



Climate Adaptation Plan



**WELLS
2025**

Funded by
Somerset
Rivers Authority

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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:

- 1 Improving and increasing green spaces**
- 2 Reducing flooding risks**
- 3 Encouraging community-driven climate action**
- 4 Co-ordinating emergency plans**

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 from the workshop and consultations
- 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:
Wells City Council - reception@wells.gov.uk**

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 extreme weather events such as flooding, extreme heat, droughts and wildfires are all likely to occur more frequently 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 Wells City Council, Sustainable Wells and Wells Environment Network (WEN), we have developed a locally tailored Climate Adaptation Plan for Wells. Wells City Council will host this community-driven plan, which is a collaboration between organisations and individuals. This plan is a guide of suggested adaptations that would help Wells become more climate resilient.



Beginning with a Climate Adaptation Workshop event at [Wells Town Hall](#), the '[Act to Adapt](#)' process has brought together residents, community groups, councillors and Somerset Wildlife Trust's [Climate Adaptation](#) 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 [Climate Adaptation Toolkit](#) for communities

This plan shares the key themes and priority adaptation actions chosen by residents through workshops and consultations, 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.



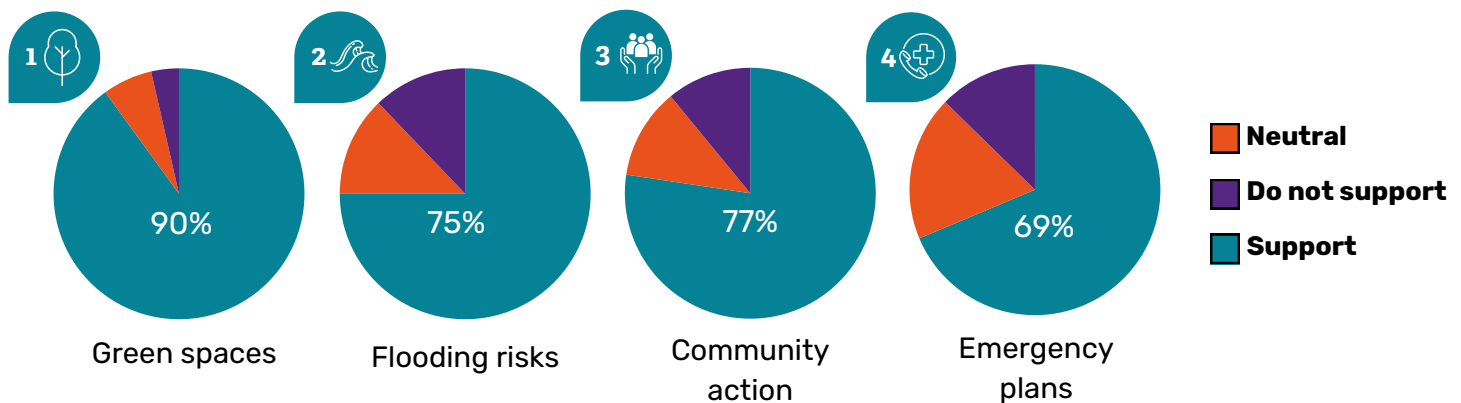
SHAPING WELLS' PLAN

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 reflected the needs and priorities of Wells, we organised a consultation period to gather feedback on the existing priorities and ideas for new adaptation actions from more residents.



In November 2024, we held two in-person consultations where residents learned more about climate adaptation, read the draft plan and helped shape the full plan by sharing their ideas. For those unable to attend these events, we also had an online survey and opportunities to provide more detailed feedback by email.

144 respondents (1.3% of Wells population) also provided feedback on how strongly they **support** each priority:



Survey respondents reported which of the adaptation priority areas they felt were most important for Wells. In order from most to least important, these were:

1. Improving and increasing green spaces (36%)
2. Reducing flooding risks (27%)
3. Encouraging community-driven climate action (26%)
4. Co-ordinating emergency plans (5%)
5. Other (6%)

See Appendix I for more information about consultation responses.

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 at reception@wells.gov.uk

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 - Identify and protect existing trees



| Where: | When: | Who: |
|---|---------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Green spaces owned by Somerset Council or Wells City Council• Trees in conservation area• Local notable trees - some identified by Woodland Trust | By 2030 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wells City Council• Somerset Council• Woodland Trust• National Trust• Somerset Wildlife Trust (SWT) |

How:

Map trees with existing protection orders: Identifying and recording protected trees helps ensure their preservation while guiding future planting strategies. By mapping trees with Tree Preservation Orders, veteran and ancient trees and those in Conservation Areas, the community can better protect these valuable assets and plan complementary planting that enhances existing tree coverage.

Survey and prioritise trees for protection: Work with local arborists, ecologists, schools/colleges and community groups to conduct a tree survey across the parishes. Identify trees with high ecological, historical or cultural value, such as veteran trees, habitat-rich species or those providing flood resilience.

Raise awareness among communities: Launch educational campaigns to inform residents about the importance of tree protection for climate adaptation, biodiversity and flood mitigation. Organise workshops for parish councils and community groups to explain the Tree Protection Order process. Develop an easy mechanism, such as an online form or helpline, for community members to nominate trees for protection.

Build community and volunteer networks: Recruit volunteers to monitor tree health and report threats. Launch or take part in a citizen science project to map and monitor trees across the parishes. Encourage community members to contribute to ongoing data collection and tree maintenance efforts.

Monitor and review: Conduct regular progress reviews and update the tree inventory to reflect any changes. Share success stories and progress updates with the community to maintain engagement and support for the initiative.



