

The daily shop

This week there have been too many empty shelves in supermarkets. There is no problem with the food supply. Some people have decided to buy large stocks for no particularly good reason, leaving little or no choice of product for those who arrive later.

Today when I visited in Wokingham it was more orderly, thanks to supermarket decisions to limit purchases to 2 or 3 only of each item. This simple piece of rationing has helped, and could always be toughened further if people still persist with excess purchases.

There will be overall some additional food buying through shops, as many of those meals previously eaten in works canteens, restaurants and fast food outlets will now need to be replaced with meals at home. This does not of itself stress the food supply, but it does require reorientation of the deliveries from the suppliers to restaurants to the supermarkets.

I would ask people to behave responsibly, with thought for others who also need to buy their daily food. Those who did buy too much for stock can make amends. They should now spend the next week or two living off the stocks they bought up instead of going back for more. It would be unforgiveable if they let the food in stock go to waste as it went out of date, or because they on reflection decide they don't like rice or pasta or whatever that much after all.