

# Somerset West and Taunton

## **Newsletter to SWT Councillors and Parish Councils**

### **Issue 65 Week ending 04/07/2021**

**#Hands      #Face      #Space and Fresh Air**

#### **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. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (Furlough)**

From 1 July 2021, the level of grant available to employers will be reduced and employers will be asked to contribute towards the cost of furloughed employees' wages. To be eligible for the grant employers must continue to pay furloughed employees 80% of their wages, up to a cap of £2,500 per month for the time they spend on furlough.

Employers can continue to choose to top up employees' wages above the 80% total and £2,500 cap for the hours not worked at their own expense. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme has been extended until **30 September 2021**. For more information, please [click here](#).

### **2. SWT COVID-19 Business Support Grants**

The business support grant schemes have all now closed for applications. SWT cannot accept any new applications. During the month of July SWT will be

issuing final payments to businesses that applied before 30 June and who have not yet been paid. SWT is unable to make payment after 31 July 2021.

No new mandatory business support grant schemes have been introduced, or existing ones extended, to deal with the extension of COVID-19 restrictions beyond 21 June to 19 July 2021.

For those who have received business support grant payments from the Council, please remember the grants are treated as income, whether the business is within the scope of either Income Tax or Corporation Tax, and should be recorded in your accounts / HMRC returns as such.

Whether any tax is paid will depend on the business profits of the grant recipient (taking into consideration the grant and other business income and expenditure under normal tax rules), any other taxable income and personal and other allowances to which they are entitled. If in doubt please talk with your tax advisor. The Council cannot provide tax advice.

### **3. 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 5 July – Licensing Sub Committee, 11am (no public participation as this is a hearing)
- Wednesday 7 July – Corporate Scrutiny Committee, 6.15pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Friday 2 July)

From 7 May 2021, meetings can no longer be held virtually.

These meetings will take place in the Chamber at Deane House following the Government COVID-19 safety guidelines. As we are very limited to the number of people we can safely get into the Chamber, we are asking people to register if they wish to attend in person.

Information on speaking at public meetings is available on the SWT website. This also gives alternatives to participating without attending in person.

The meetings will still 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.

Contact the Governance Team via [governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk).

Please see the dates listed above re deadlines for submitting questions or statements.

#### **4. A Vision for Tonedale**

SWT has made a bid for Government funding to help finance the restoration of Wellington's heritage and cultural assets.

The council has asked for money from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government's Levelling Up fund to help realise "A Vision for Tonedale".

If successful the funds would provide an opportunity for SWT working in partnership with stakeholders and the community, to transform and sustainability regenerate the nationally significant heritage site at Toneworks and enhance associated land for community use.

The Council purchased the Toneworks site which is home to a complex of Grade II\* listed buildings using a grant from Historic England and acquired the green space adjacent to Tonedale Mill earlier this year following its designation as an Asset of Community Value.

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

#### **5. Recycle on the go**

SWT is making it easier for people to help keep our parks and open spaces clean and green. As part of its drive to tackle litter the Council will be introducing new replacement waste bins in public spaces which also have compartments for recycling in line with its environmental priorities.

Staff and volunteers have been litter picking at locations across the district, targeting problem areas such as residential streets, highway verges and open spaces. Much of the litter collected has included items which could have been recycled.

It hopes the new style bins with a litter and dog waste section in the middle and sections for plastic and cans at either end will encourage people to dispose of litter responsibly and allow them to recycle while out and about.

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

#### **6. Reminder- Consultation for new rented Council homes**

SWT is developing plans for new zero carbon homes in Taunton in line with its ambition to build 1,000 council homes across the district over the next 30 years. The Council is now encouraging members of the public to have their say on proposals for 20 of these council-owned homes split across Churchill Way, Charter Walk, Wheatley Crescent, and the former Oxford Inn site on Roman Road.

People are being asked to give their opinions on the proposals in a [consultation](#) available on SWT website until **4 July 2021**.

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

## 7. How to report fly-tipping

Fly-tipping – dumping rubbish - is an environmental crime. If you fly-tip you can be fined or jailed. It's a blot on our landscape and a threat to wildlife. We can all fight fly-tipping by reporting dumped rubbish and, if possible, who dumped it.