Useful links:

1. [Managing and caring for trees - Tree Council](#)
2. [Tree Preservation Orders - GOV.UK](#)
3. [Tree Preservation Orders - Historic England](#)
4. [British trees - Woodland Trust](#)
5. [Somerset Tree Strategy - Somerset Council](#)

1.2 - Increase tree planting throughout Wells



| Where: | When: | Who: |
|--|---------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Land managed or owned by Wells City Council / Somerset Council following appropriate assessment• Tor Lane• Appropriate streets | By 2030 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wells City Council• Woodland Trust• Reimagining the levels• Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA)• Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG)• Somerset Council• Volunteers• Local businesses• Historic England |

How:

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

Develop a planting plan: Create a 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' 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 greater public awareness for 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: Develop volunteer tree wardens to work alongside partner organisations to 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.



Useful links:

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



1.3 - Incentivise tree planting



| When: | Who: |
|---------|--|
| By 2030 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Woodland Trust• Tree Council• Reimagining the Levels• Wells City Council• Somerset Council• Westbury-sub-Mendip Parish Community Tree Nursery |

How:

Explore Funding Opportunities: Research funding opportunities by regularly scanning for grants and schemes related to tree planting from government bodies, charitable trusts and corporate social responsibility programmes (for example Woodland Trust, Tree Council Branching Out Fund, the Orchards for Schools programme, the Network Rail Community Tree Planting Fund and Reimagining the Levels). Maintain a calendar of application deadlines to ensure submission windows aren't missed.

Develop Compelling Funding Proposals: Develop compelling funding proposals that clearly demonstrate the benefits of green initiatives in Wells. Include specific data on environmental impact, community engagement plans and the long-term sustainability of projects to strengthen your applications.

Organise Community Fundraising Events: Organise community fundraising events specifically aimed at supporting green initiatives. These events serve the dual purpose of raising necessary funds while increasing awareness and building community support for tree planting efforts.

Work Toward Tree Planting Goals: Work closely with the Somerset Tree Strategy by tracking your planting initiatives through the Somerset Tree Planting Register. This documentation helps Somerset Council celebrate collective efforts and supports future funding opportunities, while also establishing clear responsibility for the planning aspects of tree initiatives.

Planning Application Integration: When reviewing planning applications, take an active role in advocating for more trees incorporated into plans. Emphasise how trees enhance property values, local biodiversity, climate resilience and community wellbeing. This proactive approach helps integrate green infrastructure from the earliest planning stages.

Media Engagement: Engage local media by creating press releases about tree planting initiatives. Feature community involvement, environmental impacts and encourage public participation in upcoming projects. Highlight cooling effects in summer, improved drainage and flood prevention, enhanced biodiversity, mental health benefits, air quality improvements and carbon sequestration.



Useful links:

1. [Climate and emergency funding and grants | Somerset Council](#)
2. [Free trees for schools and communities | Woodland Trust](#)
3. [Our grants | The Tree Council](#)
4. [Reimagining the Levels](#)
5. [Root for Somerset | Somerset Council](#)

1.4 - Provide easy access to tree planting advice



| Where: | When: | Who: |
|---|---------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Wells Town Hall ◦ Local libraries ◦ Farmers' markets ◦ Local events ◦ Portway Annexe • Online communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Community websites ◦ Wells City Council website ◦ Wells Environmental Network website ◦ Social media ◦ Email newsletters ◦ Forums and groups ◦ Local news websites ◦ WhatsApp | By 2027 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wells City Council • Wells Environment Network (WEN) • Wells Community Network • Privately owned tree and garden nurseries • Westbury-sub-Mendip Parish Community Tree Nursery • Woodland Trust • Wells & District Wildlife Group • Chew Valley Trees • Sustainable Wells • Scouts & Beavers |

How:

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 a link to the Somerset Tree Strategy. 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: Work with schools' educational programmes to teach about tree planting, such as through biology/science classes. Set up tree planting days at local schools that involve and educate children and families.



Useful links:

1. [Tree planting advice | Woodland Trust](#)
2. [Managing and caring for trees | Tree Council](#)
3. [City of Wells, connecting communities group | Facebook](#)
4. [Wells Environment Network](#)

1.5 - Develop climate resilient management options



| Where: | When: | Who: |
|---|---------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Land owned or managed by Wells City Council / Somerset Council following appropriate assessment• Private land with supportive ownership• Churches | By 2030 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wells City Council• Wells Environment Network (WEN)• Wells Community Network• Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA)• Reimagining the Levels• Somerset Prepared• Bishops Palace• Wells Cathedral |

How:

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 climate resilient management.

Explore Wilder Churches: Use resources from Wilder Churches (link provided below), which is a partnership initiative between Somerset Wildlife Trust and the Diocese of Bath and Wells. Through Wilder Churches create a wildlife management plan and utilise poster templates to promote wildlife to the public.

Introduce an effective communications strategy: Use venues such as the Wells Town Hall, partner organisations' venues, Wells City Council venues and local events such as farmer's markets to educate locals on the available climate resilient management options, in addition to promoting online. Promote ongoing land management, adding advice on how to get involved on both the community and individual levels.

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

Integrate climate considerations: Wells City Council and other organisations will look to develop strategies and practices that integrate climate considerations into all green space decisions and operations, focusing on sustainable maintenance practices, drought-resistant plantings, reduced mowing and natural flood management techniques. Collaborating with local nurseries to increase the accessibility of these species.

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.

Collaborate with community groups for climate awareness: Work with partner organisations which currently host regular nature events, combining talks with social networking. Build on new partnerships within the Voluntary Sector, e.g. WI, Rotary, Lions, WCN, U3A, to organise workshops on sustainable living.



