

Somerset West and Taunton

Newsletter to SWT Councillors and Parish Councils

Issue 72 Week ending 22/08/2021

SWT Council's priority strategic themes and outcomes

Somerset West and Taunton Council's four strategic themes are as follows:

- Our Environment and Economy
- A Transparent and Customer Focused Council
- Homes and Communities
- An Enterprising Council

[Click here](#) to view SWT's expected outcomes.

Key Messages this week

1. All young people aged 16 and 17 in England to be offered vaccine

All young people aged 16 to 17 in England are to be offered a first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine by **Monday 23 August** to give them the vital protection provided by the vaccine before returning to school in September.

Tens of thousands of people in this age group have already been vaccinated at local vaccination sites and walk-in centres across the country and the drive to offer a first jab by the new date will allow those teenagers in that age bracket the two weeks necessary to build maximum immunity.

NHS England has launched a new online walk-in site finder to help 16 and 17 year olds locate the nearest available centre. Further sites will come online over the coming days and weeks.

Please [click here](#) for further information and to keep up to date with the latest Government announcements.

2. Reminder- Self-isolation removed for double jabbed close contacts

People who are double jabbed or aged under 18 are no longer legally required to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. The change was announced last month, as part of step 4 of the Government's COVID-19 roadmap. Please [click here](#) for further information.

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:

- Thursday 26 August – Community Scrutiny Committee - **CANCELLED**
- Wednesday 1 September – Corporate Scrutiny Committee, 6.15pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Thursday 26 August)
- Thursday 2 September – Planning Committee, 1pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Friday 27 August)

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.

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

4. Get prepared for National Tree Planting Week 2021

SWT is once again offering Town and Parish Councils across the district **free trees** as part of its commitment to work towards carbon neutrality and climate

resilience by 2030. With Tree Planting Season now over SWT is looking ahead to September when the new Season begins.

Last year SWT provided over 200 free trees to Town and Parish Councils for planting, this year the hope is to plant even more; local councils can order trees, stakes, ties and guards which will be ready for collection in time for National Tree Week from **27 November to 5 December**.

Councils can choose from Oak, Beech, Lime and Hawthorn bare root trees to the value of £50 to be collected from one of three locations across the district: **Taunton Deane Nurseries, Wellington Depot or Minehead Depot**.

Please look out for future updates when the scheme opens and you are invited to place your request ready for National Tree Planting Week. If you have any queries or questions please do not hesitate to contact Barry Hawkins, Project Manager on b.hawkins@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

5. Notice of vacancy - Wilton and Sherford Ward

A notice of vacancy has been published for the Wilton and Sherford ward at SWT following the passing of Councillor Alan Wedderkopp.

An election to fill the seat will be held if the Returning Officer receives a request in writing from two electors from within the district. On receipt of the requests the Returning Officer will set a date for an election to be held within 35 days.

The Notice of Vacancy is available to view on the [District and parish elections](#) page.

6. Somerset Waste Partnership Services (SWP) Collections improving – recruitment and retention work continues

Somerset Waste Partnership's collections have continued to improve over the last few weeks after a really tough period. On Thursday and Friday this week SWP have been able to fully deploy crews to on all rounds. No significant missed collections are expected, though clearly misses can and do happen due to other reasons over the course of the day.

SWP expect to see the improvement sustained next week, with the small number of outstanding "dropped rounds" returned for – meaning all rounds would be caught up and back to weekly recycling collections.

This is a positive milestone, helped in part by the suspension of garden waste collections as well as considerable recruitment and retention work which currently includes a £1,000 welcome bonus for qualified Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) drivers. However, it is important to note that collections remain fragile. The underlying issue of driver shortage remains, and important recruitment and retention initiatives will continue.

If you know anyone who may be interested in a career with SUEZ (Somerset Waste Partnership's collections contractor) as a driver, supervisor or loader, please sign-post them to www.suez.co.uk/join-our-team-in-somerset

The resumption of garden waste is still scheduled for **Monday 13 September**.

