

# Somerset West and Taunton

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

### **Issue 104 Week ending 08/05/2022**

#### **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. Election Result – Town and Parishes**

The results of the 12 contested parish and town elections in Somerset West and Taunton have been declared a day early, following on from the Somerset County Council election count.

The results will be posted on the website next week. You can [click here](#) for updates.

Information on the County Council (new Somerset Council) elections can be found [here](#).

### **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.

- **SWT Executive Committee – Wednesday 18 May 2022 – Cancelled**
- **SWT Annual Council, SWT Full Council – Tuesday 24 May 2022, in the JMR at 6.15pm. Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Friday 20 May.**

- **SWT Community Scrutiny Committee** – Wednesday 25 May 2022, in the JMR at 6.15pm. Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Monday 23 May.
- **SWT Planning Committee** – Thursday 26 May 2022, in the JMR at 1.00pm. Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Tuesday 24 May.

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.

Please see the dates listed above re deadlines for submitting questions or statements. Information on speaking at public meetings is available on the [SWT website](#).

### 3. Town and Parish Register of Interest Forms

The Monitoring Officer has sent out an email this week, attaching the required forms that need to be completed following the elections.

This includes: -

- LGA model Councillor Code of Conduct City, Town and Parish Councils
- Declaration of Acceptance of Office Form
- Register of Interest Form

The Localism Act 2011 requires that the Monitoring Officer hold and maintain a register of interest for all District, Town and Parish Councillors.

All Town and Parish Councillors are required to fill in a new Register of Interest (ROI) form. A form will need to be completed irrespective of whether they have been a Councillor before. SWT delete and securely destroy any previous ROI forms.

They will have 28 days to return their form following their declaration of acceptance of office. The email address to send the forms to is [governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk). If any Councillors decide to print and send the forms in the post, please ensure that they are addressed as:

Governance Team  
Somerset West and Taunton Council  
Deane House,  
Belvedere Road,  
Taunton,  
TA1 1HE

Once the forms arrive with the SWT Governance Team they will have signatures redacted, be scanned and uploaded to the website. It is a legal

requirement that the Monitoring Officer publishes all Register of Interest forms on the SWT website. If any Councillors are concerned about this, please ask them to contact the Monitoring Officer to discuss.

Traditionally, some Town and Parish Councils have been better at returning their ROIs than others. This year the Monitoring Officer will give an update to each Ward Member (in mid to late June) on the returns that are missing so that this can be raised when they are attending the next Town or Parish Council meeting. Updates will also be regularly given to the Standards Committee.

#### **4. SWT Hardship Fund**

SWT has provided a Hardship Fund of £50,000 for use as a means-tested benefit of up to £200.00, available for application by eligible low-income households residing in the SWT area.

During 2022/23, Taunton Citizens Advice and West Somerset Advice will use the fund to provide financial assistance to low-income households who are unable to pay for essentials due to lack of sufficient means (and have exhausted recourse to other support such as Local Assistance Scheme (LAS), Surviving Winter fund, foodbanks and any other scheme for which they may be eligible).

If you know someone who may be eligible for this financial help, please ask them to contact [Taunton Citizens Advice](#) or [West Somerset Advice](#).

#### **5. Celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with SWT**

A party to mark the [Queen's Platinum Jubilee](#) is being held in Taunton's Vivary Park on Sunday 5 June.

SWT is putting on the free event in the award-winning park fittingly referred to as the town's Jewel in the Crown.

The Big Jubilee Lunch will run from 11am to 4.30pm with everyone invited to bring their own picnic, rugs, chairs and flags.

The event will be officially opened at midday by the Mayor of Taunton, Cllr Sue Lees, with outside broadcast support from Tone FM.

There will be entertainment to suit all ages with theatre performances, games and activities.

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

#### **6. Reminder - SWT updates climate positive planning advice**

In response to changes in legislation and policy, SWT has updated its interim planning guidance with regards to consideration for the Climate and Ecological emergencies.

Intended as a temporary measure, it seeks to clarify related policies adopted within the Council's existing Local Plans until successive policies can be

implemented by the new unitary authority for Somerset (Somerset Council), following its formation in April 2023.

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

## 7. Reminder - Online reporting of Housing Repairs

Recently the Housing Service launched an online repair tool to allow customers to report repairs to council properties. It can be accessed here [Housing repairs \(somerwestandtaunton.gov.uk\)](https://somerwestandtaunton.gov.uk).

