

# Somerset West and Taunton

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

### **Issue 124 Weeks ending 09/10/2022**

#### **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. Taunton to have its own Town Council**

Taunton – Somerset's county town – will be represented by a new Town Council for the first time in 50 years.

The grass-roots council is due to come into being on 1 April next year – just as the new, unitary Somerset Council is launched.

Both Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT) and Somerset County Council (SCC) held special full council meetings to approve the creation of a new town council for Taunton and changes to local governance arrangements, marking the culmination of two years of intensive work, research and consultation.

The decisions mean a legal order will be made for a town council to represent Taunton - the centre of which was the only part of Somerset not to be parished as a result of local government reorganisation in 1974.

The commitment to a Town Council for Taunton was made in the business case for the new, unitary council in Somerset which recognised the need for Taunton to have a strong town voice when the role of city, town and parish councils becomes even more important.

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 SWT [Committee meetings](#). Here you can find the agendas and minutes of all meetings, as well as which Councillors sit on each Committee.

- **SWT Planning Committee – Thursday 13 October**, in the JMR at 1.00pm. Deadline for public questions or statements is 4pm on Tuesday 11 October 2022. The agenda and report packs are now available to view on the [website](#).
- **SWT Executive Committee – Wednesday 19 October**, in the JMR at 6.15pm. Deadline for public questions or statements is 4pm on Monday 17 October 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. Preparing a Place Plan for Wellington

SWT is preparing a Place Plan for Wellington to inform future decisions about the development, regeneration and conservation of the town.

The Place Plan will look at potential options for future growth to support housing and employment needs: retail and commercial function; transport systems; culture and heritage.

When adopted it will be a long-term strategy that will inform the future Somerset-wide Local Plan as we move to a new unitary authority in April 2023.

The Council has commissioned consultants Allies and Morrison, Avison Young, and LUC to prepare the Place Plan including a Vision, Spatial Framework, and Infrastructure and Implementation Plan.

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

## 4. Somerset Councils seek your views on trees

A consultation has been launched to help influence what Somerset's future landscapes will look like.

Opinions are being sought from experts and non-experts alike. From people who deal with trees in their work every day, to those who walk the dog in a woodland occasionally - and everyone else in between!

The consultation will inform a long-term Tree Strategy for Somerset to ensure planting and woodland management is fit for the future and supports the area's ecology, landscape and its people.

Residents and communities across Somerset are being asked to take part in the consultation process and to share the survey link as widely as possible  
- [Somerset Tree Consultation](#).

**The survey remains open until 21 October 2022 should take no more than 5-10 minutes to complete.**

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

## **5. SWT Climate News – Issue 6 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 Somerset West and Taunton to achieve carbon-neutrality by 2030.

View all editions of the SWT Climate Newsletter [here](#). Each new edition is circulated to all subscribers at the beginning of every month, and the August issue is available to read now

## **6. Reminder - Free Trees 2022**

SWT is delighted to be offering Parish, Town Councils and community groups free trees for National Tree Planting Week, 26 November to 4 December 2022. We are offering you the opportunity to order trees, stakes, ties, and guards to the value of £100.00 per organisation, free of charge.

You can choose bare root trees available in several varieties and these will be ready for collection only from our local nursery situated at Taunton Deane Nurseries, Stoke Road, Stoke St Mary, Taunton, TA3 5DG, week commencing 21 November 2022.

**The closing date for requests will be Thursday, 20 October 2022 at 6pm.**

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

## **7. Reminder - SWT Housing Newsletter Autumn 2022**

SWT Housing has produced the latest tenants' newsletter which is due to hit doormats soon. Approximately 6000 publications are being printed and will be distributed to all SWT tenants and leaseholders signposting readers to help and support. There has been a particular emphasis on the cost-of-living crisis and how tenants can access available services.

Please [click here](#) to read the latest newsletter on the website.

## 8. Reminder – - Royal Mail – Further Industrial Action planned

SWT has been made aware that Royal Mail is taking further strike action on **Thursday 13 and 20 October**, and **Tuesday 25 October**.

