

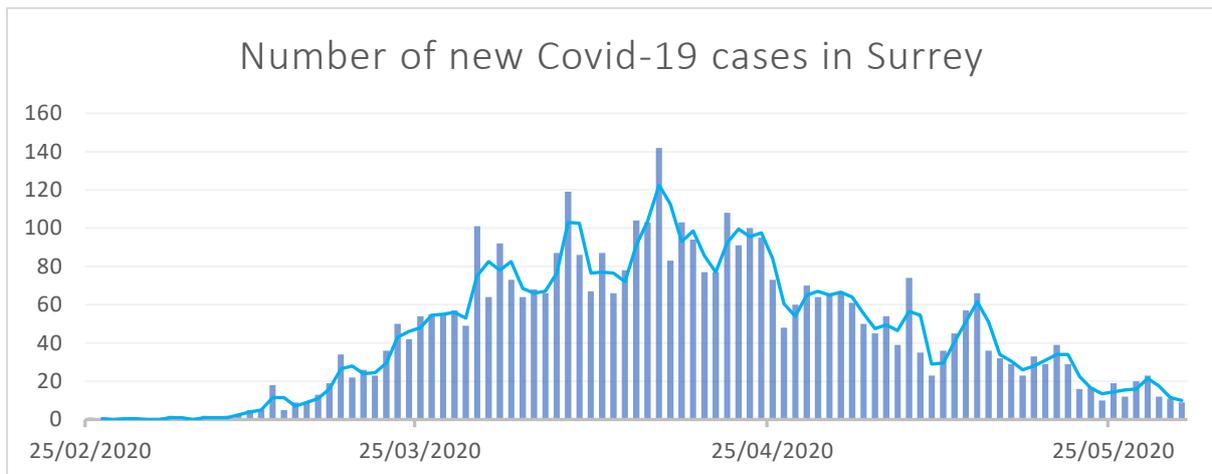
Surrey Covid-19 Community Impact Assessment

Part 1 – Lockdown

In March 2020 cases of Covid-19 started to rise in Surrey and government announced a national lockdown

Cases in Surrey started to rise from the beginning of March 2020. On 19 March, furlough began and on 23 March the Government announced a national lockdown.

Cases peaked in Surrey between April and May and started to fall towards the end of May. This is what the graph shows.



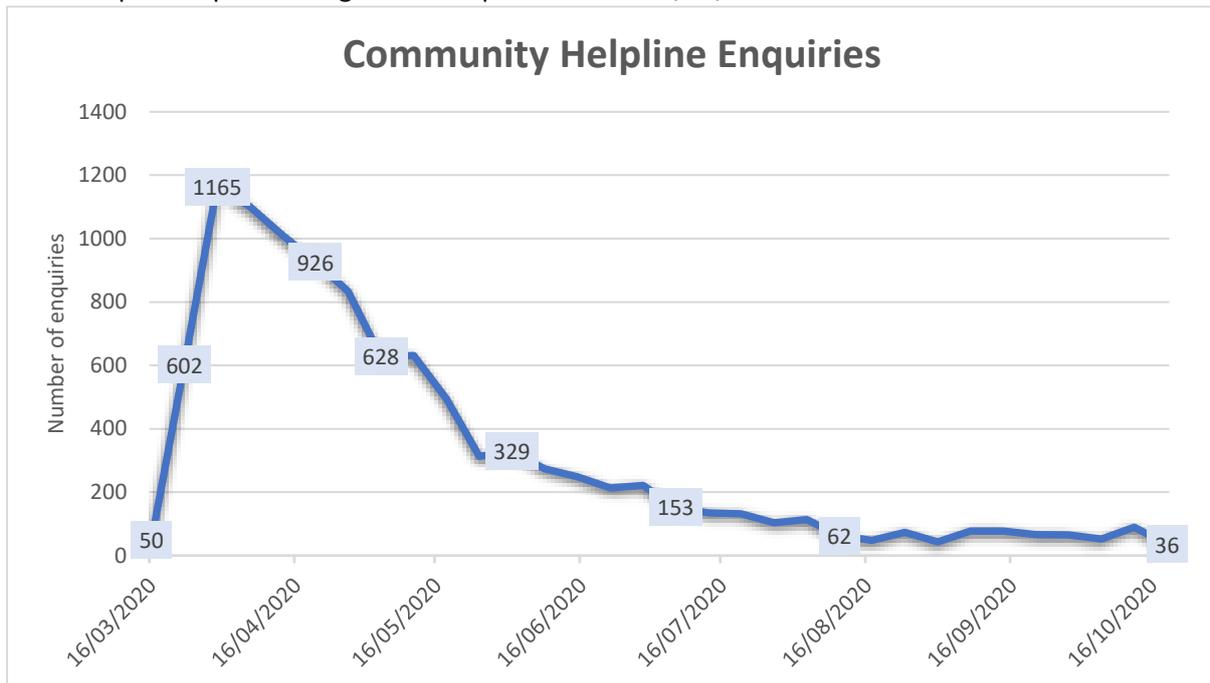
There was a greater need for support from vulnerable people

