

Somerset West and Taunton

Newsletter to SWT Councillors and Parish Councils

Issue 41. Week ending 17/01/21

#StayAtHome #ProtectTheNHS #SaveLives

It is also important to remember the Coronavirus basics

- **Hands** – Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds
- **Face** – Cover your face in enclosed spaces
- **Space** – Keep 2m apart where possible

SWT Council priorities

Somerset West and Taunton Council's updated priorities during the Coronavirus pandemic are as follows:

- Preserve critical services;
- Safeguard the public;
- Ensure our most vulnerable residents are supported; and
- Planning economic resilience and recovery

The situation is being reviewed on a daily basis to ensure that the Council follows the [latest advice from Public Health England](#).

[Click here](#) to read up to date information on how SWT continues to respond to Coronavirus.

Key Messages this week

1. Covid-19 vaccinations in Somerset

Health and care teams across Somerset are working exceptionally hard to roll out our local Covid-19 vaccination programme in Somerset in line with the Joint Committee of Vaccination and Immunisation's prioritisation and they are continuing to vaccinate people aged 80 and over, care home residents and staff, as well as widening out the offer to frontline health and social care staff.

It is known that patients and all health and care staff are eager to find out when they will receive their Covid vaccination. The NHS is prioritising vaccinating those people who, experts have agreed, will benefit from it the most and they

are systematically working through all eligible groups according to the national priorities.

Please do not call or turn up at your GP surgery or the local hospital to enquire about Covid vaccinations.

People are asked to support the NHS:

- By not contacting GPs and health services about vaccinations. You will be contacted when it is your turn to be invited for your vaccination. Some phone lines are jammed with people asking about vaccinations and this is preventing people who need help from getting through.
- When contacted, please attend your booked appointments
- Please continue to follow all the guidance to control the spread of the virus and save lives.

Please continue to attend any appointments as planned – if there is a requirement to change any details for your vaccination appointment you will be contacted directly.

2. SWT to simplify grant claims process

SWT is finalising a scheme to simplify the claims process for business grants being administered on behalf of the Government. The Council has processed a range of mandatory and discretionary grants throughout the various tier restrictions and lockdowns each with differing criteria and application windows. It has delivered funding of over £47m to eligible local businesses so far including payments totalling £2,522,960 for the Second National Lockdown period and £605,000 for Tier 2 restrictions.

Local authorities are still waiting for details around one-off tier 4 payments as well as funding for Tier 3, 4 and the Third National Lockdown, which are expected in mid-January. In the meantime, SWT is planning to implement the new claims process as quickly as possible.

The new system will allow businesses to register their details with SWT enabling the Council to identify their potential entitlement to the various schemes and invite them to submit applications via a simple e-mail process. Businesses which have previously successfully claimed for support during the Second National Lockdown or Tier 2 periods will not need to re-register.

Please continue to keep an eye on the [SWT website](#) for further information. If you have not already done so SWT would advise you to sign up for the [business newsletter](#) so you can be kept informed when further grant schemes become available.

Please [click here](#) to read the full SWT press release.

3. The Somerset Coronavirus Support Helpline

In Somerset, the Councils have responded to over 11,000 phone calls on the Coronavirus Support Helpline and have emailed or written to over 22,000 residents shielding to advise them of the helpline and to make contact if they need support.

This single phone number is available for anyone in Somerset who needs coronavirus-related support from their councils. The **0300 790 6275** number is available seven days per week 8am – 6pm.

Anyone who can't find help within their own local networks and volunteers, can use this number to get help and advice around:

- Personal care and support including food and delivery of prescriptions
- Support for the homeless
- Emotional support if you're feeling worried or anxious
- Transport to medical appointments
- Waste collection and disposal
- Financial support

This number won't cover medical advice, for which people will need to continue to use the 111 NHS phone number if they cannot get help online. If you would like to find out more about the Corona helpers, offer assistance, or need support please [click here](#).

