

## HICovid19 digest (16 Jul 21)

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Monday (19 Jul 21) is talked of as being 'Covid Freedom Day' but that doesn't mean that we'll be free of Covid. It just means is that we'll be free of the rules which have governed our lives over the last 16 months or so and enabled us to fight off two surges in infection rates. Now we have a third surge but the strategy is to fight it in another way: no rules but rely on common sense.

We won't be free as long as we live in the shadow of Covid so it is essential, whether or not we understand and agree with the Government's strategy, that we do exercise common sense.

In Histon & Impington we continue to be blessed with a low infection rate. Although it's sometime since we've been in the white zone (less than 3 infections over a seven day period) it's hovering at 11 at present. That's an incidence of 91 per 100,000 inhabitants compared to a national (England) average of about 350. It would be good if we could find a way to keep it that way.

Our local businesses have a dilemma. They have supported us so well during the periods of lock down and constrained activity and are naturally hoping that they can open up. However they also know that many people in the community are concerned. Many residents have reported their intention to continue to wear a face covering, especially indoors, and their worry about social distancing norms being abandoned.

Both the Mayor of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough (<https://bit.ly/3wJO6O9>) and the Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council (<https://youtu.be/OSThyt2HVu8>) have expressed support for the continuing wearing of masks in public places

Different businesses will respond in different ways and that's their right. They will do so sensitive to what their customers want and it's up to them to balance this with their need to trade profitably.

None of this is right or wrong. We all, businesses and customers, just need to exercise common sense and recognise that our collective behaviour over the next weeks will determine whether or not we can keep our local infection rate down.

This probably means that we should:

- Continue to observe 'hands, face and space' especially in crowded indoor spaces;
- Be tolerant of those who choose not to relax their behaviour. And of those who do;
- Recognize that vulnerable people may now feel less safe in our community; and
- Support our businesses and whatever rules they put in place

Our community has looked after itself in exemplary fashion. However the changes will probably bring more stress. If that happens and you or anyone you know does need any help for any reason please contact the street co-ordinator or call the HICOVID19 helpline on 01223 320420.