



**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
HELD AT 32 WATERLOO STREET ON
MONDAY 13th JULY 2026**

Meeting Commenced: 7.00 pm

Meeting Concluded: 7.35 pm

PRESENT: Councillors John Crockford-Hawley (C), Ray Armstrong, Annabelle Chard, Peter Crew, Robert Skeen, John Standfield, Tim Taylor, Helen Thornton and.

ALSO, IN ATTENDANCE: Sarah Pearse (CEO/Town Clerk), Fay Powell (Director of Community Services/ Deputy Town Clerk) Samantha Bishop (Democratic Services Manager) and Molly Matthews (Senior Development Officer).

54	Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Caroline Reynolds who was substituted by Jemma Coles, Martin Williams substituted by Roger Bailey and Helen Thornton with no substitution.
55	Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest received.
56	To note the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair by Full Council at its Annual Meeting held on 28th May 2026 RESOLVED: That the appointment of the Chair (Councillor John Crockford-Hawley) and Vice Chair (Peter Crew) by Full Council at its Annual Meeting held on 28th May 2026 be noted.
57	Confirmation of Committee Terms of Reference by Council at its Annual Meeting held on 28th May 2026 RESOLVED: That the Committee Terms of Reference by Council at its Annual Meeting held on 28th May 2026 be confirmed.
58	To agree the accuracy of the previous Amenities, Culture and Leisure Committee Minutes held on 16th March 2026

	The minutes of the Amenities Culture and Leisure Committee had been previously circulated. PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew SECONDED BY: Councillor Ray Armstrong A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly. RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Amenities Culture and Leisure Committee be signed and approved.
59	To receive the DRAFT Notes of the Allotments Community Consultative Group Meeting held on the 11th June 2026 The Notes had been previously circulated. RESOLVED: That the Notes of the (DRAFT) Allotments Community Consultative Group held on 11TH June 2026 be received.
60	To approve the DRAFT Notes of the Heritage Arts and Culture Community Consultative Group Meeting held on the 4th June 2026 The Notes had been previously circulated. RESOLVED: That the Notes of the (DRAFT) Heritage Arts and Culture Community Consultative Group Meeting held on 4th June 2026 be received.
61	To approve the Amenities Culture and Leisure Committee Annual Work Programme 2026/27 The covering report of the Democratic Services Manager and CEO/Town Clerk accompanied by the proposed Annual Work Programme (Appendix A) had been previously circulated The Committee were advised that the programme had been developed to provide a structured framework for the Committee's business throughout the year, ensuring that matters within its delegated remit were considered in a timely and strategic manner. It was noted that the Work Programme was intended to be a live document, enabling the Committee to respond to emerging priorities, legislative changes and matters referred by Full Council as necessary. The Committee welcomed the proposed programme and noted that it would support effective forward planning, governance and budget development throughout the municipal year. PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew SECONDED BY: Councillor Robert Skeen A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly. RESOLVED: 1. To approve the Amenities, Culture and Leisure Committee Annual Work Programme for the 2026/27 municipal year, attached at Appendix A.

	2. To authorise the Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, to make minor administrative amendments to the Annual Work Programme during the municipal year, provided such amendments do not alter the Committee's delegated responsibilities or decision-making powers.
62	<u>AMENITIES</u> Weston Museum – Development Scoping Exercise The Committee received the Development Scoping Exercise Report presented by the Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk. During discussion, Members: • welcomed the comprehensive report and accompanying photographs illustrating opportunities for future development within the Museum; • sought clarification on the financial information presented, including forecast income, stock valuation and the distinction between turnover and profit. It was confirmed that the figures were budget forecasts and that financial performance would be reviewed following the summer season; • recognised the importance of obtaining further qualitative evidence to support any future proposals; • acknowledged the valuable contribution made by volunteers, noting that whilst they enhanced the visitor experience, the Museum remained capable of operating independently of volunteer support. The Chair proposed the establishment of a cross-party Project Group to consider the report in greater detail. The Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk advised that, under Standing Orders, the Committee could not establish a formal Working Group and recommended that an informal Project Group be appointed through Group Leaders, with findings reported back to the Committee in September. PROPOSED BY: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Crew A vote was taken and the motion was carried. RESOLVED: 1. That an informal cross-party Project Group be established to consider the findings of the Development Scoping Exercise and determine whether further feasibility work, engagement with professional advisers, grant funding opportunities and community engagement should be pursued, with recommendations to be reported back to the Amenities, Culture and Leisure Committee in September. PROPOSED BY: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Crew A vote was taken and the motion was carried.

	RESOLVED: 1. That an informal cross-party Project Group be established to consider the findings of the Development Scoping Exercise and determine whether further feasibility work, engagement with professional advisers, grant funding opportunities and community engagement should be pursued, with recommendations to be reported back to the Amenities, Culture and Leisure Committee in September.
63	<u>CULTURE</u> Weston Artspace CIC – Statement of Strategic Support and Current Intent Culture – Weston Artspace CIC: Statement of Strategic Support and Current Intent The Committee received the report presented by the Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk. During discussion, Members: • noted the positive meeting held with Weston Artspace CIC regarding the proposed sublease at Old Town Quarry; • noted that Weston Artspace now understood the legal framework for the tenancy, including the requirement for it to be contracted out of the security of tenure provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954; • recognised that the proposed Statement of Strategic Support and Current Intent was non-legally binding, created no contractual rights and did not amend the lease, whilst demonstrating the Council's commitment to the long-term vision for Old Town Quarry; • acknowledged Weston Artspace's significant contribution to the successful development of Old Town Quarry as a community arts and cultural facility. PROPOSED BY: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Crew A vote was taken and carried. RESOLVED: 1. That the update following the meeting with Weston Artspace CIC held on 3 July 2026 be noted. 2. That it be noted Weston Artspace now understood the legal framework governing the proposed sublease, including the requirement for the tenancy to be contracted out of the security of tenure provisions contained within the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954. 3. That the significant contribution made by Weston Artspace to the development of Old Town Quarry as a community arts and cultural facility be recognised. 4. That the Statement of Strategic Support and Current Intent, attached at Appendix 1, be approved. 5. That the Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk be authorised to issue the Statement on behalf of Weston-super-Mare Town Council.

