

# Somerset West and Taunton

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

### **Issue 77 Week ending 26/09/2021**

#### **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. Unitary update – Response to Government**

The five councils in Somerset have jointly responded today to the Government regarding their views on potential electoral arrangements for the proposed unitary council for Somerset.

In July, the Secretary of State announced that the five existing councils in Somerset would be replaced by a single unitary council. As part of that process, he is reviewing the number of elected members and wards/divisions for the unitary council.

This is not a formal LGBCE Electoral Review, but in response to the Government's request, the Chief Executives of all five councils have been given an opportunity to provide views on potential electoral arrangements for the unitary council. They have assessed five options and provided opinions on them as can be seen [here](#). Elected members of all the existing five councils in Somerset have also had the opportunity to submit their views.

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

### **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:

- Monday 27 September – Special Audit & Governance Committee: Statement of Accounts, 6.15pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Wednesday 22 September)
- Thursday 30 September – Community Scrutiny Committee, 6.15pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Monday 27 September)
- Tuesday 5 October – Council (at Oake Manor Golf Club), 6.15pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Thursday 30 September)
- Wednesday 6 October – Corporate Scrutiny Committee, 6.15pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Friday 1 October)

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 [governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk).

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

### **3. Parish Council Elections**

Attached to the newsletter this week in a letter containing important information for all Town and Parish Councils relating to potential elections in 2022 and budget setting.

### **4. North Taunton Woolaway Project Update**

ENGIE and SWT have celebrated the start of a major redevelopment scheme under the North Taunton Woolaway Project.

ENGIE was appointed in Spring 2021 as the main contractor for Phase A of the project, to regenerate five parcels of land on the estate, through to delivery of 47 new homes. The newly built homes will comprise 24 houses, 4 bungalows, 19 apartments and a new community centre.

Representatives from ENGIE and SWT took part in a ground-breaking ceremony at the site in Wells Close, Taunton, on Wednesday (22 September).

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

## **5. Work completed at East Quay wall.**

Work to replace a section of the wall at East Quay, Watchet, is now complete representing an investment of £0.75m into the coastal community.

The maintenance work was identified following a professional survey of the wall - part of the structure which creates the Marina and protects Watchet as a sea defence.

SWT also recently completed a £1m project to rebuild the Splash Point sea defence wall in Watchet after it was destroyed in the winter storms of 2019/20.

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

## **6. SWT highly commended at national awards**

SWT has been highly commended at this year's [MJ Achievement Awards](#) in recognition of its work to support neurodiversity in the workplace.

SWT's People Business Partner team attended the awards ceremony at the London Hilton along with five other nominees for the 'Innovation in Building Diversity and Inclusion' category.

The award was won by Bradford City Council with SWT and the West London Alliance both being highly commended.

Neurodiversity covers a range of conditions including attention deficit disorders, autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia and Tourette's. It is estimated that more than 15 per cent of people in the UK are neurodivergent, meaning they learn and process information differently.

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

## **7. Reminder - By-election nominations published**

By-elections are being held on **Thursday 7 October** for vacant seats on SWT Council, and Somerset County Council.

The vacancies for the Wilton and Sherford ward at SWT, and the Comeytrowe and Trull division of SCC arose following the death of long-standing Councillor Alan Wedderkopp.

A [statement of persons nominated](#) has now been published for both elections.

## **8. Reminder - SWT Sheltered Housing Meeting Halls**

Meeting halls have been closed during the COVID-19 period, to reduce the risk of infection to tenant's, SWT staff and members of the public. SWT is re-opening the meeting halls with consideration for the ongoing risk COVID-19 presents to everyone, including people who have been vaccinated.

Bookings will be dealt with by the SWT Business Support team, who are also going to begin updating the promotional material for the venues. Other providers will be able to book venues, from **4 October 2021**, but only 1 booking per day will be allowed, until 1 November 2021. This will allow cleaning to take place between times and will allow SWT to monitor the state of play locally and nationally regarding COVID-19.

## **9. Reminder - Get prepared for National Tree Planting Week 2021**

In the run-up to this year's winter planting season, SWT is once again offering free trees to town and parish councils, including unparished areas. The scheme, which was first introduced last autumn, supports the Council's commitment towards reaching a carbon-neutral district by 2030.

