

# Somerset West and Taunton

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

### **Issue 128 Weeks ending 06/11/2022**

#### **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. Councils pay tribute to Cllr Anthony Trollope-Bellew**

SWT Council has led tributes to Councillor Anthony Trollope-Bellew who died suddenly on Friday 28 October.

Cllr Trollope-Bellew served the South Quantock ward and also represented SWT on the Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee and the Joint Scrutiny Panel of the Somerset Waste Board.

Prior to the formation of SWT in 2019, he represented the Crowcombe and Stogumber ward at West Somerset District Council where he was a long-serving member and leader from 2015-2019.

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 Audit and Governance Committee – Monday 7 November** at 6.15pm in the JMR. This is a special meeting to deal with the Statement of

Accounts. The agenda and report packs are available to view on the [website](#). The deadline for public questions or statements is 4pm on Thursday 3 November.

- **SWT Planning Committee – Thursday 10 November** at 1.00pm in the JMR. The agenda and report packs are available to view on the [website](#). The deadline for public questions or statements is 4pm on Tuesday 8 November.
- **SWT Executive – Wednesday 16 November** at 6.15pm in the JMR. The deadline for public questions or statements is 4pm on Monday 14 November.

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 - SWT celebrates opening of Coal Orchard**

SWT will mark the official opening of its multi-million-pound Coal Orchard regeneration with celebrations bringing together local businesses and organisations.

The town centre development of riverside living, retail, working and leisure space will be declared open at **11am on Saturday 5 November** by the Mayor of Taunton, Cllr Sue Lees; the Chair of SWT, Cllr Hazel Prior-Sankey; and the Leader of SWT, Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts.

Members of the public will have a chance to join in the launch and see the development which incorporates a grand plaza with a stepped terrace to make the most of its position on the river Tone.

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

### **4. Drainage works to begin at Firepool**

Drainage work opening up SWT's flagship Firepool site for redevelopment is set to begin following the appointment of contractors [Montel Civil Engineering](#).

Montel are due to commence site clearance and preparation on Monday (7 November) ready for Phase 1 of the drainage work.

The enabling works will include removal of existing obstructions above and below ground, and construction of new sewer networks and surface water infrastructure together with groundworks to lift the bulk of the site out of the flood plain protecting future development.

SWT's planning committee approved an application for the vital infrastructure work earlier this year, along with an initial programme of development which will include conversion and extension of the old GWR goods office to a restaurant; and construction of a four-storey office building with commercial space, rentable office spaces and a café or shop.

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

## **5. Cost of living support events comes to West Somerset**

SWT's [Community Employment Hubs](#) service has once again teamed up with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to hold another cost-of-living support event for residents, this time in West Somerset.

The free event will be held between 11am and 3.30pm on **Tuesday, 8 November**, at SWT's Council Chamber, [West Somerset House](#), Killick Way, Williton, TA4 4QA.

Anyone concerned about the current cost-of-living crisis is welcome to attend this one-stop-shop for comprehensive support and advice, and to ask face-to-face questions from a range of organisations that will be present.

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

## **6. SWT Tenancy Drop-in Surgeries Restarting**

Tenant Case Manager Surgeries are returning so that SWT tenants can talk to their Case Manager directly about any concerns they have with their council house or tenancy.

Drop-in surgeries will be held: -

- every 2nd and 4th Tuesday, starting **8 November in the Priorswood Community Centre** TA2 7JW (10.00am-12.00pm) and
- **Wellington Town Council offices** TA21 8AQ (2.00-4.00pm)
- and every 2nd and 4th Wednesday, starting **9 November in the Halcon Link Centre** TA1 2DD (10.00am-12.00pm).

A detailed list of dates, times and venues can be found [here on the SWT website](#).

## **7. Mayor to lead Taunton's Remembrance events**

The Mayor of Taunton, Councillor Sue Lees, will lead a programme of events to mark this year's annual observation of Remembrance.