	6. That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Amenities, Culture and Leisure Committee, to make any minor typographical, administrative or legal amendments to the Statement prior to its issue, provided these did not alter its substantive meaning.
64	<u>LEISURE</u> To receive the outline Programme for the Play & Sports Strategy (to follow) The Committee received a verbal update from the Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk and Director of Community Services on the development of the Play & Sport Strategy. During discussion, Members: - noted that the written report would be circulated following the meeting due to timing issues between officers and the appointed contractor; - were advised that the Strategy would consider play and sports provision across Weston-super-Mare, including assets owned by a range of organisations, and was being developed in partnership with North Somerset Council, Voluntary Action North Somerset, Pride of Place and other stakeholders; - noted that the project timetable had been aligned with the Committee cycle, with completion anticipated by 30 September 2026, and that the appointed consultants had offered to present the completed Strategy to a future Committee meeting; - noted potential future funding opportunities through the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner's Crime Prevention Fund, which would be considered during the Strategy's development. A vote was taken and carried. RESOLVED: - That the verbal update on the development of the Play & Sport Strategy be noted.
	There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 7.35 pm Signed.....Dated Chair of the Amenities, Culture and Leisure Committee



**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE BLUE PLAQUE
START AND FINISH GROUP
HELD AT 32 WATERLOO STREET ON
TUESDAY 21ST JULY 2026**

Meeting Commenced: 10.04am

Meeting Concluded: 10.35am

PRESENT: Councillors John Crockford-Hawley, Peter Crew and Catherine Gibbons.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Sarah Pearse (CEO/Town Clerk) Fay Powell (Director of Community Services/ Deputy Town Clerk), Helen Morton (Director of Finance and Resources and Responsible Financial Officer) , Warren Parker-Mills (Visitor experience & Communications Manager) Hannah Steer (Communications Officer) and Rebecca Saunders (PA to the CEO/Town Clerk & Civic Officer).

1.	Appointment of Chair Councillor Peter Crew nominated Councillor John Crockford-Hawley to chair the meeting. As there was no eligible seconder for the nomination, no Chair was appointed. The meeting proceeded as an informal advisory discussion, facilitated by the Officer present.
2.	Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes Apologies of absence were received from Councillor Catherine Gibbons with no substitution.
3.	Declaration of Interest There were no declarations of interest received.
4.	Appointment of Vice-Chair Councillor John Crockford-Hawley nominated Councillor Peter Crew as Vice Chair. As there was no eligible seconder for the nomination, the motion was not progressed and no Vice-Chair was appointed.
5.	Blue plaque scheme review

The CEO/Town Clerk provided an overview of the report which would decide the direction of the next round of the Blue Plaque scheme. Three options were presented for consideration:

- **Option 1** – Continue the Building-Focused Scheme
- **Option 2** – Buildings and Individuals
- **Option 3** – Individuals Only

Members agreed that the focus for this round should focus on buildings, noting that previous years had concentrated on recognising individuals. It was acknowledged that this decision would not prevent individuals from being considered in future years.

A discussion took place regarding the process for selecting buildings and the potential for public involvement in determining the order in which plaques would be presented.

Members agreed that given the forthcoming 100-year anniversary of the Winter Gardens next year, this would be a suitable first building to be recognised. It was proposed that the Civic Society, Worle and Uphill History Societies be consulted to each provide a list of five suggested buildings. These suggestions would form a shortlist, after which building owners would be contacted to seek permission. Subject to successful engagement with owners a wider community consultation would then take place to identify which sites were considered a priority by members of the public.

It was noted that the Civic Society had previously supported the scheme through a £1,000 donation and it was suggested that they should be approached to establish whether they would wish to continue supporting the scheme. It was also reported that historically some building owners who had been approached had subsequently offered to self-fund the cost of their plaque.

The CEO/Town Clerk referred members to the English Heritage Blue Plaque Selection Criteria as listed below

1. Figures proposed for commemoration must, without exception, have died at least 20 years ago. Animals and fictitious characters will not be considered.

2. To be chosen for a plaque, a person must be understood by the National Blue Plaques Panel:

- To have made an important contribution to human welfare or happiness, and/or
- To have made an exceptional impact in their field, community or on society at large

3. We encourage a wide range of applications from all communities and welcome the nomination of people that help us tell a broader story of a place or community of people: for example, but not limited to, women, those from minority ethnic groups, LGBTQ+ people, disabled people, or working class people.

4. Proposals may be considered for plaques commemorating more than 1 person (for example, a duo, group, society or organisation) providing:

- There is an overarching theme or connection between the people being commemorated
- Each figure named on the plaque is significant in their own right
- Each person named on the plaque meets the criteria set above

5.Proposals can also be considered for the commemoration of buildings that have a historical significance of public interest, other than a particular personal association, either because:

- A historical event of particular importance occurred there, or
- The building had an important historical significance that is not obvious from its present appearance, use or from any existing signage or commemoration.

