



Your Local Community Network

**Avalon and
Poldens LCN**

Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Notes and actions from previous meeting
3. Avon and Somerset Police
4. Working group updates:
 - Health and Wellbeing working group
 - Community Transport
 - Highways
5. Next steps/Actions
6. AOB
 - Somerset Local plan engagement
7. Date and theme of next meeting

Notes and actions from previous meeting

Table of Actions

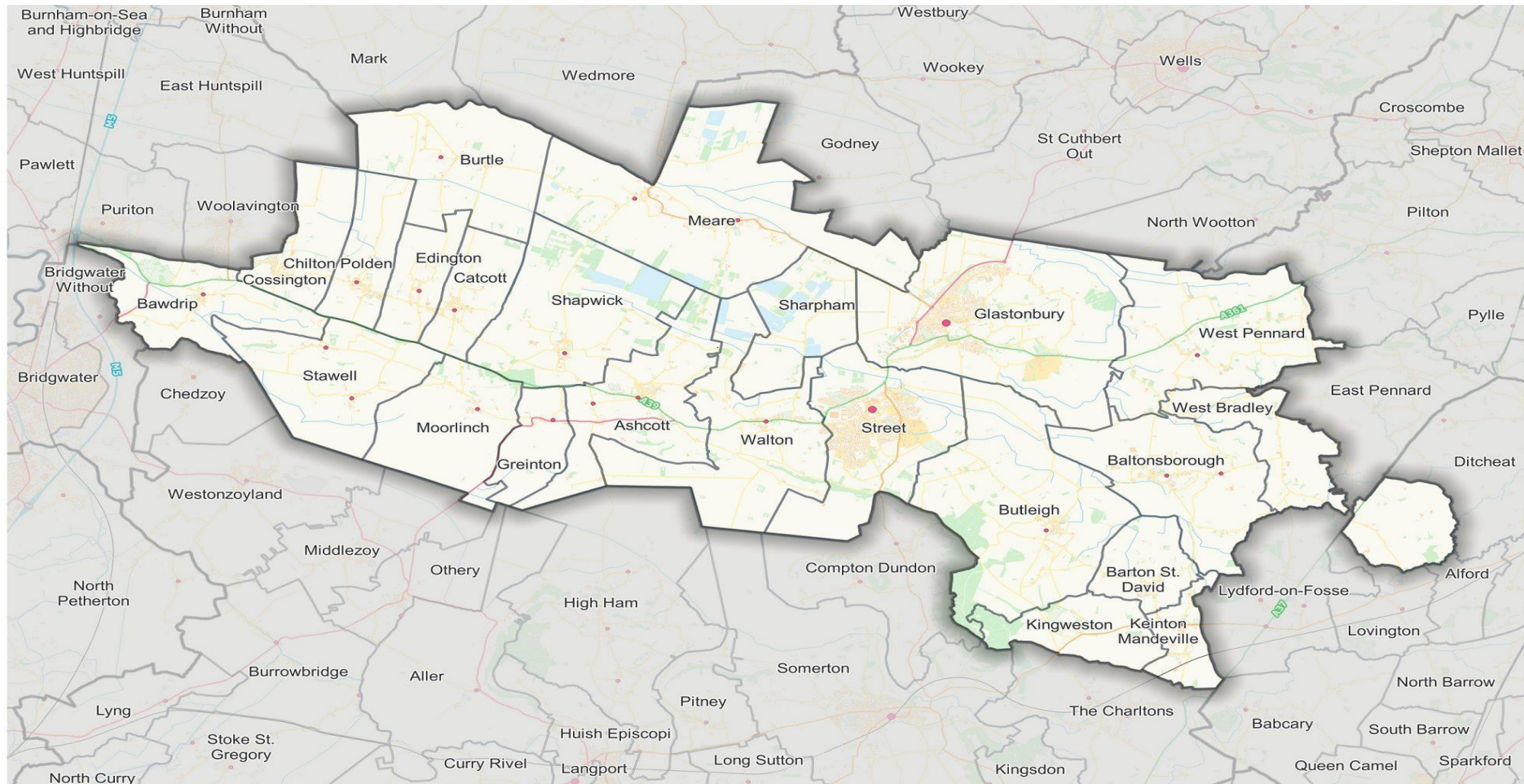
Date	Action	Action for
16/10/2024	Parish Engagement: Send an email to all parishes to gauge interest in setting up a flooding or emergency planning working group.	Chair/Link Officer
16/10/2024	Community Flood Action Fund: Circulate information about the Community Flood Action Fund to all parishes and encourage applications.	SRA/Link Officer
16/10/2024	Health and Well-being Grants: Share the link to the SALC website and details about the health and well-being grant program with all parishes.	SALC/ Link Officer
16/10/2024	Watercourse Maintenance: Share the new guidance on farming rules for water and responsibilities with Emmaline for distribution to parishes.	EA/ Link Officer
16/10/2024	Flood Risk and Planning Workshop: Promote the Community resilience day in Bridgwater on November 6th, including the workshop on flood risk and planning.	SRA
16/10/2024	Parish Conference: Promote the Somerset Parish's conference on November 13th to all parishes.	Fodo



