

AGM Report 2021-2022

Connecting Communities Forums

Bath and North East Somerset

Introduction

Our [Connecting Communities](#) programme is designed to help public services and local residents to work better together to address the issues and priorities of concern in the diverse localities within the local authority area.

The 'Connecting Communities' approach is built around five key principles:

- listen
- prioritise
- join-up
- work with you
- share ideas

To achieve this, the council has worked with partners, parishes and communities over many years to establish Area Forums to streamline and simplify local engagement. The current Forums are:

- [Bath Area Forum](#)
- [Bathavon Area Forum](#)
- [Chew Valley Area Forum](#)
- [Keynsham Area Forum](#)
- [Somerset Valley Forum](#)

The purpose of the Forums is to improve local engagement, foster communication and provide a mechanism for collaboration between local communities and organisations, Bath and North East Somerset Council and public bodies so local people receive better outcomes.

They achieve this in various ways, for example by

- Ensuring their residents and organisations' are key players in improving the quality of life in the area;
- Identifying common issues across the particular area and debating local priorities;
- Creating space for constructive suggestions for improvement in relation to local priorities;
- Shaping responses to the local priorities and where appropriate, co-delivering them;
- Influencing policy developments so as to enable or empower better outcomes for local people;
- Acting as a 'Champion' on behalf of the forum area.

The Bath Area Forums is attended by Bath residents, their ward councillors, and relevant local community groups, organisations, and senior representatives of the service providing and decision-making public bodies. All Forum meetings are open to anyone to attend at any time.

The agendas for Forum meetings are planned to include a time and context appropriate balance of items the council and its partners want to share or would like feedback on; items the Forum members themselves wish to discuss and opportunities for local organisations to share information and best practice.

The Forums are inclusive and provide grass roots engagement with residents and community organisations, not only for the council but also its partners such as the Police, Curo, health care providers etc. Feedback from the Forums plays a vital role in helping to shape local services. A 'one size fits all' approach does not always work in the diverse communities across our district which include very rural areas alongside a World Heritage City.

It's also important to recognise that the Forums are not defined by their meetings alone. The knowledge gained and shared, the contacts made and networks created all assist in strengthening our communities.

The Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Forums and the council's Community Engagement Team which supports the Forums, always welcome ideas for Agenda items and feedback on how to make the Forum as valuable to participants as possible (contact details for the team below).

2021-2022 Overview

The Forums continued to meet regularly by Zoom in 2021 and 2022. A table at Appendix 1 details the meetings that took place; the topics covered and the links to the meetings on our YouTube Channel.

The table at Appendix 2 details the Chairs and Vice Chairs for each Forum during the period, the officer contacts at B&NES for the Forums and the new Place Team leads for each Forum area.

Place Teams Initiative

Sophie Broadfield, Director of Sustainable Communities with the council, has established this internal means of:

- improving work planning
- ensuring consultation is more effective
- ensuring we listen to, and make use of, local knowledge
- identifying what local communities need

This has synergies with the role of the Forums and Sophie has assigned geographic areas based on the Forum boundaries to senior officers within her team to enable them, and the staff reporting to them, to improve their knowledge of these local areas.

Communications

The importance of receiving the latest information has never been more pertinent and we would encourage all Forum members to sign up to receive the [council's e-newsletter](#) to residents and the Connecting Communities Team's [Interagency e-bulletin](#) if they have not done so already. The council's [Newsroom](#) also contains its latest press releases.

The council's website has a ['have your say'](#) section, where you can find out about the latest consultations and other ways to contribute.

The council has its own [YouTube channel](#), where you can look back at a range of meetings and webinars, including Forum meetings. Also a page for forthcoming and archived [webinars](#).

Throughout the pandemic, Community Engagement Team has continued to hold regular [Interagency Meetings](#) which help community groups, charities and others to share information and to network. Again, these meetings are open to all and are currently virtual

The [Parish Liaison](#) meetings were also held, allowing parish representatives and council leaders to engage. Details of how Parish Liaison links to the Connecting Communities Forums can be found [here](#).

The key to the success of all the above are the people, like you, who participate and engage. We should like to thank you all for your valuable contributions to the Forums, your organisations and communities.

The Forum Chairs and Vice Chairs
and
B&NES Community Engagement Team

Connecting Communities Forum Meetings 2021-22

Forum	Date/Link to YouTube	Main Theme/Topics	Presentations
Bath	31st August 2021	Bath Governance	Other Area Forums Bath Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
	8th September 2021	Planning and Transport	Local Planning Portal WECA Transport Improvement Plan
	1st December 2021	Winter Pressures	Presentations from the Council and the BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group (now Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board) on the pressures they faced in winter 2021 and how residents can assist. Budget Update
	2nd February 2022	Youth Showcase	Youth Connect South West Bath Rugby Foundation Project 28 Boys in Mind
	16th June 2022	Making space for our city's nature recovery	The Place Teams Approach Grow Allotments Bath City Farm Transition Bath

			Guests from Ukraine in Bath and North East Somerset and support for them in the Bath Area
Bathavon	12 August 2021 (AGM)	Planning - Local Plan Partial Update/Supplementary Planning Document consultations	Bathavon Climate and Nature Group Update Public Health Update
	20 October 2021	Health and Wellbeing	A Bioregional approach to the climate emergency Village Agents in B&NES Community Wellbeing Hub Age UK 3 Valleys Health Primary Care Network
	24 November 2021	Winter Pressures	Presentations from the Council and the BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group (now Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board) on the pressures they faced in winter 2021 and how residents can assist. Budget Update Bathavon TORs Bathavon Climate and Nature Group Update
	8 February 2022	Bathavon Issues	Transport Village Agents Bathavon Climate and Nature Group Update

