

COMMUNITY UPDATE

COVID-19



21/05/2020



I cannot deny that come Monday morning, I breathed a sigh of relief. The weekend had passed without major incident and in areas that were busy, social distancing was the order of the day. The large majority of people in Norfolk seemed to embrace their new-found freedoms with a degree of restraint. The weather definitely played its part in this, with more people out and about on the Sunday.

I think it's fair to say that for many of us, lockdown fatigue has or is certainly beginning to set in. And let's be honest...these are unprecedented times. Daily life has changed dramatically, it's affected our freedoms, work, travel, business, schooling and childcare.... even food shopping seems like a military exercise nowadays.

In normal times, a change to just one of these would probably be enough to trigger a feeling of being unsettled or frustrated. You combine all these things and that equals one massive challenge.

We cannot and should not ignore the fact that many people will be struggling with their mental health right now at a time when people's usual support networks, be that meeting up with friends or family or through a more professional setting, are not accessible in the same way as before.

No one is immune to having a bad day and I imagine many of you will have had a few in these last couple of months as we all come to terms with a new way of life. This week is Mental Health Awareness Week and the theme of this year's campaign is kindness. The #BeKind movement which attracted so much publicity before this crisis seems to be a distant memory, with limited coverage in mainstream media.

But the message couldn't be more important now – kindness is a medicine we should all be giving and receiving. Doing something good – putting other people's needs before your own – not only helps other people but can also help to reduce stress and improve your mood. I have no doubt acts of kindness have been happening across Norfolk since day one of lockdown. However, while some restrictions might be easing, the pressures people are facing remain the same. Let's not forget that and help our family, friends and colleagues where we can.

Lastly, as we head towards another bank holiday weekend, I ask you all to keep up with your efforts, demonstrated last weekend. Social distancing remains in place for a reason – to protect you and to help stop the spread of this virus. So, for the benefit of you and others, be sensible and let's protect ourselves and protect Norfolk.

Many thanks - **Temporary Assistant Chief Constable , Julie Wwendth**



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