Everyone, including businesses, must be responsible for how they get rid of rubbish, even when it's left your home or premises. If you pay someone to remove your rubbish - man-with-a-van, builders, gardeners, carpet-layers or others - ask to see their waste carrier's licence, and make sure you know where your rubbish will go. If you don't you could be fined.

To report fly-tipping use SWT's [report fly-tipping](#) online form or phone **0300 304 8000**.

For more information check the 'How we can all fight fly-tipping' section on the [Somerset Waste Partnership](#) website.

## 8. Somerset Waste Partnership Services (SWP)

### Apologies for missed collections

SWP would like to apologise for the disruption to waste collections in parts of Somerset in recent weeks. The issues are largely down to a national shortage of LGV drivers and SWP are working hard with their collections contractor to get services back on track. Unfortunately, further delayed collections are likely in the coming days.

### LGV drivers – Your County Needs You

An escalating national driver shortage is making it very difficult for SWP's contractor, SUEZ, to recruit drivers. Although temporary extra staff have been brought in from elsewhere in the company, there is no quick fix. SWP is working hard to get things back on track but unfortunately some disruption is likely to continue.

If you know anyone who is a qualified Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) driver, including anyone recently retired, please point them in the direction of current vacancies in Bridgwater, Evercreech, Taunton, Williton and Yeovil. Recycling collection crew staff are also much needed. Details of vacancies can be found here [careers.suez.co.uk/vacancies](https://careers.suez.co.uk/vacancies) or email [careers.uk@suez.com](mailto:careers.uk@suez.com)

For more information on kerbside services, recycling sites, and on COVID-19 and waste, visit: [somersetwaste.gov.uk](https://somersetwaste.gov.uk), sign up for the SWP e-newsletter or follow @somersetwaste on Facebook or Twitter.

# Partner Engagement – Key messages from other Public Service Areas

## Somerset County Council (SCC) SCC Highway Maintenance Update

The weather recently in Somerset West and Taunton has been typical for the time of year: generally warm and sunny but with spells of rain and showers in between. Well it is Wimbledon Fortnight! However, on the evening of Monday 28 June, there was a major flash flooding event just to the south, in the Chard and Combe St Nicholas areas of our neighbours, South Somerset. There is extensive damage to the road network in the area and major repair work will be required. Further information can be found [here](#).

Back in Somerset West and Taunton there will be a series of evening road closures on the **A396 Church Street, Dunster** to allow the replacement of access covers to the ducting chambers which link up the traffic signals in the middle of the village. The **A396** will be closed between 6pm and 10pm each evening from **Monday 5 July to Friday 9 July**. The road will be open to traffic between these times.

The road running along the top of the Blackdown Hills will be closed for two weeks in the **Otterford and Castle Neroche area**, between **5 and 16 July**, for carriageway patching works. This is to prepare the road for surface dressing in August.

In the **Wellington area** there will be another road closure. Here it will be on the **Holywell Lake Road in Langford Budville**. This will also be between **5 and 16 July**, and on this occasion will be for highway drainage improvements.

In Wellington itself, there will be two weeks of repairs of drains and kerbs, also between **5 and 16 July**, but on this occasion the work will be carried out using temporary traffic signals.

The carriageway surface dressing programme in Somerset will be commencing in mid-July and will run until mid-August.

For more information on highway maintenance works and to stay up to date visit [www.travelsomerset.co.uk](http://www.travelsomerset.co.uk) or follow @TravelSomerset on Twitter.

## Temporary Road Closure: Coal Orchard, Taunton

The order becomes effective on 8 July 2021 and will remain in force for eighteen months. The works are expected to commence on **12 July 2021** and last for 33 days to enable Wales & West Utilities to carry out works to upgrade gas main.

Please follow the [link](#) to view the above road closure and the [Notice 2](#). For any further information about this closure please contact Wales & West Utilities on **0800 9122 999**, quoting reference: ttr0446242.