“Thank god for technology really, had I not had that technology, I think it would be a very sad place to be” – a shielding resident

The council set up a Community Helpline to support residents during the pandemic.

There was high demand on the helpline during March and April, demonstrating the increased need for support from vulnerable residents.

The graph shows a peak of 1165 enquiries to the helpline on 30/03/2020 followed by a continuous fall in enquiries up to a trough of 36 enquiries on the 19/10/2020.



And a greater risk of ‘hidden harm’ in our communities

It is likely that the pandemic has had a disproportionately negative impact on certain groups of residents.

We identified 10 vulnerable groups with pre-existing vulnerabilities or a greater risk of mortality from Covid-19.

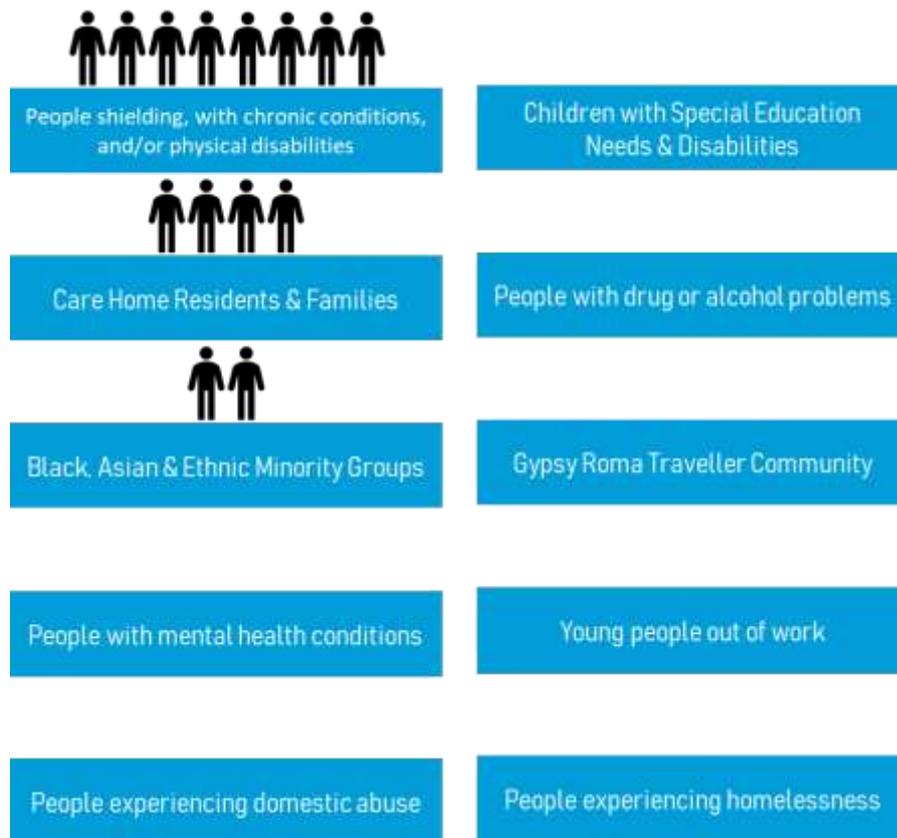
As part of our Community Impact Assessment, we have carried out a series of ‘Rapid Needs Assessments’ to understand the impact the pandemic has had on each of these groups.

