

Weekly note on COVID in Bolton – 24th March 2021

Local COVID Alert Level:

National lockdown: Stay at Home, from 5th January

This note brings together a summary of the information from a range of indicators of cases of COVID-19 amongst residents of Bolton. The information is based on data from official sources. It presents the picture of our understanding according to the latest available data on the date of the note's release. No single indicator gives the complete picture; counts and rates will vary from day to day and are interpreted alongside other indicators and contextual information including testing rates, positivity, our understanding of what's driving transmission locally and within neighbouring areas. The period to which the indicators apply may vary and are stated within the text.

Data on COVID-19 in Bolton is available at <https://www.boltonjsna.org.uk/coronavirus>

Positive cases from swab testing (Pillar 1 and Pillar 2)

- The number of positive cases amongst Bolton residents remains high and above average for the region; there have been on average 44 cases per day in the week to 19th March. Most positive cases are via Pillar 2 (community swab testing), with a smaller number of cases diagnosed via Pillar 1 (NHS and PHE testing for those with a clinical need, and health and care workers)
- New COVID-19 cases remain widespread across the borough
- The largest proportion of cases are White British (49%), followed by cases among residents from Asian backgrounds (23%)
- The largest number of cases continue to be among those from the most disadvantaged parts of the borough, although in the previous fortnight residents from more affluent areas have been overrepresented, this has since reduced.
- The variant that was first detected in Kent/SW just before Christmas (B.1.1.7) is now the dominant strain circulating within Bolton as it is across the country

7-day rate of cases per 100,000 population

The current rate is estimated to be 107.1 for the 7 days ending 19th March 2021 remaining high and has significantly increased since last week (97.4). This rate is an estimate and may change. Case rates have shown a downward trend since the second week of January and have generally continued to reduce; however, this week has seen a slight increase from the previous 7 days. Rates are highest amongst 0-15 year olds, and rates amongst those aged 35-54 and 60+ are now increasing in Bolton. This is likely at least in part to be a result of improved detection as we have seen increases in testing rates. Case rates amongst those aged 60+ have increased since last week, and most of these cases are in the 60-64 age range who may not have yet had the vaccine or had time for immunity to have developed.

Test numbers and Positivity

Testing rates have been trending upwards throughout January and into February, and this has continued towards the end of March. The proportion of tests reported as positive, known as 'positivity', remains steady at 4.3% for the 7 days ending 19th March.

Situations and outbreaks

Situations investigated in the last week include workplaces, care homes, and educational settings.

Regional R

The R value for the North West is 0.7-0.9 as of Friday 19th March. When there is a significant amount of variability across a region, for example due to a local outbreak, then a single average value does not accurately reflect the way infections are changing throughout the region.

NHS activity

We are continuing to see steady numbers of people who required hospital admission and the number of patients requiring critical care for serious illness has similarly remained relatively steady

Definitions:

Pillar 1: swab testing in Public Health England (PHE) labs and NHS hospitals for those with a clinical need, and health and care worker

Pillar 2: swab testing for the wider population, as set out in government guidance and delivered with Deloitte

in the last 7 days. The number of daily hospital deaths has been slowly reducing and has continued on this path over the last week.

Deaths with COVID-19 and deaths from all causes

Sadly, there have been a total of 764 deaths with COVID-19 amongst Bolton residents (occurred up to 12th March 2021, registered up to 19th March 2021).

Ward level data

In the last week cases have been reported in all wards in the borough. From 8th March – 14th March 2021, Crompton ward, Rumworth ward and Great Lever ward saw the highest number of cases; most wards, except Crompton and Westhoughton South have seen decreases in case rates from the previous week.

Figure 1.

Daily confirmed cases of COVID-19 for Bolton, with Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 cases inclusive

