# **COVID-19 in Herefordshire Intelligence summary**

Public Health & Intelligence Unit

21st April 2021

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## Covid-19 in Herefordshire: key messages, 21 April

- ➤ We are now in Step 2 of the UK Government's <u>roadmap out of lockdown</u>: 'stay at home' ended and the 'rule of six' was reintroduced on 29 March, and last week (12 April) most retail, hospitality and leisure facilities were able to re-open with restrictions. The recommendation to 'shield' for the 11,400 clinically extremely vulnerable people in Herefordshire ended on 1 April, and care home residents are now allowed two visitors.
- ➤ These changes haven't had any effect on case numbers so far, but some increases are to be expected as society reopens and more asymptomatic cases are identified through regular LFD testing eligibility for which was widened to everyone on the 9<sup>th</sup> of April.
- ➤ The average number of **asymptomatic (LFD) tests** have been down from the 4,000 per day that they had been since early March over the school holidays, but are already showing signs of returning to similar levels. This Monday saw the third highest daily number recorded to date (6,700). Access to LFD tests, either through <u>community test sites</u> or <u>home testing kits</u>, continues to expand.
- > COVID-19 cases and in-patients are now at their lowest levels since late September and total deaths are below average for the time of year. Situations remain low. Reflecting this, Herefordshire's local system alert level has been downgraded to Level 2.
  - The proportion of **symptomatic (PCR) people** testing positive has been at or below 0.5% since 5 April.
  - 29 new cases across the whole county in the week to 15 April: no more than 5 cases in any MSOA. Only three confirmed cases in people aged 60+.
  - One death involving COVID-19 occurred in the fortnight to 9 April (registered by 16 April).
- > Two thirds of all Herefordshire GP registered patients have received a first dose **COVID-19 vaccine**. Those aged 45 and over are currently being invited, following the invitation for all those in the Phase 1 priority groups (i.e groups 1-9) identified by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation. Data has not yet been published for second doses.
- April's <u>economic impacts of coronavirus</u> is now available. Indications are that the latest lockdown has not had as big an impact as the first, either nationally or locally. The number of people claiming unemployment related benefits remained stable in March at 4,800 still more than double the pre-pandemic number.

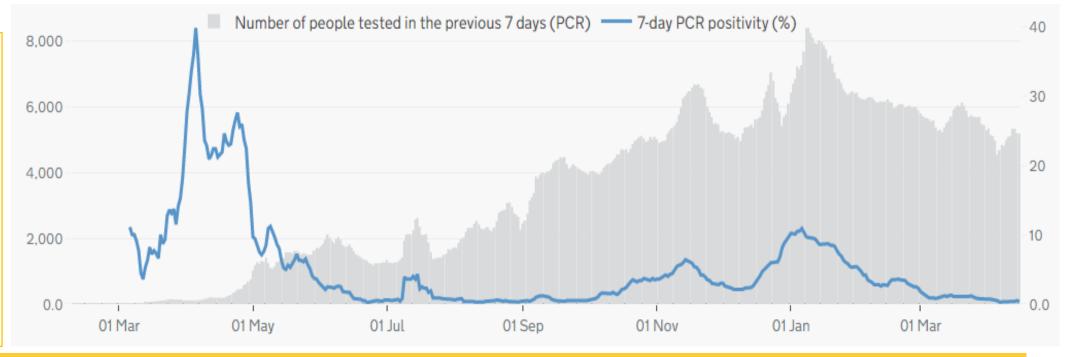


### Symptomatic COVID-19 testing: PCR tests and positivity

- The graph gives a complete picture of local PCR testing for Herefordshire residents, regardless of where the test was carried out.
- 5,200 **people were tested** in the seven days to 15 April 100 fewer than a fortnight ago and about 900 fewer than in late February. The recent trend is difficult to see because of the Easter weekend, but generally reflects fewer symptomatic people requiring a test.
- The line shows the **positivity rate** from PCR tests (i.e. the % of people whose test is positive). Having fluctuated around 1% in early March, it has been at or below 0.5% since 5 April (latest: 0.4% on 15 April), its lowest level since the end of September.
  - high positivity to May shows the impact of testing policy at that time, when only suspected cases amongst those most vulnerable to the disease were being tested. Availability of testing increased throughout the summer.
  - Since May, increases in positivity rate have matched the peaks in cases: generally around 1-2%, rising to 6% during November peak and 11% on 6 January

