

This composite summary covers the months of October to December 2020 inclusive.

At the start of this period, there was some optimism that the ‘worst’ was over and a more relaxed autumn and early winter might be on the cards ... though the scientists and particularly health professionals were cautioning care with relaxation of the rules too swiftly. They were right. The government ‘ Eat out to Help out ‘ is now thought to have contributed to a significant increase in Covid19 case rates and encouraged a more general lack of care as regards social distance, hand sanitising etc. It was becoming obvious to those of us who follows the figures closely that ‘something’ would have to happen.

Another factor was the insistence by central government ( all nations ) that schools and universities should continue as normal. This was a contentious issue as it was known that secondary-level youngsters in particular were a potent vector for spreading the virus – despite attempts to control contact, ‘bubbles’, isolation etc.

Also during this period, the last vestiges of any ‘UK-wide’ system of controls were abandoned. Effectively, all four nations (England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland) went their separate ways – England with Tiers and ‘regional’ controls, followed by a Lockdown II; Scotland had even more Tiers eventually – Wales opted for nationwide controls without any regional variation – as did Northern Ireland. Most confusing as the individual measures within nations also varied. Time will tell whether this fragmentation was the right policy.

And towards the end of this composite period, the ‘Deal/No Deal’ with the EU as regards trading regime (after the UK left the EU at the start of the year) came to a head. In the end, on Christmas Eve, it was announced that a deal had been agreed with the EU.

The Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine was rolling out during December – though slowly for many. Approval for the Oxford/AstraZeneca version was expected in the last week of December.

Summary of newsy items from past 7 days ( to Sunday 4th October )

- Elsewhere in the country, cases are rising alarmingly – such that between a third and half of the population of England are living under ‘enhanced’ restrictions. In Dorset, though there are small pockets of slightly higher incidence, we seem to be well-below the regional average (see an extract from the weekly summary at the bottom on this bulletin.)
- The ‘panic buying’ of last week seems, for the most part, to have gone. A few shortages of toilet rolls.
- The weather has taken a marked downward turn which will help stop people moving about from elsewhere in the country, but of course there will be more meetings-up inside: curfew of 10pm for pubs/restaurants seems to be holding well as far as is known.

Critical dates/actions this period:

11<sup>th</sup> October: St. Martin’s intend to re-start services on a fortnightly basis.

Summary of newsy items from past 7 days ( to Sunday 11th October )

- Lots of talk about ‘imminent’ lockdown or similar ( e.g., ‘circuit break’).
- As of this update, West Moors as a council area is still within the lowest level (0-2 in 7days) of infection cases, but areas round about us (e.g. west Ferndown & Canford) are now into the level above (3-9 in 7days); compared to a couple of weeks ago, the number of areas into this next higher level has increased noticeably – and BCP (specifically Bournemouth E/W)

is now into the near-top level of 30-39 in 7days; presumably something to do with the universities restarting. See more at the base of this bulletin.

- St. Martin’s United Reformed Church re-start ‘in person’ worship – with full ‘Covid-secure’ precautions. It is intended to provide such every two weeks.
- Buses seem to be near pre-emergency levels of use.

Critical dates/actions this period:

11<sup>th</sup> October: St. Martin’s re-start services on a fortnightly basis.

Extract from weekly analysis from Public Health Dorset:

“ Over the last week we have seen a significant increase in case numbers and case rates across the Dorset and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council areas ..... and we can see that cases are rising in both council areas, particularly in the BCP area. This increase is in line with the national picture and our local numbers and case rates are still much lower than some other areas of the country, but the trend is concerning and it is a reminder that we need to be vigilant. “

<b>Time period</b>	<b>Cases in BCP Council area</b>	<b>Cases in Dorset Council area</b>
28 Sep - 4 Oct	265	93
22 - 28 Sep 20	78	29
16 - 22 Sep 20	48	18

The table below shows the case rates per 100,000 of the population for the BCP Council and Dorset Council areas, the South West region and England in the latest 7-day period. This period is earlier than the above time period so we can make a comparison to the national figure.