4. Democracy and Governance

Committee Meetings

You can search by Committee or by the monthly calendar for details of all [Committee meetings](#). Here you can find the agendas and minutes of all meetings, as well as which Councillors sit on each Committee.

A number of Committee meetings are scheduled to take place over the next couple of weeks, which are as follows:

- Monday 18 January – **Licensing Committee**, 6.15pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Wednesday 13 January)
- Wednesday 20 January – **Executive**, 6.15pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Friday 15 January)
- Wednesday 27 January – **Scrutiny Committee (budget setting)**, 6.15pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Friday 22 January)

The meetings will all be live streamed so that members of the public can watch at home. To watch the live stream when the meeting commences please visit the SWT website by [clicking here](#). If you are not able to watch the meeting live, you can also watch it after the meeting.

Members of the public are still able to participate in the meeting by submitting their questions or statement to the Governance Team via governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk and these will be read out by an officer at the meeting. Please see the dates listed above re deadlines for submitting questions or statements.

5. Leisure operator offers top home fitness tips to tackle lockdown inactivity

Local leisure operator Everyone Active has released its top home exercises to combat inactivity following the announcement of a third national lockdown.

January is traditionally a popular month to begin a new fitness regime, but the Blackbrook Leisure Centre and Spa, Taunton Swimming Pool, Wellsprings Leisure Centre, Wellington Sports Centre and Vivary Golf and Adventure Centre, managed by Everyone Active in partnership with Somerset West and Taunton Council, are currently closed in line with Government guidance.

With gyms due to be shut until at least Monday 15 February in a bid to tackle Covid-19, alternative ways to keep fit will play a key role in the health of local residents. Please [click here](#) to read the full SWT press release.

6. Housing and Communities Directorate Update

In response to the most recent lockdown announcement, SWT has galvanised the organisation's business continuity plans, and a review of essential services has taken place.

The services listed below have been deemed essential to our customers and therefore need to be maintained, regardless of continued Covid-19 challenges.

- **Responsive Repairs** - Emergency works and all external works (i.e. both emergency and non-emergency works) only. SWT will continue to log all requests for repairs and make contact with residents to arrange appointments when appropriate to do so.
- **Capital Programme** – Roofline, external painting, door replacement, roofing, and door entry systems to continue. All other planned capital works programmes to be put on hold.
- **Supported Housing** – face-to face meetings to continue to be avoided/reduced when possible. Periodic inspections of Sheltered Housing schemes to continue as part of hazard/compliance checks.
- **Extra Care (Kilkenny and Lodge Close)** the provider of these facilities have introduced a sensitive lockdown which includes the ceasing of social and family visits whilst allowing support to continue.
- **Tenants Support** - face-to face meetings to be avoided where possible. In some high risk / sensitive cases (e.g. ASB, safeguarding) a risk assessed face to face meeting may still be required.
- **Rent Recovery** – work to continue, avoiding face to face meetings as far as possible, court attendance may still be required.
- **Homelessness Service** – face to face meetings avoided where possible

- **Rough Sleeping Service** – in compliance with agreed risk assessed controls, including acceptance of new clients and working practises, in conformance with requirements of Minister for Homelessness (letter 30/12/20).
- **Development and Regeneration** - Construction site activity and supervision to continue with appropriate measures in place.

The above list is not exhaustive and is subject to very regular review so is likely to change.

7. ShopAppy – Why Shop with ShopAppy

[ShopAppy](#) is about supporting your local, independent shops – to spend money in your community. By shopping closer to home, you support your local economy, local shops of all kinds and local jobs, preserving your area’s unique character, supporting innovation, suppliers and saving our high streets from becoming clone-towns (i.e. a town where the shopping area is significantly dominated by chain stores). ShopAppy does not take any commissions from shops, meaning every penny you spend (minus bank charges) goes straight to the shopkeepers.

How ShopAppy works

If you choose to shop online then, when you are ready to pay for your goods, you are given a choice of whether you would like to click and collect from each shop you purchased from, or whether you would prefer to just pick up all your shopping from one place. Whatever you choose, the shops pack part of your order and then you can go to the collection point to collect your shopping in one location.