6.The National Blue Plaques Panel will pay due regard to disparities in representation and in the overall balance of cases being shortlisted. The panel will consider the current geographical distribution of plaques across England.

7.There should be a strong and clear association between the property and the proposed person: for example, place of birth, death, childhood home, a substantial period of residence or a significant moment in life or career.

8.The building must be in such condition that the person being commemorated would recognise it from the outside.

9.A person's residence in a given place should include significant life events (for example, birth, death, education, work) and/or reflect a significant period in their life or work, in terms of length of time or importance.

10. A national blue plaque would not normally be considered for someone who is already commemorated by a plaque in the town or city in which they have been nominated. This is because the purpose of the Historic England National Blue Plaque Scheme is to complement existing schemes. A national blue plaque would be considered if a person has been recognised only through other forms of commemoration, such as statues, place names, or perhaps if a plaque has been put up by private individuals.

11.A plaque must be clearly visible from the public road or right of way. A plaque will normally be erected only on a building and not on a boundary wall or gate pier.

12.Plaques shall not be erected to commemorate short-term associations of a person with educational or ecclesiastical buildings, military establishments, hospitals, hotels, or private clubs. Plaques shall not be erected on royal palaces or the Inns of Court, or on any building which has too many significant personal associations to merit any one being singled out.

13.No more than 2 plaques are allowed on 1 building.

The accompanying brochures and leaflets from the previous phase were shared with the group. It was noted that these required updating to include the final additions to the collection, ensuring the phase was fully completed before the commencement of the new phase

6.	Current Blue Plaque Requests The CEO/Town Clerk Informed that a request had been received via North Somerset Council to recognise Jack Liddell for his connection to the Dambusters. However it was advised that this would not be possible now the focus would be on recognising buildings rather than individuals. It was noted that Birnbeck Pier may be a potential site for consideration once restoration works were complete given its historical significance and its role in research into bouncing bombs during the Second World War.
	There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 10.35am Signed.....Dated Chair of the Devolution Start and Finish Group



Amenities, Culture & Leisure Committee 7th September 2026
Weston Weekly Market Update
Report from the Community Operations and Resources Manager

1. Purpose and Background of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide a general update regarding Weston Independent Market's progress and plans moving forward.

There have been challenges with the weather, especially with the wind. This has resulted in some markets earlier in the year to be rescheduled to another day of the week.

To help mitigate the impact of bad weather, the operator has altered to lay out of the market and moved it closer to the Sovereign. They also use vehicles to block the wind where appropriate.

There is now a good base of consistent traders and a welcome addition of a fish monger. The operator is currently looking to increase their street food provision whilst maintaining a good mix of other general stalls.

We have recently been approached by the operator as they would like to explore the possibility of a night market. These would take place later in the year and be less frequent than the weekly markets.

Positive conversations have taken place between ourselves, the BID and North Somerset Council who are all supportive of the idea as long as the appropriate measures are in place.

2. Options for Council

To note this update.



3. Reason for Recommendation

N/A

4. Expected Benefits

Increased footfall into the town centre.

Build better relationships with local businesses.

Maximise availability for market traders.

5. Implications

5.1. Legal

N/A

5.2. Risks

N/A

5.3. Financial Implications

N/A

5.4. Timescales

Once the appropriate measures are in place, the operator will inform us of potential dates for the night markets.

5.5. Stakeholders

The community of Weston-super-Mare

Weston-super-Mare Town Council

North Somerset Council



Town Centre Partnership

5.6. Contractors

N/A

5.7. Crime & Disorder (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

As the markets will be taking place during the evening, there will be a consideration to mitigate anti-social behaviour by the operator having dedicated security present.

5.8. Biodiversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

N/A

5.9. Privacy Impact (consider Privacy Impact assessment)

N/A

5.10. Equality & Diversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

N/A

6. Appendices

N/A

7. Members are recommended to:

Note this report.

Matthew Hardy

Community Operations and Resources Manager

Drafted 24th August 2026.



Amenities, Culture and Leisure Committee

Parks and Open Spaces Update Report

Grounds Services Manager

1. Purpose and Background of Report

To update members.

In addition to the general grounds maintenance across all sites the following has been facilitated/achieved.

Allotments

- The removal of asbestos at Clarks Field and Kewstoke sites.
- The repair of the gate at Old Mill Way.
- The near completion of the accessible plot at Clarks Field ensuring compliance with wsmtc safety standards.

Milton Road Cemetery

- 13 internments
- 2 burials
- Emergency tree works due to storm damage
- The signs for the community arboretum have been put in place near the relevant trees, this has been met with many positive comments from members of the public.

There has been a decrease in the amount of dog faeces in the cemetery since the signage was put up, though an increase of anti-social behaviour during and after hours has been reported, in particular apparent 'drug deals'. The Community response team are aware and attend when called.

The Old town Quarry (grounds maintenance only)

- The cultivation of a rewilding area in the bowl.
- Dead hedging erected adjacent to the bat maternity units.
- Bird boxes and bat boxes installed.
- Installation of interpretation boards and signage.
- Planters made from upcycled pallets to be used to prevent parking in the no parking areas.

Waste Collection

- Replacement of old/tired dog waste bins.
-



- Replacement of bins in all parks, including adding bins to the 8 recently devolved sites.

There has been a further increase in the amount of waste collected as a result of household waste and larger items being left next to our litter bins or in our parks. From April to July this year 34,000kg has been collected by the team a 5,000kg increase on the same period last year (2025).

Street Vitality

This has been impacted by staffing challenges within the team though an average of 20hrs p/w has been committed. This service continues to receive extremely positive feedback from members of the public.

