



A message from Fran McCabe, Chair of the Healthwatch Board

“ The last time I gave out a message, I was sitting in my garden in the sunshine during the first lockdown. We have come a long way since then, with new treatments for those who get COVID-19 and vaccines here for many of us - or at least on the horizon. But it is still not normal, and I hope this Christmas you will be able to see those who are important to you.

Despite the awfulness, Healthwatch rallied around and we have been in contact with many more people than in previous years albeit by survey, and telephone, and even webinars. People have told us about their experiences of using general practice, dentistry, visiting relatives in care settings, cancer services, and how they feel about the increasing use of technology. I.T has meant that many of us have been able to keep in contact and have meetings, but it can be a mixed blessing and it is not the only answer for care, as many people need face-to-face contact about their ailments.

The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated how important health and social contact is, and how lucky we are to have the NHS, which is once again stepping up to the plate as COVID-19 cases rise again - and all the other front-line workers in care, education, and services who have had to work harder than ever over the year.

Thank you to Healthwatch Volunteers, Staff and Board, Young Healthwatch and all our colleagues in the health and social care services and the community. Everyone's life has been affected this year. 2021 must be better- we have vaccines and even the prospect of better weather.

I hope you have a happy and healthy Christmas.



YOUR HEALTHWATCH

(1) COVID-19



Last week marked a crucial step in the fight against COVID-19 with the roll-out of vaccines to frontline staff and the most vulnerable at the Royal Sussex County Hospital. This week, GP-led local vaccination services began delivering the vaccine in Brighton, and across Sussex.

Healthwatch has worked closely with Sussex NHS Commissioners, and colleagues in East and West Sussex, to gather more information about how the vaccine will be rolled out. We have created a dedicated webpage which contains the latest information, which you can access [here](#). We have also replicated this information in the separate document attached to this email.

We are sharing your questions with Sussex NHS Commissioners so that they can update their guidance which we will in turn share with you. Please contact us at office@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk

(2) Dentists



Healthwatch England has called for action to address widespread issues with access to NHS dental care following an unprecedented surge in concerns. Click [here](#) to read more.

The Healthwatch network experienced a 452% increase in feedback on the issue of dentistry in the second quarter of the year, with continuing accounts of people being left in pain, resorting to 'DIY' repair methods, and in some cases even extracting their own teeth.

A review of over 1,300 people's experiences of accessing dental care from 43 local Healthwatch found that 73% of people found it difficult to access dental services, with 47% of people dissatisfied with the service they received, compared to 11% who were satisfied.

The increase in feedback comes after [the British Dental Association reported](#) that treatments delivered by NHS dental services in England are at a quarter of pre-COVID levels, with over 14.5 million fewer procedures taking place.

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove also asked local people to tell us about their experiences of dental care from September to December 2020, and 56 people responded. Whilst this is not a large enough sample to be representative, nor a sample from which we can draw firm conclusions, it gives a snapshot and is

supported by similar issues and themes being identified by Healthwatch in East and West Sussex and nationally by Healthwatch England.

Our sample in Brighton and Hove showed

- Accessing a dental service - 46.7% said this was 'very difficult', 13.3% difficult.
- Finding out about how COVID-19 had affected dental services - 28.6% people found this 'easy', 23.2% 'very easy', which means that 48.2% did not.
- When seeking help from a dentist and leaving a message or email, 25% never heard back from the dental service, and 37.5% heard back longer than 3 days.
- Respondents were satisfied with the advice they had from dentists where 16.4% were 'very satisfied' and 43.6% 'satisfied'.
- Respondents were dissatisfied with waiting times to see someone - 24.1% were 'dissatisfied' and 35.2% 'very dissatisfied'.

We have provided our findings to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9th December (for information on the role of the HOSC click [here](#)). We asked the HOSC to exert pressure on NHS Commissioners to improve access to dental services and clarify important issues for the public which they have agreed to do. We have asked local MPs to table questions to the Secretary of State for Health and other government ministers. We have also engaged with the NHS Sussex Commissioners to help us get more answers and action from NHS England who commission dental services. Our dental survey, combined with the excellent work done by one of our volunteers Chris Jennings, and efforts by colleagues in Healthwatch West Sussex are achieving results

On the 19th November 2020, the three local Healthwatch in Sussex met with NHS England where we raised our concerns. We await their response and will be meeting with them again soon.

You can read more about the impact which COVID-19 has had on dentistry on our [website](#).

(3) Non-emergency Patient Transport Services in Sussex



In September, Healthwatch teams across Sussex sought your views on the current Non-emergency Patient Transport Services in Sussex. 130 people told us what they thought.

We are in the final stages of finalising our reports and hope to publish these before Christmas. If you are interested in this service do look out for these on your local Healthwatch websites.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE UPDATES

(1) Services over Christmas and New Year, and tips for staying well this winter

The NHS [Stay Well This Winter campaign](#) can help you prepare for winter. The website contains lots of useful information and advice.

We have created a page on the [Healthwatch website](#) which provides information and links to a variety of services that are open over the festive period. We will be regularly updating this page.

Support

If Christmas is a hard time for you, it is important to remember that you are not alone. There are things you can try that might help, such as:

- find [tips that might help you cope at Christmas](#)
- find [ways to be supportive to others](#)
- discover [useful contacts for finding support at Christmas](#).