SWP would like to thank you for your patience and understanding through what has been a really tough time for crews who have been collecting heavier loads for well over a year.

Don't forget SWP is committed to making sure the recycling you put out is reprocessed into new products and packaging – in the UK wherever possible.

Last year, Somerset recycled or reused 137,146 tonnes, preventing more than 123,000 tonnes of carbon from being released. Nearly 98% of our recycling is reprocessed in the UK, including more than 50% staying in Somerset itself www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/recycling-tracker.

Veggie pets? Make sure you compost their waste

Manure from guinea pigs, gerbils, hamsters, and rabbits - if kept on a plant-based diet - is good for home composting. Unless you have carefully managed "hot" composting that reaches high enough temperatures to kill pathogens, experts advise not composting cat or dog waste.

Please [click here](#) for more on veggie pets for composting.

For more information on kerbside services, recycling sites, and on COVID-19 and waste, visit: 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

A mixed week for weather, with the showery conditions hampering progress of the carriageway surface dressing operation. Completed sites are:

- Neroche Road/Castle Main/Blackdown Hill Road (running along the top of the Blackdown Hills between the old Merry Harriers and Castle Neroche)
- Buckland Hill, West Buckland
- Staple Fitzpaine Road (between Castle Neroche and Frost Street)
- Ash Road, Thornfalcon
- Knotcroft Lane and Mill Lane, Thurloxton
- Culver Street, Cross Elms Hill and Lilstock Road in the Kilton/Stringston area of Quantock Vale.

Sites still to do during the week commencing 23 August are:

- New Road between **Wootton Courtenay** and **Tivington**

- Ranscombe Road and Clouds Steep between **Wootton Courtenay** and **Timberscombe**
- Mill Cross to Woolcotts, **Brompton Regis**
- Andrews Hill Cross to Hinam Cross, **Dulverton**
- B3224, **Treborough** (running along the top of the Brendon Hills between B3190 Beulah Chapel and Withiel Hill)
- B3224/B3223 **Exford** to **Simonsbath**
- A378 Langport Road, **Fivehead**.

More information regarding the surface dressing programme, including a short YouTube film, can be found [here](#).

Drainage work at Huish Cleeve Road, Huish Champflower, footway resurfacing on Blackdown View, Norton Fitzwarren and the removal of trees affected by ash dieback at Staple Fitzpaine have all been completed.

Drainage repairs and improvements continue and **B3187 Burn Hill, Langford Budville**. The temporary road closures will be in place until 27 August.

The week of 23 to 27 August will see carriageway resurfacing at **Lipe Hill Lane, Trull** and the removal of trees affected by ash dieback at **Blagdon Hill Road, Culmhead** (both temporary road closures); and drainage work at **A358 Minehead Road, Norton Fitzwarren** (temporary traffic signals). There will also be drainage and kerb repairs under the cover of a series of temporary road closures at **Trull Road, Taunton**, on 25, 26, 27 and 31 August.

The rural highway verge cutting programme is now proceeding on the “A” and “B” Class roads for their second safety cut.

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

Harmful or poisonous weeds

SCC are responsible for controlling certain noxious weeds, including ragwort. You can [report noxious weeds here](#).

When you contact SCC, please give them the following information:

- Your name, address and phone number in case we need to contact you
- The location of the weeds. including the road name and parish
- The type of weed (if you know)

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.](#)

Temporary Urgent Road Closure - Stoke Road, Ruishton

Please be aware of an urgent road closure at Stoke Road, Ruishton, which will

commence on **23 August 2021** and is expected to last until 24 August 2021 (the closure is between the hours of 6pm - 6am).

These works are for Highways England to carry out drainage survey works.

For any further information about this closure please contact Highways England on **01623 345 888**, quoting reference: ttro465827.

Please [click here](#) to view a map of the affected area (in red), together with the recommended diversion route (in purple), along with the link to One.Network.

Highways England

Reminder- A358 Taunton to Southfields Community update

As Highways England continue to develop their plans for the A358 Taunton to Southfields project, they want to use their newsletter to keep you up-to-date, informed and aware of what they're working on.

