

COMMUNITY UPDATE

COVID-19



11/12/2020



During the last week, infection rates in Norfolk have stabilised which is disappointing because we had started to see infection rates steadily fall. We had expected to see this trend continue for longer after lockdown which poses the question... are people now too relaxed?

Many of you will have seen images of streets packed with shoppers, with scenes in London making national headlines. However, these scenes were not unique to the capital with Norwich also being extremely busy at the weekend. Some shops even reported their busiest trading days...not just of this year but ever!

Non-essential shops can of course open under our Tier 2 restrictions. However, while the rules may have been relaxed and we're afforded greater freedoms, we still need to be alert to the threat of this disease and act accordingly and responsibly. I'm all for supporting businesses, particularly those who have found themselves struggling as a result of the restrictions but hearing businesses have had some of their busiest ever trading days, you can't help but feel the pendulum has swung too far towards 'normality'.

The UK made history this week with the first person receiving the COVID-19 vaccine on Tuesday. As the rollout continues, so too does our optimism that the end of this epidemic is in sight. The vaccination programme is a monumental task and one which will not happen overnight. This will be a phased process, initially prioritising those most at risk from the virus. So, while the vaccine is a huge step forward in the fight against coronavirus, now is not the time to sit back and relax. The virus is still with us and we must continue to follow the guidelines to keep ourselves and each other safe.

Many businesses are playing their part and following the guidelines to keep their customers and staff safe. There are some establishments who haven't embraced the rules in the same spirit and alongside our colleagues from local authorities and Trading Standards, we will be making visits to venues to offer additional advice and guidance and make our expectations clear. As I've always said, we will continue to police as we've always done by engaging, explaining and encouraging people to adhere to the guidelines however we will also use enforcement where this fails and it is proportionate to do so. There is no excuse for breaching regulations.

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



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