If you are finding things hard this Christmas, you are not alone - use the details below to access support:

- [Sussex Mental Healthline](#) is there to offer support and point you in the right direction about where to get help should you need it. The number is 0800 0308 500.
- The Samaritans provide help and support to people in a crisis 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Contact them by phone on 116 123 or visit www.samaritans.org
- Mind offer a wide range of information including details of local contacts and support groups. Call 0300 123 3393 or visit www.mind.org.uk

Local Support Available

Find out about services that can help with specific issues, like mental health support, and what to do if you can't get food, medicines, or are lonely and isolated, on your council's website:

- [Brighton and Hove Community Hubs](#)
Brighton and Hove Community Support Telephone: 01273 293117

NHS Volunteer Responders are also still providing vital support to people vulnerable to COVID-19 and this will continue until at least March 2021. The scheme continues to accept new referrals, and volunteers are ready to provide vital support to those who meet the criteria. You can [contact the NHS Volunteer Responder Service online](#) or call on 0808 196 3646 (8am to 8pm seven days a week)

For support with food shopping, money, and work, COVID testing, and more please visit: <https://covidbrightonhove.org.uk/>

[Ageing Well](https://ageingwellbh.org/christmas-directory/) have produced a Christmas Directory for the period of 21 December - 3rd January. This includes details of the opening times of important services which can provide help with food, community services, wellbeing, and support, and ideas for entertainment. This directory is being updated regularly and can be accessed here: <https://ageingwellbh.org/christmas-directory/>

Ageing well also produces a weekly guide to local services that are open during the COVID-19 pandemic - <https://ageingwellbh.org/coronavirus/>

NHS111



If you need help over the winter, call 111 or visit [NHS 111](https://111.nhs.uk/) online. It's free to call from landlines and mobiles and is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

NHS 111 is a non-emergency service you can use if you are unsure of which healthcare service you need to visit. It offers access to advice 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by phone and online

and can connect you to healthcare professionals, including nurses, emergency dentists or GPs.

The advisors at NHS111 can also arrange face-to-face appointments, and book you an appointment at A&E if needed. They can also assess whether you need an ambulance and send one directly. A call back by a clinician can also be requested using NHS111 online.

For more information about NHS 11, please visit the Healthwatch [webpage](#).

Get your flu jab



Flu is potentially a very serious illness. People might think that flu is just a cough or cold, but it can develop into a very significant illness; particularly in patients most at risk.

The flu vaccine is the single best way to protect yourself, and anyone you care for, from flu. NHS services across Sussex have been working hard together to prepare for the winter season. It is particularly important to have the flu vaccine this year due to the added risks from COVID-19.

Children can receive their vaccination as a nasal spray instead of a needle injection. Adults can get the vaccine via their GP, or, alternatively, at many local pharmacies.

For more information about flu, please visit the Healthwatch [webpage](#)

Keep warm

It is important to keep warm in winter - both inside and outdoors - as it can help to prevent colds, flu, and more serious health problems, such as heart attacks, strokes pneumonia and depression. Heat your home to at least 18°C (65°F); if you can, you might prefer your living room to be slightly warmer.

Seeing a pharmacist early

If you start to feel unwell, even if it is just a cough or cold, do not wait until it gets more serious, get help from your pharmacist. The sooner you get advice the better - pharmacists are here to help you stay well this winter. If you need to find a pharmacy over the festive period, why not use the [NHS pharmacy finder](#) to find your closet store.

For details of pharmacies that are open over the festive period please click [here](#). Most pharmacies will be closed on Christmas Day (25 December), Bank Holiday Monday (28 December) and New Year's Day (1 January 2021) over the Christmas period. As Boxing Day falls on a Saturday this year then Monday 28 December is the substitute Bank holiday. The majority of the pharmacies in the Sussex and Surrey will be open on Saturday 26 December, although please note that their opening times may vary to their normal Saturday opening hours. Opening times for the majority of pharmacies are shown in the on the next page.

Thursday 24 December	Business as usual
Friday 25 December	Some pharmacies are open, but hours will vary
Saturday 26 December	Business as usual
Sunday 27 December	Business as usual
Monday 28 December	Some pharmacies are open, but hours will vary
Tuesday 29 December	Business as usual
Wednesday 30 December	Business as usual
Thursday 31 December	Business as usual
Friday 1 January 2021	Some pharmacies are open, but hours will vary
Saturday 2 January	Business as usual
Sunday 3 January	Business as usual
Monday 4 January	Business as usual

Stock up

If you have been prescribed antibiotics or other medication, do not forget to pick up your prescription before the Christmas holidays start. Many GPs and pharmacies will close over the holidays. It is also a good idea to have a well-stocked medicine

cabinet at home to help you with pain relief and minor injuries. You can now use [several apps and websites to order online](#).

You, or a friend or relative, can then collect your medicines from a pharmacy or have them delivered to your home (where available). This [useful poster](#) lists key pieces of information for people who are picking-up medicines from a pharmacy on behalf of someone else.

(2) Bring your voice to NHS specialised services

Have your say on specialised services...



Apply to become a Patient and Public Voice partner today.



NHS England and NHS Improvement is committed to ensuring that public and patient voices are at the centre of shaping our healthcare services.

Every level of our system needs to be informed by insightful methods of listening to

those who use and care about our services. Their views should inform service development and improvement.

