

South Somerset *Tourism News*



Autumn 2022

Included in this issue:

- Updates from the tourism team
- Diary date for the South Somerset Tourism Showcase
- Somerset Art Week and other business events
- Success in the Taste of the West awards

Dear colleagues,

Along with my colleagues at SSDC, I was very saddened to hear of the death of Her Majesty The Queen and have fond memories of her visit to Yeovil and Crewkerne in 2012 for the Diamond Jubilee.



The Reading of the Local Proclamation took place at 4pm on Sunday 11 September at Yeovil Country Park, near Ninesprings Café. If you were unable to attend, a recording of the full event is available to view via this [link](#).

The Coordinator from our South Somerset Heritage Collection is today (Tuesday) supporting the Countryside Rangers in removing the floral tributes that have been laid at Yeovil Country Park (Ninesprings). The cards and messages will be retained in the archive to reflect this period of national mourning, and any blooms that remain in good condition will be dried or pressed to add to the archive. Thank you to everybody that attended the Proclamation or who left a tribute.

Best wishes, Becky

As I write this newsletter we are still waiting to hear what national help will be available to businesses regarding the fuel, energy and cost of living crisis. As soon as I have any details to share I will produce a separate newsletter or keep an eye on the [businesses support pages](#) on the SSDC website.

Please don't forget the free support on offer from the South West Growth Hub, especially their [THRIVE](#) programme. They use specialist advisors to offer 1-2-1 sessions and will help identify what assistance would most help your business, for example, marketing, business planning or finance.

South Somerset Visitor Information Centre and Tourism Team news

At SSDC we are delighted to welcome **Clare Petherick** to the role of Leisure Operations Manager, looking after the Tourism and Heritage teams. Clare comes to us with front-line experience in our Visitor Information Centres and many years of marketing and business management. Clare has come in and driven forward the new [visitsouthsomerset.com](#) website and worked wonders on our social media feeds.

Our [website](#) is going from strength to strength, with an impressive 12.5K new website users in August. All listings are completely FREE and straightforward - details and links about how to submit your content are on our [trade pages](#). The website content is continually being updated, the most recent article is a lovely piece about visiting Somerset gardens this autumn that can be viewed [here](#). Please feel free to link our website to yours and enjoy all the free guides, itineraries, brochures, and maps to help visitors make the most of their stay here.

We love spreading the word about fabulous South Somerset and you can do this too by following us at:

- Facebook - VisitSouthSomerset
- Twitter - VisitSSomerset
- Instagram - visitsouthsomerset
- YouTube: Visit South Somerset

The **South Somerset Visitor Information Centre** is still operating summer hours, with the hordes of school children being replaced with a somewhat older demographic! If you supply the centre with leaflets it might be worth calling in to check they have enough stock and pick up any brochures you need.

The **Yeovil Tourist Information Centre** is operating as a self-serve information point – it is not staffed. It is located in the Connect area in Petters House, Yeovil, and the leaflets displayed are managed by our Cartgate site. Please do not leave leaflets at Yeovil

– this must be arranged with Bev at Cartgate as we have very limited space. Thank you.



Date for your Diary! **Tourism Showcase, 28th March 2023, Westlands Entertainment Venue, Yeovil**

Demand for printed materials is still strong as we have seen for ourselves at the bustling Visitor Centre this season. However, there is a notable decline in the number of attractions now producing print.

With this in mind, we are evolving our annual 'leaflet exchange' to become more of a **showcase** for tourism in the area. Providing an important meeting point for local businesses to come together and exchange materials, but also to **network** and showcase your business to fellow tourism colleagues. Westlands offers easy access, free parking and a cafe area, perfect for catching up with colleagues in a relaxed environment.

Accommodation, attractions, activities, food and drink – are all welcome to attend and have a stand. More information will be emailed soon to businesses that attended in the last few years. If you haven't been before - please get in touch to be added to the list. Also, please share with other local businesses or colleagues that you think might be interested.

