

**Newsletter to SWT Councillors and Parish Councils**

**Issue 110 Weeks ending 19/06/2022**

**SWT Council’s priority strategic themes and outcomes**

Somerset West and Taunton Council’s four strategic themes are as follows:

* Our Environment and Economy
* A Transparent and Customer Focused Council
* Homes and Communities
* An Enterprising Council

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

**Key Messages this week**

1. **Further consultation begins on local governance arrangements**

SWT Council has launched the second stage of public consultation on proposed changes to local governance arrangements including the creation of a new town council for Taunton.

The Council is consulting on the preferred options identified by the Community Governance Review Working Group and approved at a special meeting of the Full Council in March, following the initial consultation.

The recommendations made following the first stage of public consultation are detailed in the second stage consultation document which can be accessed here - [Community Governance Review for Taunton Second Stage - Somerset West & Taunton - Citizen Space (somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk)](https://yoursay.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/governance/cgr2/)

Local residents, businesses, parish councils and organisations are being invited to give their views on the Council’s recommendations **by 26 July 2022.**

Please [click here](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/news/further-consultation-begins-on-local-governance-arrangements/) to read the full press release.

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.

* **SWT Licensing Committee – Monday 20 June 2022,** in the JMR at 6.15pm. The agenda and report packs can be viewed on the [website](https://democracy.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=329&MId=3033). Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Thursday 16 June 2022.
* **Taunton Charter Trustees, Annual General Meeting – Tuesday 21 June 2022,** in the JMR at 6.00pm. The agenda and report packs can be viewed on the [website](https://democracy.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=405&MId=3137). Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Friday 17 June 2022.
* **SWT Planning Committee – Thursday 23 June 2022,** in the JMR at 1.00pm. The agenda and report packs can be viewed on the [website](https://democracy.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=330&MId=3113). Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Tuesday 21 June 2022.
* **SWT Community Scrutiny Committee – Wednesday 29 June 2022,** in the JMR at 6.15pm. Deadline for public questions is 4pm on Monday 27 June 2022.

Meetings will still all be live streamed so that members of the public can watch at home. To watch the live stream when the meeting commences, please visit the SWT website by [clicking here](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.

Please see the dateslisted above re deadlines for submitting questions or statements. Information on speaking at public meetings is available on the SWT [website](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/your-council/speaking-at-a-council-meeting/).

1. **Reminder - Town and Parish Register of Interest Forms**

Thank you to those town and parishes that have already returned their Register of Interest Forms. All Town and Parish Councillors are required to fill in a new Register of Interest (ROI) form. A form will need to be completed irrespective of whether they have been a Councillor before. SWT delete and securely destroy any previous ROI forms.

They will have 28 days to return their form following their declaration of acceptance of office. The email address to send the forms to is [governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk).  If any Councillors decide to print and send the forms in the post, please ensure that they are addressed as:

Governance Team

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Deane House,

Belvedere Road,

Taunton,

TA1 1HE

Once the forms arrive with the SWT Governance Team they will have signatures redacted, be scanned, and uploaded to the website. It is a legal requirement that the Monitoring Officer publishes all Register of Interest forms on the SWT website.  If any Councillors are concerned about this, please ask them to contact the Monitoring Officer to discuss.

Traditionally, some Town and Parish Councils have been better at returning their ROIs than others. This year the Monitoring Officer will give an update to each Ward Member (in mid to late June) on the returns that are missing so that this can be raised when they are attending the next Town or Parish Council meeting. Updates will also be regularly given to the Standards Committee.

