

Sustainable Drainage

Developers

Designers

Community

Planners and
approvers

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) help to manage flood risk within Somerset. They help to protect homes, businesses, roads and services like schools and hospitals. They control the amount of rainfall and pollutants which run off paved surfaces, and enter our rivers, the Somerset Levels and eventually the sea. Well-designed SuDS also contribute to our resilience to climate change, and provide habitats for native wildlife in the county. They also provide places for communities to meet, play, exercise and enjoy nature.



This website has been developed to provide guidance, information, and useful links on SuDS for developers, planners and approvers, designers and community groups in Somerset. It also sets out Somerset Council's [local SuDS design standards](#) for Somerset.

Climate change



Climate change will affect the varied landscapes in Somerset in many ways. Wetter winters and more severe weather events will lead to more flooding. Combined with a rising sea level, this will place communities in low-lying areas, such as the Somerset Levels and Moors, at higher risk. Warmer and drier summers will see an increase in the risk of drought and added pressure on water supplies from a growing population.



In February 2019, the former County Council and the four District Councils (now the unitary authority, Somerset Council) declared 'a Climate Emergency'. This included a commitment to make Somerset carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of climate change. The local authorities prepared a [Climate Emergency Strategy for Somerset](#). Work is underway on the '[Adapting the Levels](#)' project. A partnership of local authorities, organisations, farmers and land managers will use natural processes to adapt to future climate change, flood risk and water availability.



SuDS can help communities build resilience against climate change. Features such as ponds and basins can store water in residential areas during storm events, to reduce flooding to communities downstream. Leafy and grassy SuDS features, like tree pits and green roofs, can provide a cooling effect against rising temperatures. Water butts and tanks can be used to collect and store rainwater and re-use it in the home, lowering the demand for water in times of drought.

[Water](#) ⇒

This website has been developed in partnership with local stakeholders in Somerset including Somerset Rivers Authority, Somerset Council (Lead Local Flood Authority, Local Planning Authority, Highways Authority), Wessex Water, Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium, Environment Agency, Highways Authority, Natural England, West Somerset Flood Board, Somerset Wildlife Trust, Somerset Catchment Partnership and West Country Rivers Trust.

Ever wonder where the rain goes?

Ever wondered where the rain goes? Sustainable drainage animation



This video, produced by Susdrain, gives a useful introduction to why we need SuDS, what they are and what benefits they can bring.

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