

Somerset West and Taunton

Newsletter to SWT Councillors and Parish Councils.

Issue 22. Week ending 23/08/20

#StayAlert #Controlthevirus#SaveLives

Up to date information on the Council's response can be found on the SWT website:

<https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-and-information/>

SWT Council priorities

Somerset West and Taunton Council's updated priorities during the coronavirus outbreak 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](#).

Key Messages this week

1. VJ DAY Commemorations

Taunton's 40 Commando Royal Marines and the Mayor of Taunton hosted a COVID-secure service to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VJ Day. The event to recognise Victory over Japan, marking the end of the Second World War, took place on Saturday 15 August at the 40 Commando base in Norton Manor Camp.

Attendees included the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Somerset, The High Sheriff of Somerset, and Civic leaders from SWT and Somerset County Council alongside serving Armed Forces personnel and veterans.

Whilst VE Day (Victory in Europe) marked the end of the war in Europe in May 1945, many thousands of Armed Forces personnel were still engaged in

bitter fighting in the Far East. VJ Day marks the day Japan surrendered on the 15 August 1945, which in effect ended the Second World War.

Taunton's VJ Day commemoration thanking them for their service and sacrifice is traditionally held in Vivary Park but COVID-19 restrictions have meant changes to the format of many Civic events this year. 40 Commando agreed to hold the event at Norton Manor Camp with a service and small reception for up to 30 people. The wet weather didn't stop proceedings with a quick move indoors for the service followed by the placing of wreaths in the Memorial Garden.

A short video of the wreath placing has been uploaded to SWT YouTube channel can be found [here](#). The Mayor also placed a wreath at the Memorial in Vivary Park.

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

- Tuesday 25 August - **Special Full Council**, 6.15pm (deadline for public questions or statements is 4pm on Thursday 20 August). Items on the agenda include Hinkley Point C Housing Strategy (Phase 3) and Discretionary Rate Relief Policy. There is also a confidential item (due to commercial sensitivity) on the Leisure Contract.
- Thursday 27 August - **Taunton Charter Trustees**, 6pm (deadline for public questions or statements is 10am on Tuesday 25 August)
- Wednesday 2 September - **Scrutiny Committee**, 6.15pm (deadline for public questions or statements is 4pm on Thursday 27 August - due to the Bank Holiday)
- Thursday 3 September - **Planning Committee**, 1pm (deadline for public questions or statements is 4pm on Friday 28 August)
- Monday 7 September - **Audit, Governance and Standards Committee**, 6.15pm (deadline for public questions or statements is 4pm on Wednesday 2 September)

The meetings will 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.

Members of the public are still able to participate in the meeting by submitting their questions or statement to the Governance Team via governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk and these will be read out by an officer at the meeting. Please see the dates listed above re deadlines for submitting questions or statements.

SWT Councillors are reminded that if they do not wish to receive paper copies of agendas to please let the Governance Team know.

3. Reminder - BT Phone Box Removal Consultation

SWT has previously reported on BT's proposal to remove 23 payphones across the District due to them not being used enough. BT is proposing to remove them under a 90 day consultation process. The first consultation stage ends on **Friday 28 August 2020 at 12 noon**.

SWT welcomes your feedback on whether the payphones are still needed and would appreciate your help. If you haven't done so already, please email your responses to governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk.

All responses are required whether you wish to accept or reject the closure of the payphone.

4. Business Grant Schemes Now Closed

Please note that the following grant schemes are now closed;

- The Small Business Grant Scheme
- Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Grant Scheme
- The Discretionary Business Grant Scheme

SWT is now unable to accept any further applications. If you are looking for information on other business support announced by Government, please [click here](#).

5. Parking charges set to resume

Charging will be reintroduced in Somerset West and Taunton owned car parks from Monday 31 August.

The Council introduced free parking at the start of the Coronavirus lockdown and extended the offer as part of its wider plan to support the re-opening of High Streets and help rejuvenate the local economy.

It has taken the decision to start charging again in line with other district councils in Somerset, although key health workers who display permits provided by their NHS Trust can continue to park for free.

Signage will be placed in the car parks reminding people that charges now apply.

All SWT car parks are now fully open except Paul Street Car Park where the top three levels remain closed until they can be opened safely under Covid-19 guidance.

SWT recently reopened levels 2 and 2A providing an additional 37 car parking spaces for Blue Badge holders and enabling the Shopmobility Taunton service to resume. The Shopmobility service run by Compass Disability Services, is open from 11.30am - 3.30pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. More information can be found on their website <http://www.shopmobilitytaunton.org.uk/>

6. SWP Sites and Services

The Met Office has forecast some windy weather in Somerset over the next few days, so Somerset Waste Partnership has issued some top tips to help you stop your recycling and rubbish escaping with these simple steps:

- Squash all materials except glass and aerosols
- Stack recycling boxes with the lighter one below, the heavier one above, and the locked food bin on top
- If possible, put waste containers in a sheltered yet visible spot
- Put recycling and rubbish out just before 7am on the due date.