Parks and Play Areas

- Independent annual play inspections have been completed on all sites (including the recently devolved play areas).
- 225 play repairs have been completed, the majority of which were necessitated by vandalism/anti-social behaviour.
- Surface degradation of the splash pad is having an increasingly negative impact on the water filtration system, that and the exceptionally dry conditions of the grass and falling leaves has necessitated additional daily filter maintenance.
- New play areas signs have been added to all play areas.
- The new play facilities at Coniston Green and Maltlands are proving extremely popular, with families seen using them well into the early evening.

Resource Challenges

The main resource challenge in recent months has been staffing, since April we have lost;

- 1 Cemetery and Conservation Officer (now replaced)
- 2 Community Rangers (1 replaced, 1 recruited, starting in October)
- 1 Cemetery and Conservation Assistant (not yet replaced)
- 1 Water Park Ranger (not replaced, operational team have been covering the hours)

In addition to this the Amenities Officer is currently on long-term sick leave so the cemetery admin has had to be covered by the Grounds Administration Officer, there have also been staff off for longer than average periods due to sickness/medical procedures. At the time of writing the operational team is almost back to full strength resulting in a noticeable improvement in productivity and performance.



2. Options for Council

N/A

3. Reason for Recommendation

N/A

4. Expected Benefits

N/A

5. Implications

N/A

5.1. Legal

N/A

5.2. Risks

N/A

5.3. Financial Implications

N/A

5.4. Timescales

01.04.26 - 25.08.26

5.5. Stakeholders

N/A

5.6. Contractors

N/A

5.7. Crime & Disorder (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

N/A

5.8. Biodiversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

N/A



5.9. Privacy Impact (consider Privacy Impact assessment)

N/A

5.10. Equality & Diversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

N/A

6. Appendices

7. Members are recommended to:

Lisa Clemons

Grounds Services Manager (Interim)

25.08.26

Amenities Culture & Leisure –
Grounds Services Update
(supporting photographs)

Milton Road Cemetery



Old Town Quarry



Waste Services- Increase in
household waste left near wsmtc
litter bins or parks



Street Vitality (before & after)



Parks & Play Areas (before & after)







Amenities Committee – 7th September 2026. Tourism & Visitor Services Update Communications & Visitor Experience Manager.

Weston Welcomers

It is fair to say that this has been a particularly challenging season for our Weston Welcomers. Despite these pressures, Our Welcomer Supervisor and the core team deserve significant recognition for the resourcefulness, commitment and professionalism demonstrated throughout the summer.

The team has managed its responsibilities, including the admissions function, exceptionally well, despite challenging weather conditions and a reduced pool of available casual workers. Their ability to maintain a high standard of service under these circumstances is a considerable achievement and should be recognised.

There has been a fantastic response to our 'Air Like Wine' walking tours, hosted by one of our team. Building on the success of last year, our strategy for the season was to increase the programme from five walks to seven across July and August.



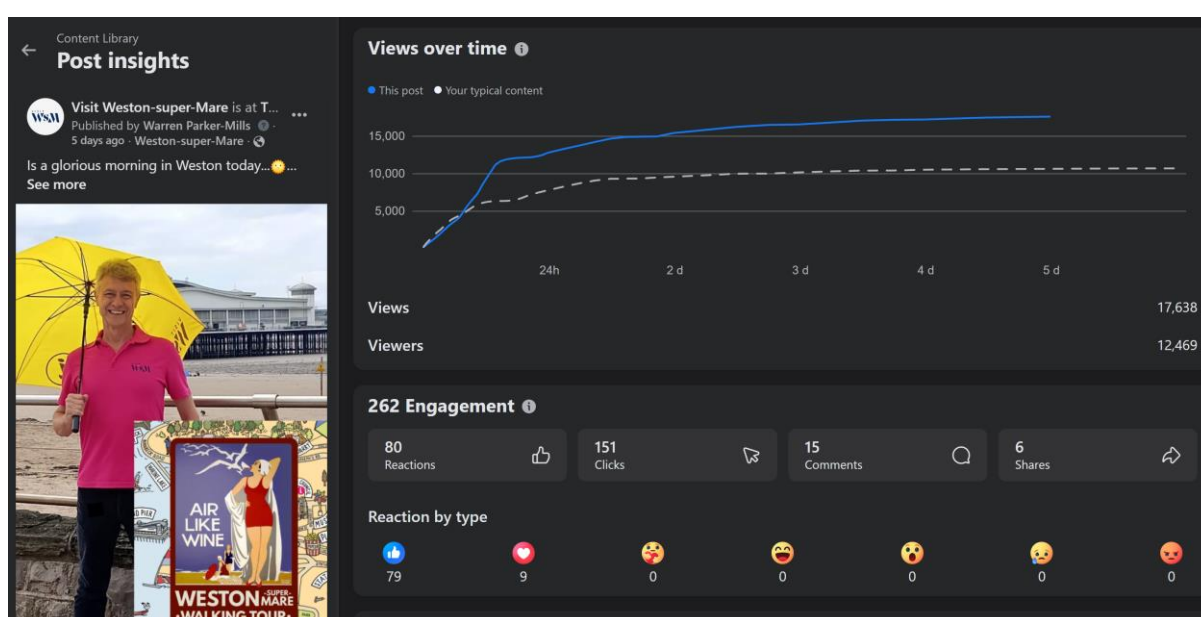
The strong response and uptake of the walking tours has clearly demonstrated the value of expanding the programme. With an aspiration to develop similar ideas and deliver more engaging and informative experiences of this kind in the future.