Please report repairs using this online tool or via the **0300 304 8000** number. Repairs that are reported by other methods may be delayed as the correct information has not been captured. Please help SWT to provide the best possible service to our customers by reporting repairs using the most effective method.

## 8. Somerset Waste Partnership Services (SWP)

Due to the Bank Holiday Monday, all collections are a day later this week, with Friday pick-ups on **Saturday 7 May**.

For the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, changes start with the extra bank holiday on Thursday 2 June, whose collections move to **Saturday 4 June**, and Friday 3 June's pick-ups move to Monday 6 June, so waste collections all that week are a day later, including Friday's on **Saturday 11 June**.

To see, download, print or add to a smart device all your collection days - for recycling, rubbish and garden waste - visit My Collection Day at [somerwestwaste.gov.uk](https://somerwestwaste.gov.uk). (When entering your post code in the search bar, please include the gap i.e., AB12 3CD)

Calendars can be downloaded for printing or directly into your laptop or mobile device's calendar - creating helpful automatic reminders.

You can find lots more information about Recycle More online at [somerwestwaste.gov.uk/recycle-more](https://somerwestwaste.gov.uk/recycle-more). Extra guidance and support can be requested using a form on this page, or by calling SWT.

## New Council for Somerset Election Results

The results of the Somerset County Council elections are as follows:

- Liberal Democrat: 61
- Conservative: 36
- Green Party: 5
- Labour: 5
- Independent: 3

Full details of the results for individual divisions and candidates can be found on the elections results page on the authority's [website](#). The results mean that the Liberal Democrats take overall control of the council.

More than 430,000 people were eligible to vote for the 337 candidates standing for the 110 seats. The turnout at the election by district was Mendip – 39.3%; Sedgemoor – 30%; Somerset West and Taunton – 38.73%; South Somerset – 38.15.

For their first year, the councillors will take responsibility for all current County Council services and oversee the local government reorganisation to establish the single unitary Somerset Council on 1 April 2023. District councils will remain until 31 March 2023 and the councillors serving on them will continue in their roles until that date.

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

A dedicated inbox to ensure enquires about the new council and the unitary programme are dealt with quickly and efficiently has been set up.

Email [info@newsomersetcouncil.org.uk](mailto:info@newsomersetcouncil.org.uk).

## **Partner Engagement – Key messages from other Public Service Areas**

### **Somerset County Council (SCC)**

#### **SCC Highway Maintenance Update**

The good weather this week has contributed to works being completed ahead of schedule and the week commencing 9 May is looking promising too.

Here is an **IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT** for users of the **A39 between Porlock and Minehead** on the hill at Venniford (the narrow section between the Wootton Courtenay junctions):

From Monday 16 May, the A39 will be closed at this point from 09.30am to 3.00pm. This is to enable drainage and preparation works for the forthcoming (evening) resurfacing works towards the summer.

- 16 - 20 May inclusive - Road closed from 09.30 to 3.00pm.
- Outside of the closure hours temporary traffic lights will be in use.
- School transport will be unaffected.
- Emergency vehicles will be escorted through the site.
- HGV transport (under 17 tonnes) delivering to Porlock etc within closure times will need to use A39 Porlock Hill diversion if appropriate.
- All vehicles over 17 tonnes or over 9.5m length accessing Porlock area are to continue to holding areas – access will be granted between 1.00pm -1.30pm (HGVs only)

## **New works for week commencing 9 May 2022 are:**

- Pedestrian safety barrier repairs: **Hamilton Road, Hurdle Way and A38 Musgrove entrance – Taunton** commencing 9 May.
- Footway resurfacing: **Oaken Ground, Wellington** – 12 and 13 May.
- Carriageway resurfacing preparation works **Cher, Minehead** continuing until 13 May.
- Completed: Repair of sinkhole in **Duke Street Taunton** on 3 May - approx. 2 days duration.
- Completed: Changing of speed limit signs **Stoke St Gregory Taunton** on 3 May – approx. 4 days duration.
- Completed: footway resurfacing works in **Bishops Lydeard at Darby Way** and at **King George Road, Minehead**

For information on highway maintenance works and to stay up to date visit [www.travelsomerset.co.uk](http://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/](http://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.

## **Temporary Road Closure: - BT - St Augustine Street, Taunton**

Please follow the link [ttr0786807TD](#) to view the above road closure; and the link for the **Notice 2** which can be found [here](#).

