

YOUR HEALTHWATCH

(1) New report - people's experiences and views about Covid-19 vaccinations in Brighton and Hove



From February 13th 2021, Healthwatch Brighton and Hove explored people's experiences and views about the COVID-19 vaccine.



We have completed some initial analysis of the 2,102 responses that we received which you can [read here](#).

We will be producing additional analysis shortly.

(2) New report - COVID-19 Vaccine helpline



The COVID-19 Vaccine Enquiry Line has been set up in response to the increased number of email and telephone enquiries received by the Sussex clinical Commissioning Groups since the start of the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme.



The phone line is not envisaged to be in place any longer than four months: it is in place to respond whilst the vaccine is a live topic. The phone line went live on 4th February 2021

Healthwatch volunteers have been providing invaluable support since day one taking calls, conducting call-backs, and answering emails.

Read our report [here](#)

(3) Volunteer with us



Have you ever considered volunteering for Healthwatch? An essential part of our role is to learn more about the patient experience of using services.

Our volunteers are currently making vital phone calls to patients who have recently been discharged from hospital, gathering their experiences and at the same time signposting them to vital services. They are also taking calls from the public and answering their queries about the COVID-19 Vaccine programme

We are therefore looking for additional help to speak to patients and members of the public. If you are interested in learning more about these projects, do please get in touch by emailing us office@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk

Both roles offer complete flexibility in terms of the hours and days you can be involved. Weekend working is also possible, and the roles can easily be performed at home. Training and support is provided, and your expenses are all covered. We are happy to chat to you about the projects if you want to find out more, or we can put you in touch with volunteers who are already performing these roles to learn more.

(1) Our Hospital Discharge wellbeing project - Wellbeing caller

The project has been running since April 2020 and hundreds of patients have already been referred to Healthwatch. Our Clinical Commissioning Group has commended us - and our volunteers - for this important work. The role involves calling adults recently discharged from hospital to check on their wellbeing, to check if they have any concerns related to their discharge, or if they need any community support such as food, shopping, social/befriending, digital support, etc. You will be signposting and/or referring people directly to other specialist services, and we will provide training on how to do this.

More information about this role is available [here](#), and you can read about what we have achieved to date [here](#)

(2) COVID-19 Vaccine Helpline

We are currently helping the NHS to answer public queries about the COVID-19 vaccine programme. Our volunteers are speaking to people and providing advice and signposting them to other useful resources. Volunteers can join a daily catch-up meeting where they will be brought up to date with any new developments, and an online chat facility is available to help you answer queries. The information obtained from these phone calls is helping service providers to understand what concerns or worries people have and to identify any issues or blockages in the system.

More information about this role is available [here](#) where you can read about what we have achieved to date.

Requirements for both roles:

- Comfortable calling and speaking to a range of people.
- A friendly, calm disposition, and willingness to listen.
- Able to use email and Microsoft Word.
- Able to access Microsoft Teams or Zoom.
- Internet access for submitting call responses online.
- A relevant background would be useful but not essential as we can offer training to support you.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE UPDATES

(1) The roadmap out of the current lockdown

On 23rd February, the Prime Minister announced a phased opening up of society starting with schools re-opening on 8th March.

- For a simple guide to the key dates please [click here](#).
- For more detail [click here](#).

STEP 2 No earlier than 12 April At least 5 weeks after Step 1	STEP 3 No earlier than 17 May At least 5 weeks after Step 2
EDUCATION <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As previous step	EDUCATION <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As previous step
SOCIAL CONTACT <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rule of 6 or two households outdoors• Household only indoors	SOCIAL CONTACT <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximum 30 people outdoors• Rule of 6 or two households indoors (subject to review)
BUSINESS & ACTIVITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All retail• Personal care• Libraries & community centres• Most outdoor attractions• Indoor leisure inc. gyms (individual use only)• Self-contained accommodation• All children's activities• Outdoor hospitality• Indoor parent & child groups (max 15 people, excluding under 5s)	BUSINESS & ACTIVITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indoor hospitality• Indoor entertainment and attractions• Organised indoor sport (adult)• Remaining accommodation• Remaining outdoor entertainment (including performances)
TRAVEL <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Domestic overnight stays (household only)• No international holidays	TRAVEL <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Domestic overnight stays• International travel (subject to review)
EVENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funerals (30)• Weddings, wakes, receptions (15)• Event pilots	EVENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most significant life events (30)• Indoor events: 1,000 or 50% (plus pilots)• Outdoor seated events: 10,000 or 25% (plus pilots)• Outdoor other events: 4,000 or 50% (plus pilots)

