

Covid-19 and other matters 29/11/2020

Dear resident,

Many in Rutland are breathing a sigh of relief that from 2 December when this lockdown finishes we will be in tier 2 and not tier 3 like our neighbours in Leicestershire and Lincolnshire. It is indeed good news and here is a summary of what it means:

- No socialising with anyone not in your official support bubble in any indoor space
- No socialising with more than 6 people outside
- Hospitality venues can only serve alcohol to people having a “substantial meal” (but note bullet point 1 –no going to the pub with friends!)
- Pubs have to operate table service and stop taking orders at 10pm
- Places of worship can open but the congregation must not socialise other than within their own support bubble
- We are all encouraged to travel as little as possible

I have been asked by a number of people about whether we can shop in the tier 3 areas of Stamford or Melton (after all, Christmas is coming). This is what the Government says **“Avoid travel to or overnight stays in tier 3 areas other than where necessary, such as for work, education, youth services, to receive medical treatment, or because of caring responsibilities. You can travel through a tier 3 area as a part of a longer journey.”** This seems to me that all our shopping will be in Oakham and Uppingham until the rules change. For further information, including on other matters such as weddings and funerals or moving home see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-restriction-tiers-what-you-need-to-know#high-alert>

[Local advice and sources of help, whether you are an individual or a family, can be found here https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-services/health-and-family/health-and-nhs/health-and-support-services/coronavirus/](https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-services/health-and-family/health-and-nhs/health-and-support-services/coronavirus/) as can information on what the relaxation of the rules at Christmas really mean.

And remember, general rules still apply so wear a face covering if you can't keep two meters away from others (except in your own home, of course) and wash your hands regularly.

An Avian 'flu prevention zone is in place across England so if you keep chickens, ducks etc. in your garden click here to find advice on what you should be doing. <https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-council/council-news/prevention-zone-in-place-in-response-to-avian-flu-cases/>

The consultation on the reconfiguration of Leicester's hospitals continues until 21 December. This includes the proposal to close the maternity unit in Melton and other reductions at the General. These proposals are likely to have a significant impact on Rutland residents, particularly in relation to travel time, and so you may wish to respond to them. You can find out more about the proposals, and how to respond, here <https://www.betterhospitalsleicester.nhs.uk/>

From 1 December everyone is being encouraged to contact NHS111 rather than their GP if there is a medical problem. Either 'phone 111 or go online at <https://111.nhs.uk/> The NHS locally tell us “Patients contacting NHS 111 will be clinically assessed so that they can be referred to an emergency department, an NHS Urgent Treatment Centre, a Minor Injuries Unit, pharmacy, GP or advised to self-care where appropriate. They will also be provided with a time that they should attend.” I have been assured that the 111 system will refer Rutland residents to geographically appropriate services and not send us to the other side of Leicester!

Assuming I won't have to write another update till next year have a safe Christmas and let us hope the New Year brings a vaccine and a steady return to normality.

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