Useful links:

1. [Wells u3a](#)
2. [Community flood action fund](#) | [Somerset Rivers Authority](#)
3. [Reimagining the Levels](#)
4. [Wilder Churches - Somerset Wildlife Trust](#)
5. [Futureproofing green spaces for climate resilience PDF](#) | [University of the West of England Bristol](#)



1.5 - Promote nature-based solutions for individuals



| Where: | When: | Who: |
|---|----------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal properties; locals with gardens. | <p>By 2027</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wells City Council Individuals Wells Environment Network (WEN) Wells Community Network Somerset Wildlife Trust (SWT) |

How:

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 church halls, Wells City Council venues or partner with local garden centres. Collaborate with Team Wilder (teamwilder@somersetwildlife.org) to include sessions on creating small ponds and choosing the best native plants for pollinators.

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.

Connect with Eco Week and Team Wilder: Coordinate with Eco Week events and Team Wilder initiatives to promote individual action on nature-based solutions, using these established platforms to reach wider audiences and inspire personal climate adaptation measures.

Transform public recreation spaces: Work with Wells City Council outdoor spaces team to incorporate demonstration areas of nature-based solutions in public spaces, creating educational corners with QR codes that explain the features and their climate benefits when scanned by visitors.

Revise Wells in Bloom: Develop Wells in Bloom initiative to encourage participants to incorporate climate-adaptive and wildlife-friendly features in their displays, helping to shift the focus toward sustainable and resilient planting schemes while maintaining aesthetic appeal.

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.

Useful links:

1. [Team Wiler | Somerset Wildlife Trust](#)
2. [Wells in Bloom | Wells City Council](#)
3. [No May Mow | Plantlife](#)
4. [Plants for a living wall | Gardeners World](#)



1.6 - Promote nature-based solutions for community groups



| When: | Who: |
|---------|---|
| By 2027 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wells Environment Network (WEN) • Wells Community Network • Sustainable Wells • Women's Institute (WI) • Wells u3a • Reimagining the Levels • Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) • Somerset Prepared • Wells Rotary • Wells Civic Society |

How:

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: WEN to host network events to share good practices and support community awareness and partnership working. WEN to set up community events to focus on nature and climate and encourage social interaction.

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.

Develop community-led green spaces: Work collaboratively with Sustainable Wells and community partners to create and maintain demonstration sites for nature-based solutions, such as developing a small garden at Portway Annexe and establishing wilder verges along Tor Lane. Use these visible projects to showcase practical examples of climate adaptation that enhance biodiversity while providing community benefits and educational opportunities.

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.



Useful links:

1. [Working with community groups | National Lottery Community](#)
2. [Wells u3a](#)
3. [Community flood action fund | Somerset Rivers Authority](#)
4. [Reimagining the Levels](#)
5. [Wells Environment Network](#)



1.7 - Promote nature-based solutions for schools



| When: | Who: |
|---------|---|
| By 2030 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wells Cathedral School• St Joseph and St Teresa Catholic Primary School• St Cuthbert's CofE Junior• Stoberry Park School• The Blue School• Local Community Network Schools• Wells Environment Network (WEN)• Bishops Palace• Somerset Council• Somerset Wildlife Trust (SWT) |

How:

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: Engage 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 Wells Town Hall.

Organise climate workshops for schools around Wells: The program would encourage collaboration between schools, adapt to seasonal changes, and empower students to develop their own climate initiatives. The aim of this would be to create a community-wide understanding of climate issues specific to the Wells area, fostering environmental stewardship among the region's youth.

Build on school engagement sessions: Encourage schools to utilise training sessions provided by the Bishops Palace. Work with environmental organisations such as SWT Team Wilder to work with schools to integrate a nature-based approach to learning within the curriculum needs of students. 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. Work with teachers of local schools to set up students' ecocouncils where requested.

Revise Wells in Bloom: Use Wells in Bloom initiative to create special school-focused projects that engage students in planting and maintaining gardens on school grounds. This partnership can provide resources, expertise and community recognition for schools' greening efforts while teaching students practical skills in horticulture and ecosystem management.

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.