ShopAppy is currently expanding its online platforms in **Taunton, Wellington, Minehead** and **Dulverton**.

8. REMINDER- National Lockdown: Stay at Home

You must stay at home. The single most important action we can all take is to stay at home to protect the NHS and save lives. You should follow this guidance immediately. This is [the law](#).

Summary: what you can do during the national lockdown

- shop for basic necessities, for you or a vulnerable person
- go to work, or provide voluntary or charitable services, if you cannot reasonably do so from home
- exercise with your household (or support bubble) or one other person, this should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area.
- meet your [support bubble](#) or [childcare bubble](#) where necessary, but only if you are legally permitted to form one
- seek medical assistance or avoid injury, illness or risk of harm (including domestic abuse)
- attend education or childcare - for those eligible

9. REMINDER- Somerset West Lottery New Year Bolt-on Prize

Everyone who signs up to purchase one or more Somerset West Lottery tickets between **4 January** and **27 February 2021** will be in with the chance to win one of five £100 Etsy gift vouchers plus £100 for their good cause courtesy of the external lottery management company Gatherwell.

All tickets bought during this timeframe will automatically be entered in to the bonus prize draw as well as being in with a chance to win up to £25,000 in the weekly lottery run by Somerset West and Taunton Council. Please [click here](#) to read the full SWT press release.

10. Somerset Waste Partnership Services (SWP)

REMINDER- Recycling sites stay open for essential use only

Somerset Waste Partnership is keeping the county's 16 recycling sites open on standard winter hours for essential use only during the latest Covid-19 national lockdown. SWP is asking people to only visit sites if the trip is really necessary, for example because waste cannot be safely kept home or disposed of through kerbside recycling and rubbish collections.

The Reuse Shop at Taunton Recycling Centre will be closed during the lockdown.

Recycling centre queue cams

SWP operates a web based queue (web cams) camera on four of its recycling centres, the static images are available to view from the partnerships website. The camera images are intended to allow members of the public to check the congestion and likely queuing times at the recycling centre before departing on their journey to the sites. Images are refreshed every 30 seconds. No images are stored on the partnerships web site and they cannot be recalled for public use. These images are provided in line with the RIPA Regulations. Please [click here](#) to view the Recycling centre queue cams.

REMINDER- Langford Lakes Christmas Tree Farm in Langford Budville is offering to take trees and shred them for mulch – but only if their farm near Wellington is closer than your nearest recycling centre. An allocated drop-off area will be in place at the farm from **4 - 22 January**, and visitors will also be able to pick up mulch created from previous year's Christmas tree recycling for use on their own home gardens.

To keep up to date with recycling sites, sign up for the SWP e-newsletter at www.somersetwaste.gov.uk and follow @Somersetwaste on Facebook or Twitter

Partner Engagement – Key messages from other Public Service Areas

Somerset County Council (SCC) Highway Maintenance Report

After the long run of severe and adverse weather over the Christmas and New Year holiday period, last week we finally saw a break, with warmer air pushing up from the Atlantic. Monday 11 January was SCC Highways first “green” weather forecast (meaning no road salting required) since Boxing Day. This was a run of 15 consecutive nights, many of which required a double action of afternoon and early morning salt runs, due to very low road surface temperatures, wet roads and the persistent threat of snow on high ground.

SCC Highways are now utilising the break in the weather to re-set operations, such as vehicle maintenance and the restocking of salt barns at depots. 2,000 tonnes are currently being delivered from the salt mine in Cheshire to depots across the county. SCC Highways are now focusing mainly on repair of safety defects (potholes etc.) in order to keep the road network safe for all those using it, whilst keeping a weather eye on the forecast. There is a lot of winter still to go!

For more information on highway maintenance works and to stay up to date visit the website www.travelsomerset.co.uk or follow @TravelSomerset on Twitter.

