

County Councillor Update

Coker Division SCC

Cllr Mark Keating

March 2018



County Councillor Mark Keating - Representing you locally at Somerset County Council Barwick, Chiselborough, Closworth, East Chinnock, East Coker, Hardington Manderville, Hardington Marsh, Hardington Moor, Haselbury Plucknett, Lower Odcombe, Middle Chinnock, Montacute, North Coker, North Perrott, Norton Sub Hamdon, Odcombe, Pendomer, Sutton Bingham, Stoford, West Chinnock and West Coker

Highways & Maintenance Contacts

South Somerset Area Highways Office	E: countyroads-southsom@somerset.gov.uk	T: 0300 123 2224
Report Pothole/Road Defect	E: roadsandtransportSD@somerset.gov.uk	T: 0300 123 2224
Report Dead Animal/Mud on Road	E: roadsandtransportSD@somerset.gov.uk	T: 0300 123 2224
Neil McWilliams – Highways Service Manager	E: countyroads-southsom@somerset.gov.uk	T: 0300 123 2224
Mike Fear – Assist Highways Service Manager	E: countyroads-southsom@somerset.gov.uk	T: 0300 123 2224
Garry Warren – Traffic Engineer. Traffic & Transport Development	E: countyroads-southsom@somerset.gov.uk	T: 0300 123 2224
Gully Emptying/Road Sweeper	E: chris.holley@southsomerset.gov.uk	T: 01935 462462
Nick Allen – SSDC Ranger Scheme	E: nick.allen@southsomerset.gov.uk	T: 01935 462462

Adults & Children Contacts

Report Adult at Risk	adults@somerset.gov.uk	T: 0300 123 2224 T: Emergency: 999
Report Child at Risk	childrens@somerset.gov.uk	T: 0300 123 2224 T: Emergency: 999
Childrens Social Care Worker out of hours Emergency Duty Team		T: 0300 123 2327
Fostering and Adoption www.fosteradoptsomerset.org.uk	aandfrecruitmentenquiryline@somerset.gov.uk	T: 0800 587 9900

Useful Websites

www.somersetwaste.gov.uk	ssdc@southsomerset.gov.uk	T: 01935 462462
www.travelsomerset.gov.uk	Useful website - all travel in Somerset	
SCC website - www.somerset.gov.uk	generalenquiries@somerset.gov.uk	T: 0300 123 2224
http://roadworks.org/	Useful website for road works info	
www.facebook.com/somersetcountycouncil	SCC Facebook page	

As reporting on Sunday 4 March 2018

Somerset Schools - We expect all schools to be open on Monday but you can check here for any that us notify that they won't be <https://goo.gl/Se8UTy>

School transport - We are expecting the majority of our school transport to run as normal on Monday. However, there could continue to be some disruption to school transport services in some localised areas. Routes will be assessed by Somerset County Council and bus operators. It is recommended parents/carers monitor www.somerset.gov.uk/badweathertransport for the most up to date information. We will also aim to keep parent/carers up to date tomorrow morning through the school transport SMS texting system.

Taunton Park and Ride - Park and Ride services are expected to operate normally on Monday, but do take care if there is still any snow on the ground. Adhere to any ice warning signs that may be on site.

Highways - While most main roads in our region are now passable with care, we still have lying snow and ice affecting many routes, so we'd urge people to plan ahead, drive with caution, appropriate to the conditions and ensure your vehicle is prepared.

Our gritters are out from midnight on major roads across Somerset. Snow ploughs have been clearing routes throughout West Somerset and the A39 Porlock Hill is still currently closed, but further works are planned today to clear the snow.

Check out @TravelSomerset on Twitter or www.travelsomerset.co.uk for gritting updates and live reports on traffic and road conditions. You can also check which roads are treated on the searchable map at www.travelsomerset.co.uk/gritting. For more road safety advice, please visit www.somersetroadsafety.org or follow Somerset Road Safety on social media.

Libraries - Due to the improving weather conditions, all our Somerset libraries are expected to be open as usual from Monday. All loans which were due back on 1st, 2nd and 3rd March are extended for all libraries, so no items will be overdue for these three dates. Visit <http://www.librarieswest.org.uk> for renewals and to borrow free ebooks and eaudio books from rbdigital.

Weather update: The Met Office states the region will have scattered showers clearing slowly through the evening. It is expected to stay cloudy overnight with the risk of a few more showers, but also some fog and low cloud developing during the early hours. Minimum temperature 3 °C. Check out <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/regional-forecasts/sw> for more information.

Social care: There are in the region of 2,000 people receiving care at home in the county. The County Council doesn't provide this care but works closely with providers to make sure they can support people when if disruptive weather comes. We have been in regular contact with providers actively checking on those who are most vulnerable and working to make sure they have the help they need.