(2) NHS sets out Covid-19 recovery plan for patient care and staff wellbeing

This week, an estimated 4.7 million people were waiting for routine procedure and operations in England - the highest since 2007. Nearly 388,000 people were waiting more than a year for non-urgent surgery compared with just 1,600 before the pandemic began.

The NHS is accelerating the delivery of operations and other non-urgent services as part of a [£8.1 billion plan to help the health service recover all patient services](#) following the intense winter wave of COVID-19.

Maternity services will also be boosted by an additional £95 million this year, including by creating new midwifery and obstetrician roles and providing more training and leadership programmes for midwives.

The additional investment in routine, non-COVID services follows more than a year of intense pressure that has seen more than 390,000 critically ill patients require hospital for the virus, and the NHS successfully roll out a world-leading vaccination programme.

While waiting times for routine procedures fell significantly following the first April peak of COVID, more than 100,000 people were admitted with the virus in January 2021, at the peak of the winter wave, prompting additional disruption to services.

The NHS is also rolling out 40 mental health hubs to help staff recover and hospitals are being encouraged to recruit more healthcare and medical support workers to ease the burden on existing staff.

Average waiting times for non-urgent surgery have dropped by almost 40% since the summer, and the NHS will continue to increase the number of non-urgent operations it does.

Every [Integrated Care System](#) - groups of health and other agencies working together to deliver services - is being asked to draw up a plan to ensure all hospitals maximise their capacity to do as many non-urgent operations as possible. And trusts will also be expected to reduce the number of patients waiting for longer than 62 days for cancer procedures to pre-pandemic levels over the coming months.

The guidance also includes a funding boost for mental health services with children and young people set to benefit from continued increases in access to community mental health services, and everyone will continue to benefit from beneficial changes made as part of the NHS covid response, including 24/7 crisis mental health lines.

And more emphasis is being put on health inequalities, with every ICS expected to develop a list of health and care priorities that reflect the needs of their local population. Trusts will also analyse waiting times by ethnicity and deprivation to ensure equitable access to care.

In addition to being able to see their GP in person, patients will continue to be able to access GP appointments remotely as they have throughout the pandemic, with a further £10m of funding going towards video consultations.

(2) Making it compulsory for care staff to have the COVID vaccine - your views

The government is seeking your views on a proposal to make COVID-19 vaccination a condition of employment in older adult care homes.

This consultation is [available here](#) and closes at 11:45pm on 21 May 2021

Consultation description

Older adults living in care homes have been significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic because of their heightened risk to COVID-19 infection, often with devastating consequences, as well as the risk of outbreaks in these closed settings.

Ensuring very high levels of vaccination of people living and working in these settings is an essential public health intervention.

While vaccination uptake rates are increasing slowly week on week, there are still a high number of older adult care homes which do not have the level of protection needed to reduce the risk of outbreak.

To increase vaccine take up, the government is considering amending the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

This would mean older adult care home providers could only use those staff who have received the COVID-19 vaccination (or those with a legitimate medical exemption) in line with government guidance.

LOCAL COVID NEWS

(1) A message from the Director of Public Health for our City



The rate of confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Brighton & Hove is now back to the same low level as the end of summer last year.

But I must remind everyone that mixing in public places does come with a risk. Transmission will increase if we lower our guard. Now more than ever, it is essential to follow the safety guidelines to stop Covid. When you go outside, please always remember: hands, face, space, and fresh air.

