**CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)**

**17.03.20 BRIEFING**

Here are the key points from Monday’s Government briefing:

* Everyone should avoid gatherings with friends and family, as well as large gatherings and crowded places, such as pubs, clubs and theatres
* People should avoid non-essential travel and work from home if they can
* All "unnecessary" visits to friends and relatives in care homes should cease
* People should only use the NHS "where we really need to" - and can reduce the burden on workers by getting advice on the NHS website where possible
* By next weekend, those with the most serious health conditions must be "largely shielded from social contact for around 12 weeks"
* If one person in any household has a persistent cough or fever, everyone living there must stay at home for 14 days
* Those people should, if possible, avoid leaving the house "even to buy food or essentials" - but they may leave the house "for exercise and, in that case, at a safe distance from others"
* Schools will not be closed for the moment

For information about the virus and how you can look after your health, visit [www.nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/)

For the latest information about Coronavirus in the UK, click [here](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public)

**What is the latest advice?**

Stay at home if you have either:

* a high temperature – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
* a new, continuous cough – this means you've started coughing repeatedly

Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

You do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying at home.

Testing for coronavirus is not needed if you're staying at home.

If you have symptoms, stay at home for 7 days

If you live with other people, they should stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person got symptoms. If you live with someone who is 70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system, try to find somewhere else for them to stay for 14 days.

If you have to stay at home together, try to keep away from each other as much as possible.

Read NHS [advice about staying at home](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/).

*This link will take you to the 111 Coronavirus service -* [***Use the 111 coronavirus service***](https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/)

**What actions has South Somerset District Council undertaken?**

While we await further guidance and clarification, in the interest of public safety we have:

* Closed the Octagon Theatre, Westlands, alongside Yeovil Recreation Centre (and Galley Café)
* Closed our buildings to the public apart from the Connect hub at Petters Way, Yeovil
* Postponed today’s Regulation Committee meeting and tomorrow’s Area West meeting
* The meeting of Full Council will go ahead with a revised agenda which you receive shortly
* Ninesprings Café will be open normal hours but as a takeaway only with waiting lines marked out on the ground and we ask customers to queue using these guidelines.
* All volunteering activity is suspended from tomorrow for Countryside and Heritage. Letters will be issued today by the teams. The same goes for work experience.
* Staff at Ham Hill, Chard Reservoir and Ninesprings are working to keep sites safe and accessible as access to greenspaces is going to be of paramount importance to people’s health at this time.

It is important to stress to communities that the delivery of council services continues and our business continuity plans are already being implemented. Please urge residents, where possible, to use our website www.southsomerset.gov.uk

Additional strategic meetings with key team members continue to ensure we are taking the appropriate action which ensures we can continue to deliver services for our communities.

We will be guided by advice from the Government with regard to the continuation of public council meetings and by-elections. If any guidance is issued on this matter, we will circulate this immediately.

We have set up a page for the public on our website to signpost people to relevant information, provide reassurance, and provide key messages to our residents - <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/your-council/coronavirus-covid-19-information-and-guidance/>

You may also find this link useful to see further official guidance from the Government - <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

**Useful links for public facing information**

NHS information – the first port of call for the public:
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Guidance for households
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

UK Government response:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

Guidance on social distancing:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people>

Travel advice for those travelling and living overseas:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>