

Area Council Update – COVID 19 Briefing

Public Health

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This is a regular update on the Council's Public Health response to the pandemic, providing a wide range of work undertaken across the Council. The pace of change continues, so we will aim to provide as up to date information as possible. Any specific questions on areas of work will be taken back to the appropriate lead for further detail, if appropriate.

1. Purpose of Report

To provide a progress update to members in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Key Themes

Headlines as at 29th March 2021

- [COVID-19 Spring 2021 Roadmap](#) provides plan to move out of lockdown. Monday 29th March marks the start of [lockdown easing](#).
- Case rates were one of the highest in the country, part of a general pattern seen following an increase in testing in both schools and workplaces. On a positive note, hospital numbers continue to fall.
- Working aged adults have the highest case rates, specifically younger adults (20-39). Case rates in over 65s are falling faster which may reflect vaccine effectiveness. Slight rise in children testing positive, relating to schools reopening and increased testing.
- Areas with higher levels of deprivation have higher case rates than more affluent areas, linked to ability to reduce transmission relating to socioeconomic factors e.g. employment (frontline roles and less likely to work from home) & larger households.
- The most recent case rates are highest in Central and South East parts of Barnsley (Bolton-on-Deane, Town Centre/Oakwell and Thurnscoe), with high levels of household clustering and cases linked to schools.
- Continue to see a moderate percentage of cases linked to household clusters (49%), suggesting ongoing transmission within households. Many of these clusters have a school or workplace linked case.

Public Health Messages

The National Roadmap is positive, but we MUST continue to reinforce government guidance;

- **HANDS** - Wash hands regularly.
- **FACE** - Wear face coverings in enclosed spaces,
- **SPACE** - Stay at least 2 metres apart or 1 metre with a face covering.
- Let Fresh Air in – during winter months

Intelligence

COVID Situation Report (Sit-Rep)

Any local community intelligence regarding COVID intelligence or concerns would be useful to feed into this group.

COVID Marshals/Community Observations/NEO update

Main themes from community observations:

- Marked deterioration in behaviour towards any uniformed presence, which has extended to aggressive and criminal behaviour, including towards parking wardens and particularly COVID marshals. Plans to extend joint operations with South Yorkshire Police are underway.
- General observations continue regarding lack of face covering use and a feeling of less adherence to the current position in the roadmap.

Community Behavioural Insights – Additional Funded Work

A total of 836 Barnsley residents were consulted via workshops or online questionnaire. Full findings and Campaign material should be presented shortly.

Summary of key findings:

- People who are following the guidelines do so mainly to protect themselves and their family.
- Majority of respondents were compliant, but offered reasons why others were not following guidelines; denial, unable to social distance at work, forget about the guidelines, can't social distance in some shops, confusion.
- Most people understood the guidelines but the biggest gaps in knowledge were around when to self-isolate and when to get a test.
- 87% of those surveyed said they intend to get the vaccine (88% men, 86% women).

Testing

Work is underway to target vulnerable and vaccine-hesitant groups through community engagement for both testing and vaccinations.

Symptomatic Testing

Local Testing Units continue at;

- County Way lower Courthouse car park,
- Dorothy Hyman Sports Centre car park,
- Wombwell Summer Lane car park for symptomatic residents.

Mobile Testing Unit (MTU) sites also available -

Burleigh Street car park, Barnsley, S70 1LW. Open every day until Sunday 4 April from 9am to 3pm. This is a drive-through testing site accessible by car.

Find out more information at this link <https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/health-and-wellbeing/coronavirus-covid-19/get-a-test-for-coronavirus-covid-19/getting-a-test-if-you-have-symptoms-of-coronavirus-covid-19/>.

Asymptomatic/Mass Community Testing

Testing site at Barnsley Metrodome, Queens Ground, Queens Road, Barnsley, S71 1AN. The usual operating hours are:

- 8.30am to 4.30pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday

- 8.30am to 7pm on Tuesday and Thursday

The rapid testing facility at the Metrodome will close at the end of April to be replaced by a Community Collect Model to provide more localised support where there are vulnerable groups or high case areas.

School Testing

- Rapid testing in secondary schools is underway following return of pupils to schools and colleges on 8th March - and this has impacted on case rates, as expected.
- Primary school staff will continue to take 2 rapid tests a week at home.
- Local '[Community collect](#)' model allows self-tests at home for households/support bubbles/childcare bubbles that includes nursery, primary, secondary or college pupils or staff – temporary access from the 3 LTUs detailed above.

Vaccinations

Vaccination roll out is managed by Barnsley CCG: more information can be found on their FAQ page <https://www.barnsleyccg.nhs.uk/patient-help/covid-19-vaccine-faqs.htm>

- As of writing, 43% of the Barnsley Adult population have received their first vaccine dose.
- People aged 56 or over, and 18 or over identified as clinically extremely vulnerable, will be initially invited to large-scale vaccination sites such as Sheffield Arena or a community pharmacy. Appointments can be made online using this [link](#) or calling 119. If people are unable to or would prefer not to attend these sites, they do not have to respond to the letter and can wait to be invited by their GP practice to be vaccinated locally. There will be a delay as invites go out first for large sites/community pharmacies, and exact timescales will vary. But the vaccination programme continues at pace.
- Cohort 6 who are at higher risk will be invited to local Barnsley vaccination service run by local GPs, and will be contacted by the GP service when it is their turn.
- Supply is expected to decrease over the Easter period.
- Some vaccine hesitancy is showing among certain groups – plans underway to address this and provide more info and support to encourage people wherever possible is underway.
- Also working with Community Pharmacies to support the programme and improve local access.

Recommendations

Members to note the information in the report and consider the following;

- Promote PH Messages around HANDS, FACE, SPACE and encourage local communities to get tested, especially if they have symptoms.
- Continue local connections with NEOs/COVID Marshals to feedback any community-based intelligence especially in relation to increased levels of cases in particular areas
- Make any further comments on this report and its format/content

Officer Contact:

Cath Bedford cathbedford@barnsley.gov.uk
Lucy Butcher Lucybutcher@barnsley.gov.uk

Date:

29/03/2021
29/03/2021

Other Contacts:

- To book a symptomatic test you can book a test on the NHS website (<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>) or call 119 if you're not able to access the internet.
- For queries regarding staff vaccinations (including Community and Voluntary Sector staff): ascpublichealth@barnsley.gov.uk
- For queries regarding COVID marshals or joint operations with South Yorkshire Police: COVIDmarshals@barnsley.gov.uk
- To report any concerns with businesses not complying with COVID-19: Regulatoryservices@barnsley.gov.uk
- For more general public health queries, please contact PublicHealth@barnsley.gov.uk

Safe Behaviours



Wash hands frequently, for at least 20 seconds.



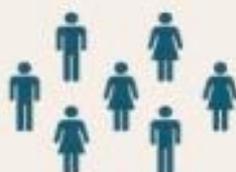
Wear a face covering in enclosed environments.



Maintain space with anyone outside your household or bubble.



Meet with others outdoors where possible.



Minimise the number of different people you meet and the duration of meetings, if possible.



Let fresh air in.



Download the NHS Test & Trace app.



Get a test immediately if you have any symptoms.



Self isolate if you have symptoms, have tested positive, or had contact with someone with COVID-19.