REMINDER- Temporary Road Closure: ttro419289TD - Silk Mills Road and Silk Mills Lane, Bishop's Hull

The order became effective on **14 January 2021** and remains in force for eighteen months. The works are expected to commence on **18 January 2021** and last for 2 nights to enable Somerset Highways to carry out patching works.

For any further information about this closure please contact Somerset Highways on **0300 123 2224**, quoting reference: ttro419289TD - Silk Mills Road and Silk Mills Lane, Bishop's Hull. Please [click here](#) to view the above road closure.

REMINDER- Temporary Road Closure: ttro419295TD- Priorswood Road, Cheddon Fitzpaine

The order became effective on **14 January 2021** and remains in force for eighteen months. The works are expected to commence on **18 January 2021** and last for 2 nights to enable Somerset Highways to carry out patching works.

For any further information about this closure please contact Somerset highways on **0300 123 2224**, quoting reference: ttro419295TD - Priorswood Road, Cheddon Fitzpaine. Please [click here](#) to view the above road closure.

Useful links to report faults

Throughout winter, there are more queries about overgrown trees, verges or hedges, blocked drains and street lights that don't work. To report faults in the following areas, please click on the relevant link:-

[Dangerous/Overgrown Tree alongside the public highway](#)

[Report an overgrown verge or hedge on the road](#)

[Street light not working](#)

[Blocked surface water drain on the highway.](#)

M5 Junction 25 Improvement Scheme

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

From **18 January 2021**, all A358 traffic will need to use the new Nexus Link Road to access Taunton, the Junction 25 Roundabout and when heading towards Henlade/Ilminster direction. From this point onwards the old section of the A358 between the Park & Ride (P&R) and Junction 25 Roundabout will be closed until the project is complete, at which point it will reopen to eastbound traffic only.

You can view the latest Project Bulletin by clicking [here](#).

REMINDER- Chancellor extends furlough and loan schemes

The furlough scheme has been extended until the end of April 2021 with the Government continuing to contribute 80% towards wages.

The Chancellor confirmed he would be extending the Government-guaranteed Covid-19 business loan schemes until the end of March. These changes come ahead of the Budget, which the Chancellor has confirmed will take place on **3 March 2021**. Please [click here](#) to find out more information.

Somerset Covid-19 Catch-up Week 5 - 6 January 2021

Somerset County Council is producing a series of films each week to help you understand how Covid-19 is affecting Somerset and what you can do to help us beat this virus. This week former BBC Correspondent Clinton Rogers interviews Somerset County Council's Director of Public Health to find out more about the current lockdown and what the situation is in Somerset. Please [click here](#) to watch this week's catch up.

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service

Winter Safety

Keeping warm this winter may mean you'll use portable heaters, electric blankets or wheat bags. Whatever your chosen method, be sure to read Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service's safety tips.

Using portable heaters

- Keep heaters at least one metre away from curtains and furniture.
- Never use them for drying clothes.
- Always unplug electric heaters when you go out or go to bed.
- Try to secure heaters against a wall to stop them from falling over.
- Only use gas or paraffin heaters in well ventilated areas.

Using electric blankets

- Never use a hot water bottle in the same bed as an electric blanket, even if the blanket is switched off.
- Unplug blankets before you get into bed unless they have a thermostat control for safe all-night use.
- Don't leave electric blankets folded as this may damage the internal wiring. Store them flat or rolled up instead.
- Get your blanket tested by a qualified electrician every three years.
- Replace your blanket if it is more than ten years old.
- Never buy a second-hand electric blanket.

You can also download a couple of handy leaflets to remind you of our [top tips this winter](#) (PDF) and [electric and gas heater safety](#) (PDF).

HM Coastguard Watchet

Team tasked to report of more found ordnance on Kilve Beach

Using [what3words](#) the finder gave HM Coastguard Watchet an exact location, allowing them to use the best access point with our vehicle before searching on foot across the rugged beach checking for any other pieces of ordnance that may have been uncovered by the recent Storm Bella.

