

Annex E

Birmingham COVID-19 Test and Trace Communications and Engagement Plan

1. Background

Test and Trace is an important part of the local control of COVID-19 infections and outbreaks and a key aspect of this programme is engaging with communities to promote awareness and understanding of the programme.

Our local COVID-19 Communication and Engagement Plan is focussed on supporting our communities to control the transmission of COVID-19 infections through appropriate and timely communication channels and engagement with various community groups to promote awareness and understanding of COVID-19 and risk reduction measures to minimise the spread of the virus.

This approach builds on the existing engagement and communication approach during the COVID-19 pandemic working across the city with communities of geography and identity using various methods of communication both directly and through partners to spread messages and increase engagement.

This plan is primarily for Test and Trace communications and engagement as part of the wider communications workstream by Public Health and the Corporate Communications Teams. Any outbreak response communications will be managed through a separate plan.

2. Aims and objectives for the Covid Outbreak Management Communication and Engagement Plan

Our overarching aim is to promote awareness and understanding of COVID-19 and uptake of effective risk reduction measures to minimise transmission and the wider impact of COVID-19.

We are refreshing this plan to achieve the following key objectives:

- **Support understanding and awareness of guidance and control measures**
 - Support residents in citizens, our communities, in high-risk settings such as health and social care, and in other settings like education settings and workplaces understand COVID-19 risks, the actions they should take to reduce these risks and what to do if they are exposed avoids laboratory turnaround times.
 - Signpost individuals and groups to relevant guidance and provide clarity on queries or concerns for adherence or implementation.
 - Increase awareness of how individuals who don't have symptoms can access testing.
 - Increase awareness and understanding of the process of contact tracing and encourage engagement with this process.
 - Increase awareness and understanding of relevant and current national guidance e.g. self-isolation of contacts, financial support available and how to access this support.
 - Ensure those who have had the vaccine understand the remaining risk of acquiring a COVID-19 infection and spreading it to another citizen.
- **Enable partnership working to deliver the local plan**
 - Ensure Citizens, Elected Members, Staff and Partners understand the Birmingham Test and Trace approach
 - Support and work in partnership with key partners such as the NHS to increase vaccine understanding to promote vaccine uptake.
 - Facilitate co-production of messaging and outputs with local citizens and partner organisations.
 - Identify key stakeholder groups and manage their expectations and encourage their contributions using appropriate methods.
 - Ensure those who have had the vaccine understand the remaining risk of acquiring a COVID infection and spreading it to another citizen.
 - Coordinated and joint approach to deliver consistent and positive messaging across the national, regional and local system with local interpretation of the national guidance.
 - Identify opportunities for community groups to form links and to work in tandem by sharing experiences to promote changes in behaviour and perceptions where necessary.
 - Support local enforcement and assist in managing any immediate concerns or scan the horizon for any threats to avoid conflict.
- **Establish appropriate and effective channels for delivery of the plan**
 - Greater use of physical media such as posters and leaflets to avoid marginalising those who can be digitally excluded.
 - Localise national COVID-19 guidance especially for Birmingham's diverse community by producing local community-centred and accessible material involving various groups.
 - Provide reactive and proactive messages which offer a more targeted approach to the need e.g., to support lifting of restrictions and the use of specific venues such as for sports or myth busting.
 - Identify proven approaches to encourage open, transparent and timely non-judgemental communication to reduce stigma.
 - Enable tailored campaigns and outreach work to specific groups where required to identify any barriers and offer reassurance.
 - Ensure key principles of information governance including data protection, confidentiality and GDPR are maintained.
 - More co-production of messaging and outputs with local citizens to include community partners and COVID champions.
 - Provide a more targeted messaging approach based on the lifting of restrictions e.g. as soon as crowds welcomed back to sporting venues target comms in these areas accordingly.
- **Assess impact and reflect the evolving evidence base on behavioural insight**
 - Provide an opportunity for feedback from communities to inform the local, regional and national test and trace programme.
 - Develop joint measures (quantitative and qualitative) of success agreed across the local system.
 - Identify quick wins and celebrate successes and positive outcome using community assets for wider dissemination e.g. feel good factor, better mental health.

3. Our approach to communication and engagement

We are working across the system in partnership with communities and partners to ensure that our messages are well aligned and accessible using various channels and adapting to the wide range of audiences and the need.