Avalon and Poldens Local Community Network

Avon & Somerset Constabulary

LCN Area



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23/03/2023

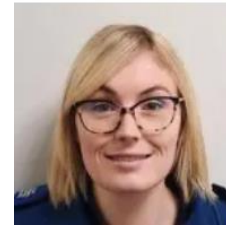
Shepton Neighbourhood Team



Inspector Rachel Clark



PS Daniel Jeffries



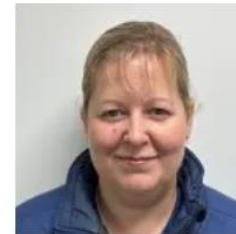
PCSO Supervisor Ellis Ryall



PC Malissa Thompson



PCSO Rebecca
Manley



PCSO Natalie
McIntosh



PCSO Sheila
Thompson

Shepton Priorities

- Whilst there have been no reported incidents of Anti Social Behaviour within the West Pennard/West Bradley area for the last 3 months. It is being brought to our attention that there is increasing incidents of anti social behaviour around Shepton Mallet, this is in the form of teenagers banging very loudly on front doors and running away. We are working with schools and have identified some of the youths responsible and they have been dealt with via education and out of court disposals.
- The wider Shepton area has experienced a small number of thefts of small plant machinery & tools from outbuildings/sheds. Please secure vehicles and buildings and give consideration for CCTV and lighting to deter offenders.



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Street Neighbourhood Team



Inspector Rachel Clark



PS Simon Lancey



PCSO Supervisor
Jason Wyatt



PC Stacey Bennett



PC James Higgins



PCSO Elaine Cave



PCSO Bev Jackson



PCSO Tim Richards



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Street Priorities



- **Reports of inconsiderate parking and speeding taking place around Street at school drop off and pickup times.**
 1. The beat team have attended local schools, speaking with parents about parking issues and giving advice around the issue.
 2. The team along with the help of the special constabulary and speed enforcement unit has been carrying out speed checks in Street area providing high visibility presence which has been greatly received by the local community.
- **Reports of Anti Social Behaviour around Strode Road area in Street has been received by the beat team whilst on patrol.** The beat team are aware of this individual and are currently seeking a person in relation to this incident.
 1. The beat team have increased reassurance patrols in the area with support of response team looking for the suspect.
 2. We are working with the local for any further information to assist us with the location of the person.



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Glastonbury Neighbourhood Team



Inspector Rachel Clark



PS Simon Lancey



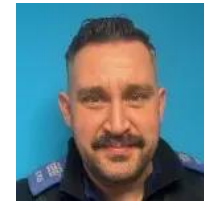
PCSO Supervisor
Jason Wyatt



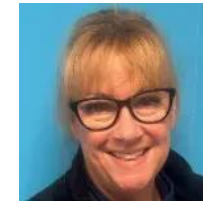
PC Stacey Bennett



PC James Higgins



PCSO Nik Burge



PCSO Mel Rowlands

Glastonbury Priorities



- **Reports have been made to the local Police Team that a male is causing a nuisance around Glastonbury Tor.** The male is shouting abuse to unknown persons which is causing harassment alarm and distress to visitors and residents. The Police Neighbourhood team are actively seeking this individual to engage and discuss the issues that he is causing.
- **The Glastonbury beat team have been made aware of ASB in St John's church yard, Glastonbury.** We have been working along side the church and the council to:-
 1. Increased ASB patrols to ensure a safe and welcoming environment
 2. Collaborative efforts with the church to enhance the church yard
 3. Regular council updates to address any neighbourhood concern. By working together, we're committed to strengthening our community.



