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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The climate emergency poses many threats to Wells. Winters are becoming warmer and wetter, increasing flooding risks. Hotter and drier summers are increasing the risk of droughts, heatwaves and wildfires.

Through collaborative events, residents have identified four key themes for how Wells should adapt to the changing climate:



Adapting to these changes is urgent and essential to reduce the impacts on our buildings, green spaces and the daily life of Wells' residents.

The resulting plan:

- reflects the priorities of Wells' community
- outlines adaptation actions under each key theme
- gives guidance on taking action
- highlights the co-benefits of each priority, such as improving water quality or health and wellbeing



Explore this plan to discover the actions you and your community can take to adapt to climate change. Your support and contributions will be vital to ensure we can build a better adapted, resilient and connected future for Wells.

To find out how you can get more involved contact: Natalie Barnett - Climate Change Adaptation Officer natalie.barnett@somersetwildlife.org

INTRODUCTION

Since October 2024, local residents, Wells Environment Network (WEN) and Somerset Wildlife Trust (SWT) have been working together to address the following challenge:

"How can we help Wells adapt to climate change?"

The impacts of the climate emergency are already unfolding. Sea levels are rising and flooding, extreme heat, droughts and wildfires are all likely to happen more often in Somerset. Thankfully, there are lots of ways that communities can act together to be better prepared for the changes and build a positive future where people and nature can thrive. Climate change is already impacting Wells - there is an urgent need to adapt.



SWT has been raising awareness of adaptation and encouraging communities across the county to develop plans. In a unique collaboration with WEN, we have began to develop a locally tailored Climate Adaptation Plan for Wells.



Beginning with a Climate Adaptation Workshop event at Wells City Hall, the '<u>Act to Adapt</u>' process has brought together residents, community groups, councillors and Somerset Wildlife Trust's <u>Climate Adaptation</u> team, to:

- Talk about climate change projections for Somerset
- Discuss the need for adaptation in Wells
- Co-create a bespoke climate adaptation plan, using the <u>Climate Adaptation Toolkit</u> for communities

This plan shares the key themes and priority adaptation actions chosen by residents, and offers advice on how to make these actions happen. We have also highlighted the adaptation benefits of each priority, and additional 'co-benefits' - such as mitigating climate change or supporting biodiversity – to demonstrate how they will support Wells in becoming better adapted and more resilient to our changing climate.

Wells Climate Adaptation Plan 2024

SHAPING WELLS' PLAN

Following our initial events, we compiled participants' suggested adaptation priorities and actions, and turned these into a draft Climate Adaptation Plan for Wells. To ensure that the plan better reflects the needs and priorities of Wells, we are organising a consultation period to gather feedback on the existing priorities and ideas for new adaptation actions from more residents.

In November 2024, we are holding two in-person consultations where residents can learn more about climate adaptation, read the draft plan, and help shape the full plan by completing a survey and sharing their ideas. For those unable to attend these events, we also have an online survey and opportunities to provide more detailed feedback by email.

SCAN ME TO

LEAVE FEEDBACK

ONLINE

Respondents can share ideas for strengthening the plan's adaptation actions. We will then incorporate as much feedback as possible into the actions in this updated plan.

By collecting more ideas and harnessing local knowledge, we can refine the plan to create a positive, grounded vision for how Wells can better adapt to the changing climate.

However, to ensure this plan stays flexible and best serves Wells, residents should have regular opportunities to suggest additions, changes and improvements. If you have any suggestions for the plan, get in touch:

Natalie Barnett - Climate Change Adaptation Officer natalie.barnett@somersetwildlife.org





1. IMPROVING AND INCREASING GREEN SPACES

Actions to improve and increase green spaces across Wells could provide the following adaptation benefits and co-benefits to the local community:



1.1 - Increase tree planting throughout Wells





Where:	When:	Who:
 St. Cuthbert's church Cathedral green Appropriate streets 	TBC	 Woodland Trust Reimagining the levels Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) Volunteers Local businesses Historic England

Identify suitable planting locations: Work with the City Council, local landowners, and community groups (e.g., WEN) to identify streets suitable for tree planting. Conduct soil and drainage surveys to ensure chosen locations are appropriate for long-term tree growth.

Develop a planting plan: Create a comprehensive plan that outlines where different tree species will be planted. Choose a variety of native trees like Hazel, Rowan, Crab apple, and Hawthorn that are well-suited to Wells's climate and soil conditions. For example, select flood-resistant varieties.

Conduct a water management study: Collaborate with hydrologists and environmental scientists to study how different tree species affect water management and flood risk in the context of Wells. Use this information to inform tree selection and placement.

Engage the community: Organise volunteer planting days to involve residents in the tree planting efforts. This can help build community ownership and ensure long-term care of the trees. Provide training on proper planting techniques and aftercare. Create educational materials and signage explaining how different tree species contribute to water management and flood risk reduction.

Establish maintenance plans: Develop long-term maintenance plans for all newly planted trees. This should include watering schedules, pruning, and monitoring for pests or diseases. Assign responsibilities to council staff, community groups, or volunteers.

Monitor and evaluate: Regularly assess the health and growth of newly planted trees, as well as their impact on local drainage and flood risk. Use this information to refine future planting and maintenance strategies.

Consider requirements for street trees: Investigate using "tree pits" to enable planting whilst minimising impact on other infrastructure.

Consult with heritage organisations: Understand the historic and cultural values of the heritage sites by collaborating with Historic England. Work together to identify areas of interest for tree planting.



- 1. <u>More trees BANES case study</u>
- 2. <u>UK community tree planting | International Tree Foundation</u>
- 3. <u>Tree planting advice plant trees | Woodland Trust</u>
- 4. <u>Managing and caring for trees | Tree Council</u>
- 5. National heritage list Historic England
- 6. Heritage and conservation | Wells Cathedral

1.2 - Incentivise tree planting





When:	Who:	
TBC	 Woodland Trust Tree Council Reimagining the Levels Wells City Council Somerset Council Westbury-sub- mendip Parish Community Tree Nursery 	

Explore funding opportunities: Apply for funding toward tree planting, such as through the Woodland Trust and Tree Council websites. Opportunities available on the Tree Council website include:

- Branching Out Fund £250-£2,500 to community groups, schools, small registered charities, and Tree Warden Networks.
- Orchards for Schools.
- Network Rail Community Tree Planting Fund main grants are between £2,500-£5,000, with large grants ranging between £5,000-£15,000.