1. **Armed Forces Day**

The Armed Forces Day flag is now flying at Deane House, Taunton and West Somerset House, [Williton](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/williton?__eep__=6&__cft__%5b0%5d=AZVgZZI18Y1cl66IiSNwrQ6w82uImCws-y_-mhjombANmV_r3vU0U79jAO_hlsfmTmEE0mVO3V-Vlrw7smTAKAvz7cAdfAEVZH2P4W6yumidrSIKN1yh-Mw2nBLgeBQbKelzDexq1By7Zvh67gwagQFjR7rE4fF3T7CE9PojUzitol0MoBYTIq4hJ8-w9Bn_ibA&__tn__=*NK-R) and will continue to fly leading up to [Armed Forces Day](https://www.facebook.com/armedforcesday?__cft__%5b0%5d=AZVgZZI18Y1cl66IiSNwrQ6w82uImCws-y_-mhjombANmV_r3vU0U79jAO_hlsfmTmEE0mVO3V-Vlrw7smTAKAvz7cAdfAEVZH2P4W6yumidrSIKN1yh-Mw2nBLgeBQbKelzDexq1By7Zvh67gwagQFjR7rE4fF3T7CE9PojUzitol0MoBYTIq4hJ8-w9Bn_ibA&__tn__=-%5dK-R) on Saturday 25 June.

In the ceremonies held on Monday 13 June to mark the occasion, we were reminded that our communities are made up of people from all backgrounds and experience. Military representatives spoke of the importance of a joined-up community in peace time, allowing for greater understanding when husbands, wives, parents, and children are called upon for active duty. They spoke of genuine gratitude for the support they receive.

Please [click here](https://www.facebook.com/SWTCouncil/photos/pcb.5289484627741507/5289424484414188/) to view the photographs.

1. **Free workshop for food and drink businesses**

A recent survey showed that Somerset food and drink businesses are facing several challenges - from concerns about food regulations and labelling to issues with training and supply chains.

In response to this, SWT and Sedgemoor District Council have teamed up with the Heart of the South West Growth Hub to organise an event specifically designed for businesses in the food and drink sector.

The Spotlight on Somerset Food and Drink event will give businesses the chance to hear directly from support providers, district authorities and regulators about the support that is available to them and how to overcome some of the challenges they face.

Please [click here](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/news/free-workshop-for-food-and-drink-businesses/) to read the full press release.

1. **Reminder - Council Tax Energy Rebate Payments**

If you are eligible to receive an energy rebate payment and have not yet received it, you can claim now.

SWT will make payment into your bank account. Payments cannot be made by cash or cheque.

For those households who do not submit a claim by the end of June, £150 will be paid direct to their Council Tax account and a revised bill will be issued showing the effect this has made to their account.

Please [click here](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/council-tax/energy-support-payments/?fbclid=IwAR08cUQjDa5oBz1epvMZWu2m8-3FZakSZ2ObHxEM0UEB7AmH0invL1mzHiA) to find out more information and submit a claim for energy rebate.

Claims can also be made over the telephone on [0300 304 8000](tel:03003048000) Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm. The same details will be required as for online claims.

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

**Don’t hedge your bets, renew garden waste now**

Tens of thousands of residents are being reminded to renew their price-frozen garden waste collection. Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) is sending reminders to the 56,000-plus green-fingered subscribers.

For the second year in a row, the price for the 25-collection annual service is £57.20.

Most subscribers need to renew by 4 July to ensure an uninterrupted service for the next 12 months.

For those due to renew on 4 July the reminder email or letter will arrive by the middle of June and for the first time these have been sent by SWP rather than district councils.

But there is no need to wait for the reminder, subscribers can renew now and the quickest and easiest way to sign-up again, 24/7 is online [somersetwaste.gov.uk/garden-waste-collections/](https://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/garden-waste-collections/)

Last year, the service went stickerless, with crews using in-cab tech and real-time information to know who has subscribed and needs a collection. This makes it even more important for you to renew on time.

New subscribers can now sign-up to the service at any time of the year and will be reminded to renew roughly a month before their subscription expires.

A 10-pack of 90-litre garden waste sacks can also be ordered at a cost of £28.30, with requests for collection made online.