Case rates for BCP Council, Dorset Council, South West and England

<b>Time period</b>	<b>BCP Council</b>	<b>Dorset Council</b>	<b>South West</b>	<b>England</b>
28 Sep - 4 Oct	67.0	24.7	92.1	118.1
22 - 28 Sep 20	19.7	7.7	33.2	55.1
12 - 18 Sep 20	15.7	5.6	20.4	38.1

Summary of newsy items from past 7 days ( to Sunday 18th October )

- 12<sup>th</sup>: Government announces ( effective 14<sup>th</sup> ) three levels of regulation/advisory categories ... Medium, High, Very High; at present West Moors, along with areas round about are in the ‘Medium’ category – which means no effective change from 22<sup>nd</sup> September ‘Rule of 6’/10 pm pub shutdown etc.
- The Public Health Dorset weekly summary makes sobering reading ... up to the 10<sup>th</sup> October, cases in Dorset Council area doubled ( 93 to 182 ) and a similar rise in BCP. By the

measure of cases per 100k, Dorset is still doing well ( 48 against the England average of 147 ) but the journey is upward!

- For West Moors specifically, after many weeks when we had few if any cases, the latest analysis shows that we have edged into the  $\geq 3$  cases category (5 over 7 days to 13th). Still very low, but going the wrong way!
- No particular problems noted with local shops as regards supply.
- Noted: the former Village Medical Practice buildings ( was Dr. McKinstry ) on Station Road seem to be in use again for consultations etc. after extensive re-decorating etc. Now part of WM Village Surgery ( was WM Group Practice ).

Critical dates/actions this period:

New '3-tier' alert/regulation system enabled Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> ( though no immediate effect for West Moors ).

Summary of newsy items from past 7 days ( to Sunday 25th October )

- Infection rates across the local area continue to climb. As of the 22<sup>nd</sup> summary, cases in the DC area rose from 182 4-10 Oct to 245 in period 11-17 Oct. As regards the *rate-per-100k*, DC rose from 48.2 to 65.1 in same periods as above. ( The SW NHS region=158, England=170, so we're well below those rates.)
- For West Moors, in the seven days to 20<sup>th</sup>, the number of cases=5, no change on the previous 7-day period.
- No significant local changes noted. Everyone waiting for schools to break up!
- WMTC office (Park Way) closed 20<sup>th</sup> ... scheduled to re-open 3<sup>rd</sup> November; whether 'Covid-related'/isolation or not isn't known – but that is 14 days!
- Gullivers Farm announce that they will provide free school meal 'boxes' as the Government have refused to fund same during the half-term break: a lot of political 'aggro' over that!

Critical dates/actions this period:

None.

Summary of newsy items from past 7 days ( to Sunday 1st November )

- Following the (English) government decision NOT to fund free school meals during the half-term ( this week ), Gullivers Farm arranged for basic boxes of food to be distributed / collected to that end. Welsh, Scottish and NI governments DID fund same. A lot of political controversy over this one, especially as a Premier League footballer was involved and they *did* fund such in the summer!
- Significant rise (again) in cases reported across Dorset/BCP. Dorset is in the lowest Tier (1/Medium) currently, but there are rumours of a change to Tier 2/High) restrictions [ *but see update below* ]. Summary of the bulletin issued on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> is appended below.
- Longer term, there is much speculation regarding tiers locally and for Christmas; it is difficult to see that there will be much improvement to come in the medium term (see below for BIG NEWS!).
- Although there will be no community Remembrance Service ( open to the public ) on the 8<sup>th</sup> November, St. Martin's URC intended to hold a (Covid-secure) service on Remembrance Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> Nov in the church ... BUT, FOLLOWING THE CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES ANNOUNCED ON SATURDAY 31ST, I SUSPECT THIS WILL BE CANCELLED.
- **PM announces Saturday evening** that effective Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November, nominally until December 2<sup>nd</sup>, a near-full return to March/April 'lockdown' is to come into force. This will

mean a return to only leaving households for essential purposes, working from home where possible, only essential journeys to be made, only meeting one other person outside the house who is not from your family, etc. Full details yet to be published.

- I suspect that the ‘stripped-down’ Remembrance ceremony at the War Memorial next Sunday will not go ahead as planned. No word as of this update.
- The Memorial Hall committee announced on Sunday ( Facebook ) that they will close for all activities with immediate effect – this follows the Government announcement of Lockdown II above.

