

## BUSINESS EYE

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# We must stay ahead of epidemic

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**T**his week's continuation of lockdown comes to you as I nurse a swollen knee after taking far too quickly to renewed golf and tennis after we were allowed outside again. I am back to being caged inside again, but this time because I can't walk so well.

Am I the only one thinking that the arrival of a second wave of deaths from coronavirus is now inevitable?

It seems not, as some epidemiologists on the Government Advisory Panel, SAGE, are now suggesting this to be a likely event, possibly in Octo-

ber as the cold weather sets in.

It seems to me that we are on a knife-edge and that the digital test and trace infrastructure that we need to quickly isolate outbreaks are not available and seems unlikely to be so for some time ahead.

There have been second spikes in Germany, Beijing and Iran, to name a few, and it is surely not lost on anyone that we still have the exact same defences against the virus that we had in February when everyone was so scared they wanted to self-isolate as soon as was possible.

We had members of our team accusing us of profiteering for staying open. Those very same people now are complaining that we have not yet found work for them.

Meanwhile, as the Government tries its best to balance the health emergency with the economic one, we have seen irresponsible behaviour from some elements of large crowds, whether they be pro-

testing that black lives matter, descending on the beach or holding illegal street parties like congregating outside Anfield in Liverpool to celebrate Chelsea's victory over Manchester City.

The trouble with these illegal gatherings is not just the chaos, disorder and disturbance that they bring.

They clearly fly full in the face of the social distancing rules there to protect us all, and worse than this, they put the lives of the police and emergency services under threat.

Whether you feel this to be a failure of politics or of communication, it is definitely a failure of common sense and community.

Now that 'COVID Independence Day' has been and gone on and the quarantine barrier for travel to many countries lifted, I guess we are all wondering if there are enough of us willing to keep acting responsibly in order to prevent a second spike and all



Alex Pratt urges readers to continue to stay safe.

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the costs and pain this would bring.

In the USA, Florida and Texas are back into lockdown and the number of cases has started to grow strongly again. Meat processing plants across Europe, including in Wales, have seen localised spikes and have been closed down as the virus has thrived in the cold. Leicester has already had a return to lockdown. The disease

continues to spread aggressively across the world, with places like India seeing an exponential rise in cases and deaths.

Scotland seems more disciplined than England. Most of the old and infirm who are at risk are rightly staying at home, but many of the young can't seem to contain themselves and will spread this virus.

We need to stay ahead of this epidemic. It is our predator. We have no defence yet. Be responsible. Be safe. Stay home as much you can. Wash your hands. Stay socially distant. Wear a mask. Don't join the crowds. It's not only safer, it's still the law.

This killer remains out there lurking in the crowd, being passed around and waiting to hurt you and your family.