Customers unable to use the internet can also renew their garden waste subscription, sign-up for the service or order garden waste sack collections by telephoning their district council.

**6am starts for crews as temperatures soar**

Recycling and rubbish collections have been starting an hour earlier this week in response to rising temperatures.

Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) is asking residents to make sure their waste is ready for collection from 6am putting it out the night before if needed.

Temperatures were forecast to increase from Wednesday 15 June peaking on Friday 17 June.

Waste collection is hard, physical work and early starts help limit the time crews spend working in the hottest part of the day.

The early starts may continue into next week, depending on forecasts.

**A good way of keeping up with collection news is to use the My Collection Day feature on the SWP homepage** [somersetwaste.gov.uk](https://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/)

You can use it to download your collection days into thecalendar on your laptop or mobile device - it works for Apple and Android devices and sets up automatic reminders, so you need never miss a collection again.

Or you can use the same feature to just check your days online or download a printable copy of your collection day calendar.

You can also check the 12-month calendar that was sent to all homes as part of the roll-out of the new Recycle More service. In some parts of the county, the calendar will cover the Jubilee changes.

**New Council for Somerset**

**Have your say on how Somerset should prioritise £7m UK Shared Prosperity funding**

A questionnaire is now open giving Somerset residents and businesses the chance to have their say on how more than £7m of funding should be spent to help build pride in local communities and increase life chances.

Somerset has been allocated a total of £7.26m of funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to invest in the area between 2022 and 2025.

The funding forms part of the Government’s national Levelling Up agenda, and now Somerset is developing a Local Investment Plan to support the key objectives of the fund.

SCC are seeking thoughts from Somerset businesses and residents on how they think the funding should be prioritised. A questionnaire is now live, and can be found on the UKSPF page on the Somerset County Council website: [UK Shared Prosperity Fund (somerset.gov.uk)](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.somerset.gov.uk%2Fbusiness-and-economy%2Fbusiness-support%2Fuk-shared-prosperity-fund%2F&data=05%7C01%7CSXSalter%40somerset.gov.uk%7Cc3136898be3e4762907308da4ade8f29%7Cb524f606f77a4aa28da2fe70343b0cce%7C0%7C0%7C637904616978673458%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=GTe1l56ev41eAuuGnKTegit9pXVZswDHh1BUXlFSMGE%3D&reserved=0).

The questionnaire will be open until **24 June 2022**. The responses will help inform the priorities for the Local Investment Plan, which will then be submitted to Government for consideration. SCC hope to be able to begin delivering activity in Autumn 2022.

Please [click here](https://somersetnewsroom.com/2022/06/16/have-your-say-on-how-somerset-should-prioritise-7m-uk-shared-prosperity-funding/) to read the full press release.

**Arts front and centre thanks to funding award**

Arts and culture across Somerset are set to benefit from the creation of a Somerset Cultural Strategy following a £30,000 grant awarded by Arts Council England.

Over the next year, the aim is to produce a five-year cultural strategy for the new unitary Somerset Council which comes into being in April 2023. Community priorities will be included with details of how the cultural identity of Somerset is promoted to ensure arts and culture is embedded at the heart of the new authority’s strategic plans.

The project will consider how to raise awareness and promote the role that culture, and creativity can play in enriching communities and improving the quality of life, health, wellbeing and the local economy for Somerset residents, local businesses and visitors.

It will also help to create new employment opportunities and raise the profile of the county’s vibrant creative sector.

As well as the grant from the Arts Council, £5,000 has also been committed towards the strategy from each of the councils in Somerset - Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Somerset County Council, Somerset West and Taunton Council and South Somerset District Council.

Please [click here](https://newsomersetcouncil.org.uk/arts-front-and-centre-thanks-to-funding-award/) to read the full press release.