You can keep up to date with the latest scheme news by using the following means:

- Webpage: www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields/
- Email: A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk
- Phone: **0300 123 5000**
- Twitter: @HighwaysSWEST
- Facebook: @HighwaysSWEST

Toneway - Creech Castle Junction Improvement Scheme

Reminder- A38 Bridgwater Road Closure

The A38 Bridgwater Road North is now closed to vehicles for approximately 12 months. There will be no vehicular access from the A358 Toneway, north of the junction onto the A38 Bridgwater Road except for the following:

- From the Toneway heading north ONLY to access the Creech Castle Business Park or residential property in this immediate area, then leave onto the Toneway heading east towards Hankridge Park Roundabout.
- From Bridgwater Road A38 heading south to access the small retail area containing a timber merchant and a garage and any residential properties in this immediate area, then leave north back along the A38.
- There shall be a third permanent barrier between these two small retail areas which shall prevent all vehicle movement.
- The footway / cycle path will remain open as usual. We will also need to close the right-turn from Toneway to Bridgwater Road South. Official diversion routes will be in place for the duration of the scheme and will be clearly signposted.

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

Post-16 Educational Support

Many young people received their exam results last week. Whilst it is hoped that many will be celebrating, it may not have gone as planned for others. There's lots of support available to help post-16 students figure out their options following results day.

Somerset Education Business Partnership

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. They help:-

- employers to build their talent pipelines
- education providers to build relationships with local employers
- learners to understand post-16 options and the workplace

Whether you are a parent, education provider or business, the Somerset Education Business Partnership can provide you with the latest events, resources and information on career-related activities in Somerset. Please click [here](#) to visit the website and subscribe to their newsletter.

Skill Up Somerset

Skill Up Somerset are an Apprenticeship and Skills service supporting residents of Somerset – offering free, impartial advice and guidance on apprenticeships and upskilling opportunities in Somerset. Please click [here](#) to visit the website.

National Careers Service

Assistance with planning next steps after getting A level, AS level, GCSE or vocational and technical qualifications. Whether students received the grades they expected or not, there are lots of work and study options available after receiving the results. COVID-19 has had a big impact on teaching, learning and assessments for lots of students this year, so it's important to examine all the options and different ways to reach career goals. Please [click here](#) to visit the National Careers Service website.

Somerset Activity Sports Partnership (SASP)

Reminder- Happy Healthy Holidays Somerset

The Happy Healthy Holidays Somerset Programme Activity Finder is now live and parents/carers can use the finder to find fun local activities (with food) taking place throughout the summer holidays.

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 and contact your child's school in the first instance.

If you are having problems booking, please see our helpful FAQs and 'how to' videos at the bottom of the page or call the support hotline (Monday - Wednesday 10am - 2pm) on **01823 653990**.

[Click here](#) to head to the activity finder to find your nearest centre.

Exmoor National Park (ENP)

Dedicate a tree on Exmoor to show you “CareMoor”

It is now possible to dedicate a tree on Exmoor towards the creation of a major new woodland in the National Park at Bye Hill near Winsford – the largest of its kind for 15 years.

People can pay £15 to dedicate a tree and send a personalised card of a painting by local artist Leo Davey depicting what ‘Bye Wood’ might look like in the future. A two-day tree planting event is also being held on site this November so the local community and anyone keen to help with the planting can come along. Although to keep the environment as natural as possible there will be no ownership of individual trees or commemorative plaques in this wood.

Each tree dedication will count towards [the National Park’s new CareMoor Woods and Trees appeal](#) as part of a drive to increase tree cover across Exmoor from around 13.5% to at least 17% by 2050 – the amount recommended by the Government’s independent Climate Change Committee.

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

Reminder- Proposed Diversion: Public Bridleway in Parish of Oare

Exmoor National Park Authority is proposing to divert public bridleway WL17/3 which will include upgrading part of public footpath WL17/2 to public bridleway in the parish of Oare. Prior to making an Order ENP would like to hear your views on the proposal.

Please return any comments on the proposal by **27 August 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.

