

COMMUNITY UPDATE

COVID-19



15/05/2020



With lockdown measures in place for almost two months, we now approach the weekend with greater freedoms following the easing of some restrictions. The second phase of lockdown will come as a relief to some of us, looking forward to travelling a little further and getting outside a bit more, but there are equally some who are fearful about areas in our county being swamped with visitors at a time when social distancing remains vital in helping to prevent the spread of this virus.

We absolutely recognise the sacrifices made by people during this difficult and testing time. The public of Norfolk have done a superb job in keeping to the restrictions; transmission of the virus has been low and we have seen one of the lowest death rates in the country. As a county we have protected ourselves really well and we must continue this work. The virus has not gone away. In the last seven weeks we've been given daily updates on infection rates and fatalities and I think we can all agree the numbers have been quite sobering. As always, there are real people behind those statistics, people suffering the loss of a loved one. We will all have loved ones and people more vulnerable to infection who we want to protect. This is why I want to be clear that the easing of restrictions doesn't make our role in this any less important. Reading information or listening to a figure being quoted every day is nothing to the unimaginable pain some families are going through right now – families who cannot be close to one another and find comfort as we normally would do following the death of someone close.

In many situations, it's when your guard is down that you're caught out, and I see this virus as no different. Yes, you can go out more, yes, you can get far more exercise and enjoy the fresh air but at the heart of this is the maintenance of social distancing. The best way of protecting ourselves and others is being sensible, not going out unnecessarily and still being cautious. If we all continue to adhere to social distancing guidelines then as a county we will have the best chance of keeping infection rates and deaths low.

If you are heading out and about this weekend I would urge you to remember what the guidance is really trying to do – it's trying to protect you and all of those you love and care for. If we are all sensible and take seriously our social responsibility here, we will be able to continue to protect ourselves from the worst of this.

Many thanks - **Temporary Assistant Chief Constable , Julie Wwendth**



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