Remembrance commemorations are observed annually to honour the contribution of British and Commonwealth military and civilian servicemen and women involved in the two World Wars, and in later conflicts.

The events will begin with the Dedication of the Field of Remembrance on **Thursday, 10 November**. This short service will take place from 10.50am in [Taunton Minster](#) churchyard, St Mary Magdalene Church.

On **Friday, 11 November**, the Mayor will lead a two-minute silence in Taunton town centre from 10.55am for Armistice Day. The two-minute silent pause of remembrance is observed at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month to mark the end of the First World War.

**On Remembrance Sunday, 13 November**, a service led by Revd Tobie Osmond (Taunton Minster), Revd Simon D'Albertanson (40 Commando Padre) and the Rt Revd Dr Michael Beasley (Bishop of Bath and Wells) will be held at Taunton Minster from 9.30am, which will also be livestreamed via the Minster's [Facebook page](#).

Temporary road closures will be in place throughout the commemorations.

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

## **8. Reminder - Future-proofing Firepool**

SWT has made significant progress at Firepool this year after its planning committee approved applications for vital infrastructure work along with an initial programme of development.

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

## **9. Reminder - Somerset West Lottery Christmas 2022 bolt-on prize**

The Somerset West Lottery is now running the Christmas 2022 bolt-on prize draw.

Anyone purchasing one or more tickets between Monday, 1 November and Saturday, 17 December, could win a £1,000 voucher to spend at [John Lewis](#), courtesy of external lottery management company [Gatherwell](#).

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

## **10. Somerset Waste Partnership Services (SWP)**

### **Simple steps to stay safe and stop a bin blaze!**

Organised bonfires and firework displays are far safer than household events, but if you are holding your own party, simple steps will cut the risks and prevent a later bin blaze that could threaten your home and family.

Caution is vital for bonfires and fireworks to help noise-nervy pets and shelter-seeking wildlife, and to stop that a highly dangerous bin blaze:

- Have a hose and buckets of water handy
- Drench or allow embers and ash to completely cool
- Soak fully spent fireworks then add them to your rubbish bin
- Soak misfired fireworks overnight. Ask maker or supplier for guidance

- No sky lanterns due to the fire risk and danger to wildlife

A bonfire night event is a great excuse to use up leftovers and turn any pumpkin flesh into warming soup, savoury snacks, and great cakes.

More SWP advice about bins, waste and fire risks, from batteries to:

<https://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/slider/binblaze/>

## **New Somerset Council**

### **Latest news**

#### **Have your say on arts and culture strategy for Somerset**

The five Councils across Somerset are working together to create a Somerset Cultural Strategy which will help to raise the profile of Somerset as a cultural destination and embed arts and culture within the council's services. As part of this work, a new consultation is taking place which gives people the chance to have their say in what they would like to see happening in their area.

The new, unitary Somerset Council comes into being from 1 April 2023, providing all the services currently delivered by Somerset County Council and the four district councils – South Somerset, Mendip, Sedgemoor, and Somerset West and Taunton. The Somerset Cultural Strategy is being created to present a vision for the role of culture in the county and the communities the council will serve.

As part of the work, the partners involved in the strategy want to understand perceptions of arts and culture in Somerset currently and what people would like to see happening in their area. A survey has been launched to learn more and how Somerset can be promoted to visitors as a cultural destination.

The survey – that should take about five minutes to complete can be found here: <https://consultation.southsomerset.gov.uk/arts-entertainment/somerset-cultural-strategy/>

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

#### **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.

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

### Somerset County Council (SCC)

#### SCC Highways maintenance update

Work has continued well on the major schemes this week such as the resurfacing of the A38 Wellington Rd at Compass Hill, in Taunton which is now complete except for minor snagging work. The SCC Highways team thank you for your patience and forbearance during these essential works.

The SCC contractors' gangs have successfully completed works to repair 176 Safety Defects this week with 132 in the Taunton Area and 44 in the West Somerset Area.

