

Camerton Parish News



Autumn
2026

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Useful contacts

Parish Council Chair
Lloyd Randall

1 Collier Close, BA2 0QB
07880 748765
camertonparishchair@gmail.com

Clerk to the Parish Council

clerk@camertonparishcouncil.gov.uk
www.camertonparishcouncil.co.uk

District Cllrs for Bathavon
South Ward

Matt McCabe
mattmccabe.1@outlook.com
07711 047267
Fiona Gourley
fiona_gourley@bathnes.gov.uk
07803 015886

The Council Connect contact
centre deal with telephone,
text and email enquiries.

www.bathnes.gov.uk/reportit
councilconnect@bathnes.gov.uk
01225 394041

Your Neighbourhood Police
Team

101
www.avonandsomerset.police.uk

Curo Community Housing

01225 366000

Camerton Community Hall

07877907963
www.camertoncommunityhall.co.uk

Editorial

ARWEN ROSS



And here we are in autumn again!

This time of year can mean very different things to different people.

For students, it means a new academic year, with new challenges and sometimes even a new school.

For parents, there is a focus on supporting and setting up your children to enter into this new challenge in a positive way, and a return to term-time routine. And for those who are not bound to the school year, it is often looked forward to as “time for a holiday”!

What does autumn mean to you? Is it a new beginning? A time to get out and enjoy turning leaves, blackberries, morning mist and dark, starry nights? A time to get away from it all for a while, or to chase the sun before the nights start closing in?

Whatever autumn means to you, I hope you will find something to interest you in this latest issue of our newsletter.



Council News – Local Plan Update

Bath & North East Somerset Council's Draft Local Plan has now moved to its final public consultation stage. Cabinet agreed on 10 September 2026 that the Draft Local Plan should proceed to consultation, and the formal Regulation 19 consultation opened on 18 September.

The Local Plan will guide where new homes, employment and supporting infrastructure are provided across Bath & North East Somerset up to 2043. It aims to ensure that growth is planned alongside the schools, healthcare, transport links and community facilities needed to support new and existing communities.

The scale of housing required has increased significantly following changes to national planning policy.

Earlier work on the Local Plan considered provision for around 14,000 new homes, but the Government's current housing requirement for B&NES is 27,324 homes over 18 years. The Draft Local Plan identifies proposed allocations capable of delivering around 80% of that requirement.

Following previous consultation and engagement, including the Local Plan Options consultation, the Council has now published its proposed final draft. The current Regulation 19 consultation runs from Friday 18 September until Friday 30 October 2026. This is the final formal public consultation before the Plan is submitted for independent examination.

This stage is different from earlier consultations. Rather than asking residents which options they prefer, Regulation 19 asks people to comment on whether the proposed Local Plan is legally compliant and "sound".

Residents, businesses and community organisations can support the Plan, object to particular policies or site allocations, or suggest changes, but representations should explain the reasons for those views.

Anyone wishing to comment should therefore submit a formal representation by 30 October 2026.

The Draft Local Plan, supporting evidence and online representation form are available through B&NES Council's consultation website: https://haveyoursay.bathnes.gov.uk/localplan/index.php?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

After the consultation closes, the Council will review all representations received. Subject to further Cabinet and Council decisions in December, the Draft Local Plan and consultation responses are expected to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination in winter 2026. A government-appointed Planning Inspector will then consider whether the Plan is legally compliant and sound. Adoption of the new Local Plan is currently scheduled for 2027. For Camerton residents, this is therefore the final opportunity to make a formal representation on the Draft Local Plan before it moves to independent examination.

Book Now



3-course CHRISTMAS LUNCH 2026

**with entertainment and a
licenced bar - £25**

at Camerton Community Hall

Sunday 20th December 2026

12 for 12.30pm

**Email: cchallsecretary@gmail.com or send
Text 07866112689 (Calls after 4pm):
(Booking/payment essential for catering)**

Somersetshire Coal Canal – Important Local Plan Update

There is welcome news for residents concerned about previous proposals in the B&NES Local Plan Options, which could have facilitated the future restoration of the Somersetshire Coal Canal to navigation through our village.

In its September 2026 Draft Local Plan, B&NES Council has not included the proposed separate policy promoting canal restoration or creation, nor the potential diversion routes.

