

LOCKDOWN UPDATE 13 June 2020

It's been another bumper week of activity and plenty of progress with the introduction of new Lockdown measures, and the easing of restrictions means we have all been kept on our toes in terms of plans and activity with the imminent opening of more retail businesses on Monday.

Both WCC and SDC have been busy making sure businesses are fully compliant in being able to protect both their staff and shoppers. Consequently, there has been close liaison between the county and the district to ensure that all the right safety procedures are in place to help build community confidence to #VisitSafeStaySafe.

Whilst we now have the opportunity to meet up with some friends and family in either the garden or a suitable outside space this week or even create a 'bubble' with a single relative to visit one's home, the message from Public Health Warwickshire (PHW) is continuing to reinforce the importance of social distancing and washing hands regularly to maintain infection control. For there is still considerable concern about a potential second wave of infection and concern that there may be some fatigue in continuing to follow the social distancing measures and hand hygiene practice; particularly in view of the number of planned mass marches around the county which is also having a major impact on police resources.

COVID-19 Update

The cumulative cases in the county are now 1524 up from 1487 with confirmed cases in Stratford on Avon District at 369 up from 366 representing an increase of just three new cases since the previous week which is one less than last week but encouraging. Testing is continuing at Stratford College and the Track and Trace procedures have commenced – see further information on Test and Trace Service below.

Out of the 421 SWFT Hospital Beds there are five cases of COVID-19 and no cases in intensive care. With the updated ONS figures sadly the cumulative deaths across Stratford District are now 159 (an increase of four in the last week) which includes 79 from the care home settings. The cumulative total of all COVID-19 deaths in Warwickshire is now 516 and over the same period there have been 2995 non COVID-19 related deaths in Warwickshire. Across the county there were 199 COVID-19 deaths in care homes settings compared to 930 non COVID-19 deaths in care homes over the same period.

The capacity in hospitals remains good with 1% of beds occupied by COVID-19 patients and 17% with suspected COVID-19 patients. There are 29% of beds occupied by Non-COVID-19 patients and a spare capacity of 53% reinforcing that the NHS is very much open for business!

National Test and Trace Service

Together Warwickshire County Council, Coventry City Council and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council alongside the West Midlands Combined Authority were selected to take part in the early roll out of the Government's new Test and Trace Programme. This sub-regional Beacon programme is one of 11 across the country aiming to accelerate the development of the government's Outbreak Control Plans.

Warwickshire's Outbreak Control Plan identifies a set of priorities which encompass measures to both prevent and control infection, as well as target vulnerable people and high-risk settings. It will link closely to the regional testing programme and use local and national data to swiftly target testing, contact tracing resources and local outbreak management measures to contain outbreaks at the earliest stage.

WCC will also be working with SDC's Environmental Health Team following the launch of the Outbreak Control Plan, and as this is progressed there will be regular briefings and localised updates.

SDC Environmental Health

The environmental health teams at Stratford District Council have been working exceptionally hard and literally round the clock throughout the Lockdown to provide invaluable help to businesses and retail outlets including restaurants, pubs, cafes, garden centres and shops. The team has also provided a wealth of information with links to government guidance which can be accessed from its website <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-recovery.cfm>

Stratford Town Centre

To assist in the reopening of Stratford Town and the recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, Warwickshire County Council, Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Stratford-Upon-Avon Town Council have worked together to produce a temporary scheme which will provide additional space for pedestrians to safely circulate, for customers to queue outside shops and for businesses to expand to meet customer needs.

The proposed scheme includes the introduction of a one-way system with traffic restricted to westbound movements on Bridge Street, Wood Street, Greenhill Street and on Alcester Road between Arden Street and Brunel Way, southbound movements on Rother Street, High Street and Chapel Street and eastbound movements on Sheep Street.

The space created by a combination of lane closures and the suspension of some on-street parking will create areas for customers waiting for shops to queue whilst allowing pedestrians to circulate safely. It is also proposed to introduce a 20mph speed limit in the town centre and to make changes to pedestrian crossings.

Traffic management equipment such as cones and barriers will be used to safely segregate people from motor traffic. The councils have plans to work with local art groups to consider options for improving the appearance of barriers to ensure the distinctive look and feel of the town can be retained. As hospitality businesses open, the space created may allow them to increase their outside tables to accommodate the social distancing requirements.

Wellesbourne Market

Warwickshire Trading Standards are continuing to work in close partnership with SDC together with the Police and Public Health Warwickshire with regard to the future opening of the market as it is understood that the operators have provided a revised risk assessment and event plan for review with reduced numbers of stalls, expanded one-way aisles and increased marshalling. Further details are awaited.

Waste Household Recycling

The online booking system continues to work really well and the sites open include Burton Farm in Stratford and Princes Drive, Leamington Spa: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/hwrc> New booking dates are continuing to be released by WCC but remember a household can only book on visit every two weeks. Whilst the centre in Shipston is opening on 22 June there are no plans for Wellesbourne to open in view of the difficulties of implementing social distancing procedures effectively.

Discretionary Business Grants

Stratford on Avon District Council launched this new round of grants on Monday this week and are continuing to receive extensive applications. The scheme aims to provide support for businesses through the Covid-19 pandemic in addition to the Small Business Grant and the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Grant Funds, which remain open for eligible ratepayers to apply who have not yet claimed. For more information on the scheme, please read the Council's policy for the grant. Applications can be made via <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/coronavirus/discretionary-business-grant.cfm>

Face Coverings

In line with the government's new measures for travelling on public transport, face coverings/masks must be worn from Monday 15th June.

Wishing you all a great weekend, stay safe and socially distanced!

Anne

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