4. Methods of Engagement

The reality of the COVID-19 situation limits the potential for face-to-face engagement, but we are conscious of the risk of digital exclusion further increasing the inequalities of the outbreak. Methods of communication and engagement we plan to use include and are not limited to examples below using written and verbal content:

- Physical engagement fora
 - Working through front line staff who are engaging face to face to share information and raise awareness
 - Engagement through existing community networks e.g. support groups
- Virtual engagement fora
 - Digital including social media
 - Radio promotion (including promotion for those first language is not English)
 - Teleconferences and telephone-based engagement
 - Engagement through existing community networks e.g. WhatsApp groups



Source: Health Foundation, [Communications Model – A guide](#) (accessed March 2021)

5. Threads of Activity to date

We have a range of activities which cover the methods of engagement listed above and these activities are summarised in this section and will cover the key elements for consideration as part of delivering our plan effectively. These key elements are; ‘who’ our audience is, ‘when’ we deliver a message, ‘what’ our message is about, ‘where’ we deliver i.e. channels and ‘who’ will deliver the messages. We have also integrated ‘what’ our desired impact is as part of the evaluation of each activity.

Activity	Delivered/Outputs – September 2020 to date
COVID Champions Updates	Gained 766 champions across 69 wards Over 25,000 emails sent out with the latest advice/guidance 27,000 texts sent out 300+ enquiries responded to in the dedicated inbox Gathered the demographic data from our existing champions but also the new recruits Covid Champion survey on BeHeard + actions taken as a result Webinars: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 have already happened- topics included schools, businesses, latest guidance, christmas, testing, isolation support, vaccination • 9 are scheduled from now until June 2021
Films/animations	Covid Champion recruitment- Birmingham Updates https://www.instagram.com/p/CMCSHSDB8M2/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link Casey Bailey/Bring Back Brum- https://www.instagram.com/p/CLe6vgZBF6n/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link BSL- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNAQZ5R3BPI Our Youtube Channel + videos https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3RIwgKB6ehKvOCb7QbSf1Q LFT testing schools- https://vimeo.com/520870475
Webinars/Workshops	BSCGG vaccination webinars for the Birmingham Public x6 BID- 57 youth club workshops Nishkam Centre- Sangat TV Sikh Community Catch Ups Series (Vaccination & Testing) Chinese community centre- 8x Online meetings (800 hours of watching time) Virtual coffee mornings- Disability Resource Centre BAME Webinar with 1 st Class Foundation & Nicky Tapper from BBC WM https://twitter.com/nikkittapper?lang=en Black heritage Support Service https://firstclassnation.com/a-covid-conversation-with-the-black-heritage-support-service/ Citizens UK- Newtown round table (Vaccination) Polish Expats- various Facebook live and Zoom meetings https://twitter.com/PEA_____ Hawkmoth <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Webinar for Somali community with influencers Dr Maryan Qasim (COVID Vaccination) 2. BBC News Somali with another Somali influencer, Dr Amina Ibrahim MBE (COVID Vaccination)
Radio adverts	Covid 19 messages was broadcast on: Ambur Radio: 200,000 listeners Switch Radio: 22,000 – 28,000 listeners Raaj FM: 40,000 listeners New Style Radio: no listener figures available Big City Radio: no listener figures available Unity Radio: 90,000 listeners
Faith based meetings	40 meetings (Masjid, Interfaith and Black Led Churches)
Ward meetings	Approx 70+ since September 2020 plus 15 emergency meetings
Media/interviews	12 Interviews

	BBC WM Radio, Birmingham Live – Facebook, BBC Midlands Today, Free Radio, Birmingham Eastside, Unity FM Radio, NOOR TV, ITV Central, BBC World at One, Times Radio, The Doctor and MJ
Translated/accessible materials	https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50247/national_guidance_during_covid-19/2065/coronavirus_covid-19_-_guidance_in_accessible_formats_and_other_languages Information available in 12+ languages, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current guidance • Symptoms • Test & trace • Diabetes • Vaccination • Wellbeing • Face coverings & hand sanitizer https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50231/coronavirus_covid-19/2223/information_in_accessible_formats_covid-19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy read • Pictures/stories • BSL
Insight & Feedback	Funding/Support & Isolation (Providers & Champions) Insight Now- Survey about schools Testing/LFT (Providers & Champions) Hawkmoth- Report about the views of vaccination within the disabled community Disability Resource Centre- A report about the impact that COVID-19 has had on three groups of people: stroke survivors, people with diabetes and people with COPD
Website	Website consistently kept up to date and new information is added to the COVID-19 pages on a weekly basis. 1.3 million views to Covid homepage Highlights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid Champions section updated and new materials updated (welcome pack, sign up post card) • LFT and vaccination section added
Targeted social media adverts	Targeted Facebook postcode advertising to promote: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NHS App – reached 51,190 people 2. COVID champion recruitment – reached 42, 592
Other	Chinese community- 2000+ Befriending telephone calls made Roma and Polish community- 728 leaflets in Big Issue Facebook group for parents and carers made by CREC 'Myth-busting' factsheets Vaccination toolkit General LFT infographic LFT infographic for schools Updating the Council telephone line adverts so they include vaccination

