



A-Z of Services 2010-11



This document can be made available in large print, Braille, tape format or in other languages upon request



Abandoned Vehicles

We are responsible for the investigation and removal of untaxed, abandoned vehicles on any of the highways in West Somerset.

Affordable Housing

We work with the Housing Corporation, Registered Social Landlords, Developers, Builders and Landowners to increase, develop and promote affordable housing.

Anti-Social Behaviour

For advice on or to report anti-social behaviour please contact us.

Benefits

The Council is responsible for the assessment and payment of Housing and Council Tax Benefit. We offer advice on other welfare benefits, recover overpaid Housing & Council Tax Benefit and investigate allegations of fraud.

A discretionary housing payment scheme exists for those already in receipt of benefit who require further assistance to meet housing costs. The service also provides a home visiting service if required.

Building Control

Under the Building Regulations, the Council has the responsibility of

safeguarding the health, safety, welfare and convenience of all people in and about buildings. This includes both private and public buildings.

Bus Passes

We run the Concessionary Fares Scheme for West Somerset residents aged 60 and over and those who qualify on medical grounds. Free off-peak travel on local buses anywhere in England.

Business Rates

We provide advice regarding the payment of business rates, your liability to pay business rates and on eligibility to reductions in business rates.

Care and Repair

The Council enables vulnerable people who are homeowners or private sector tenants to maintain independence and live comfortably in their own homes and can help with advice about adaptations, repairs and improvements and possible sources of funding. These services are delivered by Somerset West Care and Repair. Tel: 01278 444815



Civil Contingencies (Emergency Planning)

The Council has a duty to prepare plans to support the community in the event of a major incident in the area. We also provide external business continuity advice.

Council Tax

The Council is responsible for collecting the council tax for Somerset County Council, Avon and Somerset Police, Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority and Parish and Town Councils in West Somerset. We also collect council tax on behalf of Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority.

Customer Services

We deal with general enquiries and service requests for the Council.

Dead Animals

We remove dead animals from the highway or from Council land.

Democratic Services

We arrange and service the Council's meetings and provide support to Councillors.

Dog Warden Service

This service collects restrained stray dogs and promotes responsible dog ownership. The dog warden also undertakes targeted patrols and investigates complaints of dog fouling and barking.

Drinking Water

We have a responsibility to monitor private water supplies.

Economic Development

West Somerset Council seeks to develop and regenerate the economy and community, with key objectives being to create employment opportunities and secure external funding for the benefit of the area.

Electoral Services

We administer elections and compile the electoral register.

Energy Efficiency

We offer advice to people about insulating their homes and energy efficiency. Our advice is delivered through the South West Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre which can be contacted on Freephone 0800 512 012.

Equality and Diversity

For advice on Equalities in West Somerset please contact us.

Fly Posting

We deal with unauthorised or illegal fly-posting on Council property and street furniture.

Fly-Tipping

We investigate complaints of fly-tipping on public land. We endeavour to make this collection within 5 days.

Food Safety

The Council is responsible for food safety within West Somerset. We carry out inspections, advisory visits, sampling and undertake food poisoning investigations.



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Freedom of Information Act

The Act gives you the right to request information about us.

Garden Waste

A fortnightly garden waste kerbside collection service is available in West Somerset. Wheeled bins can be hired and/or householders can purchase paper sacks.

Graffiti

We are responsible for removing graffiti from public buildings.

Handyperson Scheme

The handyperson service is offered to address minor repairs and adaptations in a cost effective way. The service costs £10 per hour for labour plus the cost of materials used. The service is managed and delivered by Somerset West Care and Repair and funded by the Big Lottery.

Health and Safety

The Council carries out regular checks on offices, shops, warehouses, places used for leisure activities and other non-industrial premises to ensure that safe and healthy working conditions are provided for all employees, the self-employed and members of the public visiting these premises.

Homelessness

We provide advice and assistance to those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Housing

We provide help and advice on a wide range of housing options. The housing register for Somerset can be found at www.homefindersomerset.co.uk



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Housing in the Private Sector

The Council deals with housing issues such as houses in multiple occupation (HMO's), advice to tenants, complaints regarding housing fitness and empty properties within the private rented sector.

Land Charges

We offer local land charge searches to solicitors, agents and members of the public requesting search applications to be made against residential/commercial properties and land within West Somerset.

Licensing

We issue and enforce a wide range of licences throughout West Somerset.

Litter

We are responsible for street cleaning and regularly emptying litter bins throughout the district of West Somerset.

Noise

We investigate complaints about noise.

Nuisance

We investigate complaints about smells, smoke, dust etc, which come from private or commercial land and take action as necessary.

Parking

We operate car parks in the district for public use and patrol all the Council's on and off Street pay and display areas.

Parks and Gardens

We maintain a number of parks, gardens and open spaces in West Somerset. If you would like to use our land for an event please contact us.

Pest Control

We deal with rats, mice, fleas, wasps and other pests. There will be a subsidised charge for this service.

Planning

We are responsible for regulating and managing future development to meet local economic & social needs whilst protecting and enhancing the local built & natural environment.

Play Areas

We provide and maintain nine play areas within the District.

Pollution

We investigate all complaints about air, land, noise and water pollution.

Public Toilets

We are responsible for a number of public toilets around the District.

Recycling (Waste)

We provide kerbside recycling to allow people to recycle a wide range of materials from their home including: all types of paper and card, glass bottles and jars, aluminium and steel cans, garden waste etc.



Street Litter & Sweeping

We are responsible for street cleanliness and the removal of litter.

Tourism

We work in partnership with tourist associations and other stakeholders to promote tourism in West Somerset. We also operate a Visitor Information Centre in the principal town of Minehead. Further information is available on the tourism portal website www.visit-exmoor.co.uk



How to contact the council

Telephone

01643 703704

Telephone hours

8.30am - 5pm Monday to Thursday
8.30am - 4.30pm Friday
(your call may be recorded)

Emergency

Careline 0800 0831404 (4.30pm - 8.30am)

Email

customerservices@westsomerset.gov.uk

Web

www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk

Minehead Customer Centre

9am - 5pm Monday to Friday
1-3 Summerland Road, Minehead,
Somerset TA24 5BP

Williton Office

West Somerset House, Killick Way,
Williton, Taunton, Somerset TA4 4QA
Monday - Thursday 8.30am - 5pm
Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm

Visitor Information and Interpretation Centre

Warren Road, Minehead
Somerset, TA24 5BG
01643 702624
visitor@westsomerset.gov.uk

HELP STOP FRAUD

If you know somebody who you think is claiming benefit incorrectly, help us to stop them by calling the Benefits Fraud Hotline **01984 635236**.