

Somerset West and Taunton

Newsletter to SWT Councillors and Parish Councils

Issue 112 Weeks ending 03/07/2022

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. Over 8 million families in the UK getting new cost of living payment from 14 July 2022

Over 8 million households will receive the first of two cost of living instalments totalling £650 from **14 July 2022**, as part of a government support package this year. You do not need to apply. If you're eligible, you'll be paid automatically in the same way you usually receive your benefit or tax credits but the payments will be made separately.

This payment will be tax-free, will not count towards the benefit cap, and will not have any impact on existing benefit awards. The initial automatic instalment for means-tested benefit claimants will be £326, with the rest to follow in a second instalment from the autumn. The payments are designed to be deliberately slightly unequal to minimise fraud risks from those who may seek to exploit this system.

Support includes the direct cost of living payment of up to £650 for over 8 million households on eligible means-tested benefits, a separate £300 payment for pensioners, and a £150 payment for eligible disabled people, which can be paid on top of the £650 payment.

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

You can read more about the government's cost of living support and what is available [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.

- **Special Meeting, SWT Executive – Tuesday 5 July 2022**, in the JMR at 4pm. The agenda and report packs are available to view on the [website](#). Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Friday 1 July 2022.
- **SWT Full Council – Tuesday 5 July 2022**, in the JMR at 6.15pm. The agenda and report packs are available to view on the [website](#). Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Friday 1 July 2022.
- **SWT Corporate Scrutiny Committee – Wednesday 6 July 2022**, in the JMR at 6.15pm. The agenda and report packs are available to view on the [website](#). Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Monday 4 July 2022.

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. Reminder - Town and Parish Register of Interest Forms

Thank you to those town and parishes that have already returned their Register of Interest Forms. 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.

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 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. Somerset Armed Forces Day in Vivary Park

This **Saturday 2 July, from 10am – 6pm**, Armed Forces Day is a chance to show your support for the Armed Forces community.

A free community event will be held in Vivary Park, Taunton to celebrate, the men and women who make up the Armed Forces and Emergency Services communities: from those still serving, their families, veterans and cadets.

A fun filled day for all the family, open to all and free to attend. Lots of displays and stalls throughout Vivary Park and Wilton Lands. Please note, Ash Meadows and Fons George car parks will be closed from Friday 1 July until Sunday 3 July to accommodate this event. Please [click here](#) for alternative car parking locations.

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

5. Business Innovation event announced for Somerset

Somerset West and Taunton Council is pleased to announce a new, flagship business event aimed at supporting Somerset's businesses and innovation economy.

The 'Somerset Innovation Exchange' on **Tuesday, 27 September**, will provide a collaborative forum for the county's leading businesses to learn and share the latest technological and industrial innovations, helping them to develop and grow together as part of Somerset's innovation community.

The event has been organised by SWT with support from Somerset County Council, The Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (HoTSWLEP), SWT Innovation Leadership Group, Tech South West, Innovate UK and Barclays Eagle Labs, and is open to businesses at all stages of growth including entrepreneurs, designers, rising stars, inspirational founders and civic innovators.

To find out more visit somersetinnovationexchange.co.uk or follow SWT's promotional partner, One Voice Media, via their [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) channels.

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

6. Sign up to the Somerset West Lottery bonus prize draw

Sign up to the Somerset West Lottery to support local good causes and not only will you be in with the chance of winning weekly cash prizes, but if you enter before Saturday 27 August, you will be in with the chance of winning a £1,000 Currys voucher as well.

Everyone who signs up to purchase one or more tickets between 1 July and 27 August will automatically have the chance to win a £1,000 voucher to spend at any Currys PC World store courtesy of external lottery management company Gatherwell.

All tickets bought during this timeframe will be entered into the summer bonus prize draw as well as being in with a chance to win up to £25,000 in the weekly lottery run by Somerset West and Taunton Council.

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

7. SWT Housing Newsletter – Summer 2022

The summer edition of housing news will be arriving in the post this week. This 24-page newsletter is packed with helpful information for SWT tenants and leaseholders.

Approximately 6000 publications have been printed and will be distributed to all SWT tenants and leaseholders signposting readers to help and support.

Please [click here](#) to view the Summer 2022 Newsletter online.