As a Patient and Public Voice (PPV) partner you will have the opportunity to work directly with these services.

For full details on some of the roles that are currently available and how to apply please visit this web page: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/participation/get-involved/opportunities/specialised-commissioning-patient-and-public-voice-ppv-roles/>

To watch a short video which explains the work of PPV partners in specialised services [see here](#)

The deadline for applications is 17 January 2021.

(3) Research participants wanted

Sussex
Health and Care Partnership

The Sussex Health and Care Partnership are working with the Helix Centre who is part of Imperial College London to uncover what is not working well for patients when accessing, using, or discussing their care plan so that they can understand how to

make improvements. They are looking to speak with people who have recently used health and/or social care services to understand their experience of care plans.

If you are happy to be involved in this research, they would like to arrange a 45 - 60 min research chat with you over the next few weeks, this can be online via a video chat or over the phone - whatever works best for you. They are able to offer £30 as a thank you for your time.

If you can please fill out this [research availability form here](#) so that they can learn a bit more about you and what your availability might be like for a research chat over the next few weeks. If you would prefer to do this over the phone please call on 07534 135886.

(4) Big Health and Care (Socially Distancing) conversation



As part of the [Big Health and Care \(Socially Distancing\) conversation](#), the NHS are asking the public and local community groups to help play a key role in helping us understand people's experiences of care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

They want to make sure that we understand what it has been like for people if they have needed to use health and care services during COVID across Sussex - what has worked well, and what could have been better? If you didn't access services when you thought you needed to, why not? What changes should we maintain, and what needs to go back to normal as much as possible?

To feed in your views and experiences, you can:

- Visit [the website](#) and share your experience, ask questions, and more!
- Email the team at sxccg.involvement@nhs.net or call us on 01903 708411
- Write to us at:
FREEPOST RTUZ-ECYG-ERRK
Attn: Public Involvement Team
NHS Brighton and Hove Clinical Commissioning Group
Hove Town Hall, Norton Road, Brighton, BN3 4AH
- Invite the Public Involvement Team to your (virtual) group meeting to hear your thoughts - please do get in touch.

COVID-19

Brighton and Hove remains in Tier 2 “High Alert”. Please refer to the government [poster](#) below for information about what you are and are not allowed to do. The [Brighton and Hove City Council](#) website also has this information. For alternative formats: [Local restriction tiers: what you need to know - alternative formats](#)



















HM Government



CORONAVIRUS TIER 2 HIGH ALERT

gov.uk/coronavirus

Around 1 in 3 people with Covid-19 have no symptoms so will be spreading the virus without realising. We must all take action to protect each other and our hospital capacity.

<p>MEETING FRIENDS AND FAMILY </p> <p>No mixing of households indoors, apart from support bubbles. Maximum of six outdoors.</p>	<p>BARS, PUBS AND RESTAURANTS </p> <p>Pubs and bars must close, unless operating as restaurants. Hospitality venues can only serve alcohol with substantial meals. Venues must stop taking orders at 10pm and must</p>	<p>RETAIL </p> <p>Open.</p>	<p>WORK AND BUSINESS </p> <p>Everyone who can work from home should do so.</p>
<p>EDUCATION </p> <p>Early years settings, schools, colleges and universities open. Childcare, other supervised activities for children, and childcare bubbles permitted.</p>	<p>INDOOR LEISURE </p> <p>Open.</p>	<p>ACCOMMODATION </p> <p>Open.</p>	<p>PERSONAL CARE </p> <p>Open.</p>
<p>OVERNIGHT STAYS </p> <p>Permitted with household or support bubble.</p>	<p>WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS </p> <p>15 guests for weddings, civil partnerships, wedding receptions and wakes: 30 for funerals.</p>	<p>ENTERTAINMENT </p> <p>Open.</p>	<p>PLACES OF WORSHIP </p> <p>Open, but cannot interact with anyone outside household or support bubble.</p>
<p>TRAVELLING </p> <p>Reduce the number of journeys you make and walk or cycle if possible. Avoid busy times and routes on public transport. Avoid car sharing with those outside of your household or support bubble. Avoid entering a Tier 3 area, other than where necessary such as for work or education. Further exemptions apply.</p>	<p>EXERCISE </p> <p>Classes and organised adult sport can take place outdoors, but cannot take place indoors if there is any interaction between people from different households. Organised activities for elite athletes, under-18s and disabled people can continue.</p>	<p>RESIDENTIAL CARE </p> <p>COVID-secure arrangements such as substantial screens, visiting pods, and window visits. Outdoor/airtight visits only (rollout of rapid testing will enable indoor visits including contact).</p>	<p>LARGE EVENTS </p> <p>Sport, live performances and business meetings limited to 50% capacity or 2000 people outdoors (whichever is lower) and 50% capacity or 1000 people indoors (whichever is lower)</p>

LOCAL COVID NEWS

(1) A message from Alistair Hill, Director of Public Health for our City

“ In today’s national Tier review (17th December) the government confirmed Brighton & Hove will remain in Tier 2 - High Alert.

While that is good news for the city, we are very concerned that our local case numbers are increasing very rapidly. I am asking everyone to do everything possible to stop COVID from spreading further.

