

## County Council November 2020 Report

The flare up of Coronavirus and the associated lock down has dominated events this month. The Government has not implemented the level of mitigation measures employed last spring other than in support for furloughed employees. The main concern is the ability of the NHS to manage “winter pressures” against the back drop of additional Coronavirus cases. It is this worry about the NHS coping with a ‘flu outbreak that is driving the lockdown rather than the absolute level of covid-19 infections. Some rules do however appear quite arbitrary, for example, the small locally owned Warwick Book Shop was made to close, but WH Smith next door was allowed to stay open. Given what appears to be a corporatist benign attitude in Government, I hope that everyone will make a special effort to support small local retailers rather than national suppliers and certainly avoid those who do not pay UK tax, such as Amazon when lockdown is lifted.

County Councillors receive daily briefings on the progress of the virus in Warwickshire. However more detailed information is publically available by going to Government websites, for example:

<https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/details/interactive-map>

On November 13 web site data showed that there were 9 cases in the Henley in Arden & Claverdon economic zone, this includes Langley, Wootton Wawen and Preston Bagot, well below the national average and the Earlswood, Tanworth-in-Arden and Sambourne zone had 19 cases, just fractionally below the national average. Warwickshire, as a whole, also remains below the national average. The death rate for UK is running at about 1/3 of the daily maximum rate of last spring (1,000 vs 334) and in Warwickshire comparable numbers are 88 last spring and 5 per week today. It is difficult to compare test data between the spring outbreak and today due to the ramp up of the testing regime. Comparing hospital only tests, infections are running at around 1/3 of last spring.

An area that has been neglected this year is global warming and WCC is supporting the provision of tree-planting kits to schools colleges and community groups to plant a tree for every resident in the county. To get involved visit: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/>

Warwickshire runs a general welfare programme for vulnerable residents at times of unavoidable crisis by providing basic and essential help. It is recognised within the Scheme that some families who are struggling financially, and are eligible for free school meals, have difficulty covering the period when their children are off school during the school holidays. This Scheme is supporting eligible families with the cost of food for their children over the school holiday periods. For further information go to <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/localwelfarescheme>

Following the Arden Clerks and Chairs meeting last month focused meetings will be held with parish councils, residents associations and County officers concerning the situations at Earlswood Lakes and Henley High Street when lockdown has been lifted.

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