8. Reminder - Free workshop for food and drink businesses

A recent survey showed that Somerset food and drink businesses are facing several challenges - from concerns about food regulations and labelling to issues with training and supply chains.

In response to this, SWT and Sedgemoor District Council have teamed up with the Heart of the South West Growth Hub to organise an event specifically designed for businesses in the food and drink sector.

When: 5 July 2022, open from 7.30am for an 8am start

Where: Junction 24 (TA6 6DF), near Bridgwater

What: This event has two parts: a Breakfast Briefing and a Workshop

Who: Open to anyone in the food and drink sector

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

9. Reminder - Council Tax Energy Rebate Payments

If you are eligible to receive an energy rebate payment and have not yet received it, you can claim now.

SWT will make payment into your bank account. Payments cannot be made by cash or cheque.

For those households who do not submit a claim by the middle of July £150 will be paid direct to their Council Tax account and a revised bill will be issued showing the effect this has made to their account.

Please [click here](#) to find out more information and submit a claim for energy rebate.

Claims can also be made over the telephone on [0300 304 8000](tel:03003048000) Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm. The same details will be required as for online claims.

10. Somerset Waste Partnership Services (SWP)

Big thanks as recycling rate hits new heights

Somerset's recycling rate is at an all-time high thanks to Recycle More and everyone's efforts to do the right thing with their waste.

At 56.2%, the rate for 2021-22 is a big step forward from 52.4% the previous year - coming after more than a decade of being stuck around the 52% level. It's the highest it has been since such figures started being tracked more than 20 years ago. This should put us in the top 10% when national figures are shared later in the year.

The recycling rate is the proportion of the waste collected at the kerbside or taken to recycling sites that is recycled.

The improvements are believed to have been driven by the introduction of the expanded Recycle More collections and the way Somerset has embraced them so enthusiastically.

Somerset Waste Partnership would like to thank everyone for making the most of the new service. With its roll-out only just complete, Recycle More should continue to drive up the county's recycling rate next year.

Recycle More has expanded the range of recycling collected at the kerbside of Somerset's 260,000-plus households, notably adding plastic pots, tubs and trays to the weekly pick-ups.

It has been a great example of cross-authority work that is helping all the partners deliver on their Climate Emergency commitments.

Initial figures indicate Recycle More has produced a 20% reduction in the rubbish in Somerset's bins, as well as the increases in recycling.

The final stage of the new service roll-out started this week, with expanded collections being introduced to more than 5,000 communal properties in Sedgemoor and West Somerset.

Where is Fixy?

Working alongside Somerset's existing repair cafe groups, the Fixy repair van is visiting events, schools and businesses to promote repair, support repair cafes with tools and a PAT – portable appliance testing – safety service, encourage volunteers to get involved, and collect smart tech for reuse.

Saturday 9 July 10am-12noon – Bishops Hull Repair Café at Bishops Hull Hub, Bishops Hull Road, Bishop's Hull, Taunton TA1 5EB. More Hub details at <https://bhhub.co.uk/> and Hub Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/BishopsHullHub/>.

Saturday 9 July 1.30pm-4.30pm – Fore Street, Taunton (opposite Lloyds Bank, by pedestrian crossing); signposting to Taunton Repair Cafe, 2pm-4pm at Moose Hall, Tower Lane, Taunton, TA1 4AR. More details: <https://tauntontransition.wordpress.com/>

To keep up to date with waste services, sign up for the SWP e-newsletter at somersetwaste.gov.uk or follow somersetwaste on Facebook or Twitter.

New Somerset Council

Budget faces combination of challenges as inflation hits all councils

Papers published today (1 July 2022) show the challenge that inflation is presenting to council budgets.

The team putting together the budget for the new Somerset Council will be bringing together the budgets of the five current councils and delivering the planned £18.5 million in savings from the move to a single unitary council. However, the dramatic rise in inflation is making the already complex budget programme hugely challenging.

Papers published today by Somerset County Council as part of the process for setting next year's budget show the scale of the challenge facing the new Somerset Council. While officers had previously identified the need to make £28 million of savings for the new council, inflation and demand for services have increased that budget gap to £44 million.