The progress of the roadmap depends on the virus remaining contained while the NHS vaccination programme rolls out.

Up to one in three people with Covid-19 don't have symptoms. For that reason, we are encouraging all residents to make regular symptom-free testing part of your weekly routine.

The tests are free, you do not need to pay for them, and they can be done at home in your own time. You can collect them from pharmacies and centres all around the city or you can get them delivered directly to your home address. All the details about [how to get your free testing kits](#) are on our website.

As we take our first steps on the road out of lockdown the signs are positive. Let's keep it that way by staying safe and supporting each other.

Kind regards, **Alistair Hill, Director of Public Health**



(2) Support is available

Whilst NHS services are currently extremely busy, and demand continues to rise due to higher rates of COVID-19 in our communities, you can still access urgent medical help by contacting NHS 111 online or by phone. Please only call 999 in the event of a medical emergency.

The Sussex Mental Healthline offers crisis care 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 0300 5000 101.

If you need support or advice during the pandemic the [Council](#) website has more information: [Brighton and Hove City Council Covid-19 pages](#)

A coronavirus help directory for Brighton & Hove is also available [here](#). Use this site to find support with food shopping, money, and work, COVID testing, and more. You can also use it to find help for friends, family, and neighbours.

For advice around attending school, college and universities please click [here](#). Answers to commonly asked questions are available [here](#).

(3) How and where to get a COVID test

Full advice from the Council is available [here](#). A test for suspected COVID-19 is free and NHS treatment for COVID-19 is free for all, including overseas visitors who are not usually entitled to free treatment from the NHS.

Click here to [get a coronavirus test](#). If you do not have access to the internet, you can call 119 to book or order a test.

Off to work? Get a Covid test on your way

Regular symptom-free Covid testing protects your business, customers and colleagues

Book at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/communitytesting

No one's safe until we're all safe



Symptom-free community testing is available in test centres and participating pharmacies across Sussex.

Anyone aged 18 and over who can't work from home is encouraged to book in for a symptom-free Covid-19 test. Local testing offers free, rapid lateral flow tests to anyone who isn't showing signs of Covid-19, who can't work from home and who can't access testing through other means. Further details, including how to book, are available on the Brighton & Hove City Council website at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/communitytesting, or call 01243 642130.

You can order FREE coronavirus (COVID-19) rapid lateral flow tests [here](#). These are tests you perform yourself at home. A pack of tests contains 7 tests. You can order one pack per household each day

These websites contain all the information you need about testing:

- [Brighton and Hove City Council](#) (including links to translated materials)
- [Coronavirus in children](#)
- This link to the [government website](#) explains all you need to know about testing
- More information explaining how Test and Trace works can be found [here](#). [The council has updated their advice about obtaining a test for COVID-19](#)
- [Testing for coronavirus at home](#) How to use your coronavirus home test kit
- [COVID-19 self-test help](#) Find out how to test yourself for coronavirus (COVID-19) if you are asked to and learn what help is available. This contains a link to the self-test instructions for use and translated versions of it.
- [How tests and testing kits for coronavirus \(COVID-19\) work](#)
- [NHS Test and Trace: how we test your samples](#)
- [Testing for coronavirus before hospital](#)

Antibody testing is available for certain groups only.

You can get [a free at-home antibody test if all of these apply](#) you live in England , you are 18 or over and you work in paid adult social care.

LOCAL COVID DATA

(1) Local data on COVID and statistics published by the Council

Key statistics for Brighton & Hove

You can find key local data showing confirmed cases of COVID-19 and deaths related to COVID-19 on the [Brighton and Hove Council website](#). We have reproduced some of the data displayed on the website. The data is accurate as at the time of publication, but updates occur daily. The Council also provides links to other available data related to COVID which can be accessed [here](#).

CONFIRMED CASES OF COVID-19 in Brighton and Hove

HEADLINES

As of 14th April 2021, the total number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 (recorded since February 2020) in Brighton and Hove stood at 14,451. In the 7 days up to 10th April we had 44 confirmed new COVID-19 cases in Brighton & Hove.

