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Communities urged to stay safe and be sensible ahead of second lockdown

Police in Norfolk are urging people to stay safe and be sensible as England prepares to enter a second phase on lockdown on Thursday (5 November 2020).

It comes as new measures are introduced to help stop the spread of coronavirus which will see people required to stay at home, restrictions on gatherings and non-essential businesses closed, including shops, restaurants and bars.

Officers are encouraging people to continue adhering to the existing restrictions, sticking to the rule of six and maintaining social distancing.

Temporary Assistant Chief Constable, Julie Wwendth, said: "It's reasonable to assume people will want to make the most of their freedom before Thursday. However, it's important to remember the existing rules still apply and we want people to be sensible and stay safe."

Over the weekend, officers issued four fixed penalty notices to people in Norwich in breach of the rule of six. Three related to a Halloween party while the fourth was in connection with a protest. In Cromer, following a joint visit by police and North Norfolk District Council on Saturday night (31 October) a fixed penalty notice was issued to bar/restaurant Lily Mais the following day for breaching COVID regulations in failing to take steps to ensure that customers remained seated while consuming food or drink on the premises.

T/ACC Wwendth added: "We know these changes can be difficult and uncomfortable for some and we've acknowledged this in our approach to enforcing the regulations by engaging, explaining and encouraging people to follow the rules. Enforcement has always been a last resort.

"However, people who are knowingly and blatantly breaching regulations leave us with no option but issue a fine. We can't waste time with endless engagement and the public would expect us to act in these circumstances."

Additional information on the new measures can be found on the Government website <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november>