

# Covid-19 Update

## Cabinet 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021

- Update on Covid-19 London and Harrow
- Key policy developments re Omicron Variant
- Announcement to move to Plan B on 8<sup>th</sup> December
- Council response to Covid-19
  - Covid-19 related activity
  - Winter Planning and Plan B
- Overview of service pressures and organisational challenges
- Testing Update
- Vaccination update
- Questions

- Overall Covid-19 cases are high and increasing in Harrow
- Harrow is now 374.5 cases per 100k people – cases continue to rise
- Significant reduction in impact of Covid-19 on hospitalisation due to vaccination but pressures on NHS and Social Care continues
- Identification of Omicron variant of concern drove initial additional measures and policy changes re vaccination
- Yesterday announcement of a full move to Plan B in respect of Winter Plan
- Council has significant role in supporting many aspects of the additional measures in respect of Omicron and general situation
- Significant focus on service pressures and recovery going forward

# Harrow Covid-19 Dashboard

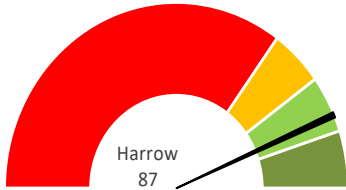


## Harrow COVID 19 Dashboard

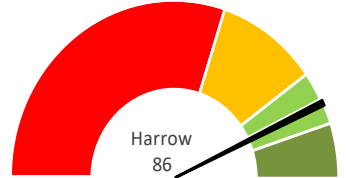
**Report date:** 09/12/2021  
**Data from:** November 27 2021 to December 3 2021

Confirmed Positive Cases (all ages) in 7 days to 03/12/2021 **945**  
 % Change in past 7 days **15%**  
*Interim positive cases (all ages) in 7 days to 8/12/2021* **952**  
 Confirmed Positive Cases (age 60+ ) in 7 days to 03/12/2021 **50**  
 % Change in past 7 days **25%**

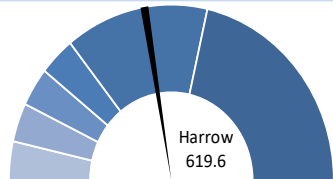
Test and Trace Cases (cumulative) % Complete



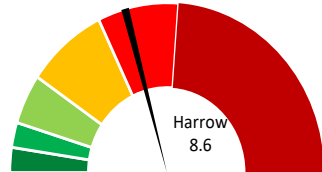
Test and Trace Contacts (cumulative) % Complete



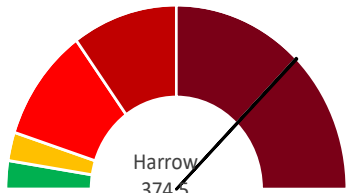
PCR Testing rate per 100,000



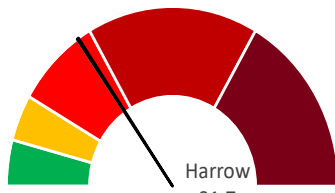
PCR Test Positivity rate



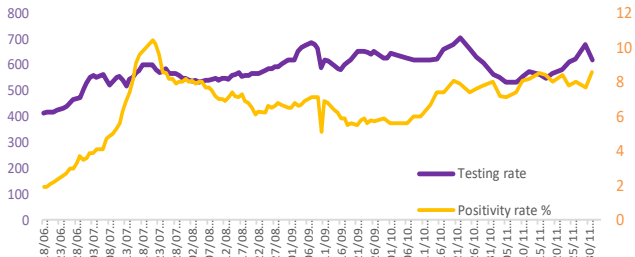
Incidence rate (all ages) in past 7 days per 100,000