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Beat Pages and Social Media



All beat teams have a dedicated beat page on the Avon and Somerset website that shows local crime stats, area priorities and any events that the beat team will be attending. - <https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/your-area/>

The beat teams also update our Facebook social media page with information, updates and general advice. - <https://www.facebook.com/aspmendip>



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Rural Crime Update

- We are continuing to see the theft of trailers and quad bikes force-wide with Ifor Williams trailers being the trailers of choice. Offences are sporadic and not specific to any area, thus currently we have not identified any trends or series.
- We are continuing to push crime prevention and target hardening by utilising security marking including Selecta DNA and Datatag trailer marking kits.
- We are purchasing 10 poacher blocks which will be utilised in areas that have been persistently targeted with deer poaching and hare coursing, this is a new initiative and will initially be a trial, if successful more will be purchased.



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Questions?

Working group updates: Health and Wellbeing working group and Community Transport presentation

Community Transport on the Somerset Levels

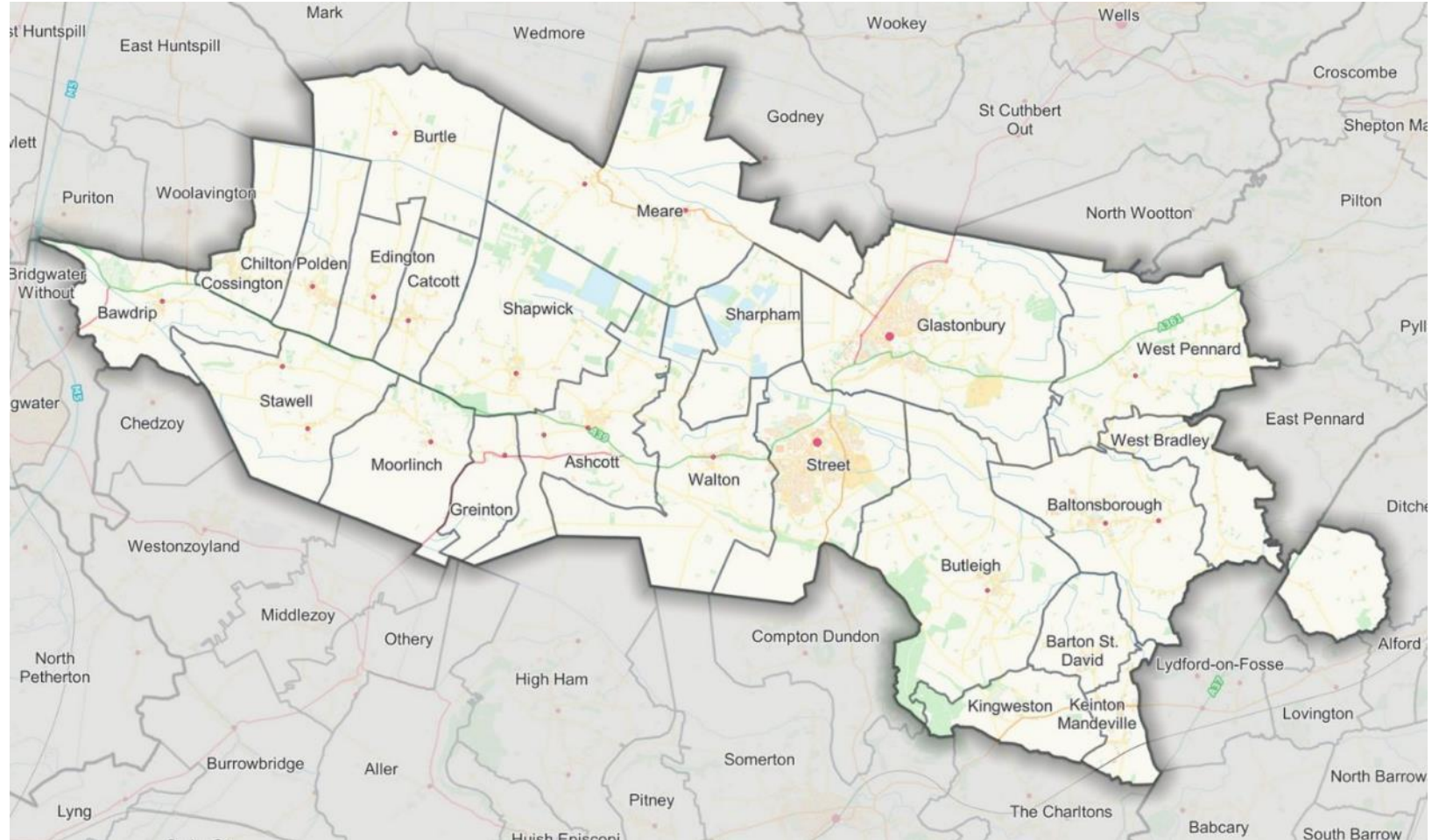
Natalie Watson

Avalon Marshes Business
Manager, Natural England



Current Community Transport Projects

- Connecting **Castle Cary Train Station to Glastonbury**
- Connecting **Highbridge Train Station to the Levels**
- Connecting the **Avalon Marshes Centre to the #668 bus route**
- Discussions of how **existing community transport schemes** can support areas that don't have them



Avalon Marshes Partnership



Avalon Marshes

1,500 hectares of nationally important nature reserves and habitats managed by the members of the Avalon Marshes Partnership.

- Catcott Nature Reserve
- Ham Wall National Nature Reserve
- Honeygar Nature Reserve
- Huntspill River
- Shapwick Heath National Nature Reserve
- Shapwick Moor Nature Reserve