Budget tracking for the County Council also shows a potential £14.4 million overspend for the current financial year if action is not taken to limit spending. This is driven largely by inflation and particularly by rising costs in demand-led services such as adult and children's social care as regulatory and market changes hit these departments. District Councils will report their current year budget projections in a month's time.

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

Partner Engagement – Key messages from other Public Service Areas

Census 2021 results

On Tuesday 28 June the first census the [first census results for England and Wales](#) were published.

The census happens every 10 years and gives a picture of all the people and households in England and Wales.

The census questions answered help organisations make decisions on planning and funding public services in your area, including transport, education and healthcare.

Somerset County Council (SCC)

SCC Highway Maintenance Update

Reasonable weather this week has allowed the Highways Team to complete many safety works, and the planned works have continued well.

Can we remind the public please to heed the road closure signs/barriers in the evenings – this week the traffic management equipment was moved by a member of the public at Chilcombe Lane and they then proceeded to drive through the site and

destroyed seven newly built concrete drains that hadn't set. This has now extended the works at significant cost to SCC and disruption to residents.

The verge maintenance gangs have completed the A and B roads and are now halfway through the parish program.

The surface dressing program has continued to schedule.

This week SCC Highways have successfully completed 141 Safety Defect repairs in the SWT Area (82 in Taunton and 59 in West Somerset).

Works for week commencing 4 July 2022 are:

- **Continuing:** Drainage works at **Peacehay Lane, Sampford Arundel** (10 day temporary road closure, commenced Monday 27 June)
- **Continuing:** drainage works at **Weacombe Lane, Bicknoller** (4 weeks temporary road closure, commenced Monday 27 June)
- **Continuing:** installation of 5 new cattle grid gates on **Exmoor**
- **Continuing:** Drainage works at **Chilcombe Lane, Bicknoller (Please see comments above)**

- **Completed:** Replacing post and rail fencing **Cothelstone Hill, Bishops Lydeard (Please see comments above)**
- **Completed:** Resurfacing works at **Cher and Quirke Street, Minehead**
- **Completed:** Verge Works (concrete channel) at **Blackwater Lane, Wiveliscombe**
- **Completed:** Drainage works at **Holywell Lake, Wellington**
- **Completed:** Footway works at **Grange Drive Taunton**
- **Completed:** Works at **Chip Lane & Outer Circle Taunton**
- **Completed:** Footway resurfacing in at **Bradford on Tone Rd, Taunton**
- **Completed:** Carriageway patching at **A396 Bridgetown**

For 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.

£8.3m Toneway Project moves into home straight

Taunton's Toneway Creech Castle junction improvement project is entering the final phase towards completion later this summer.

The multi-million-pound project, designed to increase capacity at the junction and improve cycling and pedestrian connections, started in August 2021 and is progressing well. As part of the essential work to complete this scheme and allow the team full access to the road there will need to be night-time closures of Toneway for about six weeks from **25 July**. Undertaking the work in the evening when the traffic levels are much lower will significantly reduce the impact of the finishing works.

The closures will be in place from **8pm until 6am weekday evenings only from 25 July to 31 August. The road will be open during the evening at weekends.**

This will be a full closure from the Hankridge roundabout to the Asda junction inbound and from the Wickes roundabout to the Hankridge roundabout outbound.

You can read more on the Toneway project here, including plans, videos and FAQs www.travelsomerset.co.uk/Toneway/.

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

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.

Grass cutting and surface dressing underway across the county

SCC's Highways Team has commenced work on two vital summer highways maintenance programmes covering verges and road surfaces.

Grass cutting

Each year more than 9,400km of roadside verge is cut – that is almost the distance from Taunton to Tokyo.

The operation presents a challenge for the Council's Highways team as a balance must be found between promoting habitat creation and protecting wildlife, and the overall road safety of all road users.

Most highway verges are only cut to a width of one metre (one-swathe width), though some stretches can be cut back beyond this width if there is a need to improve visibility for motorists at specific junctions. As well as ensuring visibility this also helps the flow of water along road channels and provides a safe area for pedestrians where there is no pavement.

The cutting programme commenced in May and is due to be completed September, depending on the seasonal growing conditions. The routes in which experienced higher volumes of traffic are cut first.

