

Somerset West and Taunton

Newsletter to SWT Councillors and Parish Councils

Issue 114 Weeks ending 17/07/2022

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. Have your say on proposal to manage flood risk

Somerset West and Taunton Council has launched a public consultation on a proposal to create new flood defences between Firepool Lock and Obridge in Taunton.

The consultation is seeking views on the proposed scheme which will benefit 219 properties in the Priorswood and Crown Industrial Estates and Bathpool by preventing floodwater from the River Tone entering the Bridgwater and Taunton Canal, reducing the risk of floodwater overspilling into Maiden's Brook and Allen's Brook.

Plans to manage the flood risk from the River Tone and its complex network of tributaries were identified in the Taunton Strategic Flood Alleviation Improvements Scheme (TSFAIS) approved by SWT in February 2020.

The document sets out a number of improvements to reduce flood risks over the next 30-plus years.

Consultation on the proposal for Firepool Lock to Obridge started on Monday 11 July and runs until Sunday 7 August.

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.

- **Taunton Charter Trustees – Tuesday 19 July 2022**, in the JMR at 6pm. The agenda and report packs are available to view on the [website](#). Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Friday 15 July.
- **SWT Executive Committee – Wednesday 20 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 18 July.
- **SWT Phosphates Planning Sub-Committee – Thursday, 21 July 2022**, in the JMR at 10am. The agenda and report packs are available to view on the [website](#). Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Tuesday 19 July.
- **SWT Planning Committee – Thursday 21 July 2022**, in the JMR at 1pm. The agenda and report packs are available to view on the [website](#). Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Tuesday 19 July.
- **SWT Tenants Strategic Group – Monday 25 July 2022**, in the JMR at 6pm. The agenda and report packs are available to view on the [website](#).
- **SWT Standards Committee – Tuesday 26 July 2022**, in the JMR at 6.15pm.
- **SWT Community Scrutiny Committee – Wednesday 28 July**, in the JMR at 6.15pm. Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Monday 25 July.

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. Environmental improvements progress with Vivary Park works

A programme of environmental improvements to SWT Council's parks and open spaces has progressed with a catalogue of works completing in Taunton's Green Flag, award-winning Vivary Park.

As part of the 2022/23 agreed annual budget, SWT has invested in a programme of environmental enhancements for the benefit of its residents and visitors.

Taking place in Vivary Park, the latest work included resurfacing of the network of paths and widening of the walkways by the toilet block and sensory garden to increase accessibility and safeguard walking stick, wheel and pushchair users.

Further improvements included repairs to the boundary edging of the sensory garden; replacement of the posts surrounding the war memorial; newly erected information and location signage at the entrances; and repainting of the gates and fountain, the latter of which was serviced to include installation of a new pump.

Additional work to preserve the park's iconic band stand will commence later this year.

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

4. Climate e-Newsletter Issue 3 is now available

The Climate Change Team has published its latest 'Climate News' which gets sent to SWT residents and businesses who sign up to receive a copy.

The newsletter aims to showcase all the great work that is happening across SWT to achieve carbon-neutrality by 2030.

The July issue of the Climate e-Newsletter is available to view online [here](#).

Please [click here](#) if you wish to subscribe for further updates.

5. Get prepared for National Tree Planting Week 2022

SWT is once again offering Parish and Town Councils across the district **free trees** as part of its commitment to work towards carbon neutrality and climate resilience by 2030. With Tree Planting Season now over SWT is looking ahead to September when the new Season begins.

The scheme, to date, means SWT have provided nearly 400 free trees to Parish and Town Councils for planting, this year the hope is to plant even more; local councils can order trees, stakes, ties and guards which will be ready for collection in time for National Tree Week from 28 November to 5 December.

Councils can choose from a wider variety of bare root trees from last year to the value of £100 which will be delivered on the week commencing 19 November in a pre-arranged timeslot.

The scheme opens on 01 August, and you are invited to place your request ready for National Tree Planting Week.

If you have any queries or questions, please do not hesitate to contact the team via email at freetrees@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

6. Reminder - SWT Housing Newsletter – Summer 2022

The summer edition of housing news is now available and has been mailed out to households in recent weeks. 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.

7. Somerset Waste Partnership Services (SWP)

Put your waste out the night before due to heatwave!

Residents are asked to put their rubbish and recycling out the night before collection as waste crews across Somerset gear up for next week's extreme heat.

