

**Newsletter to SWT Councillors and Parish Councils**

**Issue 81 Week ending 24/10/2021**

**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](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/your-council/corporate-strategy/) to view SWT’s expected outcomes.

**Key Messages this week**

1. **Town / Parish Council Precepts for 2022/23**

SWT has emailed all parish councils this week enclosing Parish/Town Precept Forms for the 2022/23 Financial Year. The completed forms and any queries should be emailed to [parishprecepts@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:parishprecepts@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk).

If Parish Councils decide to return their precept demand forms using the post, then extra time should be allowed for processing in the digital mailroom. All submissions should be received by **Friday 7 January 2022**.

If you have not received your email or foresee any difficulties in returning the forms before the deadline, please inform SWT at the earliest opportunity.

1. **Democracy and Governance**

**Committee Meetings**

You can search by Committee or by the monthly calendar for details of all [Committee meetings](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/your-council/council-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:

* Thursday 28 October – Community Scrutiny Committee, 6.15pm in the JMR at the Deane House (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Monday 25 October)
* Wednesday 3 November – Corporate Scrutiny Committee, 6.15pm in the JMR at the Deane House (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Friday 29 October)
* Thursday 4 November – Planning Committee, 1pm in the JMR at the Deane House (deadline for public questions is 4pm on Monday 1 November)

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](https://democracy.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/mgCalendarMonthView.aspx). If you are not able to watch the meeting live, you can also watch it after the meeting.

Contact the Governance Team [governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk).

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

1. **Support for charities in SWT**

The Somerset West and Taunton Small Grants Fund, managed by Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) on behalf of Somerset West and Taunton Council, will consider applications for grants from charities, community groups, sports clubs, and social enterprises.

Grants of up to £1,000 are available now. Deadline for applications is 5pm **Friday 26 November 2021.**

Please [click here](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/news/support-for-charities-in-somerset-west-and-taunton/) to read the full press release.

1. **Local groups awarded funding for youth support work**

Two local groups have been given a significant financial boost from an SWT fund to support youth projects.

YMCA Taunton and the Conquest Riding Centre have benefitted from the Taunton Youth and Community Centre fund set up with the proceeds of the sale of land owned by the Taunton Youth and Community Centre (TYCC).

The funds were given in trust to the former Taunton Deane Borough Council by the TYCC trustees in 2013 on the understanding that the money would be ring fenced for capital funding of youth projects in Taunton.

Please [click here](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/news/local-groups-awarded-funding-for-youth-support-work/) to read the full press release.

1. **Volunteers needed for Community Employment Hubs service**

SWT’s community-led employment support service is calling for volunteers to help reopen its walk-in centres located throughout the district.

The Community Employment Hubs service provides support to people both in and out of work, including long-term job seekers, employees at risk of redundancy or those seeking new skills or a career change.

The Community Employment Hub Coordinators are keen to hear from any volunteers who are willing to spare as little as three hours a week to help people access work and training, whilst over a hot brew.

The employment hubs are scheduled to reopen over the coming weeks in **Dulverton, Minehead, Stogursey, Watchet and Williton**, as well as five new hubs based in **Wellington**, an additional hub in Minehead and three hubs in **Taunton**.

Please [click here](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/news/volunteers-needed-for-community-employment-hubs-service/) to read the full press release.

1. **Somerset West Lottery Winter 2021/22 bolt-on prize draw**

The Somerset West Lottery is taking part in the Winter 2021/22 bolt-on prize draw.

Everyone who signs up to purchase one or more tickets between 1November 2021 and 1 January 2022 will be in with the chance to win £1,000 to spend at DECATHLON, a retail store that provides equipment for over 70 outdoor and sporting activities as well as nutrition and body care products. There really is something for everyone at DECATHLON. This prize is courtesy of Gatherwell the external lottery management company (ELM).

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

Please [click here](https://www.somersetwestlottery.co.uk/) to find out more information.

1. **Reminder - Boost for Business Revitalisation**

Businesses in the SWT area that have borne the brunt of COVID-19 restrictions this year may be able to benefit from the Council’s Business Revitalisation Grant which was launched last week.

Full details of the scheme and the online application form can be found on the Council [website](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/businessrevitalisationgrant/). All applicants will need to apply via the online form.