#### ! Need to know !

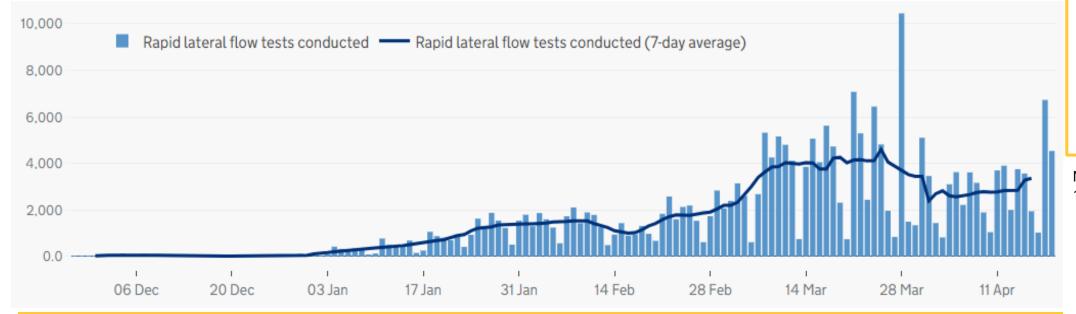
- PCR data is for rolling 7 day periods, not daily / weekly counts
- Counts individuals tested in each 7-day period, not the number of tests carried out. A person is only counted once.
- Wholly residence based, whereas previous data included a mixture of Herefordshire residents & also people working in the county.



Where can I find out more? Local level testing data is now updated daily on the government's Covid-19 dashboard. Details of the roll-out of lateral flow tests to local authorities was published by the government on 9 November, and a guide for local delivery of community testing was published on 11 January.

### **COVID-19 testing: Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests**

- Lateral flow device (LFD) tests are swab tests that give results in less than an hour, without needing to go to a lab.
   They have become one of the main approaches nationally to controlling the spread, with eligibility gradually widened.
   Since 9 April, everyone in England has been eligible for twice-weekly testing.
- A total of 232,000 LFD tests had been recorded in Herefordshire by 19 April. The recent drop in the average daily number coincided with school Easter holidays, but early indications following the start of term this week (the last two bars on the chart) are that they will return quickly: 6,700 tests recorded on Monday, the third highest daily figure
  - The step change at the beginning of March reflects schools reopening to all pupils with twice-weekly testing of staff and secondary school pupils, and families of all school-age children also eligible.
  - Community LFD testing is now available at 12 sites across the county, including 8 pharmacies. Plans are in place to further increase availability, e.g. more places to collect home test kits, mobile testing facilities, and pilots in specific locations.



Where can I find out more? Local level testing data is updated daily on the government's Covid-19 dashboard. Details of the roll-out of lateral flow tests to local authorities was published by the government on 9 November.

#### ! Be aware !

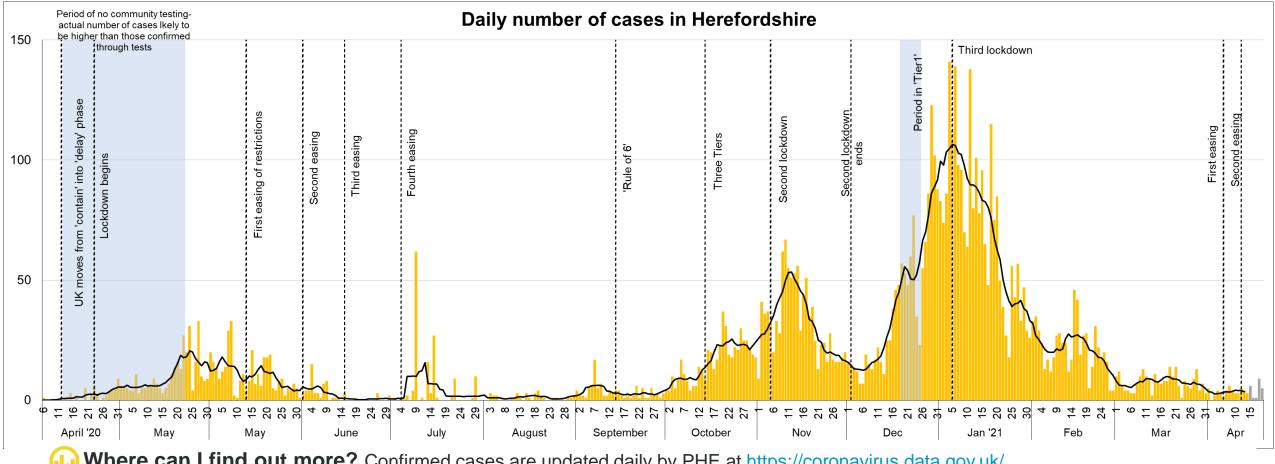
- The requirement for a confirmatory PCR test following a positive LFD result was reintroduced on 29 March. It had been suspended for LFD testing on 27 Jan due to the prevalence of the virus.
- Unlike the published PCR test data, LFD tests are counted by the number of tests which returned either a positive, negative or void result which can mean that a person is counted more than once. Data is published as a daily count and 7-day average.

