

# Somerset West and Taunton

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

### **Issue 73 Week ending 29/08/2021**

#### **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. Latest changes to self-isolation rules**

People who test positive for COVID-19 still need to self-isolate for 10 days, but now people who have both doses of their coronavirus vaccine, and those aged 18 and under, will no longer be legally required to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case.

Fully vaccinated people and those under 18 who are identified as close contacts by NHS Test and Trace are being advised to take a PCR test as soon as possible to check if they have the virus. People can order a PCR home test online, by calling 119, or going to a test site.

Anyone who is symptomatic and awaiting the result of a PCR test should still self-isolate until the results are received.

Please [click here](#) to find out more information

### **2. 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:

- Wednesday 1 September – Corporate Scrutiny Committee, 6.15pm (deadline for public questions was 4pm on Thursday 26 August)
- Thursday 2 September – Planning Committee, 1pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Friday 27 August)
- Tuesday 7 September – Full Council, 6.15pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Thursday 2 September). **THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD AT OAK MANOR GOLF CLUB AND WILL BE LIVE STREAMED ON FACEBOOK**

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.

### **3. SWT Quality Review Panel – New members wanted**

SWT is inviting applications for membership of a Quality Review Panel, which is being formed to support high standards in new developments in the district in accordance with the emerging Design Guide SPD.

The panel will play an important role in furthering the council's commitment to achieving high quality and sustainable places that meet the needs and consider the future demands of communities.

It will provide independent expert design advice, to ensure exemplary development across Somerset West and Taunton that will add to the area's character, creating healthy, attractive and distinctive places to live and work.

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

#### **4. Somerset West Lottery Autumn 2021 bolt on prize draw**

The Somerset West Lottery is taking part in the Autumn 2021 bolt-on prize draw. Everyone who signs up to purchase one or more tickets between 1 September and 30 October 2021 will be in with the chance to win a £1,000 John Lewis gift voucher, courtesy of Gatherwell the external lottery management company (ELM).

All tickets bought during this timeframe will automatically be entered into 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.

The Somerset West Lottery offers registered good causes the opportunity to raise income for their organisation by selling tickets to members of the public.

If you know of a good cause wishing to raise funds or would like to buy a ticket contact the Somerset West Lottery on 0300 30 20 666;

[support@somersetwestlottery.co.uk](mailto:support@somersetwestlottery.co.uk) or visit [www.somersetwestlottery.co.uk](http://www.somersetwestlottery.co.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.

Please click here to read the full SWT press release.

#### **6. Somerset Waste Partnership Services (SWP)**

No collections on the Summer Bank Holiday Monday 30 August, means recycling and rubbish services are one day later all week, including Friday pickups on Saturday 4 September.

The changes affect collections of recycling, refuse and garden waste, as well as assisted collections. Residents should sort and segregate materials, ensure no recycling – especially food – is in the rubbish bin, and put all waste containers out by 7am.

Recycling sites remain on their usual timetables, with all 16 sites open 9am-4pm on the Bank Holiday Saturday and Sunday weekend. 12 sites will be open 9am-6pm on Bank Holiday Monday: Bridgwater, Minehead, Taunton, and Williton.

All kerbside collections return to their usual schedules from Monday 6 September.

## **Partial Sale of Viridor to Biffa**

Please see the attached briefing paper on the proposed sale of Viridor assets in Somerset to Biffa. A media release will be sent out shortly.

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](http://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](http://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/recycling-tracker).

For more information on kerbside services, recycling sites, and on COVID-19 and waste, visit: [somersetwaste.gov.uk](http://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**

After a run of mixed weeks, the weather switched around to being fine and dry just in time to allow SCC Highways to complete the 2021 carriageway surface dressing programme in Somerset West and Taunton before the start of the Bank Holiday weekend.

SCC Highways would like to take this opportunity to thank all the residents and users of the roads of Somerset West and Taunton for their patience and support whilst the team carried out this important highway maintenance programme. Over the last five weeks, they have dressed around 700,000 square metres of road with 1,500,000 litres of bitumen emulsion binder and 12,000 tonnes of chippings right across the county.

Drainage works at B3187 Burn Hill, Langford Budville, and carriageway resurfacing at Lipe Hill Lane, Trull have all been completed.

Drainage repairs and improvements continue at **Trull Road, Taunton**. The final temporary road closure will be in place on 31 August between 8am and 5pm.

