

COVID-19 in Herefordshire

Intelligence summary

Public Health & Intelligence Unit

19th May 2021

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Covid-19 in Herefordshire: key messages, 19 May

- Step 2 of the UK Government's [roadmap out of lockdown](#) allowed for the re-opening of most retail, hospitality and leisure facilities with restrictions from 12 April, while from 17 May Step 3 now allows for indoor hospitality and limited housing mixing.
- A small number of individuals within the county have been confirmed with the variant B.1.617.2 (Indian variant). Strict control measures are in place, and there is currently no concern for transmission into the wider community. Currently, there are no plans to introduce surge testing locally. However, close monitoring of the situation is continuing.
- National evidence had suggested that seasonal workers may be less willing or able to travel this year due to the pandemic. A new survey of farms in Herefordshire has found that, although there continue to be some concerns about future recruitment, 4,500 temporary overseas workers are still expected this summer (peak arrivals in May/June). Most will be accommodated on the farms, with the highest numbers in the Ledbury, Ross and Hereford localities. The majority are still likely to come from Bulgaria and Romania, will be aged 25 to 44, and more men are expected than women.
- The number of **new cases** in Herefordshire has fallen in the last week and the localised outbreak which drove the increases seen in late April is now under control having been successfully managed.
 - 36 new cases confirmed so far in the last 7 days, compared to 56 the previous week and the seven day case rate is again less than that for England as a whole.
 - More than one third of new cases have been in the west of Hereford and are primarily linked to a school outbreak.
- The number of PCR tests remain relatively steady while positivity has fallen as outbreaks come under control.

Covid-19 in Herefordshire: key messages, 19 May

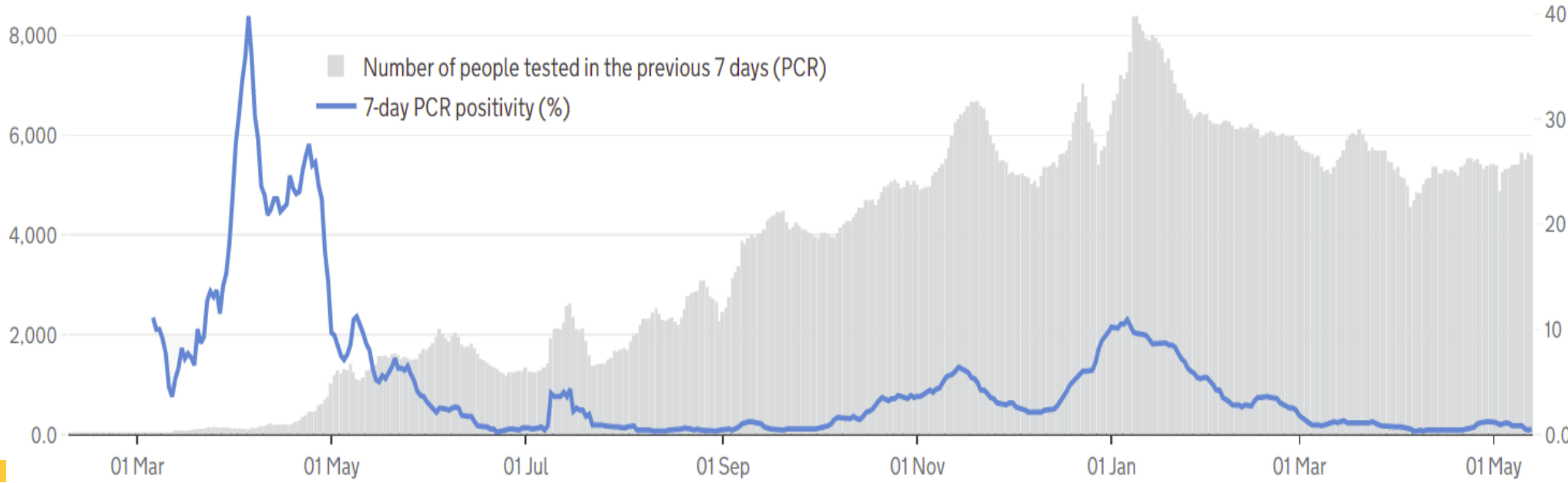
- Although average daily number of **asymptomatic (LFD) tests** recorded in the seven days to 14 May dropped compared to the previous week the local rate remains the highest in the West Midlands and 10th highest in England. Access to LFD tests, either through [community test sites](#) or [home testing kits](#), continues to expand.
- Despite the recent rise in cases, the number of COVID-19 **in-patients** remain 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 remains at Level 2.
 - Over one third of this week's cases were in the 5 to 10 age bracket – there were two confirmed cases in people aged 60+.
 - Six patients admitted during April and one in May (to 9th), and no-one has been on mechanical ventilation since mid-March
 - Two deaths involving COVID-19 included in latest ONS mortality update – both occurred in the week ending 2nd April.
- 70% of all Herefordshire GP registered patients have received a first dose COVID-19 vaccine. 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 people aged 40+ are currently being invited.
- While the proportion of the Herefordshire population aged 50+ having received the 1st dose is in line with those reported for England and the West Midlands, the figures for those aged 40 to 49 are lower than those seen nationally and regionally.


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.
- On average 5,500 **people were tested daily** in the seven days to 13 May – marginally more than the April average (5,200) and higher than the national and regionals figures.
- The line shows the **positivity rate** from PCR tests (i.e. the % of people whose test is positive). After the slight rise in the rate seen in late April when it reached 1.2% the figure has subsequently fallen as associated outbreaks have come under control. As of 13 April the rate was 0.5%.
 - high positivity to May 2020 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 2020, 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 !

