

## County Councillor Report - Councillor Linda Cohen

### North Nibley Parish Council

September 5<sup>th</sup> 2021

1. My next monthly meeting to allow residents to meet and discuss concerns and new initiatives will be at The Keepers on Symn Lane in Wotton on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> September at 11.00am. It would be useful if this information could also be shared on the Parish Council website.
2. Highways Local - I mentioned in my last report that a small amount has been ringfenced for use in North Nibley. We are still waiting to hear from North Nibley C of E Primary about dates for speed monitoring.
3. School Road Safety - A social media campaign has been designed in partnership with Wotton Town Council to remind local drivers to drive particularly carefully when children are walking to and from school. The graphic uses the existing Children Crossing Triangle but with pictures of local children in place of the characters. This will be extended to posters after the trial this week and initial feedback. The campaign will initially target local drivers.
4. Community Recovery Fund - Gloucestershire County Council has launched a new £2 million fund to help communities to recover and rebuild from the impacts of Covid-19.

The fund provides a total of £40,000 for each of the county's 53 electoral divisions to allow each county councillor to support bids in their area and ensure the benefits of the investment are shared across Gloucestershire.

The fund is open to (but not exclusively) community groups and voluntary organisations, parish councils and sports groups.

Anyone who would like to find out more can email me on [linda.cohen@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:linda.cohen@gloucestershire.gov.uk) or ring me 07791 110906

5. Return to school - Gloucestershire schools supported by the county council have been planning for pupils' safe return with rapid testing, ventilation and extra hygiene precautions at the top of the checklist.

Regular rapid testing for people with no symptoms will remain key to helping prevent the spread of COVID-19. Secondary schools have been offering pupils on-site lateral flow device (LFD) tests before they return to face-to-face teaching and may need to stagger pupils' return to school as a result. Pupils and staff across all schools will be urged to continue to take regular rapid tests ongoing.

Students aged 16 and 17, as well as younger children aged 12-15 in certain eligible groups are also encouraged to take up the offer of the vaccine.

Whilst restrictions such as bubbles have been eased to allow a full return to school activities, handwashing and regular cleaning across school

buildings will still feature as part of school life. It is also recommended that face coverings are worn on public or school transport.

In the event of a school outbreak extra action might be considered when cases reach a threshold, which could include face coverings in communal areas and classrooms for secondary school pupils; moving group activities outdoors or enhanced ventilation and deep cleaning will need to be considered. Schools will continue to work with the county council to agree what action should be taken.

Schools will no longer be responsible for tracing close contacts of pupils who test positive for COVID-19, instead this will be done by NHS test and trace. To ensure pupils get the maximum face to face teaching and minimal disruption to their education, children and young people aged under 18 years six months who have been identified as a close contact will continue to attend school – including if someone in their household has COVID-19 provided they are symptom free.

It remains a legal requirement that anyone who tests positive or has symptoms of COVID-19 stays at home and gets a PCR test. Contacts of a confirmed case that have had both doses of the vaccine, have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial or are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons don't need to isolate but should still get a PCR test and limit socialising to keep loved ones and the wider community safe.

Advice and information for parents and carers about returning to school can be found at: [gov.uk/backtoschool](https://gov.uk/backtoschool) or read this handy blog: <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2021/08/24/back-to-school-what-you-need-to-know>

6. Foster Carers – The County Council is announcing a new fast track fostering assessment for people who have experience caring for children and are interested in becoming foster carers. This is in response to the increase in the number of children coming in to care in Gloucestershire and the sharp decline in the number of people applying to be foster carers since the easing of Covid 19 restrictions.

To find out more [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/fostering) or call 01242 532654

7. Afghan Local Staff Resettlement Scheme:

- Working through a countywide partnership, all seven local authorities in Gloucestershire have agreed an ambition to resettle up to 35 families in the county through the scheme to evacuate former employees of the British mission in Afghanistan.
- The Gloucestershire Housing Partnership continues to appeal to private-sector landlords who have good quality properties to rent to come forward. They are particularly in need of larger (4 or 5-bed) properties. Participation in the scheme brings a number of benefits for landlords. If you are interested, please contact the team at [Gorib.Hossain@glocester.gov.uk](mailto:Gorib.Hossain@glocester.gov.uk)

## 8. COVID-19:

Testing: Our nearest Mobile Testing Unit location is:

Dursley Rugby Club, Hounds Green, Dursley GL11 6AJ (Monday-Tuesday)

Lloyds Pharmacy Wotton-under-Edge provides on site testing for people with no symptoms - 43 Long Street, GL12 7BX. Opening hours 9am-6.30pm (Monday - Friday), 9am-5pm (Saturday).

Cases

In the week Monday 16th August - Sunday 22nd August there were 2,308 cases of COVID 19.

Of these cases:

- 492 Gloucester
- 480 Cheltenham
- 302 Tewkesbury
- 480 Stroud
- 283 Cotswold
- 271 Forest of Dean

The rate of cases in the last 7 days per 100,000 is 364.0 in Gloucestershire.

In the week 7<sup>th</sup> August - 13<sup>th</sup> August, there was 1 death mentioning 'novel coronavirus' which is 1.1 % of all deaths.

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