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.

The following is a list of SCC works in the SWT area starting week commencing 7 November 2022:

#### Monday 7 November

- **Fouracres Close, Taunton** – 1 day – signing works.
- **Washford Cross to Smithyard Cottage, Williton** – 1 day – additional jetting and CCTV survey works.
- **Beulah Chapel to Withiel Hill, Brompton Regis** – 5 days – existing grip clearance.

#### Tuesday 8 November

- **Lodes Lane, Kingston St Mary** – 3 days - x4 concrete grips and new chamber install.
- **Calway Road, Taunton** – 2 days – signing works.

#### Wednesday 9 November

- **Toneway, Taunton** – 3 days - New Western Power Distribution cable to be laid due to a fault detected.

#### Thursday 10 November

- **Bishops Fox Drive, Taunton** – 1 day – signing works.

- **Vinnicombe Straight, Exton** – 4 days – Reshape grips

#### **Friday 11 November**

- **Doniford Road, Williton** – 1 day – Replacement x3 streetlights.
- **Harp Chase, Taunton** – 1 day – Signing Works
- **Washford Cross to Smithyard Cottage, Williton** – 1 day – Jetting works continued. Unable to access on concurrent days.

### **Reporting a problem on the road**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Temporary Road Closures**

#### **[ttro994597TD](#) - Honiton Road, Taunton**

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 - 331 metres southwards from the junction with Gatchell Meadow for a total distance of 16 metres.**

The works are expected to commence on **6 November 2022** and last for **9 hours (8:00am - 5:00pm)** to enable **Jurassic Fibre to carry out works to install a duct.**

The contractor has indicated that access for Emergency Services through the site is **permitted** on this occasion.

Please [click here](#) to view the map, and alternative routes.

### **Great Western Railway (GWR)**

#### **Updates on Industrial Action**

The RMT, TSSA and Unite trades unions have announced industrial action at Network Rail and several train operators, including GWR.

Industrial action will take place on **Saturday 5, Monday 7 and Wednesday 9 November**. This means services will be severely disrupted from Saturday 5 November up to and including Wednesday 9 November.

On strike days train services will be severely disrupted and some parts of the GWR network will have no service at all. Where trains are running, it will be an extremely limited service, operating from 7:30am with all journeys having to be completed before 6.30pm.

Train services on the days following the industrial action will also be disrupted.

Where services do run, they are expected to be extremely busy and GWR will not be able to provide bus replacement services. Online journey planners will be updated with the latest information as soon as possible.

Passengers are advised to find alternative ways to travel on those days. Only travel by train if absolutely necessary.

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

## **Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA) Inspirational stargazing during Exmoor Festival**

The dark skies above Exmoor remained cloud free and starlit for most events in the sixth Exmoor Dark Skies Festival which finished last weekend. The October festival attracted well over 2000 participants from all over the country who come to explore the night sky under some of the UK's least light-polluted skies.

Details of stargazing activities and events on Exmoor can be seen at [www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/stargazing](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/stargazing).

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

## **Young chefs excel after Exmoor competition and new film launched**

The top winners of the Exmoor Young Chef 2022 competition, captured in a new film released this week, have joined top professional chefs at high profile foodie events and are on course for a fine career in hospitality. In July, Perran Clark and Nathan Reardon, both 16 years old, impressed the judges with their three-course menus prepared under strict competition rules at West Somerset College, Minehead.

Hosted by Exmoor National Park Authority in collaboration with Butlins Minehead and the Rotary club with support from Visit Exmoor. The competition and this film aim to showcase the abundance of quality locally sourced food grown from Exmoor's inspiring landscapes and the opportunities hospitality can provide young people with for a rewarding and creative career on Exmoor.

The [Exmoor Young Chef film](#), which will be distributed to schools and colleges in the coming week, can be viewed at [www.visit-exmoor.co.uk/business-hub/centre-of-](http://www.visit-exmoor.co.uk/business-hub/centre-of-)

[excellence](#) alongside details and the option to register interest in future Exmoor Young Chef competitions and careers' opportunities.

