Lost – 49,000 miles of footpaths

Curry and Sarcasm

When you move from America to England there are things you appreciate in a special, deep way only made possible by being raised bereft of them. The NHS is one that springs to mind. Also curry, sarcasm and footpaths.

When I lived in the mountains of North Carolina, surrounded by hundreds of acres of beautiful forest, it was all off-limits to me, except for the area set aside as a national park. There, you can't walk through privately owned land. Unless you risk being prosecuted for trespassing, or possibly being shot at. Meaning unless you know the landowner, all you can do is look from a distance.

The missing miles of footpaths

In England the footpath network contains paths dating from 5000 BC, used by Neolithic people to move from place to place. Some date from the Romans, and some from Anglo Saxon times. Given the prevalence of long barrows and other sites sacred to Neolithic humans in this area, it is likely that some of the paths we enjoy were walked on many thousands of years ago. **I think that is pretty marvellous**. Our right for free access these footpaths has been fought for by the Ramblers, established in the 1930s to protect the rights of people to access the countryside.

Obviously a lot has changed in the last several hundred years, and the Ramblers recently pored over old maps, square kilometer by square kilometer to find lost footpaths. What they found was shocking. There were over 49,000 miles of

historical footpaths missing from modern maps, almost a **thousand miles in Gloucestershire alone**! This represents almost a third of the footpath network in England.



Walking a local footpath

Finding and reinstating

The government has given a deadline of **January 1st 2026** to re-map the routes and preserve them. This seems like a long way away but will be upon us before we know it. This deadline was established as part of the Countryside and Rights of Way act of 2000. However, as the clock ticks down the government has taken no action towards mapping and preserving historic footpaths. Of course at the moment they have quite a lot of other things on their plate.

Some of these paths have been:

- developed over or
- legally extinguished or
- are small fragments

The Ramblers Association – Don't Lose Your Way

The Ramblers are prioritizing paths which add value to the footpath network, such as

- completing circular routes
- resolving dead ends
- adding walking to areas without many off-road walking options.

They are **looking for volunteers** to help with this mission which they've named Don't Lose Your Way, by finding and mapping these routes, and where appropriate applying for them to be restored.

For more information on how you can help with this work, you can go to the Ramblers Website where there is an extensive FAQ.

These footpaths have been established over many hundreds, or indeed thousands of years, and are easy to take for granted, but once they are gone they are gone forever. To join the South Cotswold Ramblers see their website

Jessica Burchfiel

Cycling Forum

Calling all cyclists and would be

cyclists

If you cycle on our local roads or you would like to but don't for whatever reason, please read on.

First Gloucestershire Cycling Forum

Siobhan Baillie MP has invited the Parish Council to her first Cycling Forum on 17th November at 6pm. Virtual not face-to-face, of course.

She describes it as an *opportunity to discuss how cycling and other sustainable methods of transport can be improved across the Stroud District and Gloucestershire*. The District Council and the County Council will be there to discuss their existing and planned cycling schemes.

What are your views?

I am happy to attend as a Parish Councillor and fair weather cyclist. I'll report back on anything relevant to Stinchcombe. But I can't represent your views unless you tell me what they are. I know there are some keen cyclists out there.

- What are your experiences of cycling locally?
- What would make it better?
- If you don't cycle yet, what would encourage you to take to your bike?

Please let me know before 17th November.

Kath Hudson

Lockdown Support

Latest Information from Stroud District Council

Shielding Support

People who were advised to shield during the last wave and People who had access to a supermarket priority delivery slot will still be able to access this without the need to re-register. People who did not use this service during the first lockdown but would like to this time they will need to register. This can be done by via The National Shielding Support Service(NSSS).

If anyone needs help with registering on the NSSS please contact Gloucestershire Help Hub on telephone **01452 583519**.

