

Somerset West and Taunton

Newsletter to SWT Councillors and Parish Councils

Issue 92 Week ending 30/01/2022

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. SWT ranked top in Climate Emergency Scorecard

SWT has been ranked as the top performing district council in analysis by the campaign group [Climate Emergency UK](#).

SWT was the only council to score above 90% in the [Council Climate Plan Scorecards](#) and was one of only 21 to get top marks for its plans to improve biodiversity and combat the ecological emergency.

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:

- **Wednesday 2 February** – SWT Corporate Scrutiny Committee at 6.15pm in the JMR. (The agenda and report packs can be viewed on the [website](#)).
- **Thursday 3 February** – SWT Planning Committee at 1.00pm in the JMR. (The agenda and report packs can be viewed on the [website](#))
Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Monday 31 January.
- **Tuesday 8 February** – SWT Full Council at 6.15pm in the JMR. (The agenda and report packs can be viewed on the [website](#)). Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Thursday 3 February.
- **Wednesday 9 February** – SWT Budget Setting Executive at 6.15pm in the JMR. (Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Friday 4 February).

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.

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

3. Notice of Election – Alcombe Ward

A notice of poll has been published for the election of a district councillor for the Alcombe Ward at SWT. The poll will take place on **Thursday 10 February 2022**.

A statement of Persons Nominated has now been published and can be viewed [here](#). The candidates are Craig Coleman(Cons), Nicole Hawkins (LibDem), Richard Lillis (Indep) and Roos Shanti (Lab).

4. SWT approves new litter enforcement scheme

SWT has approved a new [enforcement scheme](#) to help keep its streets and public spaces free from litter.

The new scheme, which was adopted unanimously at the Executive meeting on the 19 January 2022, will permit litter enforcement operations to be carried out

by EH Commercial Services (EHCS) from 1 April 2022 as part of a 12-month trial with East Hampshire District Council.

SWT's Executive Councillors voted unanimously to adopt the scheme, agreeing that ethical enforcement delivered through an established public partnership was considered the most cost-effective option.

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

5. SWT to plant 190 trees for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

SWT is planting 190 trees as part of a nationwide project to commemorate HM Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee.

Known as the 'Queen's Green Canopy' (QGC), the project encourages individuals and organisations to plant trees across the UK as a tribute to the Monarch's 70 years on the throne and to mitigate climate change.

To support the project, SWT has allocated land in its parks and open spaces for tree planting in Hawthorn Park, Taunton and at Culvercliffe, Minehead.

Planting of the first 85 trees began Monday, 24 January, in Hawthorn Park. Acers, conifers and fruit trees will each feature in separate zones with mixed varieties occupying two further areas.

105 trees designated for Culvercliffe will follow, arranged in two parallel lines to create an avenue adjacent to the coastal path. A combination of native species will be used, including common beech, English oak, field maple, hawthorn, lime, rowan and silver birch.

The planting and subsequent maintenance work for Taunton and Minehead is being undertaken by SWT's Open Spaces Team. Both schemes serve to provide wildlife rich habitats, as well as a glorious palette of colours that change throughout the year.

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

6. Urgent Works Notice issued at Tonedale Mill

SWT has served an Urgent Works Notice on Mancraft Ltd, the primary owners of Wellington's Grade II* listed Tonedale Mill.

The Notice has been issued under Section 54 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to prevent further deterioration to one of the site's principal buildings known as Block H, which is located in the East Complex of Tonedale Mill.

Regarded as one of the best-preserved examples of its kind, Tonedale Mill was the largest textile manufacturing site in the South West, famous for producing twill fabrics such as 'serge', and later khaki cloth and puttees used by the British Army in WWI.

A significant proportion of the early 19th century mill remains, however, many of the privately-owned buildings have fallen into disrepair and are now registered as 'Heritage at Risk' by Historic England.

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

7. SWT identifies land for new swimming pool in Minehead

SWT is taking the first step to secure a new swimming pool for the West Somerset community.

The Council will hold a parcel of land at the junction of Bircham Road and Seaward Way in Minehead to accommodate a leisure facility including a swimming pool.