The application window opened on Wednesday 13 October and is expected to close at 5pm on **Monday 1 November 2021**.

Please [click here](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/news/boost-for-business-revitalisation/) to read the full press release.

1. **Reminder - SWT commits to ending rough sleeping by 2027**

At a Full Council meeting on Tuesday, 5 October, SWT agreed to adopt an accommodation strategy and delivery plan to support single homeless people and end rough sleeping in the district by 2027.

Please [click here](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/news/swt-commits-to-ending-rough-sleeping-by-2027/) to read the full press release.

1. **Somerset Waste Partnership Services (SWP)**

**Blue Monday as Taunton Deane gears-up for Recycle More**

The launch of Recycle More across Taunton Deane moved a step closer this week with Bright Blue Bags being delivered across the area from Monday.

Tough, washable and with a 60-litre capacity, the extra recycling containers are a key feature of the new service that is already delivered more than 100 extra tonnes of recycling in Mendip and South Somerset.

Recycle More launches across Taunton Deane – including Taunton, Wellington and Wiveliscombe - at the start of November, and 55,000 bags are being delivered right up until Friday 29 October. **So,** **if you haven’t got yours yet, please be patient**.

Bags will be left somewhere easy to find near front doors, usually in an empty recycling container. Stickers will be stuck on everyone’s recycling boxes as the bags arrive, making it clear what needs to go where once Recycle More starts.

**Please don’t use put them out until your first new collection day**.

This is set out in the collection calendar inside the “Coming Soon!” leaflet which should have arrived by the start of this week. Some have been arriving later than scheduled due to delays with Royal Mail.

**Some residents will also have a one-off extra collection of rubbish only on Saturday 30 October or 6 November.** This is made clear in the leaflet and is to make sure no-one goes more than three weeks between rubbish collections.

Remember, you can look up your new dates online using the My Collection Day feature on the SWP website homepage. Calendars can also be downloaded for printing, or directly into laptop or mobile device’s calendar.

As they deliver the bags, teams will also be applying stickers to your green and black recycling boxes to show what should go in them under the new system.

Anyone with questions or concerns about Recycle More can find more information online somersetwaste.gov.uk/recycle-more

Extra support is available. Please make contact using an online form – see popular tasks on our homepage [www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](http://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk) or call 0300 3048000.

**Recruitment**

The nationwide driver shortage remains a big issue, hitting authorities and businesses up and down the country. There are no quick fixes. Intensive recruitment and retention work continues and SWP are monitoring the COVID situation closely.

If you know anyone who may be interested in a career with SUEZ (Somerset Waste Partnership’s collections contractor) as a driver, supervisor or loader, please sign-post them to [www.suez.co.uk/join-our-team-in-somerset](http://www.suez.co.uk/join-our-team-in-somerset)

For more information on kerbside services, recycling sites, and on COVID-19 and waste, visit: [somersetwaste.gov.uk](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fsomersetwaste.gov.uk%2F%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR2oF9R4vF7n_tKefIgXnP-ktPuvS5aK2e9UIcE0O5MQks0gzZnFMXXxxhI&h=AT3bITV72obsOTf12Gox2uc0e0Hw2LwYxp-bQnXgcJxd8jkvTLZSgClybK2jT0TX7CTqy2PLS3CvB74VWxxjt4V3RhEHwB6lSLaDpqJygqovF1CxDa1V4kZpv8v6Ib2x1g&__tn__=-UK-R&c%5b0%5d=AT2rfMTig3WQql8WNmzcWfuiUm2NBuoj1kMfX5IUpmw501yH8dH04KgwsUO1l1kWlHKw2Llk0BuojE_salHOm9TXlsRtFeovVnQ4CY_tUQmxiogjlmFO3B7zUx9p4Dk_U09i4m1wu8ruvY0jUJkdjp8qHASYQka2dakKdycFdranXcs), sign up for the SWP e-newsletter or follow @somersetwaste on Facebook or Twitter

**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](https://my.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-7273c7e8-b6a9-403d-8c31-5a0556ba616c/AF-Stage-0b9c2922-2340-406c-99ea-cea41e828000/definition.json&redirectlink=%2Fen&cancelRedirectLink=%2Fen&consentMessage=yes) 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](https://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/) website.