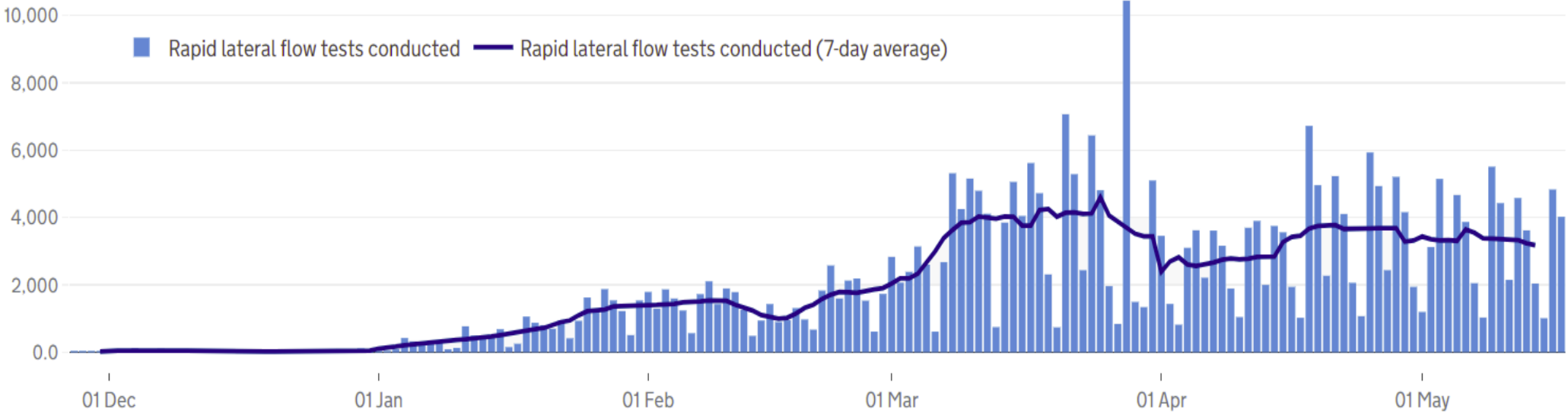
- PCR data is for rolling 7 day periods, not daily / weekly counts
- Counts *individuals* tested in each 7-day period, not the number of *tests* carried out. A person is only counted once.
- Wholly residence based, whereas previous data included a mixture of Herefordshire residents & also people working 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.
- Almost one third of a million LFD tests had been recorded in Herefordshire by 17 May. Although the daily average number of tests recorded in the seven days to 14 May (3,180) dropped compared to the previous week the local rate remains the highest in the West Midlands and 10th highest in England with around 11 tests taken for every 100 residents over a 7-day period.
 - 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.



! Be aware !

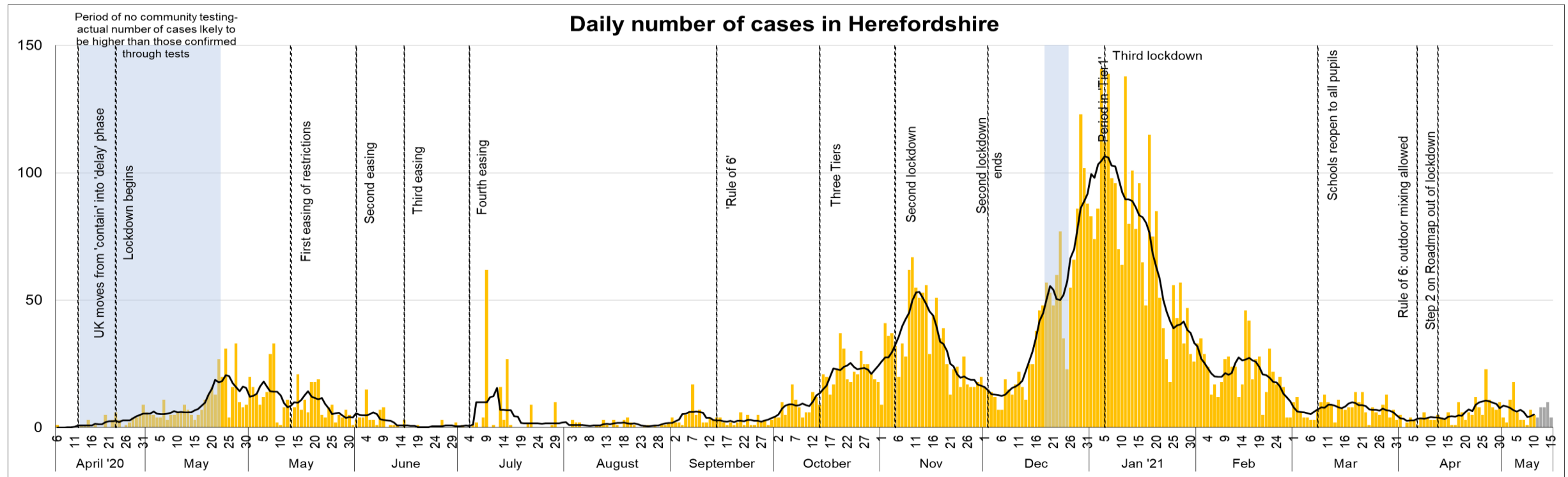
- The requirement for a confirmatory PCR test following a positive LFD result was re-introduced on 29 March. It had been suspended for LFD testing on 27 Jan due to the prevalence of the virus.
- Unlike the published PCR test data, LFD tests are counted by the number of tests which returned either a positive, 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
1. 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
 2. All LFD tests are counted under Pillar 2 (Gov't testing programme)

