

Public health briefing for the borough of Bury – 10 December, 2021

Country moves to 'Plan B' to combat Omicron

The first of 'Plan B' measures to combat the rapid spread of the Omicron variant of Covid-19 has been implemented today.

Face coverings are now compulsory in shops and most indoor spaces like theatres and cinemas. They will not be required – for practical reasons – in hospitality venues like restaurants, cafes and bars where people are eating and drinking.

From next Monday (13 December), those who can are advised to work from home.

And from Wednesday (15 December), and subject to parliamentary approval, the NHS Covid Pass on the NHS App will become mandatory for entry into nightclubs and settings where large crowds gather. People will be able to demonstrate proof of two vaccine doses via the App. Proof of a negative lateral flow test will also be accepted.

It is hoped that Plan B measures will help to slow the spread of the variant and reduce the chances of the NHS coming under unsustainable pressure, while buying time to deliver more boosters.

Vaccine remains the first line of defence against Covid-19. It is now more vital than ever that those who are unvaccinated come forward, and those eligible for boosters book when called.

The new regulations are set to expire six weeks after implementation, with a review after three weeks.

As well as following the guidance, there is much more we can do to help stop the spread. Remember:

- Meet outside as much as possible, and keep indoor spaces ventilated
- Minimise the number, proximity and duration of social contacts
- Continue to wash or clean your hands frequently.



Also: please continue to test, to isolate if positive or if asked to by NHS Test and Trace, and make sure that when eligible you and your family members go for your vaccinations at the earliest opportunity. Most people have had their vaccinations already and the jabs are working!

It all helps, and we thank everyone in Bury for remaining cautious, being considerate and, above all, staying safe.

Cases increase this week

The number of new cases of Covid-19 increased in the week to 4th December, when Bury had the second highest rate in Greater Manchester with 454.6 cases per 100,000 people. Case numbers continue to be highest among school-aged children and working-age adults. Case numbers continue to fall among older adults, likely due to the vaccination programme. The number of people in local hospitals fell, although we continue to have deaths from Covid-19 in Bury.

7-day case figures:

Week ending 4 December: infection rate per 100,000 – 454.6 (867 new cases).

Week ending 27 November: infection rate per 100,000 – 383.8 (732 new cases).

Week ending 20 November: infection rate per 100,000 – 403.2 (769 new cases).

Week ending 13 November: infection rate per 100,000 – 350.3 (668 new cases).

Keep ahead with cold weather alerts!

Cold weather can be really dangerous, especially for people aged 65 and above. As we get older it takes longer to warm up, which raises the risk of increased blood pressure, heart attacks and strokes. Older people can also suffer serious harm if they slip and fall in icy conditions.

We're advising people to sign up to the Met Office's email alerts [here](#) so that they can get early warnings of bad weather and make necessary preparations.

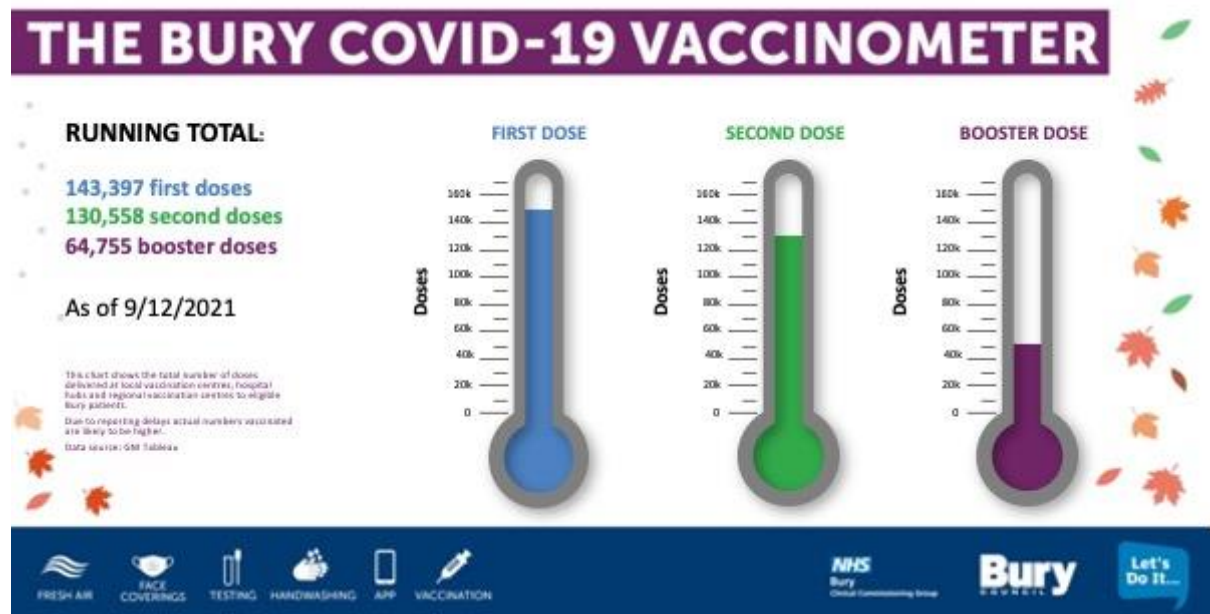
Age UK and the UK Health Security Agency (formerly Public Health England) have teamed up to produce some really helpful hints and tips for staying warm and well, perfect for printing out to give to older friends and relatives. Find them [here](#)

Boosters now open to over 40s three months after second dose

This week the booster campaign has been expanded, with the National Booking Service now open to all those aged over 40 to book their jabs with the dose interval shortened from six months to three months. Those eligible are now able to book a month in advance – two months after their second dose – via the National Booking Service.