In the seven days up to 11th December we had 283 confirmed new cases in Brighton & Hove which is a 61% increase in the rate from the previous week. Based on emerging data, we expect numbers will continue to rise significantly in the coming days. The [full data](#) is available on our website.

The increase in cases seen across the South East is affecting NHS services. The number of COVID-19 patients in hospitals across in the region is at its highest since late April and is rising rapidly in some areas.

It is almost certain that household mixing over Christmas will lead to greater transmission, more cases, and more hospital admissions at the busiest time of the year for the NHS.

When making your Christmas plans, please think very carefully about the risks to you, your loved ones, and our community. Consider whether meeting at Christmas this year is really a good idea. Please meet as few people as possible, for as short a time as possible and travel safely. We have added some [Christmas COVID safety advice](#) to our website to help you reduce your risk of transmitting or catching the virus.

And if you experience any [COVID related symptoms](#) - even if very mild - you must immediately [self-isolate](#) with your household and [book a test](#).

”

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](#).

Support available in Brighton & Hove

Emergency help with food, energy bills and other essentials

Local Discretionary Social Fund
www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/
emergency-help-with-bills 01273
293117 (option 1).

Debt advice if you are facing financial difficulties

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/
debt-advice
Citizens Advice 0300 330 9033
Money Advice Plus 0800 988 7037.

Food, shopping and meal deliveries Brighton & Hove Food Partnership www.bhfood.org.uk/
coronavirus-update.

Mental health Sussex Mental Healthline 0300 5000 101 (freephone).

Wellbeing Healthy Lifestyles team www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/
healthylifestyles 01273 294589.

Carers The Carers Hub www.carershub.co.uk 01273 977000 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

Loneliness Together Co www.togetherco.org.uk 01273 775888.

Older people Ageing Well www.ageingwellbh.org 07770 061072 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) or call The Silver Line 0800 470 8090.

Domestic abuse The Portal www.theportal.org.uk 0300 323 9985.

Bereavement Cruse Bereavement Care www.cruse.org.uk 0808 808 1677.

Digital support and resources Digital Brighton & Hove www.digitalbrightonandhove.org.uk 07475 946084.

Adult social care Access Point www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/adult-social-care 01273 295555 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm).

Children or families Front Door for Families www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/
front-door-families 01273 290400 (Monday to Thursday, 9am to 5pm, Friday until 4.30pm).
If you still need extra support and don't have anyone to help you at the moment, contact our community advice and support hub.
www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/coronavirus-help
If you can't get online, call 01273 293117 (option 2) Monday to Friday, 10am to 4.30pm.

Do not leave home if you or someone you live with has any of the following:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste

Self-isolate immediately and get a test.
Go to [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus) or call 119.

(2) How and where to get a COVID test

Advice from the Council is available [here](#).

There is very high demand for coronavirus tests. You are advised to keep trying to book through the government [website](#) or by calling 119. You must [Self-isolate](#) immediately for 10 days if you have symptoms, and all household members also need to stay at home.

A walk-in coronavirus test centre in East Brighton park is open. Anyone wanting a test must book an appointment, as with the mobile drive-through test centre currently operating from Withdean.

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.

In the event that anyone with symptoms is unable to obtain a local test, it is not recommended that you travel long distances. Government advice is to try booking again in a few hours. A good time to try is 8.30pm when new slots are made available.

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.

Symptoms

Anyone with [symptoms](#) can get a coronavirus test, whatever their age. Main symptoms are:

- **a high temperature:** this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough:** this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (a usual cough may be worse than usual)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste:** this means you have noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

These websites contain all the information you need:

- [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 how to get a test.
- 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 (COVID-19) home test kit.

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.

[How tests and testing kits for coronavirus \(COVID-19\) work](#)

[NHS Test and Trace: how we test your samples](#)

[Testing for coronavirus before hospital](#)

(3) Meeting friends and family this Christmas

On 19th December, the government announced changes to the Tier system which has also impacted on who you can meet at Christmas.

The rules on Christmas bubbles will be put into law. Once in force, you must follow the rules to minimise the spread of infection.

One in three people with coronavirus (COVID-19) have no symptoms and will be spreading it without realising it. So the safest way to celebrate Christmas this year is with your household or existing support bubble in your home. The more people you see, the more likely it is that you will catch or spread coronavirus.

Brighton currently remains in Tier 2 "High Alert" which means that you may see a maximum of two other households (your 'Christmas bubble') on Christmas Day (25 December). You cannot see anyone from a Tier 4 area, unless you are in an existing support bubble.

Before, and after, Christmas Day you must continue to follow the rules for [Tier 2: High alert](#)

You can only form a Christmas bubble if you do not live in a Tier 4 area. If you are permitted to form a Christmas bubble and choose to do so:

- keep your Christmas bubble as small as possible. Two other households is a maximum, not a target
- do not join a Christmas bubble with anyone from a Tier 4 area
- stop all unnecessary social contact outside your immediate household as soon as possible and for at least five days before you meet other households in your bubble
- only meet your Christmas bubble in private homes or in your garden, places of worship, or public outdoor spaces
- only see your bubble on Christmas Day. Do not stay overnight and keep your visits as short as possible
- stay local where possible. Avoid travelling from a high prevalence to a low prevalence area
- only meet people who are not in your Christmas bubble outside your home according to the rules in the tier you live in (unless coming from a lower to a higher tier) and do not meet socially with friends and family that you do not live with in your home or garden unless they are part of your Christmas bubble

When seeing your Christmas bubble, you should keep taking steps to reduce the spread of the virus. This includes meeting outdoors where possible, ensuring indoor spaces get as much fresh air as possible, making space between members of different households wherever you can, washing your hands regularly and for 20 seconds, and following [rules on self-isolation](#) if you develop symptoms or test positive for coronavirus.