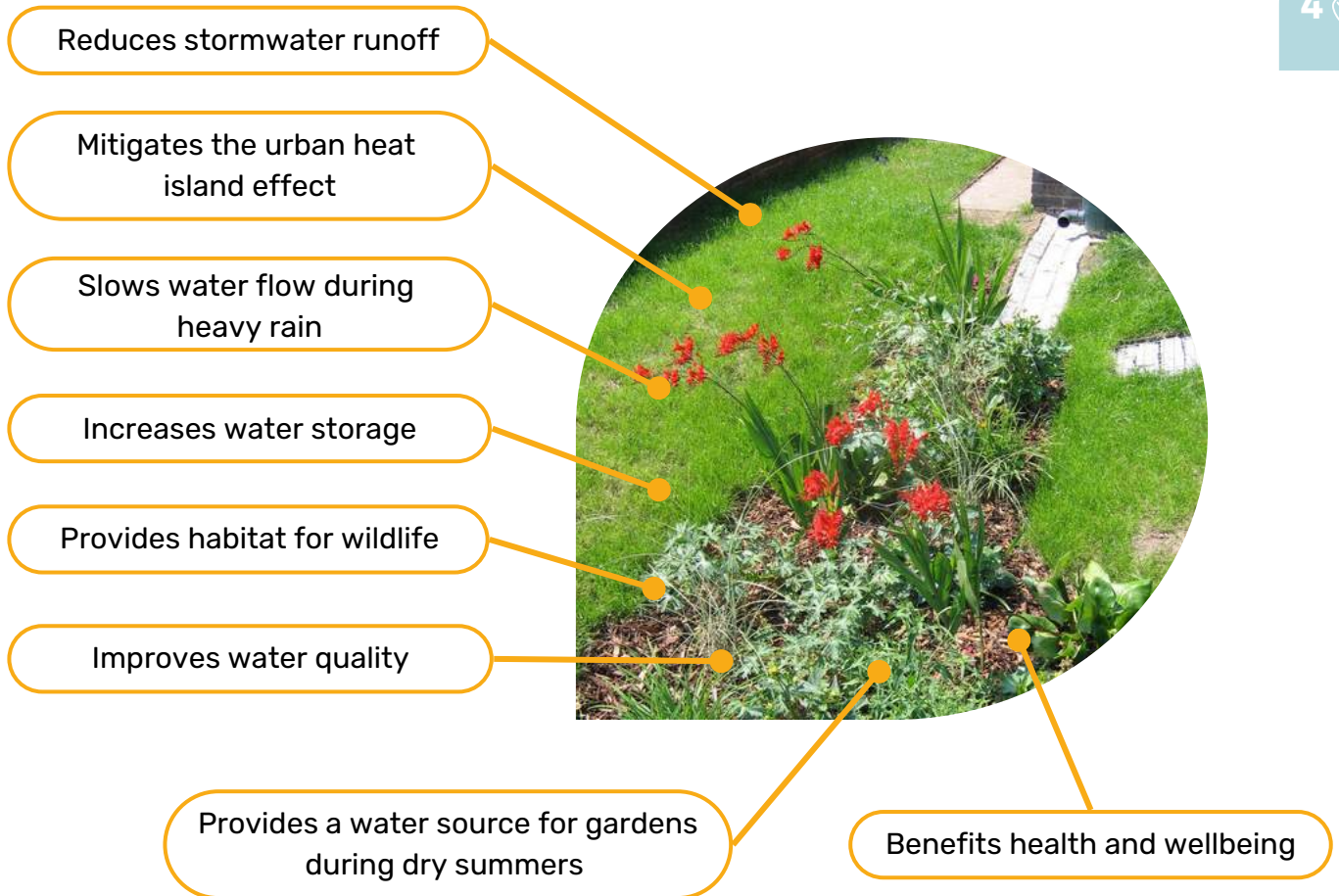
Useful links:

1. [Free trees for schools and communities | Woodland Trust](#)
2. [School gardening | Royal Horticultural Society](#)
3. [Education is key to addressing climate change | United Nations](#)
4. [Organisations that can help you take action | Let's Go Zero](#)
5. [Get inspired: schools responding to the climate change challenge | Government website](#)
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: |
|---|--------------------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Tor Hill Lane | <p>By 2030</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Somerset Drainage Board ConsortiumSomerset CouncilSomerset Highways |

How:

Promote reporting channels: Actively encourage residents to report drain and gully issues through official channels using the Somerset Council reporting system. Create simple guidance on how to effectively report problems, including what information is most useful to include.

Establish a Drain Warden scheme: Develop a network of community volunteers who are trained to identify and report drainage issues throughout Wells. Equip these Drain Wardens with basic knowledge to spot potential problems before they cause flooding and create a clear pathway for them to report concerns to the relevant authorities.

Establish a regular clearing schedule: Implement a routine maintenance schedule for clearing blocked drains, with increased frequency for high-risk areas. 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.

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.

Educate riparian landowners on their responsibilities: Distribute clear guidance on waterway maintenance responsibilities to adjacent landowners. Include information on debris clearance, vegetation management and maintaining water flow. Host targeted sessions to build understanding and create a simple system for landowners to report completed maintenance or issues requiring assistance.

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.



Useful links:

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 and maintenance



| Where: | When: | Who: |
|--|---------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schools• Individual gardens• Mendip Hospital Cemetery• Churches• Residential homes | By 2027 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wells City Council• Wells District and Wildlife group• Somerset Drainage Board Consortium• Sustainable Wells• Somerset Council• Somerset Prepared• Communities Prepared |

Why:

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 community / church halls or Wells City Centre venues or partner with local garden centres and collaborate with Team Wilder (teamwilder@somersetwildlife.org).

Incorporate educational activities: Establish regular nature events including flora and fauna identification and pond dipping. Encourage local groups and schools to take part in designing and continuing regular 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.

Support Pond Maintenance: Establish a regular maintenance schedule for ponds including debris removal, vegetation management and sediment control. Provide training for volunteers on proper techniques to maintain water quality and wildlife habitat. Monitor invasive species and water levels seasonally. Create a community-based reporting system to quickly address issues as they arise.



Useful links:

1. [How to build a pond | The Wildlife Trusts](#)
2. [How to build a pond | Water-Garden](#)
3. [Pond creation toolkit | Freshwater Habitats Trust](#)



2.3 - Install water butts on public buildings



| Where: | When: | Who: |
|--|----------------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Council properties where appropriate • Community buildings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Church halls ◦ Tramways ◦ Bowling green shed ◦ Football grounds ◦ Wells library | <p>By 2030</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wells City Council • Somerset Drainage Board Consortium • Somerset Council • Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) • National Trust • Wells Recreation Trust • Somerset Wildlife Trust (SWT) • Sustainable Wells • Wessex Water |

Why:

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.

Support Volunteers in Installation: Recruit and train volunteers to form a water butt installation team. Provide workshops on proper installation techniques, including downpipe connection and overflow management. Create a scheduling system for coordinated installation days, with experienced volunteers mentoring newcomers.



Useful links:

1. [How to install a water butt | B&Q outdoor & garden](#)
2. [Retrofitting a water butt for storm water attenuation | Slow the Flow](#)
3. [Useful information about Somerset flooding | Somerset Rivers Authority](#)
4. [Wells Repair Cafe](#)

2.4 - Encourage water butts for personal properties



| Where: | When: | Who: |
|--|---------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Private residences | By 2027 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Wells City CouncilSomerset CouncilSomerset Rivers Authority (SRA)Somerset PreparedCommunities PreparedWells Repair CafeWessex WaterSustainable WellsLionsRotary |

Why:

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 personal properties 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 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. Sustainable Wells hope to use connections to run a campaign. For further information on Somerset flooding, the Somerset Rivers Authority have provided details [here](#).

