

Somerset West and Taunton

Newsletter to SWT Councillors and Parish Councils

Issue 63 Week ending 20/06/2021

#Hands #Face #Space and Fresh Air

SWT Council priorities

Somerset West and Taunton Council's updated priorities during the Coronavirus pandemic are as follows:

- Preserve critical services;
- Safeguard the public;
- Ensure our most vulnerable residents are supported; and
- Planning economic resilience and recovery

The situation is being reviewed on a daily basis to ensure that the Council follows the [latest advice from Public Health England](#).

[Click here](#) to read up to date information on how SWT continues to respond to Coronavirus.

Key Messages this week

1. Four-week pause at Step 3 in England

There will be a four-week pause at Step 3. Step 3 restrictions remain in place, and you should follow the [guidance on what you can and cannot do](#). It is expected that England will move to Step 4 on **19 July 2021**, though the data will be reviewed after 2 weeks in case the risks have reduced.

You can socialise indoors in a group of up to 6 people or 2 households, including for overnight stays. Up to 30 people can meet outside. Pubs, theatres and other venues can open indoors. Hotels, hostels and B&Bs can open for people on holiday. [Read the guidance on what you can do](#).

The Delta COVID-19 variant (first discovered in India) is spreading in England. [See where it's spreading fastest and find out what you should do](#).

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.

A number of Committee meetings are scheduled to take place over the next couple of weeks, which are as follows:

- Monday 21 June – **Licensing Committee**, 6.15pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Wednesday 16 June)
- Thursday 24 June – **Special Planning Committee**, 1pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Monday 21 June)
- Wednesday 30 June – **Community Scrutiny Committee**, 6.15pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Friday 25 June)
- Thursday 1 July – **Planning Committee**, 1pm (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Monday 28 June)

From 7 May 2021, meetings can no longer be held virtually.

These meetings will take place in the Chamber at Deane House following the Government COVID-19 safety guidelines. As we are very limited to the number of people we can safely get into the Chamber, we are asking people to register if they wish to attend in person.

Information on speaking at public meetings is available on the SWT website. This also gives alternatives to participating without attending in person.

The 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.

Contact the Governance Team via governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk.

Please see the dates listed above re deadlines for submitting questions or statements.

3. Elections

The by-election of one District Councillor for the Old Cleeve & District Ward took place yesterday and the result is as follows:

DEWDNEY Martin (Conservative) 494

GRIFFITHS Steve (Liberal Democrat) 500 **Elected**

LILLIS Richard Patrick 120

The by-election of one District Councillor for the North Curry & Ruishton Ward will take place on **Thursday 24 June 2021**.

Please [click here](#) to view a statement of persons nominated.

4. Armed Forces Day 2021

SWT will once again be showing its support for the Armed Forces by holding two flag-raising ceremonies on Monday 21 June.

Services will be hosted at Deane House in Taunton, and West Somerset House in Williton by the Mayor of Taunton, Councillor Sue Lees and the Chair of Somerset West and Taunton Council, Councillor Hazel Prior-Sankey respectively.

The Armed Forces Day flag will be raised during the ceremonies and will be flown for the week leading up to Armed Forces Day on **Saturday 26 June 2021**.

Both ceremonies will be carried out in line with the latest Covid-safety guidance. Residents wishing to pay their own tributes are encouraged to visit armedforcesday.org.uk/get-involved.

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

5. Survey launched to gauge interest in electric car club

SWT is seeking the views of residents, businesses and community organisations for an electric car club to be piloted in Taunton. A short survey has been published online to gauge public interest and pending the results, the pilot scheme could be expanded to other areas of the district.

The project is being led by the Council in partnership with not-for-profit social enterprise, Co Cars, with the aim of providing affordable access to electric cars, whilst also supporting the shift to zero emission transport.

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

6. SWT investing in the future

SWT is generating income to protect future service provision in the face of continued Government funding cuts. The Council is pursuing commercial investment opportunities to generate additional income that can be reinvested in service delivery in line with its adopted Commercial Property Investment Strategy.

The Council invested £44m in six properties in the last financial year (2020/21) which will generate an annual rental income of £3.25m.

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

7. Work starts at East Quay wall

Work to replace a section of the wall at East Quay, Watchet, has started this week. The maintenance work was identified following a professional survey of the wall and represents a further investment of £0.75m into the coastal community. The East Quay wall is part of the structure which creates the Marina and protects Watchet as a sea defence.