The works are expected to commence on **9 May 2022** and last for **4 days** to enable **TLU Contracts Ltd to carry out ducting works on behalf of BT Openreach**.

The contractor has indicated that access for Emergency Services through the site **is not permitted** on this occasion.

For any further information about this closure please contact **TLU Contracts Ltd** on **01823 661 104**, quoting reference: **ttro786807**. Please note that should you require to view a closure which is more than two weeks ahead, you will need to register for free with [www.One.Network](http://www.One.Network)

## **New Journey Planning website for Somerset**

SCC has developed a new journey planning website called 'Think Travel'.

The website is dedicated to planning journeys within Somerset and includes information on public bus services, community transport and the demand responsive 'Slinky' service. There is also a dedicated noticeboard area to help facilitate car sharing.

The website will be particularly useful to individuals or groups who have difficulty accessing public transport and want to know what other transport options are available to them.

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

## **EDF**

### **Hinkley Point C Community Bus Passenger Notice**

#### **Cleeve Hill (Watchet) Weight Restriction from 26 April – 17 May**

Whilst the above 7.5 tonne weight restriction is in place on Cleeve Hill, the Community Bus Service will be unable to operate between Watchet and Blue Anchor via Cleeve Hill until the 17 May.

The service will continue to serve Watchet Railway station but will **not** serve Blue Anchor.

The HPC Community Bus is sorry for the inconvenience this will cause. Normal service will resume as soon as the weight restriction is lifted if before the 17 May.

If you require any further information in connection with this, please contact the **Passenger Helpline on 01278 393500**.

## **Step Up Somerset**

### **Employment advice service coming to a location near you**

Looking for work, new skills and training opportunities or information on how to grow your business? Would you like to try out digital equipment to find out what might suit you? Then come and visit us at the new Step Up to Mobile Outreach service which is coming to a location near you.

Step Up to Mobile Outreach will be visiting localities across Somerset from May to the end of October, with the aim of helping people access a range of employment, digital and business support provision.

Friendly advisors will be on hand to help you explore work opportunities, improve your CV, give helpful tips on how to find and apply for jobs online, and signpost you to a range of organisations who can provide specialist support. If you are currently in

employment, the advisors will provide advice on training and skills opportunities to help you progress in work or change career pathways.

Information will be readily available if you are thinking of starting up your own business or want to grow an existing business, including how the local library service can help you achieve your goals.

The Step Up to Mobile Outreach service's events will be held at the following venues, **between 10am and 2pm** on the relevant date:

- Tuesday 10 May – **Wiveliscombe**- outside of the Community Centre,
- Wednesday 11 May - **Dulverton**- The Lion Car Park,
- Thursday 12 May - **West Monkton** - BACH Hall Car Park,
- Tuesday 17 May - **North Curry**- Village Hall Car Park,
- Wednesday 18 May – **Stogursey** - Victory Hall Car Park,
- Thursday 19 May – **Churchinford** - Village Hall Car Park,
- Tuesday 24 May – **Williton** - SWT Car Park,
- Wednesday 25 May - **Watchet**- The Esplanade,
- Thursday 26 May - **Bishops Lydeard**- Village Hall Car Park.

Keep an eye on the Step-Up Somerset website at [Events \(stepupsomerset.org.uk\)](https://stepupsomerset.org.uk) for updates on the dates and locations of upcoming events.

### **Employability Skills Programme – “The Life You Want”, workshops**

“The Life You Want ©” is a highly innovative, intensive, experiential personal breakthrough, motivation and employment programme. The programme was initially designed for the hard-to-reach long term unemployed and other groups including problem / troubled families, but can be tailored for anyone, including businesses, from onboarding career progression, development and team building.

The programme has been rescheduled now starting on **9 May** and has been moved online so anyone who is unemployed in Somerset can do it. It is free for participants.

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

Any queries please email [olivia.speakman@recroconsulting.co.uk](mailto:olivia.speakman@recroconsulting.co.uk) for a chat or contact **0330 12227015**.

### **NHS Jobs for You - Online Careers Event**

**Tuesday 10 May 2022, 6.30 – 7.30pm via Microsoft Teams**

Would you enjoy a practical or administrative job or perhaps a supportive patient facing role? With more than 350 different careers in the NHS – there is bound to be one to suit you.

The Sector-based Work Academy Programme (SWAP) offers free training and guidance that can lead to flexible, fixed term or permanent employment in the NHS.