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

8. Reminder - SWT Green Flag Parks – Survey

Do you spend time visiting SWT Green Flag Award Parks? How would you rate them and what could be improved to meet your needs?

Have your say by completing SWT's online survey to help towards developing a 2022 management plan. The survey closes on **Tuesday 8 February 2022** and can be accessed [here](#).

9. Reminder - Iconic benches starting conversations in SWT parks

SWT has received two of the iconic benches being placed around the country in a campaign encouraging people to talk about grief.

The benches have been gifted to the Council by the [Campaign Against Living Miserably \(CALM\)](#) and [Netflix](#) to mark the launch of the third and final series of the hit show [After Life](#).

They have been installed by the open spaces team at SWT's green flag award winning parks in [Blenheim Gardens](#), Minehead, and [Vivary Park](#), Taunton.

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

10. Somerset Waste Partnership Services (SWP) Recycle More: The leaflets have landed

The first of two important Recycle More leaflets have been landing on Sedgemoor and West Somerset doormats this week.

The expanded Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) collections start at the end of next month and the "Get Ready to Recycle More" leaflet introduces what is changing and when.

If you live in the area, please make sure you read it.

It is the first of two direct mailings to around 70,000 residents, gearing them up for the service which is already delivering hundreds of tonnes of extra recycling in Mendip, South Somerset and Taunton Deane each week.

Recycle More builds on Somerset's enviable recycling record. Last year the county recycled or reused more than 137,000 tonnes of material, preventing 123,000 tonnes of carbon from being released into the atmosphere – the equivalent of taking around 47,000 cars off the road for a year.

And, nearly 98% of the recycling collected in 2020-21 stayed in the UK to be turned into new products and packaging - for plastics it was more than 99%. Find out more [here](#).

Hundreds of extra recycling containers have already been ordered by homeowners in Sedgemoor and West Somerset preparing to make the most of Recycle More.

Now is the time to make sure you have all the containers you need and order more if required. Everyone can have a green and a black recycling box, plus a food waste bin – more than one if you regularly need more space.

All are FREE and can be ordered easily online using the My Waste Service menu on the [SWP homepage](#) or by calling your district council.

Recycle More adds the following items to weekly recycling collections: plastic pots, tubs and trays; food and drink cartons; small batteries and small electrical items

Every home gets a new recycling container – a "Bright Blue Bag" - delivered before the new service starts. This is scheduled to happen from the week beginning 7 February and take around two weeks to get to everyone.

Extra weekly recycling means far less rubbish, so rubbish bins will be collected every three weeks instead of every two. Garden and clinical waste collections will not change with Recycle More.

You can find lots more information about Recycle More online at somersetwaste.gov.uk/recycle-more Extra guidance and support can be requested using a form on this page, or by calling your district council.

Recycle More will also improve recycling for homes with shared or communal collections - for example blocks of flats and homes of multiple occupancy – later in the year.

New Council for Somerset

On 1 April 2023, Somerset will become a unitary authority, replacing the current County Council and four District Councils with a single council governing the whole area. Find out more [here](#).

The website <https://newsomersetcouncil.org.uk> contains a link to the One Somerset Business Case, recent press releases and details of Local Government Reorganisation Governance meetings. It will also signpost queries from the public to the mailbox at newsomerset@somerset.gov.uk.

Upcoming dates:

All meeting information can be found on the [One Somerset website](#).

LGR Joint Scrutiny Committee meeting: Monday 31 January, 1.00pm – 4.00pm.
To be held at Canalside, Bridgwater with the option to join via Microsoft Teams for non-committee members.

The JSC will provide the joint overview and scrutiny function for LGR. They will review policy development ahead of the decision making, by the LGR Joint Committee, and ensure that decision making processes are robust and transparent. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the JSC will be elected at this inaugural meeting.

LGR Advisory Board meeting: Thursday 3 February, 3.30pm – 5.00pm.
Please join the conversation. You will be most welcome. It will be a virtual meeting which you can attend by clicking on the link just prior to the event. You will find it here: newsomersetcouncil.org.uk/meetings

On the agenda are updates on how preparations for the new council are shaping up, progress on Local Area Networks (LCNs), a communications presentation, and forward planning.

