

# COVID-19 Suffolk Weekly Briefing

30<sup>th</sup> September 2020

## Summary

- The national alert level for the UK in relation to COVID-19 has increased to level **4**.
- In the 7 days up to the 24<sup>th</sup> September, there have been 47 new cases of COVID-19 in Suffolk. This is a small increase on the numbers in the previous week.
- The rate of new weekly cases in Suffolk remains relatively low, at 6.96 cases per 100,000 people. This is below the rates for the East of England region and for England as a whole.
- In total, up to the 18<sup>th</sup> September, there have been 565 deaths in Suffolk where COVID-19 was recorded on the death certificate. There has been 1 COVID-19 related death in the last 7 days.
- The estimated 'R' value for the East of England is between 1.1 and 1.3. which has increased in the last week, in line with increases seen across England.

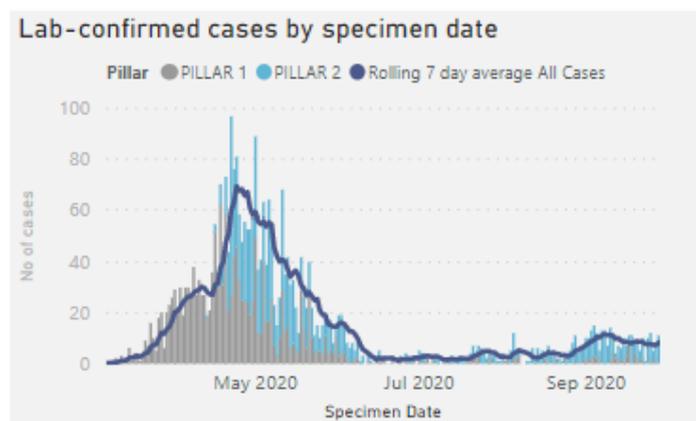
## National alert levels

The UK has increased to alert level **4** in relation to COVID-19.

## Weekly cases and rates

COVID-19 cases are identified by taking specimens from people and sending them to laboratories around the UK to be tested. If the test is positive this is referred to as a lab-confirmed case.

In the week 18<sup>th</sup> September – 24<sup>th</sup> September there were **47** new lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Suffolk. This is slightly higher than the previous week, but remains a relatively low number. The 7 day rolling average case number (the dark blue line on the graph below) is stable in Suffolk and remains low overall.



It is also 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 weekly case rate in Suffolk was 6.96 cases per 100,000 people. This is currently the lowest weekly COVID-19 case rate in the East of England.

In the last week in Suffolk, 13 of the cases were diagnosed in West Suffolk, 16 in East Suffolk, 9 in Ipswich, 7 in Mid Suffolk and 2 in Babergh.

## Total cases and rates

As of the 24<sup>th</sup> September there have been **3,081** total lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Suffolk. In total there have been 405 cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 people. This remains the second lowest overall COVID-19 case rate in the East of England, with only Norfolk lower than Suffolk.

## 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 shouldn't 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 – the East of England currently has one of the lowest rates in England. (Source: University of Cambridge MRC Biostatistics Unit).

**Regional R Value as at 29 September 2020**

Region	R value	Growth rate % per day
East of England	1.1-1.3	+1 to +4
London	1.2-1.5	+4 to +9
Midlands	1.2-1.5	+3 to +7
North East and Yorkshire	1.2-1.5	+4 to +8
North West	1.2-1.5	+3 to +9
South East	1.0-1.3	+1 to +5
South West	1.1-1.4	+1 to +6
England	1.2-1.5	+4 to +8

## Death Registrations to 18<sup>th</sup> September 2020

In Suffolk, there have been 565 deaths which mention COVID-19 in total. There has been 1 COVID-19 death in the most recent week of data. Currently deaths caused by other causes than COVID-19 are occurring at similar levels compared to the five year average for Suffolk.

## Contact Tracing

The majority of contact tracing as part of test and trace in Suffolk is being done by Public Health England and the NHS Test and Trace Service, with the Suffolk Public Health team involved in some more complex cases. In the data as of 30<sup>th</sup> September, 77.5% of all Suffolk cases had completed the test and trace process, higher than the England average of 73.9%. 64.7% of Suffolk contacts of cases have completed the NHS test and trace process, with the overall percentage of contacts completing the test and trace process rising to 88.7% once the contacts managed by PHE and locally are included. This is higher than the England average of 75.3%.