The image shows the 10 vulnerable groups identified; these were:

People with long-term physical health conditions, Care Home Residents & Families, Black, Asian and Minority Groups, People with mental health conditions, People experiencing domestic abuse, Children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities, People with drug or alcohol problems, Gypsy Roma Traveller Community, Young People out of work, People experiencing homelessness.

Icons represent the increased mortality risk of each group. People with long term health conditions have an 8 times higher risk of dying from Covid-19 than those without long term health conditions, Care Home residents 4 times greater risk and Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority Groups 2 times greater risk.

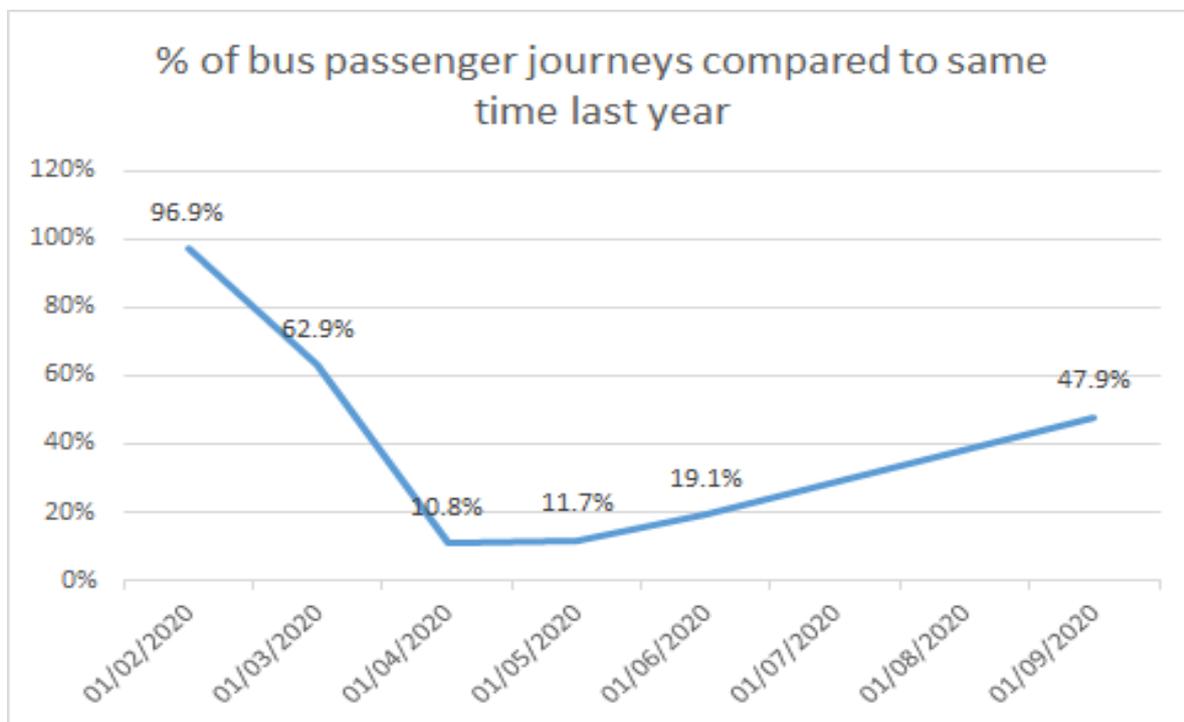
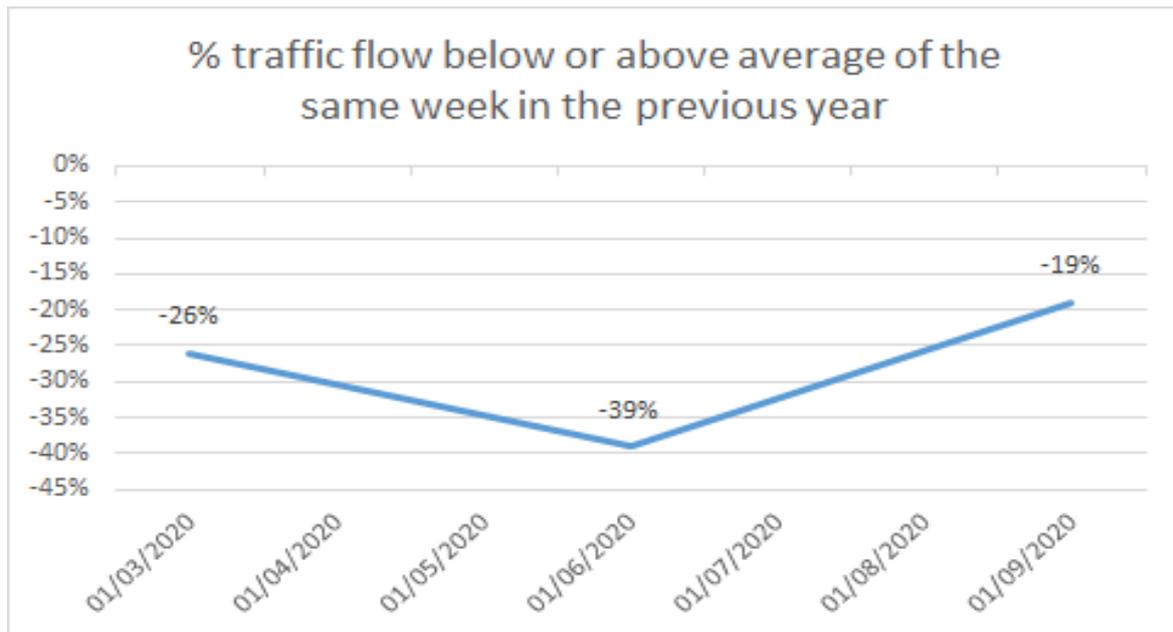
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Lockdown led to a decrease in mobility and economic activity

