



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:



Tests are freely available so please use them

Everyone in Somerset over the age of 16 can now get free rapid lateral flow device (LFD) COVID-19 tests and should be using them twice a week.

These tests are important to do regularly because they detect people who are carrying coronavirus but haven't got any symptoms, so could be spreading it unknowingly. The tests are quick and easy, and the results are usually back within an hour.

A new assisted testing service will launch from tomorrow (Saturday 1 May). So far, 19 Somerset pharmacies have signed up to provide assisted testing, so if you have never used a Lateral Flow (rapid) test before, it is a great way

to be shown how to do the test correctly.

You can then collect kits and do the testing at home. This might also help those who cannot perform the test on themselves for some reason, allowing them to take part in regular rapid testing.

Full details on how Somerset residents can access rapid testing can be found here: [Coronavirus – Get a test if you do not have symptoms \(somerset.gov.uk\)](#). People are strongly advised take at least one supervised test at a centre if you plan to do your regular, twice weekly testing at home. If you can't get to a centre, the following video provides a great demonstration of the correct testing technique: [Self swab technique for lateral flow tests - YouTube](#)

And please remember – if you are taking the tests at home it is very important for you to log your results here: [Report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). Please make sure that if you are symptomatic in any way take a confirmatory PCR test as quickly as possible.



May Bank Holiday

The weather forecast for the early May Bank Holiday is looking unsettled so please don't be tempted to meet up with others not in your household or support bubble indoors.

People have been able to enjoy new freedoms such as dining or having a drink outside a pub or restaurant, or meeting friends outside again since 12 April. It is vital to keep up the good work this weekend, as this could affect the next step in the roadmap.

Please do go out and enjoy Somerset - but do it responsibly. Everyone has made huge efforts and many sacrifices have been made to reach the roadmap milestones. It's really important to stay two metres apart from anyone who is not an immediate member of the household or support/childcare bubble when socialising outside as part of the rule of six –

and wear masks in enclosed spaces.

If you are meeting friends in a park or an outside setting, ensure you keep your distance as our message remains - stay local, minimise travel and continue to follow **'hands, face, space and fresh air'** to minimise catching Covid-19 and spreading it to others – even if you have been vaccinated.

[.\(COVID-19\) Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/coronavirus/coronavirus-restrictions/coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do)
[.\(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)



Vaccinated? You still need to take care

Vaccination is a vital part of moving out of the coronavirus pandemic, so getting your vaccine when offered is something to celebrate.

Although the COVID-19 vaccine gives the best protection against becoming seriously ill if you catch coronavirus, it's important to remember that it doesn't make you invincible.

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

Remember, there's a chance you might still get or spread COVID-19 even if you have the vaccine. So, even when you've been vaccinated, don't ditch the soap and fling your mask in the bin - you still need to stick with the important things you've been doing for the past year, like keeping your distance from others, wearing a face covering when required and washing your hands regularly and well.



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

Businesses can keep up to date with the latest information by registering for HMRC's email updates. Guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-and-support-if-your-business-is-affected-by-coronavirus-covid-19> Sign-up:

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKHMRCED/subscriber/new?preferences=true#tab1>



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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