

VIADUCT

March 2021

Somerton

Town Council



working with the community



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Somerton Town Council - March 2021

Meeting	Date	Time	Venue
Full Council (Planning at 6.30pm if required)	9 th March 2021	7 pm	Remote Meeting
Accessibility & Highways (planning at 6.30pm if required)	23 rd March 2021	7 pm	Remote Meeting
Promotions & Communications	16 th March 2021	19:00:00	Remote Meeting

Everyone is welcome to attend and there will be opportunities to ask questions. Planning applications may be viewed on the SSDC website. All agendas and minutes are available on the STC website. If residents have any issues or questions about anything within this report, or in general, please direct them to the Clerk who will ensure they are answered or forwarded to the relevant councillor or organisation to respond.

DOG WARDENS

STC are looking for volunteers to join Brian Davenport and his dog Dylan and become local dog wardens. Dog wardens help to create a cleaner environment by reminding dog walkers to always clean up after their dogs. This unfortunately continues to be a real problem in Somerton not only on the streets and pavements, but also footpaths, bridleways and verges. Please use the bins provided or take it home with you rather than leave plastic bags on display on the ground or hanging on fences or bushes. If you would like to help, please contact the Clerk's office.

SOMERTON RED TELEPHONE SWAP BOX

There has been really positive feedback from the community on the retention of the decommissioned Red Telephone Box and how it could be used. Amongst the ideas there has been a recurring theme of using the box as a place to swap items like books, clothes or plants. Rather than have an array of items within the Box the idea STC would like to take forward would be residents using the Box to 'advertise' items they would like to swap or donate. Please let us know what you think about this idea.

GRANTS

Grants have been awarded to:

Langport Transport group - £3000 towards the costs of a feasibility study for a railway station in the Langport/Somerton area.

King Ina PTFA - £5000 towards supporting home learning under lockdown 3.

TREES

STC has recently received a number of trees through the SSDC Great Parish Tree Giveaway. We have identified a number for planting at specific locations but would like to hear from any residents who would like one of the following: *Pyrus Com* (European Pear); *Sorbus Aucuparia* (Rowan) and *Malus Sylvestris* (European Crab Apple). Each tree comes with a stake and protective cover. Please contact Cllr Shelia Taylor at shelia.taylor@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk or via the Clerk's office.

YEOVILTON AVERAGE WEATHER STATISTICS FOR JANUARY 2021

	Average Max temp	Average Min temp	Rain mm	Sun hrs	So January 2021 was slightly colder and less sunny than the long-term average
Jan Average	7.6	0.8	73.4	43.2	
50yr Average	8.4	1.7	71.1	57.4	

Figures from Met Office Yeovilton website

News

WALKING

In these difficult times many of us have turned to our daily walk as a way to help keep our spirits up. Martyn Smith has been busy updating his series of walks called 'Somerton Strolls' which were originally written in 2008. There are 15 circular walks starting from the Half Moon Car Park and each are about 10km long.

Martyn is also updating a further set of walks, which involve travel by bus or car to the start point which will be more appropriate for when travel restrictions are lifted. All can be found on the Somerton Community website www.somerton.co.uk.

Looking further afield we have also heard from John Harris who has alerted us to the great selection of walks on the Walking in Somerset website www.walkinginengland.co.uk/somerset. All these walks are free to download and print and range from ½ a mile to 12 miles. So there are many walks near and far for us to enjoy as spring approaches.

SPEEDWATCH

Although Speedwatch has not been as active over the lockdown period we are pleased that some of the traffic is showing respect for the speed limit. I am sure you have noticed the speed indicator sign that has been placed around various parts of the town recently and is showing some interesting data which we hope will filter down into road and safety improvements for Somerton. The general traffic is down but the delivery vans are out and about and a lot of the drivers are fairly respectful. We will be back out soon and when you see us in the high viz jackets we are there only to remind you, we REALLY do not want to report you. The police have followed up on more than 20 persistent speeders and abusive drivers and have a few more to call on so please don't let it be you. If you would like to join us rather than complain about the traffic contact David on 01458897224.

