

Norfolk Police thanks people for following government guidelines over Easter

Norfolk Police is thanking communities who followed Government guidelines and stayed at home over Easter.

While the majority of people listened to the advice to stay at home and stay away from others, and not travel to tourist spots, coastal retreats, parks and public areas, there were people who chose to ignore the social distancing guidelines.

Over the four-day Easter Bank Holiday weekend, Norfolk Police received 1,261 calls from members of the public reporting people ignoring the guidelines.

On Good Friday (10 April 2020), the constabulary received 353 calls from members of the public reporting people ignoring the guidelines, and a further 452 calls on Saturday, 11 April 2020.

122 warnings were given to those in public or gathered at other addresses on Good Friday (10 April) and a further 230 warnings issued the following day (Saturday 11 April).

On Easter Sunday (12 April), the constabulary received 304 calls from members of the public reporting people ignoring the guidelines, and a further 152 calls on Easter Monday (13 April).

145 warnings were given to those in public or gathered at other addresses on Easter Sunday (12 April) and 39 warnings were given yesterday (Easter Monday 13 April).

Assistant Chief Constable Julie Wvendth, said: "This Bank Holiday Easter weekend was unlike anything we've experienced before with the public asked to keep away from beauty spots and avoid socialising in person. For many people that will have involved cancelling their plans and not spending time with friends and family. I know this will have been difficult and I want to thank people for complying with the government's guidelines

"Our best chance of stopping the spread of infection is to follow the government advice, stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives. Social distancing is only effective if we all work together and follow the same advice, and I know people are making real sacrifices in order to do that.

"Over Easter we received a number of calls regarding breaches of these restrictions and, in line with our policing approach, we will always aim to engage, explain and encourage before taking any enforcement action. However, if left with no other option, officers will use the new powers available to them."

A man from Norwich has been sentenced to 16 weeks in prison after assaulting a police officer and breaching the Covid-19 restrictions on Easter Sunday (12 April 2020).

It follows an incident when an officer in the Roads and Armed Policing Team, who was on patrol in the city, came across a group of approximately 10 people congregating in a park off Pitt Street in Norwich at around 11.35am on Easter Sunday.

The officer stopped to speak to members of the group; the majority of whom left the park when requested. However, one member of the group, a 44-year-old man, initially

refused to provide his details to the officer, continued to be obstructive and coughed in the officer's face four times. He was also in breach of existing bail conditions. He was arrested and taken to Wymondham Police Investigation Centre for questioning.

Richard Law, age 44, of Northumberland Street, Norwich, was subsequently charged with assaulting a police officer. He was also charged with engaging in a social gathering of approximately 10 people and being obstructive when asked to leave by police contrary to regulations under the Health Protection Regulations 2020.

He appeared at Norwich Magistrates' Court yesterday (13 April 2020) via video link and received a 16-week custodial sentence.