

BARNSELEY 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 12th March 2021**

- [COVID-19 Spring 2021 Roadmap](#) provides plan to move out of lockdown.
- Whilst case rates are showing a decline, this is still very slow and we must remain vigilant. This week shows an early suggestion of a slight rise, likely related to school testing.
- Working aged adults have the highest case rates, specifically younger adults (20-39) last week. Case rates in over 65s are falling faster which may reflect vaccine effectiveness. Slight rise in children testing positive, possibly relating to schools reopening.
- Areas with higher levels of deprivation seem to have higher case rates than those more affluent areas, possibly due to the impact of deprivation on ability to reduce transmission relating to socioeconomic factors e.g. employment (frontline roles and less likely to work from home) & larger households
- North East and Central have the highest rates, with Grimethorpe, Monk Bretton and Brierley identified as 'hotspots'. This is believed to be linked to ASB, Care Homes, young people loitering after school and higher proportions of individuals who may be exempt from wearing masks. We are working with COVID Marshals and NEOs but welcome any intelligence as to reasons for high case rates in these areas.

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:

- Households meeting in parks, play areas and open spaces, some travelling distances to locations.
- Significant increase in young people gathering socially, including antisocial and violent behaviour resulting in a Town Centre operation. Common reason for gathering was 'getting together' before return to college/school.
- Lack of face coverings in licensed premises and general stores, although this has reduced following COVID Marshals', Regulatory Services' and Neighbourhood Engagement Officers' work.
- Concerns around the effect of Mother's Day on case rates due to busy shops and higher risk of mixed households.

Community Behavioural Insights – Additional Funded Work

A total of 836 Barnsley residents were consulted via workshops or online questionnaire. Full findings and Campaign material will be presented in a few weeks. 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 -

- Queen Street car park, Goldthorpe, S63 9ND. Open every day until 28th March, from 9am to 3pm. This site is accessible by car and on foot.
- Burleigh Street car park, Barnsley, S70 1LW. Open every day until 28th March 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

Local 'click and collect' model in development to allow self-tests at home expected to be extended to all residents from 29th March – temporary access from the 3 LTUs detailed above.

School Testing

- Rapid testing in secondary schools is underway following return of pupils to schools and colleges on 8th March.
- Primary school staff will continue to take 2 rapid tests a week at home.

Vaccinations

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

- Over 77,000 people vaccinated in Barnsley – 90% + uptake in first four cohorts.
- Cohorts 5 (65+ years old) and 6 (at-risk adults aged 16-65) are now being offered a vaccination. More recently those over 56 years old are also being offered the vaccine.
- 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 will continue to increase significantly from this week onwards and colleagues in primary care are planning clinics and making bookings on the basis of the numbers of vaccines indicated.
- Some vaccine hesitancy is showing among certain groups – work to address this and provide more info and support to encourage people wherever possible is underway

Recommendations

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

- Promote PH Messages around HANDS, FACE, SPACE and encourage 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:

12/03/2021

12/03/2021

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.