

SOMERSET COUNCIL

Rode Parish Council

Dawn Denton

June 2023

Somerset Press Releases: You can view all the Somerset County Council press releases for the last month using this link:

<https://somersetnewsroom.com/category/press-releases/>

St Lawrence Church: I have taken photographs of the signage from both sides of the road and submitted them to Highways. A request was put in by Geoff Banwell to improve the signs to prevent damage to the church wall due to speeding.

Slip Road: no news. Sara Davis is trying too. I will keep at it.

Bradford Road/ Rode Hill Junction: there was a delay with signage, but it will all get completed as soon as the signs arrive (6-8 weeks from early May).

Church Farm Lane: Previous enforcement investigations have concluded these footpaths, whilst discussed in planning correspondence were never formulated into the final approved scheme for construction.

Andrew Dearing has reviewed the planning history, permissions and s106 agreements and has concluded:

There was an intention for the additional footpaths to be considered at a future date within the wider scheme, however this appears not to have been advanced to a point the Council can allege a breach of the planning permission or the s106 agreement. In the event Somerset Council contemplated enforcement action either in the Civil Court (s106 agreement) or using enforcement powers contained within The Town & Country Planning Act 1990, Andrew Dearing is not persuaded the Council would succeed due to the level of ambiguity within the documented planning history.

*****I attached a separate and more detailed report*****

Business Breakfast: The Frome Chamber of Commerce and Somerset Chamber of Commerce are hosting a joint business breakfast at Standerwick Market on Thursday 6th July 8:00am to 10:00am. The guest speaker is Lucy Milton-Downes of Solstice Legal Services Limited. Tickets: <https://fromechamber.com/event/breakfast-with-frome-chamber-of-commerce/>

Asset Devolution: This is something that pops into my inbox regularly and I have been advised that this will be a slow process. It may also be something for the LCN to pick up.

Government support for Bus Services: Bus users across the County can now travel on most routes for just £2 until October 31. The major fare cut is part of the Government's initiative aimed at boosting bus use while helping passengers to save money and had been due to finish on 30 June. The Government have also announced that from 1 November fares for single journeys in the County will be capped at £2.50. The initiative also applies to cross-county services.

Road repair funding: The Government have awarded Somerset Council an additional £5.4m to carry out essential repair works across the county's road network. This year's extra funding from the Government recognises the challenges facing authorities after a year of extreme weather conditions. A blistering summer followed by a winter of sustained flooding and freezing temperatures which has led to an increase in defects on roads across the UK and with standing water getting under surfaces before freezing.

Gritting Season Ends: Somerset Council's gritting teams are standing down for the season after travelling the equivalent of twice around the world this winter. The fleet of 23 gritters were needed on 67 occasions (an increase of eight days over the previous winter season) when freezing temperatures were forecast, treating around 900 miles of road each time. The team covered 83,200 miles during the 2022/23 season, a significant increase over the previous winter season when they covered 45,000 miles. Recent winter seasons included 70,200 miles in 2020/21, 44,000 miles in 2019/20 and 32,800 miles in 2018/19. The lowest road temperature was recorded at -8.4 degrees on the A396 Exebridge on 16 December 2022. During the season, more than 9,850 tonnes of salt was utilised – almost double last year's quantity.

Consultation on licensing policy: Residents and businesses are invited to comment on Somersets updated Licensing Policy which must reviewed every five years. The Policy document sets out an approach to the Council's licensing functions in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003. When the consultation has ended, the Council will consider responses and make any appropriate amendments to the Statement of Licensing Policy. The final draft will be considered and agreed at a Full Council meeting. The closing date for comments is 13 July 2023 and the consultation is available to view: <https://somersetcouncil.citizenspace.com/licensing/licensing-policy/> .

Recycling Centres: Cartons and Tetra Pak will no longer be taken at recycling sites from Monday 12th June because of the impact of increased kerbside collections. The move is down to the huge success of Recycle More expanded collections which mean cartons are collected from the kerb every week with the rest of the recycling. Last year Somerset recycled close to ten tonnes of cartons each month, with less than 500 kilograms having been collected across the recycling sites.

Volunteers (1): The beginning of June marks the start of the 39th year of Volunteers' Week when thousands of charities and voluntary organisations recognise the contribution volunteers make across the UK. Somerset Council has almost 1,600 volunteers with many supporting services that are so important to the county's residents of all ages from libraries and the environment to children, young people

and the NHS. Volunteering opportunities are available on the Council's dedicated www.assemblevolunteers.somerset.gov.uk/opportunities

Volunteers (2): Somerset libraries are looking for volunteers to help support this year's Summer Reading Challenge, 'Ready, Set, Read!'. The challenge, which runs across all Somerset libraries, aims to encourage children to read six books during the summer holidays, while also engaging in a host of fun events and activities, online or at their local library. In 2022, a total of 6,595 children participated in the challenge and now Somerset libraries are looking for volunteers, aged 14 and over, to help this year's challenge become another great success.

Here's to a glorious summer!

Dawn Denton