

# COVID 19 Update

October 2020



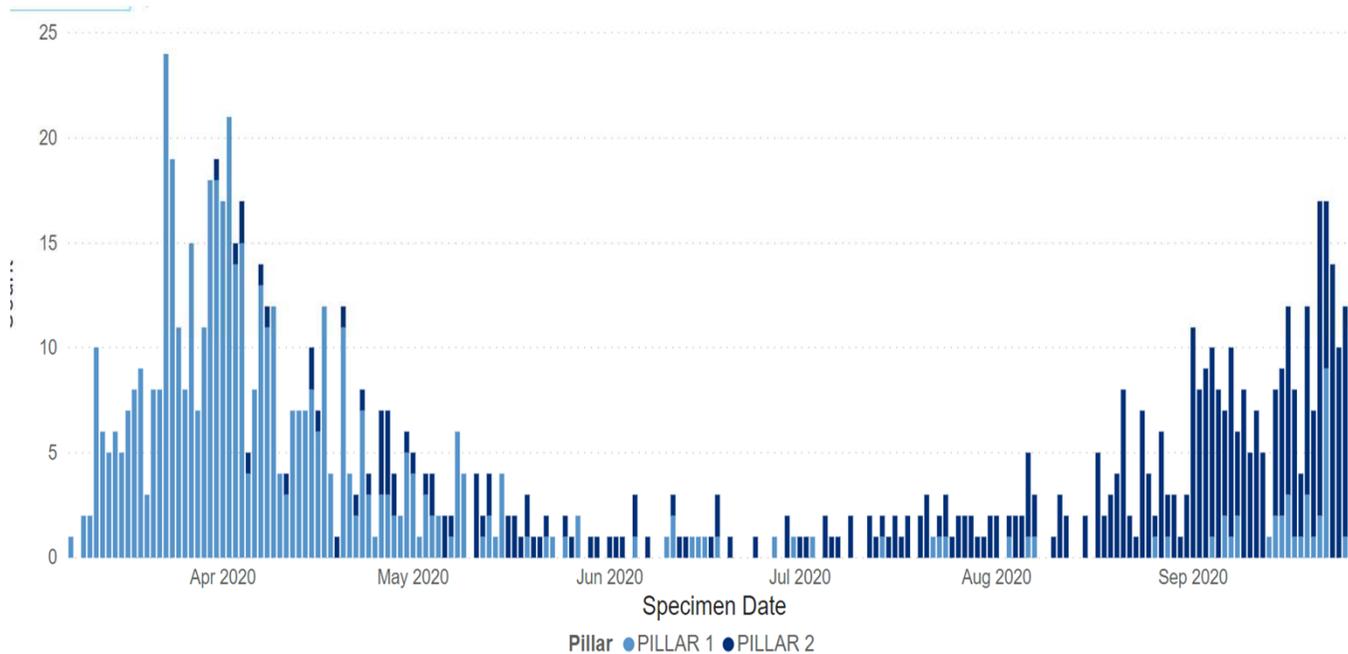
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# Brief summary of national and local impact of COVID- 19 to date

# COVID-19 Cases in Islington



- As of 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2020, there are a total of 903 laboratory confirmed cases in Islington.

- The average number of new daily cases peaked from 29 March – 4 April 2020 at 17 cases.

- Over the last 4 weeks the average number of new daily cases has increased.

It should be borne in mind that over this time the eligibility and availability of testing has increased dramatically, so early on many symptomatic cases will not have been tested.

