

Wrexham Community COVID
support briefing 19th May 2021



This week sees the opening up of many services and activities allowing more people to meet but there is still the need for everyone to act responsibly and as Mark Drakford has said on numerous occasions 'Just because you can does not mean you have to'.

This week see variations across England and Wales about what will be permitted and what restrictions will still be in place here in Wales.

The increasing spread of the 'Indian' variant of the virus remains a significant worry with initial evidence showing that it spreads a lot quicker than the original virus from the beginning of last year and subsequent variations. It is crucial that everyone plays their part in keeping themselves and those around them as safe as possible and when contacted take up the appointments for vaccines.

The vaccine programme across Wrexham using the Catrin Finch Centre for mass vaccines and the network of GP surgeries has ensured a rapid roll out. There are however still concerns that many people offered vaccines are not taking these up – there may be personal medical reasons or confidence issues in some parts of our communities. Everyone who has had a vaccine should encourage anyone they know who has not been vaccinated to take up the vaccine. Having the vaccine does not however give someone a green light to do what they want and forget any restrictions.



Mark Drakford said: "Within your own household bubble or extended household you'll be able to make decisions about who you hug and who you cwtch.

"But we're not yet thinking, largely because of the Indian variant, we're not going to change the rules about people more generally. We expect the two-metre social distance to be sustained."

Asked whether people will be able to hug a family member outside of their household bubble or extended household, Mr Drakeford replied: "I'm afraid you have to wait a little bit longer.

"We can change the rules, we don't have to wait two or three weeks. If we get advice that says it's safe to move ahead on that, we'll do so as soon as we get that advice.

"But we are just pausing to make sure that we have the best possible evidence about the newly emerging risks that there may be because of (the) Indian variant."

2 Million people vaccinated in Wales



On Sunday Public Health Wales announced more than two million people in Wales have now received their first Covid vaccine, according to latest figures.

Public Health Wales (PHW) said a total of 2,019,160 people (64% of the population) have had their first dose.

Also, 915,674 people have had their second jab - 29% of the population.

Whilst the vaccine numbers are very positive this is also against a background of rising cases in Wales with the seven-day infection rate up to last Saturday risen slightly from 8.9 cases for every 100,000 people to 9.5, according to the latest data.

The success of the programme has not just been through the commitment of the many Health Workers but also the many 1000's of volunteers that have assisted in various roles including being trained as vaccinators.

Welsh Government changes this week:

It is important that local people ensure they take notice of the differences that still exist across the border in England. With many people traveling across the borders for work or social there will be a need to adhere to both sets of rules.

The changes in Wales for 6 people from 6 separate households meeting up indoors and pubs and restaurants is a significant change that many will welcome.

Many of the changes will see a wider opening up of both commercial services and activities as well as those being run at a community level.

The onus is still resting with individuals to ensure that if they have any symptoms that they obtain the necessary tests and if positive isolate by following the instructions of the Test, Trace and Protect Team.

Even if someone has had their vaccine if they encounter any symptoms, they should obtain a test immediately. The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a high temperature: this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough: this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste: this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If you develop one of these symptoms, you should:

- follow the [self-isolation guidance](#)
- [apply for a coronavirus test](#)

The [COVID-19 online symptom checker \(on NHS 111 Wales\)](#) can tell you if you need medical help. Use the service if you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, or your condition gets worse. If you do not have internet access, call 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.

What lockdown rules are changing on 17 May?



Indoor hospitality can reopen

Six people from up to six households (not including children under 11) can visit pubs, cafes and restaurants together



All holiday accommodation can reopen fully



Entertainment venues can reopen

Cinemas, bingo halls, bowling alleys, indoor play centres and areas (including soft play), casinos, amusement arcades, and theatres... etc



Indoor visitor attractions can reopen

Museums, galleries... etc



Organised activities

Up to 30 people can take part in organised indoor activities and up to 50 people in organised outdoor activities. This includes wedding receptions and wakes.

Source: Welsh government

BBC

[Covid in Wales: When can you eat indoors and when do cinemas open? - BBC](#)

What is changing in communities?-

Opening of community centres-

Community centres have been hit very hard over the past 14 months with many buildings still not open. The Guidance from the Welsh Government was last updated on 10th May – this link is updated when there are substantial changes. [Safe use of multi-purpose community centres \(COVID-19\) | GOV.WALES](#) . Management Committees should refer to this link to be kept up to date.

