



## Somer Valley Breastfeeding Welcome: Information for Venues

By signing up to the Breastfeeding Welcome scheme, businesses and venues are contributing to helping babies get the best start, by supporting and empowering parents to feed when out and about. The Breastfeeding Welcome scheme is an easy way for businesses and venues to support breastfeeding.

### Why is it important to provide a breastfeeding welcome space?

- **Eight out of ten mothers will stop breastfeeding before they want to.** The reasons for this include: a lack of access to support services in the community and at work, cultural barriers and misinformation. **Increasing the frequency of mothers breastfeeding in public, is likely to contribute to the reduction of stigma around breastfeeding<sup>1</sup>.**
- The Equality Act (2010) states that **it is discrimination to treat a parent unfavourably because they are breastfeeding.** It applies to anyone providing services, benefits, facilities and premises to the public, public bodies, further and higher education bodies and association<sup>2</sup>.
- **Breastfeeding rates in Somer Valley are lower than in other areas of Bath and North East Somerset<sup>3</sup>.**
- The World Health Organisation recommends exclusive breastfeeding for about the first 6 months, with continued breastfeeding along with introducing appropriate complementary foods for up to 2 years of age or longer<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> UNICEF (2017). *Removing the barriers to breastfeeding: a call to action*. Available from: [www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2017/07/Barriers-to-Breastfeeding-Briefing-The-Baby-Friendly-Initiative.pdf](http://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2017/07/Barriers-to-Breastfeeding-Briefing-The-Baby-Friendly-Initiative.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Equality Act (2010): *What do I need to know?* Available from: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/85008/business-quickstart.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85008/business-quickstart.pdf) [Accessed 7 January 2022].

<sup>3</sup> HCRG Care Group (2022). Tableau data, provided by email on 21 February 2022.

<sup>4</sup> World Health Organisation. Breastfeeding. Available from: [www.who.int/health-topics/breastfeeding](http://www.who.int/health-topics/breastfeeding)



According to UNICEF<sup>5</sup> Breastfeeding has the following benefits:

- **Infant health:** Breastfeeding protects children from a vast range of illnesses, including infection, diabetes, asthma, heart disease and obesity, as well as sudden infant death syndrome
- **Maternal health:** Breastfeeding also protects mothers from breast and ovarian cancers and heart disease
- **Relationship-building:** Breastfeeding supports the mother-baby relationship
- **Cost savings:** Breastfeeding contributes to significant savings to the NHS.
- **Supporting breastfeeding can help mitigate climate change:** It is a “green” infant feeding practice compared to infant formula<sup>6</sup>.

### What’s in it for us?

- **Repeat custom** – parents will feel welcomed and will want to return, plus they will tell their friends!
- **Your venue will be promoted** online as a breastfeeding welcome venue.

### What do we need to do to sign up?

We will ask you to sign a charter and display either a Breastfeeding Welcome sticker or certificate, which we will provide.

For further information and to register interest, please email [Breastfeeding\\_Welcome@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:Breastfeeding_Welcome@bathnes.gov.uk)

We look forward to hearing from you!

This information sheet makes recommendations for women and mothers. For simplicity of language, the charter uses the term women/mothers throughout, but this should be taken to also include people who do not identify as women but who are breast or bottle-feeding.

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<sup>5</sup>Benefits of Breastfeeding [web page]. <https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/about/benefits-of-breastfeeding/>

<sup>6</sup> Research on breastfeeding and climate change [web page]. [www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/news-and-research/baby-friendly-research/research-supporting-breastfeeding/research-on-breastfeeding-and-climate-change/](http://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/news-and-research/baby-friendly-research/research-supporting-breastfeeding/research-on-breastfeeding-and-climate-change/))