 **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.

Lab-confirmed COVID-19 cases in Herefordshire

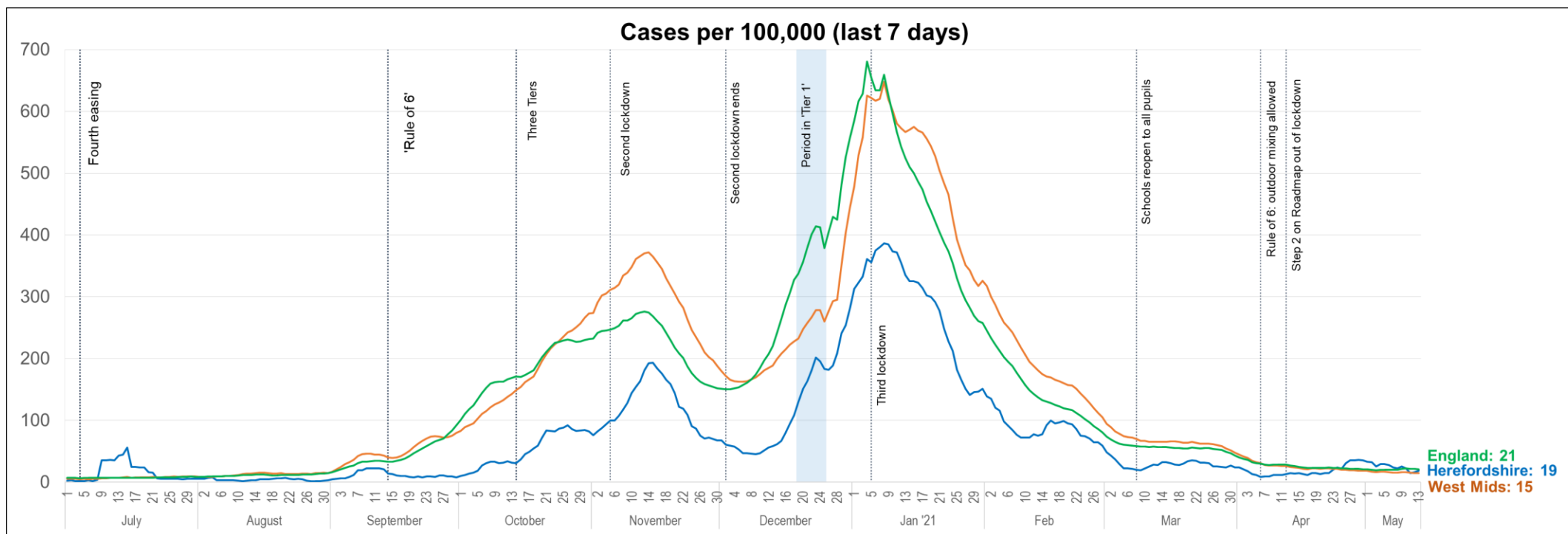
- Lab-confirmed cases are the official count of people who live in Herefordshire and have tested positive for COVID-19. In the first few months of the pandemic, numbers of confirmed cases were dependent on testing policy so are not comparable with later waves.
- There were 36 new cases confirmed in the 7 days to 13 May, compared to 56 in the previous 7 days - the average for the last week of April and the first week of May was 57. (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. In the first three weeks of April an average of 4 new cases were recorded daily, while the more than doubled the following week; the latest figure is 5 for the seven days ending 10 May - half the figure rate recorded two weeks previously – indicating that localised outbreaks associated with the rise in cases at the end of April are now under control.



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.
- Due to localized outbreaks the Herefordshire 7-day rate rose to 36 per 100,000 in the week to 29 April - the highest figure since the beginning of March. However, the rate subsequently fell and as of 13 May had fallen to 19 per 100,000, a figure lower than that currently seen nationally.



! 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?

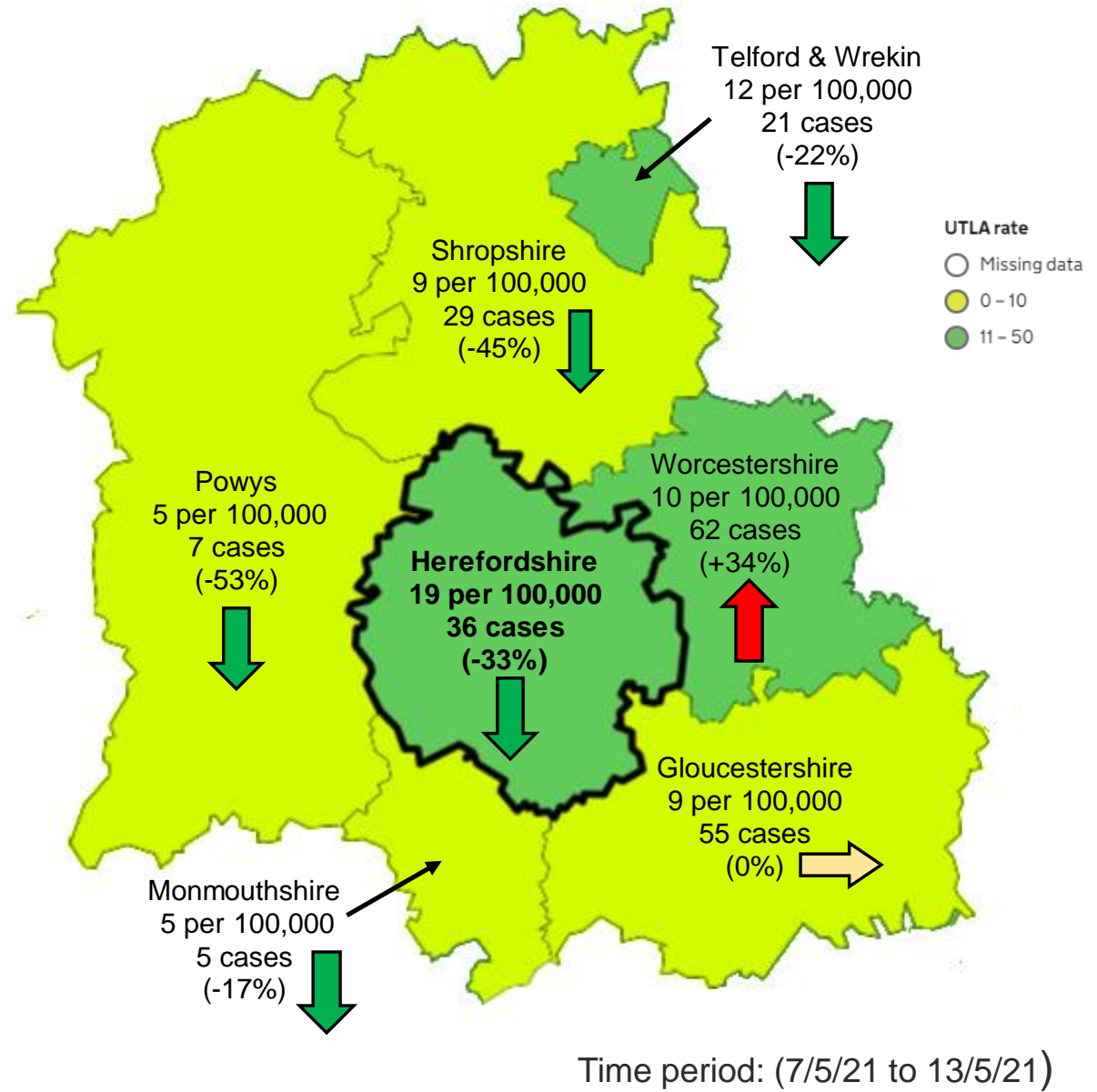
The graph is based on daily updated [PHE data on lab-confirmed cases](#). Further comparisons are included in the [LG Inform](#) dashboard. You can also view the local 7-day case rates and numbers on the [Herefordshire Council website](#).