#### Notes

- LFD tests for NHS staff using a self-reporting tool have been included from 17 December 2020.
   Some negative care home tests may not be included for the first 2 weeks of January
- All LFD tests are counted under Pillar 2 (Gov't testing programme)

#### Lab-confirmed COVID-19 cases in Herefordshire

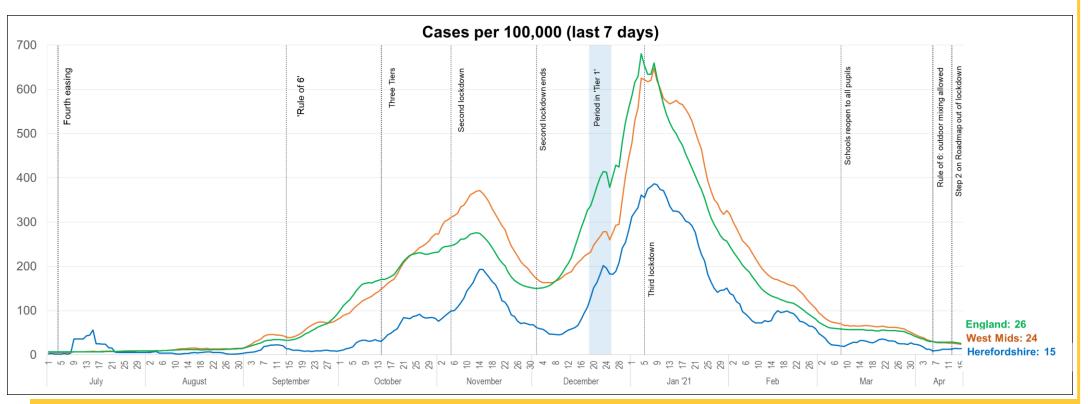
- Lab-confirmed cases are the official count of people who live in Herefordshire and have tested positive for COVID-19. In the first few months of the pandemic, numbers of confirmed cases were dependent on testing policy so are not comparable with later waves.
- The total lab-confirmed cases is now 6,937 (19 April). 29 new cases have been confirmed so far in the last 7 days, similar to the last three weekly periods (note that reporting lags mean daily numbers can change, and the grey bars for the last 5 days may increase).
- The line on the chart shows the average daily number of new cases: between 3 and 4 since the beginning of April (latest complete data is 4 for the 7 days ending 12 April) – but this is likely to increase as society continues to reopen.



Where can I find out more? Confirmed cases are updated daily by PHE at https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/.

## Lab-confirmed cases: comparisons

- The chart shows the recent trend in cases per 100,000 resident population for 7-day periods (the latest one ending 5 days ago to allow for lags in the results of tests). This rate is commonly quoted in national reporting.
- The Herefordshire rate has fallen again so far during April; having fluctuated between 25 and 35 for much of March, it now stands at 15 per 100,000 (7 days ending 15 April).
- The local rate remains lower than both the national and regional figures.



#### ! Be aware !

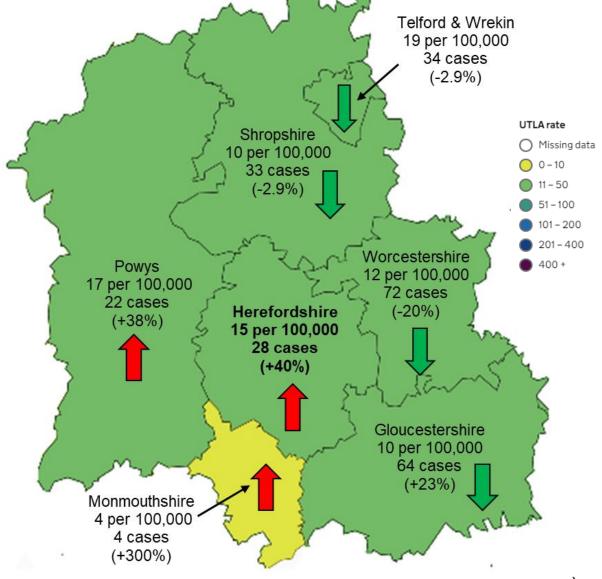
- Rates per 100,000
  resident population
  give a fairer
  comparison of the
  number of cases in
  each area but they do
  not take account of the
  different rates of
  testing or differences
  in the age and sex of
  the local populations.
- With one of the smallest 'upper tier' local authority populations (193,200), Herefordshire's rate can be dramatically affected by relatively small changes in numbers of cases. An average of 28 cases a day in a week would result in a rate of 100 per 100,000.
- These are not rates of infection amongst the population: they can only reflect those who have been tested, so numbers are highly dependent on the availability of tests.