There are activities that will be able to change with people being able to meet indoors for Health, Childcare, Faith Group, Exercise activities but the conditions over the numbers permitted may change.

Opening up of buildings must be carried out in a safe manner including distancing , sanitizing ensuring all rooms are ventilated.

If a management committee have any specific queries, email john.gallanders@avow.org

COMMUNITY BUILDINGS FORUM – next meeting Friday 28th May 10.00am – come along and share with others -

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88370492385>

FOOD AND SUPPORT NETWORK-



The next meeting of the AVOW forum will be on 29th June 10.00am [Click here to join the meeting](#) - this meeting is open to all – in particular, we would like to hear from organisations who are able to provide the additional support and not just food. As we moved forward in the past 14 months the emphasis has been on the provision of emergency food supplies but now needs to be looking at the broader support needs across our communities. Peoples lives are like a jigsaw and food is only one piece, but all the others are needed such as welfare information, funding for utilities, access to medical support etc. Looking at a person's needs holistically will help to understand their issues and then focus on a holistic solution with them at the heart of change.

VOLUNTEERING: Current Information

[Volunteer Manager Quality and Network Meeting 11th May 2021 \(office.com\)](#)

Volunteering during Covid and Beyond- Research.

AVOW commissioned a research project funded by Welsh Government looking at how volunteering has played a vital part across our communities – whether volunteering as part of organised schemes or the informal way in which many people have provided support to others at Street Level. The report however is not just about the historical nature of volunteering during Covid but looking forward to the role of volunteers in the future and the need to adapt to many new roles and challenges. We are very grateful for the representatives from organisations and individuals who were interviewed for the report as your input has helped to ensure that the report is enriched with experiences.

To further the work going forward we will be holding a feedback session during 10th June 10.00am [Click here to join the meeting](#) . The report can be downloaded from -- <https://bit.ly/2SJBN63> Thanks to John and Judi from Neighbourhood Economics.



Tîm Ymateb Cymunedol Wrecsam
Wrexham Community Response Team

Recruitment of volunteers to the new Community Response Team and other volunteering roles is still ongoing – to find out more at - [Wrexham Community Response Team - AVOW](#) | [Association of Voluntary Organisations in Wrexham](#)

There are over 60 people already signed up for the CRT who are developing their skills to be able to assist other service providers in the event of floods, snow or one-off community responses. The volunteers are also available to help at community events. If you would like to be involved or have an event that requires more assistance, then contact volunteercentre@avow.org. There are free DBS checks for all volunteers.

There is a wide range of training on offer covering topics such as Mental Health awareness ; Food Hygiene, First Aid and many others to support volunteers and organisations to improve their skills. [Training - AVOW | Association of Voluntary Organisations in Wrexham](#)

Filming to start in Wrexham to highlight volunteering:



AVOW has received funding from Welsh Government to produce two films which have started to be created now that there is an easing of Lockdown. You can contribute by sending in short clips to Marcus at Eternal Media who are producing the films. If you have short clips or want to know more how you can take part <https://bit.ly/2SP2zKh> - look out for our virtual red carpet film premier early in the summer!!

One film will focus on why people volunteer and what opportunities there are across Wrexham and the other is about support from AVOW.

WREXHAM LOTTERY - Possible new funding for organisations in Wrexham: chance to win a weekly prize of £25,000

AVOW are exploring the possibility of creating a Wrexham Lottery to raise funds directly going to support organisations. This is an exciting potential initiative that will see a chance or someone in Wrexham to win a £25,000 prize every week. The way this could work would take up a minimal time commitment for organisations with a guaranteed % of every ticket sale from your own supporters being available every month. There will be no additional costs and organisations will just need to encourage their supporters to sign up for tickets.

Does your organisation need regular income?

Need funds without having to write funding application?

Need funds that do not take work to generate?

The answer could come from an AVOW run Wrexham Lottery

A simple solution with little time required

Attractive prizes up to £25,000 each week from the beginning

A guaranteed percentage of income with no extra charges

Monthly income paid straight into your bank account

No matter how large or small your organisation this is a possible solution for you to raise funds.