There are also grants available at the Reimagining the Levels Website!

Work toward tree planting goals: Collaborate with the Somerset Tree Strategy by tracking important tree planting goals via the Somerset Tree Planting Register. By tracking tree coverage, Somerset Council can celebrate efforts and help support funding opportunities.

Research funding opportunities: Regularly scan for grants and funding schemes related to tree planting. Sources might include government bodies, charitable trusts, and corporate social responsibility programmes. Create a calendar of application deadlines to ensure timely submissions.

Develop compelling funding proposals: Craft well-researched, persuasive funding applications that clearly demonstrate the benefits of green initiatives in Wells. Include data on environmental impact, community engagement, and long-term sustainability of projects.

Organise community fundraising events: Plan and execute community events specifically aimed at raising funds for green initiatives. These events can also serve to raise awareness and garner community support.





- 1. <u>Climate and emergency funding and grants | Somerset Council</u>
- 2. Free trees for schools and communities | Woodland Trust
- 3. <u>Our grants | The Tree Council</u>
- 4. <u>Reimagining the Levels</u>
- 5. Root for Somerset | Somerset Council
- 6. Westbury-sub-mendip Parish Council

1.3 - Provide easy access to tree planting advice



Where:	When:	Who:
 In-person communication Wells City Hall Local libraries Farmers' markets Local events Portway annexe Online communication Community websites Social media platforms Email newsletters Online forums and groups Local news websites WhatsApp 	TBC	 Wells City Council Wells Environment Network (WEN) Wells Community Network Rocky Mountains Nurseries Brownes Garden Centre Westbury-sub-mendip Parish Community Tree Nursery Woodland Trust Wells & District Wildlife Group Sustainable Wells Scouts & Beavers

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Establish a dedicated tree planting webpage: Collaborate with active websites, such as WEN, Wells City Council, and Wells Community Network, to create tree planting webpages that provide free advice and updates. With visible collaboration of community groups across pages, tree planting can be promoted as a large initiative for Wells.

Host tree planting events: Organise workshops that invite local experts and residents to demonstrate proper tree planting techniques. Partner with WEN and any local gardening groups to promote the event.

Share funding opportunities: Apply for funding toward tree planting, such as through the Woodland Trust and Tree Council websites. Opportunities available on the Tree Council website include:

- Branching Out Fund
- Orchards for Schools
- Network Rail Community Tree Planting Fund

Collaborate with garden centres: Communicate with local garden centres, such as Brownes Garden Centre & Rocky Mountains Nurseries, to promote planting instructions and potentially agree on local discounts.

Encourage tree planting in schools: Develop educational programs for schools to teach about tree planting, such as through biology/science classes. Set up tree planting days at local schools that involve and educate families.



- 1. <u>Tree planting advice plant trees Woodland Trust</u>
- 2. Managing and caring for trees Tree Council
- 3. City of Wells, connecting communities group | Facebook
- 4. Wells Environment Network

1.4 - Investigate climate resilient management options





Where:	When:	Who:
• City Council owned land	TBC	 Wells City Council Wells Environment Network (WEN) Wells Community Network Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) Reimagining the Levels Somerset Prepared

Establish a dedicated management webpage: collaborate with active websites, such as WEN, Wells City Council, and Wells Community Network, to create webpages that educate locals on ongoing management.

Introduce an effective comms strategy: research into and produce an effective communications strategy that utilises both physical and social media. Use the Wells City Hall, local events, and farmer's markets, as well as online, to educate locals on the available management options. Promote ongoing land management, adding advice on how to get involved on both the community and individual level.

Explore funding and help opportunities: apply for grants from Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA), e.g., the upcoming Community Flood Action Fund, for flood adaptation actions at the community level. Research additional help, such as from Reimagining the Levels and Somerset Prepared.

Monitor via assessments: assess the vulnerability of land to the changing climate, such as soil conditions. Monitor biodiversity levels, ensuring invasive populations are kept to a minimum.

Research climate-resilient species: plant native species that are more tolerant to drought and/or flooding. Collaborate with local nurseries to increase the accessibility of these species.

Collaborate with community groups for climate awareness: Work with pubs to host monthly nature events, combining talks with social networking. Partner with the WI to organise workshops on sustainable living, such as reducing household water usage. Engage the Wells u3a to share their observations of environmental changes.



- 1. <u>Managing and caring for trees | Tree Council</u>
- 2. <u>Wells u3a</u>
- 3. Community flood action fund | Somerset Rivers Authority
- 4. <u>Reimagining the Levels</u>
- 5. <u>Climate emergency funding | Somerset Council</u>
- 6. Funding support Somerset Prepared

1.5 - Promote nature-based solutions for individuals





Where:	When:	Who:
• Personal properties; locals with gardens.	TBC	 Individuals Wells Environment Network (WEN) Wells Community Network

Launch a campaign to discourage paving over gardens and using artificial turf: Work with local publications to run a series of informative articles, highlighting the environmental impact of garden paving and artificial turf, and on issues such as increasing flood risks.

Offer workshops on creating wildlife-friendly gardens: Cover topics such as planting native species, creating habitats for hedgehogs and birds, and establishing wildflower areas. Hold these workshops in village halls or partner with local garden centres. Collaborate with TeamWilder (teamwilder@somersetwildlife.org) to include sessions on creating small ponds and choosing the best native plants for pollinators. Promote the Wells in Bloom competition, particularly with wild gardens.

Uncut grass benefits campaign: Collaborate with organisations to create informative materials. Produce eye-catching signage for participating areas explaining benefits. Support No Mow May with competitions for the most diverse meadow. Feature success stories in local media.

Educate individuals on home-based adaptation: Share knowledge on how homes can reduce flooding risks, e.g., by creating rain gardens, as well as making homes better equipped to deal with changing temperatures. Examples include: implementing shutters that cool houses, ensuring appropriate insulation to trap heat and lower energy usage, and raising awareness to the cooling effect from green walls and roofs.

