

Term: Spring 2018
Issue: 1
Date: May 2018

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The West Somerset Opportunity Area

Welcome to the first newsletter for the Opportunity Area (OA) programme in West Somerset. We have designed this newsletter to keep you updated as the work progresses across the West Somerset OA.



Pictured:

The Secretary of State, Damian Hinds with local councillors and partnership board members Mandy Chilcott and Frances Nicholson.

Secretary of State visit to the new Nuclear College

On Tuesday the 10th of April, the Secretary of State for the Department for Education, Damian Hinds, visited the New Nuclear College at Cannington site of the Bridgwater and Taunton College.

During his visit the Secretary of State met members from the West Somerset Opportunity Area Partnership Board to find out about progress to date and better understand the challenges the area faced.

The West Somerset Opportunity Area delivery plan

The Opportunity Area programme is a flagship policy at the heart of the Government's ambition to drive up social mobility and improve outcomes for young people.

The West Somerset Opportunity Area delivery plan was part of the first six wave of Opportunity Areas published in October 2017.

Click [here](#) for a link to the published plan.



The four priorities set out in the published plan



Priority One: Ensuring that every child has a great start in life.



Priority Two: Achieving educational excellence in the classroom.



Priority Three: Ensuring that there is a smooth transition into adulthood for West Somerset's young people.



Priority Four: Improving young people's skills for employment and business.

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Working in partnership across West Somerset - the Department for Education

Jan Downie and Lottie Jones representing the Department for Education will continue to work closely with the West Somerset Partnership Board, Julia Ridge (the local programme manager) and the four priority working groups to shape the activities set out in the delivery plan and leave a memorable legacy for future generations.

We are working with local partners to make sure that we engage effectively and in a range of ways.

“I am delighted to have been asked to Chair the West Somerset Opportunity Area Partnership Board. Our vision is to create a culture where all children in West Somerset have the best opportunities to learn, achieve and gain worthwhile and progressive employment.”

Dr. Fiona McMillan



List of Partnership Board members

- Alison Bell:** Public Health Somerset
- Andy Berry:** Bridgwater and Taunton College
- Chris Garcia:** Heart of the South West LEP
- Corinne Matthews:** West Somerset Economic Development
- Fiona McMillan:** Independent Chair of the West Somerset Opportunity Area partnership board
- Frances Nicholson:** Somerset County Council
- Jim Whittaker:** Channel Group
- Julian Wooster:** Somerset County Council
- Mandy Chilcott:** West Somerset District Council
- Marcus Capel:** Cutcombe and Timberscombe first schools
- Mel Roberts:** Somerset County Council
- Naomi Griffith:** Onion Collective Community Development
- Paul Rushforth:** West Somerset Academy Trust
- Peter Elliott:** Bridgwater College Academy Trust
- Tom Thayer:** EDF Energy

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OUTSTANDING

Ofsted News:

Inspector was 'blown away' by Cheeky Cherubs!



CONGRATULATIONS - Cheeky Cherubs nursery received an 'outstanding' [Ofsted inspection](#) after an inspection on 30th January 18.

The report praised the nursery's "extremely effective leadership", highly motivated enthusiastic staff and excellent relationships with parents and the emotional security of the children.

GOOD

Ofsted News:

A number of "Good" Ofsted ratings across West Somerset schools

CONGRATULATIONS - To the Staff , pupils and Governors at **Minehead Middle School, Crowcombe CEVA Primary School, Stogumber CEVA Primary School, Timberscombe C of E First School, Timberscombe Pre-School, Little Vikings Nursery and Little Horseshoe Nursery** for positive Ofsted reports, after they all achieved another 'Good' rating in their latest Ofsted reports since September 2017.

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Saturday 26th May 2018 at Blenheim Gardens, Minehead

11am to 5pm

Come and join us at;

“Naturally Healthy May”

The plan is to have an enjoyable and relaxed community Health and Wellbeing day!

Devon and Somerset's Local Nature Partnerships are marketing Naturally Healthy May again in 2018. As part of this Exmoor National Park Authority's Moor to Enjoy Project is organising a one day event – 'Naturally Healthy Minehead'.

The event will promote activities and information that help people achieve the Five Ways to Wellbeing. Activities provided will be a chance for people to try something new or pick up an activity they would like to do more of again! The activities will be things that people can do outdoors and/or that are inspired by the natural environment surrounding Minehead and Exmoor National Park.

Activities booked so far - Activities organised and booked to date are beach games with Channel Adventure, yoga, info on volunteering, Nordic walking, wellbeing workshop, guided walk, craft making, and a community picnic.

Come and see the West Somerset Opportunity Area OA stall to find out more about the West Somerset Opportunity Area.