"It was like a ghost town. Literally like a ghost town" – Woman from Waverley

As a result of lockdown, travel across the county reduced. At its lowest, traffic flow was less than 30% of its pre-pandemic average while the number of bus passenger journeys fell as low as 11% of the number from the same time last year. The reduced levels of mobility are likely to have negatively impacted the local economy.



Part 2 – The Impact

The health impacts have been felt the most in areas with higher numbers of over 80s and care homes

We mapped the health impacts of Covid-19 by combining data on Covid cases, deaths and care home outbreaks.

The top 5 most impacted areas in the health dimension were:

- Banstead (Reigate & Banstead)

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- Horley Central (Reigate & Banstead)
- Leatherhead South & Ashted South (Mole Valley)
- Haslemere West (Waverley)
- Hindhead, Beacon Hill & Frensham (Waverley)

The economic impacts have been felt the most in areas with a higher reliance on certain industries such as aviation

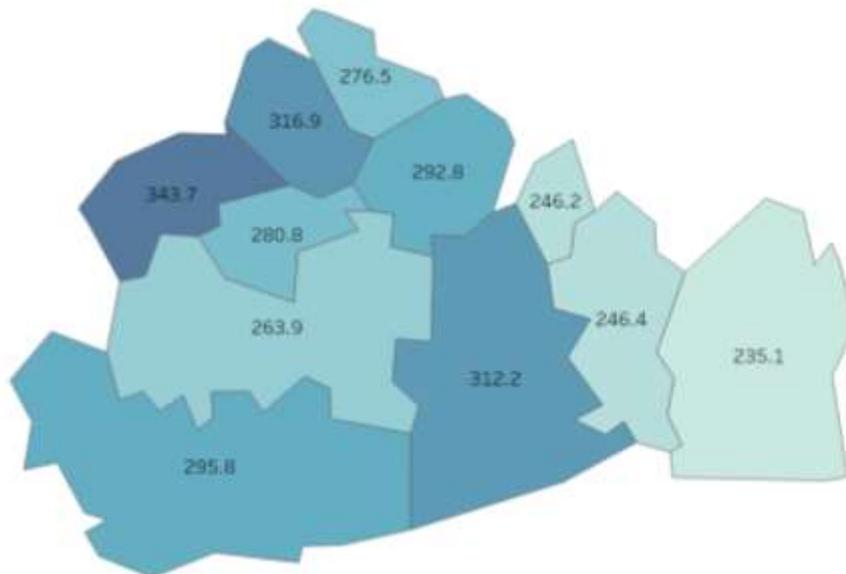
We mapped the economic impacts of Covid-19 by combining data on estimated workers furloughed and increases in the claimant count.