Critical dates/actions this period:

None.

Forthcoming critical dates:

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November: suspension of the ‘three tier’ system and imposition of near-full lockdown.

## **[ Public Health Dorset weekly summary ]**

**Updated: 29 October 2020**

### **Overall picture in Dorset**

Over the last few weeks, we have seen a significant rise in confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Dorset. We are constantly reviewing the data and considering our options with local and regional partners. At the moment, both Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council areas remain in Tier 1 (medium local alert level).

Our case numbers are continuing to go up particularly in the 18-30 age range and we are seeing more patients in our hospitals who are testing positive with Covid-19.

The situation in Dorset is serious. We need everyone to do their bit and follow the guidelines otherwise we will see ourselves moving to a higher tier.

**[ some figures from full tables published as above ]**

<b>Time period</b>	<b>Cases in BCP Council area</b>	<b>Cases in Dorset Council area</b>
18 - 24 Oct	774	414
11 - 17 Oct	481	245
4 - 10 Oct	453	182

**(Note the ‘exponential’ rise in cases above)**

**Case rates per 100,000 of the population for the BCP Council and Dorset Council areas, the South West region and England in the latest 7-day period.**

Time period	BCP Council	Dorset Council	South West	England
18 - 24 Oct	195.6	110.0	189.9	160.3
11 - 17 Oct	121.5	65.1	157.6	169.7
4 - 10 Oct	115.1	48.2	134.6	147.1

**( Note the fact that earlier this month, we were way below the rate for both the SW and England, the numbers are closing up! BCP, which is only ‘next-door’ is particularly worrying. )**

Summary of newsy items from past 7 days ( to Sunday 8th November )

- All non-essential retail / services shut-down from Thursday (5th) (Leanne’s Hair the first to announce); Webb’s Butchers, BTH Pets, Penn Court Bistro, Gullivers Farm etc., will *continue* though ( as last time ) & variously offer delivery service. List re-started on WMTC web site.
- St. Mary’s church announce that they will re-start their Community Support Team to help people who cannot get out and about.
- Council office re-opened Monday 2<sup>nd</sup>, (after 2-week closure) then closed on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup>! The latter is in line with Government restrictions introduced on that day.
- Library will close (again) from Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> until early December: however, requests for books / video etc., can still be made for pre-arranged collection. Lending periods extended to avoid charges being levied.
- Cases across Dorset Council area stabilised somewhat – according to Public Health Dorset: in the 7 days to 31<sup>st</sup> October, they were 390, as against 414 previous 7 day period. BCP continues to rise though. DC specific rates/100K of population are roughly half the national (English) average. West Moors specifically is doing well, being a category or more below other local areas: in the 7 days to 31<sup>st</sup> October, cases = 5, down 2 on the previous period. A little later analysis, available via the BBC site, to 3<sup>rd</sup> November, shows that Dorset-wide cases are generally FALLING from the peak in the latter half of October, deaths and case-rate both declining.
- Although quieter from Thursday onwards, certainly NOT the complete lack of traffic, movement etc., that we experienced late March and through April. Buses moderately busy.
- Very reduced Remembrance Sunday – a handful of people to witness the Chairman and Town Clerk lay wreaths. Weather cloudy & damp. Some people standing outside their properties for the 2-minute silence – but not the event it has been for years past.

Critical dates/actions this period:

English national ‘lockdown’ part II begins Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November.

Remembrance Sunday 8<sup>th</sup>: no ceremony apart from one person laying a representative wreath. St. Martin’s and St. Mary’s arranging for ‘on-line’ service, the latter streamed live on Facebook.

Forthcoming critical dates:  
none to notify.

Summary of newsy items from past 7 days ( to Sunday 15th November )

- First full week of “ Lockdown II “ and compared to the situation earlier this year, things are a lot busier. Non-essential shops have shut, but a surprising number of retail outlets have remained open; buses moderately busy, and roads, although a little quieter, have significant busy periods too.