Address greywater runoff: Develop a pack for households on simple measures to reduce contaminated runoff, such as using eco-friendly cleaning products and proper disposal of oils and chemicals. Distribute through local community channels and at relevant events.

Develop information material and advice: Create posters, leaflets, social media posts and blogs (etc.) to share information about how residents can create ponds or rain gardens on their properties, how to maintain them, and describe the many benefits this can bring.



- 1. <u>Team Wiler</u> Somerset Wildlife Trust
- 2. <u>Wells in Bloom Wells City Council</u>
- 3. <u>No May Mow | Plantlife</u>
- 4. Green walls: the ultimate guide Exubia
- 5. Plants for a living wall Gardeners World
- 6. <u>13 plants for a green wall | Green Shack</u>

1.6 - Promote nature-based solutions for community groups





When:	Who:
TBC	 Wells Environment Network (WEN) Wells Community Network Sustainable Wells Women's Institute (WI) Wells u3a Reimagining the Levels Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) Somerset Prepared

Coordinate installation support of Nature-based Solutions (NbS): Meet with local gardening, community action and volunteering groups to discuss offering support to residents to help create rain gardens and ponds in gardens. Encourage residents to support each other in creating ponds and rain gardens, and to share any expertise they have.

Collaborate with community groups for climate awareness: Work with pubs to host monthly nature events, combining talks with social networking. Partner with the WI to organise workshops on sustainable living, such as reducing household water usage. Engage the Wells u3a to share their observations of environmental changes.

Identify potential partners: Research and compile a list of environmental organisations, both local and national, that could support nature projects in Wells. Consider groups like Somerset Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust, and local conservation societies. Partner with local businesses or conservation groups for tree and plant donations or discounts. Consider establishing a "sponsor a tree" programme for residents and businesses.

Organise community fundraising events: Plan and execute community events specifically aimed at raising funds for green initiatives. This could include sponsored walks, tree planting days, or eco-fairs. These events can also serve to raise awareness and garner community support.

Promote green roofs and walls: Develop a green roof initiative for buildings. Create an information pack for building owners explaining the benefits and installation process. Offer incentives or grants for green roof installations, particularly for public and commercial buildings. Identify public buildings suitable for green walls along the corridor routes. Collaborate with building managers to implement green wall projects. Find expertise on suitable plant species, installation methods, and maintenance requirements.

Explore funding and help opportunities: apply for grants from SRA, e.g., the upcoming Community Flood Action Fund, for flood adaptation actions at the community level. Research additional help, such as from Reimagining the Levels and Somerset Prepared.



- 1. Working with community groups | National Lottery Community
- 2. <u>Wells u3a</u>
- 3. Community flood action fund | Somerset Rivers Authority
- 4. <u>Reimagining the Levels</u>
- 5. <u>Climate emergency funding | Somerset Council</u>
- 6. Funding support | Somerset Prepared
- 7. Wells Environment Network

1.7 - Promote nature-based solutions for schools





When:	Who:
TBC	 Wells Cathedral School St Joseph and St Teresa Catholic Primary School St Cuthbert's CofE Junior Stoberry Park School Wookey Primary School The Blue School Wells Environment Network (WEN)

Promote green roofs and walls: Develop a green roof initiative for school buildings. Identify schools suitable for green walls along the corridor routes. Find expertise on suitable plant species, installation methods, and maintenance requirements.

Create educational nature displays: Include local schools in designing informative nature posters explaining the importance of species to local ecosystems and pollinators. Involve students with planting and maintaining these displays. Organise guided walks from the village hall.

Organise climate workshops for schools around Wells: Climate workshops which are tailored, engaging education for students of all ages. Focusing on local ecosystems, these workshops would incorporate hands-on activities and field trips. The program would encourage collaboration between schools, adapt to seasonal changes, and empower students to develop their own climate initiatives with the hope to create a community-wide understanding of climate issues specific to the Wells area, fostering environmental stewardship among the region's youth.

Arrange teacher training sessions: Invite environmental groups to lead workshops for teachers on development days, sharing insights on local ecosystems and observed climate impacts. Compile information on nearby outdoor learning locations and provide this to teachers during training.

Add school representatives to WEN: Establish dedicated positions for primary and secondary school representatives within WEN. Support them in creating student eco-councils to gather input and ideas from pupils.

Blue Influencers and Wilder Schools: Encourage schools to become 'Blue Influencers' and 'Wilder Schools'. This involves promoting sustainable practices within the school community and integrating environmental education into the curriculum.

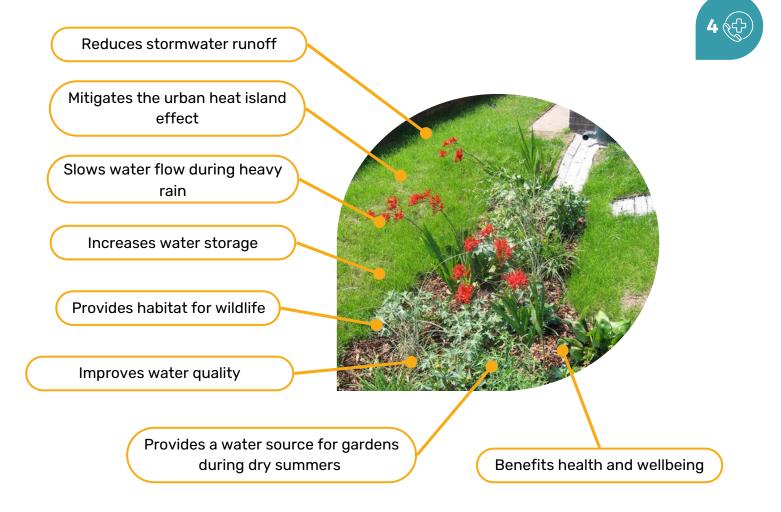


Useful links:

- 1. Free trees for schools and communities Woodland Trust
- 2. Exploring climate action in the classroom | British Council
- 3. <u>Education is key to addressing climate change | United Nations</u>
- 4. Organisations that can help you take action | Let's Go Zero
- 5. <u>Get inspired: schools responding to the climate change challenge | Government website</u>
- 6. Schools climate action planner Transform Our World

2. REDUCING FLOODING RISKS

Actions to reduce flooding risks in Wells could provide the following adaptation benefits and co-benefits to the local community:



2.1 - Improve existing drainage maintenance



Where:	When:	Who:
• Tor Hill lane	TBC	 Somerset Drainage Board Consortium Somerset Council Somerset Highways

2

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Develop a comprehensive drainage maintenance plan: Create a detailed plan that outlines all drainage systems in Wells, including street drains, culverts, and rhynes. Map these systems and identify areas prone to blockages or flooding. Organise regular, comprehensive checks of the main culvert system. Engage professional surveyors or drainage experts to assess the condition of culverts and identify any areas requiring repair or upgrade.

Establish a regular clearing schedule: Implement a routine maintenance schedule for clearing blocked drains, with increased frequency for high-risk areas such as the seafront affected by sand. Coordinate with local council services or contractors to ensure consistent execution.

Engage with the community: Organise awareness campaigns to educate residents about the importance of keeping drains clear. Encourage community involvement in reporting issues and, where appropriate, in maintenance activities. Explore 'adopt a drain' opportunities.

Coordinate with flood risk management: Ensure that drainage maintenance efforts are aligned with broader flood risk management strategies. Liaise regularly with the Environment Agency and other relevant bodies.

Monitor and evaluate effectiveness: Implement a system to track the frequency and effectiveness of maintenance activities. Use this data to refine the maintenance schedule and identify areas requiring more attention.

Review and update regularly: Conduct annual reviews of the drainage maintenance plan, incorporating lessons learned and adapting to any changes in local conditions or best practices.



- 1. Drainage and wastewater management plan | Wessex Water
- 2. Drains and gullies Somerset Council
- 3. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Susdrain

2.2 - Support pond creation





Where:	When:	Who:
 Schools Individual gardens Mendip hospital cemetery Churches Residential homes 	TBC	 Wells City Council Somerset Drainage Board Consortium Somerset Council Somerset Prepared Communities Prepared

<u>Why:</u>

Ponds capture and store rainwater, therefore reducing runoff and flooding risks. Furthermore, ponds can enhance biodiversity, aesthetics, and even property values. Wetland species that thrive in ponds can provide educational resources, as well as helping to store carbon.

How:

Offer workshops on creating wildlife-friendly ponds: Include sessions on creating small ponds and choosing the best native plants for pollinators. Hold these workshops in village halls or partner with local garden centres and collaborate with TeamWilder (teamwilder@somersetwildlife.org).

Incorporate educational activities: Establish regular nature events, flora and fauna identification pond dipping. Involve local groups, such as e2u, and schools to take part in designing and keeping up with activities.

Promote volunteer days: Organise community days where locals can help with pond digging, planting native plants. Allow the community to take ownership of ponds, providing a sense of ownership over the project.

Invite sponsorships: To fund and support pond projects, invite local businesses and individuals to sponsor pond building. Use fundraising events, such as community nature walks, to help raise both funds and awareness.

Engage online: Share updates on social media, such as community pages on Facebook, on the stories of wildlife on the pond and any updates. This can attract interest and additional support! Invite community members to share stories about past ponds in the area.

Form a Community Pond Watch: Establish a group dedicated to maintaining and supporting the ponds across Wells. Volunteers here could monitor pollution, invasive species and pond quality.



- 1. How to build a pond | The Wildlife Trusts
- 2. <u>How to build a pond | Water-Garden</u>
- 3. Pond creation toolkit Freshwater Habitats Trust

2.3 - Install water butts on public buildings





Where:	When:	Who:
 City Council Town Hall Community buildings Church halls Tramways Bowling green shed Football grounds Wells library 	TBC	 Wells City Council Somerset Drainage Board Consortium Somerset Council Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) National Trust Somerset Wildlife Trust (SWT) Wells Repair Cafe Wessex Water

<u>Why:</u>

Water butts lower risks of flooding by collecting rainwater from roofs so that less water flows into the drainage system during weather events. With many public buildings using water butts, large volumes of water can be stored.

How:

Contact potential funders/suppliers of water butts: Examples include Wessex Water, B&Q or Proper Job.

Discuss offering free or subsidised water butts: These could be bought by the City Council or community groups, in a bulk purchase, and distributed in the identified areas with delivery and installation support for those that need it. Consider if additional funding is needed to buy water butts. Look to buy water butts made from recycled or sustainable materials to reduce their environmental impact.

Install leaky water butts: Consider opportunities to make 'leaky' water butts, which slowly release excess water and help to maintain some storage capacity during dry periods. Leaky water butts could be linked to ponds and rain gardens.



- 1. How to install a water butt | B&Q outdoor & garden
- 2. <u>Retrofitting a water butt for storm water attenuation | Slow the Flow</u>
- 3. Useful information about Somerset flooding | Somerset Rivers Authority
- 4. Wells Repair Cafe

2.4 - Encourage water butts for personal properties





Where:	When:	Who:
• Private residences	TBC	 Wells City Council Somerset Council Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) Somerset Prepared Communities Prepared Wells Repair Cafe Wessex Water

<u>Why:</u>

Water butts lower risks of flooding by collecting rainwater from roofs so that less water flows into the drainage system during weather events. With many public buildings using water butts, large volumes of water can be stored.

How:

Contact potential funders/suppliers of water butts: Examples include Wessex Water, B&Q or Proper Job.

Discuss offering free or subsidised water butts: These could be bought by the City Council or community groups, in a bulk purchase, and distributed in the identified areas with delivery and installation support for those that need it. Consider if additional funding is needed to buy water butts. Look to buy water butts made from recycled or sustainable materials to reduce their environmental impact.

Send information to residents: Compile information on the benefits of water butts and how to install them. Send information to residents in identified locations, and create a sign-up form for those interested in receiving a water butt, to work out how many are required. Encourage those with an existing water butt to connect a second (or third!) to increase their water capture and storage capacity. For further information on Somerset flooding, the Somerset Rivers Authority have provided details <u>here</u>.