Lab-confirmed cases: comparison with neighbouring authorities

Latest published comparisons, for the week ending 13 April*, show:

- Herefordshire's rate fell by one third over the seven days
- At 19 per 100,000 the local figure is again lower than that for England as a whole (21 per 100,000), although it remains higher than those in surrounding authorities.
- All neighbouring areas have rates below the national average ranging between 3 and 18 per 100,000 population; Welsh neighbours have particularly low rates.

* Note that the slight lag in this data reflects the latest date for which complete data is available from test results



Where can I find out more? Maps comparing 7 day numbers of cases and rates per 100,000 people are updated daily by PHE at <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/>.

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.
- The overall rate increased in the last two of weeks April driven by cases amongst 22 to 59 year-olds primarily linked to a localised outbreak. However, rates in this age range have subsequently fallen as the outbreak has come under control.
- In the last week the rate in the 5 to 10 year old age bracket has risen owing to an outbreak in an educational setting.
- Rates remain low among those aged 60 and over with only two new cases in the seven days to 14 May.

Age group	Weekly rates per 100,000 population																								Cases this week	Number of people in age group					
	04	11	18	25	01	08	15	22	29	05	12	19	26	02	09	16	23	30	06	13	20	27	03	10			17	24	31	07	14
80+	101	54	139	286	255	379	441	464	255	131	46	70	124	15	46	0	8	8	0	0	8	15	0	0	0	12,931					
70-79	27	46	32	96	169	223	205	123	73	41	68	32	36	9	9	9	0	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	1	21,933					
60-69	27	23	81	138	257	272	261	153	92	77	46	73	46	8	8	12	15	4	8	8	0	12	4	4	1	26,084					
50-59	59	76	125	212	323	483	337	334	174	118	63	156	56	38	21	31	31	24	7	10	28	35	14	3	1	28,766					
40-49	108	59	140	212	420	434	425	267	185	117	104	127	81	32	18	36	23	32	23	18	50	50	54	23	5	22,134					
30-39	59	95	136	249	389	561	471	353	276	204	149	163	118	36	86	45	36	41	23	23	27	45	63	36	8	22,104					
22-29	80	74	209	277	659	671	505	326	166	123	135	86	55	25	12	37	25	37	25	31	43	98	37	37	6	16,245					
18-21	61	31	183	275	458	686	488	320	137	107	153	137	46	15	46	15	15	15	31	61	0	137	61	0	0	6,556					
11-17	64	28	85	121	199	249	156	149	99	21	36	43	71	36	36	64	78	28	14	7	28	14	28	28	4	14,072					
5-10	23	16	31	47	109	124	117	86	0	39	31	62	23	8	16	47	39	16	0	0	16	8	16	124	16	12,856					
<5	22	11	44	110	164	143	121	132	66	33	22	110	44	11	44	44	22	22	0	0	0	33	0	11	1	9,120					
Herefordshire	58	52	108	183	313	387	325	248	146	98	78	99	65	23	29	30	26	21	11	13	20	35	24	22							
Total weekly cases	111	100	209	353	603	746	627	478	281	189	150	191	125	44	55	58	50	41	22	25	39	68	47	43							
	04	11	18	25	01	08	15	22	29	05	12	19	26	02	09	16	23	30	06	13	20	27	03	10	17	24	31	07	14		
	Dec				Jan				Feb				Mar				Apr				May										

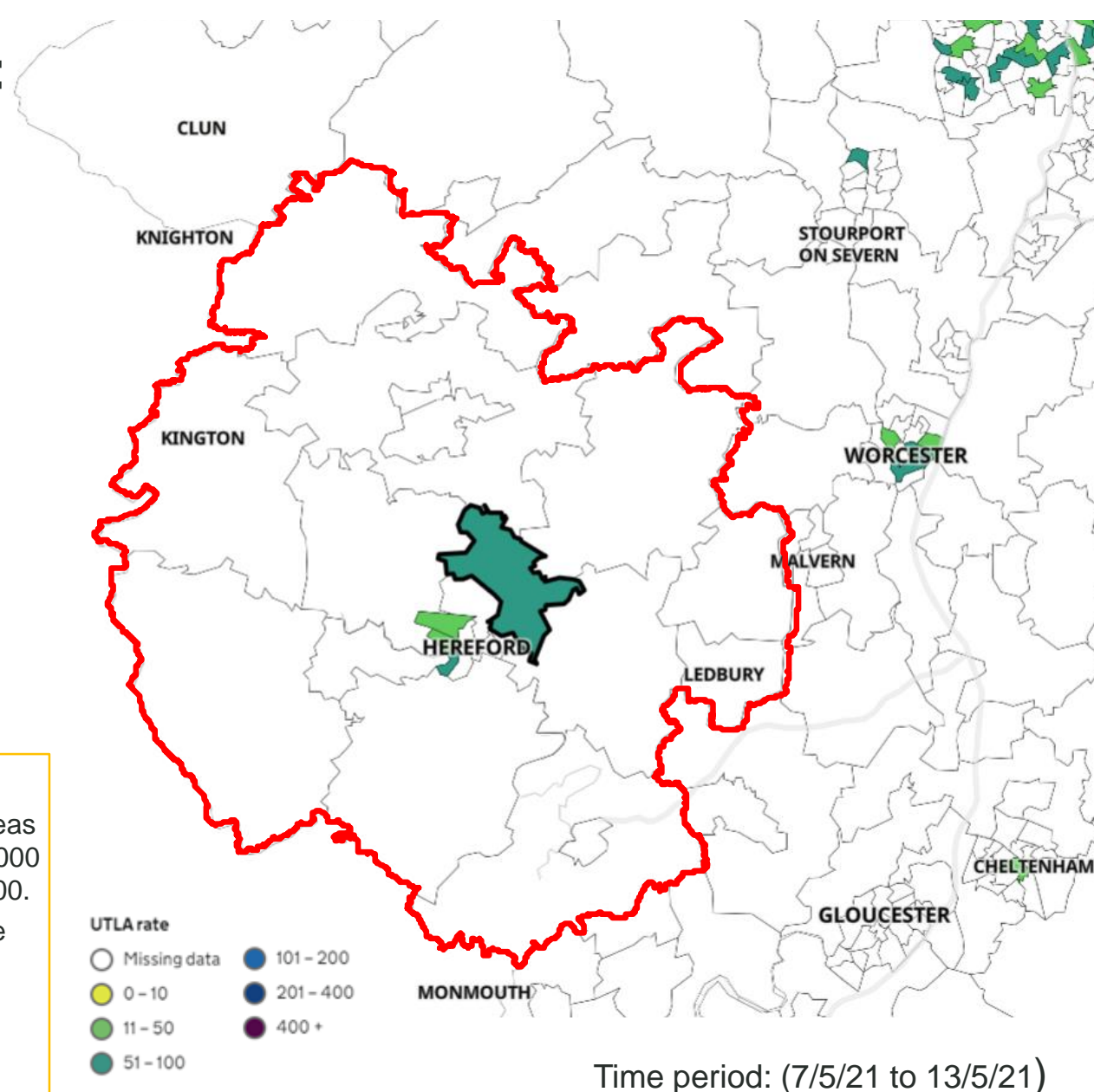
Lab-confirmed cases around the county: this week