What this means for SWT and our customers:

- Incoming mail – there will be no deliveries during these dates.
- Outgoing mail – there will be no collections during these dates. The local Sorting Office will be closed. We are unable to dispatch our business mail via a Royal Mail post box. Therefore, **outgoing mail will be delayed**.
- Significant disruption should be expected, even once strike action has finished.

The advice from Royal Mail is to post your items as early as possible in advance of the strike dates. For more information regarding the Industrial Action please visit [Royal Mail strike updates | Royal Mail Group Ltd.](#)

## 9. Somerset Waste Partnership Services (SWP)

### Recycle sites on winter hours from 1 October

All of Somerset's 16 recycling sites went over to their winter opening hours with effect from Saturday 1 October.

This means that on their open days, sites are open 9am to 5pm. Weekend opening remains 9am to 4pm.

For more information about your local site, including opening schedules, details of charged materials, and van and trailer permits, click on recycling centres at [somersetwaste.gov.uk](http://somersetwaste.gov.uk).

### Where is Fixy this month?

Visit the Fixy reuse van to learn more about the growing efforts to help everyone repair electrical gadgets and other items.

Bring along and donate any broken or unwanted smart tech, such as laptops, tablets, smartphones, smart watches, digital cameras, game consoles, routers, hard drives, external disk drives, leads and chargers.

Any donations will be data-wiped and repaired as necessary by Somerset specialists DonateIT, and passed onto schools, community groups and families who need them.

And take the Fixy survey for a chance to win a refurbished laptop or tablet in our monthly free prize draw.

- **Saturday 15 October 9.30am-12noon – The Square, Wiveliscombe TA4 2JT.** Signposting to Wivey (Wiveliscombe) Repair Café at the Community Centre, West Street, Wiveliscombe, Taunton TA4 2JP.

- **Saturday 29 October 10am-12noon – Porlock Vale Repair Café, Wootton Courtenay Village Hall.**

If going to a repair café, just turn up (it helps to be early) to get your stuff checked over. Refreshments available and fixing donations appreciated.

Recycling is good, but repair and reuse is even better and Fixy is supporting the county's network of repair cafes and groups, with a focus on breathing new life into electricals and electronics.

Working electricals and electronics should always be passed on to others or donated to charity shops if they are no longer needed.

Broken items that cannot be repaired for reuse can be recycled from the kerbside as part of Recycle More collections. Items must be small enough to fit into a carrier bag (not a black sack) which should be left untied next to your other recycling.

For details of all Fixy events, more on reuse and news about Somerset's repair cafes, visit: [somersetwaste.gov.uk/share-and-repair](https://somersetwaste.gov.uk/share-and-repair).

## **New Somerset Council**

### **Latest news**

#### **Somerset Councils welcome new Chief Executive Officer**

Duncan Sharkey, the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Somerset County Council, arrived for his first day in the office this week (3 October 2022).

Duncan got straight to work, convening the most senior officers from Somerset's five councils, to focus on immediate actions needed to create a resilient new unitary council, which he will head, from 1 April next year.

Duncan joins from the unitary Windsor and Maidenhead Borough Council, where he has led the team since January 2019.

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

#### **Hundreds sign up to help shape council services**

More than 300 people have signed up to help shape the future of council services in Somerset.

From April 2023, Somerset's five councils will be replaced by the new unitary Somerset Council which will deliver all council services to all communities – from waste collection and adult social care to housing, benefits and parks.

A new Customer Panel has been established to ensure residents are at the heart of those services.

Since launching in August, more than 300 people have stepped forward – with members already providing valuable feedback on important work like the development of a new council brand.

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

## **Local Community Network (LCN) Consultation**

Local Community Networks (LCNs) will be part of the new Somerset Unitary Council, with formal power as 'Committees of the council', that listen to and are influenced by local communities.