On arrival at the scene an initial cordon was placed whilst HM Coastguard confirmed the items as being live 50 calibre rounds, a remnant of more recent military activity on the Lilstock Target Range most probably from rotary wing aircraft from the British Military. With no other sign of any of the usual larger ordnance having been uncovered by the tide the cordon was removed and the 50 calibre bullets/rounds were taken into the care of the police for onward destruction with the Army.

Following the recent storms and heavy rain, HM Coastguard remind anyone visiting the beaches to take care, not to walk too close to the base of Cliffs or the cliff tops to avoid any collapses, and not to pick up anything suspicious/ unrecognised or deemed to be military.

In a coastal emergency remember to dial 999 and ask for the Coastguard.

#ToSearchToRescueToSave

Exmoor National Park (ENP)

Exmoor Covid-19 Update

Exmoor National Park would like to thank you for your support as they continue to balance the needs of those who come to exercise with those who live and work in the National Park. Their priority remains to follow government guidance and help keep people safe.

National Parks have played an even more important part in many people's lives this year. It is known how vital connecting with the outdoors is for our physical, mental health and wellbeing. In the meantime, do follow #VirtualExmoor on social media for your daily dose of Exmoor.

What's closed?

All overnight accommodation provision for visitors is closed within the National Park and holidays in the UK aren't permitted, including to second homes and caravans. All non-essential shops, cafes and restaurants are closed until further notice. You can continue to support local businesses by ordering online. For a list of local producers with online shops see: www.visit-exmoor.co.uk/buylocal

[National Park Centres](#) in Lynmouth, Dunster and Dulverton are closed, but you can still contact them for advice by phone and email.

What's open?

[Public rights of way](#) remain open for those who can access them in line with government restrictions and ENP will continue to carry out any inspections and maintenance as necessary. They ask that you take care to follow local signs in place for your own safety and that of staff and residents. Please also be considerate of any wildlife or livestock that may take the opportunity to relocate while fewer humans are around.

Car parks and public toilets run by the National Park Authority will remain open for local use to assist those with mobility issues and maintain hygiene. Please be aware that not all such facilities are run by the National Park. If you find that car parks are shut, please seek appropriate alternatives and don't park on verges or in entranceways. And it goes without saying that nature is neither a bathroom nor a rubbish bin. For more information and how to follow the Covid Countryside Code please [click here](#).

REMINDER- Proposed Diversion WL26-27 (Old Stowey)

The ENP Authority is proposing to divert part of public footpath WL6/27 in the parish of Cutcombe. Prior to making a Diversion Order, ENP would like to hear your views on this proposal. Please return any comments on the proposal by **29 January 2021** to cerirapsey@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk or to Ceri Rapsey, Rights of Way Support Officer, Exmoor National Park Authority, Exmoor House, Dulverton, TA22 9HL.

Steam Coast Trail

This weekend the Steam Coast Trail added new shovels to a Shingle Digging Station kindly donated by Travis Perkins Minehead. If there's shingle on the path after a big tide or a storm (and you're feeling fit, well and willing) then please sanitise your hands, grab a shovel and chuck some back on to the beach. The Steam Coast Trail team will, of course, try to get to the path to clear it ASAP but if you get there first you could consider this part of your daily exercise.

Please remember to only do what you're physically capable of and **do not touch the shovels if you do not have any hand sanitiser with you.**

Community Support – What help is out there? Voluntary and Community Sector Support

The Local Connections Fund – Grant opportunity

The Local Connections Fund is offering grants of between £300 and £2,500 for small local charitable organisations, including charities, social enterprises, Community Interest Companies and Faith groups in England working to bring people and communities together and reduce loneliness and isolation caused by Covid-19.

Application deadline: **Tuesday 26 January 2021**.

Funders: [The National Lottery Community Fund](#) and the *Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport* (DCMS). Please [click here](#) for full details and how to apply.

Food resilience in Somerset

Food resilience is still strong with food boxes being provided to families whose children are normally entitled to free school meals but who are at home, plus a wider group of families who don't meet this criteria but still need support.