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

**Somerset County Council (SCC)**

**SCC Highway Maintenance Update**

In **Carhampton**, the Somerset River Authority funded drainage improvement works are progressing well. The **A39 Williton Road** has switched from daytime closures to evening closures and will continue to be closed on weekdays only from 6.30pm to 11.30pm.

The carriageway drainage works are complete on the A39 and SCC Highways have this week (despite some horrendous weather) planed off the old surface and commenced the laying of the new surface. Week beginning 25 October will see the completion of any surfacing and the lines & high friction surfacing will be applied.

**A39 Williton Road, Carhampton**

* Monday 25 October until Thursday 28 October  Closed 6.30pm to 11.30pm – open otherwise throughout the day.

**B3191 Blue Anchor Road, Carhampton**

* Tuesday 26 October – Thursday 28 October Closed 6.30pm to 11.30pm – for completion of the A39 Junction Works

**Hill Lane** between **Carhampton** and **Withycomb**e will also be closed as part of the works until **12 November.** These works are progressing well and are currently on schedule.

**Seaward Way, Minehead**

* Construction works on the new level crossing are almost complete and some lining works will be carried out under a closure from **8pm to 11pm on the 22and 23 of October.** There are some commissioning works to be carried out in the following weeks.

**Bridge Street, Taunton**

* Resurfacing works are almost complete with lining and loop cutting works to be carried in the evenings of **25 and 26October**.

Drainage improvements have been carried out on the **A358 Minehead Road** at **Norton Fitzwarren,** near **Norton Manor Camp.**

**The A358 at Cedar Falls, Bishops Lydeard** is currently under temporary traffic lights due to a fallen tree damaging a roadside wall. This may cause some delays at peak times.

Near **Wellington**, the road between **East Nynehead** and **Poole** is closed until 28 October whilst repairs to the bridge crossing the River Tone are carried out.

For more information on highway maintenance works and to stay up to date visit [www.travelsomerset.co.uk](http://www.travelsomerset.co.uk) or follow @TravelSomerset on Twitter.

**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](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-problem-with-a-tree-by-the-road/#If-a-tree-outside-your-house-needs-pruning,-please-contact-us)

[Report an overgrown verge or hedge on the road](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-an-overgrown-verge-or-hedge-on-the-road/)

[Report noxious weeds here](https://services.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem-on-the-road/?issue=WEE&serviceCode=HRI)

[Street light not working](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem-with-a-street-light/)

[Blocked surface water drain on the highway.](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-blocked-drain-on-the-road/)

**Highways England**

**Consultation launched on A358 Dualling Scheme**

National Highways is holding a consultation on the proposed A358 Taunton to Southfields Dualling Scheme.

The planned upgrade of the A358, a key route linking the South West and London and South East, will see a single lane stretch of carriageway between the M5 at Taunton and the Southfields roundabout, upgraded to dual carriageway.

The proposed scheme would considerably benefit road users, local communities and businesses.

The consultation started on 12 October and runs until **Monday 22 November 2021** with feedback helping National Highways develop its application for a Development Consent Order (DCO), the type of planning permission needed for the scheme.

A DCO is required for all nationally significant infrastructure projects and will allow for the Planning Inspectorate to make a recommendation to the Secretary of State, who will decide on whether development consent should be granted for the proposed scheme.

One of the best ways to find out more about our proposals and have your say is to visit the online exhibition. You can access this via [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields) – there are dedicated times when you can chat with members of the project team who’ll be happy to answer any questions you may have.

There will also be nine online question and answer events, and three public consultation events in line with government guidance:

* Monks Yard – Saturday 23 October, 11am - 6pm
* Holiday Inn Taunton – Wednesday 3 November, 11am - 6pm

If you do not have access to the internet, you can request a free copy of the consultation booklet, feedback questionnaire and non-technical summary of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report by calling 0300 123 5000 or emailing [A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk).

**Buses of Somerset**

**Quantock Line 28 - A39 Carhampton**

From Tuesday 19 October 2021 the A39 at Carhampton is CLOSED Weekday Evenings ONLY between 18:30 and 23:30. This is to allow SCC Highways to carry out drainage and flood prevention work in Carhampton.