If you would like to meet on site to discuss the proposal prior to making your comments, please do not hesitate to contact the Public Rights of Way and Access Officer, Sue Applegate on **01398 322292**.

Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (DSFRS)

Looking for a job?

DSFRS have a few different support staff roles open in teams across the Service. Please [click here](#) to take a look at the latest vacancies. DSFRS support staff keep the Service running smoothly and help them to keep people safe. If you're looking for a job where you can make a difference, one of these opportunities may be right for you.

Travelling to the south west for your staycation?

It’s really busy on the roads in our area at the moment, particularly on Fridays and Saturdays. Sadly, DSFRS are also attending a large number of serious accidents. DSFRS know it’s exciting going away, and you all want to get to your holiday destination as soon as possible. But when you’re tired, you make mistakes. Please factor in some driving breaks (ice creams optional). Please stay safe so you can enjoy your holiday when you get there.

Maritime and Coastguard Agency

Inflatables are for the swimming pool only!

Flamingos, unicorns, swans and other inflatable toys might be your best friends in the pool but they can quickly become your worst enemy at the coast. If tides are going out and the wind is blowing offshore (wind going from the land to the sea), it's especially easy for you and/or your loved ones to have an unplanned ride out to sea in moments.

How to keep you and your family safe at the beach:

- Choose a lifeguarded beach
- Supervise children closely
- Never take inflatables out in big waves. Keep them for the pool
- Never ever use inflatable toys when the orange windsock is flying. This means an offshore wind which can blow inflatables (including kayaks and paddleboards) out to sea
- Whenever you take to the sea, wear a suitable lifejacket or buoyancy aid. This will provide the necessary floatation should the inflatable suffer a puncture or similar

Remember in an emergency dial 999 and ask for the Coastguard.

HM Coastguard Minehead

Please keep Emergency access points clear!

Please remember to park your cars carefully and not block the emergency services. This can include beach access points, field gateways and narrow lanes etc.

HM Coastguard Minehead recently had someone park across their station access, despite warning signs. This prevented their rescue vehicle being able to exit the station. The Police were called to identify the owner and move the vehicle. Luckily it was not on an emergency call.

Please consider others when parking. You never know you could delay the emergency services coming to your own aid.

Community Support – What help is out there?

Voluntary and Community Sector Support

Spark Somerset

Short online survey deadline looms

New study asks people how they've been affected by waiting for surgery in Somerset. As the number of patients waiting for surgery continues to grow, nationally and in the South West of England, [Healthwatch Somerset](#) are asking people about their experiences of being referred for surgery in Somerset and how they have been affected by waiting times.

If you or someone you know is on a waiting list for surgery in Somerset, or you recently had to wait for surgery, Healthwatch Somerset would like to hear about your

experiences. It's easy to share your feedback and your comments can remain anonymous.

You can complete a [short online survey](#) by **6 September 2021**. You can contact Healthwatch Somerset to arrange a convenient time to feedback over the phone - call Freephone **0800 999 1286** or email info@healthwatchsomerset.co.uk

Community Council for Somerset (CCS)

Talking Café Live – Homefinder Somerset

On the 18 August, Village Agent Jane Lillis was joined by guests Nicola Kemp, Rural Housing Enabler and Rupert Warren, Homefinder Coordinator from Somerset West and Taunton Council.

Rupert talked about the changes to Homefinder, the revised application process, and the new website. Nicola talked about the current rural housing situation. Please [click here](#) to watch a replay of the Live Session.

To visit the [Homefinder website](#).

Somerset Carers Newsletter

The next [Somerset Carers](#) Newsletter is coming soon! Have it delivered straight to your inbox by signing up [here](#). In the meantime, you can have a read of the last issue [here](#).

Ambassadors Wanted...

[Get Outside in Somerset](#) are looking for ambassadors to share their stories and be advocates for the [#GetOutside](#) campaign and promote the message of being outdoors and moving more in ways that suit you.

[Click here](#) to check out the amazing Ambassadors that have already signed up!