Feedback from participants has been extremely positive. Encouragingly, even those who joined us last year found plenty of new information to enjoy, with alternative



stops and fresh content ensuring the experience remained interesting and worthwhile.

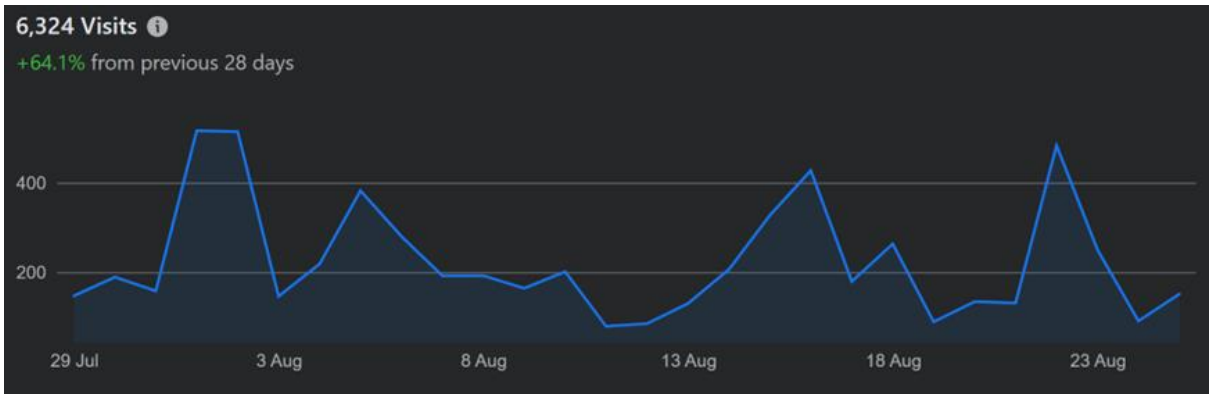
We're also seeing strong evidence that campaigns with a consistent approach are working particularly well.. The data below is from just one Facebook post promoting the walking tour and demonstrates the level of interest and engagement we can generate.



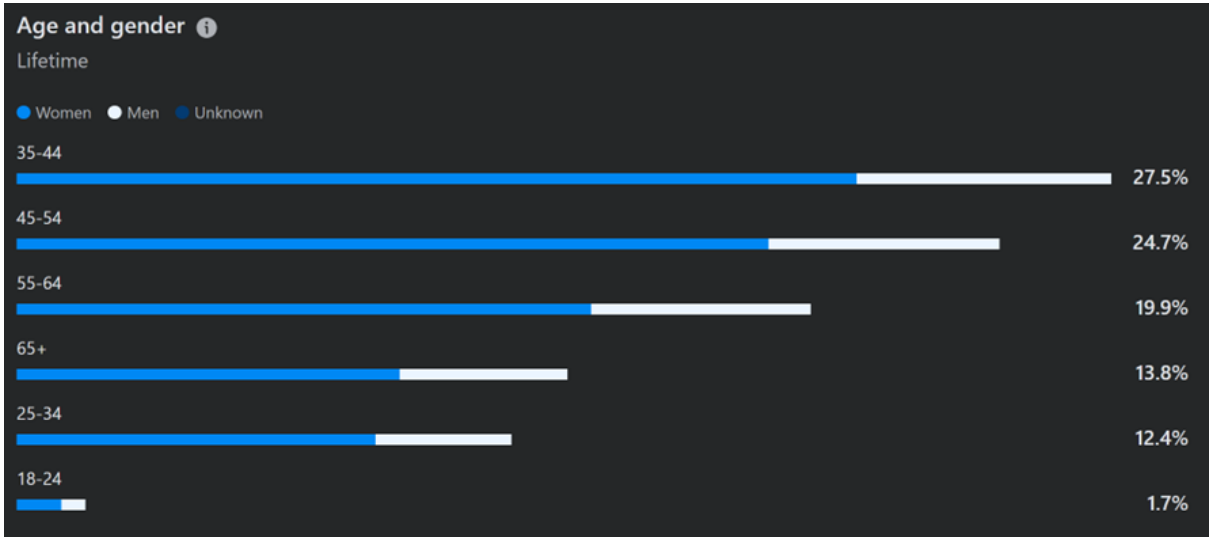
What is really encouraging is of the 17,638 views, 71.2% (12,560) were not original followers of the page. Our target is to break the 20,000 follower milestone, by the end of September.

Facebook Statistics

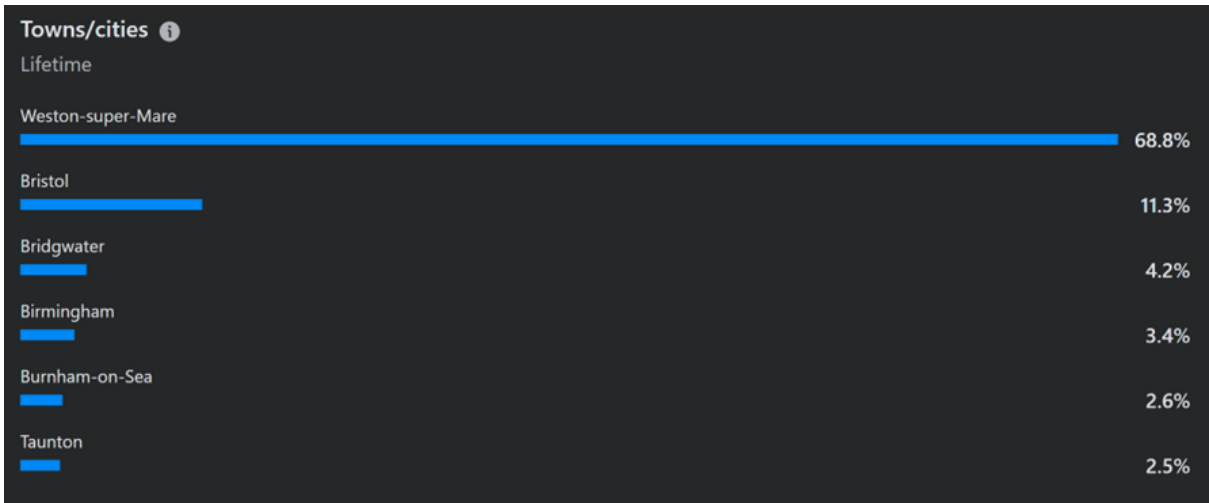
Here are some key statistics relating to our Visit Weston Facebook audience. With this information we are better able to understand our end consumer, their needs and interests and allows us to effectively structure our content to maximise engagement.