**Service Quantock Line 28 is regrettably disrupted.**

**Quantock Line 28:** The 17:45 from Butlins is running through to Taunton as planned, however, this is the last departure from Minehead. The 18:45 is suspended.

From Taunton the 16:30 departure is running through to Minehead as normal. The 17:00 service terminates at Watchet and is waiting there to work back to Taunton at 19:22.  
    
The 17:30, 18:30 and 19:30 is subject to diversion and is not serving Washford, Billbrook or Carhampton.

First Bus apologise for the inconvenience caused by the works.

**Deadline looms for 2022 school places**

Somerset parents and carers are being urged to apply for school places online and on time. Whether the child is starting school for the first time, or transferring to their next school, applications need to be made through Somerset County Council’s website: [www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions.](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions.%0d%0d)

For secondary school places, applications opened on Monday 13 September 2021 and must be submitted before **Sunday 31 October 2021**. This applies to all children moving from primary to secondary school, or middle to upper school, in September 2022.

Deadline reminder emails and/or letters will be sent to parents on the Council’s database who have not yet applied but the responsibility for getting applications in on time lies with parents and guardians.

**Exmoor National Park (ENP)**

**Plant a Tree for COP26**

Exmoor National Park are calling for green-fingered volunteers to help with planting and growing young trees this Autumn. As the UK prepares to welcome world leaders to the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow at the end of the month, they are keen to send out the message that Exmoor is doing its bit and remind people that no single person’s actions are too small.

Here are three ways you can support tree planting on Exmoor this Autumn:

* Sign up to collect and grow tree seeds on Exmoor towards the new tree nursery.
* **Come to the tree planting weekend at Bye Wood on 6 and 7 November**
* Dedicate a tree through the CareMoor Woods & Trees Appeal.

Find out how to support the appeal and sign up to tree planting eventsat**:**[www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/caremoor](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/caremoor).

Please [click here](https://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/about-us/press-room/press-room/news-2021/plant-a-tree-for-cop26) to read the full press release.

**Exmoor Dark Skies Festival 2021**

Exmoor National Park is celebrating ten years as Europe's first International Dark Sky Reserve and is inviting visitors to join them at one or more of the events during this year's Exmoor Dark Skies Festival.

A night-time adventure on board open top bus 'the Exmoor Coaster' with an expert astronomer is just one of the brand-new experiences on offer for those lucky enough to secure tickets at this year’s [Exmoor Dark Skies Festival,](https://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=0013UsdfS7_BQWbW42ZcJPxAU038JLLBqmS9phxkTeLGWzRm4yhcAZQEgP5QIEFegXQZRspznNz6nVKa6x1UDJb5KctB7fpsE3Ho5-YOzy4G8raH3RliXXgEZXN7f71_tCMUbfAz7VQr_cGjJ8OxCeLDljYotXssfn0f19bPcND2Phgtk53mkErNm29fCny9LE2&c=SG6uY6lN8NQhXi0YZeG70H4X702SM7TBc4XLN-KtSl0M4fIT3Z7crQ==&ch=AllBXo5-p9BXkk-LGfwIoQ4o_Yt7JgQrOAh3zo996MqfFYUXBuazWg==) running from **22 October to 7 November 2021.**

The full programme has just been announced, with printed copies available free from National Park Centres at Dunster, Dulverton and Lynmouth and online at [www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/darkskiesfestival.](https://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=0013UsdfS7_BQWbW42ZcJPxAU038JLLBqmS9phxkTeLGWzRm4yhcAZQEgP5QIEFegXQZRspznNz6nVKa6x1UDJb5KctB7fpsE3Ho5-YOzy4G8raH3RliXXgEZXN7f71_tCMUbfAz7VQr_cGjJ8OxCeLDljYotXssfn0f19bPcND2Phgtk53mkErNm29fCny9LE2&c=SG6uY6lN8NQhXi0YZeG70H4X702SM7TBc4XLN-KtSl0M4fIT3Z7crQ==&ch=AllBXo5-p9BXkk-LGfwIoQ4o_Yt7JgQrOAh3zo996MqfFYUXBuazWg==" \t "_blank)

Please [click here](https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Exmoor-Dark-Skies-Festival-2021---News.html?soid=1102765974837&aid=7Et00oIB0FQ) to find out more.