We will be inviting some of our SSDC colleagues and support providers, such as the South West Growth Hub, it would be helpful to know of any **experts you would like the opportunity** to meet such as HR, social media and marketing experts or finance companies.

If you have any questions, or comments about experts you would like to see there, please drop me an [email](#) - thank you.

Business Visits - one of the best parts of my job is getting out and visiting some of the great businesses we have in South Somerset. Working with my colleagues in Economic Development and the rest of the council, we can help with a wide range of issues from business objectives and opportunities for growth (including

grants), skills and recruitment requirements, and any infrastructure needs (both digital/physical) plus engagement with South Somerset District Council.

If you think your business would benefit from a visit, please let me know and I can arrange something. These visits really help all concerned, particularly gaining a greater understanding and helping scope future projects to align with business needs.

Special and unique advertising opportunity with access to thousands of travellers and holidaymakers!

We have an exciting opportunity to advertise on two large digital screens - one inside the award-winning South Somerset Visitor Information Centre and the other external facing directed to customers of the busy cafe.

Please [email](#) if you are interested in this unique advertising opportunity.

PS - If you haven't visited the site, it is hard to imagine how busy it can be, I am very happy to meet on-site for a coffee and guided tour!

South Somerset Visitor Information Centre and Gift shop

offer an exciting opportunity to showcase your business to thousands of visitors and holidaymakers.



- Your film/images shown every 3.5 minutes on 2 large digital screens
 - 24/7 coverage on large external facing screen - seen by thousands!
 - Internal exposure on large digital screen
- 7 days/week peak season (April to October)
5 days/week low season (November to March)

£85.00 / month Peak Season (£102.00 inc Vat)

£51.00 / month Low Season (£61.20 inc Vat)

Get in touch now to discuss the flexible options and make the most of this exciting offer!

Contact; Becky.Cotterill@southsomerset.gov.uk

Amazing reach!
Great value!



Business training and support

Thrive: 12 hours of personalised support!

Thrive, is a Heart of the South West Growth Hub's support service for local self-employed and small to medium size enterprises (SMEs). They offer a free diagnostic and training service, with up to 12 hours of tailor-made support that will enable businesses to improve and grow. Topics covered include Digital support, business planning and HR. To find out more [click here](#) or call 03456047047

The **Heart of the South West Growth Hub** website has a full list of business support programmes and events - it is really recommended a look around the site -

<https://www.heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk/>. If you are unsure

how they can help, there is a [helpful video](#) to explain the service which can be viewed [here](#).

Springboard training courses for everyone.

[Skill Up Somerset](#) is an apprenticeship and skills advisory service, funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), and offers FREE impartial advice and guidance to Somerset's small and medium-sized businesses.

One of their services is **Springboard**, a range of free short courses on a wide range of topics, including principles of team leading, digital and Health & Safety for the food industry. These can be a taster of a new topic area, or a gentle (re)introduction to formal learning, and can offer a potential incentive when looking to recruit new staff. For more information, please visit the Skill up Somerset website [here](#).

Another source of training...

Through the [Skills Support for the Workforce](#) programme (SSW), small & medium-sized hospitality businesses in Devon and Somerset can access funded training to:

- Upskill current employees who have taken on extra responsibilities or those ready for the next step up to boost team morale and improve staff retention.
- Support new recruits that may be fresh to the sector and need to be brought up to speed.
- Provide employees with accredited qualifications or the opportunity to progress onto an apprenticeship.

The courses vary in length and cover such topics as Customer Service, Team Leading & Management and digital skills.

The SSW programme is co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and details can be accessed [here](#).

An exciting initiative from The Yeovil Chamber!

The **Hospitality Hub** is a Yeovil Chamber initiative run exclusively by, and for, hospitality and catering businesses across Yeovil and the South Somerset and West Dorset area.

The Hubs aims are *"bringing together local hospitality businesses for shared learning, supply chain opportunities, and business support. With the purpose of increasing standards and growing footfall for the whole industry in and around the Yeovil area."*

Regular meetings and events will give the opportunity for open dialogue and networking opportunities amongst colleagues to share best practices, consider sector operational challenges, look at

supply-chain development and wider business support opportunities.