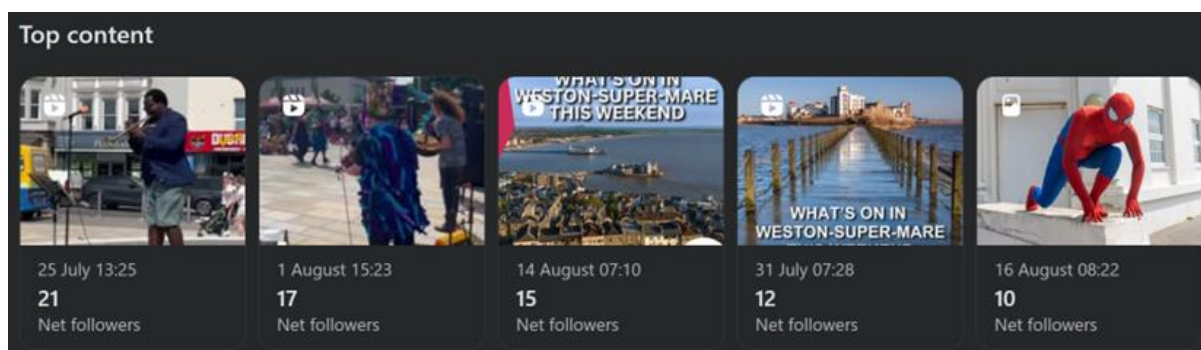
Visits to the Facebook page (+64.1%).



Audience Demographic



Audience Location



Content Ranking –The top four elements are all video which is something we are developing. The video of the Morris dancers at the Sea Shanty event had 41,759 views.

Seagull Festival

This was the second event of its kind hosted by the Visit Weston team, building on the success of the previous year.

Thank goes to Town Council staff and across the town who played a part in bringing the event to life. From the creation of the handcrafted trophies to the fantastic support of Artspace and the Museum, it was a real collaborative effort.

The community workshops were a particular highlight, bringing dozens of children together to create their own hand puppets and helping to build excitement and anticipation ahead of the event.





We were keen to build on the success of last year's event and develop the concept even further. We were delighted to welcome back three-time Junior European Champion Cooper Wallace and his younger sister, Shelby, alongside a series of lively demonstrations around the town from the Kittiwake Border Morris Dancers. Our panel of esteemed judges also returned to help select this year's worthy winners.

We received more than 30 entries this year, with many competitors embracing the spirit of the occasion by dressing up for the event. Junior winner Daniel travelled all the way from Croydon to take part, while our adult winner, Trish, made the journey from Hebden Bridge in West Yorkshire to swoop in and claim the top prize.



The event attracted significant media attention, with reporters from both the BBC and ITV attending on the day.

Ahead of the event, Cooper and Shelby took part in a studio interview, helping to generate extensive coverage across a range of mainstream media channels. We also secured two interviews with BBC Bristol, while the story reached audiences further afield, making headline news in Ireland after being picked up by 96FM.

Interest has continued to build following the event, with Good Morning TV, Heart Radio and the Chris Evans' Breakfast Show on Virgin Radio also looking to interview Trish and capture her now-famous squawk.

Building on this momentum, our ambition is to take the event to the next level in 2027 by creating a truly national competition. We plan to stage the final at a significantly larger and more prominent venue, such as the Winter Gardens or the Grand Pier.

The vision is to invite other Visitor Information Centres from across the UK including Seaside/coastal town like Blackpool, Brighton, Falmouth, Great Yarmouth and Whitby, etc... to host their own regional heats. The winners would then come together for a major festival-style national final.



Super Weston website

Our web development team, Squarebird, is progressing the build and architecture of the new Visit Weston website. Alongside this work, we have been undertaking a comprehensive review of the existing Town Council website, identifying and preparing the content that needs to be transferred to the new platform.

As the new page layouts are delivered, we will begin populating the site, while also addressing the content gaps we have identified. This gives us an important opportunity to create a website that is not simply a replacement for the existing platform, but a significantly stronger and more relevant resource for the residents of Weston-super-Mare.

A key part of our approach is strengthening the network of organisations contributing to the website. We are developing excellent relationships with new stakeholders and collaborators, including Bristol Airport and Wessex Water, alongside our established partnerships with the BID, Weston College, The Hive and the Chamber of Commerce.

The result will be a highly engaging and authoritative website, rich in genuine grassroots content and local information, while fully accommodating the governance and statutory requirements currently delivered through the Town Council website. Our intention is to create a platform that properly reflects the town, its communities, businesses and ambitions.