The Clinically Extremely Vulnerable

Some residents may have received a letter from the Government and Gloucestershire County Council advising them that they are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV). If a resident hasn't received a letter but believes they are a CEV they would need to check with their GP or Clinician regarding this. You can find a list of people who would be considered to be a CEV here at SDC

Further Information

You can find further up to date information at the SDC Coronavirus update. This includes :-

- Advice for CEV's
- Funding for Covid-19 Response Groups
- Updates from Government

- Gloucestershire Community Help Hub
- Support with food
- Support for Older Adults
- Homelessness advice and referrals
- Mental Health Support
- Domestic Violence
- Money worries and budgeting

In Flanders Fields

Flanders Fields and the Poppy

In Flanders fields the poppies blow

Between the crosses, row on row,

That mark our place; and in the sky

The larks, still bravely singing, fly

Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago

We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,

Loved, and were loved, and now we lie

In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:

To you from failing hands we throw

The torch, be yours to hold it high.

If ye break faith with us who die

We shall not sleep, though poppies grow

In Flanders fields

Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae

The history behind the poem

The Story of the poem. John McCrae was a Canadian doctor, a professor of medicine at Canada's McGill University. On the evening of May 2 1915 during the second battle of Ypres, McCrae officiated at the burial of Lieutenant Alexis Helmer. The next evening he took a twenty-minute break from his duties and scribbled a short poem.

He was interrupted by a Sergeant Major Cyril Allinson with his post. So he handed the pad and poem to the Sergeant Major and read his mail. As McCrae read his mail, Allinson read the poem. Returning the pad to McCrae after he had finished the mail, Allinson watched in horror as McCrae crumpled his poem into a ball and tossed it aside.

Sergeant Major Allinson had been deeply moved by the poem and retrieved it. After showing it to other soldiers, he sent it to several newspapers in England. The following December is was finally published in "Punch"

About John McCrae

John McCrae was a doctor and a teacher, who served in both the South African War and the First World War. Born in Guelph, Ontario, on November 30, 1872, John McCrae was the second son of Lieutenant-Colonel David McCrae. Described as warm and sensitive with a remarkable compassion for both people and animals, John McCrae began writing poetry while a student at

the Guelph Collegiate Institute.

On August 4, 1914, Britain declared war on Germany. Canada, as a member of the British Empire, was automatically at war, and its citizens from all across the land responded quickly. Within three weeks, 45,000 Canadians had rushed to join up. John McCrae was among them. He was appointed a medical officer with the First Brigade of the Canadian Field Artillery with the rank of Major and second-in-command.

He took with him a horse named Bonfire, a gift from a friend. Later, John McCrae sent his young nieces and nephews letters supposedly written by Bonfire and signed with a hoof print.

In April 1915, John McCrae was in the trenches near Ypres, Belgium, in the area traditionally called Flanders. Some of the heaviest fighting of the First World War took place there during what was known as the Second Battle of Ypres.

On April 22, the Germans used deadly chlorine gas against Allied troops in a desperate attempt to break the stalemate. Despite the debilitating effects of the gas, Canadian soldiers fought relentlessly and held the line for another 16 days.

The day before he wrote his famous poem, one of McCrae’s closest friends was killed in the fighting and buried in a makeshift grave with a simple wooden cross. Wild poppies were already beginning to bloom between the crosses marking the many graves. Unable to help his friend or any of the others who had died, John McCrae gave them a voice through his poem. It was the second last poem he was to write.

Soon after it was written, he was transferred to No. 3 (McGill) Canadian General Hospital in France where he was Chief of Medical Services. The hospital was housed in huge tents at Dannes-Cammiers until cold wet weather forced a move to the site of the ruins of the Jesuit College at Boulogne.

When the hospital opened its doors in February 1916, it was a

1,560-bed facility covering 26 acres. Here the wounded were brought from the Battle of the Somme, the Battle of Vimy Ridge, the third Battle of Ypres and from Arras and Passchendaele.

For respite, he took long rides on Bonfire through the French countryside. Another animal companion was a casualty of the war, the dog Bonneau, who adopted John McCrae as his special friend.

