

COMMUNITY UPDATE

COVID-19



13/11/2020



We're a week into a second national lockdown in England and I think it's fair to say it feels quite different from the experience in March.

While the restrictions aren't quite as severe as the first lockdown, the reasons they've been imposed for a second time are exactly the same – to prevent the spread of infection and saves lives.

It's clear there's general COVID-19 fatigue which I think we all appreciate, understand and are prone to, however while we might all have our own opinions on these measures, the fact remains they are in place to protect us and we need to follow them.

As police, we don't make the rules, we enforce them and I would urge each and every one of you to do the right thing and stick to the regulations.

Agencies across Norfolk, including our local NHS, councils and blue light services, are working hard and doing what they can to keep this county as safe as possible. All we ask in return is that you play your part and follow the measures in place to protect you and your loved ones.

As part of our role in this, officers continue to engage with people to explain and encourage them to follow the measures. Since the introduction of the Health Protection Regulations we've found this approach tends to work in the overwhelming majority of cases, with breaches resolved without the need for enforcement.

However, as I mentioned last week, we're well into this pandemic now and people are fully aware of the risks and rules. We don't have time for endless encouragement so where we need to, we will enforce. In recent days we've had to issue 10 fixed penalty notices to people breaching the regulations. This brings the total number we have issued to 434 since March.

While many might think this isn't enough, and some perhaps too much, when making your judgement I would encourage you to consider two things. Firstly, our approach to these regulations has been to use enforcement as a last resort. We police by consent in this country and locally I believe we have a close bond with our communities so it's important we take a measured approach when enforcing this new legislation.

Secondly, while during the first lockdown there were noticeable reductions in crime, our demand has returned to pre-COVID-19 levels. In recognition of this, we have to strike a balance between enforcing these restrictions whilst also responding to reports of crime and managing our day-to-day work of protecting the public.

Assistant Chief Constable Julie Wwendth



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