Please note that should you require to view a closure which is more than two weeks ahead you will need to register for free with [www.One.Network](http://www.One.Network)

## **Extension of Temporary Road Closure: Yallands Hill, Cheddon Fitzpaine**

Here is a notification of an **extension of dates** to a temporary road closure at **Yallands Hill, Cheddon Fitzpaine** for approximately 656.00 metres.

The date for the works is now: 5 May to **25 July** (24hrs) - 11 weeks.

These works are for CJL Construction Ltd to carry out all construction and associated works in connection with the Western Relief Road, their works reference is LG111PD01409-001.

For any further information about this closure please contact CJL Construction Ltd on **(01934) 853227** quoting reference: ttr0431060TD - S50 - Yallands Hill, Cheddon

A [map](#) of the affected area (in red), together with the recommended diversion route (in purple) is shown below, along with the link to One.Network.

## **Reminder- Emergency One Way Order Maidenbrook Lane, Taunton**

Please be aware that SCC Highways have received notification on the 18 June 2021 of a continuation of works to the emergency one way order at Maidenbrook Lane, Taunton. This work is now expected to continue until **16 July 2021** (24hrs), and the restrictions will only apply when indicated by traffic signs.

A copy of the draft Traffic Regulation Order and the associated plans can be examined at [www.somerset.gov.uk/TRO](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/TRO). There is no alternative route for this. The works promoter will contact residents and business directly to discuss access arrangements.

## **Useful links to report faults**

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.](#)

## **Alun Griffiths Ltd M5 Junction 25 Improvement Scheme Toneway - Creech Castle Improvements**

Work at M5 Junction 25 is almost done and contractor, Alun Griffiths Ltd is commencing the next phase nearby on the **Toneway - Creech Castle** Improvement works. The latest Project Bulletin can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

## **Somerset Activity Sports Partnership (SASP)**

### **Live Longer Better**

**Free virtual conference on Zoom – Thursday 8 July 10am – 11.30am**

A chance to explore loneliness and how physical activity can be part of the solution for ending loneliness in Somerset

The event will include an excellent array of speakers, to give both a national and local perspective. The webinar is designed to be suitable for those working in adult health and social care settings including housing, charities as well as carers and micro providers.

If you are yet to register please do so at [Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership - Live Longer Better - More than Moving \(sasp.co.uk\)](https://sasp.co.uk) for this webinar. Ending loneliness is so important and physical activity is such an important piece of this puzzle.

### **Beat the Street – Join the fun, free game!**

#### **Taunton transformed into A Giant Physical Activity Game**

This is a fun competition about getting moving around the Taunton area – you can walk, run, cycle, rollerskate, scoot or skip. The team behind the game want you to enjoy the competition and get the most out of it you can, so please don't try to cheat the system – you've nothing to gain from doing so.

It is against the rules to use a car or motorised vehicle to drive between Beat Boxes. Anyone found to be doing this, will have their points wiped. The point of the game is to promote exercise, get out in the fresh air and collect the points on foot.

Disability should be no barrier to participation. If you are a wheelchair or mobility scooter user, please feel free to use these to get between Beat Boxes. Beat Boxes are placed approximately 500 – 600 metres apart and you have an hour to travel between two Boxes to earn your 10 points.

The game is running in Taunton with 37 Beat Boxes spread across the [map](#); so mainly Priorswood, Holway, Halcon, Town Centre, the canal, green spaces and parks. Primary Schools in Taunton are participating, and an impressive 4717+ registered players have managed to travel 37,640 miles since the game started. The aim is to get to 5000 players before the final day of the game on **14 July 2021**.

Please [click here](#) to watch a video which explains the project in more detail.

Beat the Street is the perfect way to get you and your children safely back into action. [Sign up today](#) and follow the [Facebook page](#).

### **Happy Healthy Holidays Somerset**

The Happy Healthy Holidays Somerset Programme Activity Finder will be available to use from **Monday 5 July**. To book an activity, you will need to have received your unique Booking Code from your child's school. You will not be able to make a booking without it, so please ensure you have done this first.

