

## North Somerset Council – Update 8th April 2020

The latest information about services can also be found on our website at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus).

### Childcare support

If emergency childcare cover is needed for children of critical keyworkers (likely to be NHS) over the Easter bank holiday weekend (including Saturday and Sunday) please contact the council's Early Years team on 07920 082 811.

### Weston-super-Mare Foodbank

Weston-super-Mare Foodbank urgently need tinned soup, tinned spaghetti, tinned fruit, tinned meat, tinned potatoes or instant mash, biscuits, pasta and jam. They're still collecting from donation points in supermarkets, so if you're able to please pick up something extra to donate to them when you're getting your essential shop done. Go to [www.westonsupermare.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.westonsupermare.foodbank.org.uk) for more information.

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) update

As part of the nationwide effort to ensure personal protective equipment (PPE) is available to people in frontline care roles, the council has taken delivery of a stock of much-needed items. The delivery includes aprons, gloves, face masks and cleaning equipment.

As soon as the items arrived locally, the council organised it into smaller batches for onward distribution to care homes and home care providers across North Somerset. In addition, the council has had an excellent response to its plea to local businesses for urgently needed PPE for care workers and would like to thank all those businesses who have offered items. Please keep them coming and help save lives. See [press release](#) for more details.

### Recycling and waste

All recycling and domestic waste and garden waste crews are continuing as normal.

Additional cardboard is being collected in Weston-super-Mare and Worlebury thanks to additional Glendale crews.

Please remember:

- sort your recycling. As staff numbers deplete, crews will be under pressure to complete their rounds and sorting recycling is the key to everyone getting their recycling collected - [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/recycling)
- park courteously so crews can get access. Some collections are not being completed because of this and crews will not be able to return
- break down cardboard so it fits in your recycling box. Excess cardboard should be put out on future collections.

The council's three recycling centres at Backwell, Portishead and Weston-super-Mare continue to be closed until further notice.

### [Are you a good neighbour?](#)

Residents are being urged to be considerate and think about their neighbours while they spend more time at home during the coronavirus pandemic.

### **Business checks**

North Somerset Council's licensing team is working with the police to ensure local businesses are complying with the government's closure order. Reports of any breaches will be investigated. Officers have today served a closure notice on a vape shop in Weston-super-Mare. See [press release](#) for more details.

**There's lots of ideas for exercise on the [Go 4 Life website](#).**

### **Councillors' thank you**

Councillors from across the political spectrum in North Somerset have joined together to praise council staff for all the work they're doing to keep vital services running.

### **Dog bins**

Dog bins are still being emptied but this does depend on staff availability on any one day. As with recycling and waste collections we are asking for residents' assistance to help reduce the workload for the service so that those staff available can concentrate on the key services. Dog owners can help by taking their pets' mess home with them and disposing of it there.

### **Recycling and waste**

Recycling and refuse collections are continuing as normal at the moment. All recycling and waste crews were out today with additional support from council contractor Glendale who are collecting cardboard.

Grateful residents are showing their appreciation of the crews' efforts with messages of thanks, applause and kind words.

Please help the crews cope with the increased volumes of recycling being put out by correctly sorting your recycling boxes. And please park sensibly so crews can access kerbside waste.

The council's three recycling centres at Backwell, Portishead and Weston-super-Mare are closed until further notice.

### **Council Tax help**

The council is offering help to any residents having difficulty paying their Council Tax during the coronavirus crisis and has already received 400 requests for Council Tax payment holidays. See [press release](#) for more details.

The Government has announced additional help for people whose household income has been affected due to coronavirus. See [press release](#) for details.

### **Business support**

The council is urging local businesses to get in touch to find out what support is available for businesses and individuals affected by the coronavirus outbreak. See [press release](#) for more information.

### **North Somerset Together**

North Somerset Together is an initiative to help residents who have no support from family or friends and who are socially isolated access the support they need during the coronavirus pandemic and beyond. It will also help those who want to volunteer to get involved to link up with the right organisations, and signpost businesses to relevant information.