Latest figures show that 64,755 people in Bury have now received a Covid-19 booster vaccination, and the majority of them also received their flu jab at the same time.

A total of 143,397 people in Bury have now received a first Covid vaccination, and 130,558 have had their second jab. Bury's clinics continue to work at pace, administering thousands of Covid-19 and flu vaccinations every week.



Bury's excellent take-up of vaccinations has been a key part of our fight against Covid-19, flu and other winter bugs.

However, with new Covid-19 variants potentially spreading, and flu usually becoming more widespread from December onwards, we do need to stay alert - so the earlier you can get vaccinated, the better.

How to get your Covid-19 vaccination in Bury

It's easy to get your Covid-19 vaccinations in Bury. Here's what to do:

Covid-19 first and second doses

If you're aged 18+ (including within 3 months of turning 18) you can go to any walk-in clinic or bookable clinic to get a first or second vaccination. Your second dose will be given at 8+ weeks since the first.

If you're aged 16 or 17 you can get your first vaccination at a walk-in clinic or a bookable clinic. Second vaccinations for 16 and 17-year-olds are not currently available at walk-ins – for a second jab you will need to book ahead, and it should be 12 weeks since your first vaccination.

Covid-19 booster

People aged 40 and over, along with those in high-risk groups, can now book their Covid booster jab three months after their second dose.

In line with JCVI guidance, the NHS is inviting people most at risk from the virus first and is working through age groups in stages before opening up to other age groups.

The NHS intends to offer every eligible adult an opportunity to book in for their booster jab by the end of January.

12 to 15-year-old vaccination programme

Vaccinations for 12 to 15 year-olds can be booked at vaccination clinics via the [National Booking Service](#) or by calling 119.

Note: Vaccinations for 12 to 15-year-olds are not currently available at Bury's four vaccination clinics.

How to book

- Local Covid-19 vaccination clinics can be booked [here](#)
- Appointments are also available via the [National Booking Service](#) (our Ramsbottom and Elizabethan Suite sites, participating local pharmacies and Fairfield General Hospital's vaccination hub, can be booked via this route) or by calling 119.
- If you need support to book please contact your GP practice.

Walk-ins

Bury offers multiple options for walk-ins for first vaccinations (aged 16+) and second vaccinations (aged 18+). Please be aware that you may have a short wait if you just walk in.

Date	Venue	Time
Saturday 11 December	Elizabethan Suite, Town Hall, Knowsley Street, Bury, BL9 0SW	8.30am–5.30pm
Saturday 11 December	Ramsbottom Civic Hall, Market Place, Ramsbottom, BLO 9AJ	8.30am–5.30pm
Sunday 12 December	Prestwich Vaccination Clinic, Prestwich Walk-in Centre building Fairfax Road, Prestwich, M25 1BT	9am-12.30pm 1.30pm-4.30pm
Sunday 12 December	Ramsbottom Civic Hall, Market Place, Ramsbottom, BLO 9AJ	8.30am–5.30pm
Tuesday 14 December	Elizabethan Suite, Town Hall, Knowsley Street, Bury, BL9 0SW	8.30am–6.30pm
Tuesday 14 December	Prestwich Vaccination Clinic, Prestwich Walk-in Centre building Fairfax Road, Prestwich, M25 1BT	1pm–4.30pm
Wednesday 15 December	Radcliffe URC Church, Blackburn Street, Radcliffe M26 3WQ.	9am-3.30pm
Wednesday 15 December	Elizabethan Suite, Town Hall, Knowsley Street, Bury, BL9 0SW	8.30am – 6.30pm
Wednesday 15 December	Prestwich Vaccination Clinic, Prestwich Walk-in Centre building Fairfax Road, Prestwich, M25 1BT	9am – 12.30pm 1.30pm – 4.30pm
Thursday 16 December	Radcliffe URC Church, Blackburn Street, Radcliffe M26 3WQ.	9am – 3.30pm

Friday 17 December	Ramsbottom Civic Hall, Market Place, Ramsbottom, BLO 9AJ	8.30am – 5.30pm
Friday 17 December	Prestwich Vaccination Clinic, Prestwich Walk-in Centre building Fairfax Road, Prestwich, M25 1BT	1.30pm – 4.30pm
Saturday 18 December	Ramsbottom Civic Hall, Market Place, Ramsbottom, BLO 9AJ	8.30am – 5.30pm
Sunday 19 December	Ramsbottom Civic Hall, Market Place, Ramsbottom, BLO 9AJ	8.30am – 5.30pm