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

8. Don't Feed the Gulls

SWT is continuing its work to ensure our streets and open spaces are clean and welcoming for residents and visitors, targeting problem areas throughout the district. At this time of year it's not just litter dropped by humans that causes an issue, wildlife also has its part to play, particularly gulls nesting in our town centres.

People should avoid putting waste food in rubbish bags as this can lead to odours, which make the bags more attractive to the gulls.

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

9. How to report fly-tipping

Fly-tipping – dumping rubbish - is an environmental crime. If you fly-tip you can be fined or jailed. It's a blot on our landscape and a threat to wildlife. We can all fight fly-tipping by reporting dumped rubbish and, if possible, who dumped it.

Everyone, including businesses, must be responsible for how they get rid of rubbish, even when it's left your home or premises. If you pay someone to remove your rubbish - man-with-a-van, builders, gardeners, carpet-layers or others - ask to see their waste carrier's licence, and make sure you know where your rubbish will go. If you don't you could be fined.

To report fly-tipping use SWT's [report fly-tipping](#) online form or phone **0300 304 8000**.

For more information check the 'How we can all fight fly-tipping' section on the [Somerset Waste Partnership](#) website.

10. Somerset Waste Partnership Services (SWP)

Apologies for Missed Collections

Waste collections have been disrupted in recent days and SWP is sorry for the inconvenience. The issues are largely down to a national shortage of LGV drivers and SWP is working hard with their collections contractor to get services back on track.

Crews continue to work very hard, collecting heavy loads in high temperatures. Unfortunately, a large number of collections – mainly of recycling, some of garden waste – have been missed in several parts of Somerset. SWP would like to apologise and have said they will return for these collections as soon as

possible. If possible, ensure your containers are out kerbside by 7am for the crews.

How to prevent a high-risk blaze in your refuse bin

Adding the wrong items to rubbish bins and black sacks could put lives at risk by starting a fire. As well as the danger of a fire in a rubbish bin threatening homes or business premises, lack of care could start a blaze in rubbish lorry or see a landfill conflagration putting staff at risk.

Among the danger items that should never be added to the rubbish bin are:

- Hot ash or part-burned materials from domestic or garden fires or barbecues.
- Used portable barbecues whose charcoal may not be completely cold.
- Household or vehicle batteries as these may short out or cause sparks.
- Broken glass not carefully wrapped or bagged as it could act as a magnifying lens.
- Aerosols as they may get hot or be pierced during the collection and landfill process.

The advice is simple in each case:

- Let ash and portable barbecues completely cool, or fully damp down with water.
- Recycle vehicle batteries through any one of Somerset's 16 recycling sites.
- Take household batteries to recycling sites or high street stores that collect them.
- Carefully wrap and bag broken glass, which should also never go in recycling boxes.
- Use up aerosols completely, do not squash, and then add them to recycling boxes.

Reminder- Garden Waste Collections

All restarted and new subscriptions will get 25 fortnightly collections over 12 months (no collection Christmas/New Year).

For all garden waste tasks, go online to the "Garden Waste Bin and Sacks" tab on the My Waste Services menu at somersetwaste.gov.uk.

NB: Remember to put a gap in postcode (AB1 2CD).

For more information on kerbside services, recycling sites, and on COVID-19 and waste, visit: somersetwaste.gov.uk, sign up for the SWP e-newsletter or follow @somersetwaste on Facebook or Twitter.

Partner Engagement – Key messages from other Public Service Areas

Somerset County Council (SCC)

SCC Highway Maintenance Update

After a dry, warm spell it looks like we are now heading into a wetter few days.

The carriageway resurfacing of **A358 Williton Road, Combe Florey** is progressing well and the final series of daily temporary road closures are scheduled for 21 – 25 June (5 days). During these times, the **A358** will be closed to through traffic between **Williton and Bishops Lydeard** between 9.30am and 3.30pm each day, Monday to Friday.

On the minor works programme, SCC Highways have completed drainage work at A38 Bridgwater Road, Walford Cross. Next week there will be minor drainage schemes undertaken at **Wiveliscombe Road, Fitzhead and Castle Lane, Wiveliscombe**.