The new service was launched by the council last Friday (28 March) and by Wednesday 1 April had received around 200 enquiries and made 144 referrals to community support groups across North Somerset. Most people contacting the service are needing help collecting food or medicines.

Residents and businesses can access the service at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/together](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/together).

### **Sport England Community Emergency Fund**

Sport England has announced funding is available for sports clubs and community organisations who have a role in supporting the nation to be active but are experiencing short-term financial hardship due to the impact of coronavirus. More details at: <https://www.sportengland.org/news/195-million-package-help-sport-and-physical-activity-through-coronavirus>.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) update**

The council has had an excellent response to its plea to businesses for urgently needed PPE for care workers. Items donated include hand sanitiser, nitrile gloves and handmade masks and aprons. Thank you. Please keep them coming and help save lives. See [press release](#) for more details.

### **Childcare support**

If any critical worker needs support finding childcare for children aged 0-4 contact the council's Early Years team on 07920 082 811.

### **Rough sleeping**

We've been working hard to ensure that people are not homeless and since Thursday 19 March we've found accommodation for 38 people who were either rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping in North Somerset.

All the people in temporary accommodation have an allocated Homeless Prevention Officer who will work with them to find them a long term housing solution when this crisis is over.

We are continuing to offer assistance to anyone who wants support. We are working with two B&B owners in order to respond quickly and accommodate anyone needing help, not just those at risk or symptomatic.

We would like to thank our partner agencies for their ongoing support during this challenging time.

### **Weston Crematorium**

The Crematorium has closed its grounds to the public. Staff are continuing to deal with enquiries on the phone and by email but have stopped face-to-face contact. Funerals are continuing but are limited to immediate family only.

### **Bus services**

Most bus services in North Somerset are now operating emergency timetables. Some services have now been suspended (please see below). We are directing all passengers to [www.travelwest.info/coronavirus](http://www.travelwest.info/coronavirus) for more information about local bus, rail and coach services. Passengers can search for their local bus service number to find out if this service is operating and at what frequency.

We are asking people to only travel if their journey is essential and follow these travel recommendations:

- Board the bus one at a time
- Remain two metres apart
- Pay via contactless or an app if you can
- Do not travel if you feel unwell
- Cough/sneeze into a tissue or the inside of your arm
- Wash your hands before and after travelling.

To ensure the safety of drivers and passengers, we have now suspended the following council-supported services:

- Bus Service 88 – Nailsea to Clevedon via Portishead
- Bus Service A5 – Winford to Winscombe via Wrington
- Community Bus L1 – Locking Parklands and Haywood Village
- Community Bus B1 – Bleadon
- Community Bus C1 – Worlebury
- Community Bus C2 – South Road/Hillside.

### **Events**

Weston Air Festival, due to have taken place on Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 June, has been cancelled.

### **Car parking**

Parking charges in North Somerset are being waived for NHS staff and key workers during the coronavirus outbreak. Essential workers – such as NHS, social care staff, volunteers and key workers – can now park for free to enable them to carry out their critical work.

This applies to on-street pay and display areas and council-run car parks. They can also park without time limit in areas where it is free but usually time restricted. [See press release](#) for more details.

Due to a drop in usage the Sovereign Centre car park in Weston town centre has closed until further notice. Nearby on-street parking is available.

In addition to the Sovereign Centre car park, nine other council car parks are closed to reduce the opportunity for people to visit areas following the government announcement about the introduction of more stringent social distancing measures. They are:

- Salthouse, Clevedon
- Bus Terminus, Kewstoke/Sand Bay
- Beach Road (opposite Commodore), Kewstoke/Sand Bay
- Marine Parade, Weston-super-Mare
- Uphill Beach, Uphill
- Knightstone Causeway, Weston-super-Mare (access will remain for residents)
- Melrose, Weston-super-Mare
- Worlebury Woods, Weston-super-Mare
- Kilkenny Fields and cricket club car park Lake Grounds, Portishead.

### **Council offices**

The Town Hall reception in Weston-super-Mare has now closed to the public until further notice. If you need to contact the council please do this online at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/connect](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/connect) or over the phone at 01934 888 888.