Crews could be starting collections as early as 5.30am to avoid the worst of the sweltering heat forecast for Monday and Tuesday (18 and 19 July).

Having boxes, bags and bins out the night before is the best way to make sure they are ready to go when the crews arrive.

SWP and SUEZ are also urging people to be extra patient and take extra care to sort recycling into the right containers to help hard-pressed crews.

Temperatures are forecast to hit more than 30 degrees Celsius at the start of the week, and crews will be ready with hats, sunscreen, and refillable water bottles.

With more than 70,000 collections to make each day, they are also being encouraged to take short breaks in the shade if needed.

On average, a recycling loader can walk up to ten miles on a round, collecting from hundreds of homes picking up nearly 1,000 boxes and bags.

Extreme heat makes that tough job even harder and that could mean some delayed collections.

SWP and its collections contractor SUEZ are asking for the public's patience and a little bit of help in the extreme conditions.

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

Welcome to the first Somerset Reuse Week

The first Somerset Reuse Week starts this Saturday (16 July), aiming to add reuse to the Somerset DNA. The SWP awareness week aims to promote reuse as an alternative to buying new, recycling or throwing away.

By reuse we mean using something again, either for its original purpose or for a new purpose. It's a step up the 'reduce, reuse, recycle' ladder – a step we want more people to take.

Reuse includes everything from donating to charity shops, using glass jars for storage, chopping the top off a pair of old wellies and making plant pots out of them, or just getting things repaired to prolong their life.

There are a host of activities planned for the week, including website info, a Facebook "Ask the experts" session, a special edition of the SORTED! e-newsletter, and a heavy schedule for the Fixy van.

Throughout the week we will also be encouraging people to tell us their reuse success stories for a chance of winning a 'repaired for reuse' laptop or tablet.

Whether it's a charity shop bargain, a beloved upcycling project, worn-out wellies turned into plant-pots, or a broken kettle fixed and boiling again – we want to hear about it.

Share your story - and a photograph – on the @somesetWaste Facebook page, the SWP Next Door page or email it to recycle@somesetwaste.gov.uk

You can start submitting from Saturday so get your thinking caps on now. At the end of Reuse Week, SWP will pick a winner at random.

Fixy activities also kick-off this Saturday when the Fixy van attends the Yeovil Ecofair (10am – 4pm).

During the week, it will be visit Chard (Tues 19 July), Ilminster (Thurs 21 July), Frome (Fri 22 July) and the Blackdown Hills (Sat 23 July).

At all events it will offer advice on repair and reuse, encourage volunteering and sign-post to the nearest Repair Cafes to get things fixed.

Thanks to Somerset-based DonatelT, Fixy will also run a "tech amnesty", taking donations of broken or unwanted smart tech including laptops, tablets, mobile phones, digital cameras and games consoles.

These will be repaired if possible and passed on to schools, community groups and people who need them, or recycled.

Please check somesetwaste.gov.uk/reuse-week for more details which will be updated before and during Reuse Week.

Proudly Supporting Pride

SWP and its collections contractor SUEZ are proud to be supporting this weekend's Taunton Live and Pride event.

Between them they will be providing recycling and rubbish bins for Saturday's extravaganza in Vivary Park and collecting them afterwards.

The 'in kind' sponsorship was a suggestion from SUEZ staff, and SWP is happy to get involved in the event which is expected to attract thousands of people.

The Taunton Live and Pride event runs from 12noon to 8pm on Saturday 16 July, starting with a parade through the town followed by music, workshops and exhibitions.

For more detail and tickets, visit tauntonpride.co.uk. For information about careers with SUEZ visit careers.suez.co.uk/vacancies.

Partner Engagement – Key messages from other Public Service Areas

Somerset County Council (SCC)

Support for Somerset households with food and energy bills

Somerset residents who are struggling to pay the bills could be eligible for support with the cost of food, energy, water, and other essentials over the coming months.

SCC has been allocated £3.8m to distribute before September 30 as part of the second round of funding provided through the Government's Household Support Fund.

Just over £1.2m will be used during the school holidays to provide food vouchers worth £10 a week to children eligible for Free School Meals and a further £1.3m will be used for one-off payments of £100 to residents on Pension Credit.

Another £1m will be made available for a range of urgent essentials including fuel, food, and white goods.