- Westhay Moor National Nature Reserve



The varied landscape of the Avalon Marshes provides vital habitats for a wide range of plant, animal and insect species.

There are many habitat types to discover including **open water**, **reed-bed**, **mire**, **fen**, **meadow** and **wet woodland**.

Visitors can access the marshes at the reserves which have numerous **trails** and **hides** and host **events** and **activities** for all ages.

None of the reserves are currently served by public transport. They all have car parks, but only Shapwick Heath and Ham Wall have visitor facilities.



Birds

Owls, birds of prey, ducks, herons, swans, waders and warblers. 'The Big Three' - Marsh harrier, bittern and the great white egret. Starling Murmurations from November to February.



Mammals

Otters, hares, shrews, deer, weasels, voles, badgers, mice, muntjac, mink, hedgehogs, stoats, foxes, moles and (since Dec 2024) beavers.



Reptiles, Amphibians and Invertebrates

Newts, toads, frogs, slow worms, snakes, lizards, snails, beetles, grasshoppers, butterflies, dragonflies, moths and mussels.



Flora & Fungi

Huge variety of fungi and plants including nationally restricted species of orchid, fern, water violet, frogbit, marsh pea, dropwort and sundew.



Who Currently Visits the Avalon Marshes?

- The Avalon Marshes receives around **220,000 visitors per year**.
- The majority of visitors are fairly local – Over half are **travelling less than 20 miles** (55%), in some reserves this rises to 75%.
- The Avalon Marshes is a destination - Most of our visitors come on a **day out from home** (63%), with fewer on a short trip or passing through (29%).
- We have an engaged and local audience - **Over half visit at least once a month** (52%) and a further third are visiting 2-4 times a year (32%).
- It's also an **older audience, with 70% being over 55** - They mostly visit alone or with one other adult (82%). Around 12% of our visitors identify as having a physical or mental impairment.
- **Birdwatching and wildlife** is by far the top main reason for visiting (53%). A further 22% are visiting the café and 14% are coming for a wildlife spectacle.