You must not visit another household if you, or anyone in your household, is feeling unwell or self-isolating. You should get [a free NHS test](#) if you have symptoms, have been asked to by your local council or your hospital, or are taking part in a government pilot project.

For more information about the changes, and Tier 4 (which does not currently apply to Brighton and Hove) click here: [Prime Minister announces Tier 4: 'Stay At Home' Alert Level in response to new COVID variant](#)

Christmas guidance:

[Guidance for the Christmas period](#)

[Making a Christmas bubble with friends and family](#)

[Read guidance on making and using a childcare bubble](#)

[If you are a student who has moved home for the university holidays](#)

The government has also produced [guidance for the Christmas period](#). These cover:

[Meeting friends and family](#)

[Visiting bars, pubs and restaurants](#)

[Visiting churches and other places of worship](#)

[Visiting shops and Christmas markets](#)

[Attending events, including performances and Christmas lighting ceremonies](#)

[New Year's Eve](#)

[Carol singing](#)

[Going to work](#)

[Childcare](#)

[Visiting relatives in care homes](#)

[Travel within the UK](#)

[Volunteering](#)

[Weddings, civil partnerships and funerals](#)

Tiers

[Tier 2: High alert](#)

[Full list of local restriction tiers by area](#)

[Local restriction tiers: what you need to know](#)

Care homes

[Visiting arrangements in care homes](#)

Vulnerable people

[COVID-19: guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable](#)

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 this data below. The Council also provides links to other available data which can be accessed [here](#). The graphs below provide more detail.

CONFIRMED CASES OF COVID-19 in Brighton and Hove

Numbers of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Brighton & Hove have once again begun to increase. As of 16th December, the total number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 (recorded since February 2020) in Brighton and Hove stands at 4,742. This has increased by 604 up from 4,138 as of 4th December (the date of our last Healthwatch bulletin). In the 7 days up to 12th December, there were 295 confirmed cases.

Published data provides 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.

7-day average

This data is published by the [Public Health England](#) and population data by the Office for National Statistics. The rates are calculated by the Brighton & Hove City Council Public Health Intelligence team.

In the seven days up to 12th December there were 295 confirmed new COVID-19 cases in Brighton & Hove. This is equivalent to a **weekly rate** of new cases of 101.4 per 100,000 residents ($295/290,885 \times 100,000 = 101.4$). This rate has increased from 60.2 as of 4th December (and is higher than 16.5 as of 2nd October). At 101.4, this rate is lower than the national average for England of 206.6 and the South East average of 245.4.