A total of £200,000 is put aside to help support people who can't access the internet or online vouchers.

Applications are means-tested and can be made by anyone in urgent need of financial support.

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

SCC Highway Maintenance Update

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

However, with the forecasted heatwave the teams' attention has turned to the possibility of the asphalt in the roads softening/melting. This would make the road surface unstable and potentially hazardous. SCC has prepared two 18 tonne gritters and loaded them with stone dust to spread on any melting/sticky roads as required.

The stone dust absorbs the soft bitumen and helps to stabilise the road.

If you spot any roads melting this week please don't hesitate to report it to SCC on www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem-on-the-road/ or call **0300 123 2224**

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

The surface dressing program has continued to schedule but will pause on the hottest days next week.

This week SCC Highways have successfully completed 148 Safety Defect repairs in the SWT Area (106 in Taunton and 42 in West Somerset).

Works for week commencing 18 July 2022 are: -

- **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**

- **Completed:** Drainage works at **Chilcombe Lane, Bicknoller**
- **Completed:** Drainage works at **Peacehay Lane, Sampford Arundel** (10-day temporary road closure, commenced Monday 27 June)
- **Completed:** Replacing post and rail fencing **Cothelstone Hill, Bishops Lydeard**
- **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.

Teams on standby to protect road surfaces in extreme heat

SCC's gritters will be mobilised to treat 'melting' road surfaces as the county prepares for extreme temperatures in the next few days.

With an Amber Weather Warning in place and temperatures set to hit 29C this weekend and climbing to 35C early next week, road temperatures could become high enough for the asphalt to soften and melt. This makes the road surface unstable and potentially hazardous.

SCC will be monitoring the situation carefully but if you spot a problem please call the contact centre immediately, or if it's at the weekend call 101 for Avon and Somerset Police and they will relay the location to the Highways teams.

You can reach the contact centre on **0300 1232224**.

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.

Temporary Road Closure

Parish of Corfe – Temporary closure of Honiton Road

[tro070134TD - B3170 Honiton Road, Corfe](#)

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; **Honiton Road - from the junction with The Ford to the junction with Adcombe Hill. A total distance of 415 metres**

This Order will enable Utility Services Ltd to replace poles on behalf of BT Openreach.

The works are expected to take place on **26 July 2022 between the hours of 9:30am - 3:30pm** for a total of 6 hours.

Exmoor National Park Authority (ENP)

Barlynch Priory – Open Afternoon

Wednesday 20 July 2pm-4pm

Explore the ruins and discover the history of Barlynch Priory, in a beautiful, wooded valley setting beside the River Exe near Dulverton. Founded 1174-89 and dissolved 1536, the remains of one building are still clearly visible, surrounded by a network of earthworks and historic buildings that help reveal the story of Barlynch Priory. There are self-guided and guided walks options available with leaflets and interpretation panels.

Access by kind permission of the owners. No booking required.

Directions: Beside the A396, one mile north of Helebridge near Dulverton TA22 9NG. SS92922890. What three words ///minimums.cheered.screening

Parking is available in the field adjacent to the Priory. The grounds are rough pasture, with mainly level walking. No dogs.

Donations to Caremoor for Exmoor

HM Coastguard Watchet

Take care near water during the heatwave

You won't have missed the fact the UK has a heatwave heading this way.

Together with partner agencies, [HM Coastguard Watchet](#) has been briefed to expect increased numbers of visitors to not only the coastline and beaches, but also inland water courses including rivers, lakes and reservoirs.

The Coastguard wish to remind anyone intending on entering the water at the coast;

- to check the tide times,
- not to take risks,
- go to lifeguarded beaches if intending to swim,
- and not to wade out across the mud or soft sand to reach the water on the [Bristol Channel](#).

The Coastguard would appeal to parents to know where your children are, especially if they are heading out with swimming gear intent on the dangerous practise of tombstoning or harbour jumping,

The same risks exist where many locals head inland to [Wimbleball Lake](#); the depth of water, and cold water which is not meant to be swam in, or jumping off the bridge which can lead to injury.

[South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust](#) is already overloaded, please don't add extra pressure to them when it is not necessary.

You may see increased patrols out including [Exmoor Search & Rescue Team](#) giving safety advice relating to the moors and inland waters.

In a coastal emergency dial 999 and ask for the Coastguard.