Instead, B&NES proposes to retain existing Policy HE2, which protects the historic route and setting of the Somersetshire Coal Canal and the Wansdyke, as shown on the B&NES Policies Map. Development adversely affecting these heritage assets must demonstrate appropriate mitigation or enhancement consistent with Policy HE1.

How did we get here?

During the earlier Local Plan Options consultation, B&NES proposed option 1: Retain existing Policy HE2 and the protected route, or Option 2: Developing a new policy for restoration/creation of the Somersetshire Coal Canal.

During public consultation, residents across B&NES raised concerns about Option 2 and the feasibility of restoring the canal to navigation, including infrastructure constraints, water supply, funding, land ownership, long-term deliverability, environmental impacts, potential ecological damage and the loss of peaceful green corridors. Residents also highlighted how safeguarding proposed routes could affect landowners and restrict future development. At the same time, respondents supported conserving surviving canal structures and the Wansdyke as local heritage assets.

The Somersetshire Coal Canal Communities Alliance was formed to bring together the concerns of affected communities. Parish councils, Bathavon South ward councillors Fiona Gourley and Matt McCabe, and local MP Anna Sabine also supported residents' concerns. The Alliance presented its case to a Council Scrutiny Panel and met with the Somersetshire Coal Canal Society to explain its position.

The Alliance supports celebrating and conserving the canal's important industrial heritage, but does not support restoring it to navigation. Protecting the surviving historic route, its heritage and its contribution to local identity does not require rebuilding a navigable canal.

B&NES' published response to the public consultation acknowledged the concerns raised. It concluded that existing heritage policies, including Policy HE2, protect the canal and the Wansdyke without the need for a separate policy safeguarding restoration and diversion areas. The draft therefore proposes to retain Policy HE2 to ensure continued protection.

This outcome demonstrates the value of residents, parish councils and councillors working together to make local concerns heard. We will continue monitoring the Local Plan process and developments relating to the canal and Policy HE2, keeping residents informed as the Plan progresses towards examination and adoption.

See page 4 for information on the wider Local Plan. The Draft Local Plan is now at the Regulation 19 publication stage, with public consultation running from 18 September to 30 October 2026.



The café on site will be open for public selling human and dog ice cream

Coffees, hot chocolate, herbal teas, popcorn, fresh cake, fresh eggs from our own chickens lots more products coming soon

No facilities can be used whilst visiting the café

We will also be offering a delivery service once a week dates tbc and ordering information

Tel 07542904178

Tel 07960186510

Camerton Community Hall



We are delighted to welcome new members to the hall committee: Tina and Paul Cunnington, David Grey, and Otis Wilkinson, who has taken over the organising of a new website to replace the very successful one put together 11 years ago by committee member Carl Sangan.

Carl travels all over the world continually and has very little time to devote to hall business. We would not be where we are today if it had not been for him setting up and running the hall website.

The Bingo sessions on the first and third Thursday in the month have been a great success, with big cash prizes paid at every session. The atmosphere is great too, with a drink from the bar making it more enjoyable.

More and more couples are choosing our venue to have their wedding day – 2027 will be the best year ever, with 8 booked already.

We have been lucky to have Radstock Museum hiring the hall to

hold their
“Bygone Days”
talks next year.

Look out for dates, these talks are well attended with between 70 and 80 people regularly turning up.

Avon Dance are still with us on a Monday evening. If you have young children who would like to learn ballet or tap, please contact them using their website.

The success story of the past 2 years has to be the Art Class on Thursdays! There are two sessions, one in the morning, the other in the afternoon. Just come along and introduce yourself to the organisers.

The hall has become a place to be on a Friday evening, with the Jolly Collier Bar open from 5pm – the local gossip is always an interesting feature.

We opened it 2 years ago for the people of the community as we don’t have a pub in the village; please come along and support it.



There are time slots available for someone to organise a coffee morning or an old age pensioners club or perhaps a kids club. If this of interest to you, please contact us through the hall website.

If you have any ideas on how we should run the hall or what you would like to see organised there,

please get in touch through the website.

Remember, all residents of Camerton get a discount.

Bryn Hawkins, Camerton Community Hall Chairman.

Seeking local photographic talent!