In **Minehead** the construction work related to the the new puffin crossing on the **A39 Bircham Road, outside West Somerset College**, is approaching completion. This will allow the temporary traffic signals to be removed. Installing the power supply and commissioning the apparatus will then take place, and the new crossing should be in operation by the end of July. Meanwhile, looking forward, the carriageway surface dressing team will be in Somerset in July.

For more information on highway maintenance works and to stay up to date visit www.travelsomerset.co.uk or follow @TravelSomerset on Twitter.

Temporary Road Closure: St Augustine Street, Taunton

The order becomes effective on 17 June 2021 and will remain in force for eighteen months. The works are expected to commence on **21 June 2021** and last for 5 days to enable Wessex Water to carry out supply separation works.

For any further information about this closure please contact Wessex Water on **0345 600 4600**, quoting reference: ttr0437700TD - WW - St Augustine Street, Taunton.

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

Please note that should you require to view a closure which is more than two weeks ahead you will need to register for free with www.One.Network.

Extended- End date amended - Emergency One Way Order Maidenbrook Lane, Taunton

Please be aware that SCC Highways have received notification of a continuation of works to the emergency one way order at Maidenbrook Lane, Taunton.

This work is now expected to continue until **27 June 2021** (24hrs). Traffic will travel in a southwards direction.

Please [click here](#) to follow the link to view the additional Notice.

Reminder- Temporary Road Closure: Galmington Road, Taunton

SCC 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

Galmington Road for a distance of 502m. This Order will enable Western Power Distribution to replace high voltage cable that feeds Musgrove Park Hospital.

Please [click here](#) to view the map of the above road closure; with further information of the alternative route.

The works commenced on 1 June 2021 and are expected to end on **2 July 2021** between the hours of 12 midnight to 11.59pm for a total of 32 days.

For information about the works being carried out please contact Western Power Distribution on **01823 348592** quoting the reference number ttr0448106.

Useful links to report faults

To report faults in the following areas, please click on the relevant link:-

[Dangerous/Overgrown Tree alongside the public highway](#)

[Report an overgrown verge or hedge on the road](#)

[Street light not working](#)

[Blocked surface water drain on the highway.](#)

First Bus Somerset

Service 28 A358 Combe Florey – Williton

Due to roadworks being undertaken by SCC from **Monday 14 June until Friday 25 June 2021**, the A358 will be closed between East Combe and West Bagborough for structural works. (This is between the hours of 9.30am – 3.30pm and excluding weekends).

ALL Services during the above times to divert from Cedar Falls, Raleghs Cross to Washford Cross, turning right at the roundabout to resume normal route at Williton. Inbound services to operate same route in reverse.

NO services to **Coombe Florey, West Bagborough, Crowcombe, Bicknoller or Sampford Brett** at this time.

Please [click here](#) to keep up to date with service changes.

COVID-19 update

As the Government restrictions ease more people are travelling and coming together safely. This means that places and buses are busier than they have been; so once passengers board, they might find they have to sit next to someone.

To help with the additional number of passengers, First Bus increased the capacity on their buses, as well as adding extra journeys to the timetables to cope with the expected demand. From Monday 17 May this was set at 80%, but there might be times where the bus has reached this, and people waiting to board might see a "Bus Full" sign. Travellers should allow plenty of time for their journey and be prepared to wait.

It is wise to check the bus timetable and plan the journey before setting out. This can be done by downloading the First Bus app, or visiting the [First Bus Website](#).

Somerset Education Business Partnership

Reminder- Schools and Colleges- Guide young people to their next step

You want to help your learners achieve the best possible life outcomes. The Education Business Partnership can help you to guide young people to their next step in education, training or employment.

The Education Business Partnership's resources will help you offer the best possible advice to your learners as they consider their futures.

- Understand how to meet your [statutory duties](#), as set out by the Government's careers strategy
- [Tools and training](#) available for career leads and teachers
- Explore the [support available for SEND learners](#)
- Key tips for [engaging with employers](#).

Check the [vacancies](#) page for Somerset employers offering work experience, traineeship and apprenticeship opportunities for your learners.

