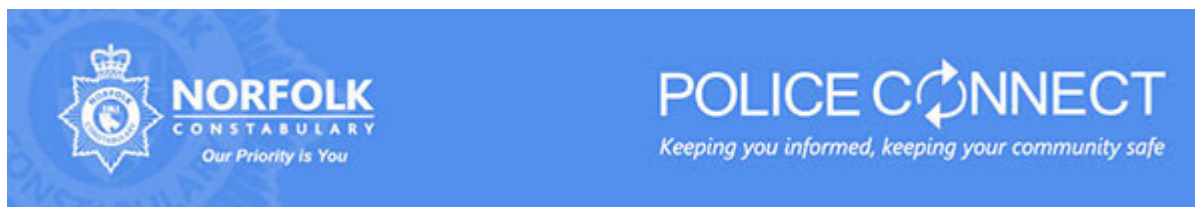


The following is a Police Connect message.



With warmer weather forecast this weekend, we understand that people will want to go outside and make the most of it following the recent spell of snow and freezing temperatures. This, combined with the 'lockdown fatigue' which has firmly set in for many people, naturally leads to the temptation of a change of scenery.

However, it's important to remember that lockdown rules remain in place and any journeys we make should be made for essential purposes only. Travelling to beauty spots or coastal areas for a walk, when you're not local to the area, is not regarded as essential.

Last weekend, more than 50 people were fined for breaching lockdown rules. Between Friday and Monday, a total of 59 fixed penalty notices were issued. Fines were given to people who attended a children's birthday party in Thetford, some of whom had travelled from Ipswich, as well as a couple who travelled from Lewisham in London to Heacham to enjoy the countryside. Meanwhile, fines were given to three people who hired an Air B&B for the Valentines weekend and two people found in a state of undress at Whitlingham were fined after they were found to be from different households.

We have seen blatant breaches of the rules, which has led to 251 fines being issued over the last three weekends. People continue to make real sacrifices to adhere to these restrictions and we must continue to work together so we don't undermine the efforts that have been made.

Officers will continue with their dedicated COVID-19 patrols this weekend, with a focus on beauty spots and coastal areas. Our policing approach continues to follow the 4Es of engage, explain and encourage with enforcement used as and when required. We do take account of individual circumstances in every case and officers will use discretion and common sense when reaching decisions. However, when we see blatant breaches, as we have recently demonstrated by the examples given above, people can expect to receive a fine.