The Role of the Get Outside Ambassadors:

- Be willing to be involved and share your story/journey with others.
- Willing to inspire others through film, images, blogs, and quotes.
- Have your image and bio on the Get Outside website
- Share your own posts through social media if you feel comfortable and tag the Get Outside socials
- Share the Get Outside in Somerset campaign content on your own social media.
- Be advocates and spread the message of promoting the campaign and being active outdoors.

If you would like to share your passion for the outdoors - from looking after your allotment, to paddle boarding on the Parrett - please get in touch with [Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership - SASP](#) on **01823 653990** or email enquiries@sasp.co.uk

Reminder- Meal and food boxes

Meal and food boxes are available in your community. Anyone can request a meal or food box, regardless of your financial situation. You can access these free meals by contacting your local Village Agent call – **01823 331222**. Please [click here](#) for further information.

Reminder- Do you need an emergency delivery of fuel?

The CCS Oil Scheme partners AF Affinity have a great scheme where they can deliver a fast, emergency parcel of fuel to tide you over until you can get a full delivery! Call them on **01603 881888** between 9am – 4.30pm to order or email somersetbuying@af-affinity.co.uk. For more information, [click here](#).

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: **01749 344949** or email: peter.stolze@somersetcf.org.uk.

Grants available for Somerset grassroots sports clubs and organisations

Made By Sport has partnered with community foundations across the UK to distribute £4.4m of funding to organisations and sports clubs who deliver sports development programmes for young people up to the age of 25. Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) is managing the applications for Somerset and grants of up to £2,021 will be awarded to eligible organisations from the #ClubsInCrisis Fund.

The fund is looking for applications from clubs and community organisations that use sport to improve young people's lives through one or more of the following means:

- Developing life skills
- Building strong communities
- Improving mental health
- Developing employability skills
- Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour

Groups that have been awarded grants from the fund this year include:

- 2BU Somerset CIC, Taunton, £2,021 for staff and transport costs to provide sports activities
- Huish Tigers Football Club, Taunton, £1,500 for coaching and equipment costs for the Ability team
- Huish Tigers RFC, Taunton, £1,188 for kit costs for youth players
- In the Mix Youth Project, Wiveliscombe, £2,021 for core and project costs

- Stogursey and District Victory Hall Committee, Bridgwater, £2,021 for youth club running costs

In order to be eligible, clubs must provide clear evidence of how they use sport to help young people develop life skills, employment opportunities, reduce crime and anti-social behaviour or tackle mental health issues.

Any community group or charitable organisation wishing to apply for funding should visit the SCF website where they can find guidance on how to make an application: www.somersetcf.org.uk/apply

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

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

Stay Safe and help prevent the spread of COVID-19

Coronavirus remains a serious health risk. You should stay cautious to help protect yourself and others.

- Meet outside, or open windows and doors for indoor visitors
- If you think you have symptoms stay at home and [take a PCR test](#)
- Wear face coverings in crowded places and on public transport
- Check in to venues when you go out
- Wash your hands with soap regularly, and for at least 20 seconds
- [Get vaccinated](#).

Department of Health and Social Care

Infection Control - Every Action Counts toolkit

Keeping infection prevention and control measures in social care settings helps reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading. Social care workers share what they're doing to protect themselves and others, and why in a selection of videos found [here](#). Care providers – please [click here](#) to find out more and get the Every Action Counts toolkit.

Have you had your jabs? Book now for first and second doses

Vaccines are the best way to protect people from COVID-19 and have already saved thousands of lives. Anyone in Somerset who is aged 40 or under can now have their

second dose of COVID-19 vaccine after eight weeks, rather than 12 – either by booking or managing your appointment through the National Booking Service, or by attending a walk-in clinic. It is not possible to have your second dose earlier than the eight-week interval from your first dose.

Don't forget – if you haven't yet booked your appointment or had your first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, please go online or call 119 to confirm your booking dates – there's no need to worry there are plenty of slots and you haven't missed out!

Vaccination sites across the county are continuing to offer both first doses and second doses, to check availability and the nearest location to where you live, visit the [National Booking Service website](#).