This funding has been made available by SCC to enable local groups to provide holiday activities including food to children eligible for free school meals in Somerset. This is part of the Government programme which has provided healthy food and enriching activities to disadvantaged children since 2018 and is now being expanded across the whole of England. The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme, now named the Happy Healthy Holidays Somerset Programme, is funded by the Department for Education. Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership (SASP) is coordinating the programme and managing the grant making process.

Please [click here](#) for further information.

## **SomersetWorks**

### **Summer Holiday Activity Programme**

The Summer Holiday Programme for Year 11 students is packed full of virtual and face-to-face events and courses taking place right across the summer months. The virtual platform hosts four halls containing information on wellbeing, careers and industry insights, tips for college preparation and details of free courses and activities to take part in.

SomersetWorks has partnered with organisations such as the RSPCA, Bristol Rugby Club, Young Somerset, Somerset Skills and Learning plus Somerset colleges and employers all across the county to provide activity days, taster courses and loads more!

Free lunches and transport are provided as part of many of the activity days and courses. New opportunities are being added all the time, so keep checking for more activities for young people to take part in this summer.

Please [click here](#) to register today and explore what's on offer.

## **Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (DSFRS)**

### **How to use a throwline**

If you found someone in trouble in water, would you know what to do?

Many inland water locations will have public rescue equipment such as a throwline.

Please [click here](#) to watch a short video on how to use one.

### **Cold water can claim lives**

Cold water can take your breath away and cause dangerous cold water shock. Right now, sea temperatures in the local area are around 14 degrees. Rivers will be colder. If you find yourself in the water and feeling overwhelmed, take a moment and float to live. Stay calm, lie on your back like a starfish and let your body get used to the temperature.

## **Royal Lifesaving Society UK**

### **Water Safety Advice**

More than 400 people accidentally drown in the UK and Ireland every year and many more have non-fatal experiences, sometimes suffering life-changing injuries. The Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS UK), work tirelessly to educate people to enjoy



water safely, to keep their families and friends safe and to know what to do in an emergency. They offer valuable support and counselling services to friends and families that have been affected by drowning incidents.

Please [click here](#) to learn how to keep you and your family safe with water safety advice.

## **HM Coastguard Watchet**

### **Take care when negotiating the terrain**

Recently the Coastguard Watchet were asked to assist the Ambulance Service to attend a casualty who had fallen over and suffered a closed fracture to their lower leg. Confirming the extent of the injury the male was immobilised and secured to a Cliff Rescue Stretcher before being evacuated from the shoreline and carried back up to the closest vehicle access point.

Whilst the casualty received care and was being constantly monitored, other members of the Coastguard team began setting up a HLS (helicopter landing site) on the Watchet Memorial Ground, checking for FOD (foreign object debris) which included any litter or items that could cause damage to the engine or other parts of the helicopter.

The casualty was stabilised at the scene and was then transferred to hospital by the land ambulance, releasing the Air Ambulance back to their base on Dorset.

HM Coastguard Watchet would like to thank the locals especially the youths playing football who were using the memorial ground at the time who happily cleared away from the landing site, and remained distant during the incident response.

HM Coastguard would like to remind anyone visiting the local beaches, cliffs and shoreline to take care when negotiating the terrain, and to always check the tide times, where possible when walking alone carry a mobile phone, and know to dial 999 and ask for the Coastguard.

## **Quantock Hill AONB**

### **Greater Quantock Landscape Development Fund**

The Quantock Hills AONB Service is delivering the Greater Quantock Landscape Development Fund providing grants of up to £5,000 to local communities, farmers, landowners and individuals and landscape enhancement projects.

The fund has been provided by EDF Energy and is part of the mitigation measures associated with the Hinkley Point C development.

Projects could include tree planting, works to manage hedgerows, orchard planting or restoration, planting of wildflower meadows, management of small woodlands, willow pollarding or pond restoration.

Please [click here](#) to find out more information and download the application form.

## **Farming in Protected Landscapes Fund**

To support farmers and land managers protecting the special and unique places that are our National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Defra have launched the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme. The programme will provide funding to farmers and land managers for projects that support nature recovery, mitigate the impacts of climate change, provide opportunities for people to engage with the landscape and cultural heritage and support nature-friendly, sustainable farm businesses.