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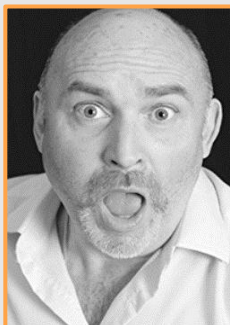


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PRIORITY 1



Story Sacks with Neil Griffiths

On 7th March Neil Griffiths the creator of “Story Sacks” came and gave a presentation of his work to the West Somerset Early Years Providers. Neil focused his speech on the value of storytelling and used his own childhood memories of stories read to him by his Dad to inspire us. His knowledge of learning, his gift of story, his passion for teaching and his love of children came over in abundance as he read and talked to us, his fellow practitioners and teachers. A further treat, courtesy of the West Somerset Opportunity Area, was a goodie bag of his famous titles and resources for all the Early Years providers and teachers in attendance. Project Team members from the West Somerset Opportunity area were also in attendance at the event and introduced to the audience, the many initiatives and activities that would be on offer over the coming months and years. All of this resulted in a thoroughly enjoyable, thought provoking and inspiring evening for all in attendance.

If you would like to learn more, please contact neil@cornertolearn.co.uk

Early Years Priority 1 Group and Early Years Staff

Staff from Early Years Cluster meetings and Inset days, have been putting ideas together for training events across the next 3 years. The staff will have the opportunity to be trained in “Emotion Coaching” to raise awareness of positive impact, daily practice and interactions supporting the Schools Speech, Language and Communication work.

If you would like to learn more, please contact the Priority 1 Lead:

Alison Bell – WSOA@somerset.gov.uk

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PRIORITY 2



Excellence in the classroom

Head teachers from every part of West Somerset have come together to ensure that we make the most of this opportunity for the children we have in our schools now and the children we will see into the future.

We have focused on the areas in which we can make the biggest difference;

- phonic knowledge;
- special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- leadership;
- transition between schools and
- mathematics.

Most of the work relates to training for teachers, teaching assistants and school leaders. Some, like the phonics work, will have a very rapid outcome as nearly all schools have chosen to adopt the same phonics scheme to train staff together

Much of the training however, will show impact towards the end of the project and into the years beyond. We are working with a large range of organisations including Somerset Local Authority, the Boolean Maths Hub, the Regional Schools Commissioner's office and the Research School based in Wells. Teachers and teaching assistants will each get details of how they can become involved after Easter as the training brochures start to come into schools. This is a great opportunity and we are determined to ensure the children of West Somerset benefit fully

Paul Rushforth Priority 2 Lead PZRushforth@educ.somerset.gov.uk



The West Somerset Research School at the Blue School, Wells

The Department for Education have funded a Research School for West Somerset, the Blue School in Wells (pictured above) which has been supported by the Education Endowment Foundation. The Research School will support schools in West Somerset to use evidence-based practice to improve teaching and learning for students.

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PRIORITY 3



West Somerset College

At West Somerset College, we will be using the Opportunity Area funding to improve the college's vocational facilities and help us broaden our curriculum offer at Key Stage 5. From September 2018, five new level 2 vocational courses will be available at the college:

5 New Level 2 Vocational Courses for 2018

- Catering and Hospitality (City & Guilds)
- Hairdressing (City & Guilds)
- Light Vehicle Maintenance (IMI)
- Maintenance Operations (City & Guilds)
- Work Skills (World of Work) (BTEC)

Supporting students progression post 16 and career development

In addition, we will encourage sixteen and seventeen year olds to take part in the prestigious National Citizenship Service programme.

We will extend the skills of our post 16 learners, providing high quality individual careers advice and guidance for all students by creating personal action plans for all students to support their progression and career development. We will also offer students access to inspiring, high impact, careers encounters.

Zoe Stucki – Head teacher, West Somerset College.

The Careers and Enterprise Company – cornerstone employers and enterprise days

The Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) have been collaborating with the schools and district and county councils to create a sustainable careers plan that increases the number of encounters students in the area will have with employers and employees. This will be driven forward by cornerstone employers, which includes EDF, Butlins, Miles Tea and the Onion Collective and implemented by a wide range of volunteers from local businesses.

Earlier this year, Emma Kelly from Butlins arranged a successful speed networking event at Minehead Middle School where all year 8 students had the opportunity to meet and interact with a wide range of local businesses.

While these relationships between the schools and businesses are being developed, the CEC has helped kick-start increasing the number of encounters for students by providing the schools with funding to spend on enterprise activities. In February, West Somerset College's Year 9 students took part in the Tenner Challenge and next month students from West Somerset, Danesfield and Minehead Middle will take part in enterprise days.

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PRIORITY 3



Somerset Talent Academies

Somerset Talent Academies are now taking place in West Somerset. This year students from West Somerset College joined others from Bridgwater and Taunton in the HPC Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Academy – working with a range of Tier 1 contractors including Bylor, Laing O’Rourke and Kier BAM, as well as visiting Hinkley Point C and working with EDF at Cannington Court.