Please [click here](#) to find out more and register for this free event.

## **Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme (QLPS)**

### **View to a Hill Project**

The Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme is looking for the best views of the Quantocks. Visit the [website](#) to learn more about this exciting project and add your favourite view of the Quantocks to their map.

When we think of the Quantock Hills, we often think of the views you can see from the hills over to Wales, Exmoor, the Blackdowns and beyond. But the QLPS need your help to find the best views of the Quantocks. They are running a public consultation from now until the 10 June and need your participation.

It could be from a road, village, footpath, park or open space, from Taunton, Bridgwater, Williton, or anywhere in between. All QPLS ask, is that it is publicly accessible. Visit the [map](#), drop your pin and answer a couple of questions to submit your view.

After the consultation closes QLPS will be digging deeper into some of the best areas and guidance will be developed for their protection and enhancement. QPLS will be asking for volunteers to get more involved in the project, by adopting a view and taking regular photographs of it through the seasons.

## **HM Coastguard Watchet Automated External Defibrillator (AED)**

All HM Coastguard blue light response vehicles now carry an AED.

HM Coastguard Watchet have always been trained to use them as well as keeping an up-to-date location list of publicly accessible ones.

However now having one as part of their casualty care equipment, will speed up the deployment and provide immediate assistance to those in need.

Remember, if you see anyone in distress in the sea or on the coastline, dial 999 or 112 and ask for the Coastguard.

If you have a marine WHF radio, call up on Channel 16.

To Search, To Rescue, To Save.

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

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

#### **Win a virtual Q&A with Emma Radacanu MBE**

Win a Virtual Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) Youth Schools Q&A for your class with US Open Champion and BBC Sports Personality of the Year – Emma Raducanu MBE.

Courtesy of the LTA and its flagship Youth programme, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity is being offered to teachers that could see teenage sensation, Emma Raducanu MBE, appear virtually in your very own classroom for a Question and Answer (Q&A) session.

[LTA Youth Schools](#) is available for free to both Primary and Secondary schools nationwide. This innovative junior programme has been created by the LTA - the National Governing body for tennis in Britain - to help more children enjoy the benefits of playing and staying in tennis, whatever their age, gender, ability, disability, or background. Based on world leading expertise, research, and science, and drawing on insight from parents and players – the curriculum aligned tennis resources are perfect to build into lesson planning covering topics such as PSHE and Physical Education.

To be entered into the prize draw to win a virtual Q&A for your school with the US Open champion and BBC Sports Personality of the Year, teachers need to simply register for a free, [online teacher training course](#) and complete training before **13 May 2022**. On completion of the course, schools will also receive a £250 voucher to spend on ten hours of team-teaching support from an LTA accredited Coach or on equipment. Win-win!

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

### **Get outside in Somerset – volunteering opportunities**

SASP are looking for volunteers to help at the **Laps of Lyngford** event in Taunton on **19 May**. Tasks include setting up and packing away, marshalling, lap counting and handing out medals.

It's a great opportunity to be part of a community event and work alongside local organisations, large and small.

You can find out more and sign up [here](#).

### **Somerset Community Foundation**

#### **Grants from the Somerset Fund available for local charities**

Grants up to £2,500 are now available for smaller charities, community groups, sports clubs and social enterprises based in Somerset.

Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) manages [The Somerset Fund](#) and is encouraging groups that run on less than £100,000 a year to apply now for funding.

The grants from The Somerset Fund can be used to pay for essential running costs, like rent, utilities, insurance, or staff time – sometimes known as core costs. The money can also be used for the costs of delivering a project or service in or for your community.

Applications to the fund must be made by **5.00pm, Friday 3 June 2022**.

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

## **Spark Somerset**

### **Free Workshops and networking events for Social Enterprises**

The Somerset Social Entrepreneurs Programme is led by the [School for Social Entrepreneurs](#) (SSE) in partnership with Somerset Community Foundation, Smart Communities Ltd and Spark Somerset.

#### **Networking Event**

**Tuesday 10 May, 7.00-8.00pm**

The Smart Communities SSE network is here to help social enterprises across the county flourish. If you would like to attend this event please email [Marie@somersetccc.org.uk](mailto:Marie@somersetccc.org.uk).

#### **Live Social Enterprise Workshop**

**Wednesday 18 May, 11.00am – 1.00pm Albermarle Centre, Taunton**

This live event will explore the fundamentals of Social Enterprise. Come along to hear local success stories, share ideas and experiences, consider your future direction and find out how the Spark Somerset and Smart Communities teams can help you.