Please distribute to your networks and post online, as appropriate. Close to 100 people participated in the last event, thanks to partners and friends spreading the word.

In particular, the LGR are seeking young voices to step forward and have their say. If you have links to youth organisations, please let them know as they are keen for them to come along.

The LGR advisory board are of course looking forward to holding in-person meetings across the county in the months ahead. But for now, they must remain virtual to keep the conversation going, and keep everyone safe.

Don't forget to check the website for the latest news newsomersetcouncil.org.uk And you can contact the team anytime by emailing info@newsomersetcouncil.org.uk

LGR Joint Committee meeting: Friday 4 February, 2.00pm - 5.00pm.
Several democratic decisions and actions will need to be taken before the new unitary council is established in 2023. The LGR Joint Committee will oversee the implementation plan and development of the new unitary council's constitution and budget. It has nine members, the leaders of the district and county councils and four further members of the County Council cabinet.

Be a Champion of Your Community

The clock is ticking down on the deadline for candidates to come forward if they want to stand for election in Somerset in May. There are around nine weeks to go before nominations close for those interested in standing as one of Somerset's community champions at county or local level.

These are crucial elections for Somerset with the creation of a new, unitary council in April 2023 – the first major change to the way the county is governed in almost 50 years. New councillors will build a new and very different kind of local government, that will shape the county for decades.

Nominations can be submitted to the appropriate District Council office from 22 March and close at 4pm on 5 April for the elections taking place on 5 May at county, city, town, and parish council levels. For the county, 110 councillors will be elected who will serve a five-year term.

City, town, and parish council elections also take place on 5 May, offering the chance for people to stand up for their community right at the grass roots. They too will serve a five-year term.

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

If you are interested in standing for election, at county or city, town, and parish level you can find out more here:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/how-the-council-works/elections/>

<https://www.local.gov.uk/be-councillor>

<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/local-elections>

Partner Engagement – Key messages from other Public Service Areas

Somerset County Council (SCC)

SCC Highway Maintenance Update

After a wet start, January has turned out to be a generally cold and dry month. It featured the coldest night of the winter, so far, on the 20-21 January when the weather station at A396 Exebridge, on Exmoor, recorded a road surface temperature of minus 5.2 degrees Celsius. Needless to say, SCC Highways have had to carry out a number of salting actions to keep on top of this.

Currently SCC Highways are carrying out a programme of footway resurfacing schemes. These include:

- North Street, Wiveliscombe (completed);
- **B3187 North Street, Wellington** (starting on 31 January, temporary road closure).
- **Broomfield Close, Taunton** (starting on 7 February); and
- **Broughton Close, Taunton** (starting on 14 February).

Drainage works are:

- Sandrocks Lane, Withycombe; (completed);
- **A39 Exeter Road Sampford Arundel** (starting on 31 January, temporary lane closure);
- **Ash Priors Common, near Bishops Lydeard** (starting on 1 February, temporary road closure).
- **Higher Lodge, Willet** (starting on 3 February, temporary road closure).
- **A39 Bratton Straight**, between **Minehead** and **Selworthy** (starting on 7 February, temporary traffic signals).

There is also a lot of carriageway patching, gully emptying, drain jetting and verge work being undertaken on a localised basis across Somerset West and Taunton.

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

Reporting a problem on the road

Alerting SCC to potholes or a host of other problems on the road is now easier and quicker – and you can track its progress after you’ve reported it.

Gone is the need to make phone calls or send emails - thanks to a new upgraded online system with an improved interactive map, members of the public can report a problem 24/7 and the Highways team will get on the case. From potholes, blocked drains and broken manhole covers, to overgrown vegetation, damaged pavements or cycle paths, faulty traffic lights or missing markings - they can all be reported in just minutes from a smartphone, tablet or computer.

The full range and how to report is available here www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem-on-the-road/.

