

Congresbury Chronicle

News and views from
around the village

Send articles for future issues to diana@rookery-farm.com

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Snippets from your Ward Councillor

The **NHS is celebrating its 70th Anniversary** and we hope that the increase in funding announced by the

government will ease the acute funding pressures. Weston Hospital A&E department is still shut overnight and this temporary closure has now lasted a whole year. **Public Health** is now the responsibility of Local Authorities and drastic cuts in funding are leading to increased concerns about obesity, excess use of alcohol and the whole range of related ill health. In North Somerset, 28% of 10-11 year olds are overweight or obese as are 63% of adults.

Funding of **social care** remains the largest unsolved problem both locally and nationally. The **Local Government Ombudsman** ruled against North Somerset Council for charging for 'reablement', a form of intermediate care which should be free. Every year, the Council has to find money from other parts of the budget to compensate for overspending on social care for adults and vulnerable children. At the same time, we have been cutting funding for preventative services. The good news is that none of our **Children's Centres** are actually closing (unlike some other authorities), but staffing, opening hours and services offered are being reduced.

The new **recycling and waste collection** rounds have taken time to settle, including problems in some parts of Congresbury.

Motorists may find it hard to believe, but the **condition of our roads** is now well above average for the UK. **Road safety**, however, is a matter of concern. Like me, many of you have complained about the speed of traffic passing through the village. The evidence from Bristol is clear: 20 mph speed limits reduce accidents and injuries. As several of you have urged me following a recent accident, **it is really time to campaign hard for a 20 mph speed limit through Congresbury.**

Cllr Tom Leimdorfer
01934 830435; leimdorfer@care4free.net

Neighbourhood Plan

A Neighbourhood Plan for Congresbury 2018-2036 has been drafted and is now ready to go out for consultation. The consultation phase takes place from 30 July to 17 September.

Residents can access copies of the Plan via the Parish Council website and there will be a number of paper copies that will be available from the Congresbury Community Library and the Parish Office (see centre pages for a summary of the Plan).

The Plan will be on display in the Old School Rooms and members of the Neighbourhood Development Group will be available to answer any questions on the following dates:

August - 2, 6, 8, 9, 15, 16, 30
September - 3, 6, 12, 13

The meetings are from 6:30 to 8pm. This will be your opportunity to discuss the policies proposed in the Plan and to give your views on them with suggested amendments and improvements.

During the consultation period comments can also be sent to the following email

congresburyneighbourhoodplan@gmail.com.

Diana Hassan

Chair of Neighbourhood Development Group

Test Pits in Congresbury

Have you ever wondered if there might be archaeology lying beneath your house?

YCCCART will be holding demonstrations of test pitting techniques at two locations in Congresbury.

Dig a test pit in your garden and see what is buried under your property. YCCCART can use the findings from the digs to build up a map of artefacts found across the village. It may also tell you something about the site of your house. Just because your house is modern, doesn't mean to say there isn't archaeology there!

If you would like to dig your test pit yourself, YCCCART are here to help and advise. Don't be too disappointed if you don't find archaeology: in this effort, negative findings are important too!

To find out more come and see the two test pits being dug by YCCCART at Stonewell Farm and Rookery Farm, Stonewell Lane on August 4th & 5th 10am – 12pm & 2pm – 4pm.

More information can be found at www.ycccart.co.uk.
Janet Dickson – Secretary YCCCART

Congresbury Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018 - 2036

WHAT IS A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

Neighbourhood Development Plans were established under the Localism Act in 2011 and aim to give local people more say in the future of their community. It allows communities to develop through steady but moderate growth, meeting the housing needs of the community while at the same time preserving the importance of the Green Belt, rural landscape and the conservation area and heritage assets. It also considers the infrastructure needed to support such growth.

Neighbourhood Plans must have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework, related Planning Practice Guidance and North Somerset Council and Congresbury Parish Council planning policies as they currently stand.

To be granted legal status a Neighbourhood Plan has to be approved by a local referendum and formally adopted by the Local Authority. It then forms part of the Statutory Development Plan with the same legal status as the Local Plan and will be used to determine planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area.

WHY WE NEED A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Under the North Somerset Core Strategy Congresbury is classed as a Service Village because it is seen as providing services for the population beyond the immediate locality. This classification means that Congresbury is an appropriate location for new residential development within the settlement boundary and developments of up to 25 dwellings **adjoining the settlement boundary** providing they respect the scale and character of the village and are not in the Green Belt.