Similarly, this year's tree giveaway provides a unique opportunity to support the Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) project. Local councils or charter trustees wishing to take part in any of these initiatives can order bare root trees completely free of charge, up to the value of £50 as per the listed guide on the Council's [Free trees](#) webpage. This is equivalent to seven or eight trees depending on the combination of species chosen, which include Beech, Hawthorn, Lime or Oak.

The closing date for requests is **Friday, 22 October 2021**.

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

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

### **Recycle week**

This week is Recycle Week, and recycling more is a way everyone can help fight climate change, as shown in the pioneering Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) annual Recycling Tracker report: [somersetwaste.gov.uk/recycling-tracker/](https://somersetwaste.gov.uk/recycling-tracker/).

As part of Recycle Week, Somerset families are being urged to "Step It Up" against climate change.

Showing where recycling goes is a key to encouraging people to recycle more, so the Recycling Tracker offers a detailed breakdown of what happens to everything you recycle, from paper and cans to paint and street sweepings. The Recycling Tracker report tracks every tonne to the location and company of first use, whether in Somerset, elsewhere in the UK or anywhere overseas.

In 2020-21, 97.8% of Somerset's recycling stayed in the UK, including more than 50% that stayed in the county itself. An impressive 99.4% of the plastics collected were recycled here in the UK, too.

All 39,432 tonnes of garden waste collected last year were composted in the county and turned into the Revive soil improver. The 22,542 tonnes of food waste recycled were all transformed into electricity and farm compost by the Somerset anaerobic digestion plant at Walpole near Bridgwater.

Check what you can recycle kerbside now where you live, from cans to clothes: [somersetwaste.gov.uk/recycling-collections/](https://somersetwaste.gov.uk/recycling-collections/).

Check what you can recycle at your nearest recycle sites, from metals to wood: [somersetwaste.gov.uk/recycling/centres/](https://somersetwaste.gov.uk/recycling/centres/).

Check what you can recycle locally or by post with the commercially sponsored TerraCycle, from medical blister packs to razors: [terracycle.com/en-GB/](https://terracycle.com/en-GB/).

Not got all your recycle containers? Order now via My Waste Services free at [somersetwaste.gov.uk](https://somersetwaste.gov.uk).

### **Recycling sites switch to winter hours on 1 October**

Every one of Somerset's 16 recycling sites will go over to their winter timetables from Friday 1 October, with weekday opening hours of 9am to 5pm while weekends remain 9am to 4pm.

Summer hours - 9am to 6pm when sites are open weekdays, 9am to 4pm weekends - resume on Friday 1 April 2022. Somerset's recycling sites are open every day of the year except Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

### **Recycle More**

Please see the attached press release about the Recycle More roadshows.

### **Recruitment**

The nationwide driver shortage remains a big issue, hitting authorities and businesses up and down the country. There are no quick fixes. Intensive recruitment and retention work continues and SWP are monitoring the COVID situation closely.

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](https://www.suez.co.uk/join-our-team-in-somerset)

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

SCC Highways have been very lucky with the run of fine weather in September. However, this looks likely to break down into wetter conditions over the next few days.

The carriageways of Magdalene Street and Duke Street, Taunton and the footways of Wooldridge Mead, Oxlease and Snathe Lea, Bishops Lydeard have all been resurfaced.

Damaged post and steel tube pedestrian fencing has also been repaired at B3227 New Road, Waterrow and Langford Lane, Staplegrove.

The main local scheme in Taunton for the next couple of weeks will be the installation of new signage in the **Leslie Avenue/Rowbarton area**.

Works to reduce hazardous flooding on the main road serving West Somerset are set to be carried out next month.

The **A39 at Carhampton Cross** has long been a flooding trouble spot, with excessive water regularly posing a danger to road users or making it impassable.

This has caused widespread disruption for residents, businesses and visitors. Water cascading down from Carhampton Cross has also regularly flooded the B3191 Eastbury Road and hit people's homes.

SCC Highways is teaming up with Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) to deliver a £350,000 scheme of major drainage improvements, commencing **11 October**, followed by carriageway resurfacing. The work includes significant upgrades to help manage water volumes including bigger pipes, better gullies, and new water control features such as concrete chambers and a catch-pit.