Arrange installation support: Work with local volunteer groups like the Sustainable Wells, Lions and Rotary 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. [Retrofitting a water butt for storm water attenuation | Slow the Flow](#)
3. [Useful Information about Somerset flooding. | Somerset Rivers Authority](#)
4. [Wells Repair Cafe | Sustainable Wells](#)



2.5 - Advocate for permeable paving in landscaping



| Where: | When: | Who: |
|--|--------------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Private residences | <p>By 2027</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Wells City CouncilSomerset CouncilSomerset Rivers Authority (SRA)Somerset PreparedCommunities Prepared |

Why:

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 plan for implementing Sustainable 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.

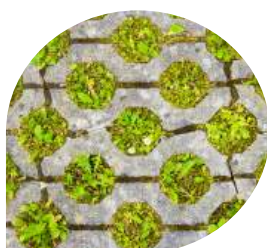
Encourage permeable paving: Develop resources promoting the use of permeable paving. Create an information pack for developers, businesses and homeowners on permeable paving options and their benefits. Consider offering incentives for retrofitting existing impermeable surfaces with permeable alternatives.

Target new builds for SuDS: Collaborate with the planning department to require planning applications to meet or exceed SuDS requirements. 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.



Useful links:

1. [Permeable paving](#) | [PavingExpert](#)
2. [Sustainable Drainage Systems \(SuDS\)](#) | [Susdrain](#)

2.6 - Slow the flow in upper catchments



| Where: | When: | Who: |
|--|--------------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private residences • Wells Golf Club • Tor Hill Lane • Local landowners | <p>By 2030</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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) • Wells and Rural Local Community Network • St. Cuthbert Out Parish Council |

How:

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. Working on these plans with the surrounding parishes in the upper catchments through talks, presentations, roadshows, social media and website links.

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. Working in partnership on 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 Somerset 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.



Useful links:

1. [Help us create more river woodland | Woodland Trust](#)
2. [Slow the Flow | Shropshire Wildlife Trust case study](#)
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: |
|--|----------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Person Communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Wells Town Hall ◦ Local libraries ◦ Farmers' markets ◦ Local events ◦ Local publications ◦ Local markets • Online communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Community websites ◦ Social media platforms ◦ Email newsletters ◦ Online forums and groups ◦ Local news websites ◦ WhatsApp | <p>By 2027</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wells City Council • Wells Community Network • Wells Environment Network (WEN) • Wells & District Wildlife Group • Sustainable Wells • Lions • Wells Rotary Club • Women's Institute • Scouts • Wells Community Shed • Wells Civic Society • YMCA • Wells Community Shed • Business Leaders |

How:

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.



Useful links:

1. [Sustainable Wells](#)
2. [Wells Environment Network](#)
3. [Wells Community Network](#)
4. [Team Wilder | Somerset Wildlife Trust](#)
5. [Recruiting volunteers | NCVO](#)
6. [Keeping volunteers | NCVO](#)
7. [Creating feedback loops | Community Psychology](#)

3.2 - Facilitate regular opportunities to raise climate awareness



| When: | Who: |
|---------|---|
| By 2027 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wells City Council• Wells Community Network• Wells Environment Network (WEN)• Sustainable Wells• Wells Market |

How:

Use WEN to facilitate networking: Form a collaborative team across the Wells City Council, a voluntary organisation such as Sustainable Wells and other city organisations and businesses to coordinate the regular engagement with the public. Work with Wells City Council and WEN groups to maintain a consistent presence at Wells Market, leveraging their existing connections and expertise in local environmental issues. This centralised approach ensures consistent messaging and shared resources.

Create a regular market space: There is a current offer of stalls available to community/charity groups, on a once a month basis, particularly utilising the space under the portico of the town hall, which offers protection from weather and high visibility to market visitors.

Establish a museum display: Partner with Wells Museum to create a dedicated climate adaptation exhibit in the Lecture Room, leveraging the space's existing popularity with environmental groups like the Wells Wildlife Group.

Implement Climate Action Days: Schedule community volunteering sessions focusing on simple climate-positive tasks that require no prior experience, building community through shared refreshments afterward and celebrating collective impact in Wells Voice magazine.

Design an engaging resources: Create an eye-catching display using existing banners and materials from all organisations. Design simple, reusable infographics about local climate impacts and solutions. Develop interactive elements like climate quizzes, pledge cards and conversation starter prompts to help volunteers initiate discussions. Create a portable, shared kit with essential items stored centrally for easy volunteer access.

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.

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.



Useful links:

1. [Principles for effective communication and public engagement on climate change](#) | [Climate Outreach](#)
2. [Better conversations about climate change](#) | [Rumie Learn](#)
3. [Effective and Inviting climate communication](#) | [Rare](#)
4. [Public engagement on climate](#) | [Involve](#)



3.3 - Partner with educational institutions



| When: | Who: |
|---------|---|
| By 2030 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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) |

How:

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

Promote classroom-ready resources: Share existing resources between organisations to create lesson plans, worksheets and presentation materials that teachers can easily implement.

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: Promote 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: Communicate 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 where possible. 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.



Useful links:

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

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



| When: | Who: |
|---------|--|
| By 2030 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wells City Council• Wells Community Network• Wells Environment Network (WEN)• Somerset Council• Local MPs• Wells Cathedral• Bishops Palace• Wells and Rural LCN |

How:

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. 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.

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.

Develop an institutional engagement program: Create a structured approach to partner with high-profile local institutions like Wells Cathedral and the Bishop's Palace to implement and showcase climate adaptation measures.