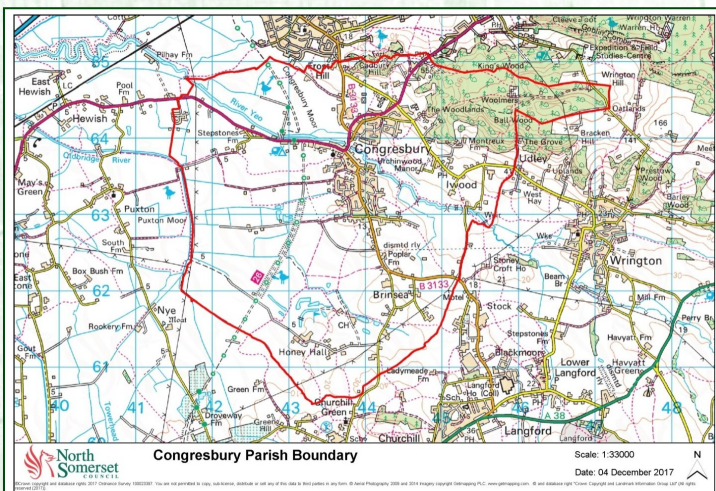
North Somerset is under a great deal of pressure to allocate more land for development but is subject to a number of constraints. The Green Belt restricts development in the north, much of the county is low lying and classed as flood plain and the Mendips is protected due to its status as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These restrictions mean there is even greater pressure on any land that does not fall within these categories.

Over the past four years Congresbury Parish Council and residents have spent a great deal of time and money fighting inappropriate and unsustainable housing schemes.

Neighbourhood Plans are not against development, they are designed to allow the community to decide where **they** would like to see development to take place.

WHAT IS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

This map shows the area that is covered by the Congresbury Development Neighbourhood Plan. The policies cover the period from 2018 – 2036 and a review will be carried out 5 years after



its implementation. The plan is not just about housing but a range of topics: Housing, Transport, Facilities, Environment & Heritage, and Employment.

The vision for Congresbury is:

- It continues to be a welcoming, vibrant, independent village surrounded by green fields and with a conservation area at its heart.
- A place where small businesses can thrive and the residents can continue to benefit from a full range of quality services, amenities and facilities.
- The community will embrace the aspirations of all its members and promote an environment where these aspirations can be realised.
- All residents of our village will feel that they can fully participate in village life; that their wellbeing is seen to be important and feel a genuine sense of pride in where they live.
- It will continue to be a safe and pleasant place to live, aspiring to achieve a sustainable infrastructure, minimising its carbon footprint and maximising the opportunity for recycling. The green spaces within the village will be made accessible and will be maintained for the benefit of all.
- Any future developments should be appropriate to the existing character and needs of the village.

HOUSING

The Plan recognises the desire by many residents for more affordable housing that would help local families and more smaller houses that would suit both young families and older residents who want to downsize.

The following sustainable development principles were applied to identify possible development sites within the village.

Policy H 1 – Sustainable development location principles

- a Congresbury Neighbourhood Plan supports sustainable development in line with the principles of Core Strategy CS32 for Service Villages.
- b New developments should be located where residents are able to safely walk and cycle reasonable distances to village facilities and services, have easy access to public transport.
- c To preserve the unique identity of the village and to protect the landscape and rural character, any new developments should be located where they minimise the dispersal of dwellings outside of the existing settlement area.
- d There should be no development in the strategic gap between Congresbury & Yatton unless it meets the criteria set out in Policy SA7 of the Site Allocations Plan 2018.
- e There should be no development south of the line formed by Silver Street/Mead and Venus Street/Nomis Park.
- f Preference will be given to site locations where additional traffic will have the least impact on the two junctions of B3133 and A370 at Smallway and the High Street.
- g Where there is no adverse effect on neighbours or the character of the area, infill development should be considered to increase residential density in sustainable locations close to the village centre. However, no building in the village should exceed three storeys in height.

In line with these principles the Plan specifies that no new developments should exceed 25 dwellings, in line with the North Somerset Core Strategy.