LCNs bring Somerset Unitary Councillors and Officers together with key partners such as Town, City and Parish Councils, Health, Police, the Voluntary Sector and local groups,

The consultation on LCN boundaries went live on the 5 of September and will run for 6 weeks (**17 October**). In-person and online engagement events are taking place across the county.

- **Monday 10 October – 10am-4pm, West Somerset House, Killick Way, Williton, Somerset, TA4 4QA**
- **Tuesday 11 October, 1pm-2pm – ONLINE: For City, Town and Parish Councils.** Email the [LCN@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:LCN@somerset.gov.uk) for a Teams invitation.
- **Thursday 13 October, 7pm-8pm - ONLINE: For City, Town and Parish Councils.** Email the [LCN@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:LCN@somerset.gov.uk) for a Teams invitation.

The team will be consulting key stakeholders and the staff at all five councils, throughout the six-week period too.

The public consultation is about gathering views from the public and key stakeholders about how LCNs should develop and work in practice. It will explore how many LCNs the new Somerset Council will have, the role they will undertake and their name; exploring whether Local Community Networks is the right title for this Committee.

You can find out more information about the consultation [here](#).

## **City, Town and Parish Council Working Group – You are welcome to attend!**

Did you know that the LCN Team hold fortnightly catchups exclusively for Clerks and Chairs from across Somerset?

Meetings take place every other Wednesday on MS Teams at 10.30am until 11am.

Each session features an update on the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Programme, plus there's news about Local Community Networks (LCNs), occasional guest speakers, and a question-and-answer session.

LGR Programme Director, Alyn Jones, attends the Working Group, alongside colleagues from the LCN workstream.

Register today, and the LCN Team will send you the Teams invitation.

Simply drop an email to [LCN@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:LCN@somerset.gov.uk) with your name and contact details, placing 'C, T&PC Working Group' in the subject title.

The team understand the timing won't suit everyone all the time, so they will distribute the meeting minutes to you, once you are signed-up.

**The next C, T&PC Working Group is scheduled for 12 October 2022.**

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

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

#### **SCC Highways**

Reported defects are still low recently which has enabled the gangs to push the planned works forward, however, if you spot any issues on the roads 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/](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem-on-the-road/), or call **0300 123 2224**.

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.



## **A358 Taunton to Southfields Community Update Community Forum**

The invitations have now gone out for the next A358 Community Forum which will take place at Taunton Rugby Football Club, Veritas Park, Hyde Lane, Taunton TA2 8BU from **6.00pm on 19 October 2022**.

This meeting will update the community before the Development Consent Order (DCO) application is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. The main purpose of this meeting is to have an in-depth conversation about the DCO process and how you can become involved once the application is submitted, as the team are still working on the technical information at this stage.

Please [click here](#) to visit the website.

## **The Buses of Somerset Strike Action on Monday 10 October**

It is confirmed that 227 of the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport (RMT) members out of a staff of 650 operating Buses of Somerset and Cornwall by Kernow routes have voted to take industrial action following recent pay offer discussions.

Therefore, there is likely to be a very limited service (both network and Park and Ride) operating this coming **Monday 10 October**, with no guaranteed journeys. In light of this The Buses of Somerset advise that customers seek alternatives where possible.

With regards to School and College services, please keep check the [website](#) and Twitter pages for up-to-date information.

## **British Telecom and Openreach Updates on Industrial Action**

The Communications Workers Union (CWU) has called for more days of strike action against British Telecom (BT), which will take place on:

- Monday 10 October
- Thursday 20 October
- Monday 24 October

Those expected to walk out are largely BT Openreach engineers and call centre workers, but, unlike the previous actions in July and August – these strikes will also include BT Group's 999 emergency call handlers.

The impact of this strike action is being monitored closely by the Blue Light services, who are liaising with each other to gauge whether 999 calls are affected.

Anyone working from home who gets their Wi-Fi directly from BT, or from a provider that uses the Openreach network, should be aware that in the event of an issue, they are unlikely to receive any immediate technical support on a strike day.