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

## **Community Council for Somerset (CCS)**

### **April Newsletter for Somerset Carers**

The latest edition of the Carers in Somerset newsletter is now available. It is packed with really useful information, from Carers groups, activities to get you out and about and new fun features which encourage you to take a break.

Please [click here](#) to view or download a copy of the newsletter.

## **West Somerset Food Cupboard (WSFC)**

### **Launch of pantry scheme**

The Minehead Area Local Pantry is opening on **Tuesday 10 May**. This is a membership scheme enabling local people to access fresh, chilled and non-perishable supermarket surplus food and other produce at very low cost.

Many people have contributed their time, skills, funds and resources (including locks, lino, tech-support and love!) to get this off the ground, and the WSFC is extremely grateful.

The **provision of emergency free food for those in crisis will continue** as it has for the past 15 years at the WSFC and, in addition to its normal provision, is currently helping support some Ukrainian refugees as they arrive here in our community.

Please [click here](#) to read about this new initiative and how to get involved.

## Health and Welfare

### Mental Health Awareness Week

More and more people, from all walks of life, are becoming affected by loneliness and it is having an impact on people's physical and mental health. We know that loneliness can be both the driver for, and a product of poor mental health

The pandemic has given rise to a sense of loneliness and isolation undermining confidence in daily routines. In recent times, COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions have meant many people have seen friends and loved ones less often. Many more activities now take place online such as appointments with healthcare professionals and home and hybrid working has become commonplace. All these changes in our society have contributed to the growing feeling of isolation and loneliness.

During Mental Health Awareness Week, NHS Somerset will be escalating promotion of emotional health and wellbeing by sharing a range of top tips, toolkits, resources and signposting across social media and other internal and external channels.

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

### Clintons COVID Catch Up

#### Mental Health Awareness Week (9-15 May)

In this week's catch-up film, Clinton discusses loneliness ahead of Mental Health Awareness Week on 9-15 May.

Loneliness affects many of us at one time or another. We know that loneliness can be both the driver for and a product of poor mental health.

In this [video](#), Clinton visits the Men in Sheds project in Taunton. They offer a place where men can come together, build things, get involved in community projects, learn new skills or pass skills on to others.

He also talks to Health Promotion Manager Amy about loneliness can affect your mental health, and the support available.

### New Leaf

#### Free Online Mental Health Half Day Awareness Course

**Wednesday 11 May 2022, 2.00pm – 6.00pm – Online**

New Leaf is working with the Somerset Public Health Team to deliver workplace emotional wellbeing training to small and medium sized (SME) businesses across Somerset.

The Adult Mental Health Awareness Course lasts 4 hours and is accredited with Mental Health First Aid England. It is an introductory session to raise awareness of mental health. Learning takes place through a mix of presentations, group discussions and workshop activities.

Please [click here](#) to find out more about this event, and register your attendance.

## **Somerset COVID Cases**

The last ONS data from early April showed that 1 in 10 people in the South West of England were infected with COVID-19 at that time. The virus is still very much with us though, and we still encourage everyone to stay at home if they experience symptoms to avoid the spread.

Some settings, like hospitals and care homes, continue to have measures in place to protect people from COVID-19. This includes wearing face coverings, alongside other measures to reduce the virus spreading. We ask everyone to follow any requests from these settings and act in ways which will help protect our more vulnerable residents.

## **Living safely with respiratory infections including COVID-19**

The [Government has published important advice](#) for people with symptoms of respiratory infections, such as COVID-19; people with a positive COVID-19 test result and their contacts; and advice on safer behaviours for everyone.

There are simple things you can do in your daily life that will help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections, such as flu and protect those at highest risk.

Things you can choose to do are:

- Get vaccinated.
- Wear a face covering or a face mask.
- Let fresh air in if meeting others indoors.
- Stay at home if you have [symptoms](#)
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Practise good hygiene:

If you have symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as COVID-19, and you have a high temperature or do not feel well enough to go to work or carry out normal activities, you are advised to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people.

Please [click here](#) to read the guidance on what to do if you have symptoms but have not taken a test.

## **COVID-19 Testing**

Free universal symptomatic and asymptomatic testing for COVID-19, for the general public, came to an end on the **31 March 2022**, in line with the move to the [Living with COVID-19 strategy](#).