**National Association of Local Councils (NALC)**

**Survey on “Make A Change” resources**

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) invites local (parish and town) councillors and local councils, to complete their survey for the May 2022 local elections. The surveys are designed to collect data on the support, social media, promotion, planning, and resources that go into local elections. Furthermore, the final section of this survey will collect feedback on NALC's ‘Make A Change’ resources, to assess overall usage, what has been useful and what could be improved for the sector in 2023.

As local (parish and town) council elections took place in the SWT area, NALC are asking for your help to ensure that they engage with as many councillors and local councils as possible. The survey can be accessed via this [link](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/localelections2022) and takes no longer than 10 minutes to complete.

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

**Somerset County Council (SCC)**

**SCC Highway Maintenance Update**

Hot weather this week has allowed the Highways Team to complete many safety works and the planned works have continued well. SCC Highways are currently monitoring whether any roads are melting and will react accordingly.

The verge maintenance works on the A and B road networks have now completed and the team are moving on to the C and D road networks.

The surface dressing program commenced this week at Burrowbridge and will now move to the Blackdown Hills and Corfe (this is extremely weather dependent and cannot be carried out in heavy rain or extreme heat)

This week SCC Highways have successfully completed 110 Safety Defect repairs in the SWT Area (52 in Taunton and 58 in West Somerset).

**Works for week commencing 20 June 2022 are:**

* **New:** installation of 5 new cattle grid gates on **Exmoor**
* Continuing: Replacing post and rail fencing **Cothelstone Hill, Bishops Lydeard** (Road closure commencing **13 June 2022** for 15 days)
* Continuing**:** Drainage works at **Chilcombe Lane, Bicknoller**
* Completed: Resurfacing works at **Cher and Quirke Street, Minehead**
* Completed**:** Verge Works (concrete channel) at **Blackwater Lane, Wiveliscombe**
* Completed**:** Drainage works at **Holywell Lake, Wellington**
* Completed**:** Footway works at **Grange Drive Taunton**
* Completed: Works at **Chip Lane & Outer Circle Taunton**
* Completed: Footway resurfacing in at **Bradford on Tone Rd, Taunton**
* Completed: Carriageway patching at **A396 Bridgetown**
* Completed: Pedestrian safety barrier repairs**: Hamilton Road, Hurdle Way and A38 Musgrove entrance – Taunton**

For information on highway maintenance works and to stay up to date visit [www.travelsomerset.co.uk](http://www.travelsomerset.co.uk) or follow [@TravelSomerset](https://twitter.com/search?q=%40TravelSomerset&src=recent_search_click) on Twitter.

**Reporting a problem on the road**

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

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

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

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

Please [click here](https://somersetnewsroom.com/2021/12/13/reporting-a-problem-on-the-road-is-now-a-hole-lot-easier/) to read the full press release.

**Great Western Railway (GWR)**

**Community Investment Fund**

GWR has been working with the Department for Transport (DfT) on a new National Rail Contract and annual business plan for 2022/23 and is hopeful that they will have funding available to support community investment, using a new Community Fund.  GWR wants to support schemes and projects identified by the communities they serve, and are now asking for bids to be sent in.

There is a guide to bidding and very simple application form on the website, on <https://www.gwr.com/about-gwr/what-you-can-expect/community/community-investment>. You must apply online with a **deadline for entry of midnight Monday 27 June**.  GWR have made it as simple as possible; they want a very short description of the project, some information about you and your organisation and a breakdown of costs.  Projects should be completed by end of March 2023.

GWR are particularly interested in bids that show a tangible benefit to the community with an emphasis on inclusion and diversity, engagement and education, environmental benefit and increasing rail travel.    It would be great if the fund could help close the gap on projects where some existing funding has been secured or could be available from other sources. However, each proposal will be treated on its own merits and consideration of the benefit it would bring to the community, and GWR will happily fund projects without any match funding.

There are no hard and fast rules; as GWR wants to encourage bids of all shapes and sizes, though to be fair, as the funding needs to cover the whole rail network they are particularly keen on small and medium projects. This could include phased projects, for instance a bid for a feasibility study or some research, to support a larger project.