- Thursday analysis (to 7<sup>th</sup> November) of DC cases show another steady drop, from 414 to 24 Oct and 390 to 31 Oct, to the most recent 365 cases. The case *rate* looks a lot better than the England national figure: DC = 96/100k, against England = 247 .. we've been going down, England going up! The West Moors number was up though (in this same period) by 6 cases, to 11.
- The new hardware shop (where Nationwide used to be), that opened last week seems to be doing OK. Not the best of times to start a new venture! The Library, although closed for 'walk-in' purposes, is apparently ticking-over well with people ordering/collecting via online etc. Cafe Olivia selling cakes 'at the door' to keep going.

Critical dates/actions this period:

None

Forthcoming critical dates:

**none to notify.**

Summary of newsy items from past 7 days ( to Sunday 22nd November )

- Not a lot to report: a good deal of traffic about, but it gets very quiet after dark (no pubs etc., open). Buses under-used. More people putting Christmas decorations up early – trying to cheer people up!
- St. Mary's have published their seasonal ( Advent / Christmas ) series of services – all online ( Facebook ) but a small number of pre-booked attendees will be ( if regulations allow ) in the church.
- Morebus published Christmas schedules: not far off being similar to previous years!

Critical dates/actions this period:

None.

Forthcoming critical dates:

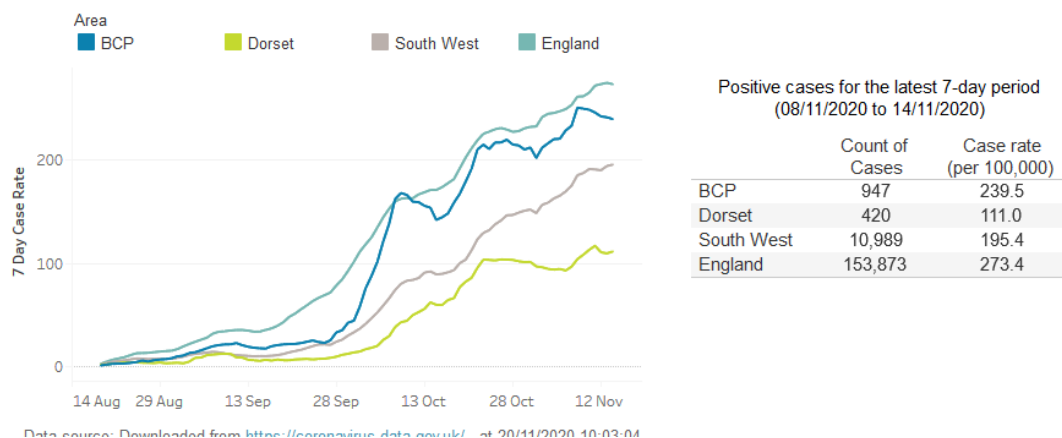
Speculation that the ending of 'Lockdown II' for England won't mean an immediate return to the previous 'Three-tier' system, but some form of enhancement / adjustment to same. An announcement should be made early this week ( at latest, nominally Monday 23rd ). I should think if it needs enabling by 3<sup>rd</sup> December. Special features for Christmas are on the cards.

The graph below shows how the virus rate has been increasing generally, though it also shows how Dorset Council area is well below the SW (NHS) area rate, and that for England.

### COVID-19 Seven-Day Case Rates for Dorset and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council Areas

Date Range: 19/08/2020 to 14/11/2020

Data shown are the number of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 in our area for the last seven days, per 100,000 people. Each person is only counted once, even if they have had more than one test in that time. The seven day periods are calculated based on the date of the test. The latest five days are removed to ensure we have the full data. You can hover over any point on the chart to see the case rate for the previous seven days.



Summary of newsy items from past 7 days ( to Sunday 29th November )