Avalon Marshes Centre

Located between Westhay and Shapwick, this is the gateway to the Avalon Marshes and a visitor hub with a varied programme of events.

Owned and operated by Natural England, it offers visitors a wide range of facilities for visitors exploring the area:

- Accessible toilets
- Free car park
- EV charging points
- Visitor information point
- Outdoor seating and picnic areas
- Wildlife pond
- Bicycle racks



Avalon Marshes Centre



Events and Activities

- Our grounds and meeting rooms play host to a range of **community events** throughout the year.
- Some are organised by the members of the Avalon Marshes Partnership, but most are members of the local community who need **cheap and a flexible space**.
- In the past year we've had exercise classes, craft workshops, talks, film screenings, citizen science days, mindfulness sessions, wildlife study days, forest schools, photography workshops, Nordic walking... the list goes on!



Connecting People with Nature

- People with a greater connection to nature are more likely to behave positively towards the environment, wildlife and habitats.
- Our partnership aims to ensure more people can access nature-rich places and spend time benefitting from the natural environment.
- We run **workshops, walks, talks** and **activities** for children and adults and provide **resources** to help groups access and use nature rich spaces.
- In 2025 we begin an exciting partnership with Somerset NHS to offer **green social prescribing** opportunities.



An aerial photograph of the Avalon Marshes, showing a large body of water with numerous small, rectangular structures floating on it. The surrounding landscape is a mix of green fields, brownish-yellow marshland, and dense forests. A road or path runs along the right side of the water body.

All of this is inaccessible to people without a car.

None of the reserves in the Avalon Marshes are served by public transport and the high cost of minibus hire prevents groups using this fantastic resource.



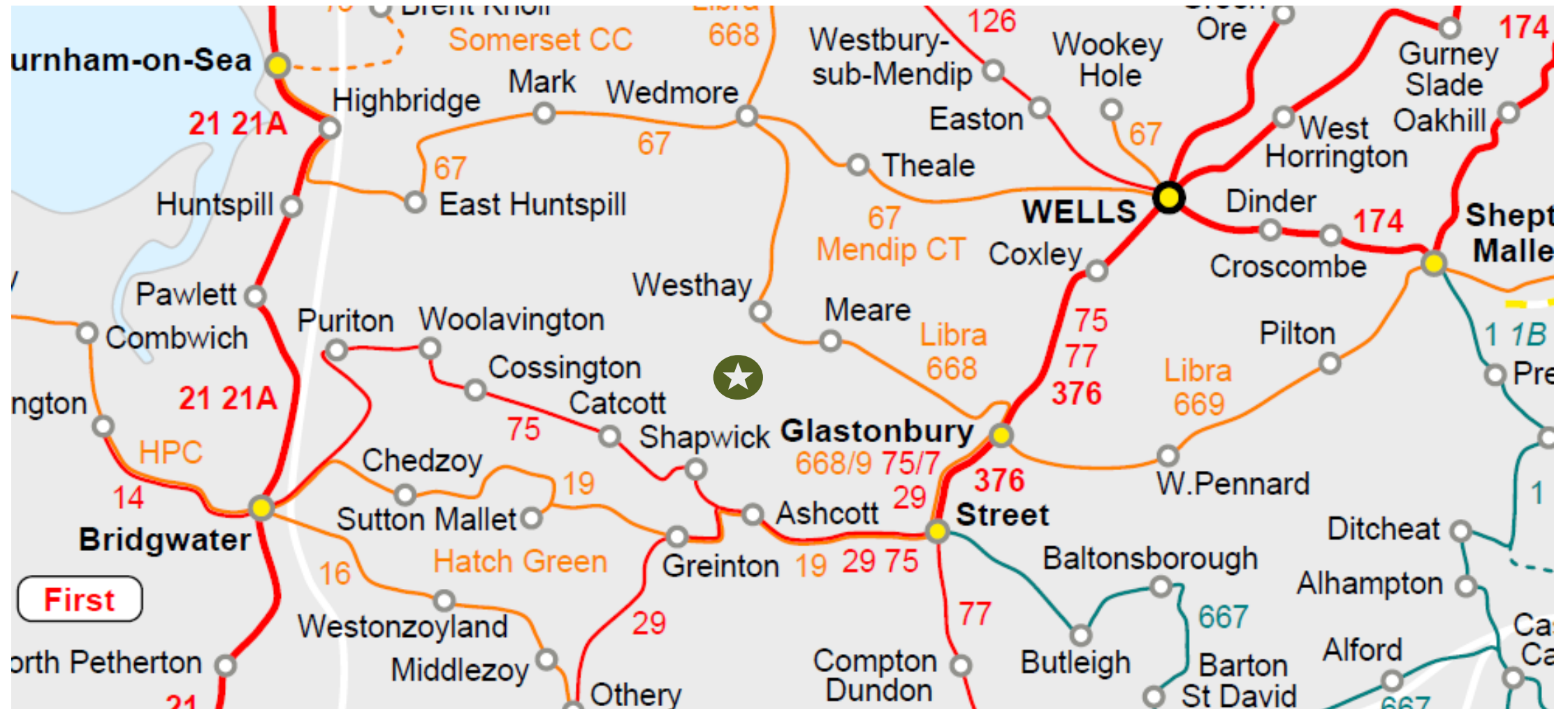
"Step, Ride, Thrive"