- 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 13 May four of Herefordshire's 23 MSOAs had three or more cases all of which had rates above that for England (21 per 100,000).
- The highest rates were in;
- 'Hereford South West' – 97 per 100,000 (8 cases)
- 'Lugwardine, Withington & Moreton on Lugg' - 52 per 100,000 (4 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.



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 December. 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.
- As numbers of cases remain relatively low the heat map tends to highlight geographical ‘hot spots’. This is particularly evident in ‘Lugwardine, Withington & Moreton on Lugg’ where the number of new cases increased in the three weeks to 7 May, although the rate fell last week as the associated local outbreak has come under control.
- The increasing rate in Hereford South West and Hereford West are linked to an outbreak in an educational setting.

MSOA	Weekly rates per 100,000 population																								Cases this week	MSOA Population
	48	60	85	157	314	423	411	278	133	157	48	48	48	36	48	0	12	24	0	0	12	60	48	109		
Hereford South West	48	60	85	157	314	423	411	278	133	157	48	48	48	36	48	0	12	24	0	0	12	60	48	109	9	8,270
Hereford West	84	14	153	153	390	432	599	209	223	125	139	167	0	0	42	0	28	14	28	14	14	0	84	6	7,174	
Lugwardine, Withington and Moreton on Lugg	78	65	65	143	248	456	326	339	130	52	65	104	65	13	13	26	26	0	13	39	183	456	248	52	4	7,671
Hereford Central	79	109	139	228	556	606	526	487	338	159	40	40	0	30	0	20	30	30	20	20	20	20	20	40	4	10,068
North Leominster	66	33	98	147	393	295	278	164	147	16	66	33	66	33	49	131	98	0	0	0	33	66	82	33	2	6,105
Hereford North West	75	54	86	344	280	527	387	344	323	129	151	118	65	11	22	32	86	32	11	11	11	11	0	32	3	9,294
Fownhope, Tarrington & Marcle	87	87	73	102	335	306	219	131	73	87	29	58	160	73	0	0	0	29	0	0	29	15	0	29	2	6,860
Penyard, Llangarron & Goodrich	66	8	166	216	257	299	166	216	58	66	66	83	58	41	8	8	0	17	0	0	0	25	83	25	3	12,060
Hereford South	82	102	133	164	470	522	481	368	174	112	61	225	123	61	20	10	31	31	20	10	10	0	0	20	2	9,779
Kingstone & Kingsthorpe	44	62	106	177	195	275	231	133	80	44	71	80	27	18	0	35	0	0	18	0	9	0	0	18	2	11,269
South Leominster	270	32	32	111	461	540	413	238	95	32	64	79	64	16	64	64	0	16	32	16	16	48	16	16	1	6,296
Hereford North East	77	52	206	606	723	490	477	555	181	181	116	103	77	13	39	39	65	39	0	39	0	52	0	13	1	7,750
Shobdon, Luston & Bodenham	34	34	45	190	179	414	336	56	112	56	90	34	11	0	101	112	22	11	11	0	11	22	0	11	1	8,929
Credenhill, Weobley & Wellington	21	10	135	114	239	479	385	208	125	156	73	104	52	21	0	10	21	10	10	10	10	0	21	10	1	9,610
Ledbury	10	30	119	70	229	169	259	229	99	60	90	139	139	10	90	30	10	20	0	0	50	40	10	10	1	10,054
Ross-on-Wye	27	62	115	124	301	256	212	318	186	88	53	44	27	27	71	9	18	9	0	9	9	0	0	9	1	11,309
Wigmore, Orleton and Brimfield	46	62	93	62	248	278	248	155	31	77	15	31	31	0	93	31	0	77	46	0	15	0	0	0	0	6,464
Bromyard & Bishop's Frome	28	56	56	279	316	557	297	158	121	102	65	102	46	37	0	37	46	37	28	46	0	9	0	0	0	10,768
Kington Eardisley & Staunton	49	97	122	134	49	109	207	109	85	146	109	12	122	0	0	61	24	24	0	12	12	12	12	0	0	8,227
Colwall, Cradley & Wellington Heath	34	0	0	34	69	292	86	154	86	154	34	137	51	17	17	0	51	17	0	0	17	0	17	0	0	5,828
Hereford East	83	67	100	184	551	534	584	534	317	50	184	401	217	17	0	17	67	17	0	0	0	17	0	0	0	5,991
Belmont, Madley & Clehonger	0	30	133	207	339	443	207	177	103	74	74	177	103	15	0	0	15	30	44	44	15	0	15	0	0	6,779
Golden Valley	0	48	176	160	112	176	192	96	112	112	112	32	0	16	32	0	0	0	0	16	16	0	0	0	0	6,246
Herefordshire	58	52	108	183	313	387	325	248	146	98	78	99	65	23	29	30	26	21	11	13	20	35	24	22		
Total weekly cases	111	100	209	353	603	746	627	478	281	189	150	191	125	44	55	58	50	41	22	25	39	68	47	43		
	04	11	18	25	01	08	15	22	29	05	12	19	26	05	12	19	26	02	09	16	23	30	07	14		
	Dec				Jan				Feb				Mar				Apr				May					
	Week Ending Time →																									