For more information and to discuss any ideas you have ahead of submission use this dedicated email address [CommunityFund@gwr.com](mailto:CommunityFund@gwr.com). GWR are keen to encourage as many bids as possible and look forward to hearing from you.

**Exmoor National Park Authority (ENP)**

**Exmoor Dark Skies Festival 2022 Programme Announced**

The programme of events for year’s Exmoor Dark Skies Festival (13-30 October 2022)has been released online at [www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/stargazing](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/stargazing).

Sponsored by **Somerset Business Agency CIC**, the festival is on track to be the biggest yet with well over fifty events already planned. This includes the popular planetarium sessions, set to return after a two-year break.

Please [click here](https://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/about-us/press-room/press-room/news-2022/dark-skies-festival-2022-programme-announced) to read the full press release.

**Somerset Wildlife Trust**

**The Great Somerset Wildlife Count 2022 (17-26 June)**

Somerset Wildlife Trust are running a big wildlife count over the next week and would love people to take part. All the information gathered will be used by conservation organisations across Somerset.

Take part in the Big Count by spotting and counting as many of our 12 species between 17 – 26 June. When you are out on a walk, exploring your local green space, on school grounds, at work, on a nature reserve – anywhere – Somerset Wildlife Trust need you to keep your eyes peeled for the special twelve! Take a snap and log it on the iNaturalist platform.

If you visit the Somerset Wildlife Trust's webpage you can also see photos of all the species plus other information about why these species have been picked. [Big Count Species | Somerset Wildlife Trust](https://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001qikg38NDP3l7gUqHdGBUTiB1Ce-wogYkNITreKT96w2_T-Uq8qbQDidrPYjy80mkmXP7BW9udfEqWuzV7dyhzexQRgkWgWb0Uc7x-oS-KsBtB3YLZlsq6yU8K3G30vv7qBLFh7djFf2VaMjuirzRjYFle2i3So1W5jVa6pt_6MgCE5aorG9KCUXY-lKeKO4ti6pHBCDcX2XbejuKmF1Xgkxd8j0LUdCV7X_Phc4IrJcegx1GU42sP08S_sf6yZs8&c=_q9gYjhNxudqtLrHAiuB92aTFIuUkg_Xn0lvWrL2xXDb959QM2shcQ==&ch=WSlC3ywf8eNjcIKmI2XYQwtkAWdhAdpVkoxDVFKWJ25kfdImXrqmGA==)

Carry on afterwards - Although the big count is for one week only, the team would love to see observations being logged all the time. If you haven't already you can join the National Parks Lookwild project on iNaturalist and carry-on longer term as well. <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/national-parks-uk-lookwild>.

**Maritime and Coastguard Agency**

**Don’t drink and drown**

Don’t drink and drown and be a statistic. Wednesday 15 June was [#NationalBeerDay](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/nationalbeerday?__eep__=6&__cft__%5b0%5d=AZUwctooDZ7_R0A7v0Pu49k52pV4OTs2K7TxoBWPA_AfPtPJ6hiik7YTtUkF08Whc74BZKc2KB6Gu2wSbHngpxkJOsLvxzXpo657MAEoOj-Gerk3ycAkgYjP9qoQ6Jj7l_6bZW3M7qPDPR7Qzor2bH281QcY12JIGzoibBFYgI6476y3cx05j3_8m17eyDU8BjDn3KcKo82NPjYY8hKkt7_w&__tn__=*NK-y-R) and, while the Coastguard would never want to stop the fun, they do want to remind you of the dangers of mixing alcohol and our coasts.

Did you know that 46% of people who drown had no intention of being in the water? And that nearly half of accidental drownings take place between May and August?