A proposal for a pilot project to provide active travel opportunities to the Avalon Marshes

“Step, Ride, Thrive” Project Overview

- **Goal:** Promote active travel and community health through an integrated community transport project
- **Key Initiative:** Extend #668 Libra bus service to stop at the Avalon Marshes Centre.
- **Broader Scope:** Walking, cycling, and wellbeing initiatives, with free events and activities offered throughout project.
- **2025 Funding Plan:** Apply for up to £35,000 from the SALC Community Health & Wellbeing Large Grant via the LCN partnership for pilot scheme.
- **2026+ Funding Plan:** 20-year funding through Defra’s ‘Adapting the Levels’ project
- **Bus:** Pilot project for 6-month operation (April–September 2025), weekday service with four daily stops.
- **Walking:** Promote connections to walking trails and cycle paths, provide free guided tours and wellbeing events.
- **Cycling:** Partnering with *On Your Bike* to offer events at parishes in LCN. Add racks on buses. At AMC, install secure cycle parking, e-bike charging points and a bike tool station.
- **Resources:** Develop maps, trail guides and active travel challenges.
- **Promotion:** Ensure the new bus route and active travel activities are well publicised and used.

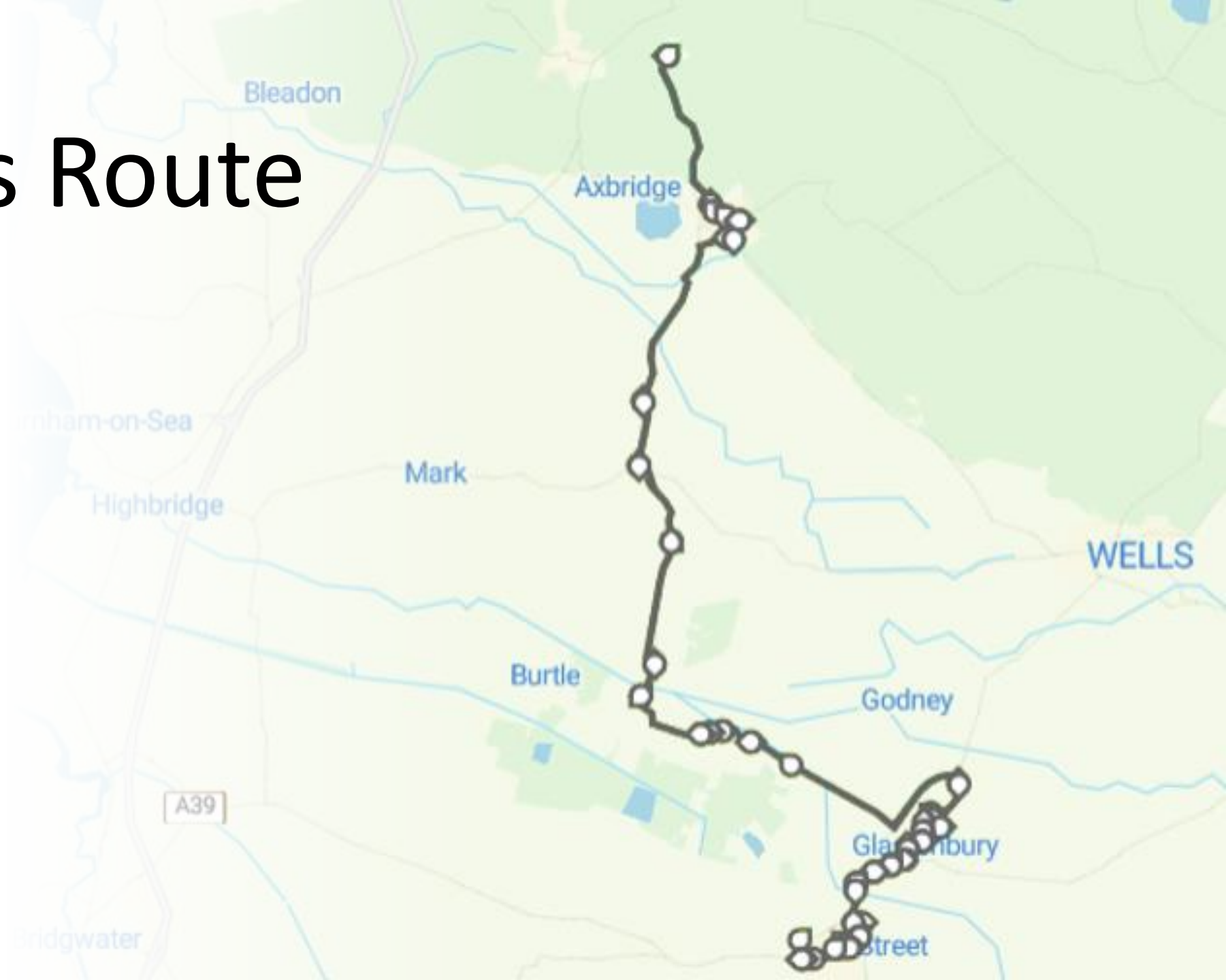
Current Fixed Route Bus Lines



#668 Bus Route

Current bus stops:

Shipham
Cheddar
Cocklake
Wedmore
Mudgley
Westhay
(Avalon Marshes Centre)
Meare
Brindham Hospital
Glastonbury
Glastonbury Town Hall
Street Strode College
