

Councillor Update

*From your
Unitary Councillors
Andy Sully and Mike Rigby*



Somerset
Council

SOMERSET COUNCIL LEADER ASKS MP'S FOR A BETTER DEAL TO FIX FUNDING ISSUES



We've got some important updates from the heart of Somerset's local government. Our very own Council Leader, Bill Revans, has been actively championing for a fairer funding model to ensure our county's services remain robust and effective. Let's dive into the latest developments.

A Trip to Westminster

On March 11th, 2025, Cllr Revans took our concerns straight to the corridors of power in Westminster. He joined forces with local government leaders from across the nation to address the Housing, Communities, and Local Government Committee. The pressing issue? The sustainability of relying heavily on Council Tax, especially when it's based on property values from way back in 1991. Highlighting that a whopping 66% of Somerset's budget is channelled into social care, Cllr Revans

emphasized that this outdated system is simply not up to the task.

Team Somerset: United for Change

In a show of unity, Cllr Revans recently convened a meeting with all seven of Somerset's MPs. The goal? To foster a "Team Somerset" approach, ensuring that our collective voice resonates loudly on the national stage. Discussions centered on Somerset Council's current financial landscape, the potential for devolution, and the profound impact national funding decisions have on our local services.

National Support for Local Challenges

It's not just within Somerset that alarm bells are ringing. Over 40 MPs from various political backgrounds have penned a letter urging the government to reassess and bolster financial support for local councils. Their collective plea underscores the urgency of the situation, highlighting the untenable position council's face: the daunting choice between slashing essential services or imposing steep Council Tax hikes.

Looking Ahead

The path forward is undeniably challenging. However, with steadfast leadership, a unified approach, and the backing of our MPs, there's a concerted effort to secure a funding model that truly reflects the needs of our community. As residents, staying informed and engaged is crucial. Together, we can navigate these challenges and advocate for a brighter, more sustainable future for Somerset.

SRA TO SPEND £3.2 MILLION ON FLOOD WORKS ACROSS SOMERSET



We have some exciting news to share about the Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) and their ongoing efforts to keep our beautiful county safe and resilient against flooding. In their latest Annual Report for 2023-24, the SRA has detailed how they've put over £3.2 million of your Council Tax to work on various projects aimed at reducing flood risks and impacts across Somerset. Let's dive into some of the highlights!

Dredging and River Management

A significant portion of the budget—£2.14 million, to be exact—was allocated to dredging activities. This involved trialling new dredging methods along parts of the River Parrett between Burrowbridge and the M5 bridge, as well as along the River Sowey and King's Sedgemoor Drain system. These efforts are crucial in maintaining the flow of our rivers and preventing potential flooding in surrounding areas.

Bridgwater Tidal Barrier

The SRA has also contributed to the proposed Bridgwater Tidal Barrier, a project set to reduce flood risks for over 11,300 homes and 1,500 businesses. This ambitious plan includes the construction of more than 2.5 miles of new flood defence banks and the raising of 1.74 miles of existing banks downstream at Chilton Trinity, Combswich, and Pawlett.

Land Management Initiatives

In 2023-24, ten land management and Natural Flood Management schemes were completed across Somerset. These projects, located in areas such as Pudleigh Mill near Chard and Hill Farm in Barrington, aim to reduce surface water run-off and improve soil infiltration, thereby mitigating flood risks.

Looking Ahead: Community Flood Action Fund

The SRA launched a Community Flood Action Fund, offering small grants ranging from £3,000 to £20,000. With up to £200,000 available annually, this initiative encourages town and parish councils, charities, and community groups to apply for funding to implement practical flood risk reduction measures. It's a fantastic opportunity for local organizations to contribute directly to making Somerset more resilient.

In conclusion, the Somerset Rivers Authority continues to make substantial strides in flood risk management, investing in both large-scale infrastructure and community-led initiatives. Their comprehensive approach ensures that Somerset remains resilient in the face of climate change and flooding challenges.



*Best wishes to you all,
Andy and Mike*

Andy: andy.sully@somerset.gov.uk

Mike: mike.rigby@somerset.gov.uk