The top 5 most impacted areas in the economic dimension were:

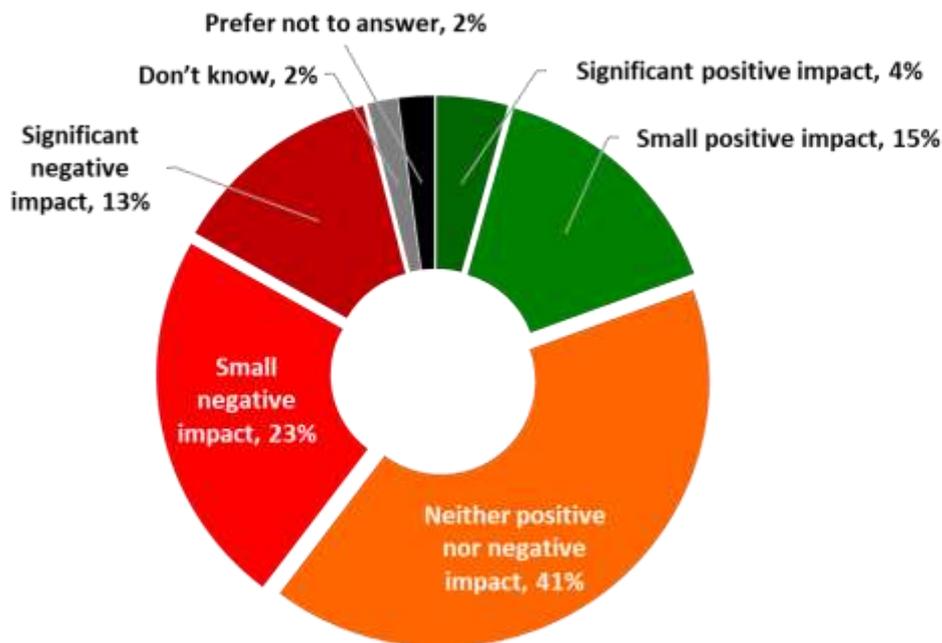
- Walton North & Molesey Heath (Elmbridge)
- Stanwell North & Stanwell Moor (Spelthorne)
- Bagshot (Surrey Heath)
- Warlingham East & Tatsfield (Tandridge)
- Tattenham South (Reigate & Banstead)

Residents who aren't used to needing support started to struggle

The number of people claiming Universal Credit or Job Seeker's Allowance increased by over 300% in some areas of Surrey. Through our temperature check survey and ethnographic research, we learnt that many residents were seeking financial support for the first time due to Covid-19.



What impact has the coronavirus crisis had on the income of your household, if any?



Lockdown has impacted many residents' mental health

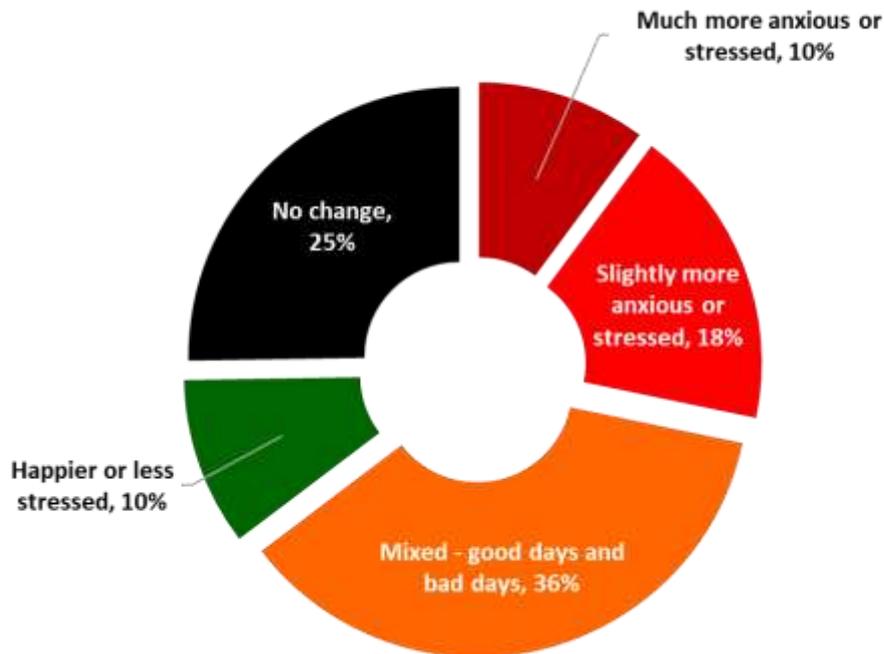
"I found Covid-19 really stressful, I broke down in front of my Mum and said I don't want to live anymore" – Woman from Spelthorne