The extent of the work means road closures are needed to carry out the works. Diversions will be in place from **Williton** and **Dunster** out across **Exmoor**.

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

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.

### 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](#)

[Report noxious weeds here](#)

[Street light not working](#)

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

## **Somerset Prepared Free Emergency Preparedness Training**

Somerset's residents are invited to sign up to free, interactive online training with emergency responders and volunteer organisations throughout October, organised by the Somerset Prepared partnership.

The fourth annual Resilience event starts with live talks on **Monday 4 October** and aims to help communities become better prepared for emergencies as well as looking at wider preparedness measures that anyone can take.

Anyone who registers will receive an information pack, event pack and weekly emails signposting to videos and toolkits on a variety of subjects. Interactive training sessions with national training provider Communities Prepared are on offer, alongside live online presentations from emergency and community organisations, as well as national flood resilience expert Mary Dhonau.

As well as the online training, face-to-face events include an open evening for Langport and Huish Episcopi Flood Group, and Avon & Somerset Police beat surgeries around the county.

To attend this free event, people can register their interest and book training sessions on the [Somerset Prepared](#) website. Please [click here](#) to find out more.

## **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](#).

## **Connecting Devon and Somerset Mobile Boost Scheme**

Are you a business struggling with poor indoor mobile coverage? Connecting Devon and Somerset may be able to help. It has announced the expansion of the Mobile Boost Programme, which aims to upgrade indoor 4G coverage in "not-spot" areas.

Businesses and households can apply for a voucher of up to £1200 towards the cost of one of a number of mobile signal booster options from a registered supplier. The value of the voucher will be dependent on the type of technology most suitable for

the premises. Suppliers will be able to advise on the most appropriate option. Businesses and residents will be required to make a contribution to cover the cost of installation.

For more information and to apply visit [Connecting Devon and Somerset - Mobile Boost Scheme](#)

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

### **‘White Rock Cottage’ entrusted to the Simonsbath community**

Ownership of ‘White Rock Cottage’, previously also known as Simonsbath School, was transferred from Exmoor National Park Authority (NPA) to the Simonsbath and Exmoor Heritage Trust during a signing ceremony held earlier this month (11 September). It will now be up to the Trust to guide its future use by the community.

The event, held as part of the annual Heritage Open Day Festival, provided a first opportunity for the public to see the restored buildings, with around 150 attendees from near and far enjoying an exhibition and tours of neighbouring Ashcombe gardens – which volunteers have been working to restore.

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

## **Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue**

### **Fire Door Safety**

What's the difference between fire doors and normal doors?

- Fire doors are designed to withstand fire for a specified period of time. The most common provide 30 minutes of fire resistance.
- Components such as self-closing devices, hinges, handles, glazing and seals are just as important as the door itself.
- If a fire door doesn't have these vital components or there has been an incorrect installation, it could fail in less than five minutes.

Fire doors are a legal requirement that can be installed for around £90. A well-fitted and functioning fire door will delay the spread of fire and smoke, saving lives and property.

[Here](#) you'll find more information, such as where fire doors are necessary, what makes a fire door different to usual doors, and how to look after them to ensure that people and premises are kept safe.

## **Exmoor Search and Rescue Team**

### **Multi-Agency search for missing person in Minehead**

**Call Out [33] 8.15pm 18/09/21**

[Exmoor Search & Rescue Team](#) were deployed by [Avon and Somerset Police](#) to assist with an ongoing multi-agency search for a high-risk missing person in Minehead, Somerset.

13 Team Members responded, including Search Dog Handler Nick and [#SearchDogLottie](#). Team Members deployed alongside colleagues from [HM Coastguard Minehead](#), [HM Coastguard Watchet](#) and [Minehead RNLI Lifeboat Station](#). Additional support was provided by the [National Police Air Service HQ](#). The Teams from across the Search and Rescue community searched extensively throughout the evening and into the night before standing down at 2.30am whilst Police inquiries continued.

As Team Members were preparing to redeploy in the morning, it was confirmed that the missing person had been located safe and well and had returned home.

Injured, ill or lost on the hill or moorland? Dial 999 and ask the Police for [#MountainRescue](#).

## **HM Coastguard Watchet Cliff Rescue Team deployment**

Recently the team were tasked to a report of a pet dog which had gone over some of the highest and steepest cliffs along the team's guard near the Lilstock Tower. Luckily the animal got stuck half-way down rather than falling all the way, which could have been fatal.

