

SUFFOLK CORONAWATCH BULLETIN

Dear all,

Welcome to the Coronawatch Bulletin. This bulletin provides an update on the current Covid-19 situation in Suffolk along with updates on the work being carried out as part of Suffolk's Local Outbreak Control Plan.

With best wishes,

Cllr Matthew Hicks, Leader of Suffolk County Council
Chair of the Suffolk Local Outbreak Engagement Board
Nicola Beach
Chief Executive, Suffolk County Council
Stuart Keeble, Director for Public Health in Suffolk
Chair of the Suffolk Health Protection Board

CORONAVIRUS IN SUFFOLK

Update

Suffolk Cases

As of May 26 there have been **30,587** total lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Suffolk, at a rate of **4017.5** cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 people. This remains the lowest overall COVID-19 case rate in the East of England.

District case rate as of May 26

Name	Daily Cases reported	Weekly Cases reported	Weekly case rate*	Trend	Total Cases	Total Case Rate	National Rate Rank (of 358)
▲							
Babergh	1	6	7.6	↑	3,879	4214.7	295
East Suffolk	3	9	2.8	↓	8,952	3588.5	318
Ipswich	1	13	8.0	↓	7,738	5651.8	206
Mid Suffolk	0	18	18.3	↓	3,367	3240.8	329
West Suffolk	0	22	17.3	↓	6,651	3714.7	313
Suffolk	3	61	9.9	↓	30,587	4017.5	
East of England	164	1,168	17.9	↑	392,628	6296.1	
England	2,540	15,179	23.1	↑	3,902,160	6932.6	

From 2 July, the number of lab-confirmed positive cases now includes those identified by testing in all settings (pillars 1 and 2). Pillar 2 refers to tests in commercial labs working in partnership with the NHS. Previously, only Pillar 1 confirmed cases were included (tests completed in NHS labs).

Overview

In the week up to May 26 there have been **61** new cases of COVID-19 in Suffolk.

The underlying rate of new weekly cases in Suffolk is now at **9.9** cases per 100,000 people. This rate is below the rates for the East of England region (**17.9 / 100,000**) and below England as a whole (**23.1 / 100,000**).

In total, up to **May 14, 2021**, which is the latest data from ONS, there have been **1,576** deaths in Suffolk where COVID-19 was recorded on the death certificate. There have been **nine** COVID-19 related deaths in the seven days up to May 14.

The estimated 'R' value for the East of England remains unchanged from the previous week at between **0.8 and 1.1**. The estimated 'R' value for England as a whole is as **0.9–1.1**.

Any R value greater than 1 means the epidemic may no longer be decreasing.

Weekly Cases and Rates

COVID-19 cases are identified by taking specimens from people which are then tested, either using a PCR test which is processed in a lab, or by using a rapid lateral flow device (LFD).

Positive rapid lateral flow test results can be confirmed with PCR tests taken within 72 hours. If the PCR test results are negative, these are no longer reported as cases.

This policy was reintroduced in England on March 29, 2021. On April 9, 2021, a total of **116** cases with specimen dates after November 1, 2020, were removed from Suffolk's cumulative total retrospectively due to meeting this criteria.

In the week up to May 26, 2021 there were **61** new lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Suffolk.

It is possible to calculate a case rate by dividing the number of cases by the number of people in a given population – this makes it possible to compare cases across different areas.

The most recent underlying weekly case rate in Suffolk was **9.9 cases per 100,000** people.

In the last week of reported data, up to May 26 there have been **6** cases in Babergh, **9** cases in East Suffolk, **13** cases in Ipswich, **18** cases in Mid Suffolk and **22** cases in West Suffolk.

Total Cases and Rates

As of May 26, 2021 there have been **30,587** total lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Suffolk. In total there have been **4017.5** cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 people.

Regional 'R' Number and growth rate

What is the R number? R represents the average number of onward infections that will be generated by a single infectious individual.

R tells us if the epidemic is getting bigger (>1) or smaller (<1) but not how large the epidemic is overall, and therefore should not be used as the sole indicator of the threat posed by an epidemic at any single point in time. R cannot be measured directly and there is always uncertainty about its exact value.

The current estimated regional 'R' numbers are below. (Source: University of Cambridge MRC Biostatistics Unit).

Regional R Value as at		24 May 2021
Region	R value	Growth rate % per day
East of England	0.8 to 1.1	-3 to 2
London	0.9 to 1.1	-2 to 2
Midlands	0.8 to 1.0	-3 to 0
North East and Yorkshire	0.8 to 1.0	-3 to 0
North West	0.9 to 1.2	-1 to 3
South East	0.8 to 1.0	-4 to 0
South West	0.8 to 1.1	-4 to 1
England	0.9 to 1.1	-2 to 1

Death Registrations to May 14, 2021

In the most recent currently available data to May 14 there have been **1,576** deaths in Suffolk which mention COVID-19 on the death certificate. There have been **nine** COVID-19 deaths in the most recent week of data. In the last week, deaths due to causes other than COVID-19 have occurred at a lower level compared to the five-year average for Suffolk.

Contact Tracing

Suffolk's Public Health Team has responsibility for all contact tracing in Suffolk. Currently there are ongoing problems with the national reporting of contact tracing data, which are limiting provision of full comparative reporting. However local Suffolk data says that in the last 7 days the Suffolk Contact and Trace team have dealt with **63** cases with a success rate of **98%**. A total of **81%** of these cases were reached within the first or second call attempts.

On average, contact tracing is completed within nine hours of Suffolk being notified of a case through the Contact Tracing System.