Trees affected by ash dieback will continue to be removed at **Blagdon Hill Road, Culmhead**. The temporary road closures here are between 9am and 4pm from 31 August to 3 September.

Carriageway resurfacing will take place on **Trull Road, Taunton, from Broadlands Road to Manor Road**. This will be evening working with a series of temporary road closures between 6.30pm and 11.30pm, on 1, 2 and 3 September.

There will be a one-day closure of **Park Lane Close, Carhampton**, on 31 August, also for carriageway resurfacing. Another temporary road closure booked up is for 31 August to 3 September at **Stawley Road, Stawley**, this time for drainage improvements.

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.

### **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.](#)

### **Student Bus Tickets**

Due to the on-going uncertainty with the Covid-19 pandemic, Somerset County Council will not be offering the County Ticket scheme for the 2021/22 academic year. The potential for the re-introduction of additional restrictions/ lockdowns, or the continuation of social distancing measures and possible changes to the level of College attendance required from September 2021, mean an annual pre-paid ticket is not the most viable option

For those students needing to travel via public transport, purchasing one of the ticket options offered by the public transport operators would be more cost-effective.

Public bus operators offer a range of tickets, with some operators offering daily tickets, as well as ticket bundles.

Buses of Somerset offer various ticket options including ticket bundles, a weekly ticket and an mticket (which can be purchased through the mobile phone [mticket App](#)). Please visit the [Buses of Somerset](#) website for more information on ticket options and fares or contact the operator.

To explore the options available and find out more information about school transport please [click here](#).

## **EDF – Hinkley Point C**

### **Site activity – Summer Update**

The measures for restricting the numbers of workers on buses have been lifted. Measures on site are still in place for random and targeted Lateral Flow Testing. The testing regime has been very effective at identifying asymptomatic cases and the incidence of Coronavirus infections on site mirrors local rates. All new recruits are tested for COVID-19 before being allowed on site.

The works are progressing well with the majority of target areas being achieved as planned. The ability to have an increased workforce on site is key to this continuing. The latest HPC workforce survey indicates 6119 on site in May 2021, with 32% being home based (30% from Somerset).

The project has featured in a BBC documentary [BBC Two - Building Britain's Biggest Nuclear Power Station](#). The HPC Website also has many images and films showing progress, alongside the site's community newsletter ([Plugged In](#)) with the most recent copy being Summer 2021.

## **The Food Works<sup>SW</sup>**

### **Put your Food and Drink Business on the map**

Somerset West & Taunton, and Sedgemoor District Councils are working with the Food and Drink Forum to launch a Food & Drink Mapping project.

Through the project, the local Food & Drink Forum team based at The Food Works<sup>SW</sup>, will be contacting as many food and drink producers, suppliers and local retailers based within the Somerset West & Taunton, and Sedgemoor District Council areas as possible, gathering feedback from businesses in the local area and their supply chain. From this, a publicly available map will be produced highlighting to businesses and the wider community the local supply chain and where to buy locally.

This work will provide important data and link into a wider food initiative the South West Food Hub - [www.thesouthwestfoodhub.co.uk/](http://www.thesouthwestfoodhub.co.uk/) - an innovative project targeting public procurement to increase local business access to public food and drink supply opportunities in the region.

The period of lockdown brought into focus how important it is to shop locally, and so producers and retailers are urged to engage with the project to get their business on the map. If you are interested in taking part, the online questionnaire can be completed here: <https://bit.ly/FoodBusinessSurvey>, or call the survey team based at Food Works<sup>SW</sup> in Weston-super-Mare on 01934 315381. For further information, or

to get involved in the project please visit <https://www.foodworks-sw.co.uk/mapping-project/>.

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

### **Addressing Health Inequalities Workshop**

**Wednesday 8 September 9.30am via zoom**

This workshop aims to explore how the new Physical Activity and Sports strategy could go further in supporting efforts to reduce health inequalities across Somerset. It will consider the role that sport and physical activity could play in improving individual's mental health and wellbeing. It will explore how we could address inactivity amongst those people with health conditions, who have a disability, or are aged 55 plus. It will then seek to identify the range of localised interventions that could reduce levels of inactivity and enhance recovery, pre-rehabilitation and rehabilitation. It will be particularly relevant to those working across the health and social care sectors

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

## **Football Club Defibrillator Scheme**

Jay's Aim is a registered charity set up to reduce the number of young people who die from sudden cardiac arrest in SW England. One of the things they do is provide public access defibrillators to schools, sports clubs and public places. They have provided over 70 since setting up in 2018 so are now relatively experienced in the process.

