

Bourne Pandemic 2020 – 10th April 2020

It hardly seems possible that the Corvid-19 crisis has only been with us for little more than a month. During February, word of the Coronavirus epidemic in a province of China seeped into the UK news but it seemed like Bird Flu, Swine Flu or any other form of flu – nothing to get really worried about.

In early March the Government seemed to be taking more notice. Older people or those with serious health problems were told to stay in. But pubs and clubs were still open, and we were able to book concerts at Stamford Arts Centre. People were being infected in Europe, but it seemed no worse than the usual winter flu, and most friends and acquaintances already had the vaccine. There was talk of 'lockdowns' but this was stuff for excitable foreigners. We had seen it all before and just needed to wash our hands a bit more than usual. Common sense would see us through it.

Remember when the Olympic Torch came through Bourne? That was a fun day and there were thousands on the streets. We have seen many other community events.



How about the BRM Day back in 2012? We closed Bourne to through traffic and thousands took to the streets to see a little bit of Bourne's motor racing heritage.



And don't forget the annual Christmas lights switch on. We also close the roads for that and, again, there are thousands on the streets.



All this talk of a lockdown is nonsense – you can't lockdown Bourne. Anyway, there is no need – all we need is a bit of common sense. That's right, isn't it?

Then, in the third week of March, things began to close, the Government caught up and we went into lockdown. We went from normal to weird within 48 hours. All pubs, clubs, and shops apart from supermarkets, pharmacies and some food outlets were closed. It was the suddenness that shocked. Within a couple of days, the whole world seemed to have changed and we could not escape the feeling that this was one of those watershed moments in history, like a world war. In future, will people use the pandemic as a reference point and talk about 'pre-pandemic' or 'post-pandemic' in the same way that our parents talked about pre-war and post-war?



It seems the world will never be quite the same again.