Other options worth considering:

- Put out only what you are sure will stay secure and, if you have space, store the rest for next time
- If you have time and transport or help from friend, neighbour or relative, take it all to a recycling site.

To view details of all sites open (and safety guidance) click [here](#).

Please [click here](#) for up to date notifications from SWP Somerset.

Keep up with weather warnings and all waste information by following [@Somersetwaste](#) on Facebook and Twitter.

Sign up [here](#) to subscribe to e-news.

Partner Engagement - Key messages from other Public Service Areas

Somerset County Council (SCC)

Highway Maintenance Update

SCC Highways are currently focusing on the routine tasks of gully emptying, safety defect repairs and patching. You may well also see the carriageway surface dressing team out and about, carrying out aftercare tasks on the dressings that were laid in June.

Weather conditions over the last couple of weeks have been (to say the least!) changeable. Some of these could have been described as seasonal and some most definitely not! The extremely hot temperatures of the previous week ended inevitably in a series of thunderstorms running over several days. On this occasion SCC Highways didn't have any issues with melting roads; however, they did experience a number of issues with flash flooding at localised places across the Somerset West and Taunton district area.

After a brief interlude, a deep Atlantic Low barrelled in from the west named "Storm Ellen". These are conditions more typical of autumn. In August, though, with trees still in full leaf, very windy weather such as that caused by "Ellen" can be very disruptive by bringing trees down and snapping off branches. SCC Highways have road crews available during normal working hours and also out-of-hours to deal with and clear up anything that falls on to the road. They also have specialist tree surgeons available too, if heavier equipment, such as chainsaws, are required.

Rural verge cutting on the "A" and "B" road network continues. More information on this can be found on the [Travel Somerset website](#).

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

Emergency Road Closure: South Street, Taunton

Please be aware of an emergency road closure at **South Street, Taunton**, which will commence on **Tuesday 25 August 2020** and is expected to last until **Saturday 29 August 2020** (the closure is between the hours of 00:00 - 23:59).

These works are for Wessex Water to carry out works to replace communication pipe relay.

For any further information about this closure please contact Wessex Water on (0345) 600 4600, quoting reference: ttr0389570TD - South Street, Taunton.

Please [click here](#) to view a map of the affected area.

Self Employed to Benefit from Second Stage of Support Scheme

Millions of self-employed people whose livelihoods have been affected by coronavirus will be able to claim a second payment of up to £6,570 as the Government continues to help drive the UK's recovery.

The second stage of Self Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) opened for applications on 17 August and those eligible will receive a government grant worth

up to £6,570. HMRC will contact all potentially eligible customers to advise them that they can claim for a second and final SEISS grant.

Eligible customers will be informed that they will be able to make their claim for the second and final grant at any time from a specified date, until the scheme closes on 19 October 2020.

Please [click here](#) to read more about the SEISS whilst particular guidance on how the grant works can be found [here](#).

Kick Start Grant- Tourism and Business Recovery

The Government confirmed [£10 million of funding to boost tourism](#) and a further [£20 million to boost business recovery](#) in England. The Kickstart Grant Scheme will give small businesses grants of up to £5,000 to help them adapt their businesses following the pandemic.- to register your interest, please complete the [online contact form](#) and reference 'Kickstart Grant Scheme' in the Enquiry Message section. You will be contacted when more information is available.

Exam Results...

Did you or someone you know receive disappointing exam results this week? If you're feeling down about what you received, remember that you aren't alone and that help is available. Please [click here](#) for more info on the support available for young people.

HM Coastguard Watchet

This week HM Coastguard Watchet were tasked to Minehead to assist HM Coastguard Minehead and Exmoor Search & Rescue Team with a Search for a high risk missing person on the request of Avon and Somerset Police

On the team's arrival in Minehead an update was received that the missing person who had been reported by family as overdue from an earlier dog walk, was in company with Police Officers on North Hill, Minehead safe and well.

Based on the initial information passed by the Police in line with HM Coastguard Watchet 'lost and missing persons search' (LMPS) training, the location of the missing person was within the planned search area. Both Watchet and Minehead Coastguard Teams were stood down and returned to their stations.

Remember in a coastal emergency to dial 999 and ask for the Coastguard.

#ToSearchToRescueToSave

Community Support - What help is out there?

Voluntary and Community Sector Support

Fortnightly Newsletter - Next Edition out 28 August 2020

SWT continues to produce a fortnightly e-newsletter to support the work of the voluntary and community sector across the district. SWT is now seeking feedback

on the VCS newsletter and would be grateful if you could please [complete a short survey](#). It should only take 3-4 minutes. Thank you.

Somerset Libraries

Escape, relax and recharge - with Somerset Libraries. Discover a world of books, audiobooks, magazines and even newspapers - all FREE! Please [click here](#) for further information.

Not a library member? No problem - please [click here](#) to get started today.

Great British September Clean

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is proudly supporting and endorsing the Great British September Clean taking place from the **11 to 27 September**, and the Great British Beach Clean, taking place from **18 to 25 September**.