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

Establish permanent agenda presence: Work to make climate adaptation a standing item on the agenda at council meetings, ensuring consistent attention and preventing climate issues from being overlooked during busy periods.

Influence planning processes: Actively feed climate adaptation priorities into the Local Plan development process, providing evidence-based recommendations that strengthen ecological resilience and community climate preparedness. Present additional climate adaptation strategies at neighbourhood plan meetings to strengthen existing measures, focusing on locally-relevant solutions that build upon current provisions and increase community resilience.

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. 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.



Useful links:

1. [Contact your MP | UK Parliament](#)
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 community emergency action plan for Wells



| When: | Who: |
|---------|--|
| By 2027 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wells City Council• Somerset Council• Centre for Sustainable Energy• Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA)• Somerset Prepared• Communities Prepared• Police• Fire services• U3A• Age UK• St John Ambulance• Wells Community Network |

How:

Establish a community emergency working group: Form a coordinated team across the Wells City Council and other groups to develop preventive and responsive measures for both flood and drought events. Wells City Council will support the Somerset Council Flood and Drought Action Plans and adapt responses to Wells' local level. We recognise our role in recovery, which will be incorporated into the Wells City Council emergency plan currently under development. This centralised approach ensures comprehensive local knowledge and shared responsibility.

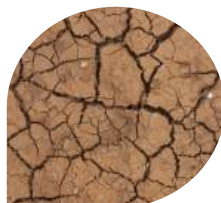
Map vulnerability zones: Use existing local knowledge, Environment Agency data and water company information to identify high-risk areas for both flooding and drought/wildfire. Create simple maps showing vulnerable areas, drainage points, water sources and access routes. Share this information across partner organisations to build a complete picture of local risks.

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

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

Establish monitoring systems: Organise volunteer monitoring of known risk areas during extreme weather conditions. Create a simple reporting system using existing communication channels to alert relevant authorities and local residents of developing situations, whether flooding or water scarcity.

Coordinate with authorities: Maintain regular contact with the Environment Agency, Fire Service, emergency services, water companies and local authorities. Share the community resilience plan through established channels and integrate it with wider emergency planning at county level.



Useful links:

1. [Flood risk maps | Government website](#)
2. [Preparing for flooding | Somerset County Council](#)
3. [Flood resilience measures | Somerset Rivers Authority](#)
4. [Flood planning template | Government website](#)
5. [Wildfire risk and management | Government website](#)
6. [Drought and water scarcity | Environment Agency](#)
7. [Preparing for flooding | Age UK](#)



4.2 - Work with surrounding parishes on flood planning



| When: | Who: |
|---------|--|
| By 2027 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wells City Council• Wells Community Network• Wells Environment Network (WEN)• Wells and Rural - Local Community Networks• St Cuthbert Out Parish Council |

How:

Utilise parish networks: Form a coordinated support team across Wells City Council, Wells Community Network, Wells and Rural Local Community Network and WEN to work with neighbouring parishes. Share Flood Planning Templates - Wells and Rural LCN Flood Planning Templates to be developed and enable cross parish boundary coordinated planning. This centralised approach ensures consistent guidance and efficient resource sharing.

Develop 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.

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.



Useful links:

1. [Somerset emergency community contacts](#) | [Somerset Prepared](#)
2. [Rural flood resilience partnership](#) | [Government website](#)
3. [Improving flood resilience through community action](#) | [Scottish Flood Forum](#)
4. [Online community resilience hub](#) | [Communities Prepared](#)

4.3 -Support residents to create home emergency plans



| Where: | When: | Who: |
|---|---------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Person Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Wells Town Hall ◦ Local libraries ◦ Farmers' Markets ◦ Local events ◦ Local newspapers • Online Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Community Websites ◦ Social Media Platforms ◦ Email Newsletters ◦ Online Forums and Groups ◦ Local News Websites ◦ WhatsApp | By 2027 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wells City Council • Somerset Council • Wells Community Network • Wells Environment Network (WEN) • Wells & District Wildlife Group • Somerset River Authority (SRA) • Somerset Prepared • Rotary club |

How:

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 for 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.



Useful links:

1. [Home emergency plan](#) | [Somerset Prepared](#)
2. [Flood resilience measures](#) | [Somerset Rivers Authority](#)
3. [Emergency planning](#) | [Somerset County Council](#)
4. [Property flood resilience](#) | [Environment Agency](#)

4.4 - Communicate emergency plans



| Where: | When: | Who: |
|---|---------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Person Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Wells Town Hall ◦ Local libraries ◦ Farmers' markets ◦ Local events ◦ Local publications (Wells Voice) • Online communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Community websites ◦ Social media platforms ◦ Email newsletters ◦ Online forums and groups ◦ Local news websites ◦ WhatsApp | By 2027 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wells City Council • Somerset Council • Wells Community Network • Wells Environment Network (WEN) • Wells & District Wildlife Group • Sustainable Wells • Lions • Wells Rotary |

How:

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.

Distribute household emergency information leaflets: Create and distribute physical emergency information leaflets to all Wells households, similar to recycling guides, ensuring every resident knows what actions to take during flooding or other climate emergencies.

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.



Useful links:

1. [Emergency planning framework | GCS Civil Service](#)
2. [Resilient communications | Government website](#)
3. [Community resilience: Resources and Tools | Government website](#)
4. [Crisis communications: operating model | GCS Civil Service](#)
5. [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.



Acknowledgements

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 [Somerset Prepared](#) 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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Disclaimer

The links provided in this document are intended to serve as information and advice, and do not reflect a recommendation from Somerset Wildlife Trust, or our partners and funders, for particular companies, products or services.