The aim to protect wildlife on roadside verges, while maintaining road safety, consistent with the Somerset Highways Biodiversity Manual and the recently adopted Somerset Pollinator Action Plan, which can be found here: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/waste-planning-and-land/biodiversity/#Somerset-Pollinator-Action-Plan>.

Surface dressing

In addition to the verge maintenance, SCC has begun work to surface dress more than 100 roads over the next couple of months.

Surface dressing is a nationally recognised maintenance technique for sealing a road, improving skid resistance, and preventing water getting under the surface. This is crucial to help stop potholes forming.

It works by coating an existing road with bitumen, covering it with stone chippings and then rolling it.

The surface dressing teams are mobile, and the work is dependent on dry weather. This means the rolling programme is flexible and dates can change at short notice.

Residents can find out more about the 2022 programme, including maps showing which roads are included here www.travelsomerset.co.uk/grass-cutting and you can check up on works dates on our map on the landing page [Travel Somerset – Travel news for Somerset](#).

If you need to report an overgrown verge, pothole or more, you can do so here: [Report a problem on the road \(somerset.gov.uk\)](#)

You can check which roads are included as part of this year's programme, check provisional dates, and find out more about surface dressing at www.travelsomerset.co.uk/surface-dressing.

Temporary Road Closure – Burton Place, Taunton

Please follow [this link to view the above road closure](#).

Somerset County Council in exercise of its powers under Section 14 (1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended, have made an Order prohibiting all traffic from proceeding along; **Burton Place - from the junction with Westgate Street to the junction with Wilton Grove. A total distance of 58 metres**

This Order will enable Jurassic Fibre Ltd to carry out overlay works.

The works are expected to commence on **7 July 2022 and last until 11 July 2022 between the hours of 8:00am - 5:00pm for a total of 5 days**. The contractor has indicated that access for Emergency Services through the site **is not permitted** on this occasion.

Temporary Road Closure – Albemarle Road, Taunton

Please follow this [link to view the above road closure](#).

Somerset County Council in exercise of its powers under Section 14 (1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended, have made an Order prohibiting all traffic from proceeding along; **Albemarle Road - from 34 metres, north west of the junction with Station Road, north westwards for a distance of 85 metres.**

This Order will enable Jurassic Fibre to carry out ducting works.

The works are expected to commence on **4 July 2022 and last until 6 July 2022 between the hours of 8:00am – 5:00pm for a total of 3 days.**

EDF (UK)

June 2022 Update - Hinkley Point C shares site progress

Hinkley Point C's Delivery Director, Nigel Cann has released his latest update on the project.

The footage shows how work has progressed over the last six months, with the site moving into new phases of construction. Work has accelerated following the subsiding of the pandemic, with around 8,000 people now working on site.

The nuclear power station will be vital in helping the UK fight climate change, and in ensuring energy security. It will generate reliable, low-carbon electricity for 6 million homes and will work alongside wind and solar in place of fossil fuels.

Please [click here](#) to watch the video.

Exmoor National Park Authority (ENP)

Exmoor Fund backs nature-friendly farming

Nearly 5.5km of new wildlife rich hedgerows, 540 hectares of regenerative farming and research into improved management across 700 hectares of moorland are among a raft of projects awarded funding in Exmoor National Park this year through the government's [Farming in Protected Landscapes programme](#).

The three-year scheme includes a total of £1.2 million allocated to Exmoor. It was set up by Defra to support farmers and land managers with the transition to new farm payment schemes, and to realise their valuable contribution towards reaching environmental goals and other public benefits offered by protected landscapes.

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

Maritime and Coastguard Agency

Defibrillator coverage vastly extended thanks to HM Coastguard

Minutes really do matter in the event of a cardiac arrest. It's why lifesaving defibrillators are being put into some of the most remote UK communities, thanks to the frontline maritime emergency search and rescue service, HM Coastguard.

Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) are now in HM Coastguard's vehicles and in its stations, creating the largest geographical spread of all the emergency services. It

adds extra lifesaving capability at emergencies and can help people in some of the UK's remote communities.

AEDs are also in all other buildings belonging to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, including marine offices around the UK, adding extra protection for employees in the event of heart-related ill health at work.