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

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

### **Don't play with fire: your guide to a safer bonfire night**

The safest way to enjoy bonfire night is to attend an organised display. Home bonfires and fireworks can cause incidents and injury which can put pressure on the emergency services.

It's much safer and more controlled to attend an organised fireworks display. Most people's gardens are not suitable or big enough for fireworks or bonfires.

If you must have an event in your garden, read the [DSFRS safety advice](#). Store fireworks safely and keep fires and fireworks well away from anything that could burn, such as sheds, fences and your home. Keep a bucket of water or hose nearby, and never leave anything unattended.

Let your neighbours know about your plans if you're having a bonfire or fireworks, so they don't think it's an emergency and call the fire service unnecessarily.

Let the fire service know about your bonfire. Most of the incidents the fire service attend on bonfire night are false alarms. Please call the non-emergency number on **0333 399 0014**. This is so the DSFRS can avoid sending out fire-fighters to controlled bonfires where they are not needed.

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

## **Environment Agency**

### **Beware of bonfire bandits and don't burn waste**

Guy Fawkes' Night is a calendar highlight. But if you're going to celebrate it, go to an organised event rather than risk being a "bonfire bandit".

As well as the safety risks caused by bonfires, they have an impact on the climate and, if the wrong materials are burned, can harm wildlife, the environment and human health.

The only materials that should be used in bonfires are dry, untreated and unpainted wood, along with small amounts of paper or cardboard. Using wet wood creates smoke which can spread and cause a nuisance to neighbours, and bonfires can quickly get out of control if not properly managed.

If you are intending to have a bonfire at home, don't use it to dispose of household waste, such as plastic, rubber, glass, oils or metal. These materials could cause a pollution risk to water, air, soil, plants, animals or the countryside and should be disposed of through recycling or household waste collections or at council recycling centres. Always check the bonfire for hedgehogs and other wildlife before setting

light to it and don't allow anyone else to add materials to your bonfire, other than clean, dry, untreated wood.

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

## **HM Coastguard Watchet Inland Flood Rescue**

Did you know HM Coastguard are trained in inland flood rescue?

Last Friday Coastguards were training with other search and rescue teams and emergency services at the [Cardiff International White Water](#) Centre, where they undertook a series of exercises and training in the swift water created by this man made course.

Organised by [Avon and Somerset Police](#) , HM Coastguard Rescue Officers worked alongside [Exmoor Search & Rescue Team](#), [Avon & Somerset Search and Rescue](#), [Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service](#), [Avon Fire & Rescue Service](#), [South Western Ambulance Service](#), [NHS Foundation Trust](#), [BARB Search & Rescue](#) and [Burnham-on-Sea hovercraft](#).

Working together the rescuers are preparing for the winter rain and storms in the Avon and Somerset area. HM Coastguard would send flood rescue teams from across the UK depending on the scale of any incident, as would the other services and teams who would be deployed outside of the area.

Please [click here](#) to see photographs of this training event.

## **Community Support – What help is out there? Voluntary and Community Sector Support Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) Festive Fund for Somerset**

The festive season can be difficult for some, and this year many of our neighbours are facing extremely tough times ahead. Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) want to support groups that can help to reduce loneliness and spread warmth and cheer through food and activities around the festive period with grants of up to £400.

You will need to think about how you can safely prepare and deliver food and gifts or think creatively about how you can bring people together to create happy festive memories. Your work can support people of all ages who may experience loneliness or disadvantage.

The money can be used towards the cost of providing food and/or activities for isolated people between December and January.

**Please apply before Friday 18 November.**

Please [click here](#) to find out more about the Festive Fund.