Somerset Activity Sports Partnership (SASP)

Reminder- Beat the Street

Taunton to be transformed into A Giant Physical Activity Game

Beat the Street is an active travel project that has been very popular in towns and cities across the UK, including Bridgwater last year. Managed by Intelligent Health and delivered by Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership (SASP), the project aims to increase physical activity levels in a community through walking, running, and cycling. The game works by turning the town into a real-life game and residents will soon start to see special sensors called Beat Boxes appearing on lampposts.

The game is running in Taunton with 37 Beat Boxes spread across the [map](#); so mainly Priorswood, Holway, Halcon, Town Centre, the canal, green spaces and parks. Twelve primary schools in Taunton have been invited to take part in the game.

Please [click here](#) to watch a video which explains the project in more detail: Play from **16 June - 14 July**. Beat the Street is the perfect way to get you and your children safely back into action. [Sign up today](#) and follow the [Facebook page](#).

Get prepared for National Tree Planting Week 2021

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.

Last year SWT provided over 200 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 **27 November to 5 December**.

Councils can choose from Oak, Beech, Lime and Hawthorn bare root trees to the value of £50 to be collected from one of three locations across the district – Taunton Deane Nurseries, Wellington Depot or Minehead Depot.

Please look out for future updates when the scheme opens 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 Barry Hawkins, Project Manager on b.hawkins@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (DSFRS)

Football fans of Devon and Somerset

If you're celebrating an England match with a BBQ, make sure that you:

- have it outside, well away from anything that could catch fire - like your home, a shed, trees, or any football flags
- place it on a flat surface that won't catch alight, such as paving slabs
- keep an eye on your cooking and have a bucket of water or sand nearby just in case – this can also cool it down after.

Trust DSFRS - accidentally setting your house or garden area on fire will be a lot more frustrating than a red card penalty!

Multi-Agency Murals Project Completed

After the final weekend of painting, the nature murals project with families, children and volunteers from North Taunton has been completed. The Quantock Landscape Partnership (QLP) hope everyone enjoys walking past and being part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund Quantock Hills story in the neighbourhood. QLP would like to extend thanks to SWT and ENGIE for allowing the community to take over the hoardings for the best part of a month. Thanks also goes to the fabulous Priorswood Community Centre, and not forgetting Dave Bain Illustration himself.

Please [click here](#) to see photographs of all the amazing volunteers, community members, children and families who painted. Their hard work is appreciated.

Please [click here](#) to learn more about the project and the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme.

HM Coastguard

Safety Spotlight - High spirits and high jinks. When danger kicks off

With warm weather ahead and the EUROS kicking off last weekend, HM Coastguard's goal is to help everyone stay safe around the coast. Good old fashioned bad luck can strike at any time but high spirits often lead to high jinks and danger quickly kicks in. And when alcohol and chilly sea water are mixed together, that's a potentially lethal cocktail that can be life changing as well as life-threatening.

Did you know that around one in every eight coastal deaths involves alcohol?
It can happen in the sea as well as in rivers and lakes too.

Don't let it happen to you, your family or your mates

The water is still chilly at this time of year, increasing the risk of drowning or cardiac arrest from cold water shock. Please [click here](#) to find out why cold water shock is so dangerous – no matter how young and fit you are. Cold water does not discriminate. In the last week alone, there have been plenty of very lucky escapes and near misses around our coasts.

Community Support – What help is out there?

Voluntary and Community Sector Support

The North Taunton Partnership (NTP)

Trustee Required for Priorswood Community Centre

NTP would like to hear from anyone with a willingness to give a little of their time, experience and commitment. The North Taunton Partnership is a registered charity which has overall responsibility for the legal structure and safe running of the Priorswood Community Centre; it employs 3 part time members of staff with support from 38 volunteers who undertake various roles within the Community Centre.

Its objectives are;

To promote charitable purposes for the benefit of the community in North Taunton and in particular the advancement of education, the promotion of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress.

The post is unpaid but offers the opportunity to work as part of a professional team to meet the challenges and opportunities within the community of North Taunton. The role will involve attending meetings for approximately 1 hour once a month on a Monday evening. The board is made up of representatives from partner organisations and community representatives.

If you feel you could have a positive impact and would like to find out more please contact Lesley Councill, Manager, for more information on **01823 353643**. If you prefer, you can email lesleycouncill@priorswoodcommunitycentre.co.uk or visit www.priorswoodcommunitycentre.co.uk.