- Announcement Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>: plan for revised procedures effective next week ( see below ). Broadly a return to Three-Tier system but with changes / enhancements – West Moors to rise up one tier level compared with pre-Lockdown II.
- Generally, Dorset is doing well – all indicators going down: for example, the case-rate/100K = 69.5 [was 111.0 previous week]; actual number = 263 [was 420 previous week] and compared with SW (140) and all-England (209) still good. However, numbers admitted to beds are slightly up. BCP does have higher numbers overall though, which doesn't help our particular situation. Much angst though that despite our doing fairly well, we have been lifted up to a higher (pre-Lockdown II) tier.
- Several local 'non-essential' retail outlets etc., announce resumption of opening next week. All cafes, barbers, hairdressers etc., should re-open next Wednesday. The cafes have been open for take-out and front-door purchase throughout.
- West Moors Scout group are running a 'virtual' Christmas Tree festival ( in place of the cancelled event usually held in St. Martin's URC ). They are asking people to send photographs of their tree with a suitable message – supposedly featured on web sites etc.
- Dorset Library announce resumption of 'walk-in' service from Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December ... for West Moors, as they are usually closed on a Wednesday, the first day back will be Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Critical dates/actions this period:

None.

Forthcoming critical dates:

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December: return to a heavily modified/enhanced 'three tier' system: as a summary: the graphic attached is useful ( but you'll need to 'zoom in' to read the text ), but it should be noted that, despite everyone working hard to control the virus locally, we've been put into a 'higher' category than before 5<sup>th</sup> November – which is causing some consternation. It will mean though that all shops, cafes etc., will be able to open and churches can also re-open though with strict controls.

TIER 2

# HIGH ALERT

FROM 2 DEC

<p><b>MEETING FRIENDS AND FAMILY</b></p> <p>No mixing of households indoors, apart from support bubbles. Maximum of six outdoors.</p>	<p><b>BARS, PUBS AND RESTAURANTS</b></p> <p>Pubs and bars must close, unless operating as restaurants. Hospitality venues can only serve alcohol with substantial meals. Venues must stop taking orders at 10pm and must close by 11pm.</p>	<p><b>RETAIL</b></p> <p>Open.</p>	<p><b>WORK AND BUSINESS</b></p> <p>Everyone who can work from home should do so.</p>
<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <p>Early years settings, schools, colleges and universities open. Childcare, other supervised activities for children, and childcare bubbles permitted.</p>	<p><b>INDOOR LEISURE</b></p> <p>Open.</p>	<p><b>ACCOMMODATION</b></p> <p>Open.</p>	<p><b>PERSONAL CARE</b></p> <p>Open.</p>
<p><b>OVERNIGHT STAYS</b></p> <p>Permitted with household or support bubble.</p>	<p><b>WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS</b></p> <p>15 guests for weddings, civil partnerships, wedding receptions and wakes; 30 for funerals.</p>	<p><b>ENTERTAINMENT</b></p> <p>Open.</p>	<p><b>PLACES OF WORSHIP</b></p> <p>Open, but cannot interact with anyone outside household or support bubble.</p>
<p><b>TRAVELLING</b></p> <p>Reduce the number of journeys you make and walk or cycle if possible. Avoid busy times and routes on public transport. Avoid car sharing with those outside of your household or support bubble. Avoid travelling outside your area, or entering a Tier 3 area, other than where necessary such as for work or education. Further exemptions apply.</p>	<p><b>EXERCISE</b></p> <p>Classes and organised adult sport can take place outdoors, but cannot take place indoors if there is any interaction between people from different households. Organised activities for elite athletes, under-18s and disabled people can continue.</p>	<p><b>RESIDENTIAL CARE</b></p> <p>COVID-secure arrangements such as substantial screens, visiting pods, and window visits. Outdoor/airtight visits only (rollout of rapid testing will enable indoor visits including contact).</p>	<p><b>LARGE EVENTS</b></p> <p>Sport, live performances and business meetings limited to 50% capacity or 2000 people outdoors (whichever is lower) and 50% capacity or 1000 people indoors (whichever is lower)</p>

**Find out what support you can get**

For example, if you're out of work, need to get food, or want to take care of your mental health.

[gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

**If you have any coronavirus symptoms:**

A high temperature • A new, continuous cough  
A loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste.