**Somerset Catchment Partnership**

**Somerset Water Forum 2021**

The inaugural Somerset Water Forum will be held on **Friday 19November**, 10am to 4pm, at the Junction 24 Conference Centre in North Petherton near Bridgwater.

The Forum is being organised by Somerset Catchment Partnership (hosted by FWAG SW), Somerset Rivers Authority and the Environment Agency.

The event’s main subjects include flooding, climate change, farming, water quality, and nature.

You can learn about what is happening in Somerset with these issues, ask questions, and pick up locally useful ideas and information.

To find out more – and to book your place – go to : [Somerset Water Forum 2021 | Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West Limited (fwagsw.org.uk)](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fwagsw.org.uk%2FEvent%2F2021-somerset-water-forum&data=04%7C01%7CJHudston%40somerset.gov.uk%7C1aa8e8d7ec734b9654f308d993d7c4e9%7Cb524f606f77a4aa28da2fe70343b0cce%7C0%7C0%7C637703377201647392%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=Rzdg6jyDO6BEDiMqVrb%2Bc8kFUeOvVeWpfBk%2BETepeJE%3D&reserved=0).

If you have any questions, please email James Maben or Ellen James at FWAG SW ([James.maben@fwagsw.org.uk](mailto:James.maben@fwagsw.org.uk) or [ellen.james@fwagsw.org.uk](mailto:ellen.james@fwagsw.org.uk)) or [sra@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:sra@somerset.gov.uk).

**Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA)**

**Heroes in Headsets**

International control room week highlights the amazing work of all the staff in control rooms. The week takes place annually to raise awareness and thank the dedicated staff who work behind the scenes but are crucial to delivering front line response to emergency teams.

Daily, call handlers speak to members of the public in difficult, often tense, and pressurised situations.

The 999 line is for emergencies, the call handlers are trained to obtain and gather information quickly and accurately so control room dispatchers can assess the information and make sure the correct resource is allocated to an incident.

The MCA really hope you never need them but if you’re ever in trouble at the coast or at sea, their teams will send the help you need, 365 days a year.

Please [click here](https://hmcoastguard.blogspot.com/2021/10/international-control-room-week-what.html?fbclid=IwAR1EtKP9LfLZQ74YDe-JiMwiRCpeni7MGrzfa3e2xdegP3SrBO_exNgctDI) to get a small insight into the difficult but vital work they do.

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

**Beware of Flood Water!**

This week the Fire Service experienced a high volume of calls due to heavy rain and flooding across Devon and Somerset. Overnight on Wednesday 20 October they logged almost 300 calls. DSFRS need to keep their emergency lines open for genuine emergencies so please only call them if there is a life risk.

If you’re out and about in your car, please don’t drive through flood water. It’s dangerous. Choose an alternative route. It only takes a few inches of water to float a car.

If you do try to drive through flood water and get stuck, get out of the vehicle and arrange for recovery, but please note DSFRS **do not** recover vehicles.

Please [click here](https://www.gov.uk/help-during-flood?utm_source=Facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=Orlo) for advice about flooding.

**Community Support – What help is out there?**

**Voluntary and Community Sector Support**

**Spark Somerset**

**Online Child Protection Basic Awareness Training**

**Monday 25 October** **2021, 1pm – 5.30pm**

Develop your existing knowledge of child safeguarding and gain new skills to help you keep children safe. Spaces are free but strictly limited to two per organisation on a first come, first served basis. This is an online session. The link to the Zoom meeting will be sent once the place has been confirmed.

Please [click here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/child-protection-basic-awareness-tickets-186561549617) to find out more and book your place.

**Online Trustee Training**

**Tuesday 2 November 2021, 10am – 1pm**

This online session is aimed at anyone who is a trustee, or is thinking about becoming one and wants to understand the role and responsibilities that come with it.

Taking place during Trustees’ Week, this session will cover key roles and responsibilities, the Charity Code of Governance, collaborative working, board development, and much more. Tickets are £20 per person.

Please [click here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/trustee-training-tickets-169279827521) to find out more and book you place.

