

CHURCH STRETTON TOWN COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE 15.5.20

POINT OF RISK

Because Church Stretton has a high number of elderly members, all residents have been acutely aware that the coronavirus poses a particular threat to this community. For that reason, with few exceptions, there has been, up until now, a high level of compliance with the government's instruction on social distancing. This has contributed to ensuring that the level of infection has remained at a comparatively low level, albeit regrettably including a few deaths.

With the easing of the lock-down and particularly the permission to travel into the countryside, Church Stretton, at the heart of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, will cease to be a community in isolation. In normal times, Church Stretton would extend a friendly welcome to visitors. However, in the present circumstances, it is hoped that visitors will appreciate they bring a potential threat of cross-infection into this community, unless they, too, pay scrupulous attention to the requirement of social distancing in the proximity of residents.

The apprehension of residents is compounded by the fact that, at this critical juncture, government guidance is open to very variable interpretation and much is left to the individual's sense of social responsibility. It is vital that residents and visitors accord each other due respect.

The Town Council has sought to ensure that the management of its amenities and green spaces is fully compliant with government instructions. The Council is grateful that the National Trust is equally scrupulous in this regard. This is particularly important in relation to Cardingmill Valley on the edge of the town, which is a major draw for visitors. Till now, the Valley has been closed to all visitors but when, in the coming days, a limited number of visitors are once more allowed into this amenity, their behaviour will be closely monitored and remedial action taken, if necessary.

The National Trust will be widely advertising the limitation on the numbers allowed admission. However, given the popularity of this site, it is appreciated that some visitors may be disappointed and may choose to come into the town. Their custom will be welcome but only if they behave in the required manner.

Cllr. Bob Welch, Town Mayor, cautioned "Epidemiologists warn that the point at which restrictions begin to be relaxed is the point of maximum risk, in terms of containing the virus."

For more information:

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