## **Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA)**

### **Countdown to Exmoor Dark Skies Festival**

The thousands of stars and bright planets in the October sky will form the perfect backdrop for over fifty events during this year's Exmoor Dark Skies Festival. From sessions in a mobile planetarium at Dunster and Barnstaple, and space-themed painting activities for children at Lynmouth, to walking under the stars with an astronomy expert, there are events to appeal to all ages.

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

### **Exmoor Day Celebrations**

Exmoor Day is fast approaching. **October 19** marks an annual celebration of Exmoor, established as a means of showcasing the National Park's special and unique area. The 19 October is the anniversary of the area's designation as a National Park in 1954. Over recent years the date has become a particularly important online event for Visit Exmoor, the National Park Authority and the many businesses and residents that call Exmoor home.

To find out more about Exmoor Day 2022 and to watch a short film visit [www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/exmoor-day](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/exmoor-day).

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

### **Notice of Confirmation of a Path Diversion Order 2022**

#### **Public Bridleway WL18/49 (Part) – Parish of Old Cleeve**

On 30 September 2022, Exmoor National Park Authority confirmed the above order.

The effect of the order as confirmed is to divert part of public bridleway WL18/49 at Naked Boys Stone from a line running between points A-B to a line running between points C-D-B as shown on the order plan.

#### **Public Footpath WL17/2 (Part) & Public Footpath WL17/14 – Parish of Oare**

On 30 September 2022, Exmoor National Park Authority confirmed the above order.

The effect of the order as confirmed is to divert part of public footpath WL17/2 at Cloud Farm from a line running between points A-B-C-D-E-N-F-H-J to a line running between points A-K-B-C-J-D-E-M-N-P-H-S-T-U-J and to divert public footpath WL17/14 from a line running between points F-P-G to a line running between points N-Q-R as shown on the order plan.

Please [click here](#) to view the changes to the path network website.

## **Porlock Parish Council**

### **Require a clerk / Proper officer to the Council**

The appointment is initially for 35 hours per week (some home based) and the successful applicant will be responsible for all aspects of local government administration.

Previous experience of local government would be an advantage. There is also an expectation that the applicant would be willing to work towards gaining their CiLCA qualification (Certificate in Local Council Administration).

For job specification and application form please contact by email: [clerk@porlockparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@porlockparishcouncil.gov.uk). More information can be obtained from the Porlock Parish Council [website](#).

## **Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue (DSFRS)**

### **Have you say**

DSFRS provide 83 fire stations and employ almost 2,000 staff, helping to keep the 1.8 million people who live here safe. They also protect 820,000 households, 74,000 businesses and a further 1.1 million visitors a year. On average, they attend about 15,700 incidents every year and provide home safety advice to more than 18,000 households. Incidents include flooding, road traffic collisions, fires and other emergencies.

Each year, DSFRS ask communities about the amount of council tax they receive as your fire and rescue service.

Whilst they are aware of the pressures many of us are facing now and in the coming months, your feedback will help them to make more informed decisions for the next financial year.

You can tell DSFRS what you think by completing the [online survey](#) which closes on **30 November at 12 noon**.

## **Maritime and Coastguard Agency**

### **Be weather ready**

Tides are dangerous and can catch anyone out – please check the tide times before travelling to our coasts.

They are a natural part of the everyday rhythm of life, but they can be extremely dangerous if you take your eye off them. Tides and currents can put people in danger, but by understanding nature's ebb and flow, it's easier to stay safe while you're enjoying that fresh sea air. People get caught out by tides and currents on a daily basis and already this year the coastguard has sent help to many callers who have been in difficulty.

Avoid the call. Be [#WeatherReady](#) - check tide times and the weather forecast from the [Met Office](#).

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

### **Somerset Community Foundation (SCF)**

#### **Somerset Cost of Living Crisis Appeal**

The Somerset Cost-of-Living Crisis Appeal, run by SCF, has raised over £100,000 since its launch just over a month ago.