SOMERTON U3A

We will be holding two Zoom meetings in March for members to enjoy. The first meeting will be held on Friday 12th March at 11.00, "Hypnosis" with Alan Jones. His talk will definitely NOT put you to sleep.

On Friday 26th March "Photography" with David Boag, who is back by popular demand after his successful talk in January 2020. A monthly online Newsletter gives members the opportunity to keep in touch and see the activities taking place. For further information or if you would like to join please visit the Somerton U3A website, or email membership@SomertonU3A.uk.

A PLEA TO DOG OWNERS

This month's competition is to remove the contents of your dog's intestine from the deep treaded sole of a walking boot. Come on dog owners PLEASE, PLEASE pick it up take and it home or bin it. The amount of dog poo in the lanes and permissible footpaths around Somerton is disgusting. Oh and by the way, dog poo bins are not cleverly disguised to look like a hedge/tree or even a stream.

SOMERTON TO CELEBRATE WITH SUMMER FESTIVAL

Somerton looks set to celebrate this summer with its music and arts festival going ahead, despite Glastonbury and other major events being called off. Locals and visitors will have something to look forward to as plans take shape for the week-long festival which culminates in a day of live music on Somerton Recreation Ground.

The Somerton Music & Arts Festival will run from 3rd July with activities including a family fun day, followed by a variety of events at venues across the town. The festival reaches its finale on Saturday 10th July with Somerstock, Somerton's own music festival, which will see more than 14 local and original bands performing across three stages, headlined by The Christians. With some festival events taking place outdoors, and with plenty of space to ensure that social distancing can be observed, the organisers are putting in place comprehensive health and safety plans to meet all regulations and guidelines. Somerton Recreation Ground, the venue for Somerstock, is large enough to provide plenty of space for all festival-goers as well as accommodating family entertainment, food, licenced bars and on-site car parking.

"The safety of our festival-goers is of paramount importance." explains organising committee chairman Cliff (Fred) Bassett, "We have even taken the decision to limit ticket numbers to ensure that we can accommodate whatever social distancing restrictions are in place at the time."

There is, however, one casualty of the pandemic. The Art & Photography Exhibition, usually an early prelude to the week-long festival will not be going ahead. The exhibition, which was due to take place in May, is an indoor event and likely to be hit by ongoing Covid-19 restrictions. "We have sadly had to cancel the exhibition for this year," says Fred "but we will be back bigger and better in 2022 with a full programme of workshops and displays." Tickets for the festival events including Somerstock are currently available online from www.somerstock.com and according to Fred it is wise to buy them early. "Buying a ticket as soon as possible will not only secure a place at the festival, but will give us the confidence that we can continue the event in the future."

Children under 12 are free but must be pre-registered for numbers. "If things go well we hope to be able to release more tickets," adds Fred "but in the event of us having to postpone the event, all tickets can either roll over to 2022 or will be refunded in full."

BREAST CANCER UNIT APPEAL

In March 2019 Yeovil Hospital Charity launched an appeal to raise the funds needed to build a £2 million dedicated Breast Cancer Unit right here in Yeovil. We have secured over £1,636,719 so far. However building work will only start when we have enough money. During this current time, like many charities, our fundraising events have had to be postponed or cancelled, making fundraising quite challenging. With that in mind, to help the appeal raise the much needed funds, we are asking people if they might like to look in their jewellery boxes for any unwanted jewellery, broken pieces of jewellery and watches, which they may like to donate. If you would like to support the appeal through donating any unwanted or broken jewellery please contact Maggie Hague, Breast Cancer Appeal Volunteer, on 01963 250108. If you'd like to find out more about the appeal please go to www.yeovilhospital.co.uk/yeovil-hospital-charity or call Sarah Cherry, Community and Events Fundraiser, on 01935 383020.

