funding. Please connect with the Frome and Villages Bus Users Group on Facebook for updates and with information about action you can take in support.

Enjoy the last of the summer and please do get in touch if you have any questions, concerns or ideas.

Best wishes,

Dawn Denton

dawndentonfrome@gmail.com