For the latest information about the Somerset vaccination programme, vaccination centres and walk-in centres follow this [link](#).

Reminder- New type of lateral flow test

New lateral flow kits are now in circulation. Please use up any NHS Innova kits you may have before moving onto the new Acon or Orient Gene kits. The advantage of the new kits is that they only require both nostrils to be swabbed, and a result will be available within 15 minutes. However, the process is slightly different so please do read the instructions provided with the kit that you receive.

If you'd like to know more, a video which shows you how to use the new kit can be viewed [here](#). By testing yourself regularly you are helping to reduce the spread of the infection.

[Click here](#) to order lateral flow tests online to be delivered to your home, call 119 to have a kit home delivered through the post, or collect a kit at a local pharmacy. If you have symptoms of the infection you need to take a PCR test, which can be done by phoning 119 or by clicking [here](#).

All COVID-19 Restrictions in England now lifted

Please refer to the links below for the latest Coronavirus-related advice, help and guidance, should you need any help in the future.

- [Order your lateral flow tests online](#)
- [How to do a COVID-19 lateral flow test](#)
- [Log your lateral flow results here](#)
- [Book or request a PCR test online](#)
- [List of local pharmacies offering lateral flow testing](#)
- [Somerset COVID-19 Local Outbreak Management Plan Dashboard](#)
- <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- [NHS – Help and Advice](#)

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.

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.

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
- Somerset Domestic Abuse helpline - 0800 69 49 999

FAQS

Q. I'm worried about my alcohol consumption since the lockdown. Where can I go to discuss my drinking habits?

A. In a recent [Covid Catch Up](#), Clinton focused on peoples' alcohol consumption. While most of the population reported drinking the same or less, nationally it's estimated that more than eight million people drank more during lockdown. And habits formed quickly can be hard to break.

Clinton also met Sally Farmer, a local pharmacist, discussed a new support service for those of us who drink more than we should but are not dependent on alcohol.

If you would like to discuss your drinking with someone, you can access free and confidential support from Somerset Drug & Alcohol Service (SDAS) on **0300 303 8788**, this service is mainly for people who are dependent on alcohol.

Q. Is it true the cost of NHS travel tests have been reduced?

A. UK holidaymakers will benefit from cheaper travel testing packages, with the price of some tests to fall by a fifth. The cost of NHS Test and Trace tests for international arrivals will now be reduced from £88 to £68 for green or fully vaccinated amber arrivals, and from £170 to £136 for two tests for amber arrivals who are not fully vaccinated.

The Health Secretary has also announced there will be a rapid internal review of the pricing and service standards of all providers of day 2 and 8 tests. Any misleading pricing will be clamped down on swiftly and they will urgently remove listings found to have misleading prices. The review started last weekend and will last 10 days, and providers failing to meet necessary standards will be urgently removed. For further information, please [click here](#).

Crime / Safeguarding

Action Fraud

Watch out for fake tickets

This summer has seen the return of popular festivals and live music events, with others set to follow in the coming months. Some people are taking advantage of this by trying to sell fake tickets to eager revellers.

To avoid disappointment, Action Fraud want you to be wary of unsolicited emails, text or adverts offering unbelievably good deals on tickets.

Here's how to spot the signs of ticket fraud and protect yourself and your money:

- Only buy tickets from the venue's box office, official promoter or agent, or a well-known and reputable ticket site.
- Avoid paying for tickets by bank transfer, especially if buying from someone unknown. Credit card or payment services such as PayPal give you a better chance of recovering your money if you become a victim of fraud.
- Be wary of unsolicited emails, texts or adverts offering deals on tickets. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

If you think you've been a victim of fraud, contact your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud online at actionfraud.police.uk or by calling **0300 123 2040**.

Which? Consumer Rights

How to spot a text message scam

Messaging scams can be very convincing, so it's important to know what to watch out for to stay ahead of the fraudsters. Scammers are increasingly taking advantage of smartphones and are getting very clever with how they try to take your hard-earned money. They can even make it look like a legitimate organisation is

contacting you via text or a messaging app by using identity masking technology to change the name displayed as the sender. This is known as 'number spoofing'.