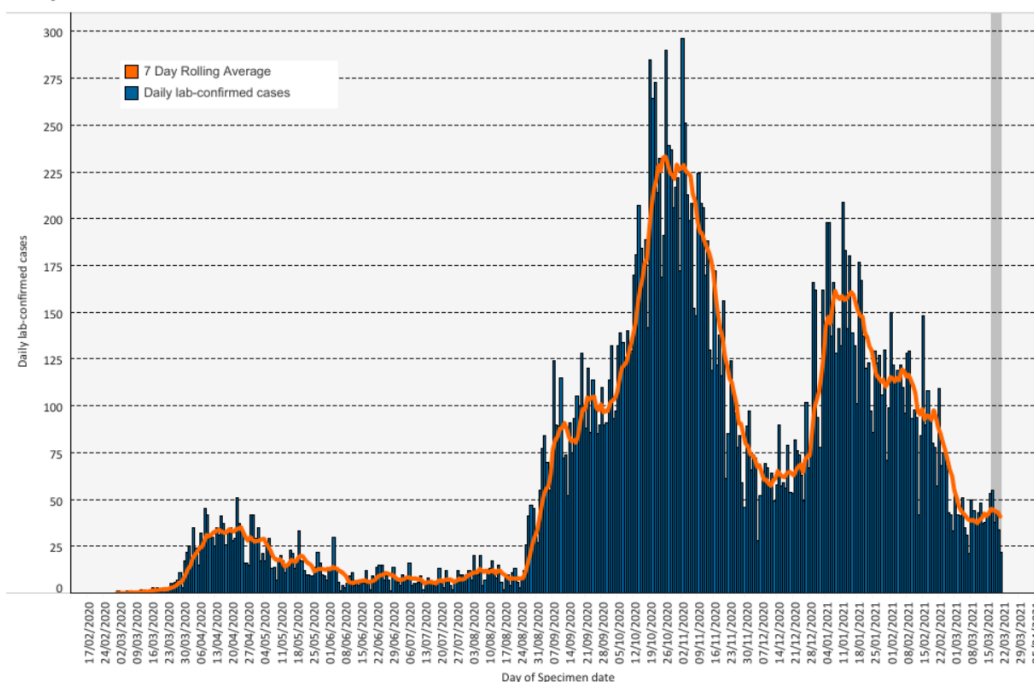
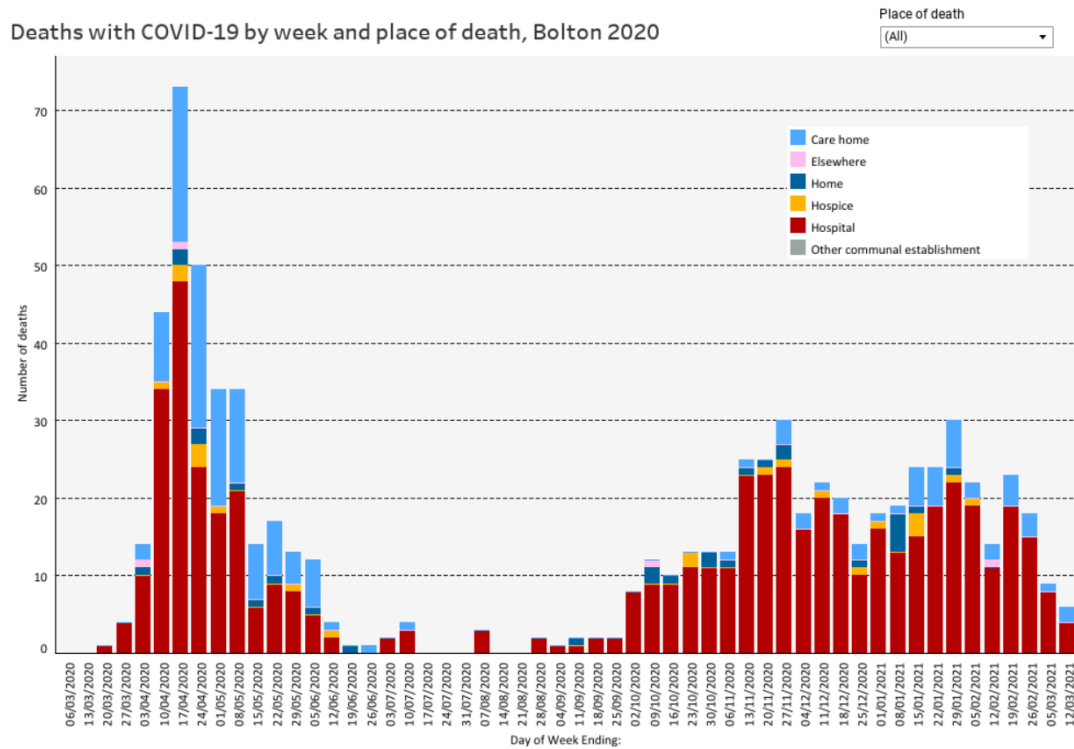


Figure 2.

Definitions:

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Prepared by Chris Kirk, Public Health Analyst, with support from Bolton COVID-19 Data Cell. Queries should be sent to: PublicHealthDirectorate@bolton.gov.uk

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