



Coronavirus update from Somerset County Council

All our help and information is now **available in a single place** on the SCC website <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/latest-coronavirus-updates/>

This page is refreshed through the day so please check in regularly to keep across developments and news.

Public Health dashboard: Detailed Public Health information dashboards are available on our website www.somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus just scroll down to 'Covid-19 dashboard'. These are updated daily.

Top stories today:



One year on – a day to reflect and remember

A minute's silence will be held by Somerset County Council to mark a [National Day of Reflection](#), remembering those who sadly lost their lives during the pandemic and to show support for everyone who has been bereaved.

Initiated by end of life charity Marie Curie, the National Day of Reflection is due to take place on Tuesday 23 March – the anniversary of the UK going into the first national lockdown.

The flag at County Hall will also fly at half-mast as a sign of respect for all

those taken before their time by Covid-19 and for the bereaved they have left behind. County Hall will be lit up in blue and green in the evening to honour the emergency services.

An online '[Covid reflection](#)' page has been made available for members of the public to share their own personal reflection messages – which will remain as a permanent reminder of the last year.

Anyone who wishes to take part and would like to add their own reflection message, photo or poem to the 'Covid reflection' memorial page can do so by emailing communications@somerset.gov.uk. Messages may also be shared via the County Council's social media channels on the day.

Read more >



Community Testing using lateral flow devices – expansion of eligible groups

Even though case numbers nationally and locally are reducing, we are still seeing cases and regular testing helps to break the chain of transmission.

In Somerset, targeted community testing has already been in place for workers who care for vulnerable groups such as the elderly in their own homes. This testing sits alongside the multitude of national testing programmes.

Somerset County Council's Public Health has now expanded the offer and free, rapid lateral flow Covid-19 tests are now being offered to:

- Anyone whose job or volunteering work requires them to leave the house and be in contact with others
- Anyone who cares for others, either paid or voluntary

To book your test, please click here: <https://somerset.maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk/>

If you are a parent, or part of household, childcare bubble or support bubble of school staff or a pupil – you can collect testing kits for you to do on yourself. Free ‘lateral flow’ test kits are available to collect from test sites across Somerset between set times. To find your nearest Somerset test collection site, please click <https://somerset.maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk/> and enter your postcode.

For more information about Coronavirus testing, please [Coronavirus – Getting tested \(somerset.gov.uk\)](#)



Teamwork keeps West Somerset connected during Covid crisis

Vulnerable residents in West Somerset have been offered a lifeline during the pandemic thanks to the partnership of transport charity ATWEST and Somerset County Council.

Accessible Transport West Somerset (ATWEST) provides fully accessible transport to local residents and despite the challenges of Covid it has been keeping communities connected with the support of the Council.

These include the regular 198 service between Minehead, Timberscombe and Dulverton, as well the 10 service between Minehead and Porlock Weir. And the County Council-funded Slinky buses are continuing to get rurally isolated people out and about.

To keep users safe, dedicated staff at ATWEST have stuck to a rigorous cleaning regime after each journey to ensure the safety of passengers.

[Read more](#)



PHE study shows three-quarters of over 70s have coronavirus antibodies

Public Health England has published new findings showing that an estimated 76% of 70 to 84-year-old blood donors had antibodies against coronavirus by early March.

The study found that the proportion of over 70s with vaccine antibodies started to increase from early January. This is in line with expectations as it takes two to three weeks to produce an antibody response after vaccination.

The proportion with antibodies resulting from natural infection started to plateau at the same time, suggesting that the vaccine is preventing older people from getting coronavirus.

The group with the highest proportion of antibodies after natural infection are the 16 to 29-year-olds, indicating ongoing infection and transmission in younger people.

[Read more](#)



Support for Somerset residents

Help is available for anyone in Somerset who may need additional support. The five councils in Somerset have been working together since the first

lockdown to provide a single phone number for anyone in Somerset who needs Coronavirus-related support.

Residents are reminded they can call 0300 790 6275 if they need any help themselves or are concerned about relatives or neighbours. Lines are open seven days a week between 8am and 6pm.



Reduce the risks and follow advice

It's vital everyone acts to reduce their own risk, and the risk to others, from getting ill with coronavirus.

There's really important information available to help Somerset residents, businesses and visitors take all-important precautions.

Read more >



Send to a friend

These coronavirus bulletins are now available to anyone. Please send to a friend who would like to stay up to date with the latest developments. To sign up simply visit [Coronavirus updates \(somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus-updates)

Read more >

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Somerset County Council, County Hall, Taunton, TA1 4DY