

## Have a Happy (and safe) Christmas

It's been a challenging year for all – particularly the old, the infirm and those with health problems – and many of us can't wait to uncork all the usual fun and excitement of Christmas.

Now we're out of lockdown, we can think about shopping and who we'd like in our Christmas "bubble" of up to three households. Consider carefully who you decide to bubble with over Christmas. Cooking for just one elderly relative may be better than catering for hordes of kids you can see any other time. Sometimes the choice of the bubble is going to be difficult but choose the right people – family should always come first.

Christmas shopping is a dubious pleasure in my opinion, but it is one that our more vulnerable neighbours and relatives may need to miss out on this year. Please offer to do their shopping for them if you can. Take pictures of likely presents while you shop and show them off on your phone when you next see them.

Remember when every store had a Christmas catalogue? Some still do, so pick one up and let those who cannot get out read through it and come up with good ideas for presents.

Many of us are using online shopping more now and this is perfectly OK providing you take the financial side seriously and only buy from reputable companies who offer secure payment facilities. If the website looks a bit amateur or suspicious, or is not an organisation inside the UK, shop elsewhere. [actionfraud.police.uk/shoponlinesafely](https://actionfraud.police.uk/shoponlinesafely)

If you are likely to be out of the house when the item is being delivered, get the delivery sent to a pick-up location: most reputable sites offer this option. Many stores and hotels in Woking have pick-up facilities for courier companies and suppliers – using them can often be cheaper than receiving deliveries at home. This stops criminals stealing the boxes from your doorstep, a possibility that has increased since couriers can no longer wait to see if anyone is in.

While going around the shops, don't forget the mask and hand sanitiser. Children aged 12 and over are supposed to wear masks, but few seem to from what I have seen, especially when not accompanied by an adult. Children are not invincible, as all good parents know.

Finally, when your bubble arrangements are sorted and the presents are purchased, remember to enjoy Christmas! We all want a break that cheers us up and makes us forget, for a short time anyway, the horrible year past. I hope you have the chance to be with your loved ones, eat a bit too much, watch the Great Escape yet again, and remember the good times.