**Get a test and stay at home**

For more information and detailed guidance visit:  
[gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)



Summary of newsy items from past 7 days ( to Sunday 6th December )

- Lockdown II ended 1<sup>st</sup>, pseudo 'lockdown' starts 2<sup>nd</sup>! Much political gnashing of teeth going on in Parliament and elsewhere as many areas ( including Dorset ) are under more severe restrictions than before the Lockdown ... yet we have an improving situation: see below for latest numbers.
- Council office and the Library re-opened Thursday 3rd.
- Announced Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> that the first CV19 vaccine ( Pfizer/BioNTech ) had been licensed for use in the UK. According to the media, we are the first country in the (? western?) world to licence such a vaccine ( I think Russia and China are somewhat ahead of us there. ) First use is likely to be in Care Homes ( & similar ) with 'front-line' NHS staff not far behind. Other vaccines are expected to be approved in the near future. Problems with this vaccine is that it needs to be transported at minus70degC!
- The Mobility Shop on Station Road is very empty! No notice displayed to say that they've finished, but it looks ominously abandoned.
- Otherwise, other retail are re-starting.



- Numbers of cases falling steadily these past 7 days – see summary below.
- St. Martin's URC Gospel Choir put a 30-minute presentation on their Facebook account early in the week. Favourite hymns / carols and some newer pieces. Also, St. Mary's have started their on-line Advent Calendar presentations.
- This week would have seen the 'Carols on the Petwyn' and Christmas Tree Festival: all cancelled well in advance as planning such takes much time and also they couldn't be sure what regulations would be in place for the events.
- Summary of latest Dorset/BCP and West Moors figures .... Good Progress! The bulletin issued on 4<sup>th</sup> December states ... " Covid-19 cases have declined rapidly over the past few weeks ...". The 7-day case rate for Dorset (per 100K) is now 44 ( down from 69 ), compared to England rate=155 and SW 93. Dorset is now back to being one of the less-affected counties ( along with Cornwall and the Isle of Wight ). West Moors had 4 cases in the past 7 days, well-below the national average ( for England ). It will be interesting to see what happens now that the second Lockdown has ended.

Critical dates/actions this period:

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December: return to a heavily modified/enhanced 'three tier' system: as a summary: the graphic attached is useful ( but you'll need to 'zoom in' to read the text ). It will mean that all shops, cafes etc., will be able to fully open and churches can also re-open though with strict controls.

Forthcoming critical dates:

None notified – but note the Christmas 'variations' kick-in on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December ( until 27<sup>th</sup> ).

*With the news regarding vaccines beginning to dominate, after many months of downbeat events, it might be pertinent to quote ( in part ) from Winston Churchill.*

*In November 1942, three years into the Second World War and after a series of defeats from Dunkirk to Singapore, Churchill could finally tell the House of Commons that " we have a new experience. We have victory - a remarkable and definite victory. "*

*Alexander and Montgomery turned back Rommel's forces at El Alamein, thus winning what Churchill called " The Battle of Egypt.*

*In a famous speech at the Lord Mayor's Luncheon he said ( inter alia ) ...*

*" Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning ... "*

***We have only had to suffer this year for 9 months: keep on keeping on – there is still a long haul ahead!***

Summary of newsy items from past 7 days ( to Sunday 13th December )

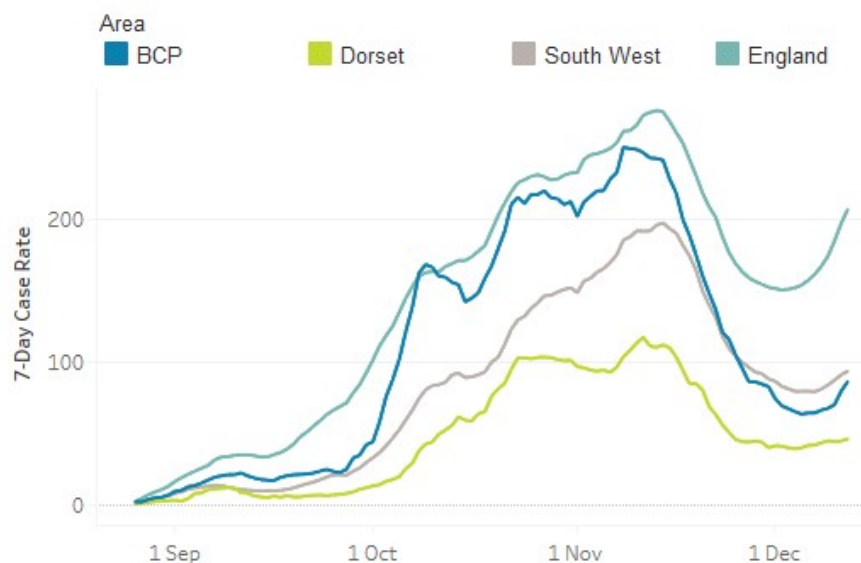
- Marie Curie appears to be open / re-opening.
- Shops generally seem well supplied with both stock and customers; there are all sorts of stories in the media regarding shortages due to blockages at the ports and the possibility of a 'No Deal' with the EU. So far, people seem to be sensible!
- Queues outside Post Office at times – but that's normal before Christmas with many fewer sub post offices as the network was reduced over the past 20-odd years.
- A further decline in CV19 case numbers, though some 'levelling-off'. The 7-day case-rate for Dorset = 40 ( was 44 ) and for adjacent BCP =63 ( was 86 ). West Moors has done

