

Gareth Johnson MP for Dartford

**Reporting back from Dartford
and Westminster - now
reaching over 5,000 people in
the local area**



5th January 2021

Covid-19 update

Following the statement from the PM last night, we are entering into another period of National Lockdown from tomorrow morning. Clearly, this is hugely disappointing. We are all fed-up with these restrictions and want life to return to normal as soon as possible.

Dartford has responded extremely well to this pandemic. I have seen so many instances of kindness shown by local people to neighbours, family and friends, during this awful time.

Darent Valley Hospital has shown itself to be a magnificent asset to the local area and local frontline workers, our police, shop workers, delivery drivers and many others, have risen to the enormous challenges we face.

This time, there is a genuine light at the end of the tunnel in the form of vaccinations that are now rolling out in the local area and across the entire country. This gives us optimism for the future.

I genuinely believe we will emerge from this pandemic more unified than before and determined to enjoy the things we took for granted in the past.

Gareth Johnson MP
(Con) Dartford

BBC SOUTH EAST TODAY

Responding to the PM's statement yesterday on BBC South East Today.

Cases

People tested positive in Dartford

Latest data at **local authority (lower tier)** level provided on 4 January 2021

Daily

169

Last 7 days

1,427

↑ 392 (37.9%)

▶ Rate per 100k resident population: **1169.6**

Seven-day rolling rate by date of specimen as of 30 December 2020

Deaths

Deaths within 28 days of positive test in Dartford

Latest data at **local authority (lower tier)** level provided on 4 January 2021

Daily

0

Last 7 days

6

↓ -4 (-40%)

Healthcare

Patients admitted in Dartford and Gravesham

Latest data at **healthcare trust** level provided on 27 December 2020

Daily

38

Last 7 days

137

↑ 21 (18.1%)

Covid-19 rates in Dartford

Unfortunately, infection rates for Covid-19 have continued to rise in Dartford and we now have the highest rates in Kent and the twelfth highest in England.

In the latest data provided on 4th January 2021, there were 1170 cases per 100,000 people.

It is therefore more important than ever that we stay at home and stick to the rules of the National Lockdown. A link to these can be found below.

[National Lockdown - Stay at Home](#)

