

# Countdown to Silica as work begins ...

WORK has started to build a £280,000 landmark piece of art in the centre of Weston.

The 26m high spire called Silica is expected to take three months to complete. Once finished, it will house a retail kiosk and bus shelter.

Lit by over 2,500 glass prisms containing energy efficient LEDs, the spire has been designed to reflect light in the day and be lit by coloured lights at night.

Boards will be placed around the site while the work is carried out. These will be covered in artwork produced by students from Weston College and pupils from Herons' Moor Primary School to form a public exhibition.

North Somerset Council hopes the spire will attract people to that part of town and encourage more shoppers into the Orchard Meadows area.

A digital display on the structure will scroll details of forthcoming events or public information such as motorway hold-ups.

People will also be able to pay to have a message on the display ring for special occasions such as a birthday.

Income generated from the information ring and the kiosk, which is expected to be used as a food and drinks outlet, will go towards maintaining the structure.

Silica, which is 3.5m wide, was designed by a team of designers led by Nottingham-based art firm Wolfgang and Heron.

Artist Wolfgang Buttress said: "The idea behind Silica is how sand becomes glass and creating a link between Weston beach and Big Lamp Corner. There are ripples in the concrete to reflect the marks left in the sand when the sea goes out."

Report by **CLARE HAYES**  
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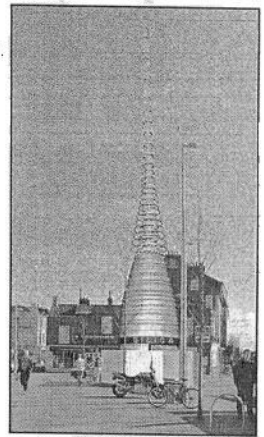
The council's executive member for strategic planning, Councillor John Crockford-Hawley, said: "This is a challenging piece of work and will challenge people to have opinions, which is what art is all about."

"Weston people will be talking about it for many years and visitors will find it

equally impressive. I am personally putting my own reputation on the block because I am convinced this is just the sort of thing we need in Weston."

While the work is being carried out buses will stop further down Oxford Street, outside Burtons.

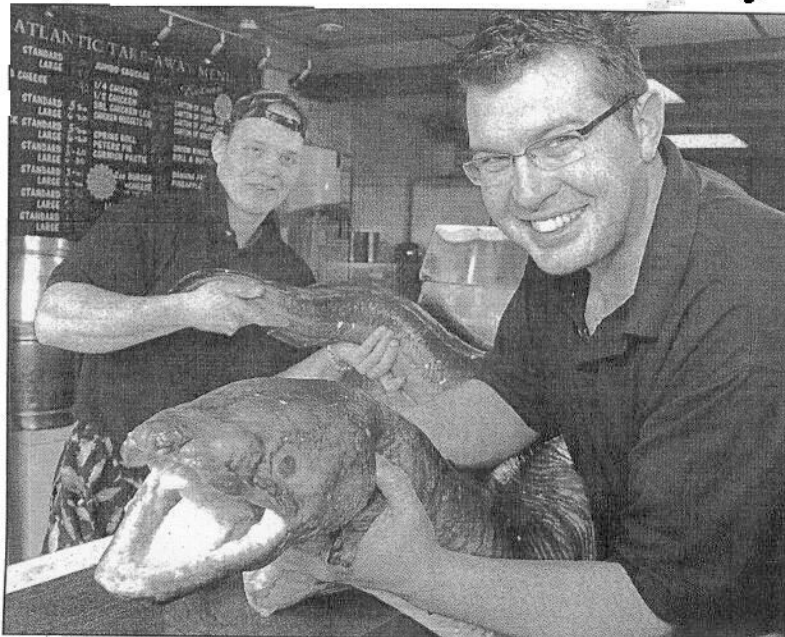
Silica is being funded by the regional development agency, Weston Tourism, North Somerset Council and Weston Town Council.



## The Silica schedule:

- Week beginning March 27 - Work started to remove the old bus shelter and a tree.
- Week beginning April 3 - Foundations laid and four piles placed 24m into the ground.
- April 10-21 - Public exhibition put up.
- May 14 - The frame is put up.
- May 22 - Frame is covered with stone cladding.
- May 31 - Kiosk fitted out.
- June 25 - The mast will be installed using two cranes.

## Whopper eel cooked for charity



WESTON, Bath and North East Somerset Council has been busy with a special event to raise money for charity. A large eel was cooked and served to the public. The event was held at the Weston Community Centre and was a great success. The eel was cooked by a local chef and served with a special sauce. The money raised will go towards the Weston Community Centre and will be used to improve the facilities. The event was held on Saturday afternoon and was attended by many people. The eel was a real highlight of the event and was enjoyed by everyone. The Weston Community Centre is a great place and we are proud to have such a successful event. We will be holding more events in the future and we hope to see you at them. Thank you to everyone who supported the event and to the Weston Community Centre for making it possible.

By Ruthie Bell  
Bath and North East Somerset Council

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