

End of year Achievement Report

2019 - 2020



Find out about our achievements for South Somerset



**Protecting
Core Services**



Economy



Environment



Housing



**Healthy, Self-reliant
Communities**

Our Vision for South Somerset:

A place where businesses flourish, communities are safe, vibrant and healthy; where residents enjoy good housing, and cultural, leisure and supporting activities.

Priority project:

The Council agrees a small number of priorities each year as part of our Council Plan annual action plan. Priority projects contribute to the achievement of the Council's ambitions for South Somerset. You can read more about the Council's priority projects for 2020-21 [here](#)

South Somerset District Council (SSDC) is an ambitious and forward-thinking council that is committed to transforming, improving and adapting to be ready for the future. We place our residents and businesses firmly at the centre of everything we do and we are incredibly proud of the work we have achieved alongside our communities in 2019/20.

A balanced budget delivered with no cuts to services whilst continuing with regeneration projects. These will support three of our key towns in South Somerset – Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton.

Following acknowledgement of the climate emergency, SSDC approved our Environment Strategy, which aims to make the District carbon neutral by 2030.

The 10-year Economic Development Strategy has been embedded ensuring that we are well placed to attract new businesses, help start-ups and encourage diversity and innovation.

We are continuing to be a more commercial organisation, investing in projects that provide essential income to pay for our highly valued services. Customer Service continues to be transformed and improved with new technology, providing dedicated resource to support those who are most vulnerable, continuing our great work to alleviate homelessness and working hard to protect the environment.

This is all in addition to the excellent value we provide for residents including free school holiday Play days, a superb network of parks and open spaces, waste and recycling collections, leisure, arts and entertainment services including swimming facilities at Wincanton and Yeovil, The Octagon Theatre and Westlands.

This achievements report provides you with an overview of just some of the great work being undertaken by SSDC as we continue to commit to our goals of being great to work for, excellent to work with, leading the way and delivering for our communities.



**Protecting
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In order to protect front line services we set out to:

- Transform customer services through technology
- Provide access to services to suit our customers' needs
- Actively manage assets and resources to ensure the best financial or community return
- Seek business opportunities for the council
- Work with partners to achieve economies, resilience and influence

£2.2m



Our ambitious Transformation Programme has continued to make good progress without cutting services and helping to generate £2.2m in commercial income by 2021.



Shortlisted for two national MJ awards

For Workforce Transformation and as Best Commercial Council.



Supported **Local, European** and **General** elections.

79%

Of planning applications were **submitted on-line**, saving time and money. Number of applications up from 1290 to 1322 this year.



Our hub at **Petters Way** has been redesigned, improved access for all including self-serve areas



Our Customer Access Points in Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton provided direct help and advice across the district.



Enhanced our property **portfolio** through prudent, ambitious and exciting investments now providing an annual income of £2.3m



49,000

People following all SSDC's **Facebook accounts** and almost been a **62% growth in SSDC's Facebook page** since April 2019 and March 2020, with posts reaching an average of 236,021 users.





To promote a strong and growing economy with thriving urban, rural and land based businesses and improving productivity we aspired to:

- Work with businesses and use our assets
- Provide advice and support
- Deliver initiatives that ensure worker skills meet the employers' needs
- Lobby for and support infrastructure improvements to enable growth
- Capitalise on our high quality culture, leisure and tourism opportunities to bring people into the district



Yeovil Refresh

Our ambitious plan for the regeneration of Yeovil town centre has continued. The Yeovil Access Strategy was produced in January 2020 and the Public Realm Design Guide approved and adopted in March 2020.



Chard Regeneration

Plans for the regeneration of Chard town centre were finalised with planning permission granted in September 2019. Demolition started on site in December 2019 with construction of the Leisure Centre underway. £1m was awarded from the High Street Heritage Action Zone Fund in September 2019.