ModernGov will also be fully integrated into the new site, together with a new CRM system. This will follow the planned overhaul of our existing IT infrastructure, ensuring that the technology supporting the website is robust, efficient and fit for the future.

We will be working closely with Squarebird and our wider partners. We have a clear programme of work in place and are firmly focused on launching the new Visit Weston website before the end of the year.

We are also working closely with Weston College, which is exploring the opportunity to incorporate content creation for the website into its student curriculum as an assessed project. This would see media students producing fresh, relevant content for the platform on a regular weekly basis.

The benefits of this partnership are considerable. Not only will it provide the website with a consistent stream of authentic, locally generated content, but it will also give students valuable real-world experience and a genuine platform for their work.



Importantly, it will encourage young people who are growing up and studying in Weston to have a vested interest in how their town is viewed and appreciated by other local residents.

Christmas Celebrations

Last year's Christmas Tree Switch-On celebration attracted a fantastic turnout, with residents and families coming together to enjoy what proved to be a hugely popular community event.

Building on that success, we are working closely with the BID to develop this year's celebration even further. Our ambition is to make the evening much more than a traditional Christmas lights switch-on; we want to create a genuine community occasion that families look forward to and enjoy together.

Following lots of emails and ongoing discussions with the PR team at Costa Coffee, we have managed to secure additional resources and support that will help us enhance the event.

We would therefore be delighted to see as many Councillors as possible, joining us in the Italian Gardens on Saturday 14th November in support of the event.

Visit Weston Networking Event

Date for your diary: we will be hosting a Partnership Meet & Greet at 32 Waterloo Street at 6pm on 4 November. The evening will provide an opportunity to bring our partners and stakeholders together, strengthen relationships and share some of the exciting work currently taking place across the town.

We will be talking in more detail about the launch of the new Visit Weston website, our ambitions for the platform and the different ways in which we are supporting our partners and wider initiatives throughout Weston.

We are also delighted to welcome presentations from Bristol Airport and The Grand Pier, together with what promises to be a particularly interesting and thought-provoking discussion with the team from Weston College on tourism and the visitor economy.

Warren Parker-Mills

Communication & Visitor Experience Manager – 27th August 2026

AMENITIES, CULTURE & LEISURE COMMITTEE 7th SEPTEMBER 2026

Christmas Lights Switch-On Event 2026 – Event Update

Report of the CEO/Town Clerk

1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the proposed programme for the 2026 Christmas Lights Switch-On event.

The event forms part of the Council's Service Level Agreement with the Town Centre Partnership and has been provided by the Manager/BID, who act as the Council's appointed event organiser for the Christmas Lights Switch-On.

The proposed event schedule has been provided by Darren Fairchild, BID/ Town Centre Manager, for Members' information.

2. Background

The annual Christmas Lights Switch-On is a key event within the town centre events programme and provides an opportunity to bring residents and visitors into Weston-super-Mare town centre at the start of the festive period.

The Town Centre Manager is responsible for coordinating and delivering the event under the Council's existing Service Level Agreement, working with the Town Council, local businesses, performers, sponsors and other partners.

The programme proposed for 2026 includes a combination of markets, family entertainment, live music, the formal Christmas Lights Switch-On and fireworks from the seafront.

3. Proposed Event Programme

The proposed schedule is as follows:

- **12.00pm** – Open Air Market opens in the Town Square, comprising a mixture of traditional and Christmas market stalls.
- **12.00pm** – Traditional fairground carousel opens in the Town Square, with free rides for children.
- **2.00pm** – Entertainment begins in the Italian Gardens, featuring local musicians and Rock Choir. Street entertainment will also commence within the High Street, including stilt walkers and fire performers.
- **4.00pm** – Weston Brass Band performs festive music in the Town Square.



Agenda Item 9

- **4.30pm** – The Weston Welcomers will begin guiding visitors towards the Italian Gardens ahead of the formal switch-on.
- **5.00pm** – Welcome from the Mayor of Weston-super-Mare and Councillors, followed by the arrival of Albert the Donkey.
- **5.15pm** – Christmas carols performed by the Band of Bugles from the Somerset Army Cadet Force.
- **5.30pm** – The Christmas lights and town illuminations will be formally switched on by the Mayor and the winner of the Christmas Card Competition.
- **5.45pm** – The Band of Bugles and the Mayor will travel along the High Street towards Big Lamp Corner. The Mayor will pause outside Costa Coffee to acknowledge and thank the business for its sponsorship and support.
- **6.00pm** – Visitors will be encouraged to make their way along Regent Street towards the Grand Pier ahead of the fireworks display. The Christmas Card Competition winner and their family will receive VIP access to the Grand Pier balcony to view the fireworks over the seafront.

4. Council Involvement

The Town Council's involvement in the event will include the formal civic element of the Christmas Lights Switch-On, including participation by the Mayor and Councillors.

Operational delivery and coordination of the wider event programme will remain with the BID/Town Centre Manager as the Council's appointed event organiser under the existing Service Level Agreement.

Officers will continue to liaise with the BID/Town Centre Manager as plans are finalised and to ensure that the Council's civic and communications requirements are appropriately coordinated.

5. Financial Implications

The event is being delivered through the Council's existing arrangements with the Town Centre Manager/BID under the relevant Service Level Agreement and approved budget provision.

Any material variation requiring additional Town Council expenditure would be reported through the appropriate Council approval process.

