

Barry O'Leary

*Hi everyone,*

## MDC Member Report - January 2021, For Evercreech Parish Council

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### Mendip's COVID response: Mendip's new priorities - Saving Lives, Delivering Statutory Services, & Economic Recovery

At Cabinet (11<sup>th</sup> Jan) Mendip's Leader, Cllr Ros Wyke, said the Council would be resetting its strategic direction with a focus on three key areas.

- **Saving lives**, through supporting the extensive vaccine roll-out, and community testing;
- **Delivering statutory services**, such homelessness prevention, environmental health, licensing, and planning;
- **Supporting the economy & our local people**. The 'new priorities' plan will be reviewed monthly.

*Cllr Wyke said: "We will continue to support our communities, one street at a time, one family at a time, one place at a time."*

Mendip had already been supporting health professionals with the vaccination roll-out. Council offices in Shepton Mallet were temporarily transformed into a medical hub during Christmas and New Year with staff volunteers on-hand.

 [Available to download a copy of the speech given by Cllr Ros Wyke](https://www.mendip.gov.uk/article/9747/Mendip-s-new-priorities-Saving-lives-delivering-statutory-services-and-economic-recovery)  
<https://www.mendip.gov.uk/article/9747/Mendip-s-new-priorities-Saving-lives-delivering-statutory-services-and-economic-recovery>

## **Mendip Markets continue daily, despite COVID**

Mendip District Council recognises the importance of its outdoor markets, and the ability of our communities to shop at these open-air environments. All weekday markets will run as normal, with slightly reduced hours, 9am-12 noon. There will be no markets on Saturdays at Wells or Frome.

**Statement:** <https://www.mendip.gov.uk/article/9754/Mendip-Markets-continue-daily-despite-COVID>

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## **Build back better: Saxonvale, Frome**

Mendip District Council, as landowner, acknowledged the decision of the Planning Board to approve outline planning permission for land at Saxonvale, Frome, subject to agreement of conditions with the developer. This exemplary development will deliver a mixed-use community, with flexible commercial units, high-quality public realm, open space, and homes for all ages.

**Statement:** <https://www.mendip.gov.uk/article/9774/A-statement-from-Mendip-District-Council-Outline-Planning-Approval-for-Saxonvale-Frome>

## **MDC Additional Restrictions Grants (Round 2)**

Mendip District Council has launched Additional Restrictions Grants (Round 2) to support local businesses affected by Covid-19 lockdowns. To date, we have issued grants across 13 different time periods since the first lockdown to local organisations in need of financial help due to the lockdown. Some 4,000 prompt payments have been made, totalling £34m.

For more information and lockdown support visit:

<https://www.mendip.gov.uk/businessgrants>

## **Planning: Phosphates**

The councils across Somerset are continuing to work on solutions to the Phosphates issue to unlock development. An update on planning applications affected and progress on a tool to assess site impacts, will be published

shortly. The Council will also be consulting on additions to policy text for the sites in Local Plan 2.

<https://www.mendip.gov.uk/phosphates>

## **Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP)**

After implementing SWEP on 29th-31st Dec, there were two further occasions in January. On 6<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> and on 19<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> Jan. Severe Weather Emergency Provision in Mendip has two aims; to ensure that no one dies on the streets due to severe weather, and to ensure that every effort is made to engage individuals with support.

Visit: <https://www.mendip.gov.uk/swep>

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## **Visitor Economy Support Programme (VESP)**

A scheme was launched to support tourism and visitor-centred businesses in Somerset in the wake of the disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Working with other councils Mendip District Council has put in place the Visitor Economy Support Programme (VESP) to help businesses strengthen and build competitiveness.

<https://www.mendip.gov.uk/article/9744/Supporting-Somerset-s-visitor-economy>

## **Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP): Early collections - 6am start**

SWP kept 16 recycling sites open on standard winter hours for essential use during the latest national lockdown. COVID continues to put the pressure on. In the first three weeks of January it contributed to the loss of nearly 800 operational days - compared to 58 in December. Additional steps to protect crews, help them manage the workload and maintain services are being taken. From Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> February it's 6am starts for collections, rather than 7am.

<https://www.mendip.gov.uk/article/9772/SWP-update-Early-collections-from-next-week>

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## Big Community Switch

Mendip has been encouraging residents to register their interest in switching energy providers with the Big Community Switch by 9th February 2021. For the first time, we have 100% renewable energy tariffs from wind, biomass and solar for electricity, at really competitive market prices.

<https://www.mendip.gov.uk/article/9732/Mendip-residents-urged-to-think-greener-with-the-Big-Community-Switch->

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## Council Column

Cllr Ros Wyke writes a weekly column, published the Somerset Series newspaper titles every Thursday.

All columns listed here: <https://www.mendip.gov.uk/leaderscolumn>

## In the news

I was interviewed on BBC Radio Somerset, talking about the outline planning consent for Saxonvale in Frome and I organised for Gill Lindsay to be interviewed also by BBC Somerset about our village history, especially mindful about the factory sites importance.

2021 is supposed to be a new year but at this point it does in art resemble 2020. At least we know there is a vaccine and light at the end of the tunnel. Keep well, stay at home, save lives, stay safe.

*Barry*

Your Mendip Councillor,  here for you

**Cllr. Barry O'Leary**

**Tel 01749 321 421 email: [evercreech.barry@icloud.com](mailto:evercreech.barry@icloud.com)**

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