Community Council for Somerset (CCS)

Reminder- Talking Cafes have reopened in venues across Somerset

The CCS are opening slowly and due to COVID-19 restrictions all Talking Cafes are **strictly by appointment only**. There will no longer be a drop in facility due to the requirement to maintain hygiene standards. Book an appointment by calling **01823 331 222** or by completing this [online form](#).

Bridgwater: The Hub at Angel Place, Every Thursday 11am – 1pm

Minehead: The Beach Hotel Minehead, Every Monday 10am – 12pm

Taunton: The Great Western Hotel Station Approach, Every Monday 10am – 12pm

Williton: Williton Pavillion, Killick Way, Every Tuesday 1pm - 3pm

The CCS will be continuing their Facebook Live Talking Cafes, so keep tuning in Tuesday - Thursday at 1pm.

Somerset Community Foundation (SCF)

Small Charity Week

To mark this year's Small Charity Week, SCF's CEO Justin Sargent has written a blog: Small Charity Week reminds us why it's vital we continue to support our small charities. Please [click here](#) to read the blog.

Reminder- Enterprise Grants

You can apply if you are aged 18 to 30, currently live in the county of Somerset (but not North Somerset or BANES), are not in education, employment or training, want to start your own business and know what products or services you want to provide. Apply for up to £1,000. Ask for money by **Wednesday 30 June 2021** and SCF will let you know if they can help you by the end of July 2021.

[Click here for more information and to apply](#)

Reminder- Training and Employment Support Grants

You can apply if you are aged 16 to 30, currently live in the county of Somerset (but not North Somerset or BANES), are not in education, employment or training, and need some help with the cost of essential things for training or employment, an apprenticeship or job.

Apply for up to £500. Ask for money by **Wednesday 30 June 2021** and SCF will let you know if they can help you by the end of July 2021.

[Click here for more information and to apply](#)

Spark Somerset

Loneliness Awareness Week

After months of lockdowns, social distancing, and restrictions, more of us are experiencing loneliness than ever - which is having a big impact on our wellbeing.

Volunteering is a great way to connect with others and can make a real difference to the lives of socially isolated people in your community. There are lots of opportunities to volunteer and help alleviate loneliness in Somerset. Please [click here](#) to see how you can get involved.

Introducing Spark iT!

In partnership with Barclays Bank and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust, Spark are delighted to announce the launch of [Spark iT](#), a new project which aims to tackle digital exclusion in Somerset and help people to access health care online.

The Spark iT Helpdesk is now live, and anybody in Somerset who is digitally excluded can get in touch for free IT support with a range of activities. This might include using IT equipment, connecting with others online or accessing local support and services that could improve their health and wellbeing.

The Helpdesk is available Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm on **01458 550977**.

Please share the details with anybody you know who could benefit from this exciting new service.

Spark are also recruiting a bank of Digital Champion volunteers who will receive training from the Barclays Digital Eagles and offer additional 1-2-1 support.

For further information about Spark iT, please click [here](#) or email Verity Baum, Digital Inclusion Project Manager, verity.baum@sparksomerset.org.uk.

Reminder-Grow for Good Forum – Online Event

Tuesday 22 June 2021 6pm – 7.30pm

A free forum for voluntary groups and individuals in Somerset who use growing and gardening to support positive change in their communities. Recent events have highlighted the important role that community growing projects can play in promoting health and wellbeing and protecting our natural environment.

This is the first in an ongoing series of meetings so there's no formal agenda – just an open, friendly discussion to establish the aims of the forum and explore how Spark can support you.

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

Help and support for businesses affected by COVID-19

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has made available webinars and videos about the support available to businesses to help them deal with the economic impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak.

HMRC cover the following government schemes:

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) Job Retention Scheme
- Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)
- Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) Rebate Scheme

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

Health and Welfare

Clinton's Covid Catch-up

As many people are aware, GP practices have been experiencing a very busy period over the last few weeks and as a result there are a very high number of patients trying to contact them. This means there are currently longer waits for routine appointments than usual at some practices. The NHS in Somerset is doing all it can to reduce waiting times but know there are many people needing healthcare help.

Please [click here](#) to watch Clinton Covid Catch-up film looks at what this means for you.