Arrange installation support: Work with local volunteer groups, like the Wells Repair Cafe, to offer help to residents with installing water butts. Consider opportunities to make 'leaky' water butts, which slowly release excess water and help to maintain some storage capacity during dry periods. Leaky water butts could be linked to ponds and rain gardens.



Useful links:

- 1. How to install a water butt | B&Q outdoor & garden
- 2. <u>Retrofitting a water butt for storm water attenuation | Slow the Flow</u>
- 3. Useful Information about Somerset flooding | Somerset Rivers Authority
- 4. Wells Repair Cafe

2.5 - Educate on permeable paving in landscaping





Where:	When:	Who:
• Private residences	TBC	 Wells City Council Somerset Council Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) Somerset Prepared Communities Prepared

<u>Why:</u>

Permeable paving reduces stormwater runoff, therefore alleviating pressure on drainage systems. As well as reducing flood risks, educating about permeable paving is important because it can support vegetation and filter water by draining and removing pollutants.

How:

Develop a SuDS strategy: Create a comprehensive plan for implementing Sustainble urban Drainage systems (SuDS) across Wells, identifying priority areas and potential projects. Consult with local water management experts and the EA to ensure the strategy aligns with broader flood management plans.

Encourage permeable paving: Develop resources promoting the use of permeable paving. Create an information pack for developers, businesses and homeowners on permeable paving options and their benefits. Consider offering incentives for retrofitting existing impermeable surfaces with permeable alternatives.

Target new builds for SuDS: Collaborate with the planning department to require SuDS integration in all new developments. Provide developers with resources and guidance on effective SuDS implementation. Consider offering expedited planning approval for projects that exceed SuDS requirements.

Engage the community: Organise public events and exhibitions to educate residents about SuDS and their benefits. Use social media and local press to share success stories and tips for implementing SuDS at home.

Monitor and evaluate: Implement a system to track the installation and effectiveness of SuDS across Wells. Regularly assess their impact on local flood risk and water quality. Use this data to refine the SuDS strategy and demonstrate success to the community and potential funders.

Lobby for permeable paving: Research the potential of incentivising permeable paving. Lobby motions to ban/disincentivise non-permeable surfaces in landscaping.



- 1. <u>Permeable paving | PavingExpert</u>
- 2. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Susdrain

2.6 - Slow the flow in upper catchments





Where:	When:	Who:
 Private residences Wells golf club Tor Hill Lane Local landowners 	TBC	 Wells City Council Somerset Council Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) Somerset Prepared Communities Prepared Somerset Highways National Farmers Union (NFU) Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) Environment Agency (EA)

Develop a comprehensive Natural Flood Management (NFM) strategy: Work with hydrologists, ecologists, and local environmental agencies to create a holistic plan for implementing NFM techniques across Wells and its surrounding areas. Communicate these plans with the surrounding parishes in the upper catchments.

Implement 'Slow the Flow' measures: Identify suitable locations on hills and slopes for tree planting to slow water runoff. Create a plan for increasing the number of ponds or cascading water features in strategic locations to manage water flow. Ensure these features are both functional for flood management and attractive as community assets. Communicate these plans with the surrounding parishes in the upper catchments.

Encourage river and stream restoration: Work with the EA and local landowners to identify sections of rivers and streams that could be restored to more natural, meandering courses. Develop plans for re-naturalising these watercourses to slow water flow.

Establish controlled flooding areas: Identify appropriate locations for controlled flooding areas. Consult with flood management experts to design these areas effectively. Engage with local communities to explain the purpose and benefits of these measures.

Promote soil decompaction: Develop an awareness campaign about the importance of soil health for natural drainage. Provide guidance to landowners, farmers, and gardeners on methods to improve soil structure and reduce compaction.

Monitor and evaluate effectiveness: Implement a robust monitoring system to assess the impact of NFM measures on local flood risk and water quality. Use this data to refine and improve the NFM strategy over time.

Develop flood plains and water storage areas: Conduct a survey of the upper catchments to identify natural floodplain areas and potential sites for water storage. Work with landowners to implement sensitive farming practices in flood-prone areas, such as cultivating flood-tolerant crops. Collaborate with organisations to ensure these new habitats support key species.

Identify suitable planting locations: Work with the City Council, local landowners, and community groups (e.g., WEN) to identify streets suitable for tree planting. Conduct soil and drainage surveys to ensure chosen locations are appropriate for long-term tree growth.



- 1. Help us create more river woodland | Woodland Trust
- 2. <u>Slow the Flow | Shropshire Wildlife Trust case study</u>
- 3. How nature can help prevent flooding | The Wildlife Trusts
- 4. More trees BANES case study

3. ENCOURAGING COMMUNITY-DRIVEN CLIMATE ACTION

Encouraging community-driven climate action in Wells could provide the following adaptation benefits and co-benefits to the local community:



3.1 - Motivate existing and potential volunteers





Where:	When:	Who:
 In-Person Communication Wells City Hall Local libraries Farmers' markets Local events Online communication Community websites Social media platforms Email newsletters Online forums and groups Local news websites WhatsApp 	TBC	 Wells City Council Wells Community Network Wells Environment Network (WEN) Wells & District Wildlife Group Sustainable Wells Lions Wells Rotary Club

Develop accessible volunteering opportunities: Design a range of low commitment volunteering opportunities that fit around busy schedules, promoting these through Sustainable Wells' existing networks. Create 1-hour tasks, such as litter picking or plant watering, that can be done independently. Share these opportunities across all networks' communication channels.

Build an email engagement campaign: Utilise existing mailing lists from all organisations to share volunteer stories, upcoming opportunities, and Sustainable Wells initiatives. Include simple "call to action" buttons that make it easy for people to sign up for specific tasks or events.

Promote the Sustainable Wells Network: Integrate "Bring a Friend" initiatives into events, encouraging current volunteers to invite others. Create informal social gatherings where experienced volunteers can share their experiences and newcomers can learn about opportunities in a relaxed setting.