The new development means that if you’re reporting a fault, you can now track its progress. If it’s safe to pull over, all you need to do is take a quick picture of the fault, then visit the Report It site on your phone, answer a few simple questions and upload your picture. You’ll be sent a link which enables you to track its progress.

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

Exmoor National Park (ENP)

Consultation into the Future of National Parks

The Government has announced [a consultation into the future of National Parks](#) in response to the [2019 Landscapes Review](#), led by Julian Glover.

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

Quantock Hill AONB

Accessing grant schemes to achieve environmental outcomes

Wednesday 23 February 2022, 2.00pm – 4.00pm

Farmers and landowners in the Quantock Hills are invited to an event. This meeting will give an overview of the current and future grant schemes becoming available

both locally and nationally through the agricultural transition period. It will cover the Farming in Protected Landscapes grant as well as the Sustainable Farming Incentive, the Farming Investment Fund and the Woodland Creation Offer.

The team will discuss how to access them, who is eligible and how they link into local and national priorities and initiatives such as net zero and local nature recovery networks.

This event is part of the Levels Up Project funded through Defra's Green Recovery Challenge Fund.

Booking for this event is essential. Please [click here](#) for more information.

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (DSFRS) Multi Agency Event to promote Road Safety

Monday 31 January at Cutcombe Market: 7.00pm – 9.00pm

How do we look after ourselves and each other in a rural community?

Join Devon and Somerset Fire Brigade: Somerset Road Safety Partnership; Avon and Somerset Constabulary and the Exmoor Hill Farming and Community Network at a Road Safety Roadshow, for an interactive evening of activities. This includes advice on End of Evening Planning and Personal Safety.

This event is free and open to all within the Greater Exmoor rural community, but booking is essential for catering purposes. COVID-19 rules will apply.

Please contact admin@ehfn.org.uk or ring 01643 841455 to book your place and advise on any dietary requirements. Please [click here](#) for more information.

Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) HM Coastguard Watchet

This week [HM Coastguard Watchet](#) joined HM Coastguard Minehead and Avon and Somerset Police Drone Unit with a night search exercise on North Hill Minehead.

Following a briefing on the capabilities of the various all-weather drones that the police have access to, the teams began a prepositioned casualty search.

With several search teams formed and a search drone positioned overhead the search commenced. The advantage of the drone is that it allows wide areas of open land to be covered quickly, whilst the land search teams can concentrate on the thicker vegetation of the national park.

Whilst the drone investigated several heat sources located near one search team, (which turned out to be deer sheltering in the undergrowth), one of the other teams located the casualty and began simulated casualty care.

This was another excellent exercise, demonstrating multi-agency working using the lost and missing person search techniques, as well as modern drone technology.

HM Coastguard Watchet are still recruiting new team members. The closing date for applications is the **31 January**.

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

Spark Somerset

Could you lead a board of Trustees?

Spark are recruiting a new Chair of Trustees to help lead the organisation as they work to support and champion the VCSE sector in Somerset.

Spark provides a range of services, training and advice to inspire, change lives, and help build healthy, resilient communities. You can read more about their work in the [2021/22 Impact Report](#).

Spark are looking for someone who shares their values, is a true leader, and loves to think ahead. If you have a background in charity governance or are a local VCSE leader looking for your next big challenge, then they would love to hear from you!

You can find out more about the role and other great Trustee opportunities in Somerset via this [link](#).

Somerset Community Foundation (SCF)

South West Enterprise Fund is open to applications

Enterprise Grants

For individuals aged 18 - 30, currently living in the county of Somerset (but not North Somerset, Bristol or BANES), who are not in education, employment or training, and want to start their own business, know what products or services they want to provide or have been trading for under 2 years.

Grants up to £1,000 available.

Click [here](#) for more information and how to apply.

Training and Employment Support Grants

For individuals aged 16 - 30, currently living in the county of Somerset (but not North Somerset, Bristol or BANES), either entering or are currently in training or an apprenticeship, or starting work after a period of unemployment, and need some help with the cost of essential things such as travel, work clothing, laptop or equipment.

Grants up to £500 available.

