



Improving Lives in Somerset Strategy 2019-2028

Draft for consultation



Somerset Health and Wellbeing

Foreword

I'm delighted to introduce this consultation on our important strategy that sets out how Somerset County Council and all its key partners will work together to improve the lives of our residents.

For me, this is the key – improving lives. It is what drove me into politics in the first place and what keeps me motivated and passionate about it now – making a difference to individuals and communities.

The Health and Wellbeing Board is made up of partners from all walks of life, all committed to working across the public, private and voluntary sectors to consider the health needs of the whole community, to look out for our vulnerable adults and children, and to help all our residents understand how they can help themselves to improve their own lives, their own prospects.

This strategy explains how, over the next ten years, we will work together to do that, to improve lives. For example, we are delighted with the progress made over recent years to increase rates of breastfeeding in Somerset, particularly in some of our more deprived areas. We have also made great strides in raising awareness of the support available to older people who might be feeling lonely. We will continue to work together on these and other, similar issues.

Our health and wellbeing is paramount to each and every one of us. Keeping well, making sound choices and understanding our own personal health and wellbeing can make a real difference. Overall the health of people in Somerset is good, but some of our communities and groups experience poorer health than others.

We hope you will have full confidence in the strategy – the strategy will only be good if we have your help and input to develop it. Please take part in our consultation, read through the supporting explanations, see what a difference you can make, and help us work together to help *all* our residents and communities.

Thank you,



Christine,

Cllr Christine Lawrence

Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board,
Cabinet Member for Public Health and
Wellbeing, Somerset County Council



Somerset Health and Wellbeing

County Vision

We have a **vision** for Somerset. Over the next ten years, we want all organisations to work together as a partnership to make Somerset:

- A thriving and productive County that is ambitious, confident and focussed on improving people's lives
- A County of resilient, well-connected and safe and strong communities working to reduce inequalities
- A County infrastructure that supports affordable housing, economic prosperity and sustainable public services
- A County and environment where all partners, private and voluntary sector, focus on improving the health and wellbeing of all our communities

What is the **Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board**?

- The Health and Wellbeing Board is a group of people from different organisations who work together in partnership to improve the health of people in Somerset.
- The organisations that work on this Board include Somerset County Council, such as the people who manage public health, adult and children services; Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS England, our five District Councils and Healthwatch Somerset which provides a voice for the residents of Somerset.
- The Board has to produce a strategy which shows what it will do to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in Somerset.
- The first Health and Wellbeing strategy was published in 2013 and set out a five year vision for how the different organisations would work together to improve health and wellbeing.
- The strategy now needs to be updated and refreshed based on the latest information available of the health and social care needs of local people.
- To recognise the aims of the new vision for Somerset we have renamed the strategy the 'Improving Lives' strategy.
- We need to get feedback from local people and services to find out if we are focussing on the things that have the biggest impact on people's lives.

What is the **Somerset Improving Lives Strategy**?

- The strategy will be used by the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board to show what they will do over the next ten years to improve the lives of people in Somerset
- The Health and Wellbeing Board will monitor progress against each of the priorities identified in the strategy and ensure all partners are contributing to improving the lives of local people.
- The Health and Wellbeing Board has identified four priorities where it will focus for the next ten years to improve the lives of Somerset people.
 - **Priority 1:** A county infrastructure that drives productivity, supports economic prosperity and sustainable public services
 - **Priority 2:** Safe, vibrant and well-balanced communities able to enjoy and benefit from the natural environment
 - **Priority 3:** Fairer life chances and opportunity for all
 - **Priority 4:** Improved health and wellbeing and more people living healthy and independent lives for longer
- The priorities are described in more detail below.



