
Latest COVID-19 information and advice for the borough of Bury 17 December, 2020

Bury remains in Tier 3 – it's hard but let's stick with it

Health and council leaders are urging Bury residents to continue to follow the coronavirus rules as the borough remains under Tier 3 restrictions.

They warn that, although infection rates are falling in the borough, they are still near the national average – and local people are continuing to need intensive care in hospital.

Under Tier 3 restrictions, we are not allowed to meet people who are not in our household group either indoors or outside in private gardens, and a maximum of six people can meet outdoors in public spaces such as parks.

Councillor Andrea Simpson, Bury Council's cabinet member for health and wellbeing, said: "I'm as frustrated as everyone else that we are living under restrictions that have lasted for months, but our infection rate is still close to the high national average at around 200 cases per 100,000 people."

With the first COVID vaccination centre opened in Bury this week (see below), and more due to open over the coming days and weeks, there is some light at the end of the tunnel. Targeted testing is also on the way.

CLlr Simpson added: "This is why it's so important that we don't lose sight of the prize, just when there is real cause for optimism that we can finally get on top of the virus."

Read more about the current restrictions here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-restriction-tiers-what-you-need-to-know>

Christmas bubbles – let's be careful

This year between 23-27 December up to three households can form a Christmas bubble, meaning families can meet and stay overnight in private homes, as well as meet in gardens, places of worship and other outdoor spaces.

This will be welcomed by some, but those with older and more vulnerable relatives may feel that the risk of getting together in the usual way is too great. It might be worth considering keeping in touch online, or having a socially-distanced walk instead.

We are urging people, if they do meet others not in their own household, to try to keep their Christmas bubble as small as possible. Also: to wash hands frequently, clean door handles and other surfaces, and let as much fresh air in as possible without getting cold.

Slight fall in case rates

The number of new cases of COVID-19 in the week to 12 December fell slightly from the previous week, with a weekly infection rate of 204.7 per 100,000 people.

The fall in incidence in Bury was not as fast as elsewhere in the North West, and Bury still has the one of the highest rates of new cases in the North West and the second highest in Greater Manchester.

The flattening of new cases is seen in all age groups, and cases may be slightly increasing in working age adults. Cases in people aged 65 and over have been heavily influenced by a small number of larger outbreaks in care homes.

The number of people in local hospitals with COVID-19 fell slightly overall, but increased in some hospitals. The number of deaths registered in Bury with COVID-19 on the death certificate increased slightly in the last week compared to the week before.

The four-week summary in Bury:

Week ending 12 December: infection rate 204.7 (391 new cases)
Week ending 5 December: infection rate 227.2 (434 new cases)
Week ending 28 November: infection rate 215.7 (412 new cases)
Week ending 21 November: infection rate 316.2 (604 new cases)

Hundreds get the vaccine as rollout commences in Bury

Bury's first community vaccination centre opened this week in Prestwich (walk-in centre building on Fairfax Road), with more sites due to go live over the coming weeks.

The vaccines, offered by invitation only, will initially be given to priority groups identified by scientists and the Government as those who will benefit most. Almost 300 people aged 80+ and able to travel were invited and received the vaccine on the first day of operation on Tuesday this week.

The centre is being run by local GP practices and staff have been working very hard in a very short space of time to get the site up and running to protect local people. Feedback from people accessing the service has been very positive.

As people most at risk from coronavirus are being offered the vaccine first, people will be contacted when it is their turn to be invited so there is no need to contact your GP practice. It will take many months for the vaccine to be rolled out to eligible groups. Find out more: nhs.uk/CovidVaccine
People need two doses of the vaccine for it to be fully effective, and must still follow COVID-safe guidelines: maintain social distancing, wash their hands and wear a face mask.

Testing availability over the festive period

If you have any of the three most common symptoms of coronavirus - a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste - we urge you to get tested to protect yourself and the people around you. Please get tested within the first 3-5 days of symptoms.

A range of testing options will be available over the holiday period including on the Bank Holidays; however, as availability will be slightly different during the Christmas break, people are advised to check the latest information and availability at www.bury.gov.uk/coronavirus-testing or by calling 119.

Isolation

Self-isolating in an appropriate and timely way is one of the best lines of defence we have against the spread of coronavirus.

