

somerset **village** &
community agents
part of CCS

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April Village Agent News

Spring is in full swing and so is the COVID-19 vaccine roll out! Hopefully by mid April the 40-50 year old age group will be invited to have their vaccinations.

If you are an unpaid Carer you are eligible to be vaccinated with the person you care for as long as you meet the eligibility criteria. We've put together a handy guide here:

<https://somersetcarers.org/news/unpaid-carers-vaccine-group-6/>

Please do register with your Doctor's surgery to let them know you are an unpaid Carer if you haven't already done so. Full details on the Somerset roll out of the vaccine can be found here:

<https://www.somersetccg.nhs.uk/health/local-services/health-services-during-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccinations-in-somerset/>

However, there will be many people still shielding and extremely isolated until restrictions are further eased in the summer. If this is you, have you thought about joining a Befriending Service? CCS has a NEW project called **CHAT TO CONNECT** for Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) People.

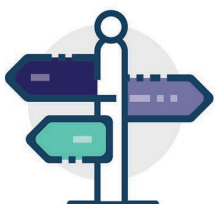
Do you want to meet new people in a similar position to you, with shared interests? We know it's good to talk and share experiences. We can connect you with another person who is on the CEV list to keep your spirits up – you are not alone. Complete the short online registration form, and we will match you with another person with similar interests and hobbies.

You may need some technical support in order to connect with someone so we are also offering one-to-one virtual support with phones, tablets, and laptops, downloading apps, and using Zoom or Whatsapp.

We have people ready to help you get online and talk to others! Go to: <https://ccslovesomerset.org/chat-to-connect/>

There are other similar services in Somerset too –

- **Age UK Somerset's** Friendly Phone Calls service Phone: 01823 345613 or email befriending@ageuksomerset.org.uk, or visit <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/somerset/our-services/befriending-service/>
- **British Red Cross** – Get help with loneliness: <https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-help/get-help-with-loneliness>



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SOMERSET
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- **Mind in Somerset** are launching some 'Somerset Wellbeing Friends' groups which focus on tackling loneliness, improving life skills and promoting coping strategies. Phone: 01935 474875 <https://www.mindinsomerset.org.uk/somerset-wellbeing-friends/>
- **The Silver Line** Free confidential helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people Phone: 0800 470 8090 <https://www.thesilverline.org.uk/>

Other ways to connect to people

If you are on Facebook – find local community pages or covid support groups. In the Facebook search bar, type the area you live, and then select to view groups and this should give you a list of groups where local people share information, ask advice and start conversations with each other – it can be a great way to get to know people in your area!

Most organisations have been able to move online in some form or another, why not check out some online groups:

Book Clubs

- The Reader <https://www.thereader.org.uk/> 0151 729 2200
- Somerset Libraries Reading Groups: <http://somersetlibraries.co.uk/events/categories/reading-groups/>

Art & Creative Clubs

- Seed <https://seedsedgemoor.com/>
- The Arts Bank in Shepton Mallet <http://www.artbank.org.uk/>
- Somerset Film at The Engine Rooms in Bridgwater <https://www.somersetfilm.com/> or the
- Mindful Art Club <https://mindfulartclub.co.uk/tag/online-art-groups/>

Men's Sheds - community spaces for men to connect, converse and create. They help reduce loneliness and isolation, but most importantly, they're fun. <https://menssheds.org.uk/>

Keeping Active - There are some great resources in Somerset that you can access online during the current restrictions

- **Somerset Activity & Sports Partnerships** – ideas for all ages and abilities <https://www.sasp.co.uk/be-active-at-home>
- **Sport England** <https://www.sportengland.org/jointhemovement>
- **AGE UK Somerset** have some great suggestions - <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/somerset/activities-and-events/exercise-sessions/>

Business Networking – Social Enterprise network

<https://ccslovesomerset.org/somerset-social-enterprise/>

Courses – Thinking of starting a new career or want to learn something new? Try Somerset Skills & Learning <https://www.sslcourses.co.uk/> or Step Up Somerset www.stepupsomerset.org.uk - Helping you find where you need to be.

2021 feels much more optimistic as things slowly return to normal – why not use these last few weeks of lockdown to explore some hobbies or interests? You never know what new friendships you may find or a new interest that puts a spring in your step!