

YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLOR UPDATE – 200322 –Spring Equinox edition

Spring Forward1 Clocks go forward next weekend!

Covid19

INFECTION RATES INCREASING SHARPLY AFTER FALLING STEADILY as I know only too well currently being off myself due to Covid.

The rate of infections across the district has increased SHARPLY to 771/100,000 from 462, the over 60's rate has increased to 598/100,000 (388 last week) with 254 cases over the last seven days. Other districts rates in Warwickshire, for all ages, are Nuneaton & Bedworth 498/100,000, North Warwickshire 505/100,000, Warwick 707/100,000 and Rugby 556/100,000. Warwickshire overall has 624/100,000. England 617/100,000.

There have been several further Covid related deaths since my last report across Stratford District (total now 289 from the start of this second wave (28th August 2020) 63 occurring in care homes, 195 in hospital, two in a hospice and 25 at home and four in a communal establishment, out of a total of 3,064 all cause deaths in the district for this new second wave period.

The cumulative total of deaths across Warwickshire for Wave 2 increased since my last report to 961 with a total of 9,329 all cause deaths. The cumulative total of Covid-19 deaths in Stratford district is 457 since the start of the pandemic and in Warwickshire 1,562 (13,813 total deaths).

The Booster programme for the over 75s is starting to roll out in the district next week and those eligible will receive an invitation from their GP.

WCC Paper Free meetings

At its meeting on Tuesday 15 March, Council passed a resolution which supported the operation of future meetings without printed papers. A significant amount of paper and packaging will no longer be needed, nor postage and savings of £15k can be used for other vital services.

Young Green Shoots Winners

The winners and runners up of Warwickshire and Coventry's climate change competition, Young Green Shoots, have received their coveted prizes following a fierce race for the climate prize.

Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/2811/young-environmentalists-win-prize-to-help-their-schools-become-more-climate-conscious>

Tree planting at Kingsbury Water Park

WCC's Country Park Rangers were joined by local residents and Councillors on Sunday 13 March, who came along to Kingsbury Water Park to help finish off this season's planned tree planting.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/2818/marking-the-end-of-a-successful-season-of-tree-planting-at-kingsbury-water-park>

Grammar School 11+ Test

Children currently in Year 5 in Warwickshire schools who want to apply to one of the county's six grammar schools in September 2023 will now take an 11+ exam from GL Assessment.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/2808/warwickshire-grammar-school-applicants-for-2023-entry-will-take-the-11-test-from-a-new-exam-provider->

Warwickshire welcome for those fleeing conflict

We have been truly shocked by the war in Ukraine and the response by the people of Warwickshire has been compassionate and generous.

Warwickshire residents have pulled together in recent weeks to support Ukrainian people and those affected by the ongoing invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/2817/warm-warwickshire-welcome-for-those-fleeing-conflict>

Save lives by regularly checking smoke alarms

Warwickshire residents are encouraged to make fire safety a priority by ensuring they have enough smoke alarms in their homes and that they are in working order.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/2816/warwickshire-residents-can-save-lives-by-regularly-checking-their-smoke-alarms>

Safer Streets Warwickshire

Agencies across Warwickshire have secured £249K in funding from the Home Office's Safer Streets fund to increase safety on Warwickshire's streets.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/2810/new-government-funded-project-looks-to-make-streets-safer-for-residents-of-warwickshire>

A happier and healthier workforce

It's not too late for Coventry and Warwickshire employers to book a place at an inspiring and educational free event taking place later this month to help nurture happier and healthier employees.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/2809/do-you-want-a-happier-and-healthier-workforce->

Child Exploitation in Warwickshire

Child exploitation is child abuse and although a child may not realise they are being abused, it puts the young victim at huge risk of damage to their physical, emotional and psychological health.

Know how to spot the signs: <http://somethingsnotright.co.uk>

#CEADAY22 #WarwickshireCE

Queen's Green Canopy

Have you planted a tree yet to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee? I joined the wonderful team at Snitterfield for tree planting a few weekends ago.

Remember to add your tree to the QGC map, which will be presented to Her Majesty the Queen as part of the #PlatinumJubilee celebrations, at <https://queensgreencanopy.org/map-education-hub/qgc-map/#/>

#PlantATreeForTheJubilee

SEND Webinar

Don't miss out on this informative webinar. It was oversubscribed last time

Warwickshire County Council is hosting another special educational needs and disabilities webinar and this time it is on the topic of educational transitions.