## Community Council for Somerset (CCS)

### Talking Cafés Live

Coming up on November's Talking Cafe live-streamed sessions: -

- **9 November** - Move More Together with [Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership - SASP](#).
- **16 November** - Interfaith Week - celebrating Somerset's Faith communities with [Somerset Diverse Communities](#).
- **23 November** - Reduce Week with [Somerset Waste Partnership](#).
- **30 November** - [NHS Somerset](#) Flu Vaccinations in Somerset - everything you need to know.

Please [click here](#) to watch LIVE every Wednesday at 1pm and ask questions in the comments for instant answers.

Want to take part and SHOUT about the organisation or community project you are passionate about? Contact [hannah@somersetccc.org.uk](mailto:hannah@somersetccc.org.uk) or message the Talking Cafe page.

Don't forget you can search for previous live recordings by subject here: <https://somersetagents.org/talking-cafe-live/> . Just select the topic that interests you from the drop-down menu.

### Somerset Diverse Communities – Family Fun Tree Planting Days Tree Planting Family Fun Day!

**Saturday 19 November, 11.00am – 4.00pm.**

Somerset Diverse Communities have extended the booking deadline to secure your space for a FREE family fun day planting trees.

If you and your family want to spend the day getting your hands dirty and learning about tree planting, then you have until 10 November to secure your place.

Sponsored by Exmoor coast project, part of the National Trust, come along and spend the day planting samplings.

- Dress appropriately for a day of work on a farm.
- Lunch will be supplied from Selworthy Pantry as a thank-you for your planting day.

If you need support with transport, collection can be arranged from some central locations across the county. Make sure you complete the booking form and supply your postcode.

Please [click here](#) for more information.

### Community Buildings - Become a warm space this winter!

If your facility or group would like to host a warm space for anyone who will struggle to keep their heating on this Winter. Please [click here](#) to view the new Warm Spaces funding list.

## **Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE)**

### **Urgent Energy advice for village halls this winter**

The current energy crisis is having a profound impact on many individuals and organisations in society. Many people are unfortunately at risk of finding themselves in fuel poverty this winter. In this context, ACRE is committed to helping village halls stay open for the benefit of their local community as they are often the only place in rural areas where people can socialise and stay warm.

Please [click here](#) to read the Utility Aid Briefing.

## **Clinton's Public Health Catch Up**

### **Staying warm this winter**

In this week's video, Clinton Rogers looks ahead to how we can stay warm this Winter. He speaks to Kate Thomas from the Centre for Sustainable Energy about the support they offer, including giving advice and offering grants to those who need to make changes to their homes. Clinton also hears from Public Health Consultant, Alice Munro about the health dangers that cold weather brings, and why it is so important for people to stay warm during the winter months. He also visits St George's Church in Taunton to hear about how they are providing a warm space within their local community.

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

## **Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE)**

### **Safe and Warm Somerset**

Everyone deserves a home which is warm, comfortable and affordable to heat. Safe and Warm Somerset supports anyone in Somerset who may need help with energy bills or keeping warm at home.

If you live in Somerset and any of the following apply to you, the CSE can help with free, impartial advice and support:

- Struggling with energy bills.
- A cold home.
- Broken heating system or boiler.
- Damp and mould in the home.
- Unsure about how to use your heating system.
- No gas central heating and high electricity bills.

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

## **Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM)**

### **A Coastal Communities Multi-Disadvantage Group**

#### **The End of the Line? – Online Event**

**Tuesday 15 November 2022 (12:30pm-3.30pm)**

Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) is a coalition of national charities – Clinks, Homeless Link, Mind and associate member Collective Voice. Together MEAM represents over 1,300 frontline organisations across England.

A core group of MEAM and Fulfilling Lives Leads from coastal communities have been meeting to discuss how the lives of people with multiple disadvantage are further impacted by the interconnected and often overlooked issues their communities face. Often located at 'the end of the line', these communities share commonalities, such as:

- Seasonal leisure and industry pressures that affect service provisions and the system
- Deprivation and health inequalities
- Accommodation challenges, particularly around bedsits/houses of multiple occupancy (HMOs)
- Low rates of unemployment and limited job opportunities
- Community safety issues such as crime, gang-related activity and county lines.