Where can I find out more? The graph is based on daily updated PHE data on lab-confirmed cases. Further comparisons are included in the LG Inform dashboard. You can also view the local 7-day case rates and numbers on the Herefordshire Council website.

# Lab-confirmed cases: comparison with neighbouring authorities

Latest published comparisons, for the week ending 15 April\*, show:

- Herefordshire's rate increased by 40% over the seven days – but this reflects an increase of just 8 cases
- Fluctuations in rates are to be expected when absolute numbers of cases are so low so comparisons of increases/decreases aren't particularly useful.
- All neighbouring areas have rates below the national average: between 10 and 19 per 100,000 population, with the exception of Monmouthshire (4)



Time period: (9/4/21 to 15/4/21)





<sup>\*</sup> Note that he slight lag in this data reflects the latest date for which complete data is available from test results

### Demographics of COVID-19: rates per 100,000 by age over time

- This "heat map" shows how the 7-day rates per 100,000 for specific age groups have changed each week from September. Each row represents an age group. As rates increase, the chart colours become darker.
  - It is important to note that rates per 100,000 can be significantly affected by relatively small numbers of cases in a population as small as Herefordshire, even more so when broken down into age-groups. The absolute number of cases are shown as context. This is especially true in the current situation of single-figure case numbers in some groups.
- Overall rates have fallen in the last couple of weeks and are now at levels last seen in late September, and in the last week there were no more than five cases in any age group.
- Rates remain low among those aged 60 and over with only three new cases in the seven days to 16 April.

																																			Num	ber of
	,	Wee	kly r	ates	per 1	00,0	00 pc	pula	tion																										cases this week	people in age group
	80+	8	39	0	15	15	15	23	85	54	131	170	186	101	101	54	139	286	255	379	441	464	255	131	46	70	124	15	46	0	8	8	0	0	0	12,900
^	70-79	0	0	0	9	14	9	23	59	46	73	128	109	59	27	46	32	96	169	223	205	123	73	41	68	32	36	9	9	9	0	5	0	5	1	21,900
	60-69	0	15	12	8	12	42	35	58	69	73	176	115	65	27	23	81	138	257	272	261	153	92	77	46	73	46	8	8	12	15	4	8	8	2	26,100
	50-59	3	35	7	3	17	24	52	104	101	118	229	181	90	59	76	125	212	323	483	337	330	174	118	63	156	56	38	21	31	31	24	7	10	3	28,800
4)	40-49	5	18	18	14	5	9	23	77	163	131	203	145	63	108	59	140	212	420	434	425	267	185	117	104	127	81	32	18	36	23	32	23	18	4	22,100
Age	30-39	23	23	9	0	5	50	18	77	90	113	253	127	95	59	95	136	249	389	561	471	353	276	204	149	163	118	36	86	45	36	41	23	23	5	22,100
	22-29	25	43	6	25	12	62	92	74	123	117	265	222	92	80	74	209	277	659	671	505	326	166	123	135	86	55	25	12	37	25	37	25	31	5	16,200
	18-21	15	107	76	31	76	244	290	275	153	214	290	198	92	61	31	183	275	458	686	488	320	137	107	153	137	46	15	46	15	15	15	31	61	4	6,600
	11-17	0	7	21	0	0	0	43	85	71	114	71	135	36	64	28	85	121	199	249	156	149	99	21	36	43	71	36	36	64	78	28	28	7	1	14,100
	5-10	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	31	0	16	78	86	31	23	16	31	47	109	124	117	86	0	39	31	62	23	8	16	47	39	16	0	0	0	12,900
	<5	0	11	0	11	0	33	44	99	33	22	44	110	33	22	11	44	110	164	143	121	132	66	33	22	110	44	11	44	44	22	22	0	0	0	9,100
	All ages	7	23	10	9	11	33	46	82	85	100	181	145	71	58	52	108	183	313	387	325	247	146	98	78	99	65	23	29	30	26	21	12	13		
	number of ekly cases_	13	44	20	17	22	65	88	158	163	193	349	279	137	111	101	209	352	603	746	626	476	283	194	151	194	123	44	57	58	50	41	24	25		
		4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	5	12	19	26	2	9	16		
	September							October						November				December			Jan		Feb					Mar					Apr			
				We	ek End	ling						Time 2021																								