For inland water rescues dial 999 for the Fire Service [Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service](#)

And for lost / missing / injured persons on the hills of [Exmoor National Park](#) and Quantock Hills dial 999 and ask for the mountain rescue teams via the Police.

Please have an enjoyable but safe weekend during this lovely weather.

To Search, To Rescue, To Save

Minehead RNLI Lifeboat Station

Minehead Lifeboat Day – 23 July

Minehead's Lifeboat Day is coming and will feature lifesaving demonstrations, stalls and events for the whole family around the harbour. Please [click here](#) to watch a video and find out more about it!

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue (DSFRS)

Warning about high-risk wildfires

With the hot and dry weather continuing, the risk of wildfires is high. Please take care in the countryside with flames and cigarettes. Avoid BBQs and always take your litter home.

If you spot a fire, call 999 and use [what3words](#) to help the fire service locate the incident.

Community Support – What help is out there?

Voluntary and Community Sector Support

Somerset Community Foundation (SCF)

Somerset Fund Impact Report for 2021/22

Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) is proud to publish their annual impact report for The Somerset Fund, which matches donations by 50% thanks to [Somerset County Council](#). Donations are then awarded as grants to a host of small, local charities and community groups across the county, every year.

The report is full of stories from some of the 29 amazing groups supported by the Fund in 2021/22 who are changing lives and making communities stronger every day. SCF are hugely grateful to the wonderful donors for supporting the Fund and to all who shared their stories. SCF look forward to working together to make an even bigger difference over the next 12 months.

Please [click here](#) to read the report.

Somerset Activity Sports Partnership (SASP)

Bookings for Happy Healthy Holidays Somerset are now open!

Thousands of children who are eligible for free school meals are set to benefit from free fun activities and food during the upcoming summer holidays – thanks to the Happy Healthy Holidays Somerset (HHHS) project.

The initiative is part of the Government's Holiday, Activities and Food programme which has been designed to help tackle inequalities in holiday hunger, physical inactivity, and social isolation for children eligible for free school meals. Somerset County Council has teamed up with Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership (SASP) to deliver the programme across the county.

More than 60 venues across Somerset will be offering face-to-face provision during the summer holidays for children aged 5 to 16, with activities on offer including kayaking, sports, music workshops, and much, much more.

Eligible families receive a code through their school which allows them to book places for their children through an online portal. Bookings for the summer programme have been open since June 22 and have already seen a huge take up.

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.

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

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.

Health and Welfare

Keep yourself and others safe during hot weather

With hot weather forecast all this week Somerset County Council (SCC) is asking people to keep an eye out for themselves, vulnerable family and friends and neighbours.

Temperatures are expected to reach the mid-to-high twenties across much of Somerset and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has issued a Level 2 Heat Health Warning for the South West.

Information on the [common signs and symptoms](#) of heat exhaustion and heatstroke are available on [NHS.UK](#).

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

Healthy Start Vouchers

If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4, you may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk.

Check if you're eligible by applying today. If you're eligible, you'll be sent a Healthy Start card with money on it that you can use in some UK shops. Pre-payment will be uploaded onto this card every 4 weeks. You can use your card to buy:

- plain liquid cow's milk
- fresh, frozen, and tinned fruit and vegetables
- fresh, dried, and tinned pulses
- infant formula milk based on cow's milk

You can also use your card to collect:

- Healthy Start vitamins – these support you during pregnancy and breastfeeding
- Vitamin drops for babies and young children – these are suitable from birth to 4 years old

Information on how to apply for the scheme and for anyone who wants to check if they're eligible to apply can be found at www.healthystart.nhs.uk.

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.

Vaccinations

COVID-19 rates are rising across Somerset. If you are not up to date with your jabs you can still get one this summer to protect you for autumn and winter. There are several clinics open in July for walk-ins and appointments offering the Spring Booster and all other jabs.

[Bookings](#) can be made at a wide number of clinics across Somerset.

[Walk-in appointments](#) are additionally being offered at Tower Vaccination Centre in Taunton on specific days.

[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

A chat with Professor Sir Chris Whitty in West Somerset

Clinton chats to Professor Sir Chris Whitty who recently visited Somerset, at the invitation of Somerset County Council's (SCC) Public Health Team. SCC provided a West Somerset case study to the Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer, which focused on the Health and Wellbeing of Coastal Communities.