Our research has shown that impacts on people's mental health have been very significant, with 75% of residents telling us that lockdown has affected their mental wellbeing in some way.

Loneliness was a common impact, particularly amongst those aged 16-34 and those with low household incomes of less than £25k.

52% of those aged 16-25 say they felt more lonely due to lockdown, and 46% of those from low income households felt the same.

How do you feel the lockdown has affected your mental wellbeing?



And had significant impacts on those already using mental health services

"I was bedbound for three weeks. I thought it was Covid, but it was the stress of having my business shut down and being isolated" – Woman from Waverley

Key findings from speaking to people with pre-existing mental health conditions were:

- Social isolation - working-age adults living alone and those in poor health
- Loss of coping mechanisms and ability to connect
- Conflicting information, lack of knowledge about how and when to seek help
- Access to services and care (patients, carers, frontline)
- Fear of infection and access to PPE
- Long-term impacts of job losses
- Digital inequalities - Individuals with no access (e.g. older adults) unable to receive support remotely
- Support offer for people with dementia living on their own
- Build capacity in voluntary sector services
- Impact on homeless clients

Exacerbated impact on people experiencing domestic abuse

"You know the lockdown was an absolute joy to them, because they had to keep their victim in the house. No one was seeing the broken bones and the black eyes and you know, so, absolutely perfect for perpetrator of domestic abuse to have a lockdown." – Service Provider

Key findings from speaking to people supporting victims of domestic abuse were:

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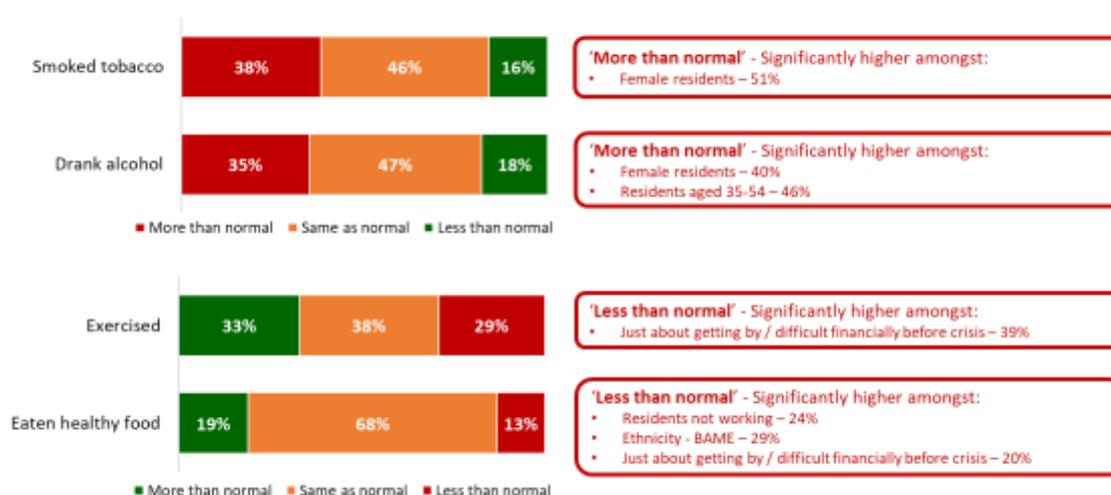
- Lockdown has exacerbated pre-existing abuse
- Impact of closure of schools further exposed children
- Impact of financial stresses and pre-existing control of victim's finances.
- Long-term physical and mental impact of lockdown
- Mental health of children returning to school - disclosures
- Awareness raising so public can report incidents
- Increase opportunities for silent/digital reporting
- Cement multi-agency partnerships and arrangements
- Funding and sustainability
- Training (new, remote) - agencies and school staff

More people are participating in unhealthy behaviours

"I cope with the stress by eating, smoking and drinking really" – Man from Spelthorne

There has been an increase in unhealthy behaviours such as smoking and drinking since the start of lockdown. 38% of residents say they have smoked more than usual and 35% say they have drunk more than usual.