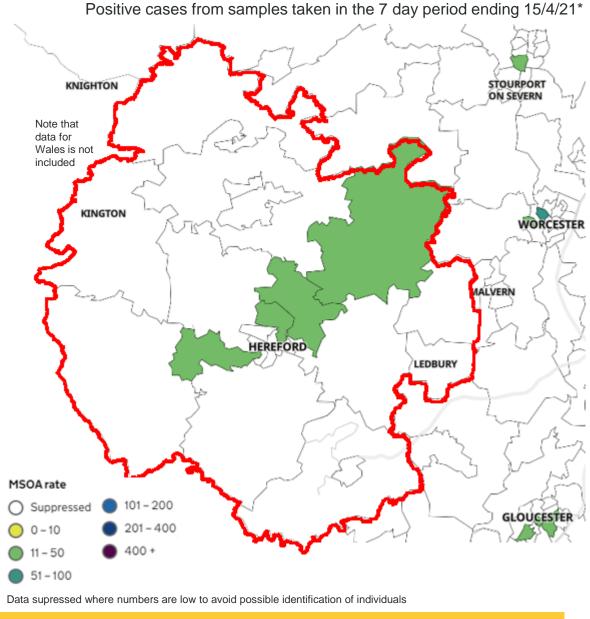
# Lab-confirmed cases around the county: this week

- The map shows the latest 7-day rates of new cases per 100,000 population, as published by Public Health England: the darker the shading, the higher the rate (unshaded areas have had fewer than 3 cases in the last 7 days).
- In the week to 15 April all but 4 of Herefordshire's 23 MSOAs^ had fewer than three cases\*
- Three of the four had just 3 new cases, whilst the other had 5:
  - 'Belmont, Madley & Clehonger' (44 per 100,000): 3 cases
  - 'Hereford North East' (39 per 100,000): 3 cases
  - 'Lugwardine, Withington & Moreton on Lugg' (39 per 100,000):
     3 cases
  - 'Bromyard & Bishop's Frome' (46 per 100,000): 5 cases

#### ! Need to know!

- It's important to note that these rates are very sensitive to small changes for small areas like MSOAs. For instance, an increase of 1 case from 9 to 10 cases in an area of 10,000 people (about the size of Ledbury), would increase the rate from 90 to 100 per 100,000.
- Note that the slight time-lag in this data reflects that test results are incomplete for the most recent few days

^ Middle super output areas: geographies designed by the Office for National Statistics in 2004 to have broadly similar population sizes – which means that they tend to be geographically bigger in rural Herefordshire.



Where can I find out more? This map of weekly confirmed cases by middle super output area (MSOA) in England are included in the PHE dashboard, which is updated daily.

#### Lab-confirmed cases around the county: trends in rates over time

- Whilst the previous slide shows cases in the last 7 days, this "heat map" shows how the 7-day rates per 100,000 have changed in each area of Herefordshire from November. The areas (MSOAs\*) are ranked by the rate in the last week.
  - It's important to note that rates per 100,000 can be significantly affected by relatively small numbers of cases in areas as small as MSOAs, especially in the current situation of single-figure case numbers. The absolute number of cases are shown as context.

Number of

At these relatively low levels, the heat map tends to highlight geographical 'hot spots' with clusters of new cases linked to settings where there is mixing of households and support bubbles. There have been none of note in recent weeks.