Somerset County Council (SCC) has topped up funding to enhance the original Department for Education (DfE) standard boxes and ensure that food boxes from schools are comprehensive and valued at £15. SCC has quality checked the boxes being sent from a number of schools, all of which meet or exceed the requirements of the DfE.

Somerset joins together to create a county-wide pantomime

In Search of Cinderella is a Richard Crowe | Over the Wall production in association with Somerset Film and Wassail Theatre Company and with the participation of the theatres and arts centres of Somerset.

Venues in Somerset have come together to create the perfect solution for panto in a pandemic. Each scene of In Search of Cinderella has been recorded at a well-known theatre or arts centre as part of an online performance.

The participating venues are: Strode Theatre, Taunton Brewhouse, The Regal Theatre Minehead, Bridgwater Arts Centre, The David Hall, South Petherton, and the performance will end with the Prince and Cinderella's wedding at Glastonbury Abbey.

The project is funded by Arts Council England, Somerset West & Taunton Council, the BARN initiative (via Take Art) and by the people of Somerset and further afield, through a fundraiser.

In Search of Cinderella premieres online at **6pm on Wednesday 20 January**.

Information about the performance and competitions will be available at insearchofcinderella.com. Donations will be in aid of the participating venues to help support them in the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic.

To watch and donate visit <https://insearchofcinderella.com/> or please [click here](#).

Somerset Community Foundation (SCF)

Grants from The Somerset Fund available for local charities

Grants up to £2,500 are now available for smaller charities and grassroots groups based in Somerset. Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) manages The Somerset Fund and is encouraging smaller charities and community groups that run on less than £100,000 per year to apply now for funding.

The grants are 'unrestricted', which means they can be used to pay for ongoing running costs, also known as 'core costs'. Applications to the Fund can be made through SCF's website and the deadline to apply is **Monday 22 February 2021**. The Somerset Fund has supported a wide range of local charities since its launch in 2018 thanks to generous local donors. If you run a business or are involved in a local, grassroots community project, please [click here](#) for more information and to apply.

Health and Welfare

Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine update

The rapid rollout of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine – less than a week after it was authorised by the [Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency](#) (MHRA) - is another world first for the NHS and major milestone in the phased vaccination programme.

The vaccination programme – the biggest in NHS history – is off to a strong start, with a total of 1.12 million people vaccinated in England by Sunday 3 January. The NHS has now vaccinated more people than anywhere else in Europe, including a quarter of people over the age of 80.

As more vaccine supply becomes available to the NHS, the Prime Minister has set out the goal this week that by 15 of February the first vaccine dose will have been offered to everyone in the four top priority groups, identified by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). These are people aged 70 and over, care home residents, the clinically extremely vulnerable, and the health and social care staff looking after them. The approval of a UK-developed and manufactured vaccine provides a major boost to the nation's ability to offer protection to those who would benefit most as quickly as possible.

Somerset Covid-19 vaccination programme expands

More people in the high priority groups in Somerset are being invited to have their Covid-19 vaccinations this week as two more sites are launched in the county.

Please don't contact the NHS or visit any of the sites to ask about your vaccine, you will be contacted.

Vaccinations are beginning this week at a further GP-led community site and in a new hospital hub at Musgrove Park Hospital. Vaccinations are now being offered at 12 sites across the county – at ten GP-led community sites and at hospital hubs at both Musgrove Park Hospital and at Yeovil District Hospital – and teams of vaccinators are also vaccinating care home residents.

Last weekend vaccinations began at **Musgrove Park Hospital** which is operating a vaccination hub seven days a week. Both the Pfizer Biotech and the newly approved Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccines will be given in Somerset. You can [read more on the NHS CCG website](#)

Who will deliver the vaccinations?

The overall rate limiting factor over the coming weeks is the amount of vaccine available, which is higher in January than December, and will be increasing yet further in February, March and April. The NHS has enough vaccinators to deliver the vaccine and have been recruiting and training tens of thousands more who will be drafted in as more supplies become available.