6. Recommendation

Members are requested to:



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1. Note the proposed programme for the 2026 Christmas Lights Switch-On event;



Amenities, Culture and Leisure Committee Play & Sports Strategy Development Update Director of Community Services / Deputy Town Clerk

1. Overview of the Sports and Play Consulting Limited report

Sports and Play Consulting has provided a progress update on the development of the Council's Play and Sports Strategy 2026–2036. An asset register covering 42 Town Council and North Somerset Council play and free access sports sites has been completed, together with initial site visits and stakeholder engagement. Community consultation is commencing and will continue through September, alongside mapping of existing provision, community need and gaps in facilities.

Work is progressing on the main Strategy, which will include strategic objectives, community engagement findings, an assessment of existing facilities and gaps, a prioritised action plan, financial and delivery considerations, community outcomes and measures of success. Appendices will include good-practice design principles and masterplans for 2/ 3 key strategic sites.

Further engagement with relevant local and national partners will take place during September, with consultation findings incorporated during September and October. Completion of the Strategy is currently scheduled for 30 October 2026, followed by an optional post completion review in November.

Members are recommended to:

Note this report.

Fay Powell

Director of Community Services/ Deputy Town Clerk

27.08.2026

Sports and Play Consulting Limited

Preliminary Update for Amenities Committee: August 2026 - for
September Amenities Meeting

Project	Play and Sports Strategy 2026–2036
Commencement	1 st of July 2026
Expected Completion	30 th of October 2026

Purpose of this update

This preliminary update sets out the expected structure, communication rhythm, and development approach for the Play and Sports Strategy 2026–2036. It is intended to help the Amenities Committee understand how the work will progress between commencement and completion.

Process

The update provides an overview of the actions and timeframes expected between commencement and completion of the Play and Sports Strategy.

Council engagement

The process will include intermittent updates prior to scheduled Amenities Committee meetings; alongside monthly Teams calls with Sarah Pearse and Fay Powell.

Strategy development

The process and content of the *Strategy* will remain flexible and responsive to Council feedback, ensuring that the final information meets the requirements of WSM Town Council and associated stakeholders.

Proposed Updates

Action	Who	Proposed Date
Amenities Update	Sports and Play Consulting	6 th of July 2026 - Completed
Amenities Update	Sports and Play Consulting	28 th of August 2026 - Completed (Enclosed)
Teams Call Update	Sports and Play Consulting, Sarah Pearse and Fay Powell	31 st of August 2026 - Scheduled
Teams Call Update	Sports and Play Consulting, Sarah Pearse and Fay Powell	30 th of September 2026 - Scheduled
Amenities Update and Completion of Report	Sports and Play Consulting	30 th of October 2026
Post Completion Review – Teams Call (Optional)	Sports and Play Consulting, Amenities Committee	Early - Mid November 2026

Proposed Contents

1. Foreword – purpose of this strategy – if we draft this would someone at the Town Council like to ‘underwrite’ it?
2. Executive Summary
3. Understanding the needs of WsM – profile & brief overview of the town population, demographics, changing needs & requirements for play, sports & recreation
4. A: Strategic Context – how this strategy links to the Council’s 10-year Strategy
B: Strategic Objectives – aims of *this* strategy
C: Linking Strategy in with existing national policies, and local initiatives and groups relevant to recreation play and sports activities and outcomes
5. Community engagement & conversations – options/ suggestions/ priorities
6. Existing Facilities & Gaps in Provision – demonstrated though map graphics
7. Facilities Development & Prioritised Action Plan
8. Delivery Plan: Timescales, Expected Costs, Budget Plan
9. Outcomes for the Community
10. Monitoring & Success Measures
11. Suggested Next Steps
12. Appendices:
 - a. Good practice and design principles for recreational Sports and Play provision
 - b. Masterplans for key strategic sites: 2-3 sites

c. Consultees

Monthly Actions (July - October)

Month / Date	Action	Owner	Status
June	Compile Asset Register of Play and Free Access Sports sites across WSM	SPC – WSM TC to verify and advise	Completed – totalling 42 sites including WSM and NSC sites.
July (1st – 2nd)	Visit key sites across WSM	SPC	Completed
July	Provide requested information by SPC – mainly contact details of internal staff	Fay Powell	Provided
July	Submit Proposed <u>Strategy Contents</u> for Council approval	SPC – Amenities Committee	TBA – Refer Above – check at Update Meeting (31 st August)
July	Engage with any key stakeholders and groups	SPC	Completed / Ongoing – refer to consultee list sent to Fay in August
Early August (Approx 4 - 6 Weeks)	Undertake Consultation Stage	WSM Town Council with limited (questions for key locations) support from SPC	To Start/Ongoing Molly Matthews advised plan to initiate consultations at key schools and parks over August and September
August - September	Mapping key data related to existing facilities, community health, affluence & opportunity, wellbeing. Identify gaps & cross-over of provision	SPC	Started/Ongoing
July - September	Building the main structure and content of the Strategy	SPC	Started/Ongoing
September	Incorporating Financial Planning and Considerations	WSM Town Council & SPC – Finance / S106 officers / Owner of Grants	This component may have to change or be amended based on financial details from WSM – Budgetary investment will be

			included however less detail on where the funding will come from – discuss on Teams Update in August
September	Incorporating existing initiatives, frameworks, local partnerships, and other policies that are relevant to the Strategy	SPC with :- Wesport Pride in Place New National Planning Policy Framework North Somerset – Get active Play England Sport England Better Health NS Make Space for Girls For All Health Local Police	TBA
September – October	Incorporating results of consultations and community engagement	WSM TC consultations Pride in Place Wesport	TBA
September – October	Draft appendices, incorporating: masterplan layouts for key destination sites Good practice guide & design principles for implementation	SPC	TBA