Defra are seeking to encourage as many people and businesses as possible to participate in these events, whilst following government guidance on staying safe outside their home.

For more information about the **Great British September Clean** and how you can get involved, please [click here](#).

You can find out how to take part in the **Great British Beach Clean** by [clicking here](#).

Reminder to Eat Out to Help Out

Don't forget, until **31 August**, you can get a 50% discount when you eat in at restaurants that are registered with the [#EatOuttoHelpOut](#) Scheme. The deal offers diners the chance to benefit from a 50% discount, up to a maximum of £10 per person, on food and non-alcoholic drinks, any Monday to Wednesday. No voucher is required. Diners can take advantage of the offer as many times as they like during the month.

Stickers and posters are in the windows of restaurants, cafes, bars and other eateries, and customers who want to take advantage of the scheme are advised to look out for the logo. You can search online for premises within a five-mile radius of your base that have signed up to the scheme [here](#).

Health and Welfare

The Somerset Bereavement Support Service

Somerset County Council has commissioned two leading charities to provide bereavement support for people in Somerset in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Somerset Bereavement Support Service will be delivered in partnership by end-of-life charity Marie Curie and mental health charity Mind in Somerset. If you have been bereaved and need emotional support or somebody to talk to please call **0800 304 7412** (Monday to Saturday 9am to 5pm).

Got COVID-19 Symptoms?

Anyone showing symptoms should book a test straightaway and self-isolate. Please [click here](#) to get a free NHS test to check if you have coronavirus. You can choose to take the test at a test site near you and get your result the following day or you can order a home test kit. There is another test, the [antibody test to check if you've had coronavirus](#). This is not widely available yet.

For help and advice on how Somerset is responding to the pandemic - and to see the latest Somerset Public Health coronavirus figures - please [click here](#).

Anyone who needs Coronavirus-related help and advice during the pandemic can phone a single helpline on **0300 790 6275**.

Travelling Abroad?

Further Government restrictions now apply to France, Netherlands, Monaco, Malta, Turks and Caicos, Aruba, Croatia, Austria and Trinidad and Tobago and they have been removed from the travel corridors list. But access to one country has been granted - the latest being Portugal.

If you arrive in England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland from any country not on the travel corridor exemption list you will need to self-isolate. As a result:

- People already in France, Netherlands, Monaco, Malta, Turks and Caicos, Aruba, Croatia, Austria and Trinidad and Tobago can stay for the remainder of their holiday and will have to self-isolate upon return for 2 weeks
- Advice against all but essential travel to countries that are not on the travel corridors list

Please [click here](#) to see the full list of countries where people **do not** have to self-isolate when arriving to the UK.

The Somerset Coronavirus Support Helpline

A 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
- 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.

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

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

[Public Health England](#)

[NHS - Help and Advice](#)

FAQS

Q. Should I be car sharing with a friend / colleague?

A. Commuters planning to car share are being advised to follow a set of rules to keep them and their passengers protected from coronavirus. People should limit sharing their car to people within their household or social bubble. But if that's impossible they should:

- share the transport with the same people each time
- keep to small groups of people at any one time
- open windows to allow air to circulate
- travel side by side or behind other people, rather than facing them, where possible
- try to keep as much distance as possible between each other

The driver should wear a face covering and ask their passengers to follow suit.

Good hygiene remains all-important - the vehicle should be cleaned between journeys, using standard cleaning products, with door handles and other areas people may touch cleaned thoroughly. At the start and end of each journey, remember to wash hands for at least 20 seconds if possible, or use a hand sanitiser.

Q. Can I go to the theatre or a concert?

A. You can now attend indoor and outdoor performances, for example dramatic, musical or comedy shows. If you are watching the performance, you should:

- sit with people from your household or support bubble
- socially distance from people you do not live with (or who are not in your support bubble)

Please [click here](#) for further information on visiting public places and taking part in activities.

Crime / Safeguarding

Avon & Somerset Police (A&SP)

Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) Sue Mountstevens and Chief Constable Andy Marsh Answer Questions

Last week Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Sue Mountstevens and Chief Constable Andy Marsh discussed anti-social driving, speeding, rural crime and careers in policing during their Facebook Video. If you missed it, please [click here](#) to catch up on the key points.

Avon and Somerset Police urges communities to look out for signs of domestic abuse

As lockdown measures continue to ease, Avon and Somerset Police is encouraging communities to look out for one another and know the signs of abuse. With more people out and about in social bubbles and contacting friends and family more frequently, it's important that we learn to recognise the signs of someone being abused, manipulated and controlled. Please [click here](#) to read more about how to recognise the signs that someone is being abused.

Avon and Somerset Police want to remind victims of domestic abuse that you are not alone and they can help you. They urge anyone who is in an abusive relationship, or anyone who suspects someone they know to be in an abusive relationship to call 101. If you or someone else you know is in immediate danger - call 999. If you can't speak, call 101 and dial 55, this will alert the phone operator who will put you straight through to the police.

For more information about organisations and services for domestic abuse victims, please visit: www.thisisnotanexcuse.org

Finally

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.

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