Since the start of lockdown, have you...? Excluding 'Not applicable'



People from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities have struggled to access support

"It was lockdown mixed with Black Lives Matter that made me realise that I don't fit in here" – Woman from Ashted

Key findings from speaking to people from BAME communities were:

- Increased experience of racism and discrimination
- Lack of clear communication of guidelines
- Confusion about accessing care and support

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- Lack of access to financial support. Job security at risk if absences
- Practicing effective social distancing a challenge, families live in overcrowded housing and/or multigenerational households.
- Need for a closer partnership working to build trust with BAME communities.
- Fund and develop culturally appropriate communication materials through trusted channels
- Improving access to testing and PPE to protect the frontline workers

And residents living in residential care homes have felt more isolated

Key findings from speaking to people from residential care homes were:

- Access to PPE and testing
- Impact of limited visitors (particularly those with Dementia)
- PPE and facial recognition issues
- Level of support dependent/varied with links to Care Networks
- Older people: Loss of mobility
- Digital forms of communication challenging
- Economic Impact - Care Home closures
- Isolation - Care Home staff
- Recognizing the level of impact (longer term)

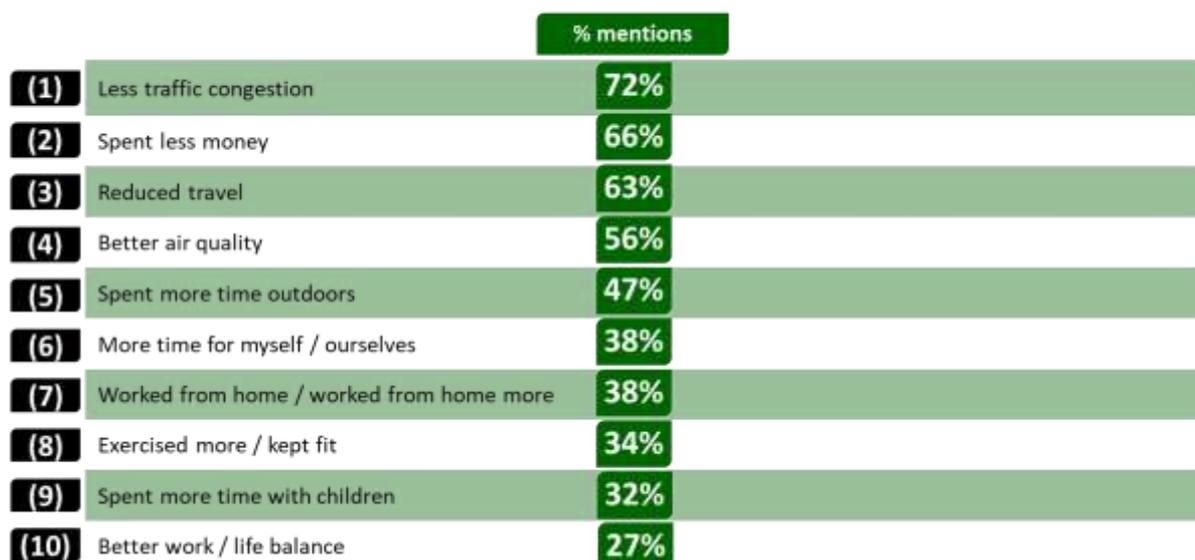
But there have also been some positive impacts from the pandemic

“The wildlife came alive when Gatwick closed” – Woman from Horley

There have also been some positive changes as a result of Covid-19. An increase in time spent outdoors and reductions in travel and air pollution are examples of this, which support our Greener Futures priorities. This provides an opportunity to encourage residents to maintain these behaviours and sustain the positive changes.

Partnerships have also strengthened between service providers, community and voluntary care sectors, transcending perceived or existing barriers.

What positive changes, if any, have come out of the current situation during lockdown for you and your family?