Please [click here](#) to go to the Eventbrite page and reserve a space.

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

### **Getting outside photo competition 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.

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

## **Spark**

### **Call out for festive volunteering opportunities**

It may seem a bit early to talk about Christmas, but the season of good will is just around the corner and Spark have already been approached by people looking for opportunities to volunteer on and around the big day.

So, if you have any suitable roles, be sure to advertise them on Spark's volunteering website, [Spark a Change](#). As the saying goes, volunteering is not just for Christmas. Once your new volunteer realises how good it feels, they might just make it a life-long habit!

Please [click here](#) or email [info@sparkachange.org.uk](mailto:info@sparkachange.org.uk) to get started.

## **Health and Welfare**

### **SCC Public Health**

#### **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.

## **Winter Readiness Webinar**

**Thursday 10 November between 11.00am – 12.30pm**

SCC are holding an online 'Winter Readiness' webinar for health and care professionals, paid and unpaid carers and volunteers working with people and communities who may be more vulnerable this winter. The event will give an overview of who is more vulnerable in winter and how to signpost to the range of support available in Somerset, with a view to helping communities stay well in the context of rising costs this winter.

This online event will give you an overview of who is more vulnerable this winter and how to signpost to the range of support available in Somerset.

Learn more about:

- Keeping warm – places and help available to keep warm this winter
- Keeping well – immunisations and emotional wellbeing and support
- Financial wellness – how to manage finances when costs are rising
- Essentials – support with food and other essentials
- Planning for cold and extreme weather.

Please [click here](#) to register for this free event.

## **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**

People aged 50 and over are now able to book their autumn booster and flu vaccines, as the NHS Covid-19 and flu programmes continue to protect the country ahead of winter. Appointments are available to people aged 50 and over, pregnant women, clinically vulnerable / immunosuppressed individuals, health and social care workers and paid and unpaid carers.

Anyone who falls into these groups are able to book now [online](#) or by calling 119. Calls to 119 are **free** from mobiles and landlines. 119 provides support in 200 languages.

Please look out for older relatives, friends and neighbours who may need help and support to book their vaccination appointments.

[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**

Cases of flu have climbed quickly in the past week, indicating that the season has started earlier than normal.

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.

Please [click here](#) for more information about the Flu vaccination.

## **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) Rural Affairs Unit – Crime prevention**

On Tuesday 1 November, the [Rural Affairs Unit - Avon and Somerset Police](#) and [Minehead and West Somerset Neighbourhood Policing](#) were at Cutcombe market providing a limited number of trailer marking kits FREE of charge to attendees.

Last month saw a rise of agriculture trailer theft across the force. ASP are urging farming communities to be vigilant and review their security measures.

Here are some security tips:

- Record trailer serial numbers and photograph your trailer. A photo will assist publicity and possible recovery should you become a victim of theft. Record obvious damage and repairs which may help with identification. The above advice is vital. Store on <http://ow.ly/iZqF50LI2Y6>
- Having your trailer marked, security marked with forensic property marking systems such as SELECTA DNA, DATATAG. You could also mark in several areas - e.g., by painting on your post code / farm name really bold to deter theft.
- Secure your trailer using a wheel clamp, hitch lock.
- Chaining items together and securing to a solid structure / appropriate ground anchor with a high rated CEN padlock and chain.
- The removal of wheels if your trailer is not going to be used for a period and store them in a separate place than the trailer itself.

Advice: ASP recommend the use of security products which are compliant with the appropriate British Standard, in addition look for products that carry the Sold Secure or Secured by Design accreditation. These products have been tested and proven to resist a considerable level of attack. Suppliers of suitable accredited products can be found via these websites: <http://ow.ly/43cK50LI2Y5> <http://ow.ly/9Qvj50LI2Y4>.

Please [click here](#) to read more rural crime prevention advice.

### **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).