Many thanks to the local people who have agreed to let us use their fantastic photos for the newsletter so far! If you have a new photo or something in your archives that you would like to share which showcases our beautiful parish in any season, please contact the Parish Clerk (camertonparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk).

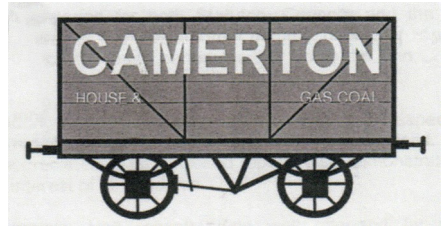
From Boy to Man in the Somerset Coal Field

Following your father into work was the order of the day when I left school in the 1950s.

My father Jim worked his whole life in the coal mines, progressing from a carting boy to driving the winding engine at Camerton Colliery and Old Mills Colliery Paulton. Camerton New Pit was my playground as a young boy, spending many hours watching my father operate the steam winding engine and playing on the two batches; the one near New Pit was the source of our Christmas trees every year.

I started as an apprentice engineer when I was still 14 years of age. I had to wait 6 weeks before I could go underground at Old Mills training pit, I couldn't wait. After working at Kilmersdon and Writhlington during the school holidays during my 5-year apprenticeship period I ended up at Norton Hill Colliery until it closed in 1966.

I made some great friends at Norton Hill, many coming to my wedding to Teresa in 1963.



After Norton Hill closed I joined a group which visited the three remaining pits to help with engineering projects. The largest job we helped with was removing the electric winding engine from Norton Hill Colliery and installing it at Writhlington Pit during the miners' annual holidays the last week in July and the first week in August in 1966. The last two pits, Kilmersdon and Writhlington, closed in 1973.

I joined the Somerset Miners Welfare Trust as a trustee in 2013, taking the chair in 2020 with a completely new set of trustees. Over the past four years we have supported the retired NCB employees and widows with meals and days out, coach trips.

We have installed 44 7ft metal miners close to where coal mines existed in our local area, keeping the memories alive on into the future.

A year-long programme on local radio Somer Valley FM called “When Coal Was King” proved a great success. I interviewed many ex-miners – they had lovely stories about their difficult job down the mines to share with the listeners.

With the metal miners and the radio programme at last we have people talking about coal mining in the area, some didn’t know there were coal mines in Somerset. You can listen to the miners’ stories and find much more information on the Somerset Miners Trust’s website.

Bryn Hawkins



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GOOD NEWS!



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Somer Valley Ramblers

By the time you read this our annual Walking Festival will have taken place. It's always such an enjoyable event; people walking and chatting and enjoying the countryside around us. We have enjoyed several years of joint planning and actioning with Somer Valley Rediscovered, who have worked over the past five years to improve the habitat and biodiversity of our local community park lands. The hard physical work undertaken in the main by local volunteers is impressive, so if you get an opportunity, I suggest you visit one. Make use of the benches and tables provided to have a picnic or sit and absorb the peaceful atmosphere where wildlife thrive. They are also excellent areas to walk, as many of the paths have been levelled and hard cored to provide better walking surfaces in inclement weather.

Recently I have been struck by some information provided in a 1990 publication about Paulton village. From memory, in 1990 walking as a form of leisure was not as popular as it is in these times, (I will stand

corrected if people disagree). The people of Paulton were asked about their use of local amenities: the library, telephone kiosks (indication of the times!), recreation fields and parks, the swimming pool, village hall and public footpaths. Options were, "never used", "occasionally used" and "regularly used". They were all amenities warranting their existence (even the telephone kiosk)! Now for the BUT. Only public footpaths were used "regularly" more often than "occasionally" or "never".

Today, use of the public footpaths is increasing as families, friends and individuals reap the benefits of getting out into the fresh air and away from screen life which seems to dominate our lives. It would be an interesting exercise to repeat this mini survey now in the 2020's and get some up to date figures on usage of public footpaths and other amenities (omitting the phone kiosks of course). Public footpaths are maintained by an army of people; the landowners and managers, the Rights of Way

officers of our Council, local volunteers, footpath wardens and Ramblers maintenance teams. You may like to pop a pair of secateurs in your pocket to clip back encroaching brambles as you take

advantage of the footpaths across our countryside, it all helps!