The importance of regular testing

There are five good reasons for regular testing:

- It finds and isolates people early who have Coronavirus but don't have symptoms (asymptomatic), helping to stop the spread of the virus
- Alongside the vaccine rollout and social distancing, it is key to reducing infection and transmission, helping the country to keep moving

- It helps to identify and suppress new variants of concern, playing a vital role in limiting the spread of Coronavirus
- It protects you and your loved ones
- When done correctly, the tests are at least 99.9 per cent specific, which means that the risk of false positives is extremely low – less than one in a thousand

In short, it's a simple and effective way for everybody to do their bit in stopping the spread of the virus. Testing regularly, even when you do not have symptoms, means we can keep infection levels low.

Reminder- People aged 18 or over can now book their COVID-19 vaccination

Everybody in cohorts 1 to 9 has been offered a vaccine, with people aged 18 and over now invited to book their appointments. Use this service to book a Coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination or manage your appointments.

Who can use this service?

You can only use this service if any of the following apply:

- you're aged 18 or over
- you're at [high risk from COVID-19](#) (clinically extremely vulnerable)
- you have a condition that puts you at higher risk (clinically vulnerable)
- you have a learning disability
- you're a frontline health or social care worker
- you get a Carer's Allowance, get support following an assessment by your local authority or your GP record shows you're a carer

Please [click here](#) for further information and to book your vaccination.

Reminder- Lateral Flow Testing Available in Local Pharmacies

A **full list** of participating pharmacies can be found [here](#). If you are unable to get to a pharmacy or test centre to collect a test kit, you can order a home testing kit to be sent to your home [here](#). If you are taking a Lateral Flow test, please report to your managers how often you are testing.

Order your lateral flow tests online

You can order one box of lateral flow tests per household each day. A box contains 7 test packets. [Please click here to order your rapid lateral flow tests.](#)

Please remember – if you are taking the tests at home it is very important for you to [log your results here](#). Please make sure that if you are symptomatic in any way take a confirmatory Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test as quickly as possible.

Your step-by-step guide for COVID-19 self-testing

Many people with COVID-19 have mild, or even no symptoms, but can still spread the virus. With regular self-testing we can slow the spread and help protect the most vulnerable in our families and communities

Please [click here](#) for a step by step guide on how to use your lateral flow tests at home. You can also [click here](#) to view a video that provides a great demonstration of the correct testing technique.

Reminder- Do you need to book a PCR test?

Somerset residents are being reminded that they need to book a PCR test if they are showing symptoms of COVID-19 or have tested positive using a 'lateral flow' (rapid) test kit. You can [book or request a PCR test online](#) or by calling 119.

Vaccinated? You still need to take care

Vaccination is a vital part of moving out of the Coronavirus pandemic, so getting your vaccine when offered is something to celebrate. Although the COVID-19 vaccine gives the best protection against becoming seriously ill if you catch Coronavirus, it's important to remember that it doesn't make you invincible.

The COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective, but it doesn't take full effect immediately. The first dose should give you good protection from three or four weeks after you've had it. But you need to have the two doses to give you longer lasting protection.

Latest Vaccination data for Somerset

You can check Somerset's vaccination data on the Coronavirus dashboard. The information provided by the NHS will be added every Friday. Please [click here](#) to view the latest figures relating to doses that have been administered in Somerset. The dashboard provides an overview of Coronavirus cases, a map, the R number and more detailed district-level information.

The Somerset Coronavirus Support Helpline

This single phone number is available for anyone in Somerset who needs coronavirus-related support from their councils. The **0300 790 6275** number is available seven days per week 8am – 6pm.

Anyone who can't find help within their own local networks and volunteers, can use this number to get help and advice around:

- Personal care and support including food and delivery of prescriptions
- Support for the homeless
- Emotional support if you're feeling worried or anxious
- Transport to medical appointments including vaccinations
- Waste collection and disposal
- Financial support

This number won't cover medical advice, for which people will need to continue to use the 111 NHS phone number if they cannot get help online.

If you would like to find out more about the Corona helpers, offer assistance, or need support please visit www.corona-helpers.co.uk.

Could you spot the difference between a heart attack and cardiac arrest?

There has been a lot in the news in the last week, following the collapse of Christian Eriksen during a EURO football match.