																	Num	ber of											
Weekly rates per 100,000 population																	Cases this	MSOA											
Wee	kly ra	ates p	er 10	00,00	0 pop	oulati	ion																	week	Population				
139	108	31	15	46	62	93	62	248	278	248	155	31	77	15	31	31	0	93	31	0	77	46	0	0	6,500	Wigmore, Orleton and Brimfield			
66	98	82	98	66	33	98	147	393	295	278	164	147	16	66	33	66	33	49	131	98	0	0	0	0	6,100	North Leominster			
64	159	111	254	270	32	32	111	461	540	413	238	95	32	64	79	64	16	64	64	0	16	32	16	1	6,300	South Leominster			
157	67	123	45	34	34	45	190	179	414	336	56	112	56	90	34	11	0	101	112	22	11	11	0	0	8,900	Shobdon, Luston & Bodenham			
56	93	65	28	28	56	56	279	316	557	297	158	121	102	65	102	46	37	0	37	46	37	28	46	5	10,800	Bromyard & Bishop's Frome			
243	146	194	49	49	97	122	134	49	109	207	109	85	146	109	12	122	0	0	61	24	24	0	12	1	8,200	Kington Eardisley & Staunton			
42	177	229	83	21	10	135	114	239	479	385	208	125	156	73	104	52	21	0	10	21	10	21	10	1	9,600	Credenhill, Weobley & Wellington			
78	156	104	117	78	65	65	143	248	456	326	339	130	52	65	104	65	13	13	26	26	0	13	39	3	7,700	Lugwardine, Withington and Moreton on Lugg			
17	172	69	17	34	0	0	34	69	292	86	137	86	154	34	137	51	17	17	0	51	17	0	0	0	5,800	Colwall, Cradley & Wellington Heath			
118	237	151	118	75	54	86	344	280	527	387	344	323	129	151	118	65	11	22	32	86	32	11	11	1	9,300	Hereford North West			
116	129	129	65	77	52	206	606	723	490	477	555	181	181	116	103	77	13	39	39	65	39	0	39	3	7,800	Hereford North East			
89	288	169	40	79	109	139	228	556	606	526	487	338	159	40	40	0	30	0	20	30	30	20	20	2	10,100	Hereford Central			
84	237	98	56	84	14	153	153	390	432	613	209	223	125	139	167	0	0	0	42	0	28	14	28	2	7,200	Hereford West			
134	351	184	67	83	67	100	184	551	534	568	534	317	50	184	401	217	17	0	17	67	17	0	0	0	6,000	Hereford East			
194	542	399	164	82	102	133	164	470	522	481	368	174	112	61	225	123	61	20	10	31	31	20	10	1	9,800	Hereford South			
118	236	162	118	0	30	133	207	339	443	207	177	103	74	74	177	103	15	0	0	15	30	44	44	3	6,800	Belmont, Madley & Clehonger			
242	399	435	85	48	60	85	157	314	423	411	278	133	157	48	48	48	36	48	0	12	24	0	0	0	8,300	Hereford South West			
29	117	117	58	87	87	73	102	335	306	219	131	73	87	29	58	160	73	0	0	0	29	0	0	0	6,900	Fownhope, Tarrington & Marcle			
80	50	30	10	10	30	119	70	229	169	259	229	99	60	90	139	139	10	90	30	10	20	10	0	0	10,100	Ledbury			
64	64	48	0	0	48	176	160	112	176	192	96	112	112	112	32	0	16	32	0	0	0	0	16	1	6,200	Golden Valley			
53	169	177	35	44	62	106	177	195	275	231	133	80	44	71	80	27	18	0	35	0	0	18	0	0	11,300	Kingstone & Kingsthorne			
44	53	62	62	27	62	115	124	301	256	212	318	186	88	53	44	27	27	71	9	18	9	0	9	1	11,300	Ross-on-Wye			
83	133	91	83	66	8	166	216	257	299	166	216	58	66	66	83	58	41	8	8	0	17	0	0	0	12,100	Penyard, Llangarron & Goodrich			
100	181	145	71	58	52	108	183	313	387	325	247	146	98	78	99	65	23	29	30	26	21	12	13						
200																													
193	349	279	137	111	100	209	353	603	746	627	477	281	189	150	191	125	44	55	58	50	41	24	25	-	*	Middle comercutors are ac-			
7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	5	12	19	26	2	9	16			* Middle super output areas:			
	Nove	mber				ember				Jan 202	1			F	eb			IV	lar			Apr			-	eographies designed by ONS to			
				Week	Ending	3				Time															h	ave broadly similar population sizes			

#### **Vaccinations in Herefordshire**

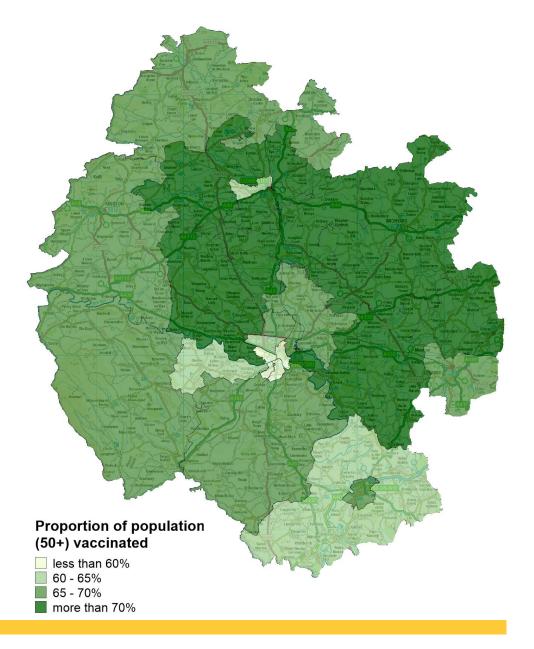
- NHS data indicates that as of 11 April **103,518** Herefordshire residents had received their first dose: **66%** of eligible residents (aged 18+).
- The proportion of the community dwelling population vaccinated by MSOA ranges from 56% (Hereford Central and Hereford South West) to 76% (Colwall, Cradley & Wellington).
- The proportions vaccinated are currently lower in Hereford city than the rest of the county.