The appeal is raising money to fund local charities and community organisations supporting those in most urgent need during the cost-of-living crisis. Donations have come from local individuals, charitable trusts and businesses, including £50,000 from Somerset County Council.

The charity is now offering grants to local charities with the funds raised to date and has launched the Warm Somerset Spaces Fund. Charities and community groups across the county offering 'warm spaces' to people experiencing fuel poverty this winter are invited to apply for a grant of up to £1,000. Grants will help fund dozens of community spaces to stay open longer over the winter months, helping to keep vulnerable people warm, safe and well. Funding will be awarded weekly to help charities respond rapidly to the cost-of-living crisis.

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

### **Wessex Water Foundation Community Fund**

SCF is proud to be working alongside [Wessex Water](#) Foundation to help deliver the Community Fund.

This fund aims to support community-based activities or projects that meet a local need and seek to improve the lives of local people who are most in need of support.

Grants are available up to £3,000 for a project/activity covering a period of up to 12 months. **The closing date for applications is 24 October 2022.**

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

### **Somerset Prepared Partnership**

#### **Community Resilience Day**

**West Monkton Village Hall**

**13 October, 10:00am – 4.00pm**

The last two years have shown us all how important our community emergency volunteers are. Quietly working away, these individuals and groups are helping to keep our Somerset communities safe, no matter what life throws our way.

That's why the Somerset Prepared partnership is returning once again this year for a face-to-face event, where communities can come together to share knowledge, hear inspiring speakers, and participate in hands-on workshops. We can't stop emergencies from happening, but we can do a great deal to plan and prepare for

when they occur. As we face issues such as climate change, emergency preparedness is more important than ever.

The event will also host the award ceremony for the inaugural Somerset Prepared Community Resilience Award, which recognises individuals or groups that have gone above and beyond to help their community to be better able to deal with emergencies.

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

## **Somerset Community Food**

### **Somerset Food Conference**

**Saturday 22 October at 10:00am**

**Elim Connect Centre, Wells BA5 2BE**

This is a free event for those involved in food and growing projects across Somerset, e.g., community gardens, food banks, pantries and fridges, community cooking clubs etc. We are working in challenging and changing times, by joining together we can share good ideas, and support each other to keep going and sustain what we do.

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

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

### **Getting outside Photo Competition 2022 and Calendar 2023**

The Photo Competition that will eventually result in next year's Getting Outside in Somerset Calendar is now open! Entry is open to all, pictures taken on your walks with smartphones are perfect and photos taken earlier in the year are welcome. The only rules are:

- Photos must feature Somerset and its outdoor environment
- The photo must be yours
- Any person identifiable in the photo must have given permission for its entry and possible publication.

Happy snapping, and most importantly enjoy your walks and encourage others to come with you!

Deadline for entries: Midnight Sunday 20 November.

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

## **Somerset Skills and Learning (SS&L)**

### **Learning for your communities**

SS&L are trying to support communities in Somerset grow, learn, develop, improve and live better lives. Somerset skills and learning have a diverse range of courses and workshops from health and wellbeing to maths, English, languages, arts and crafts, neurodiversity, employability and much more which they know all have a positive impact on individuals and communities.

People can gain confidence, enjoy learning, learn new skills, meet others, develop personal skills, gain employability skills etc.

Please do share and recommend SS&L community learning. The team area also interested to work directly with you, to arrange bespoke learning for groups that you or your organisations support. More information can be found here at [www.sslcourses.co.uk](http://www.sslcourses.co.uk)

A new free magazine has been launched which will be issued three times a year. More information about this can be found [here](#).

## **Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)**

### **Want to be an award-winning business?**

Entries are open for the free FSB Celebrating Small Business Awards 2023. Whether you're an innovative start-up, a forward-thinking sustainable business, or running a successful larger small business, the FSB want to hear from you!

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

## **Health and Welfare**

### **SCC Public Health**

#### **World Mental Health Day – 10 October**

This year, the theme is 'Make Mental Health & Well-Being for All a Global Priority' - for more information about this theme, visit: [World Federation for Mental Health website](#)

World Mental Health Day is a chance to talk about mental health in general, how we need to look after it, and how important it is to talk about things and get help if you are struggling.