The Plan states that there is a need for affordable housing. All development of 5 or more dwellings should include a minimum of

Congresbury Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018 - 2036

35% affordable housing (for rent or shared ownership). All new developments should have regard to the needs of first time buyers as well as the needs of elderly and disabled residents.

The village is subject to other constrictions on development such as the green belt to the north of the village, floodplain to the south and west of the settlement and landscape considerations to the south and the east of the village.

Six possible sites have been identified. They are all small sites, four of them having direct access onto the A370 and all are within walking distance of village amenities with good access to public transport.

TRANSPORT

The postcard survey, carried out in 2016, highlighted residents concerns over the volume of traffic, particularly the number of haulage vehicles that passed through the village, which made them feel vulnerable when walking along pavements and crossing roads. This fear discouraged residents from using more sustainable forms of transport such as bicycles. The Plan aims to:

- Put the needs of pedestrians and cyclists before motorists by ensuring that good pedestrian access and cycle provision is available in residential, shopping and recreation areas.
- Improve the access routes from the village to the Strawberry Line.
- Extension to connect the Strawberry Line to Churchill School to will offer a safe traffic-free route to school and encourage pupils to make healthier life choices.
- Introduce a number of measures that will mitigate the situation.

Policy T 3 – Mitigating traffic problems and enhancing sustainable travel

- a The introduction of village gateway features on all four approaches to Congresbury. These are designed to slow traffic and emphasise the 30 mph speed limit.
- b Apply a 20 mph speed limit on the B3133 from the Ship and Castle to the Precinct and all residential roads off both the A370, and the B3133.
- c Improvements at the A370 / B3133 junctions at both the Station Road / High Street, and at Smallway to assist the crossing of both junctions by pedestrians.
- d Removal of the central hatching along the A370 from Moor Bridge to the Old School Rooms and widening of the adjacent footways on both sides of the road to allow for a cycleway combined with the pavement. The combined pavement and cycleway will provide safer access to and from the village for pedestrians and cyclists.
- e Improvements to the B3133 particularly to the south along Brinsea Road to increase footway widths.
- f Reduce the 50 mph speed limit to 40 mph which is over the Rhodyate Hill from Congresbury to Cleeve.
- g Improve pedestrian safety on the A370 near the entrance to Moorland Park, which may include a pedestrian controlled crossing, reduction of speed limit or a combination of the two into Congresbury.
- h Remove excessive Traffic signs around the junctions.

FACILITIES

The Plan:

- Supports continued maintenance of the Old School Rooms by the Parish Council.
- Recommends the allotments be registered as a valuable community asset.

- Supports the proposal for a new community hall on the King George V playing fields as voted for in the village referendum in 2016.
- Proposes the Parish Council look for a new burial ground in the future.

Existing community services such as the library, pubs, toilets, village halls, shops and youth club should be maintained as they play an important role in the community until it can be shown they are no longer viable.

HERITAGE

The village grew around the Church and the historic core of the village is based around the churchyard, Broad Street, High Street and Mill Lane. This area was designated as a Conservation Area in 1990. Unfortunately, the character and quality of the traditional shopping street has gradually been eroded by poor, careless and unsympathetic alterations to shop fronts. The Plan includes the enforcement of a local signage policy to reverse this trend and ensure that alterations to shop fronts are well designed, and contribute positively to the surrounding area.

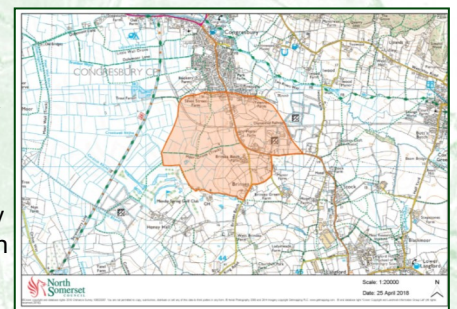


Congresbury has many listed assets as well as a number of important archaeological sites which provide evidence for the historic development of the village. The village (market) cross at the junction of Broad Street and High Street is a village landmark and is a designated Scheduled Monument. A scheme to protect it from damage is essential.

ENVIRONMENT

Congresbury lies in the North Somerset levels and Moors and has a number of Sites of Scientific Interest in the north of the village. The southern half, around Brinsea, has remnant orchards and ancient species rich hedgerows. Birdlife across the village is varied and plentiful; barn owls breed on Congresbury Moor. It is important to maintain green corridors between the various sites.