Jays Aim have been working tirelessly with the target of reducing the rate of sudden cardiac death among young people. The Adam Stansfield Foundation recognise the importance of the work Jays Aim have done and want to support this further with football clubs which have a junior section in Devon and Somerset.

Both charities will be funding £500 towards the cost of a public access defibrillator (defibrillator and external cabinet) for any football club in Devon or Somerset with a youth section. They are asking the club to pay/fundraise just the remaining £300 that it costs to purchase this equipment.

To register your interest and find out more please contact either charity through the 'contact' sections of their respective websites

[www.jaysaim.co.uk](http://www.jaysaim.co.uk) or [www.adamstansfieldfoundation.com](http://www.adamstansfieldfoundation.com)

## **Exmoor National Park (ENP)**

### **Changes to the Path Network**

Section 119, Highways Act 1980

[Public Footpath WL6/27 \(Part\) \(Old Stowey Farm\), Cutcombe](#)

On 20 August 2021, Exmoor National Park Authority confirmed the above order.

Section 119, Highways Act 1980

Public Footpath Diversion Order 2021

On 20 August 2021, Exmoor National Park Authority made Notice of making an Order to divert

### [Public Footpath WL6/3 \(part\), at Thorne, Cutcombe.](#)

Any representations about or objections to the order may be sent in writing to the Chief Executive, Exmoor National Park Authority, Exmoor House, Dulverton, Somerset, TA22 9HL to be received no later than 17 September 2021. Please state the grounds on which they are made. Copies of any objections or representations received may be circulated to interested parties.

## **Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (DSFRS) Preventing death on the roads**

There are five main causes of death on the road as a result of car accidents. These are known as the fatal five:

1. Speeding
2. not wearing your seatbelt
3. distractions - using your mobile or a hand-held device
4. drink and drugs
5. careless and inconsiderate driving.

[Here](#), you'll find top tips on how to avoid these dangers and make sure that you're staying safe whilst driving. Irresponsible driving doesn't just risk your life, but the lives of others too. It's better to be safe than sorry.

## **Learn 2 Live (L2L) Driving safely – Parents Event**

This year's event is free to attend and takes place on **Monday 13 September at 7pm-8pm**. The event will be live streamed online via the [Learn2Live](#) website and social media platforms due to COVID-19 and in the hope of attracting a national audience helping to educate and save more lives.

The hour-long panel event is targeted at parents of young adults who are newly qualified drivers, those learning to drive or passengers of new drivers. The speakers and stories will highlight the risks of inexperience and common factors that affect the safety of young people on the roads; guidance will be provided on best practices; technology will be discussed and its availability to aid young adults with their driving, such as telematics and apps; which driving instructors to choose; as well as opportunities to hear from families and emergency service workers about their personal experiences.

L2L targets young people as they are statistically one of the most at-risk groups when it comes to road traffic collisions. L2L enable young people to understand specific risks and consider the consequences of their actions. They encourage them to make small changes to their behaviours and develop appropriate coping strategies (e.g., SAFE PLANS) that can use to make sensible safe choices about their safety when travelling on the roads.

Young drivers (aged 17-24 years) are over-represented in road collisions compared with other road users. Young male drivers are more prone to being involved in collisions compared with young female drivers



Speeding is a key contributory factor to collision involvement including exceeding the speed limit and driving too fast for the conditions

Collisions involving young drivers are more likely to occur during night-time hours, on rural roads and involve a single vehicle, predominantly on Fridays and Saturdays. Young drivers are often involved in collisions where they have failed to cope with unexpected situations due to their inexperience.

Young drivers are 50% more likely to crash in their first year

Young people are at the highest risk on our roads. This is due to a combination of factors including inexperience, peer pressure, fatigue and risk taking. High risk of crashing affects learner drivers, new drivers and even the passengers of new young drivers. But the good thing is there are lots of positive steps you can take to keep yourself and others safe on the roads.

Statistically the most dangerous seat in a vehicle is the front passenger seat. It is known as the 'Sacrificial seat' and it is predominantly young females who suffer the consequences

Approximately 26% of all KSI's (Killed and Seriously Injured) casualties resulted from collisions involving young people. (RAC Foundation, 2016)

Please [click here](#) to read more about Learn 2 Live.