	22 June 2022	Planning Policy	Bathavon Climate and Nature Group Update Guests from Ukraine in Bath and North East Somerset and support for them in the Bathavon Area
Chew Valley Area	26 July 2021 (AGM)	Climate Emergency	Chew Valley Climate and Nature Emergency Working Group Local Plan Partial Update/Supplementary Planning Document consultations
	7 October 2021	Health & Wellbeing (joint meeting with Somer Valley Forum)	Three Valleys Health Primary Care Network Virgin Care (now HCRG) Age UK BANES The West of England Rural Network Village Agents
	23 November 2021	Winter Pressures	Presentations from the Council and the BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group (now Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board) on the pressures they faced in winter 2021 and how residents can assist.
	28 February 2022	The Impact of Financial Stress - Supporting Our Communities Climate Emergency	Citizens' Advice BANES Welfare Support, B&NES Chew Valley Climate and Nature Emergency Working Group The potential to use Parish Online to support Climate and Nature Emergency action plans.

	14 June 2022	No theme	<p>Guests from Ukraine in Bath and North East Somerset and support for them in the Chew Valley Area.</p> <p>Place Teams initiative, B&NES</p> <p>Three Valleys Health Primary Care Network Enhanced Access Plan.</p>
Keynsham Area	19 August 2021 (AGM)	Planning, Transport and Economic Regeneration	<p>Local Plan Partial Update and Supplementary Planning Document</p> <p>WECA - Bristol to Bath Corridor</p> <p>Keynsham High Street Regeneration</p>
	30 November 2021	Winter Pressures	<p>Presentations from the Council and the BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group (now Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board) on the pressures they faced in winter 2021 and how residents can assist.</p>
	17 February 2022	The Impact of Financial Stress - Supporting Our Communities	<p>Gamcare</p> <p>Citizens' Advice BANES</p> <p>B&NES Welfare Support</p> <p>Great Western Credit Union</p> <p>Stop Loan Sharks</p>
	23 June 2022		<p>Update on Keynsham High Street</p> <p>Guests from Ukraine in Bath and North East Somerset and support for them in the Keynsham Area.</p>

			Place Teams initiative, B&NES Keynsham Recycling Hub and Community Engagement programme, B&NES and Farrans
Somer Valley	7 September 2021 (AGM)	Planning, Transport and Economic Regeneration	Local Plan Partial Update and Supplementary Planning Document Midsomer Norton Heritage Action Zone Somer Valley Enterprise Zone Somer Valley Economic Implementation and Recovery Plan WECA - A37/A367
	7 October 2021	Health & Wellbeing (joint meeting with Chew Valley Area Forum)	Three Valleys Health Primary Care Network Virgin Care (now HCRG) Age UK BANES The West of England Rural Network Village Agents
	25 November 2021	Winter Pressures	Presentations from the Council and the BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group (now Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board) on the pressures they faced in winter 2021 and how residents can assist.
	3 March 2022	Somer Valley Rediscovered and Green Social Prescribing.	Somer Valley Rediscovered. Active Travel Social Prescribing Pilot for the Somer Valley.

			<p>Wellbeing College and Outdoor Networks.</p> <p>Work to restore the Somersetshire Coal Canal.</p>
	<p>15 June 2022</p>	<p>No theme</p>	<p>Guests from Ukraine in Bath and North East Somerset and support for them in the Somer Valley Area.</p> <p>Place Teams initiative, B&NES</p> <p>Three Valleys Health Primary Care Network Enhanced Access Plan.</p> <p>Somer Valley Enterprise Zone</p>

Key Contacts

Forum	Chair and Vice Chair 2020-21	B&NES Officer Support
Bath Area	Chair: Nicolette Boater Vice Chair: Vacant	<p>Mark Hayward – Community Engagement Officer Tel: (01225) 396975 Email: mark_hayward@bathnes.gov.uk</p> <p>Dave Dixon – Community Engagement Manager Tel: (01225) 396532 Email: dave_dixon@bathnes.gov.uk</p> <p>Place Team Leads:</p> <p>Simon Martin (Director of Regeneration and Housing) and Cleo Newcombe-Jones (Regeneration Team Manager)</p>
Bathavon Area	Chair: Cllr John Adler Vice Chair: Vacant	<p>Mark Hayward – Community Engagement Officer Tel: (01225) 396975 Email: mark_hayward@bathnes.gov.uk</p> <p>Dave Dixon – Community Engagement Manager Tel: (01225) 396532 Email: dave_dixon@bathnes.gov.uk</p> <p>Place Team Lead: Louise Morris (Head of Green Transformation – job share)</p>
Chew Valley Area	Chair: Chris Head Vice Chair: Cllr Heather Clewett	<p>Alison Wells – Community Engagement Officer Tel: (01225) 396539 Email: alison_wells@bathnes.gov.uk</p> <p>Sara Dixon – Locality Manager Tel: (01225) 396594 Email: sara_dixon@bathnes.gov.uk</p>

		Place Team Lead: Jackie Clayton (Head of Green Transformation – job share)
Keynsham Area	Chair: Cllr Alan Hale Vice Chair: Adrian Inker	Alison Wells – Community Engagement Officer Tel: (01225) 396539 Email: alison_wells@bathnes.gov.uk Sara Dixon – Locality Manager Tel: (01225) 396594 Email: sara_dixon@bathnes.gov.uk Place Team Lead: Pam Turton (Head of Transport Strategy)
Somer Valley	Chair: Lynda Robertson Vice Chair: Cllr Ron Hopkins	Alison Wells – Community Engagement Officer Tel: (01225) 396539 Email: alison_wells@bathnes.gov.uk Sara Dixon – Locality Manager Tel: (01225) 396594 Email: sara_dixon@bathnes.gov.uk Place Team Lead: Simon de Beer (Head of Planning)