During the summer of 1917, John McCrae was troubled by severe asthma attacks and occasional bouts of bronchitis. He became very ill in January 1918 and diagnosed his condition as pneumonia. He was moved to Number 14 British General Hospital for Officers where he continued to grow weak.

Source

- Veterans Affairs Canada

TGIF – November 2020

Current State of Play

Obviously November's TGIF is cancelled and as things stand we think it is advisable to cancel December and wait to review the situation in the New Year.

The results of the questionnaire

Thank you to all those who completed the questionnaire for us- we had 35 replies which (with some sent as a couple) represented more than 40 people .

- It is encouraging to know that practically all of you are strongly in favour of the concept of our get togethers and we received many appreciative comments.
- About half, of you, quite understandably, do not wish to attend indoors under COVID restrictions.
- 22 people stated that they were likely to continue under the conditions which had prevailed until this week
- Half would like food to be available.

However, we cannot assume that 22 would be present each week and a more realistic figure would probably be up to 16, possibly not enough to proceed. Therefore we will look at the situation in January and hope for better times ahead when we can all get together safely.

With best wishes to you all,stay safe and be thankful that we live in such a wonderful community in a truly beautiful setting.

Jill,Russ and Roger

The Neighbour in Need

THANK YOU! Thank you! *Thank you!*

A massive thank you for the generous gifts to 'the neighbour in need' , that is, St Cyr's church.

Following the appeal in the e-news we have raised over £600. *People's generosity has touched me* and it is greatly appreciated. If anyone would like to add to our total that would be fabulous. Because of the Pandemic, our usual community gatherings for fundraising and connection with the

village has been very limited this year. This looks like continuing through to the end of 2020.

We are hoping to bring some Christmas Cheer with our Christmas flowers and hopefully a service of word and music in December.

In this next Lockdown the church will remain open for individuals to find solace in a beautiful sacred space but no physical services until Dec 6th. Do join us on Zoom or via Facebook or YouTube. Thank you once again. What a wonderful village to be a part of. If I can be there for you please do get in touch.

Fiona

How to give

- Read more about the funding of St Cyrs on the churches website
- Donate a single one-off amount at Give a Little .(gift aid can be added during payment)
- Set up a Standing order or making a BACS payment to
    - **Stinchcombe Parochial Church Council**
    - NatWest Sort Code: 55-61-38 Account: 03709450
- You can talk to the Vicar Fiona

Lockdown – the sequel

The Prologue

Like most people, I had hoped that the country could avoid a second National Lockdown. However it seems we have joined an ever lengthening list of countries that include Austria,

France, Germany, Belgium, Ireland and other parts of the UK that have announced a second Lockdown.

Re-reading the plot

I have been looking back at one of my earlier posts from the website in the year about Coronavirus and COVID-19, especially the earlier ones and what I forecast. For example:

- "100M cases worldwide by the end of the year" 5 August 2020
- "cross fingers, I do feel positive that the "second wave" can be avoided" 5 August 2020
- "Any possible vaccine is up to 12 – 18 months away" 6 April 2020

The first is still possible, the second is now wrong and the third I still think will be true.

So, why are we in Lockdown – AGAIN

We all had hoped that because the virus infection rates had receded during the summer that we would be able to carry on, with restrictions, through the Winter. Unfortunately to my mind it come down to one thing The Percentage of Asymptomatic Cases.