Waste/Recycling: 15 recycle sites reopened on Sunday. All 16 due to reopen 8am Monday. Updates here, [facebook.com/SomersetWaste](https://www.facebook.com/SomersetWaste) or somersetwaste.gov.uk

Ofsted report into SCC Childrens Services: Following the recent Ofsted rating of 'Requires Improvement to be Good', the seven point improvement programme for children's services is now being updated and amended to reflect the recommendations. This will clearly set out the milestones required to reach 'Good'.

Family Support Service : The decision to deliver SCC's new Family Support Service have now been formally made. The aim is to develop integrated Family Support Services with the vital Health Visiting service (already commissioned by SCC) being brought in house next year. As a result SCC are working to ensure services are provided where they are needed when they are needed, concentrating money on frontline staff and not on buildings. Communities will also be supported by SCC to be more resilient and develop further voluntary activity.

Further information can be found by contacting publichealth@somerset.gov.uk

Secondary School Admissions: 97.5 per cent of children have been offered a place at one of their top three secondary school preferences, a slight increase on last year's figures of 97.17. In total 93.5 per cent received their 1st preference, an increase on last year's figures of 92.32.

Single use plastics: At the Full Council meeting in late February the County Council unanimously agreed to begin work to move towards the withdrawal of all Single Use Plastics across all of it's sites. Separately, Somerset Waste Partnership are well placed to inform the public conversation around plastic waste. They are already engaging through social media, local media, and through the 'Schools against Waste' programme about the impact of plastic, particularly considering recent regulatory changes in China.

Somerset Rivers Authority: Discussions have continued with Defra officials in respect of the SRA being a self-precepting body; officials of the SRA have also met with Dr Therese Coffey (Environment Minister) where the Minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to introducing legislation. This is likely to be through a Private Members Bill and the next step details are expected soon.

National College for Nuclear: The NCN, which opened on the 7th February is now providing a state of the art nuclear training facility, including a virtual reality environment, a reactor simulator and computer equipped training rooms, recreation and collaboration space, sports facilities and student accommodation. Bridgwater and Taunton College are the principle delivery agency, supported by their Energy Skills and Advanced Engineering centres.

Libraries Consultation. The libraries consultation continues and recent community engagement events have been well attended. It is important that as many people are encouraged to engage with the consultation as possible to provide comprehensive feedback from those who maybe affected by any potential changes in the service. No decisions will be taken until the results of the consultation have been fully analysed. The consultation runs to 22nd April and further details can be found at <http://somersetlibraries.co.uk/consultation/>

Somerset Registration Service: Somerset Registration Service, which is used by 3000 couples per year, have launched a new website to support couples planning a wedding or civil partnership in Somerset. The website www.SomersetWeddingService.org.uk features all 115 venues currently licensed for ceremonies, as well as a supplier directory of local wedding industry professionals and a comprehensive guide to Somerset ceremonies.

Somerset Road Safety Strategy: The consultation on road safety continues to run until 8th March and can be found at <http://www.somersetconsults.org.uk/consults.ti/system/home> further to updating Parish Councils in my February up at time of sending, you only have a couple of days left now to make any comments!

Volunteer drivers – SCC need more volunteer drivers across the county to help people get to medical appointments, day care center's, schools etc. Drivers need to be over 18, have a four-door car, a current driving licence and commit to as little as one hour per week. Mileage expenses will be reimbursed at up to 50p per mile. More information is available on www.somersetvolunteer.co.uk

Volunteering – Spark www.sparksomerset.org.uk and Engage www.engagews.org.uk can help local voluntary sector organisations looking for volunteers as well as individuals looking for volunteering opportunities. There is also a wide range of volunteering opportunities across Somerset on the national volunteer database, www.do-it.org

Home from hospital sooner – Home First, is SCC's highly acclaimed health and social care initiative which frees up hospital beds. Although the numbers of people being admitted to local hospitals has increased significantly, the number of people facing unnecessary delays in leaving hospital has reduced by an impressive 60 per cent compared to the same time last year. As soon as someone no longer needs medical support in hospital, Home First allows them to leave hospital rather than waiting on the ward for care assessments and rehabilitation planning.

Fostering & Adoption – SCC are launching a 'design a poster' competition for 'uniformed' organisations across Somerset (Guides, brownies, rainbows, rangers, scouts, cubs, beavers etc.) – to help us promote an urgent push for foster carer recruitment in 'Foster Care Fortnight'. The winner will receive a £250 voucher to spend on outdoor equipment and their design used as a fostering poster/online/in social media. Further details from Caroline Cook on CZCook@Somerset.gov.uk

Recent press releases:

Secondary School Admissions up again
Stay safe and well in severe weather
Get the right NHS Treatment
Travel planning portal scoops top innovation award
Council welcomes Somerset's first Aldermen
Vital bus links kept running thanks to parish partnership
Balance budget and major investment
Make every sleep safer for babies