Coronavirus cases in care homes

An outbreak is classed as a care home with two or more cases. These figures are listed on area basis and will not include the details of any specific care homes. These figures include care homes, extra care housing and supported housing. As a notifiable disease, care homes are required to report any potential or confirmed cases of Coronavirus to Public Health England (PHE) in order that this can be captured as part of the national reporting processes and also for PHE to provide advice and guidance on infection control. Care providers are under no obligation to report suspected or confirmed cases to the county council.

Care providers with outbreaks						
	22/04/2021	29/04/2021	06/05/2021	13/05/2021	20/05/2021	27/05/2021
Babergh	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ipswich & East Suffolk	14	7	7	7	7	4
Mid Suffolk	0	0	0	0	0	0
West Suffolk	0	0	0	4	0	0
Norfolk & Waveney	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total	14	7	7	12	7	4

Number of deaths involving Covid-19 occurring in care homes over the last three weeks

	07.05.21	Change from last week	14.05.21	Change from last week	21.05.21	Change from last week
Suffolk	442	+3	445	+3	445	0
Norfolk	634	+5	635	+1	635	0
Cambs+ Peterborough	359	0	359	0	359	0
Essex	852	+10	853	+1	854	+1
Hertfordshire	696	+3	697	+1	697	0

A blue banner with a stylized sun icon on the left and the text "SUFFOLK CORONAVIRUS NEWS" in white capital letters.

SUFFOLK CORONAVIRUS NEWS

Cases of 'Indian' variant of concern in Suffolk reach 22



A mobile testing unit at the former Mid Suffolk District Council offices in Needham Market

The number of COVID-19 cases in Suffolk of the variant of concern (B.1.617.2), which first originated in India, now stands at 22. This rise of cases is in line with the rest of the country.

A total of 14 of the overall 22 cases have been found in residents in Mid Suffolk.

Most of the Mid Suffolk cases are linked to a known outbreak in the Needham Market area where a programme of PCR testing of residents is on-going.

Of the remaining eight cases in the county, two are in residents of Ipswich and five are in West Suffolk.

The location of one case remains under investigation but it is understood that it may have been designated as a Suffolk case in error.

Stuart Keeble, Director of Public Health for Suffolk, said enhanced contact tracing was undertaken routinely with all known cases with a variant of concern to understand the source of any infection.

Targeted testing of close contacts is also being undertaken to identify further cases and contacts.

Links between cases would also be investigated to inform local outbreak control measures such as the ongoing enhanced testing in Needham Market, which concludes on Saturday May 29.

To read more go to the [Suffolk County Council website](#).

Video promotes businesses getting back to normal



The Suffolk Growth Partnership has unveiled a new video to support the Reopening High Streets Safely programme.

The 30 second film is [on YouTube](#) and tells businesses they can find out more about how to get ready for re-opening after June 21 through two free webinars taking place in June.

They will hear from health & safety experts and Suffolk environmental health officers on how firms can be ready to re-open, stay open safely, protect employees and customers, plus hear tips from HR experts to support a safe return and prevent the spread of Covid-19.

The webinars take place on June 10 and June 22 and places can be booked via the [Suffolk Growth website events page](#).

The Suffolk Growth Partnership brings together public sector organisations to align and promote economic growth in the county. To learn more go to [the Suffolk Growth website](#).

Vaccines rollout update

Each week the Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care System (ICS) send out an update on the vaccine roll out in Suffolk. This update can be found [here](#).

The ICS has retained joint first position across the country for the number of second dose vaccinations administered.

Figures from NHS England showed 61.3% of our local population (329,090 people) in cohorts 1 – 10 aged 40+ have received both doses of the vaccine.

This data covered up to May 20 and also showed the ICS system placed in the top ten nationally for the number of first doses administered, at 71.8% (578,377 people) of the total population.

In Norfolk and Waveney CCG, more than a third of people aged over 16 in have now received two doses of COVID-19 vaccine.



Coronavirus restrictions - how the rules changed on May 17

Restaurants, pubs and cafes can now reopen indoors, as can cinemas, theatres and

concert halls after the Government announced the next steps in its roadmap for easing of coronavirus restrictions.

The changes came into effect from Monday May 17.

Other changes include limits on gatherings being eased.

Outdoor gatherings will be limited to 30 people and indoor gatherings to six people or two households (each household can include a support bubble, if eligible).

There is also new guidance on [meeting friends and family](#) which will emphasise personal responsibility rather than government rules.

However people must still continue to work from home where possible, and when travelling within the UK should aim to do so safely and plan their journey in advance.

They should also [get a test](#) and follow the [stay at home guidance](#) if they have COVID-19 symptoms.

Go to [the Government website](#) for a full list of the changes.



Current UK Alert Level: 3

On Monday May 20, following advice from the Joint Biosecurity Centre and in the light of the most recent data, the four UK Chief Medical Officers and NHS England National Medical Director agreed that the UK [alert level](#) should move from level 4 to level 3 in all nations.



The current Government messaging is *'Hands, Face, Space, Fresh Air'* (previously *'Stay Alert, Control the Virus, Save Lives'* and *'Stay at Home, Protect the NHS, Save Lives'*)

We can now meet outside in groups of six people, or two households. The public is urged to stick to these rules and remember the key behaviours of washing hands, wearing face coverings, making space and meeting in the fresh air to help stop the spread of Covid-19.

Hands: wash your hands regularly and for 20 seconds.

Face: Wear a face covering in indoor settings where social distancing may be difficult, and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet.

Space: Stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or 1 metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings or increasing ventilation indoors).

Fresh air: Meet in the fresh air to help stop the spread of COVID-19.