Covid-19 rates in England

Local Authority	Alert Level	Dec 2	Dec 9	Dec 16	Dec 23	Dec 30	%	Cases	7-day rolling rate by specimen date - ending Dec 30 - alert level (1 = medium, 2 = high, 3 = very high)
1 Barking and Dagenham	3	300.8	387.0	641.2	1141.3	1420.8	+24.5	3025	11
2 Thurrock	3	252.8	387.2	1066.3	1468.4	1397.3	-4.3	2436	11
3 Redbridge	3	297.2	402.7	901.0	1202.4	1351.8	+12.4	4126	11
4 Broxbourne	3	219.0	390.6	762.8	1148.2	1348.7	+17.7	1312	11
5 Epping Forest	3	218.7	382.7	969.7	1509.6	1322.8	-12.4	1742	12
6 Castle Point	3	181.5	293.2	787.8	1288.0	1284.6	-0.3	1161	-
7 Harlow	3	229.7	265.3	590.3	990.0	1281.8	+29.5	1116	12
8 Brentwood	3	228.5	401.2	886.8	1565.8	1264.6	-19.2	974	11
9 Newham	3	244.4	333.9	690.1	988.0	1254.2	+26.9	4429	11
10 Enfield	3	199.2	339.4	707.6	1035.7	1189.4	+14.8	3970	-
11 Havering	3	322.1	513.2	1043.3	1321.9	1180.5	-10.7	3064	-
12 Dartford	3	255.8	354.3	678.5	1017.7	1169.6	+14.9	1317	12
13 Basildon	3	374.5	658.6	1006.4	1142.6	1166.1	+2.1	2183	11
14 Tower Hamlets	3	208.8	306.4	671.9	1074.4	1137.8	+5.9	3695	11
15 Bexley	3	252.5	312.1	738.7	1165.6	1137.0	-2.5	2823	12
16 Gravesham	3	364.7	479.7	699.5	1008.1	1112.8	+10.4	1190	-
17 Rushmoor	3	69.8	143.8	340.4	650.1	1095.1	+68.5	1036	16
18 Southend-on-Sea	3	181.8	316.2	699.0	1169.1	1084.5	-7.2	1986	11
19 Waltham Forest	3	258.9	388.8	698.6	1012.3	1063.2	+5.0	2945	11
20 Medway	3	606.0	617.5	994.8	1055.8	1045.0	-1.0	2911	14
21 Sutton	3	157.0	227.8	490.4	782.7	1043.9	+33.4	2154	15
22 Bromley	3	173.9	263.6	539.8	932.5	1041.4	+11.7	3461	13
23 Rochford	3	159.1	267.8	676.8	1087.4	1035.8	-4.7	905	16
24 Braintree	3	97.6	279.2	538.0	878.7	1028.8	+17.1	1570	12
25 Hounslow	3	155.4	199.6	411.0	717.4	1018.0	+41.9	2764	18
26 Hertsmere	3	147.7	341.1	472.7	921.7	1017.9	+10.4	1068	16
27 South Bucks	3	107.1	169.9	376.9	678.2	1002.2	+47.6	702	17
28 Slough	3	250.8	296.2	514.2	617.2	1001.1	+62.2	1497	17
29 Chelmsford	3	107.1	279.2	537.0	891.3	1000.1	+12.2	1784	12
30 Merton	3	189.3	286.3	493.8	843.9	997.3	+18.2	2060	12
31 Haringey	3	175.0	246.0	543.5	880.3	986.8	+12.1	2651	16
32 Watford	3	184.3	276.5	430.7	789.0	980.6	+24.3	947	11
33 Barnet	3	166.0	197.5	426.9	779.8	970.0	+24.4	3840	13
34 Croydon	3	151.8	213.6	507.1	845.9	964.5	+14.0	3730	12
35 Greenwich	3	159.8	252.1	510.9	797.4	962.3	+20.7	2771	13
36 Hillingdon	3	188.5	206.9	445.1	752.1	953.2	+26.7	2925	12
37 Harrow	3	179.2	254.8	508.4	743.7	934.1	+25.6	2346	-
38 Three Rivers	3	130.7	181.8	411.5	800.4	916.2	+14.5	855	19
39 Maldon	3	97.0	183.3	417.4	763.9	907.2	+18.8	589	-
40 Lewisham	3	114.4	186.0	476.4	762.5	894.6	+17.3	2736	-

Symptom-free Covid testing in Kent

Rapid-result coronavirus (COVID-19) testing for people who don't have symptoms is being rolled out at 14 locations in Kent this week.

The testing will find people who don't currently have symptoms, who may be unknowingly spreading the virus in the community and the sites are part of a rolling programme to help reduce the rates of transmission in Kent.

Our nearest testing centres for asymptomatic people are at:

- **Fairfield Leisure Centre, Lowfield Street, Dartford DA1 1JB**
- **Northfleet Youth Club, Hall Road, Gravesend DA11 8AJ**
- **Swanley Youth Club, St Mary's Road BR8 7BU**

All symptom-free testing sites will be open daily from 9am to 7pm, starting on Thursday 7th January.

Key workers and their families have already been receiving invites to book as a priority to support the NHS and other frontline services.

From now, all members of the public who live or work in Dartford are also able to book a test. This can be booked by clicking on the blue button below.

There will be capacity for over 13,000 tests across Kent per day. Another 10 sites are being planned for rollout in the coming weeks.

The symptom-free testing sites are being set up using funding from central government to support local councils to help reduce rates of COVID-19 and have also been supported by the military.

Residents attending this testing will undergo a lateral flow swab test and will receive their result within a couple of hours of attending the test by text or email. If they are positive, they will be told to self-isolate, follow the national guidance and they will be instructed to have a PCR test to confirm their positive result. If they are negative, they must still continue to observe social distancing guidelines, wear a mask in public and regularly wash hands.

These sites are in addition to the regional and local testing sites for people who have symptoms. If you have symptoms you should NOT attend one of our symptom-free testing sites but instead book a PCR test on the Gov.uk website.

[Symptom-free Covid Test](#)

The good news on vaccines

Yesterday, I met with Nadhim Zahawi, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment, for an update on the rollout of the two approved vaccines.

