

Weekly note on COVID in Bolton – 31st March 2021

<i>Local COVID Alert Level:</i>	National restrictions: From 29 March, the 'stay at home' rule ended - and up to 6 people or 2 households can meet outside.
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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 23rd 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 (29%)
- The largest number of cases continue to be among those from the most disadvantaged parts of the borough.
- The variant that was first detected in Kent/SW just before Christmas 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 107.5 for the 7 days ending 26th March 2021. Rates remain high and largely similar to last week (107.1). This rate is an estimate and may change. Case rates have shown a downward trend since the second week of January but showed increases mid March, where they have remained. Rates are highest amongst 0-15 year olds, and rates amongst those aged 60+ are now broadly stable 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+ mostly comprise 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 4.4% for the 7 days ending 26th March.

Situations and outbreaks

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

Regional R

The R value for the North West is 0.7-1.0 as of Friday 26th 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 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.

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

Deaths with COVID-19 and deaths from all causes

Sadly, there have been a total of 765 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 20th March – 26th March 2021, Westhoughton South ward, Crompton ward, and Farnworth ward saw the highest number of cases; in most wards case numbers were broadly similar to the previous week.

Figure 1.

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

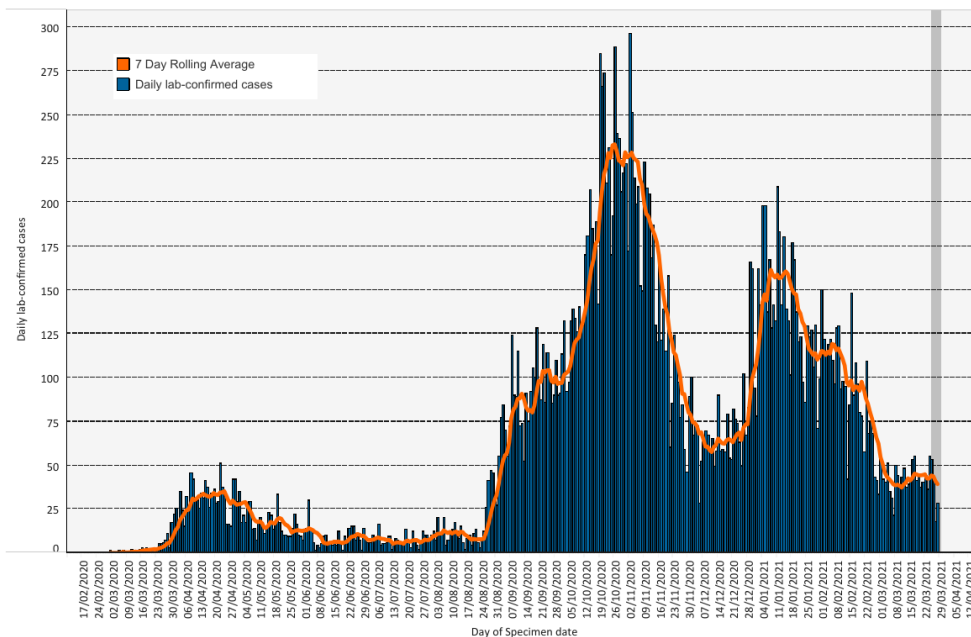
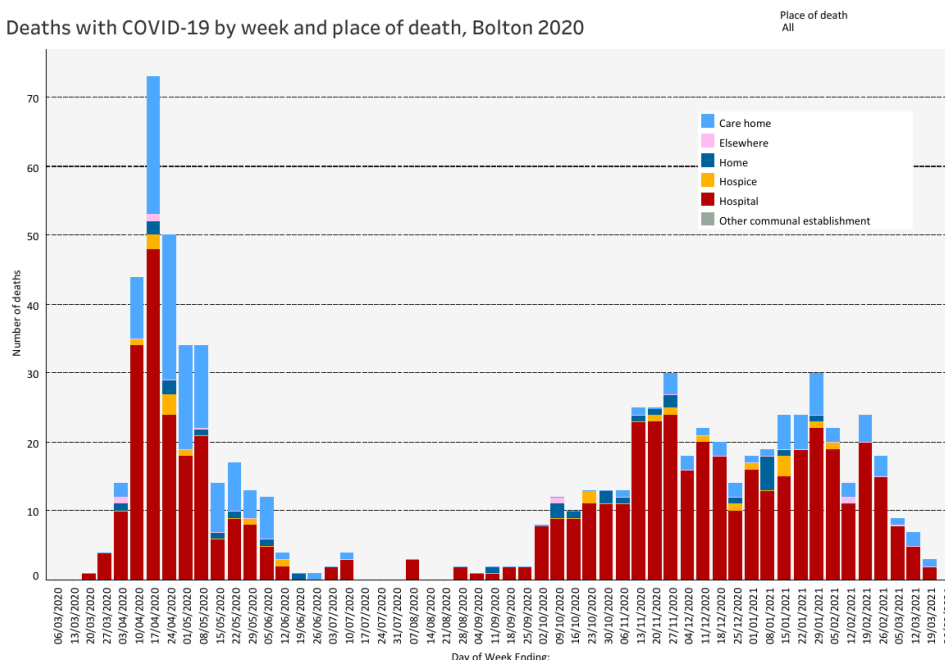


Figure 2.

Deaths with COVID-19 by week and place of death, Bolton 2020



Prepared by Shan Wilkinson, Public Health Intelligence Practitioner, with support from Bolton COVID-19 Data Cell. Queries should be sent to: PublicHealthDirectorate@bolton.gov.uk

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