Street Crispin Hall
Street Sainsburys



Shipham to Street

Shipham	07:25	10:00	13:00	15:50
Cheddar	07:33	10:08	13:08	15:58
Cocklake	07:42	10:17	13:17	16:07
Wedmore	07:46	10:21	13:21	16:11
Mudgley	07:50	10:25	13:25	16:15
Westhay	07:55	10:30	13:30	16:20
Avalon Marshes Centre				
Meare	07:59	10:34	13:34	16:24
Brindham Hospital	08:07	10:42	13:42	16:32
Glastonbury	08:09	10:44	13:44	16:34
Glastonbury Town Hall	08:14	10:49	13:49	16:39
Street Strode College	08:22			
Street Crispin Hall	08:25	10:57	13:57	16:47
Street Sainsburys	08:30	11:02	14:02	

Street to Shipham

Street Sainsburys	08:50	11:25	14:30	
Street Crispin Hall	08:55	11:30	14:35	17:00
Street Strode College				17:05
Glastonbury Town Hall	09:05	11:40	14:45	17:13
Glastonbury	09:10	11:45	14:50	17:18
Brindham Hospital	09:12	11:47	14:52	17:20
Meare	09:20	11:55	15:00	17:28
Avalon Marshes Centre				
Westhay	09:23	11:58	15:03	17:31
Mudgley	09:27	12:02	15:07	17:35
Wedmore	09:32	12:07	15:12	17:40
Cocklake	09:35	12:10	15:15	17:43
Cheddar	09:44	12:19	15:24	17:52
Shipham	09:52	12:27	15:32	18:00

Project Benefits

Health & Wellbeing

- Foster physical activity (walking, cycling), green social prescribing and tackling isolation through social connections

Accessibility

- Enable equitable access for low-income families, elderly residents, people with health issues, and those without access to a car

Sustainability

- Reduce car dependency and environmental impact

Economic Benefits

- Boost visitor numbers to support local businesses and promote conservation



Who will benefit?

