

Key Stakeholder Update

Staffing

In these exceptional times, we're seeking to bolster our resilience at every level of the organisation. For police officers, this includes bringing colleagues back from secondment to support the effort and ensure continuity of command and the running of core policing functions through the projected abstraction periods we are facing. We welcome all of them and the support they're giving our response to COVID-19.

New Policing Powers

As you will be aware, things are changing daily and there are a lot of questions about what we want the public to report to us during this time of increased social distancing

Members of our communities have been asking us whether they should report people congregating and/or ignoring social distancing rules. Again, we are asking people to **not** report this to us at this stage.

Our officers are patrolling the streets as normal. They will find large gatherings not complying with Government restrictions and make clear the importance of social distancing at this time. We will be enforcing these new measures, which will allow us to disperse groups of more than two people.

At this stage, we do **not** want people to report non-essential businesses trading. They have been told to close and we will work with local authorities to make sure this is respected.

We will police as normal and if we see specified businesses open, they'll be reminded of their legal responsibilities. Businesses that continue to flout restrictions could face prohibition notices, fines and potentially lose their license. I'd also like to request that you **do not ask people to contact us on 101 to report instances of people and businesses ignoring the new restrictions imposed by Government**

Further to the above and the announcements made earlier this week, from 12 noon yesterday, 26 March, the Home Office has given police in England new enforcement powers to reduce the spread of coronavirus.

Although this includes the issuing of fixed penalty notices to those who will not comply with Government restrictions, the force position is that our first port of call must be to engage, explain and encourage people to comply with the Government's requests. It is essential that we use our communication skills to police by consent before moving to enforcement.

The most important thing to remember is that the purpose of these new powers is to **save lives by protecting the public and the NHS.**

The Regulations provide powers to officers and PCSOs to:

- require the closure of premises and businesses
- restrict movement and gatherings

Regulations affecting permitted retail premises and businesses

Local Authorities, mainly through their Environmental Health and Trading Standards officers, will lead on enforcing and monitoring the closure of business premises and will be able to issue prohibition notices. We will support them with this where required.



Powers in relation to restrictions on movement and gatherings

The Government has been clear that it expects people to do the right thing in order to protect the NHS, which will save lives. The vast majority have done so. However, there are some individuals or organisations that have not and it is hoped that the introduction of these new powers will go further to ensure the public understand the gravity of the situation.

If we believe someone is outside of the place where they are living without reasonable excuse, we can:

- direct that person to return to the place where they are living
- give the person concerned any reasonable instructions you consider to be necessary
- use reasonable force in the exercise of the power to remove the person to the place where they are living
- we may instruct gatherings of three or more people to disperse or direct or remove any person from that gathering to their home

Where someone is believed to have committed an offence under these regulations and is 18 or over, we may issue them with a fixed penalty notice for £60, which may specify that the amount of the fixed penalty is £30 payable within the next 14 days. The regulations include powers to direct a person (who has parental responsibility) to ensure a child complies with the direction of an officer.

Advice will follow from the NPCC for dealing with under 18s soon.

Protecting our officers and staff

We are putting all measures in place to protect our officers and staff including encouraging home working where possible, moving face-to-face meetings to Skype and providing them with daily guidance from Public Health England and the Government as well as the ordering of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). A discussion board has been set up for issues and concerns relating to the coronavirus.

How to Help our Most Vulnerable

We know communities are rallying around to help the elderly and vulnerable over the coming days and weeks. Check your local authority website for details of how you can help. Somerset County Council has a dedicated [Covid-19 page on their website](#) with links and contacts.



IMPORTANT - Stay at Home advice

Please follow the below guidelines to not only protect yourselves but vulnerable people in our community. Together we can prevent the spread of COVID-19.



CORONAVIRUS

#StayHomeSaveLives



SOCIAL DISTANCING

The Government has stopped all public gatherings of more than two people. You should be minimising time spent outside of the home and ensure you are 2 metres apart from anyone outside of your household.

AVOID ALL UNNECESSARY TRAVEL



We want to remind everyone that you should only use your vehicle for essential journeys. Current Government advice states you are able to leave your home for food shopping, any medical need or to provide care or help to a vulnerable person. Travelling to and from work is permitted, but only where you cannot work from home.

EXERCISE

You are permitted to leave your home for one form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk with your dog, or cycle ride - alone or with members of your household. You should not be driving to a location away from home to carry this out.





FIND OUT MORE / CONTACT US

Follow Government advice at www.gov.uk/coronavirus

To report a crime or seek advice about a crime or anti-social behaviour, please visit www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/report. If you are unable to report online, please call 101.

If you or anyone you know is in immediate danger always call 999.

Please do not report people congregating and/or ignoring social distancing rules - our officers are patrolling the streets as usual and will make clear the importance of social distancing at this time.

We appreciate your co-operation at this time

Avon and Somerset Police
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CORONAVIRUS

#StayHomeSaveLives



AVOID ALL UNNECESSARY TRAVEL

Current Government restrictions **DO NOT** permit you to use your vehicle to travel to this location for exercise. Each and everyone of us has been instructed to avoid all unnecessary travel.

We want to remind everyone that you should only use your vehicle for essential journeys. Current Government advice states you are able to leave your home for food shopping, any medical need or to provide care or help to a vulnerable person. Travelling to and from work is permitted, but only where you cannot work from home.

You are permitted to leave your home for one form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk with your dog, or cycle ride - alone or with members of your household. You should not be driving to a location away from home to carry this out.

We urge you to comply with the Government measures around social distancing, staying at least 2 metres apart from anyone outside of your household.



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Thank you

Lastly, we would like to thank you for your continued support through these unprecedented times. We are aiming to keep you well informed on this ever-changing situation through these weekly bulletins and through skype meetings. If there is anything you wish to further discuss then please let us know.