Somerset Health and Wellbeing

Somerset now and in the future



An economy worth over £11bn



90% of schools are rated good or better



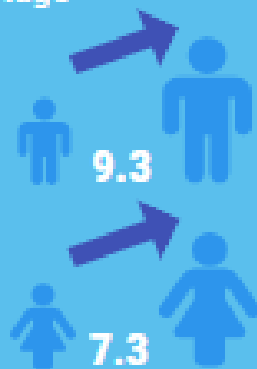
Low levels of unemployment



A rich natural environment and cultural heritage



Good partnerships and working relationships between organisations



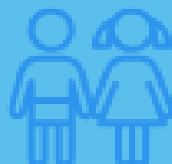
Men in the most affluent areas of Somerset will live, on average 9.3 years longer than men in the most deprived areas, while for women the difference is 7.3 years



Need for more housing and infrastructure



Increased needs of a growing and ageing population



Inequality in educational outcomes, access to services, life chances and aspirations

A more detailed profile of health and wellbeing in Somerset is described in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which can be read online here:

<http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/jsna/>



Somerset Health and Wellbeing

Priority one: A County infrastructure that drives productivity, supports economic prosperity and sustainable public services

What does this mean for me?

We know that to make the biggest change to improving people's lives we need to focus on the social and environmental factors that impact on people's lives. These include factors such as:

Employment

Good work offers stability, security and a regular income. Good work provides the opportunity for people to afford basic living standards and participate in community and social life.

Housing

A healthy home is one that is affordable, warm and stable, and somewhere that helps connect people to community work and services. A healthy home provides a solid foundation for our population and supports good mental and physical health.

Connectedness

People who are connected to the types of information and support they need are more likely to access support in a timely manner. Better digital and transport connections will also allow our businesses and communities to thrive.

We want to see economic growth and development in Somerset. However, our priority as a partnership is to ensure that this growth benefits everyone and creates jobs and housing opportunities that are available to all.

What is the local picture?

In Somerset we have lower unemployment rates than the national average. However, many people are employed in part-time and low-wage jobs and the average income for Somerset residents is lower than for the rest of England.

There are not enough affordable homes for all of the people that need them and the average house price is now 10 times higher than the average income.

Many of our residents live in rural areas, some of which have poor access to high speed broadband and mobile phone signal. There are also parts of the county where transport access is difficult which impacts on education, employment and business opportunities.

Many of the public services in Somerset are facing financial challenges with levels of funding not being matched by increasing demand.



Priority two: Safe, vibrant and well-balanced communities able to enjoy and benefit from the natural environment

What does this mean for me?

We know that to make people feel happy and supported and able to access all of the opportunities that can help to improve their lives we need to create safe, strong and supportive communities.

Environment

Health is influenced by how the surroundings and environment make people feel and the opportunities they provide. Good places, indoor and outdoor spaces and buildings help people to be more physically active, use facilities and services, socialise and play.

Crime and fear of crime

Feeling safe and secure in the local area has a significant impact on people's health and wellbeing. A feeling of safety can help to enable people to take up opportunities to be more physically active and participate in social activities.

Social isolation

A lack of social contact and feelings of isolation and loneliness can have a significant impact on mental health and wellbeing. Happy and positive friendships and feeling part of a community helps to reduce the impact of social isolation.

Community cohesion

The word community means different things to different people but we know that people who feel part of a community enjoy a sense of belonging and have more opportunity to develop resilience and have the support necessary to deal with any challenges they may face.

As a partnership we want to make sure Somerset is a safe and healthy place to work, with healthy communities that are strong and resourceful and able to make the most of the assets that we have.

What is the local picture?

Nearly half of our population live in rural areas. Many of these areas can be distant from services and can be cut off during periods of harsh weather.

Over 70% of adults in Somerset volunteer at least once a year. However, there are over 2800 charities to support and 100s of community groups who require increasing voluntary support.

The population in Somerset is getting older and there are over 33,500 people aged over 65 years living alone. In some areas of the county there are high numbers of people experiencing social isolation and loneliness.



Somerset Health and Wellbeing

Priority three: Fairer life chances and opportunity for all

What does this mean for me?

We know that what happens to us in childhood and adolescence is very important for the rest of our lives. Many of our health behaviours are formed from a very young age.

Education

Good education and lifelong skills can help to build the foundations for accessing good work, problem solving and feeling empowered and valued. Education also provides a basis for learning valuable healthy lifestyle skills such as healthy sexual behaviours, emotional resilience and healthy eating.

Positive family life

A positive family life provides a child with the opportunity for a healthy life by creating the foundations for them to develop intellectual, social and emotional skills. Positive family life can also help children to develop healthy lifestyle habits and feel loved and valued.

