

COVID (CORONAVIRUS) SHUT-DOWN 2020

It has been said by many that these are strange times that we are living through, and it would be a brave person who tried to predict when we will be able to say that the coronavirus pandemic is behind us. And so uncertainty remains a daily fact of life and that uncertainty can lead to anxiety. How do we keep hold of our sense of self and society when all the certainties are wobbling?

When Wheatley W.I. was formed in November 1919 the country was just recovering from a devastating flu pandemic. Now, one hundred years later, we are facing a very similar situation. As happened then Wheatley W.I. has risen to the challenge by making 100 laundry bags for the staff at the local hospitals.

Since March all of our lives have been turned upside down by Covid 19 and now, at the beginning of June 2020 even though some things are improving, it seems as if nothing will ever be quite the same. What will become 'normal' in the future is unpredictable. Many have discovered the joyful escape from today's many stresses and have gone back to nature through caring for their gardens. Queues for loo rolls have been replaced by requests for bedding plants.

Not to be able to hold traditional celebrations such as May Day and St George's day along with other planned events was very disappointing but it was heartening to see the many small VE day teas that were held all over the village, bringing neighbours together and remembering the national euphoria 75 years ago with the end of some of the world war, illustrating the sense of community within the village

Fortunately, our village is very self-contained. We still have a butcher, baker, post office, pharmacy and other shops and sources of take away food. Probably we all appreciate the postmen and women and refuse collectors more now than in the past and include them in the Thursday nights 'Clap for Carers' that took place in Wheatley and across the country for 10 weeks.

The way in which the village has responded over the past few weeks has been completely inspiring. Wheatley has always possessed a great community spirit but the way our residents are continuing to support and help each other has been magnificent. The establishment of the Wheatley Support Group has been a huge help to vulnerable and self-isolating villagers. Many were quick to offer support to friends, family, and neighbours, with over 200 volunteers answering the call to become a Community Support Volunteer.

A lot of people have become far more adept with technology and been able to keep in touch whilst socially distancing. There are weekly Zoom church services from St Mary's, quizzes and coffee chats in Wheatley and in a Zoom meeting with clergy from across Oxfordshire experiences were shared of how lockdown was affecting everyone. There were heartening stories of how churches had responded to the situation, and imaginative solutions to the need to keep people together were shared.

The Catholic community, too, has remained in close contact through an email support group which has been established to offer help, support and prayers. Parishioners have been able to attend daily Mass on weekdays and Sundays through the Mass-streaming link on the website of the mother church in Headington.

With much less traffic, infrequent bus services and many more tentative cyclists the village has been a lot quieter with seemingly the birds singing more loudly. There has been no morning rush of children to school or noisier chatty return journeys in the afternoon. and the church bells have been silent apart from striking the hours. Many will appreciate the calm but many also will welcome the sound of lively children returning and the pealing of the bells. These peals marking significant events will confirm that we are slowly returning to the familiar rhythm of daily life – albeit different from before the virus hit.

Wheatley truly is a special place to live and work and this has been evident over the past days, weeks and months as the community has rallied to support each other during these challenging times.



Examples of posters in

ONLY TWO
customers at
a time please.
Thank you

CORONAVIRUS
In line with Government advice
The Merry Bells
Main Hall and Coffee Room
will be closed until further notice

the Village in 2020



**WE ARE
OPEN**
**7 DAYS A
WEEK**
FOR DELIVERY & COLLECTION ONLY
1 IN 1 OUT POLICY

TEMPORARY
OPENING HOURS
MONDAY - FRIDAY
09⁰⁰ - 13⁰⁰
SATURDAY
09⁰⁰ - 12⁰⁰

**ONLY ONE
CUSTOMER
IN THE SHOP
AT A TIME
PLEASE**
THANK YOU

I am sorry to inform you
that
Nail Art and Beauty Salon
will stay closed until
further notice.

REVISED OPENING HOURS

	Morning	Afternoon
MONDAY	08:45 - 12:00	14:00-18:30
TUESDAY	08:45 - 12:00	14:00-18:30
WEDNESDAY	08:45 - 12:00	14:00-18:30
THURSDAY	08:45 - 12:00	14:00-18:30
FRIDAY	08:45 - 12:00	14:00-18:30
SATURDAY	08:45 - 12:00	CLOSED
SUNDAY	CLOSED	CLOSED

For any urgent queries, during the hours of 12:00 - 14:00 on weekdays and 12:00 -13:00 on Saturdays, please contact the pharmacy on 01865 874047

Wheatley Celebrates VE Day



2-metre social distancing meant that people queued to get into...

Cornfields



Cricks



Post Office, six in the queue



Bruins



Co-op



The morning traffic down Holloway Road just wasn't there especially during the first lockdown in March/April 2020 – this taken 8 a.m. on Monday 8 June. It was still like this at 9 a.m.



Normally, traffic would be bumper-to-bumper and backed up a long way down Church Road.

Despite large numbers of infections, from a relatively minor variant, still at the beginning of 2022, most restrictions were lifted at the end of February 2022 and people were asked to still be respectful of others' space using common sense. The village community began to meet at organized events with less use of Zoom gatherings (although we were all far more adept technologically) and we all became accustomed to a new 'normal'.