During his visit, he met a wide variety of people within Cannington, Minehead and Porlock. Clinton talks to Professor Whitty about the importance of checking your blood pressure, steps we can take to recover from the effects of COVID-19 and the Public Health work being done in West Somerset.

Please [click here](#) to view 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

Which? Consumer Rights

How to spot a text message scam

Messaging scams can be very convincing, so it's important to know what to watch out for to stay ahead of the fraudsters. Scammers are increasingly taking advantage of smartphones and are getting very clever with how they try to take your hard-earned money.

They can even make it look like a legitimate organisation is contacting you via text or a messaging app by using identity masking technology to change the name displayed as the sender. This is known as 'number spoofing'.

If you get sent a scam message, it's important you report it so others don't fall victim. Reporting a scam message is free and it will help stop the spread of these messages. Fraudsters can use many different types of messaging systems and apps, like SMS, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Viber, Skype, Google Hangouts, Snapchat and many other platforms to try scam you out of your money.

Please [click here](#) to find out how to report scams and warn others.

Spot a scam bank message

If you get a message purporting to be from your bank, always treat this with caution. And know the eight things your bank will never ask you.

Your bank should **never**:

- Ask for your Pin or internet banking password
- Send someone to your home to collect cards or banking information
- Ask you to email or text personal or banking information
- Email a link where you have to then input your internet banking details
- Ask you to authorise a funds transfer which you haven't requested
- Tell you to invest in diamonds, land or other commodities
- Ask you to carry out a test transaction
- Send you to a mobile app other than their own official app

How to avoid message scams

Here are a few tips to help you avoid message scams.

- **Don't follow any links**
This is the most effective way to avoid text scams. Links can take you to cloned websites designed to steal your money or personal data. Because

links are often shortened to help them fit into the message, it's not always easy to tell the real ones from the fakes. Clicking on links could also lead you to download malware - malicious software that can take over your phone and access your data.

- **Don't share personal information**
Treat all messages requesting sensitive information - or that link you to websites asking for personal details - with suspicion. Legitimate organisations will never text you to ask for your personal or banking details upfront.
- **Contact the organisation directly if you're unsure**
If you're not sure if a text is real, contact the company that claims to have sent it to check. Use the official contact details listed on the company's website or documents you might have been sent, if it's your bank then you can usually find its official number on the back of your credit or debit card.
- **Don't reply**
Replying to a fake text, calling the number it's been sent from or clicking through on suspicious links only lets the scammers know your number is being used. You might be bombarded with even more scam messages and calls. The number has likely been spoofed anyway, which means you'll probably only be messaging an innocent member of the public who has had their number stolen.
- **Report it**
You report the fake text by forwarding it to 7726 - a free reporting service provided by phone operators. This information is then shared with the police and intelligence agencies working to stop text scams. If you've fallen victim to a text scam, you can report it to [Action Fraud](#).

Avon and Somerset Police (ASP)

How to avoid getting hooked by phishing scams

ASP are urging people to remain vigilant when it comes to suspicious messages to protect themselves from scammers.

Known as phishing, text messages and emails impersonating well-known organisations remains a common tactic used by criminals. Whether it's a fake email asking for an individual to 'verify' bank details or a text message claiming they have been in contact with someone that has Covid-19, the goal is usually the same – to trick an individual into revealing personal and financial information.

Nationally, the most impersonated organisations in phishing emails reported last year were the NHS, HMRC and Gov.uk.

As of 31 May 2022, the public has made more than 12 million reports to the Suspicious Email Reporting Service (SERS), with the removal of approximately 83,000 scams and 153,000 malicious websites.

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

Update on Operation Scorpion

Last week ASP took part in [#OpScorpion](#) a week of intensification targeting drug related crime across the South West.

They carried out almost 700 acts of disruption across the week, resulting in:

- 17 arrests relating to drug offences
- 12 warrants in relation to properties and people linked to drugs supply
- 2 county lines disrupted
- 147 safeguarding checks to addresses of vulnerable people
- Additional patrols and preventative operations such as drug and weapon sweeps and taxi stops
- 45 educational visits to schools
- Several intelligence reports received from the public

But the work doesn't stop here. Help ASP by calling 101 if you have any information regarding drug crime in your neighbourhood, or report online.

You can make an anonymous report via CrimeStoppers by calling 0800 555 111.

[#NoPlaceForDrugs](#)

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

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.