Community Groups, Sports Groups, Uniformed Groups, Faith Groups, School PTA, Playgroups – if you do things for others then you are likely to be eligible to sign up to be a beneficiary.

Come along to one of our information sessions to find out how your organisation can generate income from being part of a Wrexham Lottery.

A covering leaflet can be downloaded for background <https://bit.ly/3uRLlub>

Come along and find out if this is an opportunity for you to be involved with or an opportunity you will regret not being part of. No matter how large or small this is something for your organisation.

Meetings (will be both the same although you are welcome to join both) will be on 4th June 10.00am [Click here to join the meeting](#) or 9th June 7.00pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:



New Electric Car scheme- AVOW have been fortunate to obtain funding from Welsh Government for the purchase of two electric vehicles and three charge points. The charge points will be installed at Llangollen Health Centre, Plas Madoc Leisure Centre and the Rainbow Centre in Penley. The two vehicles will be based in the Plas Madoc

area and initially used for South Wrexham but usage will be expanded. One is a standard 5 seat car and the other is an adapted vehicle that can take a power wheelchair and 6 passengers. This exciting scheme will hopefully expand to include more vehicles and charge points- there will be lots of opportunities for people to volunteer and undertake suitable training. Due to vehicle supply issues this scheme may not launch until September.



MIDAS training – do you own or use a minibus or adapted vehicle and want your staff or volunteers trained to the MIDAS standard contact Nigel.davies@avow.org who is going to be an accredited trainer. The MIDAS training for volunteers can help reduce the insurance premiums on your vehicle.

AVOW expands Team in Plas Madoc following successful £486k funding from the Lottery



AVOW are very pleased to announce they have received funding of £486k from the National Lottery to continue the work of the Play Team and expand the level of community support in Plas Madoc. During the past 14 months the Team along with volunteers from the We Are Plas Madoc Group have developed a wide range of community support services to meet the needs of local residents. The funding will sustain and develop new initiatives for the area

supporting families and individuals. One initiative developed has been a network of (**picture taken outside of lockdown or face coverings**) Street Champion Volunteers with someone

allocated to every street to help support residents directly or to be able to provide the necessary information they require.



The project creating kits for children and young people to make benches and flower troughs is a great example of how one type of service adapted to meet the differing needs during Lockdown. The garden project is flourishing with a lot more local residents now growing fruit and veg in their own gardens giving them a real feeling of pride often having never grown anything before.

[PlaNTs Madoc | Facebook](#)

The team have also been successful with a bid for £67k to Children in Need. This funding will be used to support children and young people to develop relationships and increase their confidence and social skills and will provide 1:1 support when needed.

If you are part of a community and want to find out more about the activities of the 6th Coolest Playground in the World (yes that is correct!), or Kettle Club, PlaNTs Madoc, We are Plas Madoc or any of the other great initiatives taking place in Plas Madoc contact

claire.pugh@avow.org

AVOW Grant funding extended: APPLICATIONS are now open. Increased amount from £1000 to £2000 available now for one month only



Following additional funding being released by Welsh Government AVOW now has an additional £21,000 to distribute to support local organisations before the end of June that are responding to the needs of the local community. Amounts up to £2000 can be applied for. Priority will be for organisations that have not yet received any AVOW or Comic Relief funding but previously applicants are also able to apply. <https://bit.ly/2JZ274K>

For larger projects funding up to £100,000 is administered by WCVA <https://bit.ly/34vdxX3>

AVOW are also due to receive another £25k this year and next year from Comic Relief for local distribution in the form of Grants of £1000

There are various Welsh Government business grants that Community Organisations can access, and information is available via the Council and AVOW-

[Restrictions Business Fund | Wrexham County Borough Council](#) nigel.davies@avow.org

WREXHAM COUNCIL **NEWS**

COVID-19 BRIEFING NOTE – WALES MOVES DOWN TO ALERT LEVEL TWO ON MONDAY

[Covid-19 briefing note – Wales moves down to alert level two on Monday - news.wrexham.gov.uk](https://news.wrexham.gov.uk)

The Council are issuing weekly updates on any changes that may be occurring in Wrexham County or broader changes affecting local residents.

OPENING THIS WEEK:

We are pleased to announce that the new enterprise Yellow and Blue (YAB) is officially opening this Saturday.

