

LOCKDOWN UPDATE – 8th May 2020

Another week in Lockdown and hopefully there's a bit of movement in the restrictions coming into play next week, so we will all be waiting with interest to hear what the PM has to say on Sunday.

Following the update from Warwickshire yesterday I can confirm that the cumulative cases in the county are now 1255 with confirmed cases in Stratford on Avon District (SDC) at 276 representing an increase of 13 new cases since last week. The expanded testing programme across the county - which now includes a pop up site at Stratford College - has inevitably resulted in more cases being identified, which over the last week is +214 across Warwickshire.

Out of the 432 SWFT Hospital Beds there are 34 cases of COVID-19 and two cases in intensive care. Sadly, the cumulative deaths across Stratford District as of 6th May is 97 with a cumulative total of 295 deaths in Warwickshire due to COVID-19. Over the same period there have been 1975 non COVID-19 deaths in Warwickshire.

Across the county there were 85 COVID-19 deaths in care homes settings compared to 594 non COVID-19 deaths in care homes over the same period.

In the ONS data which now reports on place and occurrence of death, based on registrations up to 2 May there were 40 COVID-19 deaths which occurred in care homes settings in Stratford District, based on 94 deaths at that time, with all cause deaths over the same period in care homes reported as 222.

(The variance reflects the differences between the Public Health England and ONS data which are reported at slightly different times of the day/week).

The capacity in hospitals remains good with 8% of beds occupied by COVID-19 patients and 15% with suspected COVID-19 patients and two patients in Intensive Care. There are 43% of beds occupied by Non-COVID-19 patients and a spare capacity of 35% reinforcing that the NHS is very much open for business. There continues to be a reduction in the number of cases being hospitalised and the Rate of Infection 'R' is below the national rate, but WCC is reinforcing the importance of social distancing and hand hygiene measures being fully adopted as this is not the time for any relaxation because there are still so many unknowns regarding COVID-19.

There has been a total of 509 cases or suspected cases in care homes settings across a total of 160 homes and WCC is continuing to work closely with all care homes in respect of PPE, testing and training in respect of infection control and hygiene to help bring the number of cases down. Home testing kits are not yet available to Warwickshire and Public Health Warwickshire (PHE) doesn't know when they will be fully available at this moment in time.

Trace, Track and Test (TTT) is aimed at identifying people with symptoms however mild and will be supported by the NHS COVID19 App, as well as a web-based tool and via telephone calls from the contact tracing teams. PHE will be providing input on a local basis for the workplace, care homes and school settings, as and when required. Test results will be shared with the individuals.

There is positive news on the PPE front in there being sufficient supplies in the system and WCC is liaising closely with all the care homes.

With regard to the Household Recycling Sites WCC is opening the larger sites in the first instance on 18th May but I'm afraid that the Wellesbourne facility is not included at this time. The sites to open include Burton Farm and the one in Leamington Spa and visits will be controlled by a full booking system to manage the customer flow through the site which is expected to be launched next week. Safety is paramount for staff and customer and PPE will be worn by staff and there will be additional security at those sites opening which will operate seven days a week.

WCC is considering how to support social distancing in town centres by looking at the reallocation of road space for cyclists and pedestrians to help support businesses and is working closely with the districts and BIDs. This means they are currently looking at full or single road closures to improve congestion, pop up cycle routes and the reduction of wait times on crossings. Town centres and areas of high pedestrian volumes are being focused on first.

The education team is also working with all schools looking at the scenarios for safe opening and much depends on guidance from the government. Operational arrangements involve looking at selected year groups, with a blend of in school and distance learning. Looking at the challenges of various school settings, classrooms and also issues about managing parents congregating outside school gates are being considered, however, there will be a co-ordinated approach around all Warwickshire schools.

SDC has now paid out over £27million to businesses and organisations which are registered for business rates and the team have worked exceptionally hard in challenging circumstances to help as many businesses affected by the lockdown.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a great VE Bank Holiday at home and I will be back in touch next week with another update.

Take care, stay safe and stay well.

Anne

Kind regards

Anne Parry

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