The dog walker did exactly the right thing and did not attempt to rescue the dog themselves and instead dialled 999 for the Coastguard. On arrival at the scene an immediate rescue was undertaken by one of HM Coastguard Cliff Rescue Technicians, Gary Morgan utilising a specialist animal rescue bag. This is attached into the "Cliff Technicians" equipment set up and allows the team member to safely recover an animal.

Having set up the cliff top holdfasts (series of metal stakes) and connected in the main and safety rescue lines, Gary descended to the dog and was able to attach the guide lead onto it. The dog was then encouraged into the safety of the large bag.

With more of the team now on scene they were able to recover both Gary and the pet dog back up the cliff to safety, where it was reunited with its owner uninjured.

HM Coastguard continue to remind dog walkers to keep their valued pets on leads near unguarded cliff edges to prevent them going over the edge (if they were to chase a ball, bird or rabbit for example).

Remember in a coastal emergency to dial 999 and ask for the Coastguard.

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

### **Universal Credit**

#### **Personal Allowance Uplift to End**

In April 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Universal Credit increased all Personal Allowances by £20 per week. **This will end on the 30 September.**

As the monthly bills such as rent and council tax will be unchanged, now is the time to plan and readjust household budgets and expenses before the winter bills start to arrive.

It may also be a good time to review other bills like Energy, Broadband and Mobile phone contracts. Check out [www.uswitch.com](http://www.uswitch.com) for up to date offers and deals.

### **Don't forget about "The Warm Home Discount "**

This is a government scheme which helps with a one-off payment of up to £140 discount towards electricity bills that energy suppliers provide between October and March.

#### **There are 2 ways to qualify:**

1. You are already in receipt of the Guarantee element of Pension Credit
2. You are on a low income and meet your energy suppliers' criteria for the scheme.

Contact the helpline on **0800 731 0214** or go to the website: [www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme](http://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme).

## **Spark Somerset COVID Confident Communities**

Across Somerset, voluntary groups play an important role – helping individuals in need, connecting people and ensuring that we have vibrant, supportive communities in which to live.

When COVID-19 hit, many groups based in cafés, community halls and public venues across Somerset, were forced to close. We lost the opportunity to socialise and enjoy human contact and friendship.

Whilst restrictions are lifting and lots of people are very excited about getting back together, Spark know that many groups have questions and concerns about how to do so safely. That is why they have produced the [COVID CONFIDENT COMMUNITIES BOOKLET](#).

Whether you're running a community group, managing volunteers, or are a volunteer working directly with the public, this booklet has been designed to help you get out and about and gather safely again. It will also be useful for anybody who is looking to reopen a community building and accommodate everyone safely.

## **Reflect, Recover, Renew Focus Group Meeting Tuesday October 5, 3pm – 4pm**

Spark Somerset is working in partnership with Public, Community and Voluntary Sector (VCSE) organisations throughout Somerset to deliver an important new research project called Reflect, Recover and Renew. Together they want to look back over the last 18 months and understand what the sector needs to thrive in the future.

This workshop for volunteers and group leaders from COVID-19 support groups is one of a series of online focus groups and events during September/ October to give you the opportunity to share your thoughts, ideas and opinions.

Please [click here](#) to register for this event.

## **Community Employment Hubs Volunteers needed as hubs reopen**

The Community Employment Hubs are about to re-open, and the SWT Employment Support team need your help.

If you have a couple of hours a week to spare to help people in your local community access work and training whilst having a cup of tea, then they want to hear from you. All training will be given, you just have to love chatting and meeting new people.

The hubs will be opening in **Taunton, Watchet, Minehead, Williton, Dulverton, Wellington** and **Stogursey**. The employment support team work with all ages from 16 until retirement and help people get into work, change careers, set up a new business or go for a promotion. The community employment hubs support many different people and are a brilliant place to meet and chat.

If you would like more information or want to apply please contact Georgie or Iolanda either by ringing **01823 219578** or emailing [employmentsupport@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:employmentsupport@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk).