Consultation responses to green spaces



Residents of Wells value their existing green spaces and wildlife but see opportunities for improvement. They support planting more trees, hedges and wildflowers, especially in housing estates and community orchards, like those near Charter Way. Concerns were raised about replacing felled trees and reducing bureaucracy around planting. Suggestions included requiring substantial tree planting in planning permissions and expanding green initiatives further. Several comments highlighted the Strawberry Line as a vital wildlife corridor and called for a ban on herbicides.

Concerns were expressed about the impact of housing developments on green spaces, advocating for protecting existing natural areas and mature trees, such as those on Priory Road. Recommendations ensured new developments integrate meaningful green spaces, wildlife habitats and recreation areas while also managing flooding risks. Some opposed excessive building, emphasising infrastructure needs, like schools and GPs. Others called for environmentally responsible planning, enforcing regulations, and considering alternatives to large housing estates on greenfield sites.



Improving access and facilities in green spaces could encourage greater community engagement and connection to nature. Residents raised the need for more public rights of way, better linking of pathways and cycle routes (e.g., between Wells and Cheddar) and recreational areas within green spaces. Enhanced play facilities for children and community gardening projects were also suggested. Furthermore, improved parking and public transport information, alongside accessible maps and signage, were highlighted as priorities.

Locals highlighted the importance of enhancing habitats to support wildlife in Wells. Ideas included designating additional nature reserves, planting pollinator-friendly species and involving schools and locals in these efforts. The value of private gardens, regardless of size, as critical spaces for wildlife and flood mitigation was emphasised. Areas like Haybridge were identified for potential development into natural meadows. Reduced mowing and rewilding were also recommended for protecting local biodiversity.



The need for effective management of green spaces in Wells, focusing on cleanliness, reduced mowing and community involvement was raised by locals. They advocated for less frequent mowing of verges and recreational areas, leaving natural and overgrown sections to benefit wildlife. Addressing issues like litter, dog waste and graffiti was recognised as essential, alongside improving footpaths and drainage. Encouraging locals to take ownership and care for nearby green spaces was also highlighted. Many anticipated improvements as WCC takes responsibility for maintaining these spaces.

Consultation responses to flooding risks



Community responses highlighted the importance of maintaining and upgrading drainage systems to reduce flooding risks. Suggestions included ensuring regular clearing and maintenance of drains, culverts and storm drains. Specific concerns were raised about blocked drains on major roads and the need for storm drains in areas like Priory Road. Community involvement in keeping drains clear was encouraged, with many noting that "a lot of last year's flooding was avoidable."

Residents expressed concerns about the impact of hard surfaces on flooding and water management. They called for reducing paved driveways and impermeable surfaces, particularly in new developments. Several comments specifically called for a ban on artificial grass and for planning constraints on non-permeable surfaces. The conversion of tarmacked front gardens into green spaces if not used for parking was also raised, as well as promoting water-permeable paving materials. Supporting efforts to reduce hard, impermeable surfaces in both residential areas and community spaces was viewed as important for better water absorption and flood mitigation.



The importance of raising public awareness about flooding risks and providing support to families was shown in multiple responses. They highlighted the value of expert input on watercourse management and fostering coordinated efforts among groups and landowners. While Wells is currently better positioned than many areas, preparing for climate-induced changes was deemed vital, with a focus on empowering communities through knowledge and action.

Effective maintenance and management of water systems emerged as critical priorities. Regular upkeep of riverbanks, litter removal and addressing blocked swallets were seen as essential steps to reduce flooding risks. Suggestions included upstream tree planting on the Mendips, reducing sheep numbers and restoring natural flood management practices. Positive feedback highlighted effective water management at sites like Bishop's Palace and Milton Lodge, with one resident noting that "Bishop's Palace management of water has been excellent to date."



Development should align with strategies to reduce flood risks. Avoiding construction on flood plains was a recurring theme, with an emphasis on preserving their natural purpose. Concerns were specifically raised about proposed development between Elm Close and Wookey potentially increasing flooding in the centre of Wookey. Residents noted Wells' vulnerability due to steep surrounding hillsides, with one comment highlighting that the A371 near Henley Lane "became a river twice last year." Several emphasized the need for ensuring developers provide adequate sewage infrastructure before construction begins.

Consultation responses to community action



From the surveys, the importance of community involvement in climate action was demonstrated. Key ideas included engaging schools, children's clubs and local institutions like the Cathedral and Palace to raise awareness and showcase climate initiatives. Respondents suggested "regular sessions at schools from infant school on" with "field trips and gardening sessions for children to encourage a love of the land." Both youth and older generations were seen as valuable contributors, with collaboration across all groups being essential for achieving meaningful progress.

Consultation responses highlighted community involvement in various initiatives. Suggestions included preserving agricultural land from development, promoting grants for solar panels and retrofitting insulation on public buildings. Tree planting along verges was encouraged, alongside using water from Bishop's Palace springs, including in the moat and down Silver Street, as part of local climate action efforts. Many respondents emphasized practical measures like "more cycle routes so reducing pollution from cars" and requiring "all new builds to have solar panels and heat pumps."



Residents raised the need for better communication and awareness. Examples included using local magazines, like Wells Voice, to share information, promote volunteer opportunities and update the community. Several suggested "more community events promoting ways to adapt our lives, homes and lifestyle." Some called for leadership, stating "devolving it to the community is passing the buck. Councils need to take control and lead by example," while others noted "it needs to be led by example. If the Council aren't shown to care, residents mirror that."

The consultation responses highlighted the importance of community groups in driving local climate action. Participants suggested coordinating efforts with organisations like WEN, Wells Civic Society, Sustainable Wells, YMCA and local wildlife groups. There was recognition of Wells City Council's role in "setting up Wells Environment Network to harness council, business, schools and volunteer groups to work together for community driven climate action." Some suggested a "climate festival day" to raise awareness and promote the benefits of climate action.