Please register to attend here: <https://bit.ly/SendWebinarMar>

Financial hardship

We know that sudden unexpected costs can create real challenges for people experiencing financial hardship. If this is you or anyone you know, help is available.

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/localwelfarescheme

If you are self-isolating or at higher risk to COVID-19, you can access help from the council and partners.

For practical and wellbeing support go call the hotline 0800 408 1447 or go to www.warwickshire.gov.uk/coronavirusvulnerable

The Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme supports the most vulnerable residents at times of unavoidable crisis when they have no other means of help. The scheme provides basic and essential help for food and energy in the form of emergency food parcels or credit for energy. Call 0800 408 1448.

If you're finding it hard to feed your family help and advice is online at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/foodsupport and

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/foodbanks

If you don't know where to turn and are in need of financial or emotional support visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/facinghardship or call 01926 410410.

Keeping warm is a vital part of keeping well this winter particularly for older people, the young and those with chronic illness.

Check-in on those living alone, heat your home to at least 18 Celsius, and keep up-to-date with the weather forecast.

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/keepwarm

For people struggling to afford heating bills, Act on Energy provides free advice on energy efficiency and grants and projects available in your area to help keep you warm this winter.

Find out more at <https://actonenergy.org.uk/>

You can help others in your community by donating food via supermarket collection points or clothes and toys to charity shops.

Highway Verge Management Policy

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) is responsible for maintaining around 25 million square metres of highway verge. It is one of the most valuable natural resources that the authority is responsible for managing. The Council has a duty to maintain the highway network so that it is safe to use and free from obstructions. WCC carries out grass-cutting on verges to ensure that vegetation does not restrict visibility for highway users and to provide a safe refuge for pedestrians.

The release of the good verge guidance document by Plantlife and the national discussions around climate change have brought the topic of sustainable verge maintenance into focus. Authorities are being encouraged to do more to consider the wider issues of biodiversity, environmental impact and sustainability when managing highway verges and therefore officers from the council's highways team have been reviewing how they maintain these assets.

A draft Highway Verge Management Policy has been developed to raise the awareness of the biodiversity value of roadside verges in Warwickshire. It sets out how verges can be managed to maintain their high value, whilst recognising the overriding importance of road safety. There has been a strong level of public interest surrounding the sustainable management of grass verges and in response to this the policy looks to introduce a Community Engagement scheme. This scheme will allow local groups to explore the possibility of adjusting and reducing the number of cuts to enable the existing flora and fauna to flourish or to plant wildflower areas. The draft policy also sets out how WCC intend to encourage biodiversity and create wildlife corridors by cutting selected rural roadside verges in a different manner

Good news – business support and job creation – WCC cabinet approved the development of the Holywell Business Park (where the Fire Training Centre was proposed to be) Southam for small and medium sized units – there is a shortage on those units in the county . It is anticipated between 70-80 jobs will be created in a sustainable location.

Gritting & grit bins

There was a comment on FB that You can't grit paths etc it is classed as an act of god if anyone puts salt or grit down and anything happens then that person is legally responsible

This has cropped up a few times and the advice I received was, if someone has taken reasonable action to ensure the path is clear and cleared snow etc they will not be liable, however if they clear their drive or path outside of their property, pile up the snow and someone falls over it, then possibly there is a case to answer. If they apply salt, it melts the ice and the footway is in a safe and usable condition, I doubt it would ever get to court. It is all about being reasonable and responsible. There would be the task of proving who actually salted the path etc.

Missed bins - I'm still getting details of the odd 1 or 2 that has not been collected. Contacts are streetscene@stratford-dc.gov.uk or Telephone: 01789 260616

<https://www.stratford.gov.uk/online-forms/missed-bin-report-form.cfm?fbclid=IwAR3vkf03zQgXUsEHH04ODeqfid1b1msbwpVg8DG6nQn47HoAcwmw5LL9Joc>

Reporting out of hours highways issues can be challenging, the best number for that is 01926 415000.

streetlighting@warwickshire.gov.uk or 01926 412515 (not all are currently owned by WCC – some owned by town or parish council.)

<https://www.fixmystreet.com/reports/Warwickshire>

It is worth noting for future reference that anything immediately dangerous on the highway should be reported direct to the Police on 999, which is the same process for any pressing issue Out of Hours.

During normal office hours - 8:30am to 4:30pm, WCC call centre is best on 01926 412515

Do please let me know if any matters arise which I can be of help with.

Have a great week.

Kindest Wishes

Penny-Anne O'Donnell

Division Wellesbourne.

Cabinet Support SEND

EMAIL: penny-anneodonnell@warwickshire.gov.uk