

Two steps back – and then one forward

As anticipated, on 5 November the whole country went into Lockdown 2. Only essential shops could stay open, so dress shops Nellie & Dove and Jocy closed their doors, as did our four hairdressers and Cedar Therapy.

The Covid-19 team swung into action again, with another newsletter offering help and support to anyone in need. And plans were made for the annual Christmas lunch to be delivered to anyone on their own and in need, this time as a Festive Takeaway. Before the end of lockdown on 2 December we knew we would be moving from Tier 1 to Tier 2. This meant shops could open again and pubs could open only if they could offer substantial meals, so DeddiArms, Pie Pub, the Red and the Duke at Clifton could open again. Households would not be allowed to mix indoors apart from in support bubbles, while a maximum of six people could meet outdoors.

At the end of the month the infection rate for Cherwell had dropped from a peak of around 165 to 98 per 100,000 residents, and the R number (the indicator of the transmission rate) fell below 0.9 and 1 for first time since August.

What we missed in November was our Remembrance Day parade; instead representatives of the British Legion and the Parish Council laid wreaths at the war memorial accompanied by a lone piper and bugler, and the vicar read out the name of the local war dead to an empty church. And the Charter Fair which traditionally pitched up in the Market Place for three days in mid-November – usually to a mixture of delight on the part of children, and irritation from the oldies.



Concerts in the Church started up (virtually) with two concerts streamed by the local Adderbury Ensemble chamber group.

The Farmers' Market did run for food (and drink!) stalls only and was hugely appreciated by scores of well-masked punters braving the dreary foggy weather.

The Windmill Centre stayed firmly closed until 2 December which meant printing and collation of *Deddington News* was delayed by a week. Even then opening was limited to outdoor use (football, tennis and all-weather court), with organised indoor sport, physical activity and exercise classes only by 'people who could avoid mixing with people they do not live with or share a support bubble with' – which must have ruled nearly everybody out. Not

surprisingly, the Windmill management were uncertain whether it was worth opening the building at all.



At the end of the month the usual Christmas tree went up in the Market Place as did the lights on the church tower adding to the cheer. And boy oh boy, did we need some cheer!

There were promises of restrictions being eased for a few days at Christmas which alarmed the government's scientific advisers who saw families gathering together as certain super-spreader events.

But the welcome news, the news we'd all been waiting for, was that not one, but three vaccines were on the horizon and the Health Centre began gearing up for delivery in the New Year, starting with NHS workers and care home staff and residents. Chipping Norton Health Centre was designated our local delivery centre.