**Community Council for Somerset (CCS)**

**Somerset Diverse Communities – Small Grants Fund**

Somerset Diverse Communities is a project aiming to bring people from diverse backgrounds together. It hopes to support and build relationships with groups and organisations who are supporting or working with black and minority ethnic communities in Somerset. They want to celebrate and share the diversity in the county; bringing people together, developing skills and building long term relationships.

A grant of up to £500 is available for community groups, charities, organisations and agencies that support or directly work with BAME communities in Somerset.

The funding must be used for non-profit making purposes and can include community events, running costs to support a community group, group training sessions to build skills, materials for community activities, promotion of the group.

The Small Grant Fund application deadline date **31 October 2021.**

Please [click here](https://ccslovesomerset.org/app/uploads/2021/09/Funding-Information-2021-2022-Phase-8.pdf) to find out more information and application details.

**Somerset Community Foundation (SCF)**

**Reminder - Festive Fund to combat loneliness**

Christmas can be a difficult time for some of our neighbours, and this year will be a tough Christmas again for many in the wake of the coronavirus. SCF want to support groups that can help to reduce loneliness and spread warmth and cheer through food and activities around the festive period.

The money can be used towards the cost of providing food and/or festive activities for isolated people between December and January. The grant is supported by Somerset businesses and the SCF Surviving Winter Fund.

Applications must be submitted by **Friday 29 October 2021**.

Please [click here](https://www.somersetcf.org.uk/festivefund) to find out more about eligibility and make an application.

**National Community Lottery Fund (NCLF)**

**Together for Our Planet**

In November 2021, the UK will host the [26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26)](https://ukcop26.org/) in Glasgow. The UK Government’s [Together for Our Planet](https://together-for-our-planet.ukcop26.org/) initiative has been created to engage people with COP26 and inspire positive climate action. National Lottery funding will support this by helping communities to take action on climate change.

Building on interest and excitement for this international conference, the NCLF hope to nurture and develop local ideas through this funding, supporting a legacy of ongoing climate action projects in hundreds of communities across the UK.

Projects should reflect what matters to your community and can be small in scale. They could cover an area like:

* food
* transport
* energy
* waste and consumption
* the natural environment.

The application deadline is **5pm on 18 November 2021.**

Please [click here](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/together-for-our-planet) to find out more information.

**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](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-and-support-if-your-business-is-affected-by-coronavirus-covid-19) for further information.

**Health and Welfare**

**COVID-19**

**Somerset COVID Cases**

In the week up to 9 October approximately 90,981 tests were carried out across the county with 2,044 new confirmed cases. The rates have slightly decreased to 363.6 per 100,000, which is above the South-West but below the national average. **However due to the recent lab testing issue, these figures are likely to be an underestimate**.

Hospitalisation data for Somerset has risen since last week with just over 50 COVID-19 in patients in Somerset hospitals.

**Have you had your jabs? Update on COVID-19 Booster Programme**

Vaccines are the best way to protect people from COVID-19 and have already saved thousands of lives. Use the link below to find out more about where the local ‘Grab a Jab’ clinics are taking place this week. [COVID-19 vaccinations in Somerset - Somerset CCG](https://www.somersetccg.nhs.uk/health/local-services/health-services-during-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccinations-in-somerset/).

The NHS are now rolling out the [COVID-19 Booster Vaccination Programme](https://www.somersetccg.nhs.uk/nhs-somerset-begins-covid-19-booster-vaccination-campaign/)across Somerset to those who are eligible. You do not need to contact the NHS to arrange your booster vaccine. Once you have received the national invitation you will be able to go on the **National Booking site:**[nhs.uk/CovidVaccination](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/) or call 119.

It is important to note that even if you fal**l**within one of the early cohorts (due to your age or existing health conditions) you will onlybe eligible for your COVID-19 booster **vaccine at least 6 months after your second vaccine dose.**

The booster programme will be delivered through existing and additional vaccination sites including pharmacies, hospital hubs, some GP practices and vaccine centres. Care home residents and staff will be prioritised ensuring they are offered a vaccine by the beginning of November.

**Clinton’s COVID Catch Up**

In last weeks’ film, Clinton discussed the national vaccination programme for 12-15 year olds and the importance it plays in protecting young people and keeping their education moving forwards.

In this week’s Film, Clinton interviews parents doing their bit to support their child’s education by taking regular lateral flow tests and wearing face coverings in crowded areas. Watch the film [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9rZK-uEIdE).