There is currently no charge to join the Hospitality Hub but signing up for membership of the Yeovil Chambers is encouraged to make the most of the additional opportunities.

To find out more, please visit their [website](#), where you will find details of Hospitality Hub and other Chamber events.

Green and environmentally aware tourism businesses.

I am currently working on new pages for our website regarding green and eco-friendly tourism opportunities in the area. I have found a good selection of businesses but am aware I will have missed a lot, particularly from the east of the district.

One of my sources is the SSDC [Great Green Directory](#) which showcases a variety of green businesses from local food producers to refill shops. If you think your business would qualify, please [fill out this form](#).

This is the list of criteria the team uses and a useful starting point.

- Renewable Energy Technology
- Renewable Energy Tariff
- Electric Vehicle charging for customers
- LED lighting
- Recycling Facilities - e.g. card, paper, cans, plastics, food, batteries, electrical items
- Water Conservation - e.g. rainwater harvesting, grey water recycling
- Sell or make ethical products
- Committed to Single-Use Plastic reduction? - e.g. water, milk refill station, refill options
- Measures to reduce food/product miles
- Circular economy - reuse/refurbishment
- Biodiversity - supporting wildlife, pollinators and enhancing habitats

I would love to hear from you if you think you qualify and want a mention on the website - many thanks!

Don't forget to shout about your green credentials on websites and social media, this resource might give some invaluable advice.

<https://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/make-your-business-sustainable>

JUST IN! Grants for businesses to install Electric Vehicle Charging Points

There are grants available to help businesses with the costs of installing electric vehicle (EV) charge points for their operations and

staff. If you would like further information, please contact the Heart of eth South West Growth Hub for more information using this [form](#) and state your interest in the EV charging grant.

South West How's Business Survey

To help us receive up-to-date feedback on how the tourism industry in the South West is performing, we would be grateful if you could please complete this short survey for August 2022.

This is the only survey that provides a real-time indication of **business levels** in our region and with limited national data and hardly any regional data available since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is now more important than ever that we try to collect robust, local data regarding business performance in the South West.

This is the [survey link](#) and the deadline for submissions is Friday 30 September 2022.

Thank you - it is really helpful when businesses complete this survey!

Business events in Somerset...

Apologies for the short notice regarding the events being held tomorrow.

Climate Summit - 21 September, Taunton

Join businesses from across Somerset to learn, share and be inspired about reducing the climate impact of our companies – working together using small steps to deliver collective big wins!

Hear local firms share impactful case studies as we come together to raise awareness of the opportunities and challenges for businesses as we shift toward a low-carbon economy. To find out more, please click [here](#).

Somerset Jobs Fair - 21 September, Westlands Entertainment Venue.

Around 40 exhibitors from a varied range of sectors will be in attendance plus a Ukraine translator. More details, including how to book a stand can be found [here](#). There is a similar event in Taunton on September 28th.

Somerset Innovation Exchange - 27 September, Taunton

An event to bring together businesses at all stages of growth, entrepreneurs, rising stars, inspirational founders, designers and civic innovators from across the county. The event will explore how to grow, innovate and mature more companies in our region, and set practical problems we want to solve collectively.

Delegates will be able to hear from experts in their field proving opinions, insight, advice and support. For further information and to purchase tickets for the event, click [here](#).

Visit Somerset Members Conference - 6 October, Wells Cathedral

An opportunity to receive support from across the Visitor economy, whether you are a Somerset producer, a retailer, accommodation provider or attraction or within the hospitality industry. You will go away inspired, learning from experts in their fields, digitally and offline, around innovative developments. If you are not a member of Visit Somerset and are interested in attending - please drop me an [email](#).

Whats happening near you...