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

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue (DSFRS)

Dulverton Fire Station – Open Day

Dulverton Fire Station, Kemps Way TA22 9HL are pleased to announce that they will be holding an open day on **Saturday 9 July** between 11am and 2pm.

If you have ever considered becoming an on-call fire fighter and would like to know more, one of the experienced team will be able to answer your questions. Have you ever wanted to understand more about how small-town fire stations operate, or want to ask questions about how to reduce fire risk in your home?

Bring yourself and your family down to Dulverton Fire Station and take a look around. Explore the station, equipment and fire engine, Adults and Children welcome.

Community Support – What help is out there?

Voluntary and Community Sector Support

Somerset Community Foundation

Get Somerset Cycling Project

Life Cycle UK has received charitable grants from the HPC Community Fund, Somerset Community Foundation and National Grid Community Grant Programme to help more people in Somerset unlock the benefits of cycling and bikes. By enabling people to make more short journeys by bike, it can help to mitigate the residual impacts of building the Hinkley Point C power station - such as increased volumes of traffic - while improving the economic and environmental well-being of local communities.

Life Cycle UK have joined with local community organisations across Somerset to develop and deliver projects that support local people to get cycling and make the benefits of cycling more accessible. They will also strengthen the 'cycling sector' by giving professional training to bicycle mechanics and cycling instructors.

The aim is for everyone in Somerset to be able to access to this healthy, green and low-cost form of transport if they want to.

Life Cycle UK is bringing an exciting set of cycling activities and support to "Get Somerset Cycling!" From money off refurbished bikes to confidence-boosting cycle tuition - wherever you are on your cycling journey, they can help! They are also supporting local businesses and community organisations to encourage and enable cycling.

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

Somerset Activity Sports Partnership (SASP)

Bookings for Happy Healthy Holidays Somerset are now open!

This year's summer programme is jam-packed with fun activities ranging from sports to crafts, music, theatre, games and more. Follow the link to check out the upcoming activities that will be taking place over the Summer for children on benefits related free school meals <https://www.sasp.co.uk/happy-healthy-holidays> #BeActive

Spark Somerset

Online - adult mental health awareness training

Learn how to support others and challenge stigma at Spark's Mental Health Awareness training session, taking place on **Wednesday 20 July**. Tickets are just £5 for small, Somerset-based VCSE staff and volunteers.

Learning will take place through a mixture of presentations, group discussions and workshop activities and everyone who completes the course will receive a manual, a workbook (including a helpful toolkit to support your own mental health) and a certificate from Mental Health First Aid England. This is an online session, the link to the Zoom meeting will be sent once the place has been confirmed.

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

Community Council for Somerset (CCS)

Community Review online event

Tuesday 12 July at 2pm – 3.15pm

Calling all Town and Parish Councils: Smart Communities Ltd still has a few spaces on their Community Review online event. If you missed this weeks on the 30 June, then you have a second chance to book a place.

Working in partnership with Somerset Association of Local Councils they will support and deliver 14 Parish and Town Council community plans either initiating NEW or reviewing previous plans.

The lucky communities will have the Smart Community team supporting them through the process. For more information about the project visit:

<https://buff.ly/3tmEwBN>

Community Employment Hubs

The Employment Hubs are a free employment support service covering Taunton, West Somerset and Wellington. Your pathway towards work!

The SWT Community employment hubs offer bespoke individual support towards work for **anyone** whether employed, unemployed or facing redundancy or those who wish to upskill or thinking about a career change.

A Youth Hub is already operational at the Minehead EYE (Aimed at ages 16-25). Throughout COVID-19, the Hubs have been providing support via online and

telephone and this will continue in addition to the face to face (appointment) sessions. All referrals can be made via employmentsupport@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk.

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

Health and Welfare

Have your say on Somerset SEND services

Somerset County Council, NHS Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group and Somerset Parent Carer Forum are keen to hear from children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), their families, professionals and health colleagues to help shape Somerset's SEND services going forward.

Anyone who has been in contact with Somerset SEND services (for whatever reason) over the past year is invited to share their views and experiences in the annual SEND survey

The anonymous survey runs until **Monday 19 September** and can be found here: [Annual SEND Survey \(somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/annual-send-survey) Visit www.somerset.gov.uk/localoffer for more information.