Wincanton Regeneration

The public consultation ended in March 2019 and the Wincanton Town Centre Strategy was formally supported by Area East Committee in July 2019. The budget was approved in October and the Wincanton Regeneration Board was established in November. Work is now ongoing to progress the priority projects identified in the strategy.



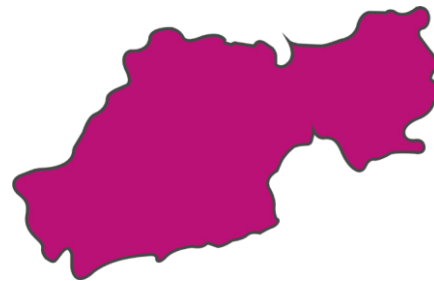
Priority Project

All three of these Priority Projects will continue into 2019-20. You can read more about our plans for 2019-20 in the updated [Council Plan](#).



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Local Plan

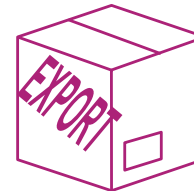
Review ongoing for South Somerset 2016-2036 – including public consultation on the Issues and Options.



New Anchor Tenant

Moved into the Yeovil Innovation Centre Phase 2. New meeting room fitted out with up to the minute conferencing and presentation equipment.

We have worked with and part-funded Somerset Education Business Partnership who have engaged with over 66 Employers & 16 Educational Instructors bringing business and education together in South Somerset. Apprenticeship funding secured and representation on “Think Tank” with **Yeovil College**.



We continued to provide **support and advice to food businesses who may be affected by Brexit** in particular relation to export certification



10-year strategy

We continued with our ten-year strategy for economic prosperity and growth in South Somerset across our 6 priority themes:

- Business Support, Retention, Innovation & Inward Investment
- Transport & Communications Infrastructure
- Economic Inclusion – skills, careers and training
- Land, Sites & Workspaces
- Supporting Urban Economies
- Supporting Rural Economies

You can read more about our [Achievements here](#)



To keep South Somerset clean, green and attractive we worked in partnership to:

- Promote recycling and minimise waste
- Promote the use of 'green' technology
- Maintain and promote access to our Country Parks and open spaces to promote good mental and physical health
- Keep streets and neighbourhoods clean and attractive
- Continue to support long term flood resilience
- Promote a high quality built environment in line with Local Plan policies
- Support communities to develop and implement local, parish & neighbourhood plans

SSDC approved our First Environment Strategy following acknowledgement of the Climate Emergency

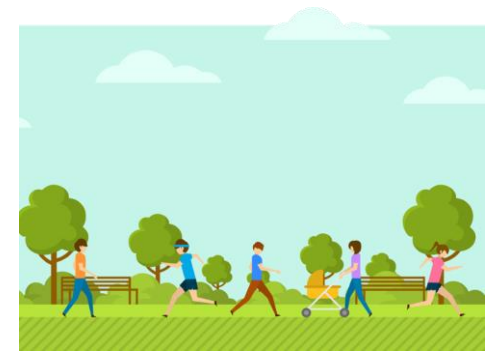
4 Climate Emergency drop in events help across the County.

625 residents came along to have their say.



Green Flag Awards

Retained at Ham Hill and Yeovil Country parks and Chard Reservoir Local Nature Reserve.



Awarded a South West in Bloom, **Five star Best Park Award** for Yeovil Country Park



Yeovil won Gold for South West In Bloom for the third year running. **Curry Rivel and Haselbury Plucknett also won Gold.**

Milborne Port & Templecombe won Silver Gilt



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The **batayenergy (25MW) storage site near Taunton** – completed and operational by the end of 2019.

Environment

Champions in place across SSDC. Recycling audit undertaken, action plan being worked on. Parishes looking for volunteers to act as Environment Champions.



2280



Trees planted at Yeovil Rec



Over **3000** trees planted as part of the Great Parish

Tree Giveaway across **61**

Flood resilience

Supported the work of the Somerset Rivers Authority



SLIM MY WASTE



Recycle all your food waste

SSDC along with the other members of Somerset Waste Partnership supported the "Slim my Waste, feed my face" initiative to promote recycling food waste.



