

Life went on – and then it didn't

Towards the end of October we could see that, nationally, the number of Covid cases in England was rising exponentially. A three-tier system of restrictions on movement was introduced, Oxfordshire being in tier 1 (medium alert). The threat of being moved to tier 2 hovered around because of the city of Oxford's case number hotspot in its student population, and on 31 October Oxford, but not Oxfordshire, moved into tier 2.

But that was quickly overtaken by the announcement on the same day of a four-week national lockdown from 5 November – the edict that no one wanted. It was based on positive cases now passing 1 million, and a forecast of up to 4,000 deaths a day during the winter months if no action were taken. The government's furlough scheme, which had been due to finish at the end of October was extended through November.

In October an unseemly row had broken out between Downing Street and a celebrity footballer, Marcus Rashford. The contentious issue was the provision of free school meals for children being continued through the holidays. The government had backtracked on an earlier decision and stumped up for this in the summer. But by the end of October they were digging their heels in and insisting that other, more targeted measures were more effective. The optics were bad for the government, particularly when parliamentarians received subsidised meals in the Palace of Westminster. Other rows erupted between Downing Street and locally elected mayors who were facing tier 3 restrictions, particularly in the northwest of England.

Locally little had changed in October, shops and pubs were open, the church and the Windmill operated on a scaled-back level, *Deddington News* was back in print, the school was open, the library was still closed.

We waited to see what the local impact would be in November. Meanwhile our Covid-19 emergency team was poised ready to swing into action again:

Deddington and Parish Covid-19 Response Team

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Hello All - it has been a while since we have posted here. Much has changed and in many ways, much has stayed the same. We have settled into a different way of working, living and interacting. Deliver services have been ramped up, neighbors, family and friends continue to help out. The Deddington News is back in print for everyone and specially those not on-line.

The Covid Response Team are still here. We are standing by if needed and we are planning how we can use the network of volunteers in the coming months. If you need to call us, you have our details.

We don't know the future but what we do know is that we are resilient and creative and responsive.

Personally, it has been a privilege to have worked with this group and for this Parish. Thank you all.

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