Concerns raised by locals included a sense that while communities can contribute, larger companies may be the main drivers of environmental issues. There was a call for clear, tangible actions in climate strategies, such as addressing increased flood risks and enhancing green spaces to mitigate urban heat and drought. Additionally, the need for preparedness for various flooding risks was recognised, along with encouraging individuals to avoid harmful gardening practices.

Consultation responses to emergency plans



Locals suggested creating an emergency flood messaging system, such as a phone alert system, to notify Wells residents of flood risks. Recommendations included improving housing, prevention and evacuation plans based on past experiences, particularly focusing on effective communication with vulnerable groups. Several specifically called for a web resource showing clearly which roads are flooded rather than relying on social media posts. There was strong support for establishing a dedicated contact number for flood-related concerns and integrating this information into existing local networks.

Responses indicated that the responsibility for developing emergency plans should primarily lie with the council. Others highlighted the importance of community involvement to ensure smooth implementation. Some noted that WCC is progressing a new Emergency Plan and is in communication with key voluntary organisations, while another suggested all responsible agencies must work to clearly communicate and agreed plans. Many recommended consulting with experienced individuals and incorporating input from community groups, alongside county and city councils, to create a comprehensive citywide plan.



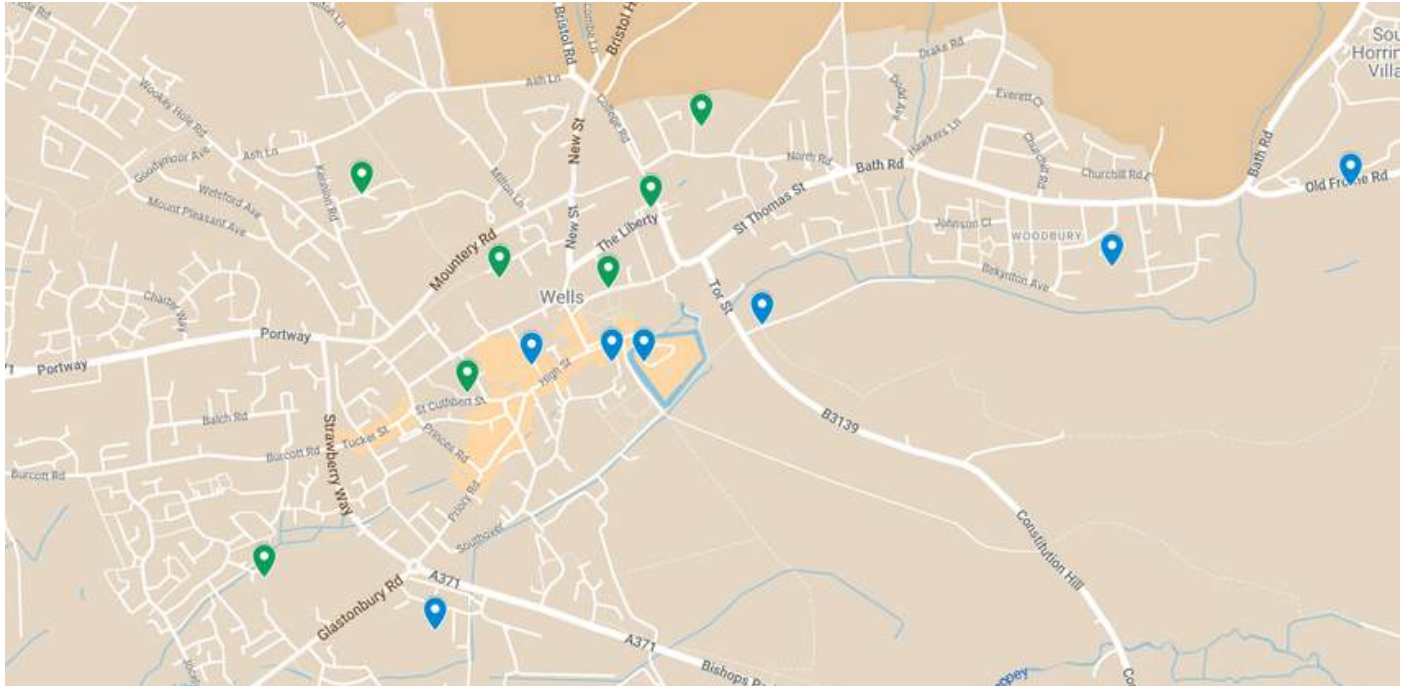
The consultation responses highlighted the need for improved awareness and communication regarding emergency plans. Many suggested using social media and email for better advertising and outreach, ensuring that plans are accessible and easily understood by everyone. Some called for information leaflets to all households similar to recycling guidance, while others emphasized the plan needs regular advertising and updates to be effective. The importance of educating the community on emergency actions was seen as essential.

Some felt that a clear and widely disseminated plan was essential, while others inquired about existing local bodies that could provide such information. There were questions about what emergencies the plans would address, with respondents asking what types of emergencies would be covered. The overall consensus was that effective communication is critical, with a focus on reaching all residents and making the plans easily accessible, understandable and actionable.





The consultation responses raised several concerns about emergency plans. Some felt that essential services like the police and hospital were too far away, potentially complicating response efforts, with calls to ensure emergency services are properly staffed. Others noted the need for a coordinating hub to process data quickly and an appointed leader to focus coordination efforts. There were also doubts about the practicality of implementing emergency plans, with some unsure of how they would work or how to contribute, highlighting the need for more urgency and clarity.

Adaptation Map



Areas suggested by residents:

-  Priority 1 - improving and increasing green spaces.
-  Priority 2 - reducing flooding risks.