5 differences between a heart attack and a cardiac arrest:

1. A **heart attack** is not the same as a **cardiac arrest**.
2. A heart attack is when one of the coronary arteries becomes blocked. The heart muscle is robbed of its vital blood supply and, if left untreated, will begin to die because it is not getting enough oxygen.
3. A cardiac arrest is when a person's heart stops pumping blood around their body and they stop breathing normally.
4. Many cardiac arrests in adults happen because of a heart attack. This is because a person who is having a heart attack may develop a dangerous heart rhythm, which can cause a cardiac arrest.
5. A heart attack and a cardiac arrest are both emergency situations. Call 999 straight away.

Heart attacks and cardiac arrests are a medical emergency. Call 999 or 112 for emergency help straight away and tell them you think someone is having a heart attack or cardiac arrest.

For more information on cardiac arrest please visit the British Heart Foundation website [Cardiac arrest - symptoms, causes and recovery | British Heart Foundation \(bhf.org.uk\)](https://www.bhf.org.uk/learn-from-us/a-z/heart-attack/symptoms-causes-and-recovery)

Please [click here](#) to watch a video outlining the signs of a heart attack and how you can care for someone at this moment. Heart attacks are serious and performing these first aid steps could help to save someone's life.

Please [click here](#) to learn more lifesaving skills with St John Ambulance first aid training courses.

Did you know?

If a defibrillator is used within the first 4 minutes of a person suffering a cardiac arrest, their chances of survival can increase to 70%, compared to just 5% if defibrillation is delayed.

There are public access defibrillators popping up all over the place. They're in shopping centres, on phone boxes, airports, train stations and so on. If you keep your eye out for them you're bound to be surprised by just how many you'll spot. They're designed to be used by pretty much anyone with no training. Most are automated and talk you through what you need to do, so you can get started before the emergency services arrive.

There's no centralised, national database of defibrillators in the UK. If you call the emergency services and provide your location, the operator should be able to tell you where your nearest defibrillator is, if there's one in reach and give you the code to access it. That's only if they've been informed about its location.

Buying a defibrillator for your community

Lots of villages, parish councils and community groups raise funds to make a defibrillator publicly available to their local community. If you're interested in getting a defibrillator [The British Heart Foundation](#) have lots of helpful information about fundraising, where to place your defibrillator, and how to maintain it so it's always ready to save a life. Alternatively, you can purchase a defibrillator from The British Heart Foundation [online shop](#).

Diabetes UK

National Diabetes Week

This year, Diabetes UK is telling diabetes stories from all corners of the UK. They are looking back on an extraordinary year, and looking forward to what's to come.

To kick off the week, Diabetes UK have an exciting new film for you. They asked fifteen different people from the diabetes community to tell them about life over the last year - the things they found hard, the things they learnt, and the things they're looking forward to about life beyond the pandemic.

Please [click here](#) to watch a film to find out what they said (and please share to help spread the word).

Men's Mental Health Week 2021

This week is Men's Health Week. Everybody's mental health has been challenged by the lockdowns and insecurities of the last year and it's not over. As we emerge from what we hope will be the worst of the pandemic, questions, concerns and anxieties remain.

During Men's Mental Health Week there are five days and five ways to wellbeing. The Men's Health Forum is calling on everyone to choose a different way to wellbeing for each day of Men's Health Week. At the week-end, pick your favourites and do them again. Please [click here](#) to access the CAN DO Challenge.

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
- National Domestic Abuse helpline - 0808 2000 247

Please refer to the websites below for the latest advice, help and guidance:

Links to the most up to date COVID-19 guidance can be found here
[Somerset COVID-19 Local Outbreak Management Plan Dashboard](#)

FAQS

Q. I know somebody who is feeling anxious about having their COVID-19 vaccination. What support is out there?

- A.** Some groups of people are more at risk from COVID-19 and its long-term effects, many of whom are more likely to be worried about having the vaccination. In partnership with SCC, Spark Somerset are recruiting a team of volunteer Vaccination Buddies who can offer 1-2-1 support to people who are worried or unsure about having the vaccine. Vaccination Buddies will receive full training, including information on the latest scientific developments from Public Health at SCC.

Individuals can be referred (or self-refer) to the scheme and a Vaccination Buddy will contact them by phone to discuss their concerns and offer information and reassurance. You can request a phone call from a Vaccination Buddy for yourself or somebody else by [clicking here](#).