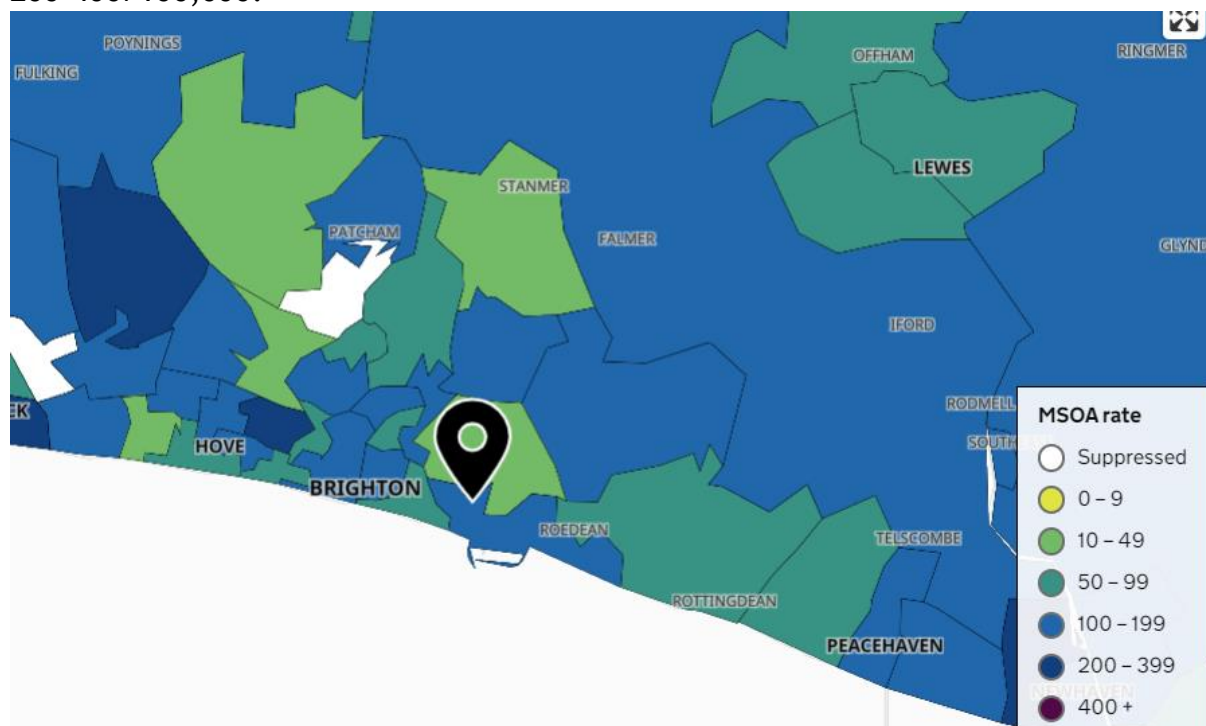
Average rate since February 2020

This data is published on the [government website](#). As of 16th December, the **total rate** of confirmed cases in Brighton and Hove since February is equivalent to 1,630 cases per 100,000 residents ($4,742/290,885 \times 100,000 = 1,630$). This number has increased from 1,423 as of 4th December (and 377.5 as of 2nd October). This rate is lower than the national average for England of 2,957.2 and the South East average of 2,002.

In the last few weeks, we have seen an increase in numbers of recorded deaths, which now stands at 193.

Where are the highest rates of infection in the city?

This government [map](#) displays weekly data, including seven-day case rates and direction of change ending on 17th December 2020. This shows that the highest rates of infection are in Hangleton, Goldsmid, and Southwick which have rates of 200-400/100,000.



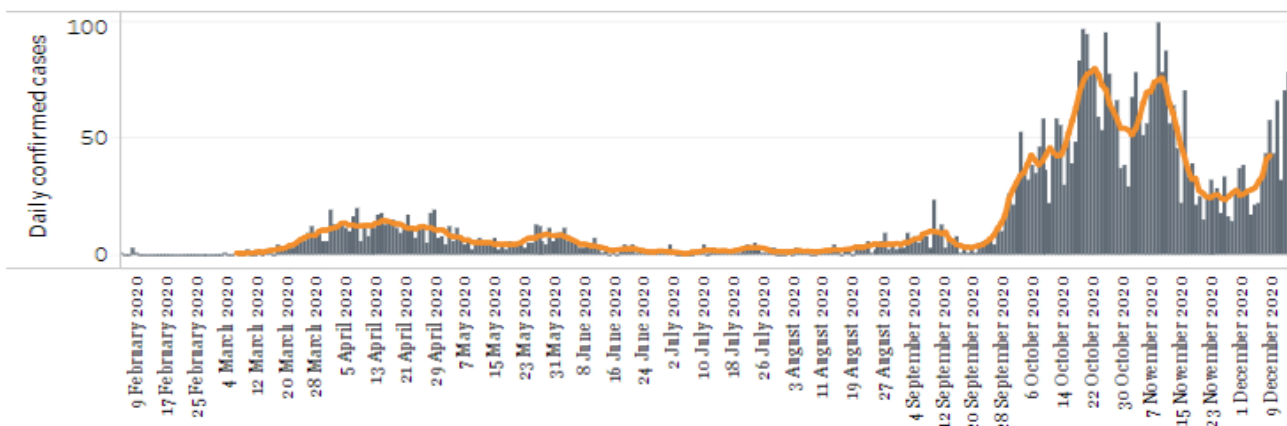
Government data showing confirmed COVID-19 cases in Brighton and Hove:

Date	No of confirmed cases	Total number of confirmed cases
16.12.20	1	4,742
15.12.20	44	4,741
14.12.20	78	4,697
13.12.20	70	4,619
12.12.20	32	4,549
11.12.20	66	4,517
10.12.20	43	4,451
9.12.20	57	4,408
8.12.20	43	4,351
7.12.20	32	4,308
6.12.20	22	4,276
5.12.20	21	4,254
4.12.20	17	4,233

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 16 December 2020: 4,742	Confirmed cases (rate per 100,000 population) up to 16 December 2020: 1,630
	Confirmed cases in the 7 days up to 12 December 2020: 295	Confirmed cases (rate per 100,000 population) in 7 days up to 12 December 2020: 101.4

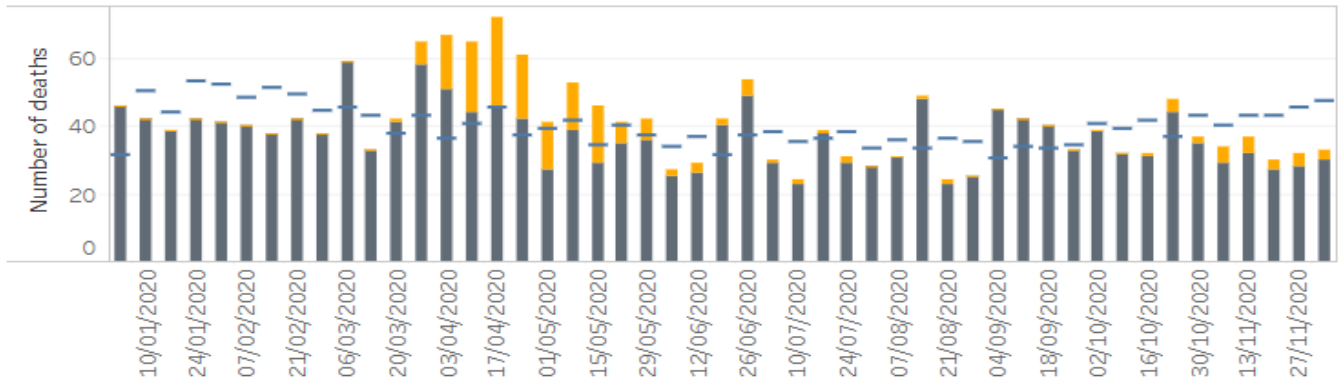
Most recent days subject to reporting delay. Last available data: 16 December 2020

Deaths related to COVID-19 in the city

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](#))

As of 4th December, the total number of deaths of Brighton & Hove residents where COVID-19 was recorded on the death certificate stands at 193 (recorded since February 2020). These are deaths which occurred up to 4th December and registered up to 12th December 2020. In the last 7 days up to 4th December, there were 3 new deaths recorded.