To enable the provision of housing that meets the future and existing needs of residents and Employers we worked with partners to:

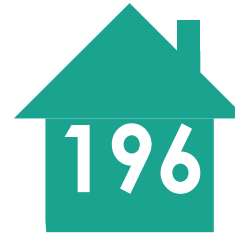
- Minimise homelessness and rough sleeping
- Work with the private rented sector to improve the standard and availability of rented accommodation
- Tackle fuel poverty
- Work to minimise the impact of personal or household debt
- Enable people to live independently for as long as they are able

82

Disabled facilities grants (DFGs) allowed residents to continue to live independently in their homes.

Operated the Severe Weather Emergency Provision for 16 nights and as a result **helped 28 people with emergency accommodation and follow up support.**

In partnership with The Newt Somerset, SSDC won the **Royal Town Planning Institute's Excellence in Planning for Heritage and Culture Award**



New affordable homes In South Somerset by partnership working with developers and housing associations.



Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) were licensed to ensure standards for tenants are maintained in rented accommodation.

254

Households received timely advice and support, which prevented homelessness

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy & Action Plan 2019-2023 was successfully adopted.

Provided **11-Unit temporary accommodation property** for homeless families with self-contained bedsits and communal facilities and commenced work to bring an old building back into use for 6 more units of temporary housing.



Healthy, Self-reliant Communities

2019-20

To build healthy, self-reliant, active Communities we committed to:

- Support communities so that they can identify their needs and develop local solutions
- Target support to areas of need
- Help people to live well by enabling quality Cultural, leisure, play, sport & healthy lifestyle facilities & activities
- Work with partners to tackle health issues such as diabetes and hypertension, and mental health
- Work with partners to keep our communities safe



1161

Food inspections completed to ensure safe places for communities to eat and buy food.

359

investigations of noise complaints, helping to address causes or factors of poor mental health and wellbeing.



Construction of a new adventure play park and outdoor gym at Stoke Sub Hamdon



The Octagon Theatre and Westlands Entertainment Venue set a new box office record selling over

161,943 tickets!

£2.8 million worth (64% on-line) across both venues, and supported by 15,800 hours donated by our magnificent volunteers.

Community Heritage Access Centre (CHAC)

CHAC created a First World War commemorative walks guide for Yeovil, funded by the South West Museum Development Fund and launched with a series of locally led events.



47 Community Led projects

We facilitated £167,000 of grants, which helped to create investment of over £560,000 into supporting increased local quality of life.

12,500+



People attended children's play days across the district with support from SSDC including 6000 visitors to the National Play Day event at Yeovil Country Park.

Construction of a new skate park in Wincanton.

Looking ahead - Our future plans for 2020 - 21



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Places where we live



Healthy, Self-reliant
Communities

Looking ahead to 2020-21 we are set for another year full of ambition for South Somerset – while still facing many of the challenges arising from reduced Government funding and rising demand for services. We are committed to protecting vital front line services, while increasing our digital services to provide 24/7 access to customers.

Our Council Plan for 2020-24 agreed by Full Council in 2020, shows our ambitions to make major changes in the way that we operate and deliver services over the next few years whilst continuing to deliver services and priority projects that meet the needs of our residents, visitors and businesses.

Our Annual Action Plan for 2020-21 includes 38 areas of focus across our five Council Plan themes: Protecting Core Services, Economy, Environment, Places where we live and Healthy, Self-Reliant Communities. We have also identified eight priority projects for the coming year, with dedicated resources and detailed plans to support their progress and long-term contribution to the well-being of South Somerset. This year's Annual Action Plan also includes a series of local priorities for each of our four areas – North, South, East and West.

Council Plan 2020-24

You can read about our Council Plan annual action plan for 2020-24 [here](#).