If you get sent a scam message, it's important you report it so others don't fall victim. Reporting a scam message is free and it will help stop the spread of these messages. Fraudsters can use many different types of messaging systems and apps, like SMS, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Viber, Skype, Google Hangouts, Snapchat and many other platforms to try scam you out of your money. Please [click here](#) to find out how to report scams and warn others.

Spot a scam bank message

If you get a message purporting to be from your bank, always treat this with caution. And know the eight things your bank will never ask you.

Your bank should **never**:

- Ask for your Pin or internet banking password
- Send someone to your home to collect cards or banking information
- Ask you to email or text personal or banking information
- Email a link where you have to then input your internet banking details
- Ask you to authorise a funds transfer which you haven't requested
- Tell you to invest in diamonds, land or other commodities
- Ask you to carry out a test transaction
- Send you to a mobile app other than their own official app

How to avoid message scams

Here are a few tips to help you avoid message scams.

- **Don't follow any links**
This is the most effective way to avoid text scams. Links can take you to cloned websites designed to steal your money or personal data. Because links are often shortened to help them fit into the message, it's not always easy to tell the real ones from the fakes. Clicking on links could also lead you to download malware - malicious software that can take over your phone and access your data.
- **Don't share personal information**
Treat all messages requesting sensitive information - or that link you to websites asking for personal details - with suspicion. Legitimate organisations will never text you to ask for your personal or banking details upfront.
- **Contact the organisation directly if you're unsure**
If you're not sure if a text is real, contact the company that claims to have sent it to check. Use the official contact details listed on the company's website or documents you might have been sent, if it's your bank then you can usually find its official number on the back of your credit or debit card.
- **Don't reply**

Replying to a fake text, calling the number it's been sent from or clicking through on suspicious links only lets the scammers know your number is being used. You might be bombarded with even more scam messages and calls. The number has likely been spoofed anyway, which means you'll probably only be messaging an innocent member of the public who has had their number stolen.

- **Report it**

You report the fake text by forwarding it to 7726 - a free reporting service provided by phone operators. This information is then shared with the police and intelligence agencies working to stop text scams. If you've fallen victim to a text scam, you can report it to [Action Fraud](#).

Avon & Somerset Police (A&SP)

Wellington Speed Checks

Wellington Neighbourhood Policing Team were joined by officers from the Special Constabulary, to carry out speed checks at different locations around Wellington, where reports have been received about vehicles travelling at excessive speed

Speed Checks on Taunton Road resulted in 5 drivers being reported for speeding and 1 driver being reported for not wearing a seatbelt. A further 9 motorists were also stopped and given words of advice about a range of differing matters related to vehicles.

Speed Checks on Mantle Street resulted in 4 drivers being stopped and advised about matters relating to vehicles. Officers did not identify anyone travelling above the speed limit whilst at this location.

The first vehicle stopped during Speed Checks in Tonedale resulted in the driver being arrested and conveyed to custody after being found in possession of cannabis and failing a roadside drug swipe.

The police have plans to carry out further speed checks and enforcement in these areas and other areas around Wellington.

If you have concerns about speeding vehicles in your community then please make A&SP aware and assist them in targeting and tackling the problem. You can make a report by visiting the Avon and Somerset Police website using the following [link](#).

Prevent car crime

Thieves smashed the window of a parked and unattended vehicle at the Wellington Monument car park this week and stole items of property from inside. The crime took place around 9am.

This is the second theft from a vehicle left parked at this location in recent weeks. Please remember to remove all valuables from your vehicle and leave no items of property on show if you're parking at the Monument or in any other beauty spot and or isolated location.

To prevent your car being broken into:-

- Don't leave valuables in the car
- Don't leave anything of value on show and leave glove boxes open
- Lock doors and use a windscreen covering if possible
- Encourage others in your community to do the same.

If you have information about who is responsible for car crime contact Crimestoppers online or call **0800 555111**. You can speak up and remain 100% anonymous.

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 communities 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.

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/ 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.