Establish a skills-sharing network: Create a database of volunteers' skills and interests across all organisations, with coordinators helping match volunteers to projects. This will improve project matching and create opportunities for peer-to-peer learning without requiring external training resources.

Create visible recognition systems: Develop simple ways to acknowledge volunteer contributions through multiple platforms, such as certificates of appreciation, features in organisational newsletters, or social media spotlights. Partner with local businesses to offer small rewards, like free coffee, for regular volunteers.

Use existing community events: Incorporate volunteer recruitment and Sustainable Wells promotion into already planned community events rather than creating separate occasions. Set up information stands at local markets, festivals, and city meetings to reach new potential volunteers.



- 1. <u>Sustainable Wells</u>
- 2. Wells Environment Network
- 3. Wells Community Network
- 4. <u>Team Wilder | Somerset Wildlife Trust</u>
- 5. <u>Recruiting volunteers NCV0</u>
- 6. Keeping volunteers NCVO
- 7. Creating feedback loops Community Psychology

3.2 - Set up a regular market stall to raise climate awareness





When:	Who:
TBC	 Wells City Council Wells Community Network Wells Environment Network (WEN) Sustainable Wells Wells Market

Wells Climate Adaptation Plan 2024

How:

Establish a market stall working group: Form a collaborative team across Wells City Council, Wells Community Network, WEN, and Sustainable Wells to coordinate the market stall rota and content. This centralised approach ensures consistent messaging and shared resources.

Design an engaging stall layout: Create an eye-catching display using existing banners and materials from all organisations. Develop simple, reusable infographics about local climate impacts and solutions. Use a portable table display that can be easily stored and transported between volunteers.

Create a resource-sharing system: Develop a shared kit of essential stall items stored centrally for easy access. Include practical items like leaflet holders, clipboards, and weather protection. Create a sign-out system to track materials and ensure their return for the next session.

Organise volunteer staffing: Set up a rotating schedule where each organisation takes responsibility for specific market days. Create simple briefing sheets for volunteers to ensure consistent messaging. Pair experienced volunteers with newcomers to build confidence and share knowledge.

Develop interactive elements: Design simple, low-cost activities that engage marketgoers, such as climate quizzes, pledge cards, or seasonal growing guides. Create conversation starter cards to help volunteers initiate discussions about local climate issues.

Build a seasonal content calendar: Plan stall themes around relevant seasonal topics, like home energy efficiency in autumn or water conservation in summer. Coordinate content with wider campaign messages from all partner organisations.

Utilise existing networks: Promote the stall through partner organisations' social media, newsletters, and noticeboards. Encourage volunteers to share their market stall experiences through their own networks to attract more visitors and potential volunteers.

- 1. <u>Principles for effective communication and public engagement on climate change | Climate Outreach</u>
- 2. <u>Better conversations about climate change | Rumie Learn</u>
- 3. Effective and Inviting climate communication | Rare
- 4. Public engagement on climate | Involve





3.3 - Partner with educational intuitions





When:	Who:
TBC	 Wells City Council Wells Community Network Wells Environment Network (WEN) Wells & District Wildlife Group St Cuthbert's CofE Junior School Stoberry Park School St Joseph and St Teresa Catholic Primary School St Cuthbert's Church of England Academy Infants and Pre-School The Blue School Wells Cathedral School Youth clubs YMCA Brownies Scouts Somerset Wildlife Trust (SWT)

Establish an education-climate partnership group: Form a coordinated team across Wells City Council, Wells Community Network, WEN, and Sustainable Wells to build relationships with local schools, colleges and universities. This centralised approach ensures consistent communication and avoids overwhelming educational partners.

Develop classroom-ready resources: Create simple, adaptable materials about local climate action that align with curriculum requirements. Share existing resources between organisations to create lesson plans, worksheets, and presentation materials that teachers can easily implement.

Create a schools outreach programme: Organise a rota of volunteers across the organisations who can deliver assemblies, workshops, or classroom talks. Design sessions that complement existing environmental education initiatives and require minimal preparation time.

Support student projects: Offer opportunities for students to participate in practical environmental projects. Connect students with relevant experts from across the partner organisations for coursework support, work experience, or research projects.

Facilitate intergenerational learning: Create opportunities for students to work alongside experienced volunteers on community projects. Design simple activities where younger and older community members can share skills and knowledge about local environmental issues.

Build a teacher network: Establish regular communication with interested teachers through existing channels. Create an email group to share upcoming opportunities and resources. Use teacher feedback to refine and improve educational offerings.

Utilise existing school events: Participate in school fairs, careers days, and environmental events rather than creating separate occasions. Coordinate representation from all organisations to maximise impact while minimising volunteer time commitment.

Promote citizen science projects: Research existing citizen science projects relevant to climate change and local environmental issues. Adapt these projects for local implementation or develop Wells-specific projects.



- 1. Education is key to addressing climate change United Nations
- 2. Organisations that can help you take action | Let's Go Zero
- 3. <u>Schools climate action planner | Transform Our World</u>
- 4. Developing classroom-ready resources | British Council
- 5. <u>Supporting student projects | WWF</u>

3.4 - Communicate with the local decision-makers on climate challenges





When:	Who:
TBC	 Wells City Council Wells Community Network Wells Environment Network (WEN) Somerset Council Local MPs

Develop briefing materials: Create clear, evidence-based summaries of local climate challenges and community-supported solutions. Use existing data and research from partner organisations to build compelling cases for action. Focus on specific, achievable asks that align with local authority powers.

Build relationships with key officials: Identify and maintain regular contact with relevant officers and elected representatives across different levels of government. Create a shared contact database amongst partner organisations to track communications and relationships effectively.

Coordinate consultation responses: Organise joint responses to relevant local and regional consultations on climate-related policies. Share draft responses among partner organisations to strengthen arguments and ensure community views are represented consistently.

Arrange regular meetings: Set up quarterly meetings with decision-makers, rotating responsibility for organisation between partner groups. Prepare focused agendas that highlight specific local climate challenges and proposed solutions, using real community examples.

