

These are the key messages for today:

COVID-19 Community Testing

We're in the final stages of setting up the Royal Borough's community testing sites for people who cannot work from home because their roles are public facing – those who encounter people because of their job. This is not for anyone who simply fancies a test or already has symptoms.

The aim is to find those who've been infected with the virus but aren't showing symptoms, to drive down the infection rate. If we identify them early, they can self-isolate.

The tests being used are called Lateral Flow Tests (LTF) which are fast. Their results take only 30 minutes then and there. They don't need to be sent to a laboratory which can take up to 48 hours for the results to come back.

We'll be publicising the full details of who will be offered LTFs and how they can access them, in the next week or so. We'll do this via our website, in our residents' e-newsletter, and on our social media - so keep a lookout.

Hospital data in England

To give you an idea of the horrendous scale of England's COVID-19 hospital numbers, see the patient numbers below. They speak for themselves and underline, if someone asks, why we all need to stay home:

- Sept – 500
- Nov – 9,000
- Dec – 17,000
- Yesterday – 35,000. And at least at least a quarter of those currently in critical care are aged under 55
- For the Royal Borough's hospital statistics visit: www.berkshirepublichealth.co.uk and click on the 'information centre' top right of the screen and then 'weekly reports'