SOMERSET ART WEEKS 2022 - SANCTUARY (24 September - 9 October)

More than 300 artists will be hosting exhibitions and events in over 100 venues, including loft spaces, tithe barns, stables, museums, churches, farms, and libraries, as well as an abbey and a prison!



Artists have interpreted the theme of Sanctuary in many different ways, such as with paintings of the natural world, mindful mark making and a poetic sanctuary. Other themes are nature, environment and locality, where artists have interpreted the social, spiritual and sustainable elements in this year's programme.

Grab one of the Somerset Art Weeks Guide from cultural centres, libraries and Tourist Information Centres and start exploring! There is also an [Art Weeks](#) page on the Somerset Art Works website.

South Somerset parks and spaces consultation

SSDC are looking for YOUR thoughts on our wonderful open spaces here in South Somerset. Did you know we are lucky enough to have access to over 50 SSDC owned parks and greenspaces across the

district, including Ham Hill Country Park.

During the coronavirus pandemic these spaces were vital to everyone living and working within South Somerset, not just for exercise and relaxation, but also for people's mental wellbeing.

Our Environmental & Countryside Services Team have strived to keep green spaces well maintained and accessible, but need your help! They want to hear from residents about how you think our services are performing, how the use of open spaces has changed and what improvements you would like to see in the future.

Please fill out the survey [here](#) to have your say before Monday 17 October, thank you.

Spotlight on ... Fleet Air Arm Museum

Fleet Air Arm Museum opened a new state-of-the-art, immersive Carrier Experience after a £1m refurbishment. Visitors have the chance to see 'the best of the best', journeying from past to present and exploring experiences of the 'Top Gun' naval aviation teams over the past 100 years. Highlights include aircraft from the 1940s and 50s like the sole surviving examples of a Westland Wyvern and Supermarine Attacker aircraft, also a Sopwith Pup, the first aircraft type to land on board a moving ship in 1917.



In the news.....

Congratulations to **Bere Cider Company** who have won Gold for their Dabinett, along with Best In Class, Best Somerset Cider Produced in Show and Champion Somerset Cider at the recent Mid Somerset Show.

Also congratulations to the Taste of the West winners -

- **Cedrics** (three golds and three silvers) and the **Old School Chutneys** (six golds and two silvers) for their homemade chutneys and preserves.
- **Coombe Farm** for winning a whooping five golds for their meats.
- **Dowdings Cider** (three golds and a silver,) **Harry's Cider** (four golds) and **Perrys Cider**, (three golds and a silver) for their ciders.
- **Godminster Cheese** - three golds for their savoury bakeries, and **Keens cheddar** for two golds for their cheese.

- **J and M King Brain** won three golds for their range of non-alcoholic cold drinks.
- **Newchester Farmhouse B & B** won gold in the Bed and Breakfast category
- Plus golds in the Dining Pub category for **The Candlelight Inn**, near Chard, **The Red Lion Inn** in Babcary, **The Barrington Boar**, near Ilminster, **The Cotley Inn**, near Chard and **The Queens Arms** in Corton Denham
- **Teals** also won gold in the Farm Shop category

I don't need much reminding about how lucky I am to live and work in South Somerset, but surely this validates my high opinion of this lovely area! Congratulations everyone!

Anything to contribute?

The tourism newsletter is generally distributed quarterly (March, June, September and December) with additional editions if there is important and relevant information to share.

It is emailed to South Somerset businesses on the tourism database and appears on the trade pages of www.visitsouthsomerset.com

We love to hear and share your news and success stories, so please email items for the next issue to tourism@southsomerset.gov.uk

Unsubscribing and your privacy

If at any time you wish to unsubscribe to the newsletter and have your details removed from the database, please email tourism@southsomerset.gov.uk or click the button below.

Very occasional we feel it is appropriate and beneficial to forward emails and newsletters from our partners, can you please let me know if you would rather not receive this information.

For more information about how South Somerset District Council uses and keep your information secure, please see the Privacy page on our website - <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/about-our-website/privacy-and-data-protection>.

www.visitsouthsomerset.com

Keep in touch



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