Please [click here](#) to find out more information on who can access free COVID-19 tests from 1 April 2022 and how to get them.

## **Spring Booster Jabs**

SCC's Public Health team is urging older and more vulnerable residents to take up the offer of a free, further COVID-19 booster vaccine.

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), as part of its latest review of the UK vaccination programme, has recommended an additional spring booster dose for our most vulnerable individuals. People aged 75 years and older, residents in care homes for older people, and those individuals aged 12 and over with weakened immune systems, are being offered a spring booster of coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine.

The Spring Booster is being rolled out for these groups of people because they are at higher risk of developing severe complications from COVID-19. Protection from their previous vaccinations may be lower and may decline more quickly over time. If the number of infections increases over the summer, this booster should help to reduce their risk of developing serious illness and being admitted to hospital with COVID-19.

Across Somerset, there are more than 80 thousand people eligible to receive their spring booster. They will be contacted by the NHS when it is their turn to receive the vaccine, although anyone eligible who has had six months since their last booster can also go online to book through the [National Booking System](#) or by calling 119 for an appointment.

There are also plenty of walk-in appointments available across the county. Please check the local NHS website: [COVID-19 vaccinations in Somerset](#) to find clinics in your area or use the national portal to find a clinic: [www.nhs.uk/grab-a-jab](http://www.nhs.uk/grab-a-jab).

NHS staff are ready to welcome you whether it's for your first, second, or third dose.

## **Coronavirus Helpline Update**

In line with the lifting of Government restrictions the Coronavirus Support Helpline is now closed having taken over 18,000 calls from Somerset residents who needed help during the pandemic.

Anyone in need of Coronavirus-related support should contact their local authority from now on:

**Somerset West and Taunton Council** call **0300 304 8000**

**Mendip District Council** call **0300 303 8588**

**Sedgemoor District Council** call **0300 303 7800**

**South Somerset District Council** call **01935 462462**

**Somerset County Council** on **0300 123 2224**

## **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**

### **Fraud and Cyber Protect Officers**

Did you know that fraud and cybercrime are two of the fastest growing crime types in the country, almost doubling year on year?

Hard hitting statistics show that £190 billion is lost nationwide to scams every year, and fraud is the UK's biggest crime type accounting for a massive 1/3 of all crime recorded.

A&SP Fraud and Cyber Protect Officers are offering to deliver fraud and cyber awareness talks to local community groups. If you know of a group that would benefit from a session, please contact: [FraudProtect@avonandsomerset.police.uk](mailto:FraudProtect@avonandsomerset.police.uk).

This crime prevention initiative was set up to encourage individuals to identify different types of fraud, educate them on the current threat of fraud and cyber-crime and how best to protect themselves. The team will cover the most common type of scams which include romance fraud, transfer to safe account scams and courier fraud.

Lots of great advice will be given on how to keep safe online, such as creating a unique and strong password for accounts using 3 random words, how to save them to your browser and turning on two-factor authentication (2FA). This is a great learning opportunity to strengthen and protect local communities.

## **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 (ASP)**

### **Men jailed after cocaine and cannabis seized on Exmoor**

Two men have been jailed for drug offences after being stopped by patrolling police officers in Dunster on 28 April 2020.

Officers carrying out targeted patrols as the result of intelligence stopped the two men in a vehicle and found drugs, a lock knife and a knuckleduster. Further enquiries led officers to find more drugs at the home of one of the men, Jared Tappin.

In all officers seized cocaine with an estimated street value of more than £16,500 and cannabis worth more than £9,500.

Appearing before Taunton Crown Court on Thursday 14 April, Patrick Shelley, 26, of Pixton Way, Dulverton, was jailed for a total of 30 months after previously admitting possessing cocaine and cannabis with intent to supply, possessing an offensive weapon in public, possessing a knife in public, and acquiring/possessing criminal property.

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

### **StreetSafe**

Did you know that you can now use the [StreetSafe](#) online tool to anonymously report locations where you feel unsafe? These reports provide insight that help to shape local policing and make the streets safer for everyone<sup>[MS1]</sup>.

StreetSafe is a pilot service for anyone to anonymously tell the Police about public places where you have felt or feel unsafe, because of environmental issues, e.g. street lighting, abandoned buildings or vandalism and/or because of some behaviours, e.g. being followed or verbally abused.

To find out more or make a report, [click 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](#)
- [Rural Affairs Unit – Avon and Somerset Police.](#)

## **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).

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