**Vaccination Programme for 12–15-year-olds**

The UK’s Chief Medical Officers (CMOs) all agree that while COVID-19 is typically mild or asymptomatic in most young people, 1 dose of the vaccine will provide good protection against severe illness and hospitalisation and help reduce disruption to education and minimise the risk of spread of COVID-19 within schools.

Invitations for the jabs have begun and parental, guardian or carer consent will be sought by vaccination healthcare staff prior to vaccination. This is a well-established process used for all school vaccination programmes.

The Somerset Foundation Trust manage the childhood immunisation programme with SAINT (School Age Immunisation Nursing Team, part of the NHS). SAINT deliver the nasal flu vaccination to all schools in Somerset between October and December every year.

This year, the COVID-19 and flu vaccines are being rolled out together for 12-15-year-olds through the schools’ immunisation programme. The role of schools is to facilitate access for those who wish to receive the vaccine.

The vaccine is not mandatory; the decision to have the vaccine is a personal decision. No vaccine will be given to any child without parental consent being sought.

**Stay safe and help prevent the spread of COVID-19**

Coronavirus remains a serious health risk. You should stay cautious to help protect yourself and others.

* Meet outside, or open windows and doors for indoor visitors
* If you think you have symptoms stay at home and [take a PCR test](https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test)
* Wear face coverings in crowded places and on public transport
* Check in to venues when you go out
* Wash your hands with soap regularly, and for at least 20 seconds
* [Get vaccinated](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/).

**Twice weekly testing**

For people who do not have symptoms of COVID-19, it remains very important to

participate in twice weekly asymptomatic testing if you are out and about and meeting up with people. Please make sure that you take a test **before** you travel anywhere and if it is positive, stay at home and arrange a PCR test.

**Anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms, should book a PCR and not attend school or work.** Do not take a LFD if symptomatic. PHE advise all parents, staff and pupils to take the supervised PCR testing route where available**.** Ask for this when you arrive at the test centre and someone will take the swab for you to maximise the quality of the test.

Please continue to use LFD and PCR tests as you normally would, the SCC PH advice remains, if you are showing any symptoms of COVID-19, or have a positive LFD test get a PCR test and if this is positive stay at home and self-isolate for ten days to avoid infecting others.

SCC PH advice remains consistent with national guidance:

* Only use twice weekly LFD testing for asymptomatic cases
* Make sure you do an LFD according to the instructions and at least 30 minutes after eating or drinking
* If you get a positive LFD or have symptoms, self isolate and get a PCR and **use the supervised PCR testing route at test centre to get the best quality test**

You are reminded that if you have previously received a positive Covid PCR test result, you should not re-test yourself by either using a rapid lateral flow kit or by having another PCR test within 90 days of the first positive result **unless** you develop any new symptoms of COVID-19.

If you’d like to know more, a video which shows you how to use the Lateral Flow kit can be viewed [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MLall_7dybQ). By testing yourself regularly you are helping to reduce the spread of the infection.

**All COVID-19 Restrictions in England now lifted**

Please refer to the links below for the latest Coronavirus-related advice, help and guidance, should you need any help in the future.

* [Order your lateral flow tests online](https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests?fbclid=IwAR2Gz7M-EdRU2suvvtphFEvdKcWW-kU5d8kVWHXYmKE1-TIXAS2_7hYp_yE)
* [How to do a COVID-19 lateral flow test](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9XR8RZxKNo)
* [Log your lateral flow results here](https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result)
* [Book or request a PCR test online](https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test)
* [List of local pharmacies offering lateral flow testing](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus/covid-19-lateral-flow-test/)
* Somerset COVID-19 Local Outbreak Management Plan Dashboard
* <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
* [NHS – Help and Advice](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/)

The situation is being reviewed on a daily basis to ensure that the Council follows the [latest advice from Public Health England.](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance)

[Click here](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-and-information/) to read up to date information on how SWT continues to respond to Coronavirus.