Deaths in Brighton & Hove in 2020



Legend
■ Covid deaths in week (2020)
■ Non-Covid deaths in week (2020)
— 5-Year Average (2015-19)

Number of deaths recorded in 2020, up to 04 December 2020, with mention of COVID-19 on the death certificate:
 193

Number of deaths recorded in the week up to 04 December 2020, with mention of COVID-19 on the death certificate:
 3

Deaths shown occurred up to 04 December 2020 and were registered up to 12 December 2020.

Deaths recorded by NHS Trusts

The total number of deaths recorded by Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust since the beginning of the outbreak is 210. Numbers across all NHS Trusts have increased in since our last bulletin. This data is published by [NHS England](#) and is available here: [COVID 19 total announced deaths 17 December 2020](#)

For interest (comparisons are not appropriate) other Sussex Trusts have recorded the following numbers of deaths:

- Brighton and Sussex University NHS Trust 210 (previously 150)
- East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust 143 (101)
- Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust 307 (260)
- Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust 23 (18)
- Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust 152 (127)

(2) Data on COVID in care homes

The Office for National Statistics began publishing data on deaths in care homes in late July.

For Brighton and Hove the number of deaths in care homes linked to COVID-19, as of 11th December, stood at 69. This is against a total of 193 COVID-related deaths in the city which had occurred up to 4th December and registered up to 12th December 2020 [This data is available on the Brighton and Hove website.](#)

NATIONAL COVID NEWS

(1) New variant of the COVID-19 virus detected

[Sharp rise in coronavirus numbers and a new variant](#)

[Statement from Chief Medical Officer, Professor Chris Whitty about new strain of Covid-19](#)

[Prime Minister's statement on coronavirus \(COVID-19\): 19 December 2020](#)

On Tuesday 15th December, the [Health and Social Care Secretary spoke](#) to the House of Commons about the coronavirus situation. He said that the virus remains just as dangerous as it has always been and indicated that the average daily hospital admissions are up 13%. The latest figures show that the average daily cases have risen by 14% in the last week. This is also a trend being seen in other parts of Europe.

A [new variant of coronavirus](#) which may be associated with the faster spread of the virus in the South East of England has also been detected. Initial analysis suggests that this variant is growing faster than the existing variants, with over 1,000 cases predominantly in the South of England. Similar variants have been identified in other countries over the last few months. **At present there is currently nothing to suggest that this variant is more likely to cause serious disease and the latest clinical advice is that it is highly unlikely that this mutation will fail to respond to a vaccine. But it shows we have got to be vigilant and follow the rules.**

(2) Find out about local restrictions

On 2nd December, an updated local restriction tier system came into force across England. There are three tiers. The higher the tier level, the higher the restrictions in place will be. **Brighton and Hove are in [Tier 2: High alert](#)**

What tier apply to my area?

To find out what tier your area is in [visit here](#). Brighton and Hove is in Tier 2. [Local restriction tiers: what you need to know](#)

What restrictions apply to each tier?

To find out what you can and cannot do in each tier [visit here](#). For Tier 2 restrictions please refer to the above poster.

How often will the tiers be reviewed?

The tiers will be regularly reviewed. Results from the first review were announced on 17th December 2020 where it was confirmed that Brighton and Hove would remain in Tier 2 for the time being.

[Full list of local restriction tiers by area](#)

Guidance to Tiers

[Tier 1: Medium alert](#)

[Tier 2: High alert](#)

[Tier 3: Very High alert](#)

[Tier 4: Stay at Home](#)

(3) News on COVID-19 vaccines

We have created a dedicated webpage on the Healthwatch Brighton and Hove website. This will be updated regularly as more information about the roll-out of vaccines is released. The website explains how the vaccine is currently being rolled-out, and what you need to do.

A lot of questions remain unanswered, and we are working with local NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups to ensure you get the information you need. You can now access some answers to Frequently Asked Questions about the vaccine by clicking [here](#).

Please visit the Healthwatch website [here](#) for more information about the vaccine.

You can also read the latest news about the vaccine programme in the separate attachment that we have provided with this bulletin.

You may also be interested in this article by Chief Executive Dr [June Raine: How we backed a COVID-19 vaccine before rest of the West](#)

(4) Wider impacts of COVID-19

In this section we have provided several articles or publications which describe the effects that COVID-19 has had on society. These primarily relate to health and social care, but some go wider.

[Estimating the prevalence of long-COVID symptoms and COVID-19 complications](#)

This data shows the estimates of the prevalence and duration of longer-term COVID symptoms, and rates of adverse events for hospitalised COVID-19 patients.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Infection Survey: characteristics of people testing positive for COVID-19 in England, December 2020](#) This shows data about the characteristics of people testing positive for COVID-19. This survey is being delivered in partnership with the University of Oxford, the University of Manchester, and Public Health England.

