

Director of Public Health
Dr S.J Louise Smith, MB, ChB, PHD, FFPH



All Households in parishes of Diss and
Roydon

Norfolk County Council
Public Health Service
County Hall, Martineau Lane
Norwich NR1 2DH

www.norfolk.gov.uk/coronavirus

18 February 2021

Dear Resident

Please take the time to read this letter in full.

COVID-19: New South Africa variant confirmed in the Diss area

I'd like to ask for your help. A very small number of South Africa variant cases of Covid-19 have been found in the Diss area. We would like to test as many adults living or working in Diss and Roydon parishes as soon as possible. We call this testing approach 'surge testing' and we do this to see if the variant is more widely spread in the community.

Norfolk County Council and South Norfolk District Council are working with NHS Test and Trace to offer a COVID-19 test to all residents in the area over the next two weeks.

Overall, the number of cases in South Norfolk is falling and there is no reason for local people to be worried by this increased testing. There is no evidence that this variant causes more severe illness than others. The most important thing is that people continue to follow the guidance that is in place: limit your number of contacts, wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds, keep your distance, cover your face and stick to the lockdown rules.

What action do I need to take? Everyone living or working in the parishes of Diss and Roydon aged 16+ are strongly encouraged to take a COVID-19 test. This includes people with or without COVID symptoms.

Why is this important? The more cases of the variant we find, the better chance we have at containing it. Please help us to keep you, your loved ones and your community safe by getting tested so we can find the South Africa variant. Also, we know that viruses change over time and this extra testing will be used by scientists to find out more information about the genetic code of the virus in Norfolk to help us assess what action may need to be taken.

If you test positive, have any symptoms, or are contact traced following contact with someone who tests positive, you and your household should self-isolate immediately. If you need help to self-isolate visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/coronavirus or call 0344 800 8020.

How can I get access to a test? Whether you have COVID symptoms or not, everyone aged 16+ who live or work in the parishes of Diss and Roydon need to get tested in one of the following ways so we can make sure these tests are checked for the South African variant:

1. Mobile Testing Unit

You can book a test at the one of the following extra Mobile Testing Units at:

- Diss youth and community centre, (19 February - 25 February 09:00 – 15:00)
- Roydon Community Centre (19 February - 04 March 12:00 – 18:00)
- Diss leisure Centre (19 February - 04 March 09:00 – 15:00)

You need to book your test at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test.

If you don't have COVID symptoms click 'yes' when asked 'is the person who needs a test part of a trial or government project?' and then select 'taking part in community testing'

If you have COVID symptoms follow the instructions on the website and choose one of the Mobile Testing Units listed above and drive to the testing centre if you can. If you can't arrive by car, please call 01508 533 933 and we will drop off a test off at your home.

2. Pick up and drop off a testing kit to take home

From Friday 19 February you can pick up and drop off a testing kit from the below places. No appointment needed. Please do not return testing kits in the post box:

- Midwich Ltd, Vince's Rd, Diss IP22 4YT 09.00 – 19.00
- Outside Roydon White Hart / Roydon church 09.00 – 19.00

3. Door to door testing

If you are unable to get to a Mobile Testing Unit or collect a testing kit to take home, we can drop off a test to your door. If you need support to carry out the test, we can arrange for someone to visit your home to help you. Please call 01508 533 933.

To protect you from the risk of scams, officers will wear a high visibility uniform with a very visible logo, PPE and visible identification. No one will ask you for any payment of any kind or any bank details. If in any doubt, please ask them for identification or call 01508 533 933.

If you or someone in your household have been identified as being clinically extremely vulnerable, please do not go out to access a test– someone will drop a test at your door.

What should I do if I already have symptoms? If you have COVID symptoms you should still get tested either by booking at one of the Mobile Testing Units above and attending in a car, or by requesting door to door testing by calling 01508 533 933.

What if I've recently tested positive for COVID-19? If you've tested positive with a PCR test in the past 90 days you do not need to take another test. If you have tested positive with the rapid test (where you get results in 30 minutes), you need to take a test again using the ways listed above.

I'm still concerned, what would you do in my situation? Having worked in this field for twenty years, I would take the test. And I encourage you and your family, friends and co-workers to take a COVID-19 test too. Please keep up the key measures to prevent spread - hands, face, space. Thank you for your help to help us understand whether community transmission the new variant from South Africa is taking place.

I am holding a virtual public meeting on Monday 22 February at 12:00 to answer any questions you may have. For more information on how to join visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/surgetesting

Yours sincerely



Dr S.J Louise Smith
Director of Public Health



If you would like this information in large print or in an alternative version, please contact us on **0344 800 8020** and we will do our best to provide it.