Tessa Wyatt

Somer Valley Ramblers

www.somervalleyramblers.org.uk

Introducing BWCE Home Energy!

Bath & West Community Energy has just launched its new Home Energy service – a local hub of independent, expert advice and support for warm, efficient, low-carbon homes in our community.

They now offer home energy assessments, providing tailored, impartial advice to help you find the best energy-efficient solutions for your home.

Plus, you'll have access to a range of inspiring events – open homes, expert talks, spotlights sessions, training and videos – everything you need to make your home more energy efficient.

Bookings for home energy surveys are now live, and you can take advantage of generous, time-limited discounts from Retrofit West.

Find out more and book your assessment at:
www.bwce.homeenergy.coop

Cam Valley Arts Trail News



The much-loved Cam Valley Arts Trail returns on 7th and 8th November 2026, welcoming visitors for a weekend celebrating creativity, culture and local talent. This will once again take the form of a trail with artists exhibiting from their own studios as well as in communal venues at Paulton, Camerton and High Littleton.

Connecting communities with artists from across the Cam Valley, the trail offers a unique opportunity to explore a variety of venues around our local area. Meet the artists, watch live demonstrations, discover the stories behind their work and gain a fascinating glimpse into the creative process.

Alongside many established favourites, this year's trail will also showcase new artists and fresh collections, ensuring that there's always something new to discover. Whether you're looking for an original painting, sculpture, ceramic, piece of jewellery or handcrafted gift, you'll find an inspiring range of affordable art to suit every taste.

Be sure to pick up the free Trail Guide, featuring artist profiles and a handy map to help you plan your journey between venues - this will be available from local outlets such as shops, libraries and pubs.



CAM VALLEY ARTS TRAIL



The Arts Trail is an interesting event for all - children will be able to enjoy creative activities and competitions, while our brand-new Art Passport gives visitors the chance to collect stamps along the trail and enter a free prize raffle.

With refreshments, toilet facilities and disabled access available at many venues, it's easy to spend the weekend exploring, meeting talented artists and supporting your local creative community. It is very heartwarming and encouraging for our artists to have people returning year after year continually showing interest. We look forward to welcoming you!

The 2026 Cam Valley Arts Trail will be held on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th November from 10.30am to 4.30pm on both days. For more information about the Trail and the group, please look at our website at camvalleyartstrail.co.uk or follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

Please save the date and join us for a memorable weekend of art, creativity and discovery.





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Timsbury Lunch Club

If you live alone but like good company and a delicious meal, a warm welcome awaits you at the Timsbury Lunch Club.

You will enjoy a wholesome two-course lunch with tea or coffee for just £7.50 per head.

We meet every other month throughout the year in the Myra Hayward Room at the Congre Hall. Why not put the dates on your 2026 calendar now? There's nothing like planning ahead!

All on the last Thursday of the month:

**26th March 28th May 30th July
24th September 26th November**

Please ring Helen Pease on 01761 470077 to book your place (booking essential for catering purposes). You will be very warmly welcomed, and we look forward to meeting you.



Have you served in the military?

Can we help?

The Royal British Legion (RBL) was established in 1921 to provide financial, social and emotional support to members and ex-members of the Royal Navy, British Army, Royal Air Force and the volunteer reserves, such as the RNR, TAVR and RAFVR, and their families and dependents. To make administration easier, local Branches were set up across the country and many of these still exist today with the same aims.

The Timsbury Branch provides support for people in the parish of Timsbury and surrounding areas. If you are looking for advice and support in welfare matters or just for the company of likeminded people, please contact the Branch using the details shown below. We would be very pleased to hear from you and you will be made very welcome.

For membership of the Branch and general information on the work of the RBL, contact Barry Sewell, Branch Chair, on 01761 471685.

For welfare enquiries contact Chris Fiddes, Branch Welfare Officer, on 07923 436950.

Dates for your diary

Every first and third Thursday, 6.30pm:

Bingo, Camerton Community Hall, bar opens 6.30pm, eyes down 7.30pm

11 Nov 2026, 6.30pm: Parish Council Meeting, Camerton Community Hall



Would you like to improve
your health and wellbeing?

The Hope Guide

Local health and
wellbeing
groups/activities

Local organisations
offering 1-1 support

Local and
national helplines



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QR code**

For general queries email: j.woodsford@nhs.net



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