## **Maritime and Coastguard Agency**

### **Stay safe with the Royal Yachting Association SafeTrx App**

Stay safe with SafeTrx - a smart phone safety app - and find out how it can help the Coastguard, help you in an emergency.

From paddle-boarding to walking, the FREE app can be used for many water and land-based activities at the coast. It lets you store information about what you're doing and update the time you expect to be home.

But that doesn't mean that the Coastguard is monitoring you!

They will only begin search and rescue action if you or your shore emergency contact alerts them for help. If you're overdue, it sends a message to your contact. If they can't get hold of you and are worried, they should call 999 Coastguard. Then the Coastguard will use the information to get you the right help in the right place.

Make sure you download the app before your next coastal adventure, take a fully charged phone and be equipped for your chosen activity.

You can find out more about the App [here](#). A useful and informative video can be viewed [here](#).

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

## **Spark Somerset Unpaid Carers Support group**

Spark are working in partnership with the [Somerset Carers Service](#) to make it even easier for unpaid carers in Somerset to access support and information.

Whilst caring for someone is very rewarding, it can also be challenging at times. Spark's online meetings are an opportunity meet other carers, share experiences and support one another.

They will also talk about what support is available locally and members of the Spark Somerset and Somerset Carers Service teams will be available to answer questions. The next meeting takes place at 11am on **Tuesday 31 August**. Please [click here](#) to register.

## **Community Council for Somerset (CCS) Reminder - 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 Community Foundation Mary's Beat Fund**

Mary's Beat is a fund created in the memory of Mary Christabel Dyer, to help disabled people take part in activities that will build self-confidence and encourage participation, that they may not otherwise be able to afford.

Grants of up to £1,000 are awarded for individuals to take part in music therapy, music experiences or outdoor adventures and activities, and are made possible thanks to Mary's family, who normally organise fundraising activities every year.

Since the Fund was launched by Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) in July 2017, a total of £12,405 has been awarded in grants, to 23 individuals with physical disabilities, learning disabilities or both, living in Somerset or Devon. However, the pandemic has meant that Mary's family haven't been able to do their planned sponsored cycle ride or other fundraising activities. To be able to award grants early next year more funding is now desperately needed.

If anyone would like to arrange a fundraiser for Mary's Beat, Mary's family can offer support and would be happy to attend an event to speak about the Fund. They would also welcome any donations which can be made at their dedicated Justgiving page: [www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/somersetcf/marysbeat](http://www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/somersetcf/marysbeat)

If you have any questions regarding Mary's Beat please visit: [www.somersetcf.org.uk/marysbeat](http://www.somersetcf.org.uk/marysbeat) or email: [Kirsty.campbell@somersetcf.org.uk](mailto:Kirsty.campbell@somersetcf.org.uk)

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.](#)

## **Clinton's Covid Catch up**

### **Week 35 – Self isolation guidance**

Clinton Rogers catches up with the latest guidance on self-isolation in his most recent video, which can be viewed [here](#).

## **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 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 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](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
- Somerset Domestic Abuse helpline - 0800 69 49 999

## **FAQS**

**Q. I bought a ticket for a music festival ages ago, and now I'm feeling anxious about going. What are my options?**

**A.** Don't go if you've got symptoms or live with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. A lateral flow test beforehand is advisable and some venues will also want you to self-test on site. Evidence of symptoms or failing the temperature check on arrival will mean that you will be denied entry.

The event/festival team will have a risk management plan in place, to help keep attendees and workers safe and minimise the spread of coronavirus.

The World Health Organisation states that COVID-19 is predominantly transmitted from person to person through respiratory droplets and contact with contaminated surfaces, and the risk of transmission

appears to be proportional to the closeness (less than 1 metre), frequency and duration of the interaction between an infected individual and an individual who becomes infected. In the context of COVID-19, festivals are events that could amplify the transmission of coronavirus.

Public Health are undertaking an investigation following the recent Boardmasters event in Newquay, Cornwall, which has seen a surge in positive COVID-19 cases despite following the required safety guidance. The safest thing to do would be to not go at all, but if you are, make sure you follow the safety measures laid down by the organisers. Although outdoor events typically present fewer risks than indoor events, there may still be some indoor spaces within outdoor venues where risks are likely to be higher. This could include areas where people congregate at higher densities (such as concession stands, bars, turn-stiles and toilets), in which ventilation may be poorer. These risks can be reduced through queuing systems and appropriate signage to avoid congestion.

