Suffolk County Council news release
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**East and West Suffolk added to Covid-19 watchlist**

East and West Suffolk have been placed on an East of England watchlist by Public Health England, due to a continuing rise of Covid-19 cases.

Areas which are seeing a rise of cases are Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill, Newmarket, Beccles, Bungay, Felixstowe and Lowestoft.

Data for cases of Covid-19 shows: (correct as of 7 October 2020)

* West Suffolk
	+ Rate per 100,000 (in the last 7 days) - 33.00
	+ Cases in last 7 days - 43
	+ Cumulative - 702
* East Suffolk
	+ Rate per 100,000 (in the last 7 days) - 30.9
	+ Cases in last 7 days - 46
	+ Cumulative - 1,073
* Rate per 100,000 (in the last 7 days)
	+ Suffolk - 26.93
	+ England - 108.7
	+ East of England - 41.1

The rise in cases comes from across the community and is not specifically linked to a certain group of people, or type of workplace.

Stuart Keeble, director of Public Health Suffolk, said:

“Unfortunately, the number of cases in the county, particularly in East and West Suffolk, has continued to increase. This is a shot across Suffolk’s bows and means that we all need to sit up and pay attention – Covid-19 is circulating in our communities.

“But the good news is that we can quickly bring numbers back down again by using our common sense and stop the virus from spreading.”

Matthew Hicks, Leader of Suffolk County Council, and Chair of the Local Outbreak Engagement Board said:

“I ask that all Suffolk residents, especially those in East and West Suffolk, remind themselves of the importance of washing your hands, covering your face and keeping your distance from others.

“We simply must stop the transmission of the virus between people. You can still meet people you don’t live with, in groups of up to six – but you must still keep two metres apart. We are not living in normal times: if you’re visiting the shops, don’t stand directly next to others in the checkout queue or when browsing shelves; give people space when passing in the street; if you visit somewhere that looks busy, come back later.

“Residents in East and West Suffolk have done exceptionally well to keep the number of cases to some of the lowest in the country. However, if we simply carry on as we are, we will be moving towards the tougher restrictions which we are seeing elsewhere in the country.”

Steve Gallant, Leader of East Suffolk Council, said:

“The communities of East Suffolk have been incredibly vigilant throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, however there has been a slight rise in numbers locally as we experience a nationwide increase in infection.

“At this stage, we are not being asked to follow any new or stricter guidelines than those currently in place – however we do want everyone to continue being as careful as possible and to ensure that numbers to do not continue to increase in a way that may cause us greater concern.

“Please remember the ‘rule of six’ and avoid gathering in groups larger than six people. Also remember “hands, face, space”, so please maintain the best possible health and hygiene standards by washing your hands regularly, wearing a mask and maintaining a two-metre distance from people wherever possible.

“It is clear that we are not suffering the same level of infection as other parts of the country and I am very proud of the efforts made by everyone in East Suffolk. However, we simply cannot let our guard down and allow the virus to take a greater hold. We must not take any chances in our battle with Covid-19.”

John Griffiths, Leader of West Suffolk Council, said:

“Public Health England has put West and East Suffolk on a watch list due to the percentage rise in COVID-19 cases in our areas. I want to reassure you that numbers are lower than many places in the country due to our communities doing what they do best and looking out for one another. But at the moment the rise in cases is serious and steep which is why we all need to play our part in tackling the further spread of COVID-19.

“By following simple rules – sticking to the rule of six guidance, washing your hands, using a facemask and leaving space to stay safe - we all can help prevent the spread. If unsure, guidance can be found on the websites of the Government, Public Health England and the NHS. Every single one of us has it in our gift to help stop the spread and protect our loved ones and community. By simply spreading the word you can reduce the spread of COVID-19. Stick with it West Suffolk and carry on doing your bit to help keep us all, and yourselves, safe.”

If you experience any of the recognised Covid-19 symptoms, you must immediately book a test and begin self-isolating. If you cannot book a test straight away, be patient and keep trying. You have up to eight days to take your test from when you first experience symptoms.

Symptoms are:

* a high temperature
* a new, continuous cough
* a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

You can book a free test by visiting the [NHS website](https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) or calling NHS 119.

For the latest information on coronavirus and how to stay safe, visit [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

**ENDS**

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