The published data provides us with an average rate of new cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 people over two time periods:

- a) the last 7-days
- b) the average since March 2020

The two averages are therefore different. For information, the population of Brighton and Hove is estimated by the ONS to be 290,885.

In the last 7 days

In the seven days up to 10th April we had 44 confirmed new COVID-19 cases in our city.

- This number decreased since our last bulletin dated 31st March.
- This is equivalent to a weekly rate of new cases of 15.1 per 100,000 residents (calculated as follows: $44 / 290,885 \times 100,000 = 15.1$).
- The rate for Brighton and Hove has decreased from 35.8 as published in our last Healthwatch bulletin issued on 31st March.
- For comparison, the current weekly rate for Brighton and Hove is now lower than it was as of 16th December 2020 when it stood at 101.4, and the rate is now back to same low level as at the end of summer last year.
- The current weekly rate for Brighton and Hove is lower than the rate for England, which is 28 per 100,000 and similar to the South East which is 18.7 per 100,000.

This data is published by the [Public Health England](#) and population data by the Office for National Statistics.

Average rate since February 2020

As of 14th April, the total number of confirmed cases across the city stood at 14,451.

- This is equivalent to a rate of 4,967.9 per 100,000 residents (calculated as follows $14,451 / 290,885 \times 100,000 = 4,967.9$)
- This is lower than the rate for England, which is 6,802 per 100,000 and the South East which was 5,842.8 per 100,000. This data is published on the [government website](#).

People tested, and positivity rates.

The number of individuals in Brighton and Hove who have had [polymerase chain reaction \(PCR\) test](#) in the 7 days up to 10th April stood at 6,432. The percentage of individuals who tested positive in the same time period was 0.7% which is lower than previously reported.

Death rates

The total [number of deaths](#) recorded up to 2nd April (registered as of 10th April) with mention of COVID-19 on the death certificate stood at 463. In the last 7 days up to 2nd April, there were 0 new deaths recorded.

Number of patients in hospital

On 15th April March there were less than 5 [inpatients](#) with confirmed COVID-19 across the Royal Sussex County and Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital sites. No patients were receiving intensive care. These figures relate to all patients and not just those from Brighton and Hove.

[Government data showing the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Brighton and Hove:](#)

Date	No of confirmed cases	Total number of confirmed cases
14.4.21	6	14,451
13.4.21	3	14,445
12.4.21	3	14,442
11.4.21	0	14,439
10.4.21	8	14,439
9.4.21	1	14,431
8.4.21	10	14,430

What are the rates of infection across Brighton and Hovey?

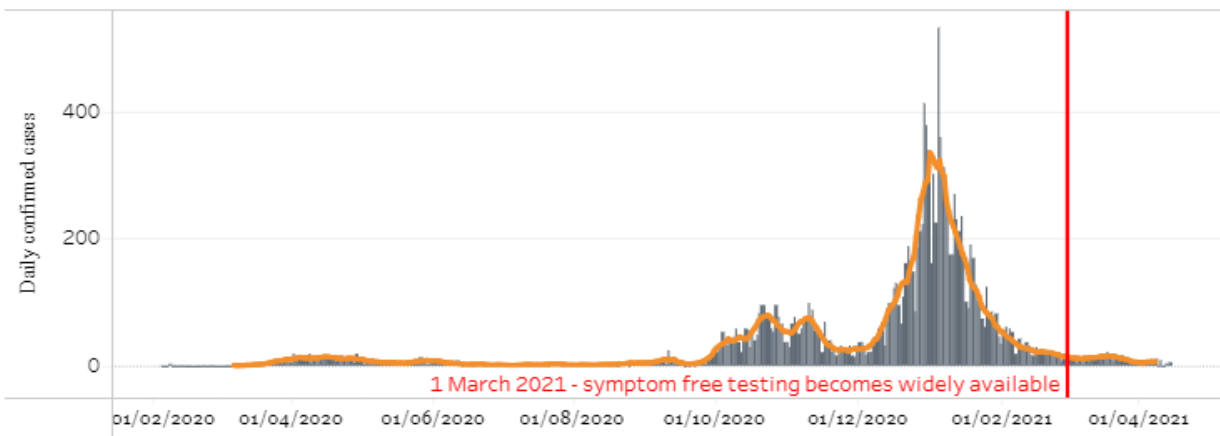
The government [map](#) displayed below shows the 7-day average as at 14th April 2021. This indicates that most areas of Brighton and Hove continue to record very low rates of infection of less than 10 per 100,000 people (shown in white). Several areas have rates which are between 10-49 (shown in green). Only Patcham is showing slightly higher levels of between 100-199. For comparison, at the start of January most areas of the city had rates of 400 and above.



