

In a week which saw a lifting of restrictions on hospitality hope was given to our arts and culture sector through £1.57 national investment.

* Stratford Upon Avon with it’s rich cultural and historic heritage is a worldwide centre of cultural excellence .Our theatres including the RSC and Bearpit theatre, concert halls and live performance venues are central to our cultural heritage, but lockdown has made once vibrant theatres vulnerable to permanent closure, and cannot easily be replaced – which is why the Government are working to ensure they are protected.
* In addition to their £1.57 billion investment to protect the cultural sector, they will change the planning system so councils will need to take the temporary impact of Coronavirus into account when considering permission for change of use, redevelopment or demolition of these venues.
* These changes will reinforce and increase protections for these vital community assets during the current crisis and help ensure they can be revived to serve their local communities once again.

Restrictions will also be lifted on Nail Bars and Beauticians along with Leisure Centres for fitness from July 25th and Swimming from August 1st next week. Whilst it is now apparent that Covid will be with us until a vaccine can be found, it is vital to adhere to the government guidance. Respecting social distancing, washing hands, wearing face masks and self isolating if you become symptomatic or have been in contact with anybody who has.



Given the glorious weather this weekend it is great that Recreational team sports will be permitted to begin returning outdoors from this weekend,

It will allow different households to participate in training and competitive matches while ensuring the risks of transmitting Covid-19 are minimised. It lays the groundwork for recreational cricket to return on 11 July after the England and Wales Cricket Board submitted thorough plans for the sport’s safe return – with more sports set to follow.

Supporters will also be allowed to attend community fixtures in small numbers provided they are in groups of two households only, or no larger than six people from different households, and adhere to social distancing measures.

It marks another step towards the phased return of all sport and physical activity, supporting the millions of people who enjoy staying active by playing team sports to access the physical, mental and social benefits they bring.

Measures in the updated guidance include:

* Activity organisers should support track and trace efforts by collecting information on participants at both training and matches.
* All players, officials, volunteers and spectators must undergo a self-assessment for any Covid-19 symptoms. If they or anyone they live with has symptoms, they should not train, play or attend matches, and should instead self-isolate in line with public health guidance.
* Participants and spectators should minimise the use of public transport and car-sharing with anyone outside their household. They should instead walk or cycle to matches where they can.
* Clubs should strictly limit the time spent congregating at a venue before a match begins. Where possible, players should arrive changed and ready to warm up, limiting time spent waiting around or in changing rooms.
* All sports must adhere to social distancing throughout warm-ups and breaks in play, and avoid equipment sharing where possible. Players should also avoid unnecessary close contact such as handshakes or huddles.
* Sports where a single ball needs to be touched by multiple players, such as basketball, cricket and football, need to include in their action plans how they will reduce the risk of this transmitting the virus – for example by cleaning when it goes out of play.
* Club toilets will need to be opened for pre-match, during the match and for 30 minutes afterwards, but they must be cleaned regularly in line with public health guidance.
* Clubhouses and bars can be opened in line with government guidance on hospitality, with groups limited to six people.

Rules on exercise were initially relaxed from 14 May, to allow people greater access to local, outdoor physical activity. This allowed the public to go outside for unlimited exercise, alone or with their household, or one other person while adhering to social distancing rules. It also permitted outdoor sports facilities such as golf courses and tennis courts to reopen, with strict safety measures in place.

On 1 June the Government published guidance which allowed people to exercise outside with up to five others from different households, provided that strict social distancing guidelines were followed. This meant that people who played team sports could meet to train together and take part in conditioning or fitness sessions without contact.

**COVID-19 Update**

The cumulative cases in the county are now 2477 up from 2449 with confirmed cases in Stratford on Avon District at 521 up 5 cases from 516 since the previous week.  These cases now include data from both hospitals and NHS settings) and also community. Testing is continuing at Stratford College and the Track and Trace initiative is continuing to work well.

Out of the 423 SWFT Hospital Beds there are currently two confirmed cases of COVID-19 at present and no patients are in the intensive care unit.  The cumulative deaths across Stratford District has increased by one over the last week to 165 and the number of deaths remains at 80 from the care home settings (no increases in the last two weeks) from a cumulative of 3454 ‘all cause deaths’. The cumulative total of all COVID-19 deaths in Warwickshire is now 571 and over the same period there have been 2883 non COVID-19 related deaths in Warwickshire.  Across the county there have been 205 COVID-19 deaths in care homes settings (no increase in the last week) compared to 1032 ‘all cause deaths’ over the same period.

The capacity in hospitals remains excellent with .5% of beds occupied by COVID-19 patients but there are 15.5% beds taken up with suspected COVID-19 patients.  There are 36% of beds occupied by Non-COVID-19 patients and a spare capacity of 48% reinforcing that the NHS is very much open for business!

Whilst the cases have flattened there is still a serious risk of a second wave with the lifting of many lockdown restrictions and so the message from Public Health Warwickshire is that it is absolutely essential to continue to respect social distancing procedures, where possible keep this at two meters apart and implement rigorous hand hygiene measures. The Outbreak Control Plan is in place and in the event of specific outbreaks occurring there could be the situation of more stringent localised lockdowns as implemented in Leicester.

**SDC Environmental Health**

The environmental health teams at Stratford District Council are continuing to work really hard to provide advice and guidance to businesses and retail outlets including restaurants, pubs, cafes, garden centres and shops, in light of the new guidelines. 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

**Budget Update**

The following provides a summary of the Chancellor’s budget statement/update focused on jobs this week which I hope is useful. Total package is around £30bn, however the figures can change depending on uptake of certain schemes.

The Chancellor said the plan was based on three pillars: supporting jobs, creating jobs and protecting jobs.

1. **Pillar one - supporting jobs**

• Job Retention Scheme - Employers who bring back furloughed staff into work will receive £1000 per employee. If all 9m furlough were returned then it would cost £9bn.

• A pledge to provide 30,000 new traineeships for young people in England, giving firms £1,000 for each new work experience place they offer. High demand sectors have £100m for training up to level 2&3

• Apprenticeships businesses will receive £2k per apprentice and a £1,500 bonus for each 25+ aged apprentice.

• The doubling of front line staff at job centres, as well as an extra £32m for recruiting extra careers advisers and £17m for work academies in England. In total £1bn for DWP.

• Kickstarter scheme: £2bn Under-25s job scheme - six months for each "kickstarter" job, the government will cover the cost of 25 hours' work a week at the National Minimum Wage. Employers will be able to top up that payment if they wish. The scheme requires jobs to be additional, include a minimum of 25 hrs per week and must include training and support for future employment.
2. **Pillar two - Job Creation**

• Restatement of Budget commitment of £88bn and additional £5bn of capital investment

• Vouchers of up to £5,000 for Green/energy-saving home improvements as part of a wider £3bn plan to cut emissions this covers up to 2/3 (£5k per household) and a full cost (max £10k) for poorer households.

• £1bn for Public Sector Buildings adjustments, £50m for new approach to decarbonise social housing.

• A temporary stamp duty holiday to stimulate the property market. This would exempt the first £500,000 of all property sales from the tax.

**3.   Pillar three - protect jobs**

• VAT: Targeted cuts for food, accommodation and attractions for 6 months from 20% to 5%

• Encouraging 'Eating out': New model not quite a full voucher scheme is proposed - allows business to claim back up to 50% (£10 per head) of a meal out on a Monday- Wednesday.

Wishing you all a great weekend! Keep safe, healthy and socially distanced and continue to enjoy the relaxation of the rules by supporting our local businesses.

.