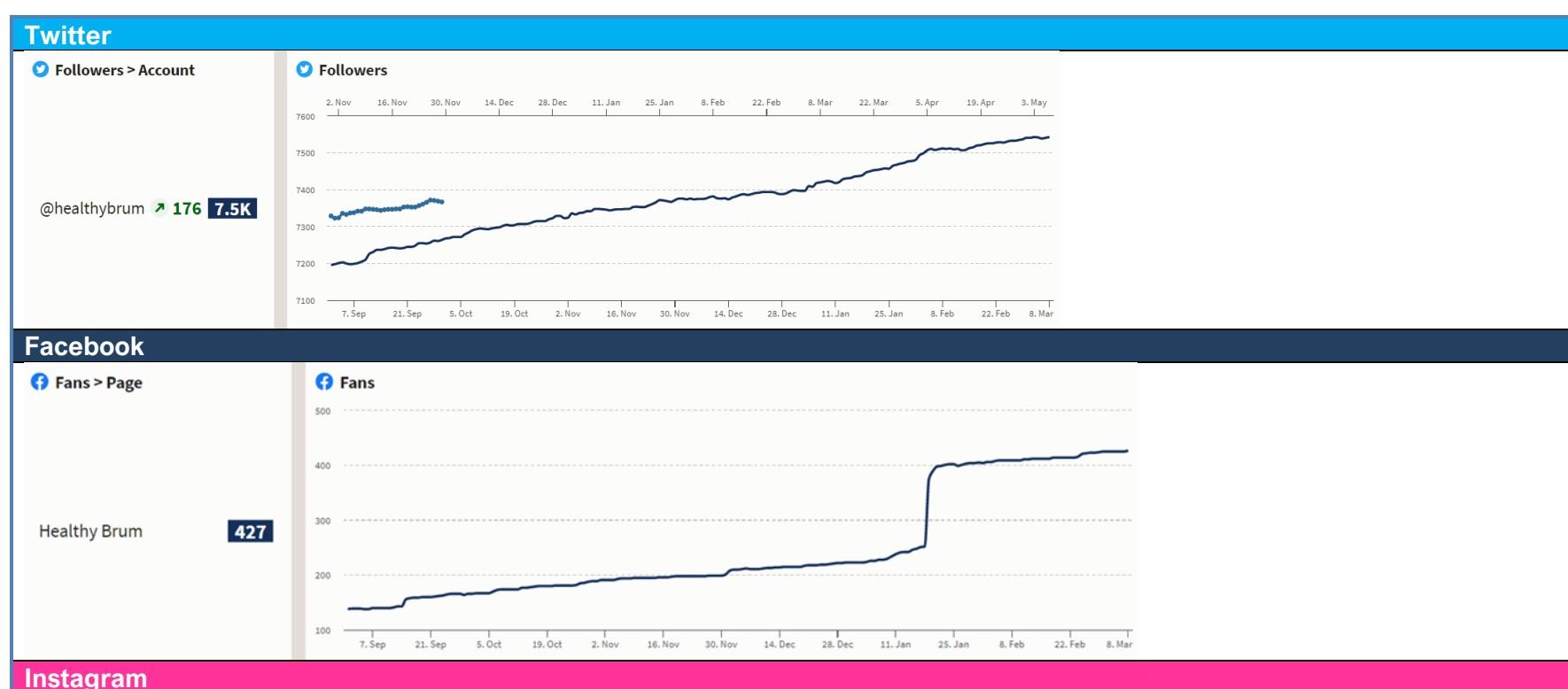
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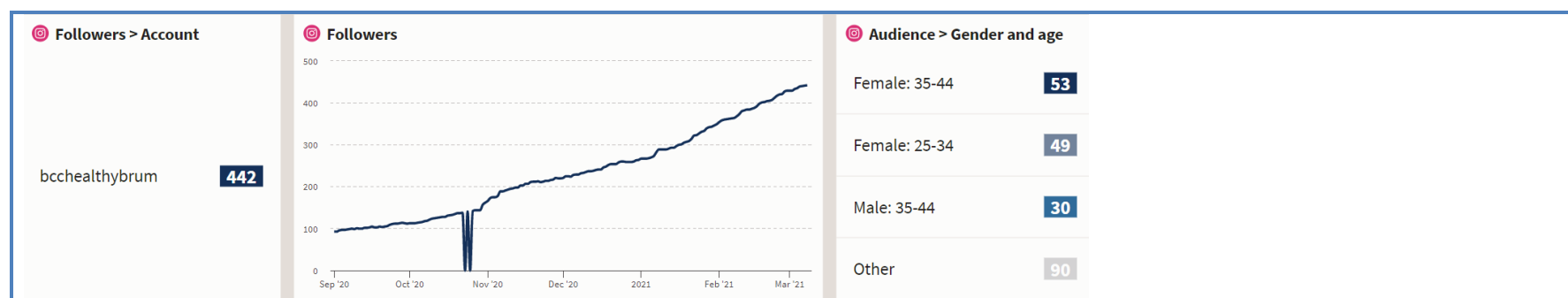
5.1 Social media engagement (September 20 to 8 March 21)