**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](http://www.corona-helpers.co.uk).

**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

**FAQ**

**Q. I recently had a negative PCR test following a positive LFD result, but have symptoms and feel unwell. What should I do now?**

**A.** A negative result means it’s likely you are not infectious.

But a negative test is not a guarantee you do not have COVID-19 and there’s still a chance you may be infectious. You should follow advice on [how to avoid catching and spreading the virus](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/how-to-avoid-catching-and-spreading-coronavirus-covid-19/).

If you still feel unwell after a negative test, stay at home until you're feeling better. Contact a GP if your symptoms get worse or do not go away.

Check with your employer before going back to work.

If you're being sick, have diarrhoea or have a high temperature, stay at home until 48 hours after they've stopped.

If you get COVID-19 symptoms after the test, you need to get tested again.

More advice and guidance can be found [here.](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/test-results/negative-test-result/)

**Q. My child has already had COVID-19. Should they still get the vaccine?**

**A.** Yes, they should be vaccinated regardless of whether they have already had a COVID-19 infection because:

* research has not yet shown how long people who have had COVID-19 are protected from getting it again after they recover
* vaccination helps to boost your protection, even if you’ve already had

COVID-19.

**Crime / Safeguarding**

**National Crime Agency**

**Do you know what an unexplained wealth order is?**

They require individuals to provide a statement explaining how they obtained their assets and can be applied to serious criminals who have unexplained wealth of over £50k in the UK. [Click here](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=364031448697954&ref=sharing) to learn more.

**Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking**

Some people are forced to undertake sex work against their will. This is modern slavery. Recently, the National Crime Agency raised awareness about the threat of sexual exploitation, how offenders operate, how to spot the signs and how you can help combat this crime.

[Click here](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=266934365245638) to watch a short video that addresses these crimes.

**Avon and Somerset Police (ASP)**

**Anti-Slavery Day**

To mark Anti-slavery day, Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Mark Shelford spoke to [Unseen & the Modern Slavery Helpline](https://www.facebook.com/unseenuk/?__cft__%5b0%5d=AZVPrYUGW8L_wyTxVWLXRGynpEDgiJLso1tBt4UEij3CmPy7gmUEDD1O-yvX1t0adg53vvyscn2ihyHlKiPSFH_JijTCAjx6yz4iMvd1amMdpaTfOmLhdFhq86P7teYupN2-OIygIrGgpaUtrwxZoeoUc3lCqx7l1sz69i-Ts7u2vw&__tn__=kK-R) to find out about the work they do to support victims of modern slavery and exploitation.

Please [click here](https://fb.watch/8KjGzUrsBY/) to view the video.

Find out how to spot the signs of modern slavery and exploitation to protect vulnerable people in our communities [here](https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/report/modern-slavery/?fbclid=IwAR04inBgnZhdjxVyczYAFfAO8BaZWkCt8oTM-2a_YqOzGaG8UWAVQyBZC34).

**Feedback invited for the Draft Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025**

One of the [PCC’s statutory duties](https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/about/role-of-the-pcc/)is to issue a Police and Crime Plan for the force area. This plan will include various aspects about policing of the area, how the Chief Constable will be held to account and how the PCC will use the money to deliver an effective and efficient police service and support other services such as victim support.

The PCC’s priorities and objectives are the cornerstone of a Police and Crime Plan. As the PCC is the bridge between local people and the police, it is essential that they consult with the public, including victims of crime, about their proposed Police and Crime Plan and direction for policing in the area.

Please [click here](https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/about/draft-police-and-crime-plan-2021-2025/?fbclid=IwAR1YJ6zQpyvwp8PM5ESNNSh4tz-SgiTTMI8KEqUeK_9NGZ83zr7Pm4up57g) to find out more.

**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](https://www.facebook.com/aspmineheadwestsomerset)
* [Wellington Neighbourhood Policing](https://www.facebook.com/aspwellington)
* [Taunton Neighbourhood Policing](https://www.facebook.com/ASPTaunton)
* [Sedgemoor and Hinkley Point Neighbourhood Policing](https://www.facebook.com/aspsedgemoor)

**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.](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public)

For quick up to date information regarding SWT services please follow us on Facebook www.facebook.com/SWTCouncil/ or Twitter @swtcouncil

Please see our dedicated [webpage](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/news/coronavirus-covid-19-information-and-advice/) for updates.

If you have concerns about your own health and Coronavirus please visit the [NHS](https://www.nhs.uk/) website.