Already, over one million vaccine doses have been administered in the UK. We have 530,000 doses of the Oxford vaccine being deployed this week and we have secured access to 100 million doses in total. An additional 500,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine will also be deployed this week.

More than 730 vaccination sites have already been established across the UK and hundreds more are opening this week to take the total to over 1,000. Around 78,000 volunteers have been recruited to give vaccinations and the process of doing so is being simplified to remove unnecessary bureaucracy.

All the Chief Medical Officers in the UK have endorsed the approach that two doses, 12 weeks apart, is correct. This maximises the number of people that we can give some immunity to in the shortest possible time.

As mentioned by the Prime Minister, the aim is to have offered the first vaccine dose to everyone in the four top priority groups identified by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation, by the middle of February. That means vaccinating all residents in a care home for older adults and their carers, everyone over the age of

70, all frontline health and social care workers, and everyone who is clinically extremely vulnerable.

Roll out of vaccinations

There are two approved Covid-19 vaccines in the UK. They both require two doses to provide longer lasting protection and both have been shown to be effective in clinical trials and have a good safety record.

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation has recommended the first vaccines go to those at highest risk of catching the disease and of suffering serious complications or dying from Covid-19. This includes older adults in care homes and frontline health and social care workers.

The vaccine will also be offered in age order to:

- those aged over 80 years
- those aged over 75 years
- those aged over 70 years
- adults on the NHS shielded patient list
- those aged over 65 years
- adults under 65 years with long term conditions

Those aged 50-64 will be offered it later.

The NHS will let you know when it's your turn to have the vaccine. It's important not to contact the NHS for a vaccination before then.

Further information can be found at the NHS link below, including when you should have your second dose, if you have already received your first dose.

[NHS information on Covid-19 vaccine](#)



Darent Valley Hospital

As you can imagine, Darent Valley Hospital is under immense and growing pressure at the moment, with around half of its beds filled with inpatients who have Covid-19. The Hospital has asked me to share the following information with you in relation to attending the Emergency Department.

Due to high numbers of Covid-19 patients, our Emergency Department (ED) is extremely busy. If you do attend and are not triaged as an emergency, you need to be prepared for a very long wait, whilst our staff care for our emergency and extremely unwell patients. Please also be aware that you will need to attend on your own, as due to the current pandemic those attending can only be accompanied if they require a carer or are seen as vulnerable.

If your illness or injury does not require immediate attention, please think about using the full range of NHS services that are available to support you. If you are feeling unwell and are unsure where to go, advice is always on-hand by calling NHS111 first.

You can also use:

- Your GP or the GP Out of Hours Service
- Call NHS111 or visit the NHS111 website: <https://111.nhs.uk/>
- Your local Pharmacist

Minor Injuries Units (MIU) - Gravesham Community Hospital is open from 8am until 8pm, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Trained nurses at minor injury units (MIUs) can assess and treat cuts, sprains, minor burns, minor dislocations of the fingers and toes, minor eye injuries and remove foreign bodies from, for example, ears and noses.

Urgent Care Centres - Queen Mary's Hospital, Frogal Avenue, Sidcup, Kent DA14 6LT. Tel: 0208 308 5611. This is open 24 hours a day, every day of the year or Erith Urgent Care Centre, Erith & District Hospital, Hind Crescent. Open Monday to Sunday 8.00am to 10.00pm (last patient 8pm) - treat conditions such as minor cuts, bites, stings, burns, injuries, sprains, infections, minor eye injuries, fractures, minor chest, neck and back injuries and pain.

[#HelpUsHelpYou](#) [#StayWellThisWinter](#) [#NHS111First](#)

Although local NHS services are under strain from Covid-19, you should still seek medical help for other concerning conditions.

NHS

A message  from the
NHS in Kent and Medway

Schools

Primary schools, secondary schools and colleges across England must move to remote provision from today, except for vulnerable children and the children of key workers. Because of this, the summer exams will not take place and the Education Secretary will work with Ofqual to put in place alternative arrangements.

There will be extra support to ensure that pupils entitled to free school meals will continue to receive them while schools are closed, and more devices will be distributed to support remote education.

It is planned that schools can be reopened after February half term.



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