We currently have 3 social media platforms within the Public Health team and have been utilising these channels to share key information to promote awareness and understanding of COVID-19 to minimise transmission and the wider impact of COVID-19.

@healthybrum -Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts

Since September 2020 we have had a steady increase of engagement across all the channels:





Please see below the impact we have made across the channels since September 2020 to present

Channel	Number of posts	Engagement	Number of followers
Twitter	1.3K	3.4K	7.5K
Facebook	1.1K	1.7K	427
Instagram	681	2.2K	442

5.2 Community partners engagement

In March 2020 we commissioned 18 community partners to provide additional community engagement support services enabling COVID-19 and Test and Trace messages to be shared widely with Birmingham’s diverse communities.

The engagement approaches were tailored to each community which included verbal and written directWhatsapps/texts, community workshops, translated bespoke resources, video messages and social media posts and translated live weekly Q&As with DPH.

Provider	Target Community
1st Class Legacy	Black African and Black Caribbean
Age UK	Older People
Amber	Early Years
Bahu Trust	Arabic. Islamic and South Asian
BID Services	Deaf and Hearing loss
Birmingham Disability Resource Centre	Blind and Sight Loss and learning difficulties. High risk conditions - Stroke, diabetes and COPD
Borne	Older Young People Under 25 years
Chinese Community Centre	Chinese
Citizens UK	Migrant Asylum Seeker and Refugee
Hawkmoth Consulting	High-risk long-term conditions High Blood Pressure, Chronic Kidney, Obese - BMI over 30, Cardiovascular disease
LGBT Centre Birmingham	LGBT
Refugee and Migrant Centre	Roma
Nishkam Centre	Sikh
OrbitaCX trading as Insight Now	Primary and Secondary school age
Polish Expats Association	Eastern European, including Polish
SRI (Shree Hindu Community)	Hindu
West Midlands Faith In Action	Black African and Black Caribbean Led Churches
Supreme Linguistic Services T/A Premium Linguistic Service	French, South Asian Language: Hindi, Pakistani Pahari (with Mipuri and Potwari, Gujarati and Somali

All the providers will be sharing an end of project report in March 2021 to evaluate the work delivered to date, successes, challenges, and key outputs.

5.3 COVID -19 champion programme

In a recent survey (January to February 2021) we sent to the Champions; it was found that the 90 respondents sent the weekly COVID-19 information to 27,000 people. This was achieved by Facebook groups, emails, WhatsApp, social media, bulletins, newsletters and text/telephone.

Birmingham COVID-19 Champions as at 1st March 2021

**Local Authority Count
Birmingham - 652**

All other local authorities - 92

☐ Birmingham Wards

The map displays the city of Birmingham divided into its constituent wards. Each ward is labeled with a number representing the count of COVID-19 champions. The numbers range from 1 to 37. Some wards are highlighted with a thick black border, indicating they are Birmingham wards. The map includes labels for various areas such as Sutton Park, Edgbaston, City Centre, and others.

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- Focus on the wards with the highest rates of COVID-19
- Increase the uptake of the vaccination within certain wards
- Increase peoples understanding of the different testing methods
- Report any non-compliance (ie workplaces)

6. Next Steps

We will continue to share weekly emails and hold webinars/workshops for the Champions.