- All residents of the Avalon & Poldens LCN through the bike scheme, and particularly those in parishes with pre-existing #668 bus connection.
- Visitors to the Avalon Marshes: local walkers, wildlife enthusiasts, dog walkers, families, cyclists, runners, tourists, social and health care providers.
- Hard-to-reach groups: older people, people living in low-income households, people with long-term health concerns/ disabilities.

Parish	Total adults	Eligible for bus pass
Ashcott	986	406
Baltonsborough	837	270
Barton St David	508	203
Bawdrip	505	175
Burtle	321	86
Butleigh	713	264
Catcott	457	193
Chilton Polden	558	227
Cossington	551	206
Edington	314	135
Glastonbury	7,371	2,267
Greinton	341	107
Keinton Mandeville	968	318
Kingweston	265	87
Meare	1,146	338
Moorlinch	342	107
Shapwick	356	119
Sharpham	103	35
Stawell	341	117
Street	9,299	2,711
Walton	973	319
West Bradley	242	64
West Pennard	564	199
Total	28,061	8,953

Partnering with *On Your Bike*

- A registered charity dedicated to empowering individuals through hands-on training to refurbish and recycle unwanted bicycles.
- They offer a range of workshops and support to organisations and schools promoting cycling.
- **Dr Bike Session** offers free safety checks and adjustments on bikes for the public. Cost £250 for 4 hours.
- **School Maintenance Course** for year 5+ that includes an M-Check, puncture race and a quiz for 1 hour per group. Cost £400 for 4 hours.



Pilot Metrics & Future

- **Data Collection:** Gather user metrics and community feedback during the pilot to make the case for future investment.
- **Impact Assessment:** Evaluate health, transport use, and environmental outcomes of the pilot.
- **Long-Term Goals:** Explore sustainable expansion to evenings and weekends and further connections from the LCN to existing bus routes.
- **Funding Plan:** We are applying for 20-year funding through Defra's 'Adapting the Levels' project to make the pilot permanent. To be confirmed by Jun 25.

Project Budget

Expenditure	Unit	Qty	Total
Bus stop - daily service cost	£100	130	£13,000
School Maintenance Course for each parish	£400	23	£9,200
Dr Bike sessions for each parish	£250	23	£5,750
Marketing and community engagement	£4,000	1	£4,000
Data collection and analysis	£2,000	1	£2,000
Contingency	£1,000	1	£1,000
Total			£34,950

Next Steps

- The LCN needs a council to be the lead applicant for the SALC funds. They must have **General Powers of Competency** and sufficient **S137A** capacity to receive a grant.
- Indication whether **financial support** would be available from your parish to support the project. If each council in the LCN could allocate £565, the full cost of the new bus route could be covered.
- **Ideas** for how we can provide more active and sustainable travel options in the area
- **Letters of support** showing that the project is of value to the parishes in the LCN, submitted by 21 Feb.

Key Dates

Jan-Feb - Development of SALC application

24 Feb – Final application submission deadline

3 Mar – Application sent to SALC assessment team

7 Mar – Assessment team meeting and decision

Questions?

Working group updates: **Highways working group**

Next Steps and Actions for the LCN

Any other Business

Somerset Council Local Plan Engagement

Video Presentation

[LP LCN Discussion - Briefing Presentation.mp4](#)

Q & A

Date Next Meetings

The dates and locations of the next Avalon and Poldens LCN meetings are:

- 23rd April 2025- Cossington Village Hall
- 9th July 2025- Keinton Mandeville Village Hall (AGM)

- **Health and Wellbeing working group**

22nd January 2025 – Avalon Marshes Centre

- **Highways working group**

25th February 2025 – Glastonbury Town Hall