Mental health and wellbeing

Enabling good mental health and wellbeing is vital for the educational and life chances of children and young people in Somerset. Early identification and access to effective support are essential to improve outcomes.

Our priority as a partnership is to ensure every child in Somerset has the opportunity to have the best possible start in life.

What is the local picture?

Most children and young people have access to high quality education with many of the schools in Somerset rated as good or better by OFSTED inspectors. Somerset does not have a University and fewer young people go into Higher Education than is seen nationally. Almost 6% of the adult population have no academic qualifications at all.

There are some significant inequalities between communities in early life experiences. For example breastfeeding rates 19% lower in the most deprived communities compared to the least deprived. Furthermore, there is a gap in GCSE achievement between pupils who receive free school meals and those who do not.

The numbers of young people in Somerset being admitted to hospital for self-harm or alcohol-specific conditions is higher than we would expect it to be compared to the rest of England.

The West Somerset District was recently ranked as the lowest area nationally for social mobility, meaning that there are fewer education, employment and housing opportunities for deprived children and young people.



Somerset Health and Wellbeing

Priority four: Improved health and wellbeing and more people living healthy and independent lives for longer

What does this mean for me?

We all have a role to play in maintaining and improving the health and wellbeing of ourselves, our families and our communities, by trying to live a healthier way of life. However, we also need access to the health and care services that we need, when we need them.

Joined up care

Joining up the different parts of our health and care system and enabling them to communicate effectively will allow us to best meet the needs of our population and ensure we do not miss opportunities for prevention and early intervention.

Independent lives

We want people to feel supported to live the life they aspire to, by helping them earlier and more efficiently. Providing the necessary care and support at home and in communities can enable people to live independently for longer and reduce unnecessary admissions to hospital.

Prevention and early intervention

People should feel supported to choose healthy and active lifestyles and improve their own physical and mental health and wellbeing. Some people will need more support than others but all partners should be doing what they can to provide the information and support for people to make positive lifestyle choices.

Our priority as a partnership is to ensure we have a health and care system that is fit for purpose and can manage the challenges of increasing demand, support those with long-term conditions and help residents take responsibility for improving their own health outcomes.

What is the local picture?

The life expectancy in Somerset has increased by around 2 years in the last 15 years, with men now expected to live until 80.5 years and women 84.1 years. This is higher than for the national average.

As life expectancy increases, the period of time spent in ill health also increases. We now expect the last 16 years of life to be spent in ill health and in the next 20 years we may see a doubling in dementia rates.

In some of our communities in Somerset, 20% of the adult population are living with a disability and over 7% of adults are recorded on GP registers for depression.

The way health and social care services are delivered may become unsustainable if demand continues to increase and our population gets older, with more long term conditions.



Somerset Health and Wellbeing

What next?

- You can view the strategy online (provide link) or a copy can be sent to you to comment on
- You have 10 weeks to respond
- Once the consultation has taken place and local residents and organisations have had a chance to comment, the final draft of the strategy will be produced and presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board later in the year
- The strategy will be reviewed regularly against clear measures and objectives established through an accompanying action plan.

Please tell us what you think.

Do you agree with the overall vision?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Did not answer Free text comments:
Do you agree we are taking the right approach?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Did not answer Free text comments:
Do you support the four strategic priorities?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Did not answer Free text comments:
How relevant is each of the strategic priorities for you or your organisation?	
Priority one: A County infrastructure that drives productivity, supports economic prosperity and sustainable public services	Very relevant Quite relevant Not relevant Not at all relevant
Priority two: Safe, vibrant and well-balanced communities able to enjoy and benefit from the natural environment	Very relevant Quite relevant Not relevant Not at all relevant
Priority three: Fairer life chances and opportunity for all	Very relevant Quite relevant Not relevant Not at all relevant
Priority four: Improved health and wellbeing and more people living healthy and independent lives for longer	Very relevant Quite relevant Not relevant Not at all relevant
How would you like to be involved to support the delivery of the four priorities?	
What support from the Health and Wellbeing Board do you need to achieve this?	



What type of organisation are you responding on behalf of?	Public Sector organisation Private sector organisation Voluntary, Community or Social Enterprise Sector As a County, District or Parish Councillor On behalf of a local community group As an individual Other
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