

# COMMUNITY UPDATE

## COVID-19



18/06/2021



As we head into the weekend for what should have been our final one under lockdown rules, I know many people will still be disappointed by the delay. The four-week pause means Step 3 rules remain in place, with indoor gatherings restricted to six people or two households and outdoor gatherings of 30. While I equally share in this disappointment, like for many of you, this news didn't come as a big surprise, with recent data showing rising cases and the increased spread of the Delta variant.

I'm hopeful the pause won't be for too long and life will begin to reflect the normality we were all used to prior to March 2020. This pandemic has not only threatened our physical health but our mental health as well, with many people put under enormous strain in dealing with the fall-out of lockdown.

As restrictions have gradually eased, we've certainly noticed the county getting busier, which in part is reflected in rising demand for our services. We're expecting this trend to continue in the coming months with Norfolk being a prime destination this summer for staycation tourists. With an influx of visitors we anticipate this will make a very busy summer period. However, our resourcing plans are strong and we will continue to support our local communities and visitors to our county.

The overwhelming majority of people have embraced the easing of restrictions, enjoying their new freedoms sensibly. The return of night life to our towns and city is welcome news, however we have dealt with a number of incidents, such as assaults and anti-social behaviour, largely fuelled by alcohol. Looking ahead to Monday 19 July, we have plans to deploy additional resources, especially at the weekend, to manage any fallout from people overdoing the "freedom day" celebrations however we really hope that people will continue to be sensible and act responsibly.

Policing the night-time economy can be a big draw on our resources and at a time when we are expecting increased demand with more people visiting the county, my plea would be for those people to go out to have a good time not to over-do it. I'm sure most people who end up in a police cell don't intend to end their night that way but we've all seen before that too much alcohol can have unintended consequences. The less we have to deal with issues related to the night time economy, the more we can prioritise the calls from people who need us most."

**Chief Superintendent Julie Wvendth**



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