

### **Nearly back to 'normal' in August?**

Life cautiously crept back to what we knew before the virus struck. We were lucky in that we were a relatively small population surrounded by fresh air and countryside rather than a conurbation with people in closely packed areas. The daily number of cases was on the rise nationally again, though with few hospitalisations, as many of those affected were in the younger generation who were not so badly affected. Rather than a nationwide lockdown there was always the threat of extra measures being imposed where a localised spike was happening – and Oxford was our nearest point of concern.

### **Featherton House Care Home**

Deddington has two care homes: Featherton House in Chapel Square, and St Anne's in Clifton, which looks after patients with dementia and Alzheimer's.

*Thoughts from the daughter of a Featherton House resident:*

'Mum understood that I couldn't visit and was concerned for our health, particularly that of my husband. My sister and I took turns to ring her every day so she kept in touch and the staff were their usual caring selves. Mum had her tv and daily paper so knew as much about what was happening as the rest of us.

'The home became its own bubble and any new residents, or those who had to visit hospital, were isolated in their own rooms for two weeks. Featherton has had no cases of the virus in either the residents or staff.

'In mid-June the home started to allow visits outside in a specially erected gazebo, Monday–Friday, three one-hour slots and only one visitor by prior arrangement. It was great for Mum and me to be able to see each other again, albeit from behind a mask! Each time I visited my temperature was taken and I was given a mask, gloves and apron, all of which were disposed of as I left. I'm not sure when and if these procedures will be relaxed, but with autumn approaching it will be less tenable to be outside.'

*From Abi Rygala, Manager of Featherton House:*

'It was very difficult for everybody at Featherton House to start with. All new procedures, particularly masks on staff faces at all times didn't help. It brought lots of confusion as facial expression is very important for communication. However, as time went by we learned and adapted to the new rules.

'We were very lucky in receiving support from head office and understanding from relatives that we were doing the best possible to keep our doors closed for COVID-19. I have been in post from 11 May, covering the Registered Manager's maternity leave. I am so proud of the staff at Featherton House for adhering to all procedures and keeping themselves healthy so there is no risk to our residents.'

*From the Deputy Manager at St Anne's in Clifton:*

'St Anne's went into lockdown a week before the government directive, a situation that lasted until August. Relatives were then allowed to meet with residents face-to-face in the garden, keeping 2m apart and with visitors wearing full PPE.

‘There was no shortage of PPE for staff; by early August they were being tested weekly for Covid and residents were tested monthly. Like at Featherton House, the biggest difficulty for residents was staff having to wear masks, as facial recognition is so important for communication. At St Anne’s the added difficulty was that few residents understood what was going on with Covid in the outside world as so many were suffering from dementia.’

Both Featherton and St Anne’s coped admirably with the first wave of Covid and, like the rest of us, waited to see whether winter would bring a second localised spike in cases, or a more general second wave. By autumn politicians and front-line staff knew far more about the virus and its treatment than first time round but it was an anxious time as winter approached.

### **Windmill Centre reopened**

Inevitably, different arrangements had to be in place when the Windmill opened its doors again on 21 August:

1. Special conditions of hire during Covid-19
2. A Windmill Covid-19 Risk Assessment had to be provided
3. An attendance register for NHS Test and Trace had to be provided
4. An A4 poster of the Covid-19 Secure Guidelines was provided for hirers to distribute to individual users

As well as some of the more common requirements that prevailed over the previous few months – washing/sanitising hands, maintaining 2m social distancing, wearing masks etc. – these were specific to the Windmill:

5. Reduced maximum capacity for each room: Main Hall – 30 people; Deddington Studio – 20 people; Clifton Room – 8 people (the Hempton Lounge was the designated safe area and unavailable for hire)
6. No use of either kitchen to prepare or store food or drink in this first phase
7. No use of changing rooms
8. Users were responsible for wiping down frequent touch points (door handles, light switches etc.) before, during and after booking – with their own cleaning products/equipment; the building was professionally cleaned on a regular basis, but not between bookings
9. Rubbish to be taken away from the building

### ***Deddington News***

Our local magazine was printed and distributed for the first time since March. Although it had appeared online every month, there was a section of parishioners who had no access to a computer and so hadn’t seen a copy. It was heart-warming to hear how many people say how much they missed it.

*From Jill Cheeseman, joint editor:*

‘Thanks to the Windmill Management Committee, at last we were given the go-ahead to print and collate the *DN* for September after producing a risk assessment for the teams using the Windmill Centre.

'The printing aspect was straightforward as only two people are involved and we use our own equipment, stored at the Windmill, so it was a question of maintaining sanitised hands, then after completing the job, storing the editorial pages in the cupboard to await the collating team. Door handles and light switches were wiped down with disinfectant after use.

'We had to record the names of the collating team for Testing & Trace afterwards and keep the data for 14 days. The windows were open, the collators were offered disposable gloves, and fewer people attended so we could reasonably maintain a socially distanced routine. They were all advised to bring face masks and any drinks they might want as we couldn't provide refreshments as before. The job took only slightly longer than usual – I'm sure we'll get better at it.'

### **School**

Teachers and children looked forward to being back in school from 2 September. In the final week of the summer term, half a class of children was able to attend at one time, from each of the year groups. This was for two days per class and much deep cleaning took place to enable this to happen. Even though they had not been fully together since March due to the virus and restrictions of space in school, children were able to deliver the leavers' service to their parents on the top school field.

### **Nursery/PFSU**

Again staff and children were looking forward to being back on 2 September. Different arrangements were in place but every effort was made to make the children comfortable in the new setting, ready to learn and have fun.

### **Church**

Services took place in Deddington Parish Church with a reduced capacity of 55, and with hygiene and social distancing guidelines followed. Still no church choir or bell ringers. Services continued to be streamed live.