If you usually come in and use one of our council tax payment kiosks, please consider switching to online payments. You can find out more at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/counciltax) or pay by phone by calling 01934 888 121. You will need your 10-digit council tax reference number, which you can find on your bill, and your credit or debit card.

### **Children's centres**

All of our children's centres are now closed, except for two - Yatton (Rowan Tree hub) and Ashcombe (Maple Tree Hub) - which are delivering midwifery services only.

If you need to contact a children's centre please ring one of these and a member of the team will be able to help you with your query:

- Portishead Children's Centre – 01275 884 001
- Clevedon Children's Centre – 01934 426 440
- Worle Children's Centre and Library – 01934 426 618
- Ashcombe Children's Centre – 01934 426 380
- Oldmixon Family Centre – 01934 426 881

If you need to contact your midwife please use the telephone number on the front of your yellow book.

### **Motex equipment and demonstration centre**

The council's equipment and demonstration centre at the Motex building in Winterstoke Road, Weston-super-Mare has closed until further notice. There are

notices on site with details of where customers can go to access council support and other providers. Telephone calls automatically redirect to Care Connect on 01934 888 801.

### **Leisure centres and venues**

All our leisure and sports centres are closed. Go to [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus) for more information.

All events are cancelled until further notice at the following venues - The Tropicana and Playhouse in Weston-super-Mare and Somerset Hall in Portishead. The Bay Café is also closed.

### **The Campus**

The Campus in Weston-super-Mare is closed until further notice. However, the midwifery care at The Campus children's centre will continue so people are to keep attending appointments and will be able to access the building.

### **Play areas**

Play areas have been closed until further notice to ensure any visits to parks are only for the purposes of exercise as outlined by the government.

### **Registration Service**

No ceremonies are being conducted and the service is open for death registrations only. Go to [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus) for more information.

### **Libraries**

All North Somerset libraries, including the mobile library, are closed until further notice. While we recognise that libraries are important hubs of the communities which hundreds of people visit every day, our priority is to protect the health and wellbeing of our visitors and staff.

Libraries are more than just a physical space and we aim to continue to deliver a range of services, including access to eBooks, eMagazines and eResources. The libraries service will be working hard to develop additional digital outreach. This could include online activities for pre-school children such as online Rhymetimes, keeping in touch with home service customers by phone to reduce risk of social isolation and promoting home-schooling resources.

We will also be making it easier for people to join online and this will be promoted widely, with investment for the coming financial year switched from hardcopy to digital to extend the eBook and eAudio titles offer.

Existing loans will be automatically extended until Wednesday 1 July. Please do not return any items borrowed from the library during this time and please do not leave them on library doorsteps, as they could be stolen or damaged.

Extended Access is not available at Portishead and Winscombe Libraries and Worle and Yatton Library and Children's Centres.

Congresbury Community Library, which is run by volunteers, is also closed.

Some libraries share a building with children's centres. If you are currently under midwifery care at one of the area's children's centres, keep attending at your usual location as these midwife appointments will continue.

For the latest updates follow us on Twitter at @nsomlibraries or on Facebook /NSlibraries.

Online services will still be available to use:

Online library from home:

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/onlinelibrary>.

Including ebooks and audio books.

Enquiry service: <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/leisure/libraries/enquiry-centre/>.

To join online visit [www.librarieswest.org.uk/join](http://www.librarieswest.org.uk/join).

### **All critical services**

We have plans in place to make sure critical front line services keep running as the coronavirus epidemic develops. These include identifying and training staff for possible redeployment into essential services, and looking at service changes that could be made in the coming weeks. Any changes will be advertised on our website at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus)

North Somerset Council is following the latest Government advice regarding the wellbeing of residents, staff and contractors during the developing coronavirus situation.

As a provider of services to some of the most vulnerable people in the community, the council will make sure it maintains service levels in critical areas.

The council is reviewing advice and information and will make update decisions daily in response to the changing situation.

Residents are urged to visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus) for the latest information about services. Updates will also be posted to the council's Facebook and Twitter feeds.