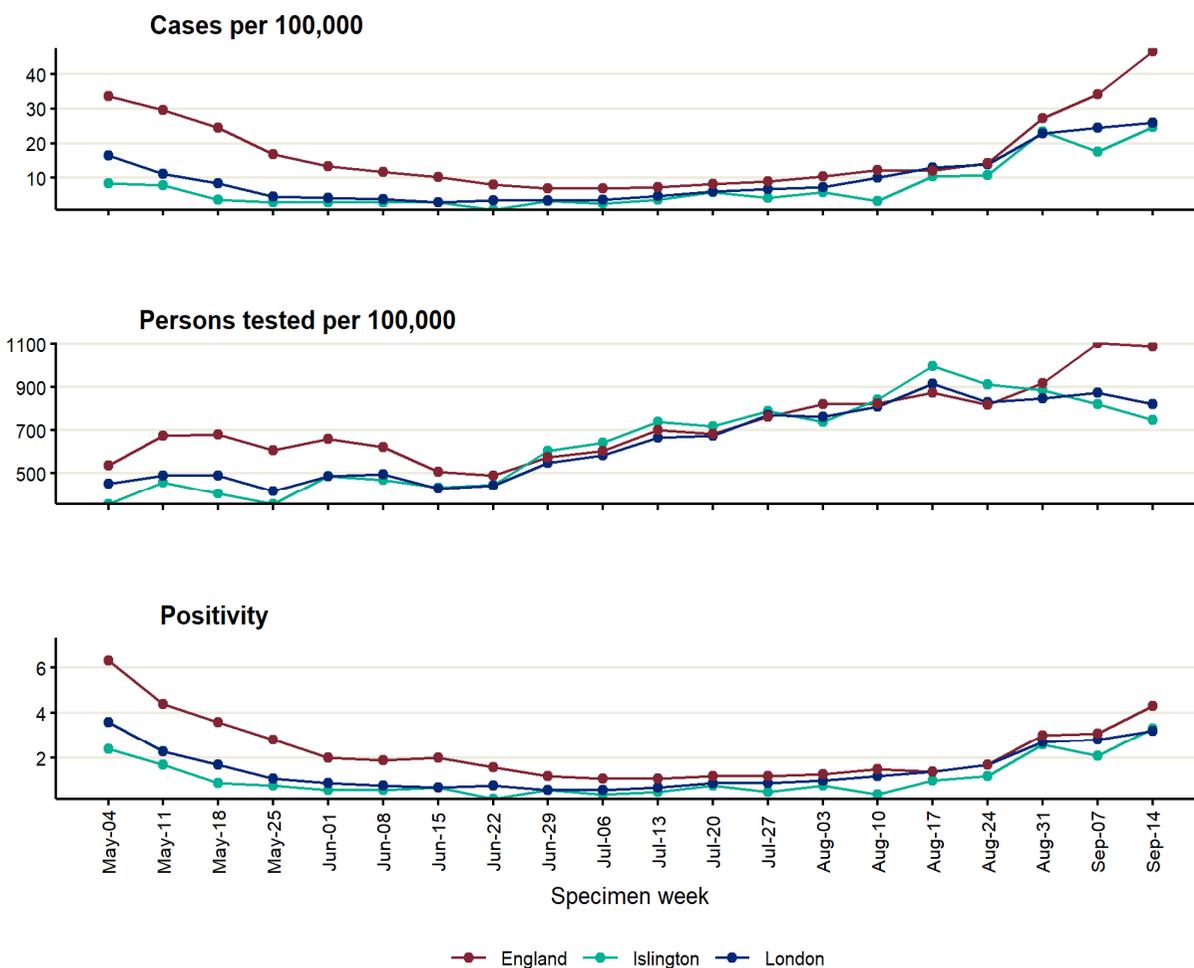
Area	Cumulative number of cases as of 30/09/2020	Cumulative rate of cases per 100,000 as of 30/09/2020	Latest 7 day incidence rate per 100,000 (18th of September to 24 <sup>th</sup> of September)
Islington	903	372	33.9
London	49,333	550	35
England	382, 686	679	58.5



# Persons tested and cases diagnosed per 100,000 population and positivity per week in Islington, London, and England (May 5th 2020 to September 20th 2020)