AVOW wishes Pete and the very many people involved in the project good luck with this exciting new project in Wrexham.

Yellow and Blue (YAB Group Ltd) is a social enterprise which has been operating in Wrexham for the past three years.



Its aim is to support the community of Wrexham including the vulnerable and anyone facing short term or long-term hardship, illness, disability or struggling physically and mentally and the pandemic has sadly meant that its work has increased significantly.

Pete Humphreys founded Yellow and Blue (YAB) in 2017 following the death of his father along with a close friend, to bowel cancer. He started YAB as an online charity but had the goal of setting up a community hub to help people in need.

Following the death of his father, Pete helped his mother Rosemary to run Number 22 café in Wrexham, and last year gave out 9600 meals to the elderly and homeless during lockdown.

However, with the help of a £10,000 National Lottery grant, two-year support from the Co-operative and lots of fundraising, Pete was able to secure premises and, last November, fulfilled his dream of setting up a hub for those in need, as he explains,

“One thing dad always wanted while he was ill was somewhere he could go and relax which was something between palliative care and a consultation room. I wanted to create an environment that would bring a big social impact for people, suffering with terminal illnesses, so they had a place like my dad wanted.”

“There are so many people going through things alone and I wanted to create a place where people can come in, relax and have fun. We have daily activity timetables and workshops supporting everyone with learning disabilities, terminal illnesses or people can use it as a drop-in centre.

“The hub is very innovative; we have hydroponic walled gardens being designed as we want to it to be vibrant and uplifting to people that come to the hub.”

The YAB founding group is a very small core team but they have a remarkable 96 volunteers who offer their help and services.

Pete adds,

“We believe in teamwork, working with likeminded individuals, organisations and businesses to make Wrexham the gold standard community where people are the priority. We support other organisations, local authorities and individuals to take our project and adapt it to suit the needs of their own community. With a compassionate board and group of volunteers, we are creating

a legacy for Wrexham, one where everyone works together, anyone who may be struggling can access support urgently and to see our wonderful county achieve its full potential.”

Over the Christmas period YAB worked tirelessly to give out food to those in need, working with different community groups, charities and businesses in Wrexham.

Pete added,

“On Christmas Eve we worked in collaboration with Given to Shine Wrexham to give out food parcels from the hub, which saw 40 tons of food saved from food waste distributed and on Christmas Day we served three course meals to the homeless and those temporarily housed at the hub.

“Following that, on the 27 December we teamed up with Nanny Biscuit, a community group, to provide 100 Christmas dinners to the vulnerable in the community and those self-isolating due to the pandemic.”

Pete is currently studying towards a Masters in Financial Technology at Manchester University,

“With a digital vision within the community we aim to support vulnerable groups with speech recognition software whilst creating a vibrant, supportive and uplifting experience. Creating moments, chances and smiles when people need it most.”

Commenting on this initiative, the Welsh Government’s Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths said:

“I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Yellow and Blue for their hard work and passion in keeping the people of Wrexham safe during this difficult time.

“The commitment and innovation they’ve shown in adapting to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic are characteristic of the resilient nature of this sector, along with the effort they have put in to support their local community.”

This year sees further progress for the Hub with continued food provisions being offered, also volunteer and hub roles to former street homeless, expansion for the Hub and a hydroponic walled garden being designed.

If you would like to donate to or support Yellow and Blue, or to find out more about Yellow and Blue projects visit <https://www.yellowandblue.org/>



Welsh Government advice for Voluntary Organisations

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-the-third-sector-html>

Welsh Government Update:

A full comprehensive list of the various updates for Wales are available on the Welsh Government site <https://gov.wales/announcements/search>



There is a vast amount of information available but be selective or you will spend more time reading rather than providing the resource.

<https://wcva.cymru/coronavirus-statement/>

Information disclaimer:

AVOW hopes to keep this as a fortnightly briefing to share with our community's support information and guidance- if there are issues you want information on email john.gallanders@avow.org The content of this briefing is provided for information only. It is not intended to amount to advice on which you should rely. You must obtain professional or specialist advice before taking, or refraining from, any action based on the content. We do not accept responsibility for any errors, omissions, misleading statements, or the consequences thereof. <https://avow.org/terms-and-conditions>