Click [here](#) for more information and how to apply.

To receive a decision in March 2022, applications need to be submitted by **Friday 25 February 2022**.

If you have any questions please contact Kirsty Campbell on 07928 485337 or email kirsty.campbell@somersetcf.org.uk.

Community Council for Somerset (CCS) Talking Café Live - National Village Halls Week 2022

This is the fifth annual Village Halls Week challenging halls to do something different and to innovate for the future. This week, CCS has been encouraging halls to pledge to do something different – whether that be extending their offer to their community, reducing environmental impact, supporting the arts, or becoming more financially sustainable. To be fit for the future, halls must continue to innovate and try new things.

This week's Talking Café Live, with guest speakers from Ashwick and Oakhill Village Hall discusses what they have planned for the future. You can catch up with the conversation and hear what it's all about [here](#). [#VillageHallsWeek2022](#)

Somerset Wildlife Trust Somerset Nature Connections (SNC)

Somerset Nature Connections (SNC) project aims to tackle some of the barriers that prevent people experiencing the health and wellbeing benefits of Somerset's spectacular natural environment. SNC will help people to access these natural spaces, with a focus on supporting mental wellbeing and physical activity.

The SNC Project is a partnership project between Somerset Wildlife Trust and the three AONB's within the county. Somerset Wildlife Trust are offering free Nature and Wellbeing Courses in Somerset for adults with or at risk of developing mental health concerns.

Courses take place on the Blackdowns, Quantock Hills and Mendip AONB's, and spaces are available, as is free transport if required.

These courses are ongoing and take place over 6-week blocks, but participants may attend for 18 weeks. All activities have been fully COVID-19 risk assessed and group sizes will be limited.

Please [click here](#) to find out more information and book yourself onto the course.

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

Mental Health

Time to Talk Day – Thursday 3 February

Time to Talk Day takes place on Thursday 3 February and is the nation's biggest mental health conversation. It is run by Mind and Rethink Mental Health in England, in partnership with Co-op.

Talking and listening about mental health has the power to change lives. Each conversation we have contributes to reducing mental health stigma, helping to create supportive communities where we can talk openly about mental health and feel empowered to seek help when we need it. This year the campaign aims to support communities up and down the country to have more conversations than ever before.

There are lots of ways to get involved, from sharing on social media using [#TimeToTalk](#) and having conversations with your friends and family, to organising activity and events in your community.

Please [click here](#) to visit the website and find out more.

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Government has announced that the measures put in place under plan B in England are lifted. You should continue to follow safer behaviours to protect yourself and others:

- [Get vaccinated](#) and get your [booster dose](#);
- Consider wearing a face covering in crowded, enclosed spaces.
- Work from home if you can.
- Let fresh air in if you meet indoors. Meeting outdoors is safer.
- [Get tested](#) and self-isolate if required.

[Find out how to stay safe and help prevent the spread.](#)

You can find full coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance and support on the [GOV.UK website](#)

Somerset COVID Cases

COVID-19 case numbers in Somerset remain high with Omicron now clearly being the dominant strain in the South-West.

Whilst we are currently seeing a small decline in COVID-19 case numbers, the rates are still very high, meaning there is still transmission occurring in the community. Changes that have been made in the past few weeks to national guidance, particularly the removal of the need for confirmatory PCR testing and 'test to release' self-isolation guidance, mean we are cautious about drawing a direct link between falling cases and falling rates of infection in our community.

In the week up to 16 January approximately 115,968 tests were carried out across the county – this is reduced by around 20,000. There were 4,329 new confirmed

cases identified by these tests. The rates of COVID-19 remain high but have decreased in the last reporting week to 7710 per 100,000. This is below both the South West average and the national average.

Hospitalisation data for Somerset is around 68 COVID-19 in patients in Somerset hospitals.

Somerset NHS Foundation Trust

Following the Government announcement that 'Plan B' COVID-19 restrictions came to an end on Thursday 27 January, the Trust have been reviewing the visiting guidance at hospitals and units across Somerset.

