

Date: 6 February 2020

## **There's a Climate Emergency and we need you to have your say at the Yeovil event**

Climate change is one of the most significant issues facing the world today – and we want you to let your Somerset councils know what needs to be done.

Thousands of people have already shared their views to help shape a strategy to protect our future and a drop-in event will be held in Yeovil later this month to help you have your say in South Somerset.

### **What's happening?**

A Climate Emergency drop-in event, hosted by the Somerset Climate Action Network, will be taking place on Saturday 22 February at Vicarage Street Methodist Church, Vicarage Street, Yeovil BA20 1JB from 10am until 4pm.

This drop in is the perfect opportunity to come along and have your say on what you think Somerset needs to fight climate change.

There will be numerous activities to join in, with different zones which will include a family craft and conservation area, an infographics area and rich picture interactive workshop which will illustrate the main elements and relationships needed to move forward with our environment strategy.

There will also be drinks available and talks from guest speakers on topics linked to protecting the environment.

You will also be able to put forward your own questions on the things you care most about for Somerset's environment.

Cara Naden from Somerset Climate Action Network, a Somerset wide community lead organisation, who are hosting the drop-in events, said, "This is an great opportunity to feedback on, and help shape the council's actions and strategy to the climate emergency declarations. The drop in event will also include community lead talks on topics and solutions to help make the necessary changes required to reduce our environmental impact and help adapt to the climate changes we face. It will include creative and

interactive responses to the issue. The more people can engage and feedback, the more we can collectively work with the councils and communities on the best solutions for our district to respond to the climate emergency as soon as possible. Our communities are on the front line of climate change impacts, particularly the low laying levels, so we need to address the climate emergency now”.

### **How else can I help?**

If you can't make the drop-in event, you can also tell us what you think through an online survey by visiting [www.somerset.gov.uk/climateemergency](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/climateemergency). There are two versions of the survey – one for adults and another for 11-18 year olds, as we're really keen to know our younger generation's views, as ultimately, it will affect their future the most.

Your opinion really matters to us, as your views will really influence how we shape Somerset's environment strategy going forward. We hope you can take 5 minutes to complete the online survey and encourage the younger generation around you to have their say too.

### **What are the councils of Somerset actually doing?**

In May last year, South Somerset District Council formally recognised a climate and ecological emergency and developed a strategy that would set ambitious targets to protect the environment and ecology, reduce Carbon Emissions and pledge to become a carbon neutral council by 2030.

Our four neighbouring councils across Somerset (Somerset County Council, Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council and Somerset West and Taunton Council) also passed resolutions to declare or recognise a climate emergency.

All Councils have agreed to come together to form a countywide partnership to create a broader plan for the environment that will work for the greater good of Somerset.

Councillor Sarah Dyke, portfolio holder for Environment at South Somerset District Council, said: “It's important the residents of Somerset have their say on the environmental issues that affect them or believe will affect them in the future. We need to understand what's important to our residents so we can look to tackle those issues first. I urge for as many people to attend the drop-in event as possible or if you can't make it, please fill in the online questionnaire. We also encourage everyone to make sure that our younger

generation of 11-18 year olds complete our young persons survey, as ultimately it's their future planet that is at risk."

Similar drop-in events have already been held in Taunton and Bridgwater attracting hundreds of adults and children.

We hope to see at the Yeovil event on Saturday 22 February where everyone is welcome.