MESSAGES FROM THE PATIENTS' PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

Covid-19 vaccinations. The national vaccination programme is moving ahead at quite a pace and the 'take-up' by Priority Groups 1 to 4 and the delivery by staff assigned from hospitals, primary care and other agencies, has meant folk in the southwest have been very well supported. Special centres/units have had to be established to administer the vaccinations so that GP surgeries and health centres can continue to provide their regular services with minimal disruption - though as some staff have to be 'shared', many are working long and extra hours to meet demand. For the latest information on all matters associated with the Covid-19 vaccination programme please make the Buttercross Health Centre website your first port of call. This applies to both national and local information. Please DO NOT telephone BHC about vaccination appointments but follow the guidance as displayed (which is regularly updated).

Phoning. Sincere thanks to those who are helping to reduce the number of calls BHC staff have to field. In January there was a slight reduction (5500) but that still meant approximately 250 per working day were answered. Many, of course, were urgent but for non-urgent matters calling in the afternoon will usually find the queue - and thus waiting time - significantly shorter.

'AskmyGP' continues to attract new users who are finding it a real asset in gaining prompt and appropriate attention to their enquiries and concerns. The system is open to patients 24 hours/day, 7 days/week. Messages are 'triaged' and a response can be relayed via a phone call, an email or even a video call. Please be assured that, should a consultation at the surgery be required, an 'in-person' appointment will be scheduled.

The PPG is very keen to recruit new full members (currently there are two vacancies) and would especially welcome enquiries from those in the age bracket 20-45 and/or those with a young family. Alternatively, you can keep in touch with issues being addressed as a 'virtual' (or associate) member by registering your interest plus email address. You will then receive minutes of meetings and other documents relating to matters of current interest.

Contacting the PPG: The PPG has a new email address. ppgbhc@gmail.com.

RUNNING IN SOMERTON - UPDATE

Since our entry in last month's Somerton Viaduct a Facebook Page called Somerton Running Group has been set up which already has 72 members signed up (55 ladies and 17 men). A Zoom Meeting was held on Sunday 7th February 2021 which was attended by 12 interested runners but several other runners apologised because they had other commitments at the time. Planning is in progress to get runs and training organised to be ready to roll out as soon as lockdown is lifted. If you would be interested in getting involved, please contact me (Keith Brackstone) by email at coachkeith53@gmail.com or on 07999-511366 or sign-up on the Somerton Running Group Facebook page.

ACEARTS

The Evolver Prize exhibition can still be viewed virtually, find the links via our website. We are working on our programme for 2021 and hope to be able to announce it soon in line with dates for reopening – as ever more information and updates can always be found, together with our on-line shop, at www.acearts.co.uk.



READY TO MOVE WHEN YOU ARE



The residential team at Greenslade Taylor Hunt's Langport office has enjoyed an encouraging start to 2021 despite the challenges of the pandemic.

Based at The Shopping Parade, they offer potential vendors and buyers Covid secure appointments. Contact is by appointment only and appropriate PPE is essential.

Owen Setter, Residential Manager (pictured center), comments: "Demand is great at the moment. It is a really good time if you are thinking about moving."

Owen and his team can provide a free valuation, whilst adhering to the Government's strictest Covid guidelines.

Recently the team's newest member, junior sales negotiator Josh Taylor, rescued a sale after the initial purchasers pulled out. He re-launched the property and within days had a sale signed up much to the delight of the vendor.

As well as a thriving sales section the office, supported by administrator Jacqui Clark, is

also the base for a busy lettings service and a well-respected professional and agricultural department.

Anne Garside (pictured right) heads up the lettings department following her promotion to manager. She originally worked in the firm's Chard office as part of the gold award winning lettings team.

Long-serving surveyor and rural valuer Mark Walters (pictured left) MRICS FAAV oversees the agricultural interests at the office.

He has just celebrated 30 years with the property partnership. An Associate with the firm Mark is well-known within the farming community specialising in all aspects of rural professional work including valuations, land sales and dealing with all tenancy matters and letting of agricultural property. He is also a regular livestock auctioneer at Sedgemoor Auction Center.