## **Community Council for Somerset (CCS) Somerset Diverse Communities – Small Grants Fund**

Somerset Diverse Communities is a project aiming to bring people from diverse backgrounds together. It hopes to support and build relationships with groups and organisations who are supporting or working with black and minority ethnic communities in Somerset. They want to celebrate and share the diversity in the county; bringing people together, developing skills and building long term relationships

A grant of up to £500 is available for community groups, charities, organisations and agencies that support or directly work with BAME communities in Somerset.

The funding must be used for non-profit making purposes and can include: community events, running costs to support a community group, group training sessions to build skills, materials for community activities, promotion of the group.

It can also fund essential staff costs for direct delivery time of activities only (not management, admin or planning time). Due to the nature of the small grants scheme, preference will be given to small projects where the funding can make a big difference. The funding team especially welcome applications which build community cohesion and/or empower people to develop skills and feel confident in the wider community.

They aim to be flexible with regard to what can be funded so if you have a good idea, contact the team for a chat.

The Small Grant Fund application deadline date **31 October 2021**.

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

## **Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) Funding deadline for HPC Small Grants looms...**

Time is running out for charities and community groups who were significantly affected during the height of the Coronavirus outbreak to apply for grants to support their day-to-day running costs (also known as core costs).

SCF has opened a special round of the Hinkley Point C Small Grants programme and is encouraging applications for grants of up to £5,000 from community groups and organisations who work in places that are impacted by the Hinkley Point C (HPC) development. Many small community groups and charities were unable to fundraise for a significant period of time during the height of the pandemic. Lockdowns have meant that activities like fun runs, charity dinners and coffee mornings were all unable to go ahead and many groups and charities have struggled financially.

Applications to the next round of HPC Small Grants can be made by visiting: [www.somersetcf.org.uk/hpcsmall](http://www.somersetcf.org.uk/hpcsmall) and the deadline to apply is **Wednesday 29 September**.

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**

### **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. Use the link below to find out more about where the local 'Grab a Jab' clinics are taking place this week. [Covid-19 vaccinations in Somerset - Somerset CCG](#)

## **COVID-19 Booster Vaccine**

As is common with many other vaccines, there is early evidence that the levels of protection offered by COVID-19 vaccines reduce over time, particularly in older individuals who are at greater risk from the virus. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has consequently advised that those in priority groups 1-9 should be offered a COVID-19 booster, no earlier than 6 months after completion of their primary course.

A booster shot of a COVID-19 vaccine will ensure protection is maintained at a high level throughout the winter months in adults who are more vulnerable to severe COVID-19 and strengthen the vaccine wall of defence.

The NHS is preparing to start offering booster doses this week, commencing 20 September.

All those who were vaccinated during Phase 1 of the vaccine programme (priority groups 1 to 9) will be offered booster jabs from this month – to boost immunity amongst the most vulnerable groups during winter.

Booster vaccine doses will be available on the NHS for people most at risk from COVID-19 who have already had 2 doses of a vaccine.

This includes:

- people aged 50 and over
- people who live and work in care homes
- frontline health and social care workers
- people aged 16 and over with a health condition that puts them at high risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19
- carers aged 16 and over
- people aged 16 and over who live with someone who is more likely to get infections (such as someone who has HIV, has had a transplant or is having certain treatments for cancer, lupus or rheumatoid arthritis)
- People who are pregnant and in 1 of the eligible groups can also get a booster dose.

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

## **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](#).

## Twice weekly testing

For people who do not have symptoms of COVID-19, it remains very important to participate in twice weekly asymptomatic testing if you are out and about and meeting up with people. Please make sure that you take a test **before** you travel anywhere and if it is positive, stay at home and arrange a PCR test.

**If you have symptoms of COVID-19** it is important that you take a PCR test, which can be done by phoning 119 or ordering a test here: [Get a free PCR test to check if you have coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

## Lateral flow test

You are reminded that if you have previously received a positive Covid PCR test result, you should not re-test yourself by either using a rapid lateral flow kit or by having another PCR test within 90 days of the first positive result **unless** you develop any new symptoms of COVID-19.

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

## 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.

## Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group

### Online Engagement Event

On **Monday 27 September from 6pm - 7pm**, Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are holding an online engagement event.

The CCG want to support the health and wellbeing of all people in Somerset, by changing the way health and care services in the county are delivered. As part of this work, in Spring 2020 members of the public were invited to consider an emerging model of community care and same day urgent care. One which will provide

services, where practical, closer to where people live, support independence and help everyone maintain their own health.