Each Talent Academy is built around a particular industry sector and includes visits to local and regional employers, large and small, across Somerset and the South West. Talent Academies this year include aerospace, manufacturing, nursing & health, Teaching and Digital Skills. Young people in years 10 and year 11, with an interest in finding out more about careers and jobs in particular sectors are selected to attend 8 workshops with different employers. Employers who have delivered workshops this year include Yeo Valley, Leonardos, Mulberry, Yeovil District Hospital, Rolls Royce, Styles Ice Cream, Numatic and Taunton Fabrication.

This term West Somerset College is also piloting a Construction Talent Academy and a Catering & Hospitality Talent Academy, which will become the ideal way for young people to find out more about the post 16 vocational options being delivered at West Somerset College from this September 2018. Willmott Dixon and the CITB have been instrumental in providing Construction workshops that have included Virtual Reality building sites and information about the huge range of jobs across the Construction Industry.

For more information, please contact: Julie Young - JAYoung@somerset.gov.uk

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Pictured:
students attending the EDF STEM Talent Academy on a site tour of Hinkley Point C.

PRIORITY 4



WIN
£50
BOOK
TOKEN

New Opportunities for women in West Somerset

In addition to supporting schools and early years settings the West Somerset Opportunity Area funding is being used to support the development of skills to enable women to succeed in the world of work. As part of this, we would like to hear your answers to some of the challenges you may face to help us understand what support we can provide. We are particularly interested in:

- The barriers that prevent you and other women from accessing jobs and learning opportunities in and around West Somerset; and
- The type of support you would like to see available to help you, and other women, make the most of these opportunities.

Be in it to win it!

The survey should take you no more than five minutes to complete and, if you are happy to provide us with your contact details, you will also be entered into a prize draw to win a £50 book token.

Look out for other opportunities to have your say at schools, Job Centre Plus, West Somerset Employment Hubs and a range of other community venues.

Please note that this survey will close on Friday 11th May.

- Please click on [this link](#) to complete the survey.

For more information, please email Natalie Wainwright – NEWainwright@somerset.gov.uk

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West Somerset Essential Life Skills Grants

Grants to improve activities for young people in West Somerset

New grant schemes have been launched to help children and young people in West Somerset get involved in extra-curricular activities to help improve their confidence, health and wellbeing.

Individuals and groups can apply for Essential Life Skills grants to improve access to activities like sports, performance and creative arts, music, physical recreation and youth provision.

Young people can apply for a £350 grant to cover the cost of their chosen weekly activity for a year, and groups can apply for up to £5,000 to either develop new activities or expand existing ones. Groups including schools, voluntary organisations and activity providers can apply.

Individual grant applications need the backing of a responsible adult such as a teacher or youth worker and applications can be made at any time. Grant applications for groups will be assessed quarterly throughout the year.

Councillor Frances Nicholson, Cabinet Member for Children and Families at Somerset County Council, said: "Evidence shows that these sorts of activities boost young people's social skills and emotional wellbeing, and this in turn helps them develop the skills to achieve their potential.

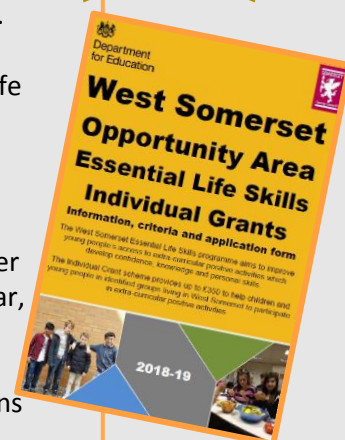
"This is a great opportunity and I hope groups and individuals across the area will seize it with both hands."

More information on the grants, funding deadlines and application forms are available from the Youth Funding pages of the Somerset Youth website. Anyone who has questions about the grant programme should contact SCC's Youth & Community Service.

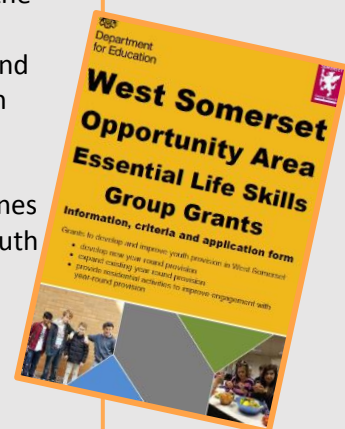
youthservice@somerset.gov.uk

[Click here to find out more](#)

£350
GRANTS



£5,000
GRANTS



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Young people - we want to hear from you!
We would like to have a young people's column as a regular feature of these newsletters.

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Thank you for reading please share it with colleagues, networks and friends.

If you have a suggestion for something we should look at, please email WSOA@somerst.gov.uk

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