To find out how GTH Langport can help with all your property needs please call 01458 250589 or visit gth.net.

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SOMERSTOCK

Saturday 10th July

Somerstock, Somerton's own one-day family friendly music festival, will take place at Somerton Recreation Ground on Saturday 10th July.

Headlined by pop and soul legends The Christians and with 15 other amazing bands performing across all three stages, Somerstock has something to suit all ages and tastes.

Our friendly and fun festival offers something for everyone with family entertainment, food, licenced bars and on-site parking.

Somerstock is the culmination of the week long Somerton Music & Arts Festival which will be held in venues around Somerton. Full event details will be announced soon.

We are delighted to offer an exclusive discount code to Viaduct readers giving 12.5% off the full Somerstock ticket price until the end of April.

**EXCLUSIVE
VIADUCT
DISCOUNT
VOUCHER**

In anticipation of Covid-19 regulations and guidelines* we are limiting the number of tickets available to provide everyone with plenty of space.

Book your tickets now to guarantee your place and help keep our festival going. Go to www.somerstock.com/tickets and enter voucher code 'SOMERSTOCKFUN' (during the checkout process. (Valid from 1st March)

VIADUCT TICKET PRICES

Adults	£28
Students	£22
Children (aged 12-16)	£13
Family†	£68
Under 12s go FREE	

† Family ticket admits two adults and two children. Discount valid until end April or when all discounted tickets are sold.

www.somerstock.com

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* In the event of postponement or cancellation, all tickets will either roll over to 2022 or can be refunded in full.

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW SOMERTON?

The boundary marker which was the subject of last month's "How well do you know Somerton?" can be seen along the "Station Path" which starts from the railway bridge in West Street and continues along the railway boundary to Perry Hill Lane. These markers are not common and the writer has only ever seen one elsewhere.

This month's picture continues the theme of "Where is it?" with an elaborately decorated bench seat available for anyone to use, perhaps with a cushion?



Virtual Financial Advice Clinic

Our financial advice clinics are back. Usually held in the Parish Rooms, we are now offering virtual, no obligation consultations. These will take place on **Thursdays from 1:30pm until 5:30pm, beginning 4th March 2021.**

Simply call us on 01458 555078. Or if you require an appointment email Rhiannon.gogh@sipp.co.uk or visit our website below and click 'Arrange an appointment.' Consultations are held by video or telephone call if you would prefer.



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SOMERTON TENNIS CLUB

As soon as the Government guidance allows Somerton Tennis Club will be open for business and welcome any potential new players. We are delighted we have already had several enquiries and have noticed an increase in interest in our tennis club. Please contact Wendy Driver membership secretary on 07788451098 or enquire via our website www.somertontennisclub.co.uk. We are all looking forward to the spring and getting back on the courts under Covid-19 LTA guidance. We are particularly interested in welcoming junior members.

SOMERTON LIBRARY

In line with Somerset Library Services, plans for reinstating additional library services during Lockdown 3, Somerton Library expects to reopen in the early weeks of March to offer a click-and-collect service for Library Choice and Reservations (details on the LibrariesWest website: https://www.librarieswest.org.uk/client/en_GB/default), and the return of books. Details will be provided on posters in the Library windows and on the Love Somerton Facebook page. By March it is hoped that the Somerton Community Library website: somertonlibrary.com will be in operation.

DON'T FORGET TO SEND IN YOUR PHOTOS

We've had some lovely photos sent in so far for our cover photo competition, but always welcome more, especially different, possibly less well photographed areas of our beautiful town. So don't forget to submit your photos in portrait jpeg format to viaduct@somertontowncouncil.co.uk

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This months cover photo was taken by Judith Hurley in St Michael's Churchyard on 7th January 2021.

Potential cover photos can be sent as email attachments to viaduct@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk. Please include some details about the picture: place, subject and date taken, and your full name.

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