COVID-10 confirmed cases following a test conducted within the those carried out by commercial laboratories (data obtained from the [Brighton and hove Council website](#)).



Confirmed COVID-19 cases in Brighton & Hove



Key
7 day daily average
Daily confirmed cases

Confirmed cases up to 14 April 2021: 14,451
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Confirmed cases (rate per 100,000 population) up to 14 April 2021: 4,968

Confirmed cases in the 7 days up to 10 April 2021: 44
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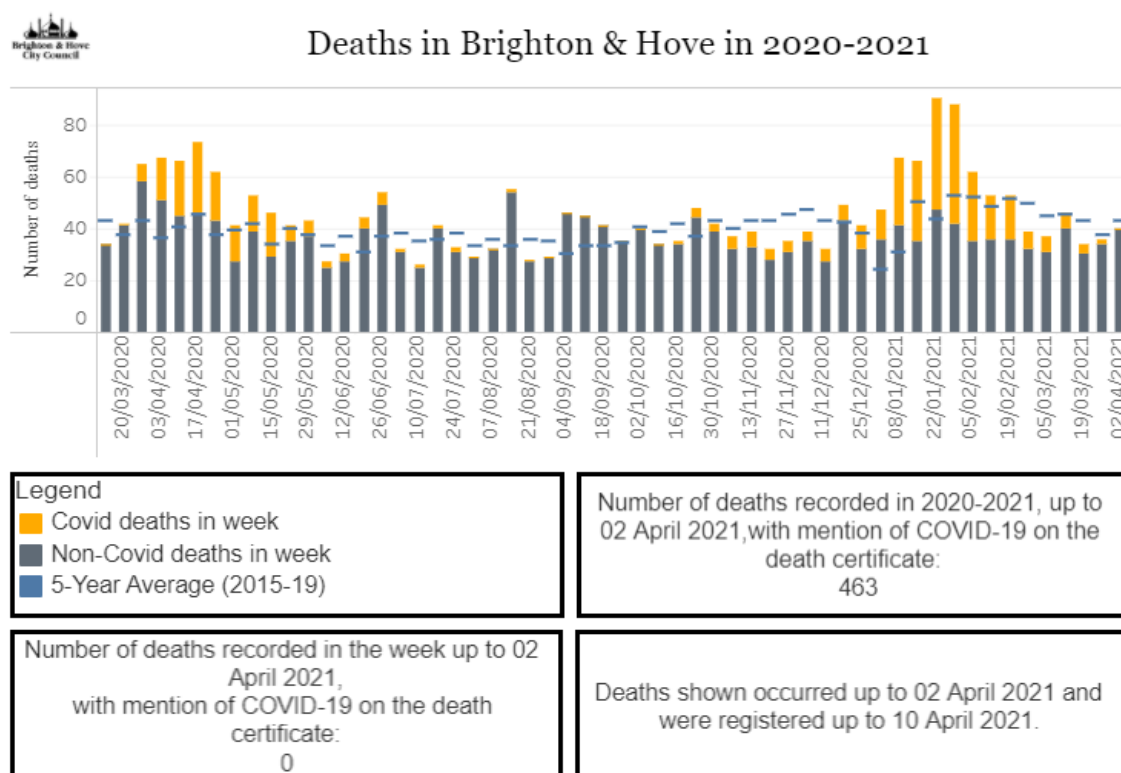
Confirmed cases (rate per 100,000 population) in 7 days up to 10 April 2021: 15.1
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Most recent days subject to reporting delay. Last available data: 14 April 2021

Deaths related to COVID-19 in the city.