All it takes is a few drinks and one bad decision to leave you in trouble. Don’t let it happen to you. Avoid going near the water if you’ve had alcohol as slips, trips and falls are far more likely if you’ve had a tipple.

* Never enter the water (the average UK temp is a chilly 11 degrees – about the same as a pint of beer)
* Don’t walk home alone, check your mates are safe and avoid routes near water
* If you fall in unexpectedly [#FloatToLive](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/floattolive?__eep__=6&__cft__%5b0%5d=AZUwctooDZ7_R0A7v0Pu49k52pV4OTs2K7TxoBWPA_AfPtPJ6hiik7YTtUkF08Whc74BZKc2KB6Gu2wSbHngpxkJOsLvxzXpo657MAEoOj-Gerk3ycAkgYjP9qoQ6Jj7l_6bZW3M7qPDPR7Qzor2bH281QcY12JIGzoibBFYgI6476y3cx05j3_8m17eyDU8BjDn3KcKo82NPjYY8hKkt7_w&__tn__=*NK-y-R)

Please [click here](https://hmcoastguard.blogspot.com/2021/05/safety-spotlight-please-dont-be.html?fbclid=IwAR2OrkubQLnWv6Y4H4qU65BRl-TSB7Hu7S0C0wO_s2szr5tlDuTAgG3-KXY) for more safety advice from HM Coastguard on water safety.

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

**Voluntary and Community Sector Support**

**Community Employment Hubs**

**Jobs Fair – Thursday 30 June 10.00am – 2.00pm**

**The Castle Hotel, Castle Green, Taunton TA1 1NF**

Free to attend and open to all. Come and meet employers and find out about opportunities in the area. Access support to move into work or training.

Stands are FREE (set up from 9am) – to book a stand, please email [b.brown@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:b.brown@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk) ASAP. **Final deadline for booking is 24 June.**

**Somerset Financial Wellbeing Project**

Somerset County Council alongside four Somerset based credit unions; Westcountry Savings & Loans, Great Western Credit Union, Somerset Community Credit Union & Mendip Community Credit Union, has launched an exciting new initiative the Somerset Financial Well-being Project.

This scheme offers free information, events and training to anyone living or working in Somerset some of whom might be facing financial anxiety and worry caused by the cost-of-living increases, the after math of COVID-19 or because they are facing a change in circumstances.

Worrying about money can have a negative impact on both your mental and physical well-being. It can put a strain on relationships, cause sleepless night and lead to depression with many people thinking that their only option is to turn to loan sharks or other high-interest lenders.

By working with a number of national and local charities and organisations that offer free expert and confidential help, the Somerset Financial Well-being project provides the tools needed to manage finances, plan for a better financial future, manage debt, know where to go to for help and also take advantage of the many benefits that becoming a member of a local not-for-profit credit union can offer.

Anyone living or working in Somerset can find out more information by visiting [www.westcountry.org.uk/SFWP](http://www.westcountry.org.uk/SFWP). A calendar of events and training will be confirmed over the coming months however free information is available now from the website.

**Somerset Activity Sports Partnership (SASP)**

**Unbreakable Men**

This week is [#MensHealthWeek](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/menshealthweek?__eep__=6&__cft__%5b0%5d=AZXsaMAYDYTPlkXo--_YYMxupOG2cKnSVLLCAnjQ9YVKdsM8HSt7_cW9tIMpbtayl9VvwEZ416FMr9xYAVvnpHDmdll3UGi3twQ2lNeJFjTrB6b5nh_DSN0sEcCcGPfBsOSgLeSvsp9gsIWkkb0kPxBjjrwKaOrtDL5MgtR89MfIDvsdaLny7Hxj9M-iCG09Nl8&__tn__=*NK-R) and the SASP Unbreakable Men is an online project where the main aim is to raise awareness around Men's Mental Health in Somerset.

If you want to get involved simply download the Manual, watch the videos and get cracking on the Unbreakable Men challenges.