#### **Blood pressure checks**

Half of all adults with high blood pressure don't know they have it - that's why it's so important to check regularly. It is a major risk factor for Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) and significantly increases the risk of having a heart attack or stroke, but early detection and treatment can help people live longer, healthier lives.

More than two hundred blood pressure monitor kits are available for loan from libraries in the county to raise awareness of high blood pressure.

The blood pressure monitor kits include an information leaflet that explains how to check your blood pressure at home and what to do with the results – measuring blood pressure at home can be very useful to give a more accurate picture of what a person's blood pressure is like. The monitors can also detect an irregular heartbeat which is another risk for CVD.

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

## Preparing for Winter

This Autumn and Winter we expect to see both flu and Covid viruses circulating. With the UK experiencing its first flu season since 2019, the population will have less immunity than previous flu seasons. Preparations for the potential impact of this on the population's health and well-being, centre on vaccination for both flu and COVID-19, targeted to at risk groups.

The best way to protect ourselves our friends and our families, is by taking up all the vaccinations that we are eligible for.

## Vaccinations

### COVID-19

The COVID-19 Autumn Booster vaccination programme started on the 5 September and all clinics are likely to become very busy. If you have yet to have your 1st, 2nd or initial booster, please consider getting it now.

[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](#).

### Influenza

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) have widened the offer of the [free flu vaccine](#) to more eligible groups.

These additional groups will only be eligible once the most vulnerable, including previously announced pre-school and primary school children, those aged 65 years and over and those in clinical risk groups, have been offered the jab.

The additional groups set to be offered the free flu vaccine in England will be:

- all adults aged 50 to 64 years (including those who turn 50 by 31 March 2023)
- secondary school children in years 7, 8 and 9, who will be offered the vaccine in order of school year (starting with the youngest first)

[If you're eligible for a free flu vaccine](#), you can book an appointment at your GP surgery or a pharmacy that offers it on the NHS. You may also get an invitation to get the vaccine, but you do not have to wait for this before booking an appointment. Everyone who is eligible for the free flu vaccine will be able to get it. If you have an appointment for a Covid-19 booster vaccine at a GP surgery or pharmacy, you may also be offered a flu vaccine at the same time.

Do not delay booking your flu vaccine appointment so that you can get both vaccines together. Only some people will be offered both vaccines at the same time.

## **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.

### **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**

### **Avon and Somerset Police (ASP)**

#### **Detectives renew appeal for information as search for missing Freddy continues**

Detectives investigating the disappearance of a teenager who's been missing from his Somerset home for more than two weeks are making a further appeal for information.

Freddy left the family farm in Stolford at 10am on Tuesday 20 September and has not been seen since.



More than 100 police officers and staff have been involved in the inquiry to find the 17-year-old with the support of partner agencies including His Majesty's Coastguard the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and BARB Search and Rescue.

Specialist police search advisors are coordinating the efforts with numerous police resources, including the helicopter, drone unit and specialist search dogs being utilised.

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

### **Appeal after driver injured in A38 collision**

Did you witness a road traffic collision on the A38 near Wellington last week?

A silver Toyota Yaris was involved in a collision in Nowers Lane at about 8.15pm on Friday 30 September.

The driver, a man in his 50s, was taken to hospital where he remains in a critical, but stable, condition.

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

### **Police successfully obtain closure order after antisocial behaviour in Taunton**

Police have acted upon concerns of people in Taunton about antisocial behaviour by obtaining a three-month closure order.

A temporary three-month closure order for the area between Chritchard Way and Priory Avenue was granted by magistrates on Thursday 22 September.

Issues, including drug offences, antisocial behaviour and noise, have been reported to authorities and led to Avon and Somerset Police working with Somerset West and Taunton Council to seek a resolution through the courts to prevent further encampments.

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

### **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).