Please see our planned schedule from March-June 2021:

Date	Topic
4 th March 5.30-6.30pm	Part 1: 30-minute update from Birmingham Public Health + Q&A
	Part 2: Interactive Workshop about isolation & support
18 th March 4pm	Discuss and go through the new guidance/roadmap from the government + Q&A session
1 st April 6-7pm	Part 1: 30-minute update from Birmingham Public Health + Q&A
	Part 2: 30-minute talk about mental health and bereavement support in Birmingham
15 th April 3-4pm	Part 1: 30-minute update from Birmingham Public Health + Q&A
	Part 2: Interactive workshop - Discuss the current issues that are being faced within their communities
29 th April 11am-midday	Part 1: 30-minute update from Birmingham Public Health + Q&A
	Part 2: 30-minutes about additional financial resources available- e.g. benefits advice, local foodbanks, healthy start scheme
13 th May 5-6pm	Part 1: 30-minute update from Birmingham Public Health + Q&A
	Part 2: 30-minute update from the CCG about the vaccination + Q&A
27 th May 11am-midday	Long Covid talk and workshop
10 th June 5pm-6pm	Part 1: 30-minute update from Birmingham Public Health + Q&A
	Part 2: 30-minutes about the resources available to children & young people in Birmingham

Activity 2 – Extending the Community Partners programme of work (April 21 – March 22)

We are extending the contracts of our 18 Community partners from April 21 for 12 months to accelerate engagement to support the understanding and the uptake of testing and the vaccination.

Activity 2 - Community Champions Fund – (April 2021 – June 2021)

In January 2021 we secured £440,000 of the Community Champions Fund from the Ministry of Housing and Local Communities (MHCLG) to support residents impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The fund is to support those communities to be most at risk from COVID-19 including those from an ethnic minority background and disabled people to help them follow safer behaviours and reduce the impact of the virus on themselves, and those around them. This work will include:

- Working closely with our 18 existing community partners to upskill and co-ordinate the set up and delivery of a minimum of 10 telephone/befriending trees for those communities with limited digital access. Telephone trees are to be set up by 1 April 2021 and to run until 31 March 2022.
- Working effectively with local community organisations who support people with learning difficulties to develop more accessible information on COVID-19 compliance, testing and vaccination in accessible formats (e.g. text, video, graphics, animation, audio and photographs as appropriate).
- Working in partnership with local community organisations working with vulnerable families to develop tailored engagement materials and resources.
- Developing and producing a suite of audio and BSL accessible education materials to support deeper engagement with those with poor literacy and the Deaf community to develop more accessible information on COVID-19 compliance, testing and vaccination.
- Develop arts-based messaging, particularly through different cultural mediums to engage with different ethnic communities. The aim is to use creative tactics as a form of health promotion. These creative projects will promote Public Health messaging and essential COVID-19 engagement. They will utilise community mobilisation and social cohesion, providing a reflective space for people to share their experiences. Additionally, it will encourage residents to become community champions. Part of this project will include the delivery of digital and non-digital products and look at innovative ways of addressing barriers such as digital poverty and socio-economic deprivation, ensuring as much inclusion as possible.

Youth COVID Champion Programme

We are working with the Birmingham Youth Service Participation team to develop a Community Champion's programme for children and young people that will foster peer to peer and family sharing of information, advice and guidance on COVID 19. This team engages with children and young people across Birmingham and provide a range of platforms to engage with a wider audience, across our city using the skills and experience of qualified youth workers. The current reach of young people aged 11+, currently 2133 young people are registered with this service creating an attendance of 18,623 and the detached youth work on the street has an attendance figure of 28,989. Materials and the key message will be disseminated through their current network of primary, senior schools and colleges and their partnership with Birmingham Education Partnership, Birmingham Careers Service and Birmingham Children's Partnership.

Business COVID Champion Programme

We are also working to commission the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the Asian Chamber of Commerce (ABCC), Small Business Federation and any other key partners to focus on engagement with the business community to support them to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic. The business sectors identified are hospitality, retail, manufacturing and entertainment. We are aiming to recruit a minimum of 20 business owners (5 per sector) into the community champion programme.

Activity 3 - Communications

A mixture of both off and online activity to include maximising our social media channels as well as paid advertising through digital and radio media targeting specific ethnic communities and scheduling local media engagement e.g. weekly radio Q&A and press interviews and coverage.