[Coronavirus and the impacts on different ethnic groups in the UK](#) This provides estimates from the UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS) to understand the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people from different ethnic groups in the UK.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) weekly insights: latest health indicators in England, 4 December 2020](#) This article brings together data about the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in England. This weekly summary gives a general overview of the current situation and explores variations for different age groups and regions.

[Coronavirus and the latest indicators for the UK economy and society: 17 December 2020](#) This provides data on the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on the UK economy and society.

[Wider impacts of COVID-19 on health monitoring tool](#)

This national monitoring tool brings together metrics to assess the wider impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19) on health.

NATIONAL COVID DATA

(1) COVID-19 national data

The impact of the second national lockdown

Findings from Imperial College London and Ipsos MORI show that infections fell by over 30% during the second lockdown and levelled off, with 91 per 10,000 people infected in the most recent data. [November 2020 findings from COVID-19 study published.](#)

In Brighton and Hove, the number of confirmed cases dropped from rates of around 180 per 100,000 people to around 60 immediately after the lockdown. However, since the second lockdown ended numbers of confirmed cases have once again begun to increase and the rate of confirmed cases is once again over 100.

National COVID-19 surveillance reports

The government publishes a series of [weekly summary](#) reports which display the following data:

- National and regional rates of infection
- Recorded death rates within 28, and 60 days
- Deaths by ethnicity
- Testing levels and results
- Hospital admissions

Death rates

There are 2 definitions of a death in a person with COVID-19 in England, one broader measure and one measure reflecting current trends:

- 1) A death in a person with a laboratory-confirmed positive COVID-19 test and died within (equal to or less than) 28 days of the first positive specimen date.
- 2) A death in a person with a laboratory-confirmed positive COVID-19 and either: died within 60 days of the first specimen date or died more than 60

days after the first specimen date, only if COVID-19 is mentioned on the death certificate

Coronavirus deaths and cases give a sense of the spread of the epidemic. Deaths are counted where a lab-confirmed positive coronavirus test result is reported in any setting. This means that not all deaths reported here are caused by coronavirus.

In England, as of 17th December, the **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 66,052. The weekly rate per 100,000 people is 102.5.

Data on death rates are published on the [daily dashboard](#). Additional data is available here: [Coronavirus cases in the UK: daily updated statistics](#)

(a) Infection levels

The data reveals that as of 3rd December, the **total number of lab-confirmed UK cases of COVID-19 stood at 1,948,600** (this has increased from 1,674,134 as of 4th December the date of the last Healthwatch bulletin). This is the total number of people who have had a positive test result. This number has been increasing since July. The weekly rate per 100,000 people is 206.6

For up-to-date numbers of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases and risk in the UK, click [here](#). You can also view the [coronavirus dashboard](#) which is updated daily.

(b) R-number and growth rates

[Last updated on Friday 18th December 2020](#)

The latest R estimate for the UK is between 1.1 - 1.2 and the growth rate for the whole of the UK is between +1% to +4%.

An R number between 1.1 and 1.2 means that, on average, every 10 people infected will infect between 11 and 12 other people.

A growth rate between +1% and +4% means that the number of new infections is growing by between 1% and 4% every day.

The UK estimates of R and growth rate are averages over very different epidemiological situations and should be regarded as a guide to the general trend rather than a description of the epidemic state.

For the South East, the latest R number range is 1.1 -1.3 whilst the latest growth rate range for the South East is +3% to +5%. Data is not available at Local Authority level.

What do these numbers mean?

The reproduction number (R) is the average number of people one person who is infected with COVID-19 may go onto infect. A high R number implies the transmission rate from person to person is increasing, a low number means it is declining. The R number range for the UK implies the transmission rate is increasing (for up-to-date numbers of coronavirus (COVID-19 cases and risk in the UK, click [here](#)). Brighton and Hove Council has previously confirmed that it is not possible to calculate meaningful R values at a very local level.

The growth rate reflects how quickly the number of infections is changing day-by-day. If the growth rate is greater than zero (+ positive), then the disease will grow, and if the growth rate is less than zero then the disease will shrink. The size of the growth rate indicates the speed of change. A growth rate of +5% will grow faster than one with a growth rate of +1%. Likewise, a disease with a growth rate of -4% will be shrinking faster than a disease with growth rate of -1%. The current growth rate for the UK implies that infection rates are increasing.

(c) Test and trace

You can access data here from the [NHS Test and Trace \(England\) statistics: 3 December to 9 December](#)

(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.

[Prime Minister's statement on coronavirus \(COVID-19\): 16 December 2020](#)

[Review of local restriction tiers: 17 December 2020](#)

[Prime Minister announces Tier 4: 'Stay At Home' Alert Level in response to new COVID variant \(19 December 2020\)](#)

[Making a Christmas bubble with friends and family](#)

[Guidance for the Christmas period](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safer travel guidance for passengers](#)

[Travel advice: coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

[Foreign travel insurance](#)

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](#)

[Answers to Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Maternity and pregnancy advice and information](#)

[Services open over Christmas and New Year, and tips for staying well during winter](#)

[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](#)
- [Signhealth has made their InterpreterNow 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 easy read
- [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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