The programme will run from 1 July 2021 and close on 31 March 2024 and applications can be for single year or across more than one year as long as all works will be completed by 31 March 2024. This funding is open to all farmers and land managers within the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and projects outside the AONB boundary if they can be shown to bring benefit to the AONB.

Please [click here](#) for more information, full application guidance and links to the application forms.

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

### **Young Somerset Bold & Brave**

[Young Somerset](#), in partnership with [sen.se](#), are on the search for talented, young producers and designers in Somerset, to give them the opportunity to showcase and sell their products at a new social enterprise shop in Taunton.

From creating cards to designing websites, this unique opportunity allows young people to develop their skills and confidence, network with other like-minded people and be mentored by Young Somerset staff and partners.

Anyone aged 14-25 can apply by sending the following details to retail manager Carol by **Friday 16 July 2021**.

Please [click here](#) for full details.

### **Skill Up Somerset Business Apprenticeship Scheme**

Government Incentive - £3,000 for Businesses offering Apprenticeship Opportunities  
The UK Government announced in the recent budget that they are extending and increasing the payments made to employers who hire new apprentices. Employers in England who hire a new apprentice between 1 April 2021 and **30 September 2021** will receive £3,000 per new hire, compared with £1,500 per new apprentice hire (or £2,000 for those aged 24 and under) under the previous scheme. This is in addition to the existing £1,000 payment the Government provides for all new 16 to 18 year old apprentices and those aged under 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan, where that applies.

To find out more about Apprenticeships and the incentives available please refer to the [Skill Up Somerset website](#).

## **Somerset Business Education Partnership Career Opportunities**

Somerset Education Business Partnership connects employers with education providers so that young people are aware of local career opportunities and develop the skills needed to thrive at work.

Research has shown that young people who have contact with employers whilst at school are significantly less likely to become Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) - and can expect to earn more money once they are in full-time employment.

To find out more please visit the [Somerset Business Education Partnership website](#)

## **Community Council for Somerset (CCS) Who cares for the carers?**

Do you look after someone else? Or know of a person that does? In Somerset there are around 66,000 people who are classed as unpaid carers, and it is estimated that 1 in 3 of us will become a carer at some point in our lives.

Would you know where to turn if you suddenly had to care for someone else? Or if looking out for someone evolved into looking after someone?

Who cares for the Carers? The CCS do.

At [Somerset Carers](#), Village Agents are ready to support you at any and every stage of your caring journey. Support isn't intervention. Support is a listening ear, advice to help you see the wood for the trees, connecting to the right services, respite help, an occasional supply of food to give you a break and more.

Support is making your life easier. Please raise your hand and be seen, raise your hand and be heard. Please [click here](#) to watch a helpful video.

Please call CCS's Carers Advice Line on **0800 3168600**, or email [carers@somersetccc.org.uk](mailto:carers@somersetccc.org.uk)

Website: [www.somersetcarers.org](http://www.somersetcarers.org)

Please share this information with anyone you think would benefit.

## **Reminder- Talking Cafes have reopened in venues across Somerset**

The CCS are opening slowly and due to COVID-19 restrictions all Talking Cafes located in **Bridgwater, Minehead, Taunton** and **Williton** are **strictly by appointment only**. There will no longer be a drop in facility due to the requirement to maintain hygiene standards.

Book an appointment by calling **01823 331 222** or by completing this [online form](#).

The CCS will be continuing their Facebook Live Talking Cafes, so keep tuning in Tuesday - Thursday at 1pm.

## **Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) HPC Community Fund Small Grants Programme**

The HPC Community Fund Small Grants Programme supports projects and work that will help mitigate the impacts and increase the opportunities of the Hinkley Point C project in your community.

Grants of up to £5,000 are available for organisations or community groups with an annual income of less than £100,000.