Create feedback loops: Establish systems to share updates from decision-makers back to the community through existing newsletters and social media channels. Keep partner organisations and volunteers informed about progress and outcomes of policy discussions.

Utilise formal channels: Make effective use of existing democratic processes such as public questions at council meetings, neighbourhood planning consultations, and local authority scrutiny committees. Share expertise across organisations to maximise impact.



- 1. <u>Contact your MP | UK Parliament</u>
- 2. Engaging with MPs: a communications toolkit | Local Government Association
- 3. Working with your MP | Local Trust
- 4. Contact Somerset Council Somerset County Council

4. CO-ORDINATING EMERGENCY PLANS

Promoting sustainable development in Wells could provide the following adaptation benefits and co-benefits to the local community:



4.1 - Create a flood action plan for Wells





When:	Who:	
TBC	 Wells City Council Somerset Council Centre for Sustainable Energy Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) Somerset Prepared Communities Prepared Police Fire services St John ambulance 	

Establish a flood action working group: Form a coordinated team across Wells City Council, Wells Community Network, WEN, and Sustainable Wells to develop and maintain the flood plan. This centralised approach ensures comprehensive local knowledge and shared responsibility.

Map flood vulnerability: Use existing local knowledge and Environment Agency data to identify high-risk areas. Create simple maps showing flood-prone zones, drainage points, and safe routes. Share this information across partner organisations to build a complete picture of local flood risks.

Develop emergency response protocols: Create clear guidelines for immediate community response during flood events. Establish communication chains between partner organisations and identify key volunteer roles. Use existing community networks to disseminate emergency information effectively.

Build a community resource database: Compile a list of available local resources including equipment, safe spaces, and skilled volunteers. Create a shared document accessible to all partner organisations listing emergency contact numbers and designated flood wardens.

Establish monitoring systems: Organise volunteer monitoring of known flood-risk areas during heavy rainfall. Create a simple reporting system using existing communication channels to alert relevant authorities and local residents of developing situations. Coordinate with authorities: Maintain regular contact with the Environment Agency, emergency services, and local authorities. Share the community flood plan through established channels and integrate it with wider emergency planning.

Conduct regular emergency planning exercises: Organise and carry out flood scenario exercises involving local emergency services, the council, and community representatives to test and improve flood response plans.



- 1. <u>Flood risk maps | Government website</u>
- 2. <u>Preparing for flooding</u> Somerset County Council
- 3. Flood resilience measures Somerset Rivers Authority
- 4. Flood prevention | Somerset County Council
- 5. Flood planning template | Government website



4.2 - Support surrounding parishes with flood planning





Where:	When:	Who:
	TBC	 Wells City Council Wells Community Network Wells Environment Network (WEN)

Implement a community flood warden scheme: Recruit and train volunteer flood wardens from the local community. These individuals can act as key points of contact during flood events and help disseminate information about flood preparedness. Work with the Environment Agency to establish or improve local flood warning systems. Ensure that alerts are widely accessible and understood by the community.

Establish a parish flood network: Form a coordinated support team across Wells City Council, Wells Community Network, WEN, and Sustainable Wells to assist neighbouring parishes. This centralised approach ensures consistent guidance and efficient resource sharing.

Share flood planning template: Adapt the Wells flood action plan into a simple, reusable format for other parishes. Create basic guidelines that can be easily customised to local conditions. Use existing networks to distribute these resources efficiently.

Develop mentoring relationships: Connect experienced flood wardens and volunteers with neighbouring parish representatives. Organise informal knowledge-sharing sessions using existing meeting spaces. Share practical lessons learned from Wells' experience.

Create resource-sharing systems: Establish protocols for sharing equipment and volunteers during flood events. Develop simple agreements between parishes for mutual aid. Use existing communication channels to coordinate cross-parish support when needed.

Build inter-parish communication: Set up basic alert systems between parishes along shared waterways. Create contact lists of key personnel in each parish. Use existing social media and messaging platforms to maintain regular communication.

Coordinate training opportunities: Organise joint flood response training sessions for multiple parishes. Share costs and resources for essential training. Use local expertise to deliver practical workshops on flood preparedness.

Facilitate authority engagement: Help neighbouring parishes establish relationships with relevant authorities and agencies. Share contact lists and successful communication strategies. Use Wells' existing connections to bridge communication gaps.



- 1. Somerset emergency community contacts Somerset Prepared
- 2. <u>Rural flood resilience partnership</u> Government website
- 3. Improving flood resilience through community action Scottish Flood Forum
- 4. Online community resilience hub Communities Prepared

4.3 - Create a drought and wildfire plan for Wells





When:	Who:
TBC	 Wells City Council Wells Community Network Wells Environment Network (WEN) Police Fire services St John Ambulance

Establish a drought and wildfire working group: Form a coordinated team across Wells City Council, Wells Community Network, WEN, and Sustainable Wells to develop preventive and responsive measures. This centralised approach ensures comprehensive coverage of both urban and rural areas.

Map vulnerability zones: Use existing local knowledge to identify areas most at risk from drought and wildfire. Create simple maps showing vulnerable spaces, water sources, and access routes. Share this information across partner organisations to build a complete picture of local risks.

Develop emergency response protocols: Create clear guidelines for immediate community response during drought or wildfire events. Establish communication chains between partner organisations and identify key volunteer roles. Use existing community networks to share emergency information effectively.

Build a resource database: Compile a list of available local resources including water storage, equipment, and skilled volunteers. Create a shared document accessible to all partner organisations listing emergency contact numbers and designated wardens.

Create resident guidance: Develop simple, practical advice for water conservation and fire prevention. Share preparation checklists and emergency contact information through existing newsletters and websites. Focus on actionable steps that residents can take to protect their properties and conserve water.

Establish monitoring systems: Organise volunteer monitoring of known high-risk areas during dry spells. Create a simple reporting system using existing communication channels to alert relevant authorities and local residents of developing situations.

Coordinate with authorities: Maintain regular contact with the Fire Service, water companies, and local authorities. Share the community plan through established channels and integrate it with wider emergency planning.