AstraZeneca second doses are offered as walk-in or booked appointments at these special sessions:

Saturday 11 December	Ramsbottom Civic Hall, Market Place, Ramsbottom, BLO 9AJ	2pm–3pm
Sunday 12 December	Ramsbottom Civic Hall, Market Place, Ramsbottom, BLO 9AJ	2pm–3pm
Saturday 18 December	Ramsbottom Civic Hall, Market Place, Ramsbottom, BLO 9AJ	2pm–3pm
Sunday 19 December	Ramsbottom Civic Hall, Market Place, Ramsbottom, BLO 9AJ	2pm–3pm

Heading out and about? Take a test to stop the spread

Going somewhere that's likely to be busy, or visiting someone who is at higher risk of becoming seriously ill from Covid? Take a rapid Lateral Flow Test (LFT) before you go for peace of mind.

Around 1 in 3 people with Covid-19 can have and pass on Covid even if they have no symptoms and have been vaccinated. Testing before going out to busy places gives you reassurance that you are unlikely to be infected with Covid-19, and therefore unlikely to spread the virus.

LFT tests are widely available and free. They are most useful at identifying Covid-19 in people without any symptoms: it takes less than 30 minutes to get a result, and they are 80-90% effective in detecting Covid-19 when someone is at their most infectious.

Some places still have their own specific testing rules and guidance; for example, schools and colleges still ask for twice-weekly LFT testing, and there are also specific rules in place for health and social care settings. You should always make sure you are aware of this guidance if you visit or work in these places.

Remember, LFT test results – whether positive or negative - should be registered [online](#) or by phoning 119. If you test positive, you should go for a PCR test to confirm the result. Anyone who tests positive should self-isolate and check if any other people they live with will also need to self-isolate.

LFT tests are available from some pharmacies, and they can be collected from Bury's Mosses Centre testing site or delivered directly to your home. See more details in the testing section below.

It's best to test!

In Bury, we have multiple options for people to test for Covid-19.

LFT (Lateral Flow Testing)

Self-testing with LFT test kits is easy to do at home or at work. There are several ways to get LFT kits:

- Collect them from a community pharmacy – find a participating outlet [here](#). You'll need a collect code which you can request [here](#).
- Collect them from the Mosses Centre in Bury - just [book](#) a Click and Collect slot.
- Order online [here](#) and they'll be sent to your home.

If you do an LFT test, you need to register your results online or by phoning 119. Anyone who has a positive LFT test result should self-isolate and take a follow-up PCR test within two days, even if they don't have symptoms.

Getting a PCR test

If you have any of the three most common symptoms of Covid-19 (a new continuous cough, high temperature, loss or change of sense of taste or smell) get a PCR test as soon as possible to protect yourself and those around you. The PCR test you take will be analysed at a laboratory and you will receive the results by text message, email or telephone.

A range of PCR testing options are available in Bury:

- No appointment required - Chesham Fold, Chesham Fold Road, Bury BL9 6JZ (9am to 3pm, Monday to Friday).
- Appointment only - Mosses Centre, Cecil Street, Bury BL9 0SB. [Book online](#).
- Appointment only – Department of Health sites located in Prestwich, Radcliffe, Ramsbottom and Whitefield. [Book online](#).
- [Order](#) a home testing kit (delivered by post).

Call 0161 253 5515 to speak to someone about testing, how to book and availability or find more information [here](#).

Self-isolate to help stop the spread of Covid-19

As we try to limit the spread of the Omicron variant, new rules around isolation have been introduced. If you live in the same household as a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant of Covid-19, you must now isolate too (even if fully vaccinated or under 18).

If you live in the same household as someone who has Covid-19 which is NOT the Omicron variant, and you are fully vaccinated or aged under 18 years and 6 months, you are not required to self-isolate.

Whatever the variant, anyone with Covid-19 [symptoms](#) should stay at home and self-isolate immediately. You should [arrange to have a PCR test](#) as soon as possible. If this PCR test result is positive, you must continue to self-isolate.

Even if you do not have Covid-19 symptoms, but you have a positive PCR test result, you must stay at home and self-isolate.

If you are required to stay at home and self-isolate, or if you are the parent or guardian of a child who has been told to self-isolate, you may be entitled to a one-off payment of £500 through the [NHS Test and Trace Support Payment scheme](#)

Bury's Community Hubs are still here for anyone who needs support, including those who are self-isolating. To access essential help, call 0161 253 5353 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) or text 07860 022876 (messages responded to by the next working day).

Further information is [on the community hubs webpage](#).

Helping people through difficult times

Life has changed for all of us through the pandemic, and it's natural that this may cause you to feel worried or anxious, lonely or frustrated. If you feel you need some extra support, Bury's Getting Help Line is a confidential telephone service run by the voluntary sector for people of all ages who are experiencing difficulties with their mental wellbeing.

You can access advice, guidance and signposting to local services by calling the Getting Help Line on 0161 464 3679. [Find out more](#) about other mental wellbeing support.

Next update due Friday 17 December, 2021.

For up-to-date information about Covid-19 visit bury.gov.uk/coronavirus