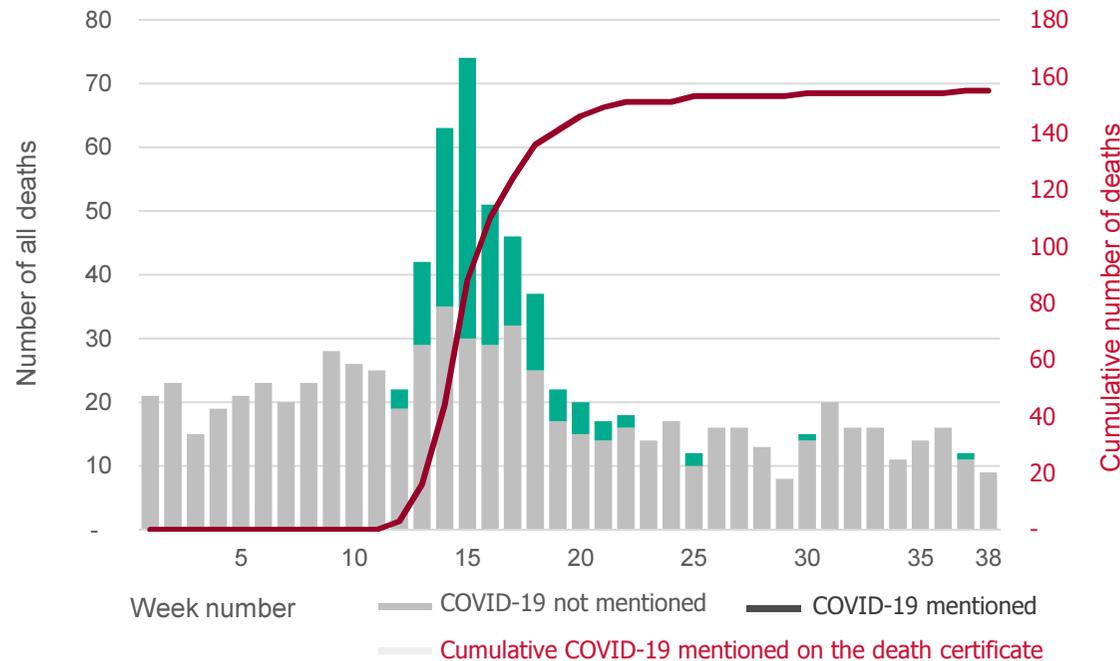
ISLINGTON



- The rate of positive Covid cases in Islington has been increasing since beginning of August but remains lower than that of England.
- Islington is showing a decline in the rate of persons tested per 100,000 since mid August whilst overall in England there is a rise in testing rates.
- Positivity rates in Islington are similar to that of London at about 4%.



**Deaths by cause of death (weekly numbers and cumulative), for deaths that occurred up to 18 September 2020 but were registered up to 26 September 2020 by week,**



- A total of 155 deaths in Islington have been COVID-19 related, up to 4 September 2020.
- In Islington, the number of COVID-19 related deaths peaked during the week of 4 April – 10 April at 42 deaths and has fallen steadily since.
- There has been 1 death in the week to the 11<sup>th</sup> of September.



## Contact Tracing

Between the 28<sup>th</sup> May when NHS Test and Trace service began and up until 30<sup>th</sup> September, in Islington they have identified:

**419** cases



**78%** of cases have been successfully contacted (London & England 74%)

who had been in close contact with



and of the contacts identified

**1118**  
contacts



**71%** of contacts have been successfully contacted (London 71% and England 75%)



The key challenges and  
priorities over the next 6-9  
months

# Strengthening Islington's COVID-19 Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan



- Building on Islington's COVID-19 Prevention and Outbreak Control Plan, we continue to progress a broad range of activities and programmes of work to prevent and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and enhance our resilience for winter, working with our local and sub-regional partners
- Ensuring we maintain a systemic focus on understanding and preventing inequalities and disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 itself and the measures to control and contain the virus will continue to be a central focus of the response
- We have stepped up our Council and Borough emergency response GOLD arrangements
- Key areas of action and work happening across the council and with our partners include:



## Older people's care homes – current situation ISLINGTON

- **In line with recent national reports of increased cases of COVID-19 in care homes, we are beginning to see a small increase in the number of COVID-19 cases amongst care home staff and residents locally in Islington, following a period over the summer where homes were largely COVID-free.**
- Since the start of September, all care homes in the borough have been completing weekly testing of staff and monthly testing of residents, and this is helping identify infection early where staff and residents are asymptomatic.
- **In comparison to the first wave, care homes are better placed to respond.** All homes now have consistent access to PPE to use in all close contacts with residents and are trained in its proper use; they have improved access to testing; and wider infection prevention and control measures are now well embedded.
- **There have been no new COVID-19 related deaths in our care homes for fifteen weeks now.**
- **Staffing levels remain generally stable.**
- **ASC commissioners continue to work closely with Public Health, providers, and partners to monitor the care home situation and ensure all appropriate steps are taken to keep residents and staff safe**



# Key issues

- Testing access and capacity

- At the current time, there is increased demand for testing across the country, including in Islington. Access to testing through the National Testing Programme remains an issue and prioritisation of testing capacity away from London to higher incidence areas has impacted on testing access locally.
- The council is working with key local partners, including North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group, to actively consider options to increase access to testing locally, whilst a national solution is awaited. Nationally, DHSC plan to scale up testing capacity further to 500,000 tests a day by the end of October.
- Communications to residents has highlighted the current issues with access to testing through the National Testing Programme; encouraged those who develop symptoms to try to access a test; and provided appropriate public health advice, should people be unable to access to a test within the first 5 days of developing symptoms.
- There has been positive progress with identifying a location for a walk-in testing site in Islington to increase accessibility of COVID-19 testing within the community. A local testing site located in a designated area of the car park at the Sobell leisure centre will be fully operational from 4<sup>th</sup> October. Another site to cover the south of the borough will be considered at a later stage.

- Local contact tracing

- Local contact tracing focuses on contacting those individuals who have tested positive, and have not been successfully contacted by the national service within 24 hours.
- The national system remains responsible for follow up of the contacts thus identified.
- Arrangements for outbreaks and complex situations do not change – responsibility remains with PHE's specialist health protection service working with local public health and environmental health teams.
- A Task & Finish Group has been convened to plan for the 'go live' of locally supported contact tracing, building on a national checklist and our own local work, ensuring approaches are safe, effective and support and reassure our communities.
- The national system is working with local teams across the country in a phased way to 'go live' systematically.

# Key issues

- **Preventing and mitigating disproportionate impacts**

- A consistent and systematic focus on mitigating further disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 on our diverse communities sits at the heart of our Islington COVID-19 outbreak prevention and control plan and the continued work and next steps.
- Beyond the immediate and critically important measures that we will take to prevent and mitigate further disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 in the short term, we are also developing an action plan to tackle long-standing health inequalities experienced by people from Black, Asian and other ethnic backgrounds, as part of the Council's Challenging Inequality programme

- **Communications and engagement**

- We have established a COVID-19 communications and community engagement group and work plan, kept continuously under review, to help coordinate and drive this critical aspect of local activity
- There are many and various communication channels to the community as a whole, with specific groups, and targeted to different settings.
- Analysis of our resident survey and engagement is giving deeper quantitative and qualitative insight into the impacts and experience of COVID-19 in Islington.
- A major Keep Islington Safe (Keep London Safe) campaign is underway currently. The council has set up a resources page on its website – including posters, translations etc., which other organisations and groups can access and are encouraged to use. We are offering and rolling out training across communities for COVID-19 Health Champions

- **Supporting schools and higher/further education**

- The council continues to support our schools and higher/further education institutions both in terms of supporting settings to operate safely and supporting individuals and families to access the information and support they need, in particular BAME and vulnerable families.
- Ensuring continued communication and accurate COVID-19 data and information flow, including through delivery of webinars, routine presence at heads forum, and availability for individual queries remains central to this work.
- Settings are provided with advice and support on infection prevention and control including actions to take if there is a suspected COVID-19 case; ongoing support during an outbreak; support for decisions and communications in the event of partial or full closure of school or nursery; and support to engage in Test and Trace. We are currently reviewing all our Higher Education institutions outbreak plans.
- Supporting families sits at the heart of this work, and engagement with families, both directly and through Parent and Health Champions, to understand their needs and concerns and signpost those who require support to council and VCS services remains a priority.