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

New COVID-19 Dashboard

As a result of recent changes to policy, the number of detected cases alone no longer provides an accurate or consistent indication of the prevalence of COVID-19 in our community.

As a result of this, detailed cases data such as the map and district level figures have been removed from the SCC and NHS in Somerset Dashboard. Cases are still shown on the chart; however, it now includes additional information (ONS Prevalence*) that may give a better indication of the actual number of people with COVID. Testing data has also been added to provide further context.

The hospital admissions data also now includes mechanical ventilation bed patients who are positive as a better indicator of serious illness being treated. The OPEL level on this page provides a snapshot of how the health and care system overall is managing.

Everyone in Somerset is being asked to get up to date with the [COVID-19 vaccinations they are eligible for](#). These remain the best form of defence against the COVID-19 and influenza viruses. It's not too late to catch up if you or someone you know has missed boosters or even first doses for the COVID-19 vaccine.

[The vaccination page](#) now provides more overall strategic vision of how the vaccination programme has been implemented and provides an indication of the effective level of immunity provided to our community by boosters and third doses. The current version of the dashboard can be accessed at any time [here](#).

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.

Clinton's Public Health Catch Up Film

The importance of checking your blood pressure

It's estimated that 1 in 10 adults have abnormally high blood pressure, or hypertension, but don't know it. More than two hundred blood pressure monitor kits are available for loan from libraries around Somerset as part of an initiative to encourage everyone to check their blood pressure.

In this week's Somerset Public Health catch-up film, Clinton highlights the importance of checking your Blood Pressure. He visits Somerset Libraries where you can now loan a Blood Pressure monitoring kit, just like loaning a book.

Please [click here](#) to watch the video.

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

Enough

Stopping violence against women and girls

The Government has launched '[Enough](#)', a campaign that highlights what we can do to safely challenge the abuse of women and girls. Created in collaboration with victims, academics and organisations working on this issue, the campaign aims to challenge perpetrators and the harmful attitudes that exist in wider society.

[Abuse takes many forms](#) it can be emotional, physical, sexual or financial. It can be words or actions. It can be online or in person. At home or in the street. It can be inflicted by a partner, ex-partner, family member, colleague, friend or stranger.

Whatever form it takes, abuse should never be justified as 'an act of love' or dismissed as 'harmless fun'. Any behaviour that embarrasses, demeans, frightens or distresses someone is abuse. And it must stop. Knowing what abuse is helps us all recognise it when it happens. So, we can all do our bit to keep each other safe. Please share widely with your networks.

Avon and Somerset Police (ASP)

Motorists advised to plan ahead of motorway protests

Travel disruption is expected on Monday 4 July due to planned nationwide protests about the cost of fuel.

Motorists are advised to plan ahead with several key routes likely to be affected, including the M4 Severn Bridge between England and Wales in both directions, ahead of the morning rush-hour.

A slow-moving roadblock is also planned on the M5 between Bridgwater and the Almondsbury Interchange from about 8.30am, which is likely to head east towards Bristol via the M4 and M32. From there, there is a possibility the same protest could be carried out along the same route towards Somerset.

ASP expect the protests may also have a knock-on effect on other roads too as drivers seek alternative routes.

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

Rural Affairs Unit

Gamekeepers and the farming community are often those most affected by or are witness to rural crime. They provide the eyes and ears of the countryside and often suffer the consequences of rural crime. Hare coursing / poaching can lead to a number of animal welfare issues, serious loss of income from the illegal taking of game and the damage which many offenders carry out to farmland in the process of carrying out these crimes.

The importance of reporting

ASP urge members of the public to report any incidents of coursing / poaching by calling 999 if in progress or reporting via 101 or on-line after the event.

You can pass on Important Intelligence via 101 alternatively if you wish to remain anonymous you can call Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**.

Please do not approach those taking part in this activity but please try to obtain as much information as possible:

- Location (consider WHAT3WORDS)
- Vehicle involved (type/colour)
- How many person/s involved descriptions.
- Dogs / weapons involved.
- Photos /video evidence can be helpful.

PLEASE REMEMBER DO NOT PUT YOURSELF AT ANY RISK!

Please [click here](#) for further details on the Farm watch scheme, and how to join.

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

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