The valuable input, ideas and suggestions received were a vital first step in helping the CCG to understand what may work and develop their thinking. The CCG would like to thank everyone who supported this early work. During this engagement period, COVID-19 required a shift in focus to support the NHS response to the pandemic. As a consequence, the outcome of the engagement was not shared as planned.

People are now invited to attend an online information session on Monday 27 September from 6pm to 7pm.

Please [click here](#) to book your place at the event. If you have any questions or need further information about what the event will involve, please email [somccg.engagement@nhs.net](mailto:somccg.engagement@nhs.net).

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

### **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. How will I be notified for my Booster Jab?**

**A.** Booster vaccine doses will be available on the NHS for people most at risk from COVID-19 who have already had 2 doses of a vaccine. If you are eligible for the booster you will be offered it at least 6 months after you received your 2nd dose.

The NHS will let you know when it's your turn to have a booster dose. It's important not to contact the NHS for one before then.

Most people will be invited to book an appointment at a larger vaccination centre, pharmacy, or local NHS service such as a GP surgery.

Frontline health and social care workers will be invited to book an appointment through their employer.

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

**Q. My teenage child is worried about the receiving the vaccine. Where can I go to get helpful advice and information?**

**A.** Following advice from the JCVI and UK Chief Medical Officers, the NHS will offer those 12–15-year-olds not covered by previous advice with a first dose of the Pfizer vaccine. The NHS, working with school immunisation teams, will offer a first dose of vaccine to 12–15-year-olds from the week commencing 20 September. The Government will consult the Royal Colleges and other professional groups on how best to present the risk-benefit decisions about vaccination in a way that is accessible to children and young people as well as their parents.

Spark Somerset offer a Vaccination Buddy Service for anybody who is concerned about the COVID-19. Please [click here](#) to find out more about this scheme.

Please [click here](#) for more information on the COVID-19 response: Autumn Winter Plan 2021.

## **Crime / Safeguarding**

### **Action Fraud**

#### **Beware of Courier Fraud**

[Action Fraud](#) is warning the public to protect their loved ones as criminals cheat older and vulnerable victims out of cash and high value items through courier fraud.

#### **What is courier fraud?**

Courier fraud is when victims receive a phone call from a criminal who is pretending to be a police officer or bank official. Typically, victims are told to withdraw a sum of money and someone is sent to their home address to collect it.

Criminals may also convince the victim to transfer money to a 'secure' bank account, hand over their bank cards or give the criminals high value items, such as jewellery, watches and gold (coins or bullion).

Since the start of this year, Action Fraud has received 2,060 reports of courier fraud, with an average loss per victim of just over £5,000. Almost two thirds (64 per cent) of victims were aged 70 to 89 years old, and over three quarters (84 per cent) of victims were aged 60 to 99 years old.

Please [click here](#) to read the full press release and how to protect yourself against courier fraud.

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

### **Tackling Rural Crime**

A&SP understand the impact crime has on rural communities. A dedicated team of Rural Crime Officers work with members of the public to address crime and prevent it from happening.

These units conduct proactive patrols of rural areas, speak with members of the local community and use intelligence reports and Automatic Number Plate Recognition data to target crime hotspots and suspect vehicles.

Please [click here](#) to read advice on how to protect your rural property.

### **How to report a drink-driver**

There's absolutely no excuse for getting behind the wheel intoxicated; it can have devastating and life-changing consequences. A&SP would urge people to report any incident where they see someone getting behind the wheel having been drinking or taking drugs – it could save a life.

Recent information published by the road safety charity Brake shows that even when someone is only just over the legal limit, they are still six times more likely to be involved in a fatal collision than someone who has drunk nothing.

If someone is habitually drinking or abusing drugs and driving this can be reported online or by calling 101. If someone is currently driving under the influence of drink or drugs, always call 999. Independent alcohol advice, information and tools to help

people make better choices about their drinking can be found on the [Drink Aware website](#).

Details of how to report a drink or drug driver can be found on the A&SP website [here](#).

### **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](#)
- [Sedgemoor and Hinkley Point 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.

### **Attachment:**

*Letter for Town and Parish Councils  
SWP – Recycle More Press Release*