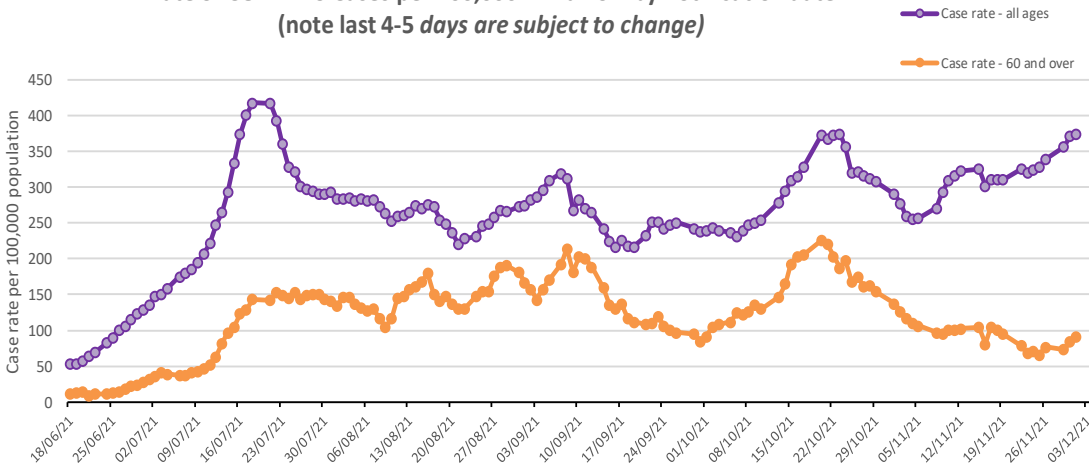
Incidence - 7 days in 60 and over per 100,000



Trends in PCR testing rates and test positivity



Rate of COVID-19 Cases per 100,000 in Harrow by notification date (note last 4-5 days are subject to change)



Harrow is currently in 23rd position out of the 33 London boroughs, The rate in all ages is increasing and the rate in over 60s also starting to increase again

**Hospitalisations:** 12 people with coronavirus went into hospital on 28 November 2021. Between 22 November 2021 and 28 November 2021, 48 went into hospital with coronavirus. This shows a decrease of -21.3% compared to the previous 7 days. There were 88 patients in hospital with coronavirus on 30 November 2021. There were 10 coronavirus patients in hospital beds with a mechanical ventilator on 30 November 2021.

**Deaths:** Between 30 November 2021 and 6 December 2021, there have been 2 deaths within 28 days of a positive coronavirus test.

- Initial response to Omicron and wider context of Delta cases and Winter led to a number of significant policy changes
- Reintroduction of face-coverings in retail and transport
- Updated advice to schools re masks in communal areas
- Changes to travel requirements including expansion of Red List, Quarantine Hotels and PCR Tests for returning travellers
- Major changes to the vaccination programme including expanding the booster programmes to all over 18's and 2<sup>nd</sup> doses for 12-15 year olds
- A reduction in the time between booster vaccinations from 6 months to 3 months
- Overall strategy to maximise protection via vaccination and slow spread of covid in advance of Winter and potential spread of Omicron Variant

- On 8<sup>th</sup> December Government announced that the response to Covid-19 required the implementation of Plan B
- This was a result of the rapid increase in cases of the Omicron Variant and the potential for this to result in greater hospitalisation and pressures on the NHS
- The key aspects of Plan B include
  - From 10<sup>th</sup> December face masks will be a legal requirement in most indoor public venues
  - From 13<sup>th</sup> December guidance to work from home where this is possible
  - From 15<sup>th</sup> December Covid-19 pass will be required for nightclubs and other venues including unseated indoor events of over 500 people, unseated outdoor events of over 4000 people and any event over 10,000 people
  - Introduction of daily tests rather than isolation for contacts of Omicron cases
- Detailed guidance will follow over next few days and measures subject to a Parliamentary vote on 14<sup>th</sup> December
- New regulations will last for 6 weeks with a review after 3 weeks

- The move to Plan B has major implications for the Council
- Pandemic response continues to be a major focus and will continue to be for many months – predicted at least through 2022
- Activity continues on key areas including testing, vaccination and isolation support
- Significant demand on services due to Covid-19 especially social care, environment, benefits and via the community hub
- The demand on services is causing both a capacity and financial pressure in the system and is likely to grow as Winter approaches especially in Social Care
- The vaccination programme is very important and requires ongoing Council support for c6months
- Additional measures re Omicron have further increased the pressure and importance of Council response to Covid-19

# Overview of Service Pressures

- Very positive that in many respects society and services have returned to pre Covid-19 “normality”
- However, the direct and indirect impacts of Covid-19 remains significant for many Council services
- Greatest direct impact is on Adult Social Care where volumes and complexity are both high and increasing
- Children’s Social Care has seen many more Children in Need putting pressure on social work capacity and budgets
- High levels of pent up demand in environmental services, council tax and benefits and housing
- Recovery in areas such as supporting business, education and mental health is driving a significant amount of activity
- Pressure on staff in all services due to pandemic and recovery is high