Many former members of NHS staff, as well as existing staff and many others who have never worked in the NHS, have applied for paid vaccinator roles. Tens of thousands of people have already begun and completed their online training. The NHS is working with the Royal Voluntary Service and St John Ambulance to recruit and train thousands more volunteer vaccinators, who will have all the relevant clinical training – as well as supervision - to ensure they can vaccinate in a way that is safe for patients and for themselves.

REMINDER- Volunteers needed to support Somerset vaccination programme

Health services in Somerset are encouraging people to volunteer to support the county's vaccination programme. They are looking for people to help greet residents as they come to be vaccinated, marshal, and help with administration. They are also looking for retired or former nurses who are willing to step forward as vaccinators. All necessary training will be provided.

If you think you can help, please email mvp.recruitment@somersetft.nhs.uk to register your interest. You can also [click here](#) for more information about the Covid-19 vaccinations in Somerset.

Samaritans

Brew Monday 2021

Samaritans Brew Monday will kick off on **18 January**, the third Monday in January, which is usually known as 'Blue Monday'. Samaritans will be turning this day on its head and into something positive by encouraging people to get together over a warming virtual cuppa.

Reach out to a friend, family member or colleague for a virtual cuppa and a chat. It doesn't have to be a Monday or a cup of tea, just taking time to really listen to another person could help them work through what's on their mind. Please [click here](#) for more information and to download your Brew Monday digital kit.

Minds really do matter

As we adjust again to staying at home more, and minimising our contacts outside the home, it's important that we remember to take care of our minds as well as our bodies. [Every Mind Matters](#) has some helpful information online to support us through this time, whether that's concerns about finances, or making sure that you or others have the support you need, or staying connected with others.

Need to seek help during these tough times?

If you, or someone you know are feeling like things are too much, please know that you / they don't have to be alone. Here are some numbers of organisations that can help in these tough times:

- Samaritans - 116 123
- CALM - 0800 58 58 58
- ChildLine - 0800 1111
- Anxiety UK - 03444 775 774
- Mind - 0300 123 3393

- National Domestic Abuse helpline - 0808 2000 247

REMINDER- SCC Appeal for equipment

Due to significant global issues affecting stock availability, SCC is making an urgent appeal to request the return any of their community healthcare equipment you no longer need. The priority is hospital beds, mattresses, bed rails and bumpers, hoists, over-bed tables and 4-wheeled walkers which are in very short supply both locally and nationally.

Millbrook, SCC's community equipment provider, will collect the equipment for free and pick up from outside homes to ensure everybody stays safe. If you have any of this equipment currently not required please contact Millbrook urgently somersetcontactus@millbrookhealthcare.co.uk or phone **0333 003 2407**.

Please refer to the websites below for the latest advice, help and guidance:

Links to the most up to date Covid-19 guidance can be found here

[Somerset Covid-19 Local Outbreak Management Plan Dashboard](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

[Public Health England](#)

[NHS – Help and Advice](#)

FAQS

Q. Why do I have to wait for my Covid-19 vaccination? I'm in one of the high priority groups, so why do I have to wait?

A. The Covid-19 vaccines will become available as they are approved for use and as each batch is manufactured. So every dose is needed to protect those at highest risk. You will be called in as soon as there is enough vaccine available. Some people who are housebound or live in a care home and who can't get to a local vaccination centre may have to wait for supply of the right type of vaccine. This is because only some vaccines can be transported between people's homes. Please [click here](#) for further information or refer to the attached PDF document.

Please don't contact the NHS to seek a vaccine.
The NHS will contact you when it is your turn.

Q. When will care home residents be vaccinated?

A. Local GP-led primary care networks have now vaccinated hundreds of thousands of older and vulnerable people across the country, including in care homes. All older care home residents are expected to have been offered vaccination by local GPs by the end of this month. The new Oxford vaccine is easier to transport and store than the Pfizer jab, so is now also being used for care home residents who often cannot travel to a larger vaccination service or hospital hub. The NHS is making extra funding available to GPs to do so.