How you get to the venue will also be important. Try to avoid very crowded transport, and if you can't, wear a mask.

If you decide not to attend, contact your event organiser in good time about returning/exchanging your ticket(s) and or arranging a refund.

**Q. I'm young and healthy. Why should I get vaccinated?**

**A.** It is known that young people have been generally less likely to catch COVID-19 throughout the pandemic, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they are immune. As of early August, [20% of people needing hospital treatment because of COVID-19 were aged 18-34 years](#). The number of older people who are currently being hospitalised due to COVID-19 has fallen compared to January 2021, but the [hospital admission rates for younger people have not decreased](#). Many people who need hospital treatment do recover, but nobody wants a trip to hospital if it can be avoided.

[Professor Neil Ferguson](#) from Imperial College London studies the spread of infectious diseases and has recently warned about [an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in September](#), although the number of deaths is expected to be less thanks to the vaccination programme. Of course, older people have had longer to get vaccinated, but now younger age groups also have the chance to get their jabs in order to keep both themselves and others as safe as possible, since the vaccination has been shown to [reduce the risk of transmitting the virus](#).

## **Crime / Safeguarding**

**Be alert to online buyer/seller scams**

Anyone selling items online is being warned of a scam which sees buyers pretending to have transferred money but making off without paying for the goods.

Avon and Somerset Police are aware of several incidents in recent months where a seller has advertised something for sale and the buyer has agreed to pay for it when picking it up.

When the suspect(s) attend the address to collect the item, victims are then asked to put their details into a fake banking app on the buyer's phone. It will show the transfer is complete, but when the victim checks their bank account, the money hasn't gone in. When the seller has queried it, the buyer has told them it may take a couple of hours for the money to go through, however no transfer ever happens.

The seller has then unsuccessfully tried to chase the buyer for payment via phone and online.

The police advise when selling items online to follow these tips to make sure you do not lose out in a scam:

- Stay on the website when communicating with the buyer/seller
- Do your research on the buyer/seller to make sure they are genuine
- Use the recommended payment method, or you may not be refunded for any losses to fraud
- If the deal seems too good to be true, it probably is. Also, if anything the seller or buyer says raises a red flag, it's probably best to go with your instincts and move on

If you are selling online be wary of any emails stating funds have been sent. Login to your account via normal route (not via any link provided to you in an email) to check this. Be certain you have received the funds before handing over the item(s) you are selling

Anyone who has been a victim of such a scam, and not yet reported it, is urged to call [Action Fraud](#) on 0300 123 2040.

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

### **More than 10,000 cannabis plants seized in 2021**

Following the recent discovery of significant cannabis farms in the Keynsham and Taunton areas, A&SP are reminding the public of the key signs that could indicate that cannabis is being grown illegally in your community.

So far in 2021, they have recovered 10,154 plants from 73 cannabis farms in Avon and Somerset, with an estimated 'street value' of more than £4m.

In 2020, 135 grows were discovered, housing 14,500 plants – the highest number found since 2014.

Cannabis farms are highly dangerous and pose a serious risk of fire. Often, the electricity meter has been bypassed and seriously overloaded electrical circuits run close to water-filled pipes. Plants grown upstairs in a building can also cause floorboards to rot, presenting the danger of collapse.

It is also important to consider that sometimes the people working in the 'farms' are victims of human trafficking and working against their will.

Every cannabis farm the police destroy helps prevent a vicious circle. The plants won't end up as street deals, the profits won't go on to fund other crime, and they won't ruin lives or pollute our communities.

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

### **Rule 64 of the Highway Code**

There have been several concerns reported to your Neighbourhood Policing Teams about individuals cycling on pavements recently, including scooters and E-Peds.

This has caused some members of the community concern, particularly when areas have been busy over the summer holidays.

A&SP are currently working with partner agencies to look at appropriate signage in areas, but in the meantime please be aware of the Highway Code Guidance below as well as being mindful that it is an offence that Police can deal with.

The Highway Code states this more emphatically, stating in Rule 64 that "You MUST NOT cycle on a pavement". It also advises that cyclists must "take care when passing pedestrians, especially children, older or disabled people, and allow them plenty of room".

The police teams are hoping to address these concerns through education and working together, thus reducing the possibility of a serious accident and the need for enforcement.

### **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.