- As a result of the Omicron variant people are being encouraged to test routinely using LFD home tests, especially before work, education and attending social gatherings
- Our Covid Information pop up continues to operate at various locations across the borough handing out approx. 2500 home test kits/week to those unable to order online and encourage the registration of results
- We now have 29 voluntary and community groups and council services signed up to the Community Collect network to hand out home test kits to some of our more vulnerable residents
- The business plan for Community Testing between Jan – March 2022 will be submitted to UKHSA in December – we will continue with: Pharmacy supervised testing, Covid Information pop up and the Community Collect Network

- Entering a period of concern with high levels of the Delta variant, a period of increased indoor social mixing and the new Omicron variant
- Whilst the impact of Omicron is not yet known increased vaccination is seen as key in managing this
- The Vaccination Programmes is therefore needing to accelerate based on the following assumptions:
  - boosters will be given at 3 months post second vaccination
  - all over 18s will be eligible - will be rolled out in each cohorts
  - all eligible people to have been vaccinated by end January
  - need to maintain focus on first vaccination including 12-15, 2nd vaccination and flu
  - 2nd vaccination for 12-15 will start in January through schools and primary care etc.
  - No announcement re 5-11

# Vaccination Update

- Harrow targets are as follows:
  - Nearly 80,000 boosters to be delivered to hit end of January
  - Works out as just under 10,000 per week over the 8 weeks to end of January
  - On top of this, capacity is still required to deliver first and second doses

The Council is working with the NHS to support increases in capacity to hit these targets:

- Civic 5 will act as a vaccination site from Fridays to Mondays from 10<sup>th</sup> December, with capacity to do 2,300 over the four day period (other sites being explored)
- Byron Hall has now closed as a vaccination centre, but the Masefield Suite in the Leisure Centre will be acting as a 'pop-up' from Thursdays to Sundays from January 2022 for first doses, second doses and boosters, either walk-ins or bookings
- Nine pharmacies offering vaccinations across the borough (boosters as well as first and seconds) - which can be booked via the NHS National Booking Site or walk-ins – with some pharmacies being able to increase their capacity to deliver
- Focus of our Covid Awareness Fund still on those who have not had a first dose, especially our Black heritage and Romanian Communities, with new funding secured from NHS to roll out further rounds in 2022
- NHS Communications Campaigns being rolled out which also include the importance of Flu Vaccination t

# Vaccination Uptake in Harrow



Cohort	1 <sup>st</sup> Vaccination	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vaccination (as % of first doses)
Care home residents	94%	92%
Over 80's	93%	98%
75-79	92%	98%
70-74	90%	98%
CEVs	91%	98%
65-69's	88%	98%
60-64	84%	98%
55-59	80%	98%
50-54	76%	97%
40-49	69%	96%
30-39	59%	93%
18-29	59%	89%
16-17	54%	42.5%
12-15	43%	0%

Overall **91%** of people who have had a first dose have had their second dose, making Harrow the best performer in North West London.

On the **Booster Campaign**, Harrow is the best performer in North West London with **81,501** delivered, with over 85% of those aged 65+ and 60% of over 50s in Harrow having now already had their booster

- Covid-19 case rates are high but serious illness and hospitalisation remains lower as a result of vaccination programme
- The emergence of the Omicron Variant and associated policy changes is a very significant development
- The key focus for Council is supporting the vaccination programme and the increase in pace and scale associated with this
- Council also supporting the Winter Plan response re delivery of social care
- Planning for recovery and ensuring capacity and resilience is in place is a key focus
- Service pressures are significant and seriously stretching the organisation
- Covid-19 will continue to dominate Council's work and priorities for many months challenging organisational and staff resilience

## Cabinet is requested to agree the following:

- Authorise a further 3 month extension to the contract with Number8 Events for the continued provision of Community Testing in line with the anticipated extension of the Community Testing programme until end March 2022. The estimated value is: £90k
- To note that the estimated cost of extending Harrow's Community Testing Programme until the end of March 2021, which includes: staffing, contractors, consumables, waste and communications is £262k which is under the rate card cap.
- To note that the costs of the Community Testing programme are reimbursed by Government on a monthly basis up to a rate card maximum, any costs above the cap are funded through the COMF grant.