While services remain incredibly busy, the Trust understands that seeing friends, family and carers is important to the wellbeing and recovery of patients. The Trust has made the decision to re-open responsible visiting.

Where it is safe to do so, pre-booked, one-hour appointments can be made to visit loved ones. This is being done in a controlled manner to protect patients, their families, and colleagues delivering care, and in some instances, it may mean that restrictions are still in place.

Please ensure you check the full guidance before visiting, and on arrival at sites, wear a hospital-provided mask - most patients are extremely clinically vulnerable, and we must all do what we can to keep them safe.

All the latest information on visiting and attending appointments can be found [here](#).

Have you had your jabs? Update on COVID-19 Booster Programme

After a healthy flurry of bookings for boosters/vaccinations pre-Christmas, there has been a noticeable drop off after the festive period. There is lots of walk-in availability at a number of vaccination sites across Somerset in January. These slots are available for first, second and booster vaccinations for everyone aged 18 and for first and second vaccinations for those aged 12–15 and 16-17. Visit the [Grab a Jab](#) site for information about any walk-in clinics being held near you.

The boosters are very important as they significantly reduce the likelihood of serious illness or hospitalisation should you catch COVID-19 so, if offered, please make a booking without delay.

Once you have received the national invitation you will be able to go on the **National Booking site**: nhs.uk/CovidVaccination or call 119. Vaccination centres across Somerset remain busy, but with slots becoming available all the time, please remember to check the National Booking Service regularly.

In total, the provisional data shows over 1.3 million vaccinations have been given in Somerset, including just under 340,000 booster jabs. This means that approximately 80% of eligible people have received their booster jab meeting, the end of the year national target. However, there is still an estimated 90,000 eligible people in Somerset that have not yet received their booster jab (of these about 6,000 have

only had their second dose in the last couple of weeks, so won't yet be eligible yet for their boosters).

Currently there is lot of spare capacity at vaccination sites and locations so there is plenty of choice and opportunity to get vaccinated. The overall aim to vaccinate 95% of the general eligible population remains and particularly the younger age groups are being asked to consider vaccination if they have not already done so.

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

In this [video](#), Clinton discusses the fact that the vaccine is safe for pregnant women and is safe for all.

COVID-19 – latest advice

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](#)
- <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

Crime / Safeguarding

Stop Scams UK Ltd / Global Cyber Alliance

The 159-telephone service

Consumers wanting to avoid financial fraud now have a secure and easy-to-remember phone number to contact their banks on to avoid painful scams. It could prove to be the safest way for many to contact their provider if they have suspicions and concerns about their accounts, or even if they're struggling to find a customer services number.

Stop Scams UK and Global Cyber Alliance have launched, the UK-wide 159 call service, which is designed to guarantee consumers a safe route to contacting their banks.

The scheme is urging people to "stop, hang up and call 159" to check calls are for real. The idea is to help those who believe they have been contacted by scammers claiming to be their bank, or by fraudsters who encourage them to transfer money. 159 works in the same way as 101 for the police or 111 for the NHS. It's the number you can trust to get you through to your bank, every time

Please [click here](#) to find out more about "159".

Avon and Somerset Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) Police Tax Survey

Local people were asked via an online and postal survey if they would pay an increase in the policing part of the council tax, known as the precept. The consultation asked if residents would be willing to pay either a 2% increase, which is equivalent to approximately 40p per month for the average band D household, 4.1% increase, which is equivalent to approximately 83p per month for the average band D household or to not pay an increase at all.

This is following the Government's announcement that PCCs could raise the precept for the next three years by £10 (83p per month) for the average band D household.

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

Avon and Somerset Police (ASP) Updates to the Highway Code

Rules for all types of road users will be updated in The Highway Code. The changes follow a [public consultation on a review of The Highway Code to improve road safety for people walking, cycling and riding horses](#). It ran from July to October 2020, and received more than 20,000 responses from the public, businesses and other organisations. Most people who responded were in favour of all the changes.

The changes will be made to The Highway Code from **Saturday 29 January 2022**.

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

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/ or Twitter [@swtcouncil](https://twitter.com/swtcouncil).

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