If you're asked to self-isolate, please comply. If you have any of the symptoms of coronavirus, please isolate immediately and get tested. And, once you have had a coronavirus test, please go home and stay there until you receive your result and then act accordingly.

The Bury Community Hubs can help with shopping or collecting prescriptions for those who are self-isolating: call 0161 253 5353 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) for information.

Financial support for individuals, including those who are self-isolating

A scheme that offers a one-off £500 payment to those asked to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Track and Trace is open for applications. Aimed at those on low incomes, a payment will be made to people who cannot work from home and will lose income as a result. Further details and an application form are available at www.bury.gov.uk/isolation-payments

For those experiencing financial difficulty, the Government's website offers help and advice. Find out more here: [gov.uk/coronavirus/worker-support](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/worker-support)

Helping people through the toughest time

As Tier 3 restrictions continue, there are people who need assistance, both financial and practical. Bury's public, voluntary, community and faith services are here to help.

Support for clinically extremely vulnerable residents continues through the Bury Community Hubs. Bury Council continues to support clinically extremely vulnerable residents, non-shielding vulnerable residents and residents who need to self-isolate. Support can be given with food shopping and collecting prescriptions as well as telephone befriending and support to get online for things like priority supermarket delivery slots.

The Community Hubs are working with partners in mental health, Bury VCFA, Citizen's Advice Bureau, Age UK and Bury Community Support Network which includes access to foodbanks in Bury. We have a network of individual volunteers in every part of Bury who we can 'buddy' you up with for regular chats, support to get online, help to collect your prescriptions and medication, and they can help with your shopping too.

Call 0161 253 5353 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) for information or to talk to us about what support you might need. **Christmas hours will apply.**

Unpaid Carers

Are you 18+ and currently helping a loved one, friend or neighbour aged 18+ with day-to-day tasks like:

- Shopping?
- Collecting prescriptions?
- Checking that they are safe?
- Supporting a vulnerable adult?

Unpaid carers have been hit especially hard by the pandemic. Many are continuing to provide extraordinary hours of care for loved ones with increasing needs, without the usual help from family and friends and with limited or no support from local services.

The Bury Carers' Hub provides a single point of access for adult carers who are caring for an adult Bury resident. The team will work directly with the individual carer to discuss their concerns and needs and provide information, advice and support.

Contact the **Bury Carers' Hub** for free personalised support:

Telephone: 0300 303 0207 (calls charged at local rate)

Text: 07786 201226

General email: enquiries@burycarershub.org.uk

Website: www.burycarershub.org.uk

Online chat: www.n-compass.org.uk/services/carers-support

Address: FREEPOST Bury Carers' Hub

Mental health support

Coronavirus means that life has changed for all of us for a while, 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, Monday to Saturday, 8am to 8pm (different hours over Christmas). Find out about other mental wellbeing support at www.bury.gov.uk/mentalwellbeing

Grants for business

The processing and paying out of support grants available to businesses that have been affected most by local restrictions and lockdown continues.

The council's Bury Means Business team is working hard to get £3m worth of Local Restrictions Support Grants and £4m of Additional Restrictions Grants to eligible businesses.

As Additional Restrictions Grant funding is to remain in place until March 2022, we would urge businesses to read the guidance carefully before applying, and we thank everyone for their patience as we focus on getting payments out as quickly as possible.

Businesses can check their grant eligibility on the council's website at <https://www.bury.gov.uk/covid19grants>

The council's dedicated Bury Means Business team is here to help all businesses with advice and support during the pandemic: go to <https://burymeansbusiness.bury.gov.uk/> for more details.

Bury 2030 – last chance to have your say

Have your say on our plans for the future of jobs, health, education and the environment over the next decade and beyond.

The Bury 2030 masterplan proposes a new relationship between local communities, commerce, the council and public service providers. Implementing the masterplan will be a key factor in our borough's recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

To get involved, give your views and to read the full strategy go to <https://www.onecommunitybury.co.uk/bury-2030>.

Consultation closes: 24 December.

Christmas updates

The next planned bulletin will go out on Thursday 7 January, 2021 but should there be any updates to key information we will issue an interim bulletin. We will also be keeping the council's [bury.gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.bury.gov.uk/coronavirus) pages up to date as well as social media feeds.

Wishing you a peaceful festive season.

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