

## More restrictions lifted in July

Many more activities and shops were able to reopen, though always with social distancing measures in place. National organisations had issued their own detailed Covid-19 guidance for local enterprises to follow.

### Masks

From 24 July everyone over 11 years had to wear a mask in shops (unless you were in one of the few exempt categories). Many of Deddington's shops are small so some shopkeepers provided masks or visors for customers who turned up without them.

### Pubs reopening

Pubs could reopen on Saturday 4 July, and the bars of the Unicorn, Red Lion and Deddington Arms welcomed drinkers for the first time since March. The Crown & Tuns had decided to wait until demand was clearer. The first evening all was quiet as customers appeared cautious in returning.

### Farmers' Market

At the 26 July market, back in its home in the Market Place, it was business as usual, though in a different format and with a one-way system and a 1m distance rule. Many of the regular stall holders returned, and they were welcomed back. The companion market in the church remained closed.



**Non-essential businesses:** Nellie & Dove dress shop and Wychwood Art Gallery in the Town Hall reopened for personal customers. Hairdressers reopened on 4 July, but appointments had to be booked ahead. Cedar Therapy opened with a restricted range of services – which puzzled many.

The Wychwood Art Gallery guidance was typical of the new trading restrictions in place:

[In compliance with government rules we are practising strict social distancing and so we have taken the following steps to ensure everyone's safety:](#)

[One household in at a time. 'Walk-ins' are very welcome if the gallery is empty but we would prefer that you book to see us by prior appointment to avoid unnecessary waiting time.](#)

1. Ring the doorbell to alert us of your presence
2. We will greet you wearing face masks and with our hands sanitised
3. Allow us to take your temperature from a distance
4. Pop on one of our disposable face masks (or our visor if you prefer)
5. Use the sanitiser provided to sanitise your hands

Once this is done, you will be free to browse the gallery at your leisure. There will be crosses on the floor to ensure that a distance is kept between us and your household at all times. We will be cleaning the gallery and the visor thoroughly after each visit and at the beginning and end of each day.

Alternatively, you may book a virtual appointment to view specific pieces “live” via an arranged online video call.

### **Church**

Services restarted on 4 July with social distancing and extra hygiene measures in place. The wearing of masks was strongly advised; funerals, weddings and baptisms were once again allowed, though with limited numbers. Chairs were set out to meet the new capacity of the church: 55. The food bank trolley in the porch continued to be generously filled. Meanwhile live streaming of Sunday services continued.

Four of the bell ringers returned on 26 July, though sadly it was a one-off. The age of some of the regular ringers puts them in the vulnerable category – and the bell tower is a very restricted space.

### **Al fresco drinking and dining**

The idea of allowing pubs and cafes to have seats and tables out on the tarmacked area of the Market Place was mooted, and the parish was asked for its opinion through *Deddington News*, social media and the Holly Tree Club newsletter (which reached elderly residents who hadn't picked it up online). This was an idea suggested by our County Councillor on the back of a nation and county-wide initiative to help the hospitality industry which had been hardest hit in the Covid pandemic, and also to introduce more of a café culture into our outdoor spaces.

Social media and emails to the Parish Council showed a huge majority in favour though those residents who normally parked in the Market Place objected. If the idea went ahead seven parking spaces would have been lost. Landlords would have to apply to the County and District Councils to change their licences and, at the end of July, it wasn't clear whether anyone had done so. But the conversation had started.

### **Windmill Centre**

Football training and cricket net training restarted late July, and the first cricket match – a friendly – was played on the 24th, again with Covid guidance in place. The Centre building was still closed, but feelers were put out to gauge user groups' confidence to return. At the end of July it was announced that the Centre would reopen on 21 August – as long as there was no increase in cases which demanded stricter restrictions.

This would enable *Deddington News* to start printing again. Since lockdown issues had been available online only and reached a good proportion of residents though not all, particularly the elderly.

The all-weather court reopened on 29 July, again with test & trace guidance and attendance register, and risk assessment in place.

### Play areas



Please maintain  
social distancing  
in this playground

The children's play areas reopened on 4 July with Covid-19 guidance notes posted around: the equipment was not sanitised or disinfected; users to bring their own hand sanitiser and respect social distancing; and no food or drink was allowed.

As expected, the playgrounds were hugely busy, children blissfully ignorant of what social distancing meant. The play areas were not stewarded so the onus was on users to be sensible – and let's just say, some were, some weren't.

### Library

The library was still closed, although libraries in some of the larger Oxfordshire town started to reopen from mid-July. Deddington was not on the list for reopening before 3 August. Our library manager reported a significant increase in people downloading eBooks and eAudio from the County Library service website.

### Health Centre

Consultations were still available online and by telephone, but not face-to-face.

### Travel

**Chiltern Railways** introduced a revised timetable, though the overall guidance was still only to travel by train if you had to. Face coverings were compulsory for people travelling on public transport in England, unless you were exempt.

**Stagecoach** bus services announced at the end of July that more of its timetables would return to pre-Covid levels. The increase in services followed changes to onboard capacity and seating guidance following relaxation of the 2m rule. One passenger could now sit in each row (sitting next to someone in their bubble or household only), sitting in a zig-zag formation, rather than directly in front or behind someone else.

On board signage was in place to advise passengers where to sit and remind customers that face masks were compulsory when travelling unless they were exempt.