If you run a local community project in Somerset and would like to find out more about funding opportunities from the HPC Community Fund, please contact Peter on **01749 344949** or email [peter.stolze@somersetcf.org.uk](mailto:peter.stolze@somersetcf.org.uk)

## **Glastonbury Festival Solidarity Fund**

The Glastonbury Festival Solidarity Fund is now open to applications. If your group raised money at previous Glastonbury Festivals, usually runs on less than £100k per annum and is based in Somerset (or just over the border) you may be able to apply.

Organisations can apply for £250 - £2,500 which can be spent on revenue costs such as insurance, rent, utility bills etc. You must submit your application by **5pm Friday 23 July 2021**.

Please [click here](#) to view the eligibility criteria and find out more information.

## **Frontline Workers' Day**

It's Frontline Workers' Day on **5 July**, and this year, it's more important than ever to take the time to thank the brilliant and dedicated frontline workers. You can get involved with this campaign, either by sharing your stories and ideas, or by finding a creative way to say thank you to the frontline workers who have made such a difference this year.

Please [click here](#) to learn more about the creative ideas to get involved.

## **Spark Somerset**

### **Training to help bust vaccination myths**

Spark Somerset continues to offer Vaccination Myth Buster Training for anyone who feels they can talk to the public about the COVID-19 vaccination. The training aims to be jargon free and user friendly. Everyone is welcome. The next course is on **Tuesday 6 July, 7-9pm** on Zoom.

The training is delivered by Fatou Mendy Sambou from Public Health Somerset and Helen Fielden from Spark Somerset and covers:

- The latest information about how the vaccines work, how they're made and possible side effects.

- Common myths and misconceptions about the vaccine.
- The basics of how to have open, supportive conversations.
- Where to signpost people to if they have more questions.

To find out more, and to book your place click [here](#).

### **Reminder- Advice and Support for Voluntary Groups**

Spark Somerset is the local infrastructure charity providing free support and advice to voluntary sector groups and organisations across the county. They also run the Volunteer Service, [Spark a Change](#), helping hundreds of people in Somerset to volunteer each year.

If you are a voluntary group or organisation and you'd like to talk about how Spark Somerset could support you then please get in touch with your advisor for the Taunton and West Somerset area, Jenny Hannis on [jenny.hannis@sparksomerset.org.uk](mailto:jenny.hannis@sparksomerset.org.uk) or **07971 912452**.

### **Help and support for businesses affected by COVID-19**

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has made available webinars and videos about the support available to businesses to help them deal with the economic impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak.

HMRC cover the following government schemes:

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) Job Retention Scheme
- Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)
- Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) Rebate Scheme

Please [click here](#) for further information.

## **Health and Welfare**

### **Mandatory vaccinations for care staff**

New legislation means from October 2021 (subject to Parliamentary approval and a subsequent 16-week grace period) anyone working in a CQC registered care home in England for residents requiring nursing or personal care must have 2 doses of a COVID-19 vaccine unless they have a medical exemption.

It will apply to all workers employed directly by the care home or care home provider (on a full-time or part-time basis), those employed by an agency and deployed by the care home and volunteers deployed in the care home. Those coming into care homes for other work, for example healthcare workers, tradespeople, hairdressers and beauticians, and CQC inspectors will also have to follow the new regulations, unless they have a medical exemption.

### **Schools and Early Years settings**

There is an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in schools and other education settings; consequently a number of children who are in close contact will need to self-isolate as a result. This is very disruptive to education and we need to all

continue to do our best to try and keep COVID-19 infections out of education settings.

There are several ways we can do this.

- All educational staff, pupils aged over 11 years and the parents/carers of school aged children continue to take part in twice weekly asymptomatic testing.
- If anyone in the household is experiencing any of the symptoms of COVID-19, please continue to isolate, seek a PCR test and await the result.
- If you are asked to self-isolate as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, you are being advised to get a PCR test – this is called case finding and will help identify cases of COVID-19. You need to complete the full 10 days of isolation, even if that PCR result is negative.

### **Order your lateral flow tests online**

You can order one box of lateral flow tests per household each day. A box contains 7 test packets. [Please click here to order your rapid lateral flow tests.](#)

**Please remember** – if you are taking the tests at home it is very important for you to [log your results here](#). Please make sure that if you are symptomatic in any way take a confirmatory Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test as quickly as possible.