Q. I have a rash on my arm, and I'm trying without success to contact my GP. What other options do I have?

- A.** GP practices have been experiencing a very busy period over the last few weeks, and as a result they have a very high number of patients trying to contact them. This means there are currently longer waits for routine appointments than usual at some practices.

The NHS in Somerset is doing all it can to reduce waiting times, but there are lots of people who need healthcare help. Please continue to be patient and perhaps consider one of the alternatives listed below to using a GP:

- **Pharmacy** – As lockdown eases, don't forget your local high-street pharmacist can provide health advice and help with minor illnesses like coughs and colds, sunburn, hay fever and diarrhoea. You don't need an appointment and they can even provide you with the right medicines at the same time.
- **Mindline** – if you, or someone you know, is struggling with their mental wellbeing, our 24/7 Mindline is open to people of all ages. Just ring **01823 276 892**.
- **111 First** – The 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and provides advice, treatment and care. Just ring 111 or visit <https://111.nhs.uk/>. The service will provide advice and refer you to another service if you need it and if you need to be seen in person, they can book you a time slot.

- **Minor injury units** – Don't forget A&E is for life-threatening emergencies only. There's also a network of Minor Injury Units to provide the treatment you need – often they'll see you quicker and closer to home.

When to call an ambulance

A medical emergency is an acute injury or illness that poses an immediate risk to a person's life or long-term health, sometimes referred to as a situation risking "life or limb".

These emergencies may require assistance from another, qualified person, as some of these emergencies, such as cardiovascular (heart), respiratory, and gastrointestinal cannot be dealt with by the victim themselves.

Crime / Safeguarding

How to Report Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is any activity which causes harm to an individual or a community. A list of ASB activities can be found [here](#). When reporting repeated instances of anti-social behaviour, it is useful to record a description of what happened and the date, time and location. To help you keep track of ASB incidents, [download the ASB Incident Diary document \(PDF\)](#).

Don't report crime on social media platforms, please call 101 or visit Avon and Somerset Police website. In an emergency always call 999.

Avon & Somerset Police (A&SP)

Minehead and West Somerset Neighbourhood Policing Team Update

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

This month has seen continued problems with ASB in the Minehead area. The problems are mostly focussed in the park areas including **Blenheim Gardens** and **Irnham Recreation Ground**, but the police have had reports from other areas too. They were concerned to receive a report from the Minehead Bowling Club where damage had been caused to the new green; as well as reports from elsewhere in the town of graffiti, damage to property and a palm tree set alight. The police have increased patrols in these areas.

The police take all reports of ASB seriously, and have a number of ways in which they can tackle these problems, but can only do so, if all issues are reported. Increasingly they have seen posts on social media of destructive and anti-social behaviour in the town but have not received calls or reports asking them to attend. Please make sure any problems or issues are reported to the police as a priority using the correct channels.

Taunton Neighbourhood Policing Team Update

Officers from the Neighbourhood Policing Team have carried out a traffic operation following your official reports to the police of concerns around vehicles driving anti-socially and driving over the speed limit along Blackbrook Way, Taunton.

In the 2 hours that officers were at the location, they pulled over 11 vehicles for the following; speeding, excessively loud exhausts and illegal number plates.

From those 11 drivers:

- 2 drivers have been reported to court for speeding
- A driver with an illegal number plate had legal plates in boot of car, so these were re-attached at the roadside
- The rest were given strong words of advice regarding their driving manner.

The police will carry out further operations like this across the town, but remember they can only act on what you provide to them via official methods.

Please [click here](#) to report the inappropriate use of a motor vehicle.

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](#)

Reminder- Do not leave dogs in hot cars

After being stuck inside for over a year, it's inevitable that this summer many of us will be wanting to get outdoors and seek the perfect staycations with our four legged friends. A&SP are reminding the public carefully to plan outings, especially when travelling with a dog.

Please do not leave your dog alone in a car on a warm day. Even if the windows are left slightly open or you're parked in the shade, this can still be very dangerous for a dog. If you see a dog in distress in a hot car, dial 999.

Did you know that if it's 22 degrees outside, in a car it can reach an unbearable 47 degrees within the hour

Please [click here](#) for further advice and remember to remind your friends and family.

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)

Please see our dedicated [webpage](#) for updates.

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

#Hands #Face #Space and Fresh Air