Q. When will NHS staff be vaccinated?

A. NHS organisations have now started vaccinating staff as more supplies of vaccine are coming on stream. NHS England has written to Trusts to outline plans to vaccinate all frontline staff against Covid-19 following the rollout of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine.

From the middle of January, all NHS Trusts will be able to provide vaccinations for local healthcare and social care workers, which will be critical in keeping both them and patients safe. The life-saving jab will be offered to all staff across NHS services, including those who work in general practices, pharmacies, dentists and other primary and secondary care settings. It will also be available to ambulance trusts, volunteers and all independent providers, such as community-based mental health services.

Crime / Safeguarding

Fake NHS Covid-19 vaccination messages: How to protect yourself

In the UK, Coronavirus vaccines will only be available via the National Health Services of England, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. You can be contacted by the NHS, your employer, a GP surgery or pharmacy local to you, to receive your vaccine. Remember, **the vaccine is free of charge**. At no point will you be asked to pay.

- The NHS will never ask you for your bank account or card details.
- The NHS will never ask you for your PIN or banking password.
- The NHS will never arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine.
- The NHS will never ask you to prove your identity by sending copies of personal documents such as your passport, driving licence, bills or pay slips.

If you receive a call you believe to be fraudulent, hang up. If you are suspicious about an email you have received, forward it to report@phishing.gov.uk. Suspicious text messages should be forwarded to the number 7726 which is free of charge.

If you believe you are the victim of a fraud, please report this to Action Fraud as soon as possible by calling **0300 123 2040** or visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk.

Be aware of fake texts offering Covid-19 vaccine

Trading Standards is warning the public to be on their guard following reports that fraudsters are sending out fake texts offering a Covid-19 vaccine in an attempt to steal bank details. The text offers a link to what police call an “extremely convincing” fake NHS website. Once on the website people are asked to input their bank details to register for a vaccine. Please [click here](#) for more information.

Avon & Somerset Police (A&SP)

Report a breach of Covid-19 restrictions

New public health regulations have granted police additional powers to enforce restrictions in line with the Government’s Covid-19 advice. This includes the requirement to close businesses and premises, and enforce restrictions on

movement and gatherings. Read the [Government's guidance on what you can and cannot do](#).

If you are concerned that an individual or business has significantly breached the restrictions, complete the [A&SP online form](#). If you are unable to use the online form, or the breach is happening now, call 101. Your report will help the police build a picture of where people appear to be or are breaching the Government's advice on physical social distancing. This information will help to inform their policing patrols.

Call 999 if there is an immediate or perceived threat to life, risk of serious damage to property or a serious offence is taking place.

Latest Facebook Live

In their first Facebook live of 2021, PCC Sue Mountstevens and Chief Constable Andy Marsh answered your questions on policing lockdown, supporting the health service and unlicensed music events. If you missed it, please [click here](#) to watch the replay from 13 January 2021.

Would you pay more Council Tax to support Avon and Somerset Police?

Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Sue Mountstevens has launched a survey seeking local people's views on an increase in the policing part of the council tax. Local policing is funded by a combination of Home Office and other grants, as well as council tax contributions.

The Home Office grant has been frozen for next year but the Government has announced that PCCs can raise the policing part of the council tax next April by 6.6%, equivalent to £15 per year for an average band D household. If the policing part of the council tax is not increased, Avon and Somerset Police would have to make significant savings which would result in a reduction of police services.

To find out more and take the survey please [click here](#).

Finally

It is important to keep up to date with the latest [information and advice from the government](#).

For quick up to date information regarding SWT services please follow us on Facebook www.facebook.com/SWTCouncil/ or Twitter [@swtcouncil](https://twitter.com/swtcouncil)
Please see our dedicated [webpage](#) for updates.

If you have concerns about your own health and coronavirus please visit the [NHS](#) website.

#StayAtHome #ProtectTheNHS #SaveLives

Attachment:

Why do I have to wait for my Covid-19 vaccination leaflet