The total [number of deaths](#) recorded up to 2nd April (registered as of 10th April) with mention of COVID-19 on the death certificate stood at 463. In the last 7 days up to 2nd April, there were 0 new deaths recorded

The number of deaths of Brighton & Hove residents where COVID-19 was recorded on the death certificate (yellow) is shown in the graph below (data obtained from the Brighton and Hove Council [website](#))



NATIONAL COVID DATA

(1) COVID-19 national data

(a) Death rates

Deaths are counted where a lab-confirmed positive coronavirus test result is reported in any setting.

Deaths within 28 days of positive test by area

Across the whole of the UK, as of 15th April 2021, the total number of deaths of people who had had a positive test result for COVID-19 and died within 28 days of the first positive test stood at 127,191.

In the South East, the total number of deaths stood at 17,296 cases.

Data on death rates are published on the [daily dashboard](#).

(b) Infection levels

The data reveals that as of 15th April 2021:

- Across the whole of the UK, the total number of lab-confirmed UK cases of COVID-19 since February 2020, stood at 4,380,976. This is the total number of people who have had at least one positive test result.
- In the South East, the total number of lab-confirmed UK cases of COVID-19 stood 536,376. There were 1,714 new cases in the last 7-days.

For up-to-date numbers of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases and risk in the UK, click [here](#).

(2) Government announcements

The current situation means that new guidance is being issued daily. Below we have provided links to some announcements which may be of interest.

[\(COVID-19\) Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do](#)

[COVID-19 restrictions posters: 12 April 2021](#)

[Surge testing for new coronavirus \(COVID-19\) variants](#)

[COVID-19 vaccination and blood clotting](#)

[Priority groups for phase 2 of the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination programme: advice from the JCVI](#)

[UK moves into next phase of vaccine roll-out as government target hit early](#)

[Weekly statistics for NHS Test and Trace \(England\): 1 April to 7 April 2021](#)

[Confirmed cases of COVID-19 variants identified in UK](#)

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove information and advice

The following Healthwatch COVID-19 guides are available (these are being regularly updated):

- [COVID-19 information and advice webpage](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccination webpage](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Check webpage](#)
- [Answers to Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Maternity and pregnancy advice and information](#)
- Top tips for [staying active and looking after your mental health](#).
- Guides which provide information about:
 - visiting a [dentist](#)
 - [seeing a GP](#)
 - [collection of prescriptions](#)

Plus, accessibility resources to help you communicate about COVID-19.

- **NEW:** [Beyond Words is providing free picture stories and illustrated guides to support people with learning disabilities and autism through the coronavirus pandemic](#)
- A series of videos aimed at encouraging people to continue to use health services if they are unwell. They are available in [English](#), [Arabic](#), [Farsi](#), [Kurdish](#) and [Sylheti](#).
- [Resources from Learning Disability England](#)
- [Sign health has made their Interpreter Now remote BSL interpretation service available for free across all healthcare services](#)
- [Signhealth is providing a video of summaries of key coronavirus guidance in BSL](#)
- [Signhealth advice for testing](#)
- [Public Health England stay at home guidance](#), translated and in Easyread.
- [NHS guidelines translated into up to 50 languages by Doctors of the World](#) and find video advice [here](#)
- [Easy read information on COVID-19](#) from Mencap
- [About the NHS Test and Trace scheme](#)
- [What to do if you are contacted by NHS Test and Trace](#)
- The NHS have also created [easy read posters like this](#) so people know when and how to get a test for coronavirus.
- [Public Health England resources](#) in accessible formats
- [COVID-19 guidance for providers of services for people experiencing rough sleeping](#)
- The [handwashing rap](#), produced to help people who have a learning disability



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