A strategic gap between Congresbury and Yatton is already in existence. A similar area to the south of the village should also be established to protect the character and identity of the landscape between Congresbury and Churchill & Langford.



EMPLOYMENT

There are very few employment opportunities in Congresbury with the majority of residents working elsewhere and commuting. 83 businesses located in and around Congresbury were surveyed in 2016 to provide a snapshot of employment opportunities within the area.

There is a need to retain employment sites within the village and therefore by designating the Cadbury Garden Centre as an employment site and the old Green Holm Nursery site as a site for employment/community use it is hoped to preserve these sites and provide employment and business opportunities for the local community. Designating the Green Holm Nursery site for Community Use in addition to employment would not prevent it from being a potential site for a medical centre or other community uses.



Flood Team update

The Congresbury Community Flood Team (20 plus volunteers) has completed the tenth inspection of the gullies (drains) and gripes around the village.

We now have data and records of blocked and broken gullies in and around the village. A "traffic light" system of recording is used and all the "RED" areas are reported to North Somerset Council (NSC) either by telephone or Council Connect.

There is no certainty that NSC will react to the "RED" reports but we now have data recorded over the last five years. We carry out four seasonal inspections each year.

North Somerset Area Officer

We are sorry to report that Mr Jeff Shipway (NSC Area officer for Congresbury) has recently resigned. He had a good knowledge and understanding of what we did.

NSC has stated that it intends to employ a replacement, but as yet there is no timescale. In the meantime if you experience any problems with flooding, fly-tipping, highway issues we suggest you report them to Adam Wood the Area Officer at NSC on 01934 888 888 or adam.wood@n-somerset.gov.uk.

Peter Hughes

Travelling Abroad get your vaccinations locally

Day Lewis Pharmacy has teamed up with MASTA, a leading specialist in travel health, which means that you can get your travel vaccinations from the village pharmacy. The service offers a full travel vaccination programme, including yellow fever, malaria prophylaxis and treatment for travellers' diarrhoea.

To book your initial telephone consultation with a travel health nurse call MASTA on 0330 1004106 or go online to masta.travel-health.com/Partners/Day Lewis. This consultation costs £20. Ask to book an appointment with the Day Lewis Pharmacy in Congresbury where you will receive your travel injections and medication.

For more information contact Day Lewis Pharmacy in Broad Street or phone 01934 832062.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL SHOPS!

A lot is happening at the library this summer!

Do you remember Dennis, Nipper and Gnasher? They are helping to inspire children to use the library during the holidays by taking part in the **Summer Reading Challenge**. As part of the challenge the library is running a number of **craft sessions** on the following days:



- July 30** Make a Clay Gnasher
- August 6** Design a Super Hero Placemat
- August 13** Make a Frightening Fridge Magnet
- August 20** Grow a Dennis "Cress Head"

**From 2:30 – 4:30 pm. Suitable for children from age 3
FREE but booking is recommended**

Chess Club, for beginners and experienced players, will be starting in September. If you would like to take part please contact the library.

The popular **Jig-saw swap sessions** will re-start in September, taking place on the last Saturday of each month. The monthly sessions will continue until March 2019.

On Friday 28 September there will be a **Coffee Morning** in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support.

The talks in May and June were enjoyed by many so it has been decided to arrange some more. On Thursday 18 October Dr Aidan Dodson will give a talk on **'Tutankhamen: his life and afterlife'**. On 15 November Chris Day's talk entitled **'The Road to Waterloo'** will cover the highs and lows of a turbulent 12 months in European history in 1814. All talks start at 7:30pm. Tickets cost £3 and are only available from the library. To avoid disappointment make sure you get your ticket early!

For more information on any of the above call into the library, phone 01934 426 200 or visit the website www.congresbury-library.org.uk

Congresbury Community Library Management

Bluey Free Shopping Trips

2nd Tuesday in the month 9:30am to 2:30pm.

Pick up points: The Precinct & Riverside Car Park, Millennium Green, Congresbury.

14 August Gloucester Docks

11 September Cribbs Causeway

9 October Orchard Shopping Centre, Taunton

To book a seat or for information 01934 257247
or bookingmanagerbluey@gmail.com

Congresbury Community Transport – here for you