Please [click here](https://www.sasp.co.uk/unbreakable-men1?fbclid=IwAR3Kcd6hOanJx9gcpVMvI_RDrrZX7TSgYVU5KUhZc4_NCmfe6SR3gcsx3mo) to find out more information.

**Spark Somerset**

**Somerset Mental Health Hub – Networking Event**

**Thursday 30 June at 10.00am – 1.00pm**

**Bridgwater Rugby Club, TA6 4TZ**

The [Somerset Mental Health Hub](https://sparksomerset.org.uk/mental-health-hub) is the leading voice for the local VCSE organisations working in the area of mental wellbeing. The aim is to provide a space for collaboration, peer support and learning and the opportunity to share your views with local commissioners and decision-makers.

Join this live event for the chance to network with other groups and charities working to improve mental health and wellbeing in Somerset.

Please [click here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/somerset-mental-health-hub-networking-event-tickets-328913437947) to find out more and register for this event.

**Community Council for Somerset (CCS)**

**Smart Communities Ltd - Community Review Project**

The CCS is excited to launch a new Community Review project, working in partnership with Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC). Its aim is to support and deliver 14 Parish and Town Council community plans by either initiating new or reviewing previous plans.

The lucky communities will have the CCS local expert team supporting them through the process.

Come along to one of the online welcome sessions:

* Thursday 30 June at 7pm – 8:15pm
* Tuesday 12th July at 2pm – 3:15pm

Meet the Smart Communities team and SALC team as well as an opportunity to hear from a Somerset community about the benefits of doing a Community Plan. The team will be giving further information about how to get involved and answering any questions you might have.

Please [click here](https://www.eventbrite.com/o/smart-communities-36080355843?fbclid=IwAR2K_dvA0X1TDwwOEr881TaRxpXRrpuZ9faTkCWgamLKP_DFORTxUjj7X1A) to book your space.

Please [click here](https://smartcommunities.online/community-review/) to find out more information about the project.

**Health and Welfare**

**SCC Public Health**

**Seven top tips for better wellbeing this Men’s Health Week**

This Men’s Health Week (13 – 19 June) SCC is sharing seven top tips for better wellbeing after latest statistics show 10 per cent of all UK men suffer from at least one common mental health disorder.

All Somerset residents are encouraged to make time to look after their health and wellbeing this Men's Health Week, but men are less likely to visit a pharmacy or GP than females - and sadly 76 per cent of all suicides are male.

Please [click here](https://somersetnewsroom.com/2022/06/13/seven-top-tips-for-better-wellbeing-this-mens-health-week/) to read the full press release.

**New COVID-19 Dashboard**

As a result of recent changes to policy, the number of detected cases alone no longer provides an accurate or consistent indication of the prevalence of COVID-19 in our community.

As a result of this, detailed cases data such as the map and district level figures have been removed from the SCC and NHS in Somerset Dashboard. Cases are still shown on the chart; however, it now includes additional information (ONS Prevalence\*) that may give a better indication of the actual number of people with COVID. Testing data has also been added to provide further context.

The hospital admissions data also now includes mechanical ventilation bed patients who are positive as a better indicator of serious illness being treated. The OPEL level on this page provides a snapshot of how the health and care system overall is managing.

[The vaccination page](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus/coronavirus-vaccinations/) now provides more overall strategic vision of how the vaccination programme has been implemented and provides an indication of the effective level of immunity provided to our community by boosters and third doses.

The current version of the dashboard can be accessed at any time[here](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/covid-19-dashboard/).

**Living safely with respiratory infections including COVID-19**

The [Government has published important advice](https://newsletters.onyx-sites.io/?mailpoet_router&endpoint=track&action=click&data=WyI2NjM2IiwidHRzeGVycTFtamtrY29nMGtvOGcwZ2trODRvZ2t3YzAiLCIxNDE5IiwiMTA5MGQ5NzhlMTg5IixmYWxzZV0) for people with symptoms of respiratory infections, such as COVID-19; people with a positive COVID-19 test result and their contacts; and advice on safer behaviours for everyone.