* Middle super output areas: geographies designed by ONS to have broadly similar population sizes

Vaccinations in Herefordshire: 1st dose

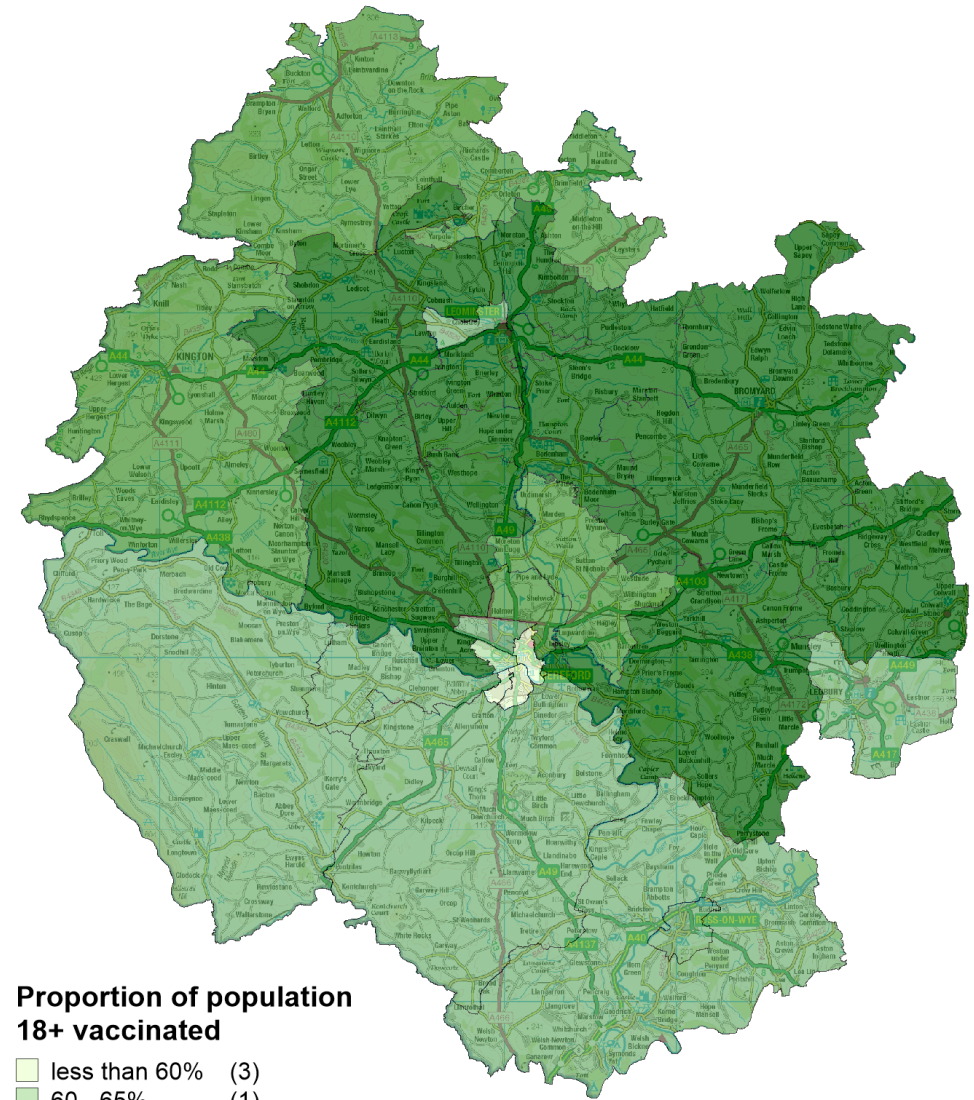
- NHS data indicates that as of 11 April **109,869** Herefordshire residents had received their first dose: **70%** of eligible residents (aged 18+).
- The proportion of the community dwelling population vaccinated by MSOA ranges from 59% (Hereford Central) to 81% (Colwall, Cradley & Wellington).
- The proportion vaccinated is currently lower in Hereford (64%) than the rest of the county (73%).

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:

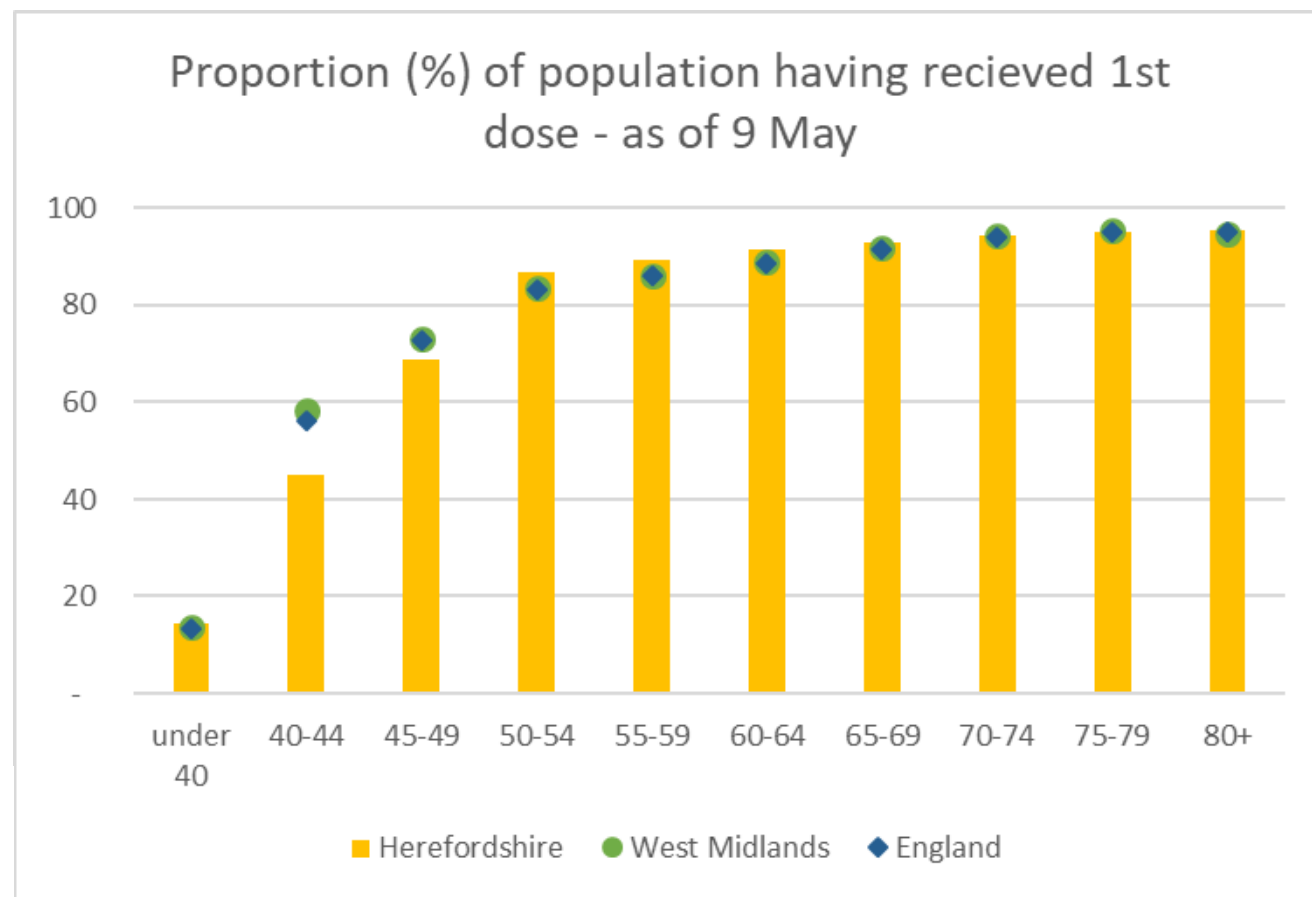
- *Date: the published NHS data lags behind unpublished data intended for other intelligence purposes*
- *Population base: the figure here is the percentage of the **resident** population, whilst others will be a proportion of those **registered** with a GP*
- *Age/eligibility group: reporting groups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



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

Vaccination: Uptake by age group

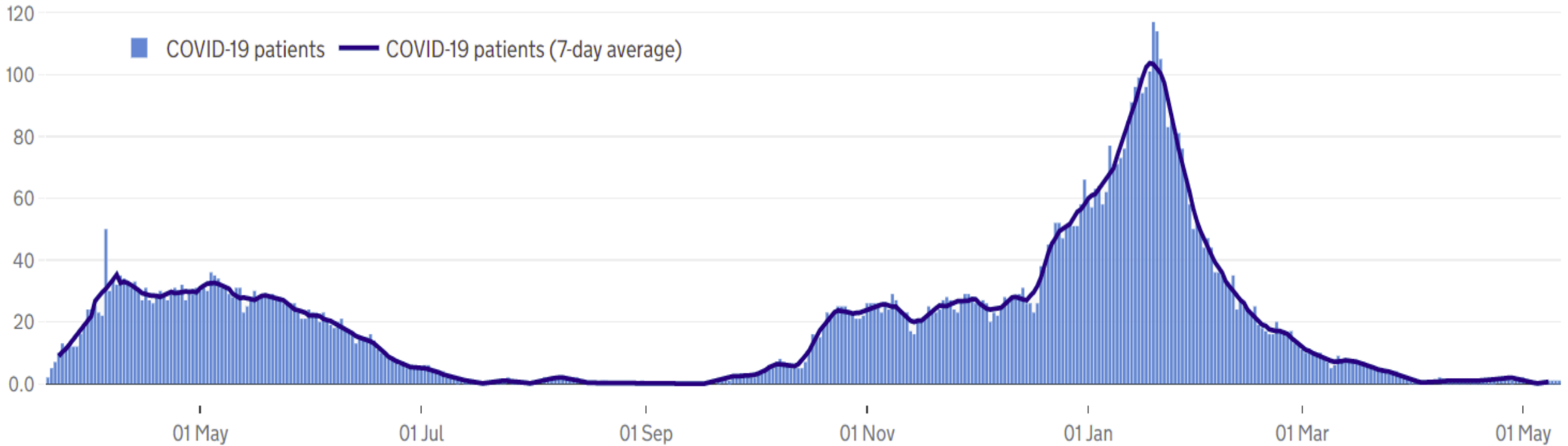
- At 45%, 1st dose uptake among 40-44 year olds in the county is behind the W Mids (59%) and England (56%) averages.
- Also behind is uptake among 45-59 year olds, 69% in the county, compared to the 73% average for both the W Mids and England.
- Uptake in all other age groups is in line with/ above regional and national averages.



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

Patients with Covid-19 in Herefordshire hospitals

- Published data shows that by 8 May there was 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 758 patients have been admitted, almost a third of whom were admitted during January. Sixteen patients were admitted during March and six in April, while only one have been admitted in May (as of 9 May); no patients have been on mechanical ventilation since mid-March.