**Note:** Differences in the proportion of the population vaccinated by MSOA will, in part, reflect the differing age profiles between areas because of the way the vaccine programme has been prioritised. The complexities of the data mean that it currently isn't possible to account for this in reporting.

#### ! Be aware !

Some readers may have access to other sources of data on vaccinations. Numbers and percentages may vary due to:

- Date: the published NHS data lags behind unpublished data intended for other intelligence purposes
- Population base: the figure here is the percentage of the **resident** population, whilst others will be a proportion of those **registered** with a GP
- Age/eligibility group: reporting groups can change

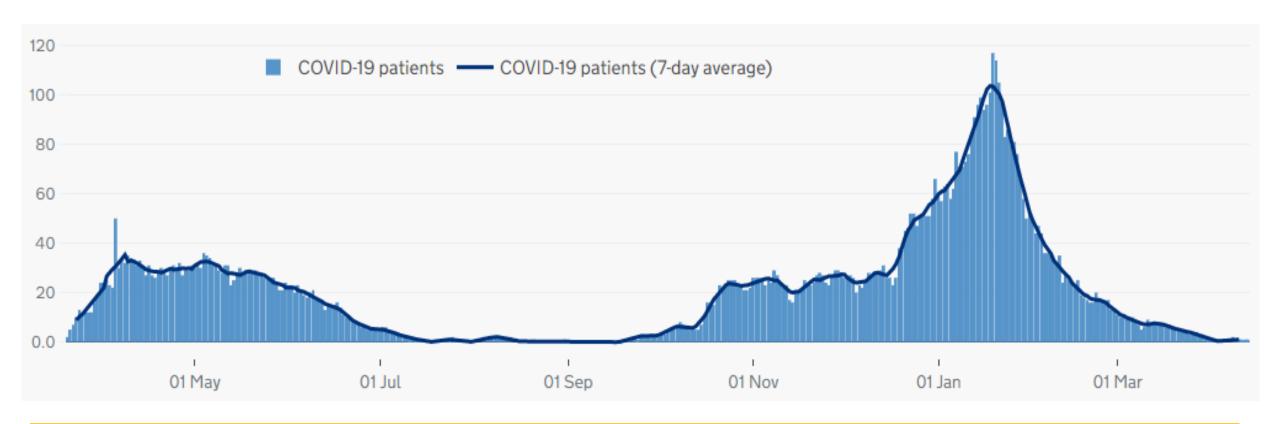


Where can I find out more? The numbers of COVID-19 vaccinations are published weekly (Thursdays) by the NHS: <a href="https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-vaccinations/">www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-vaccinations/</a>

Heref ordshire.gov.uk

## Patients with Covid-19 in Herefordshire hospitals

- Published data shows that by 11 April there was only one COVID-19 patient in Wye Valley Trust hospitals. For five days over the Easter weekend (3 to 7 April) there were none for the first time since 20 September
- Over the course of the pandemic a total of 754 patients have been admitted, almost a third of whom were admitted during January. Only 16 were admitted during March, and non-one has been on mechanical ventilation since mid-March.

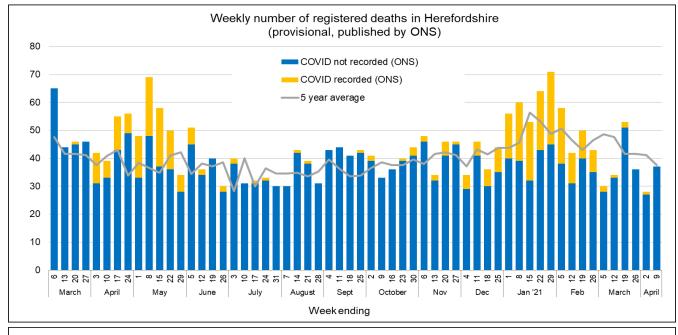


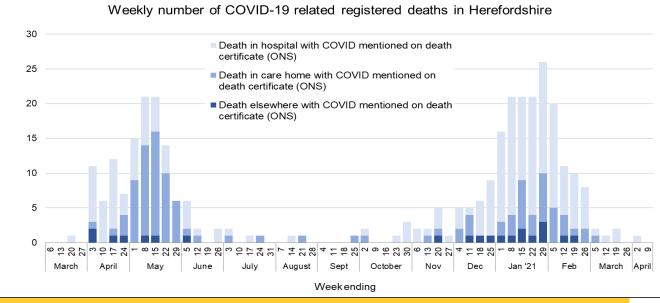
Where can I find out more? The numbers of COVID-19 patients in hospital by acute trust are updated daily by PHE at <a href="https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/">https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/</a>, with an 11 day lag.