- 1. Drought plan | Wessex Water
- 2. Wildfire risk and management | Government website
- 3. Preparing for drought | British Red Cross
- 4. Drought and water scarcity | Environment Agency
- 5. Climate change and wildfires The Wildlife Trusts

4.4 - Support residents to create home emergency plans





Where:	When:	Who:
 In-Person Communication Wells City Hall Local Libraries Farmers' Markets Local Events Online Communication Community Websites Social Media Platforms Email Newsletters Online Forums and Groups Local News Websites WhatsApp 	TBC	 Wells City Council Wells Community Network Wells Environment Network (WEN) Wells & District Wildlife Group

Create a flood resilience demonstration area: Set up a public space showcasing various flood resilience measures, such as permeable paving, rain gardens, and property-level protection. Use this as an educational tool for the community.

Encourage property-level resilience measures: Provide guidance and potentially financial incentives for residents and businesses to implement property-level flood protection measures, such as flood barriers, non-return valves, and waterproof wall treatments.

Establish a home resilience group: Form a coordinated team across Wells City Council, Wells Community Network, WEN, and Sustainable Wells to support household emergency planning. This centralised approach ensures consistent guidance and efficient resource sharing.

Develop template plans: Create simple, easy-to-use emergency plan templates that cover multiple scenarios. Include basic checklists for emergency supplies, contact numbers, and evacuation procedures. Share these through existing community newsletters and websites.

Create guidance materials: Design straightforward guides for simple, practical advice for before, during, and after emergency events. different household types (families, elderly residents, those with mobility needs). Use existing communication channels to distribute practical advice about emergency preparations and response actions. Share preparation checklists and emergency contact information through existing newsletters and websites. Focus on actionable steps that residents can take to protect their properties.

Build neighbourhood support: Encourage street-level emergency planning using existing community networks. Create simple systems for neighbours to share resources and check on vulnerable residents. Use current street representatives to coordinate local response.

Organise community workshops: Hold informal sessions in existing community spaces to help residents complete their emergency plans. Rotate responsibility for running sessions between partner organisations. Keep sessions practical and focused on immediate actions.

Establish resource sharing: Create a list of shared community resources that residents can access during emergencies. Use existing buildings as information points. Share details of emergency equipment locations through regular communications.

Coordinate with authorities: Link household plans with wider community emergency response. Share relevant contact numbers and procedures from emergency services. Use existing relationships with authorities to ensure plans align with official guidance.



- 1. <u>Home emergency plan | Somerset Prepared</u>
- 2. Flood resilience measures Somerset Rivers Authority
- 3. Emergency planning | Somerset County Council
- 4. Property flood resilience | Environment Agency

4.5 - Communicate emergency plans





Where:	When:	Who:
 In-Person Communication Wells City Hall Local libraries Farmers' markets Local events Online communication Community websites Social media platforms Email newsletters Online forums and groups Local news websites Social news 	TBC	 Wells City Council Wells Community Network Wells Environment Network (WEN) Wells & District Wildlife Group Sustainable Wells Lions Wells Rotary

Establish a communications team: Form a coordinated group across Wells City Council, Wells Community Network, WEN, and Sustainable Wells to manage emergency communications. This centralised approach ensures clear, consistent messaging and prevents confusion.

Develop multi-channel alerts: Create simple emergency notification templates for different platforms. Use existing email lists, social media accounts, and WhatsApp groups to reach different community segments. Establish clear protocols for when and how to use each channel.

Create accessible materials: Design clear, visual emergency guidance using simple language and universal symbols. Share through existing noticeboards, newsletters, and community hubs. Ensure information is available in large print and digital formats.

Build communication chains: Establish neighbourhood messaging systems using existing street representatives and community networks. Create simple protocols for passing information through these chains. Use current volunteer networks to identify and reach vulnerable residents.

Organise information points: Designate existing community spaces as emergency information hubs. Create basic information packs that can be quickly distributed. Use familiar locations where residents regularly gather.

Test alert systems: Run simple communication exercises using existing community events. Practice information sharing between partner organisations. Use feedback to refine and improve emergency messaging.

Coordinate with authorities: Align local communication plans with official emergency alerts. Share contact lists with relevant authorities. Use established relationships to ensure consistent messaging during emergencies.

Organise community workshops: Host regular workshops and information sessions to educate residents and business owners about flood risks and resilience measures. Invite experts to share knowledge and demonstrate practical flood protection techniques.







- 1. Emergency planning framework GCS Civil Service
- 2. <u>Resilient communications</u> Government website
- 3. <u>Community resilience: Resources and Tools</u> <u>Government website</u>
- 4. <u>Crisis communications: operating model | GCS Civil Service</u>
- 5. <u>Community emergency plan toolkit</u> Government website
- 6. Testing the emergency alerts service | Government website

CONCLUSION

This plan shares the community's priority actions for helping Wells thrive through our changing climate. Some can happen quickly, like planting trees, to give an instant adaption boost. Other actions, such as shaping planning policies, are longer-term projects that will significantly enhance Wells' adaptation and preparedness.

Every action in this plan will also bring many other benefits to Wells. These "co-benefits" include:

- improving community health and wellbeing
- making space for wildlife
- mitigating climate change

By working on these actions together, you can also strengthen community links, which is vital for making the City well-adapted and resilient.

> Wells' Climate Adaptation Plan should be seen as a living document, at the starting point of a wider process. The plan should:

- be reviewed regularly
- be updated as needed
- reflect the changing climate and the changing priorities and needs of Wells' community

By staying flexible, and continuing to listen to Wells' residents, the plan can best guide the community in adapting to climate change.

Now it is time to act!

Everyone can play a role in making Wells better adapted. To find out more about how you can get involved in implementing this plan, contact Somerset Wildlife Trust.









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Thank you to everyone who shared their ideas to create such a positive and ambitious Climate Adaptation Plan for Wells. In addition to the many community members who shaped this plan, we would like to thank Denise Denis and Sarah Powell from Wells City Council for their work to develop Wells' Climate Adaptation Plan.

If you are concerned about your individual preparedness to emergency events, check out <u>Somerset Prepared</u> for detailed advice and support.

For future funding, the SRA are launching a grant scheme toward flood action projects - launching in spring 2025.



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