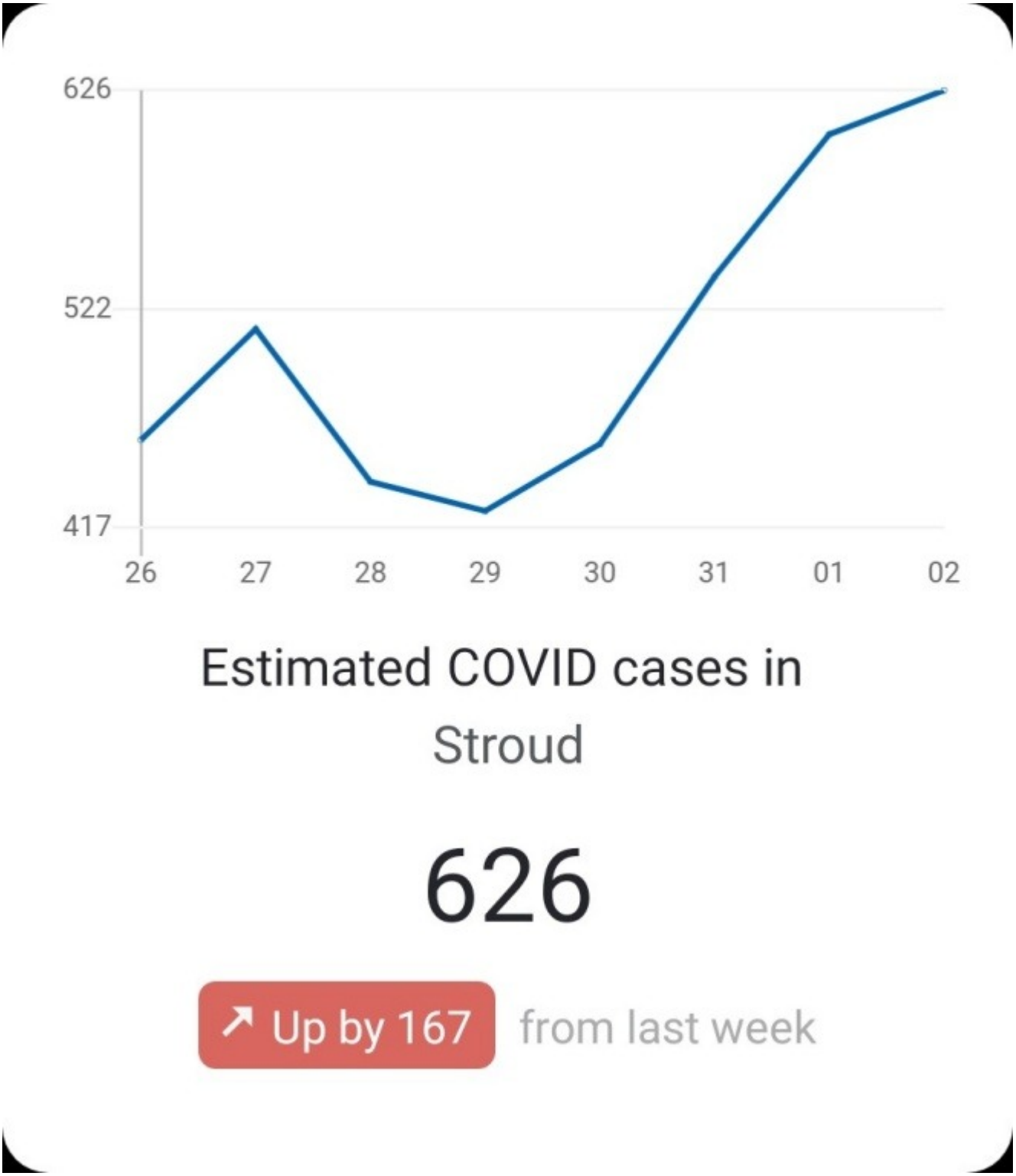
According to the latest research from the CDC, 40% of all infections are asymptomatic. The CDC also say that this 40% pass on 75% of all infections.

This means, that you are **three times** as likely to catch COVID-19 from a person **showing no signs of infection** as you are from a person showing infection.

Without proper SOCIAL DISTANCING people play Russian Roulette with the virus. Every close contact outside your support bubble increases the probability that the person you meet is

infectious but asymptomatic. Here in Gloucestershire, Stroud area cases have increased 69% in the last 7 days. We are still BELOW the National average, but the “confirmed” case numbers are now rising steeply.

AND REMEMBER for every 10 confirmed cases, there are 4 more walking around who don’t know they have it!



From the COVID Symptom Tracker App Study