### **How to do a COVID-19 Self-Test**

Rapid lateral flow tests are for people who do not have symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19). You can see the result on a device similar to a pregnancy test, usually in 30 minutes. Please [click here](#) to watch a video on how to test yourself for Coronavirus using a self-test kit, as well as how to read your result and report it to the NHS. Actual test kits may vary slightly from the version used here, so please always check the instruction leaflet in your kit.

0:36 Prepare yourself for the test

1:27 Prepare your test area

2:16 Set up the test

3:14 Take the swab sample

4:40 Process the swab sample

5:33 Read your result

6:55 Report your result

7:33 Dispose of your used test kit.

### **The importance of regular testing**

There are five good reasons for regular testing:

- It finds and isolates people early who have Coronavirus but don't have symptoms (asymptomatic), helping to stop the spread of the virus
- Alongside the vaccine rollout and social distancing, it is key to reducing infection and transmission, helping the country to keep moving
- It helps to identify and suppress new variants of concern, playing a vital role in limiting the spread of Coronavirus
- It protects you and your loved ones

- When done correctly, the tests are at least 99.9 per cent specific, which means that the risk of false positives is extremely low – less than one in a thousand

In short, it's a simple and effective way for everybody to do their bit in stopping the spread of the virus. Testing regularly, even when you do not have symptoms, means we can keep infection levels low.

### **Reminder- Lateral Flow Testing Available in Local Pharmacies**

A **full list** of participating pharmacies can be found [here](#). If you are unable to get to a pharmacy or test centre to collect a test kit, you can order a home testing kit to be sent to your home [here](#). If you are taking a Lateral Flow test, please report to your managers how often you are testing.

### **Reminder- Do you need to book a PCR test?**

Somerset residents are being reminded that they need to book a PCR test if they are showing symptoms of COVID-19 or have tested positive using a 'lateral flow' (rapid) test kit. You can [book or request a PCR test online](#) or by calling 119.

### **Vaccinated? You still need to take care**

Vaccination is a vital part of moving out of the Coronavirus pandemic, so getting your vaccine when offered is something to celebrate. Although the COVID-19 vaccine gives the best protection against becoming seriously ill if you catch Coronavirus, it's important to remember that it doesn't make you invincible. The COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective, but it doesn't take full effect immediately. The first dose should give you good protection from three or four weeks after you've had it. But you need to have the two doses to give you longer lasting protection.

### **Latest Vaccination data for Somerset**

You can check Somerset's vaccination data on the Coronavirus dashboard. The information provided by the NHS will be added every Friday. Please [click here](#) to view the latest figures relating to doses that have been administered in Somerset. The dashboard provides an overview of Coronavirus cases, a map, the R number and more detailed district-level information.

### **The Somerset Coronavirus Support Helpline**

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 including vaccinations
- 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 visit [www.corona-helpers.co.uk](http://www.corona-helpers.co.uk).

## **Need to seek help?**

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:

- 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

**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. Do I need to self-isolate when I return to England from a country on the amber list?**

**A.** Yes. You need to self-isolate when returning from a country on the amber list; however, the Government has signalled that later in the summer, arrivals who are fully vaccinated will not have to quarantine when travelling from [amber list countries](#). They will still be required to take a pre-departure test and a test on day 2, and any positive results will be sequenced to continue to manage the risk of importing variants.

Until these measures are introduced, all passengers, whether vaccinated or not, must continue to abide by quarantine rules on returning to the UK from an amber list country, and it is recommended that people should not travel to amber list countries at the moment.

**Q. How well do the COVID-19 vaccines work?**

**A.** Anyone who gets COVID-19 can become seriously ill or have long-term effects ([long COVID](#)). The COVID-19 vaccines are the best way to protect yourself and others.

Research has shown the vaccines help:

- reduce your risk of getting seriously ill or dying from COVID-19



- reduce your risk of catching or spreading COVID-19
- protect against COVID-19 variants

The 1st dose should give you some protection from 3 or 4 weeks after you've had it. But you need 2 doses for stronger and longer-lasting protection. There is a chance you might still get or spread COVID-19 even if you have a vaccine, so it's important to continue to follow all [social distancing guidance](#).