## Profile of deaths: published data

- One death related to Covid-19 has been reported in ONS' published data since the last update (occurring by 9 April and registered by 16 April)
  - Taking the official total amongst Herefordshire residents to 332 throughout the whole pandemic
  - Only six recorded since the end of February
- Covid-related deaths in Herefordshire remain lower than nationally: crude death rate is currently 170 per 100,000 compared to England's 229.
- Public Health England also publish numbers of people who have died within 28 days of a first positive test:
  - 283 in total (registered by 21 April), a figure lower than that published by ONS as the latter does not require a positive test for COVID-19 to be mentioned on a death certificate.

Where can I find out more? ONS publish provisional data on weekly numbers of registered deaths by usual residence for local authorities every Tuesday, with an 11 day lag. Deaths recorded as COVID-19 by ONS include deaths where possible or confirmed COVID-19 is mentioned as any cause of death. They are therefore higher than the PHE figures, which only include those who have died following a positive test.

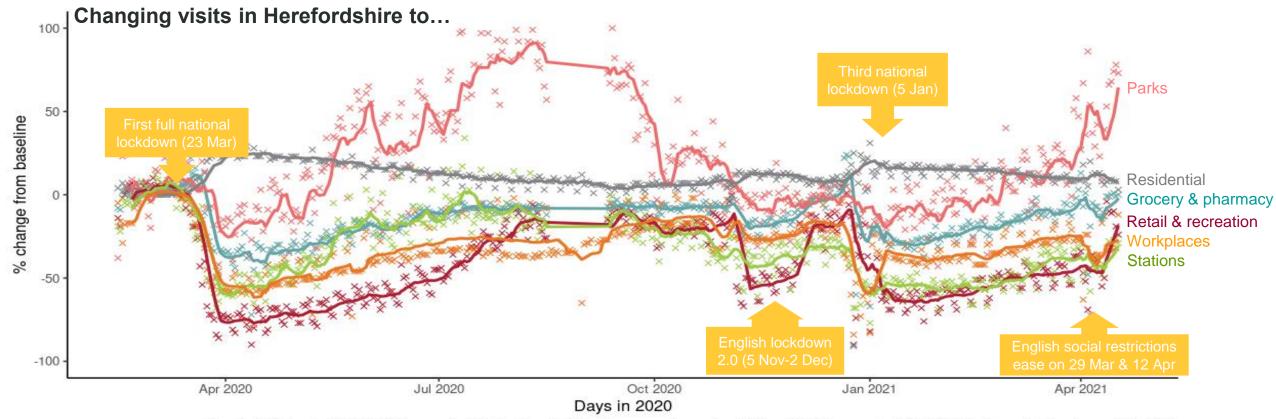






#### Effects of lockdown on population movement

- This chart shows average visits to different categories of places, using location data of Google users, compared to the beginning of 2020.
- After an initial drop following the 4 Jan lockdown, visits to most categories (except residential) increased slowly during the latest lockdown although still remain below the pre-pandemic baseline (except parks, which has a seasonal pattern).
- There has been a clear upturn in movement since the end of March, particularly to 'retail and recreation' and 'parks'. Neither are unsurprising, given the ending of the 'stay at home' rule and reintroduction of 'rule of 6' on 29 March in time for the Easter holiday weekend, and lifting of restrictions on non-essential retail and outdoor eating/drinking on 12 April.



Google LLC Google COVID-19 Community Mobility Reports https://www.google.com/covid19/mobility/ Accessed: 2021-04-21 Most recent date shown: 2021-04-17

Where can I find out more? This chart is updated daily on the <u>Data Orchard website</u>, using data published by <u>Google</u>. The baseline is the median value, for the corresponding day of the week, during the five weeks 3 Jan–6 Feb 2020. Note that the data is based on movements of those who have opted to turn on location history in their Google accounts on their mobile devices.

## Other resources

#### Wider vulnerabilities

- The draft 2020 Director of Public Health report: Impacts of COVID-19 is available on the Council's website (final version due for publication early May)
- April's monthly bulletin of the economic impacts of coronavirus is available on the <u>Understanding Herefordshire website</u>
- New research and open access analytical tools are continually emerging. As well as the sources linked to throughout these slides, you may be interested in:
  - The Office for National Statistics' daily coronavirus roundup: the latest research into the effects on the economy and society
  - <u>The Health Foundation COVID-19 policy tracker</u>: an interactive timeline of key events and government policy announcements related to coronavirus
  - An <u>LG Inform dashboard</u> tailored to Herefordshire & Worcestershire, showing daily updates in cases and comparisons with other areas.
  - A <u>Herefordshire Council dashboard</u> provides up to date information on cases in the county and provides links to other useful information.
  - A <u>summary of Google mobility data</u> for Herefordshire provided by Data Orchard shows average visits to different categories of places over the pandemic.