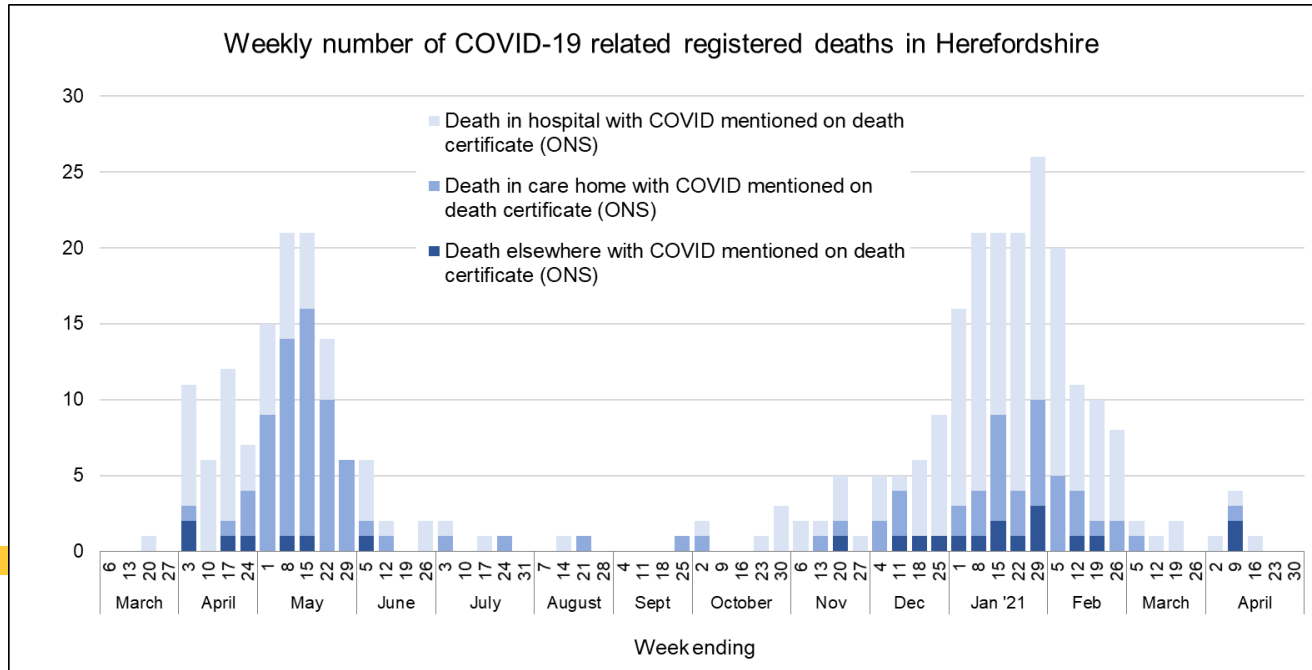
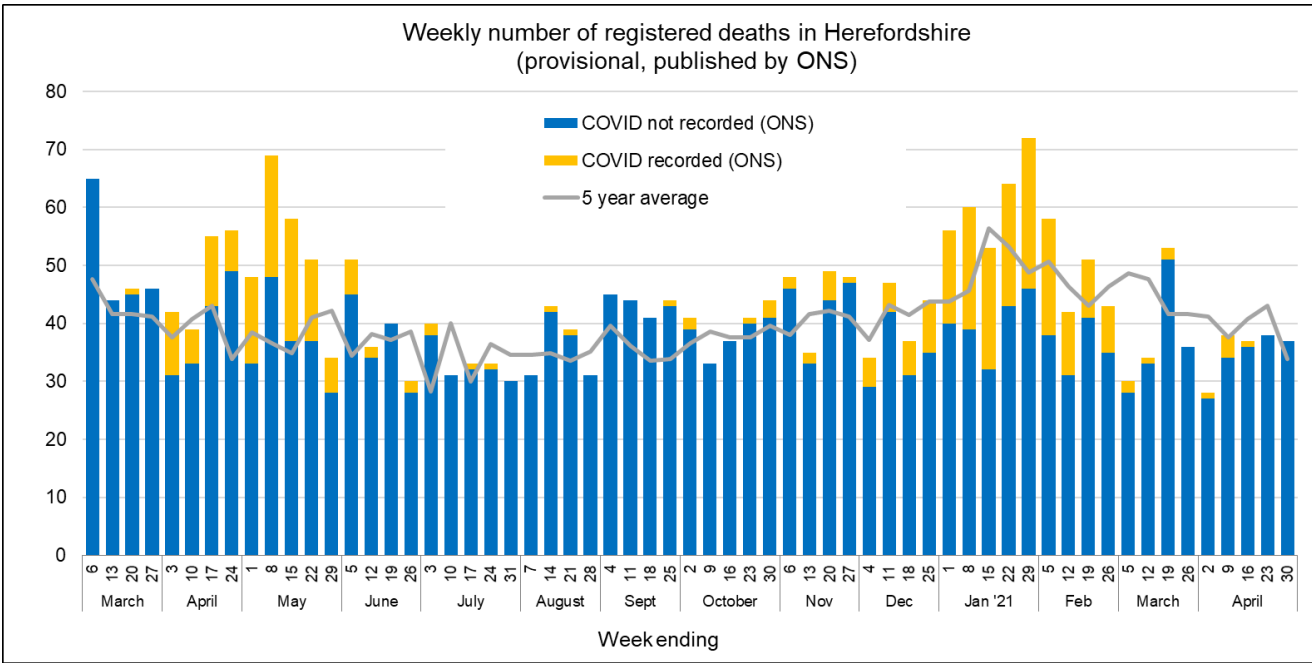


Where can I find out more? The numbers of COVID-19 patients in hospital by acute trust are updated daily by PHE at <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/>, with an 11 day lag.

Profile of deaths: published data

- **Two deaths related to Covid-19** has been reported in ONS' published data since the last update (occurring by 30 April and registered by 7 May) – both deaths occurred during the week ending 2 April
 - Taking the official total amongst Herefordshire residents to 337 throughout the whole pandemic
 - Eleven recorded since the end of February
- Covid-related deaths in Herefordshire remain lower than nationally: crude death rate is currently 175 per 100,000 compared to England's 234.
- Public Health England also publish numbers of people who have **died within 28 days** of a first positive test:
 - 282 in total (registered by 17 May), 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.



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 [Understanding Herefordshire website](#)

- 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
- [The Health Foundation - COVID-19 policy tracker](#): an interactive timeline of key events and government policy announcements related to coronavirus
- An [LG Inform dashboard](#) tailored to Herefordshire & Worcestershire, showing daily updates in cases and comparisons with other areas.
- A [Herefordshire Council dashboard](#) provides up to date information on cases in the county and provides links to other useful information.
- A [summary of Google mobility data](#) for Herefordshire provided by Data Orchard shows average visits to different categories of places over the pandemic.