There are simple things you can do in your daily life that will help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections, such as flu and protect those at highest risk.

Things you can choose to do are:

* Get vaccinated.
* Wear a face covering or a face mask.
* Let fresh air in if meeting others indoors.
* Stay at home if you have [symptoms](https://newsletters.onyx-sites.io?mailpoet_router&endpoint=track&action=click&data=WyI1MjEiLCIxbWRhbWxvZnRhbjRnb2d3ODRrZ2s0azhzOHdzd3c0YyIsIjE0MTciLCI3MDMyNWYxYzNmODEiLGZhbHNlXQ)
* Cover your coughs and sneezes
* Practise good hygiene:

If you have symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as COVID-19, and you have a high temperature or do not feel well enough to go to work or carry out normal activities, you are advised to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people.

Please [click here](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19#what-to-do-if-you-have-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19-and-have-not-taken-a-covid-19-test) to read the guidance on what to do if you have symptoms but have not taken a test.

**Need to seek help?**

If you, or someone you know are feeling like things are too much, please know that you / they don’t have to be alone. Here are some numbers of organisations that can help:

* Samaritans - 116 123
* CALM - 0800 58 58 58
* ChildLine - 0800 1111
* Anxiety UK - 03444 775 774
* Mind - 0300 123 3393
* Somerset Domestic Abuse helpline - 0800 69 49 999

**Crime / Safeguarding**

**Crimestoppers**

**Drug Crime: Speak up. Stay Safe.**

Thousands of children are being groomed to deal drugs across counties, with gangs enforcing drug debts to stop them escaping. You can contact Crimestoppers by phone and online, 24/7, 365 days a year. Speak up. Stop crime. Stay safe.

Please [click here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fACrIpKQ-m4) to view an information video.

**Action Fraud**

**Tesco gift card scam emails**

Action Fraud has received 172 reports this month about fake emails purporting to be from Tesco. The emails state that the recipient has been “selected” for the chance to win a £500 Tesco gift card. The links provided in the emails lead to phishing websites that are designed to steal your personal and financial information.

* Your bank, or any other official organisation, won’t ask you to share personal information over email or text. If you need to check that it’s a genuine message, contact them directly.
* Spotted a suspicious email? Forward it to the Suspicious Email Reporting Service (SERS) – [report@phisinh.gov.uk](mailto:report@phisinh.gov.uk)

**Avon and Somerset Police (ASP)**

**Man guilty of murdering next-door neighbours**

A 35-year-old man has been found guilty of murdering his next-door neighbours following a trial at Bristol Crown Court.

Collin Reeves admitted the manslaughters of Jennifer and Stephen Chapple in Norton Fitzwarren on 21 November last year but denied murdering them, claiming he was suffering from diminished responsibility at the time.

However, a jury rejected his defence and accepted the prosecution’s case his actions were deliberate.

He faces two mandatory life sentences and will learn the minimum term he will serve in prison before being considered for parole when he is sentenced on Tuesday 21 June.

Please [click here](https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/news/2022/06/man-guilty-of-murdering-next-door-neighbours/) to read the full press release.

**Police Horse Platinum named to commemorate Jubilee**

In honour of Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee ASP are pleased to announce that Police Horse Max has been formally re-named as Police Horse Platinum.

He is the first grey horse in the history of Avon and Somerset’s mounted section and is the 4th horse to be named with a royal connection.

Please [click here](https://www.facebook.com/avonandsomersetpolice/photos/a.66888374811/10159954575034812/) to see a photo with his rider Sgt Hannah Clarke, at Badminton Horse Trials.

**For 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)
* [Rural Affairs Unit – Avon and Somerset Police.](https://www.facebook.com/aspruralaffairsunit)

**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.

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