Please [click here](#) to watch an NHS YouTube video explaining what's in the COVID-19 vaccines and how they work.

## **Crime / Safeguarding**

### **Modern Day Slavery**

#### **Unseen's Campaign to end County Lines**

County Lines describes the mobile phone lines used by criminal gangs to organise illegal drugs to be moved and sold from one village, town or city to another across the UK. Children are most often used to move and sell the drugs. They are recruited by gang members who pose as friends and then trap the young people into a terrifying cycle of violence, exploitation and abuse.

How much do you know about County Lines exploitation? Did you know it can happen to any child, anywhere, from any background? What would you do if a child you knew was involved in County Lines?

Frequent headlines detail the suffering that County Lines causes our children and how they can become trapped in this form of modern slavery, coerced by violent gangs into dealing drugs. Yet research conducted for Unseen reveals that a third (32%) of UK adults do not know what County Lines is. Some have never even heard of the term.

The findings are alarming. It's why Unseen is campaigning to raise awareness of County Lines using the hashtag #endchildexploitation.

You can find out more about County Lines by getting your own [free guide](#) delivered to your inbox. The guide includes information about who is at risk, how children are recruited, how to spot the signs of exploitation and where to go to for help.

Please [click here](#) for more information.

## **Avon & Somerset Police (A&SP)**

### **Sarah Crew appointed as Temporary Chief Constable for Avon and Somerset Police**

Police and Crime Commissioner, Mark Shelford, has announced the appointment of Sarah Crew as Temporary Chief Constable for Avon and Somerset Police.

The appointment of Sarah Crew was approved by the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel at a confirmation hearing on 24 June. Sarah will step up into the

role, having served as a police officer in Avon and Somerset Police since 1994 and as Deputy Chief Constable since 2017. The announcement follows the decision of current Chief Constable, Andy Marsh, not to renew his contract which expired 1 July 2021.

Please [click here](#) for further information.

### **Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)**

Due to the problems of anti-social behaviour across the district, the neighbourhood teams have increased patrols across all of the hotspot areas. The police have seen a reduction since doing these patrols. In addition they have been issuing anti-social behaviour diaries for focus on specific areas and working with residents to combat issues they have been experiencing. Where individuals have been identified they have been spoken with or issued Anti-Social Behaviour letters dependent upon the situation and severity of the occurrence.

The police also work closely with local schools to engage with individuals who have been involved in unwanted behaviours. As new information is received or demand in other areas increases, the police amend or add to their patrols accordingly. They rely on information received from the community to know where problems are being experienced, so it is important all issues are reported to via 101 in a timely manner so the police can act quickly.

Don't report crime on social media platforms, please call 101 or visit [Avon and Somerset Police website](#). In an emergency always call 999.

### **A&SP Mounted Unit need your help...**

A&SP are currently looking to recruit a new police horse to join the team. They are looking for the following:

- Minimum 17 hh
- Aged 5 – 11 years old
- A calm temperament with a trainable attitude
- Loads and travels well on a horsebox
- Good bone
- Will hack alone and in company
- Safe in open spaces
- Good in traffic

All horses will be required to undergo a 4 week trial where A&SP will assess their suitability to the role and a 5 stage vetting. If you have a horse that you feel would be what the police are looking for, please email [Hannah.Clarke@avonandsomerset.police.uk](mailto:Hannah.Clarke@avonandsomerset.police.uk)

### **For further Neighbourhood Policing Updates...**

For regular updates on events/campaigns and what is happening in your area, please keep an eye on the relevant policing Facebook pages detailed below:

- [Minehead and West Somerset Neighbourhood Policing](#)
- [Wellington Neighbourhood Policing](#)
- [Taunton Neighbourhood Policing](#)

## Finally

The below link may be useful to you, should there be a requirement to convert files to jpg format: <https://www.adobe.com/uk/acrobat/online/pdf-to-jpg.html>

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/](http://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.

**#Hands      #Face      #Space and Fresh Air**