particularly well: by the 6<sup>th</sup> December, there were fewer than 3 cases and this puts us in the lowest category of infection data. It remains to be seen if our status is reviewed next week (15<sup>th</sup>) and Dorset is has it's Tier 2 status reviewed.

- The local Youth Club have arranged a 'virtual' version of the annual Christmas Tree festival.

Summary of newsy items from past 7 days ( to Sunday 20th December )

- On Thursday 17<sup>th</sup>, the government ( applicable to England only ) announced that Dorset ( and BCP ) would remain in Tier 2 restrictions, despite the steady fall of cases detected in recent weeks [ but see below – that situation has changed].
- Christmas shopping activity seems to be increasing, though compared with non-Covid19 times, it is generally quieter. HOWEVER, as restrictions were ramped-up Friday/Saturday across England ( and many other parts of the UK ) regarding Christmas, there was a noticeable increase in shopping activity.
- The following is the summary from Public Health Dorset: “ National restrictions implemented in November were successful in driving down cases across both local authority areas (BCP & Dorset) but following the move into tier two at the beginning of December, this downward trend has levelled off. Over the past seven days we have seen cases start to increase again, as well as an increase in COVID-19 patients in hospital beds. “ This is a pity, as West Moors specifically has continued in the lowest level of case occurrence. But the graph attached below is hard to explain away .... people getting confused about the regulations? Getting tired of being told what to do?



- On 19<sup>th</sup>, the UK

Data source: Downloaded from <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/> at 18/12/2020 10:12:52

government significantly reduced the ability of people to have a 'normal' Christmas; for our Tier 2, the relaxation previously announced for 23<sup>rd</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> is now only allowed for Christmas Day: three households only. Also, strong advice NOT to travel except locally. A new Tier 4 ( near-total lockdown ) is to be introduced for London, the SE and parts of E England. People from our Tier can't now travel to Tier 4 & they can't come here!

- ***Rumours of shortages in the supply chain to the major supermarkets ... will this have a 'knock-on' effect on our local shops? No doubt all the 'angst' will add to the normal pre-Christmas rushing about!***

Summary of newsy items from past 7 days ( to Sunday 27th December )

- A new variant of the Coronavirus has appeared and is causing alarm; apparently it is leading to more rapid transmission of the virus. For this reason, many more areas of England are

being put into a Tier 4/highly restricted category – for the time being Dorset / BCP will remain in Tier 2. However, many parts of Hampshire have gone up into Tier 3 – but *excluding* the neighbouring ‘New Forest’ area.

- Some foods ( e.g., frozen, fresh fruit/veg ) beginning to be bought up big-time; but then it is Christmas week and there would normally be a last minute rush to ‘stock up’, so it’s difficult to say if people are stockpiling against Covid, Brexit or anything else!
- Although the full series of data aren’t available, it’s clear that case numbers are rising now, but we (Dorset, BCP & West Moors) are *well below* the national average. However, it remains to be seen how the Christmas ‘moving about’ period will impact on the situation. Many rumours of a *third(!)* national lockdown.
- Schools: primary-age pupils to return as normal early January 2021, but secondary-age staggered re-start, with those taking exams this year back as normal, but others delayed by at least a week; in-school testing is also being arranged.
- Second (Oxford/AstraZeneca) vaccine “imminent”!