



Carnivals In Somerset Promotion Project
www.cispp.org.uk

Wessex Grand Prix Circuit
Somerset Federation
Somerset County Guy Fawkes Carnival Association

Somerset's Illuminated Carnivals

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Thanks to our sponsors

- Also...**
- Midsomer Norton www.mndca.co.uk
 - Weston-super-Mare www.northsomerset.co.uk
 - Glastonbury www.glastonburycarnival.com
 - Wells www.wellscarnival.co.uk
 - Shepton Mallet www.sheptonmalletcarnival.org.uk
 - Burnham-on-Sea www.highbridgelandburnhamcarnival.org
 - North Petherton www.northpethertoncarnival.co.uk
 - Bridgwater www.bridgwatercarnival.org.uk
 - Somerset County Guy Fawkes Carnival Association**
 - Taunton tauntontic@tauntondeane.gov.uk
 - Chard chard.tic@chard.gov.uk
 - Ilminster www.ilminstercarnival.co.uk
 - Wellington willingtontic@tauntondeane.gov.uk
 - South Somerset Federation**
 - Warmminster smajor2@toucansurf.com
 - Trowbridge maryrose@trowbridge.gov.uk
 - Castle Cary www.castlecary.org.uk
 - Shaftesbury gill.wallis@tiscali.co.uk
 - Gillingham www.gillinghamcarnival.org.uk
 - Frome www.fromecarnival.org.uk
 - Mere tal@vpml.co.uk
 - Sturminster Newton www.sturminstercarnival.co.uk

Get in touch—and get involved!

Find out more about the Somerset carnivals, from the clubs and the carnival committees who make it happen, every year

Carnival town contacts



Somerset carnivals are organised into circuits, which are friendly competitions. The Wessex Grand Prix Carnival circuit (which includes carnivals in Wiltshire and Dorset) comprises Sturminster Newton, Mere, Frome, Shaftesbury, Gillingham, Castle Cary, Trowbridge and Warmminster.

The South Somerset Federation circuit comprises Wellington, Ilminster, Chard and Taunton.

The Somerset County Guy Fawkes Carnival Association circuit starts with Bridgwater carnival then North Petherton, Burnham-on-sea, Shepton Mallet, Wells, Glastonbury and Weston-super-mare. There is also the Midsomer Norton carnival.

Carnival clubs and groups travel many miles to raise thousands of pounds each year for local charities and good causes.

Carnivals about...?

What are Somerset

Somerset carnivals have a unique 400-year-old history, that starts with bonfires and the burning of effigies of Guy Fawkes, in Bridgwater. Torchlight processions followed, thus starting the tradition of carnival processions, which have developed into the great processions of today. Other rural carnivals have a different history. For example, Castle Cary's began in 1920, to celebrate the return of soldiers (known as a 'Tommy') from the First World War. The processions involved decorated hay carts pulled by horses, lit by torchlight, and accompanied by walkers. Like the Bridgwater processions, they too ended in a bonfire.



A few Carnival facts

- Somerset carnivals date back to the 1605 Gunpowder Plot
- Carnival floats are commonly referred to as 'carts' in Somerset, as they were historically horse-drawn vehicles
- Carnivals comprise illuminated floats or carts, costumed individual masqueraders, walking groups of costumed masqueraders, bands, majorettes and other exhibits
- Feature carts are all-action movement shows; tableau carts portray a static scene; comic features aim to amuse the crowds
- Carnivals typically take over 2 hours to pass any spot on a two-mile route, usually from around 7.30 pm to 10.00 pm
- Carts can be up to 100ft long, 11ft wide and 16.4ft high; they can use up to 20,000 lamps
- Carts can cost around £20,000 to construct; organising committees spend up to £30,000 annually to stage their carnival
- Cart designs are chosen early in the year and are guarded with utmost secrecy until the carnival season begins
- Over 70 judges attend, and around 50 cups are awarded, at each Somerset carnival
- Bridgwater carnival culminates in the unique 'squibbing' display of over 150 giant squibs attached to coshes let off simultaneously
- Over £93,000 was collected at the Somerset County carnivals in 2009 and went towards the costs of staging the carnivals, and to local charities and organisations



Carnival Dates 2010

Wessex Grand Prix circuit

Aug	21	Sturminster Newton	7.15pm
Sep	18	Mere	7.30pm
Sep	25	Frome	7.00pm
Oct	2	Shaftesbury	7.00pm
Oct	9	Gillingham	7.15pm
Oct	16	Castle Cary	7.30pm
Oct	23	Trowbridge	7.00pm
Oct	30	Warmminster	7.00pm

South Somerset Federation

Sep	25	Wellington	7.30pm
Oct	2	Ilminster	7.15pm
Oct	9	Chard	7.15pm
Oct	16	Taunton	7.00pm

Somerset County Guy Fawkes Carnival Association

Nov	5	Bridgwater	7.00pm
Nov	6	North Petherton	7.00pm
Nov	8	Burnham-on-Sea	7.30pm
Nov	10	Shepton Mallet	7.30pm
Nov	12	Wells	7.00pm
Nov	13	Glastonbury	7.00pm
Nov	15	Weston-super-Mare	7.15pm

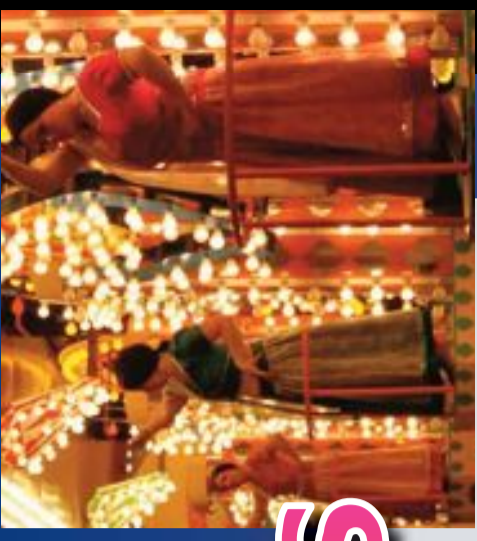
Independent

Nov	11	Midsomer Norton	7.30pm
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A Splendid Time is Guaranteed For All!

Somerset's Illuminated Carnivals



**Somerset County
Guy Fawkes
Carnival Association**

Bridgwater
North Petherton
Burnham-on-Sea
Shepton Mallet
Wells
Glastonbury
Weston-super-Mare

**Wessex
Grand Prix Circuit**

Sturminster Newton
Mere
Frome
Shaftesbury
Gillingham
Castle Cary
Trowbridge
Warminster

**South Somerset
Federation**

Wellington
Ilminster
Chard
Taunton

