

23 April 2021

Weekly Update from the Leader and Chief Executive Warwick District Council

Dear Friends

Shocking news from India underscores that Covid-19 is far from vanquished. In stark contrast, due to our testing programme and a continuing focus on safe practices, thankfully the number of new, local Covid-19 cases remains low. This is giving a vital opportunity for the vaccination programme roll-out, which is being well supported with **73,340 (56.5%) of all adults in the district so far being given at least one dose.**

It is important that we remember that even if we've been vaccinated, we can still catch and spread Covid-19. As lockdown restrictions are eased and we increase our social contact, let's take every opportunity to regularly get tested. There are a number of **options for free testing** in our community; you can order tests to be delivered to your home, make an appointment at your local test centre or collect a test from a participating pharmacy.

Following the reopening of the indoor leisure facilities, it's been a joy for us to see the return after many months of **school swimming lessons**. Being able to swim is a key life skill, so the demand for catch-up lessons is a priority. Swimming can also be lots of fun; a view summed-up by a comment from the head teacher of one of the first schools to visit the Newbold Comyn Leisure Centre this week:

"The children really enjoyed getting back into their lessons and achieving new skills in the water. One pupil on venturing into the pool for the first time ever, after previously only sitting on the edge, remarked that 'After 12 months of lockdown, I'm brave enough to get in the water now.'"

We believe it is important to also provide a wide offering of opportunities for physical exercise for all ages and interests, across our parks and public open spaces. Thanks to a well-supported public consultation on the future of Newbold Comyn, we've been working on a range of great ideas suggested by residents to extend the recreational opportunities on offer. The first of the schemes coming forward creates new off-road cycling facilities at [Newbold Comyn](#), giving cyclists 4.5km of specially designed routes, fully accessible to all and not segregated from the rest of the park. Working with our conservation charity partners, further schemes are due to be announced shortly, which will also provide significant enhancements for the Comyn's wildlife habitats and

The Media Room – Warwick District Council

T. 01926 456069 | M. 07920 535163 | E. media@warwickdc.gov.uk

Warwick District Council, Riverside House, Milverton Hill,
Royal Leamington Spa, CV32 5HZ. www.warwickdc.gov.uk





WDC PRESS RELEASE

biodiversity. Thank you all for helping create a balanced masterplan for this important public space, which will benefit users of all ages and varied interests.

This week we were delighted to confirm a major £150,600 financial contribution towards the cost of extending the **Warwick Gates Community Centre**. The balance of the funding required is being provided by charitable grants and community fundraising. New kitchens, toilets, storage and function room facilities, will make the building more versatile, enabling greater access for a community that has grown significantly since the Centre was opened in 2000.

To further support improvements in to our community facilities, we're pleased to announce that the **Rural and Urban Capital Investment Scheme** (RUCIS) is now open for applications for 2021/22. After a brief pause last year, as we focused on administering much needed funds for local voluntary and community organisations involved in supporting our residents during the pandemic, RUCIS is back offering grants of up to £30,000. Locally led and run, not-for-profit community organisations looking to make improvements to the facilities they need to provide their services, can find out more about the fund and how to apply on our [website](#).

To address a long-standing area of concern, this week we announced our intention to acquire **Warwick's medieval Leper Hospital**, subject to a Compulsory Purchase Order. We will be seeking planning permission to allow for the restoration of these important buildings. Working closely with West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust who are experts in rescuing and conserving historic 'at risk' buildings, we aim to give this part of beautiful Warwick a sustainable future.

This year the restoration of the Bandstand was completed, but we've not be able to appreciate the return of live music to the Pump Room Gardens. So, on Saturday evening at 6.30pm, we're hosting a very special gig, where musicians will be performing online from our virtual bandstand. To acknowledge and support those who've been especially affected by the pandemic, songs are being dedicated for us all to enjoy. Event details are available, [here](#).

Of course, as we mark St George's Day and Shakespeare's Birthday, it is timely for us to reflect on the wisdom of the Bard when he extolled that, "The golden age is before us, not behind us."

Keep smiling and stay safe.

Andrew Day Leader

Chris Elliott Chief Executive

The Media Room – Warwick District Council

T. 01926 456069 | M. 07920 535163 | E. media@warwickdc.gov.uk

Warwick District Council, Riverside House, Milverton Hill,
Royal Leamington Spa, CV32 5HZ. www.warwickdc.gov.uk