Part 3 – A Partnership Response

Partners across Surrey quickly responded

In Surrey, the Local Resilience Forum has been responsible for coordinating the response to COVID-19 and the national lockdown. This is jointly led by Surrey County Council, Surrey Police and Surrey Fire & Rescue Service, and involves many partners across the county. We have been working together, with a common purpose – to protect our health services and save lives. We have:

- Handled over 10,000 calls into the Surrey community helpline
- Made direct contact with 39,793 vulnerable and shielding residents, including over 30,000 calls and over 5,000 welfare visits
- Opened a new community hospital in just 35 days
- Had around 250,000 views of Surrey County Council’s Coronavirus web pages
- Helped coordinate over 10,000 registered volunteers delivering support in the community
- Worked with 276 Voluntary, Community and Faith based groups across Surrey
- Delivered 1,830 food boxes
- Sourced, sorted and delivered over 7 million items of PPE to the front line
- Established 3 temporary mortuary sites to ease pressure on hospitals

The majority of vulnerable people received the support they needed

Over 90% of those who needed help getting food and medicine received support, showing that these services for vulnerable people were effective.

There was quick adaptation to virtual working for a number of services, including outreach to support homelessness and those experiencing domestic abuse.

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As a result of the coronavirus crisis, what level of support, if any have you needed for each of the following? (Excluding Not Applicable)



Base: all answering (circa 486)

And there has been a greater sense of community and ‘neighbourliness’

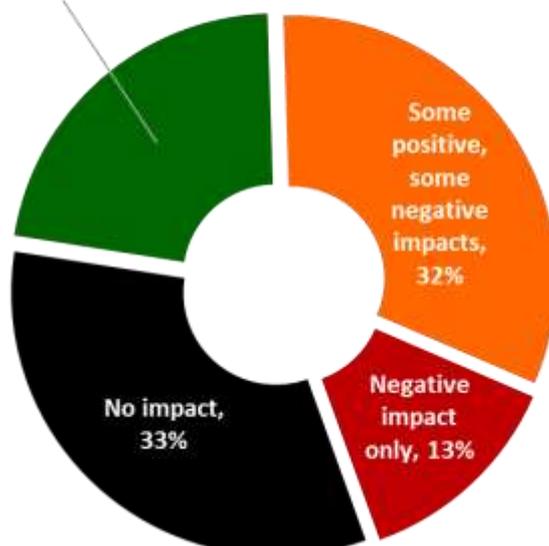
“It was our son’s birthday on VE day. All the neighbours came round with cards for him. It was special, probably his best birthday ever” – Woman from Spelthorne

Many residents felt a heightened sense of neighbourliness in their areas. 54% reported a positive impact of some sort on their connection to the local community, and 55% helped out their neighbours during the pandemic. This greater sense of community cohesion can be built on through our Empowering Communities programme and Local Community Networks.

The ‘everyone in’ initiative resulted in unprecedented levels of engagement and stability for people experiencing homelessness.

How has the coronavirus crisis impacted your household in terms of your connection to your local community? Excluding ‘Not applicable’

Positive impact only, 22%



Have you experienced any of the following local community / neighbourhood activities during the coronavirus crisis?



But some groups have felt excluded or stigmatised

Through our Rapid Needs Assessments we have identified several themes showing how vulnerable groups have been impacted by the pandemic. These highlight the risk of increased marginalisation and exclusion of vulnerable groups.

Information - The language of information and guidelines has been confusing for some groups and caused an increased sense of mistrust towards government and mainstream media

Exclusion - Many of the groups we have spoken to have felt excluded, from services (Gypsy, Roma and Traveler communities), access to transport (shielded individuals), digitally and in terms of language (BAME, Residential care)

Isolation - Lockdown has left many individuals feeling isolated and cut off from friends, family and their local community. This includes domestic abuse survivors, dementia patients, individuals in residential care, individuals shielding and newly unemployed people.

Stigma - There is greater stigma felt by some groups, for example around perceptions of mental health and stereotypes of vulnerability. We have heard concerns around stigma from shielded individuals, people in residential homes and people from BAME communities.

Rigidity of Regulations - The regulations that have been imposed have often caused unintended harm, for example decline of dementia patients, decline of mental health, decline of chronic conditions, impact on individuals with SEND and people using lockdown as a tool for domestic abuse.

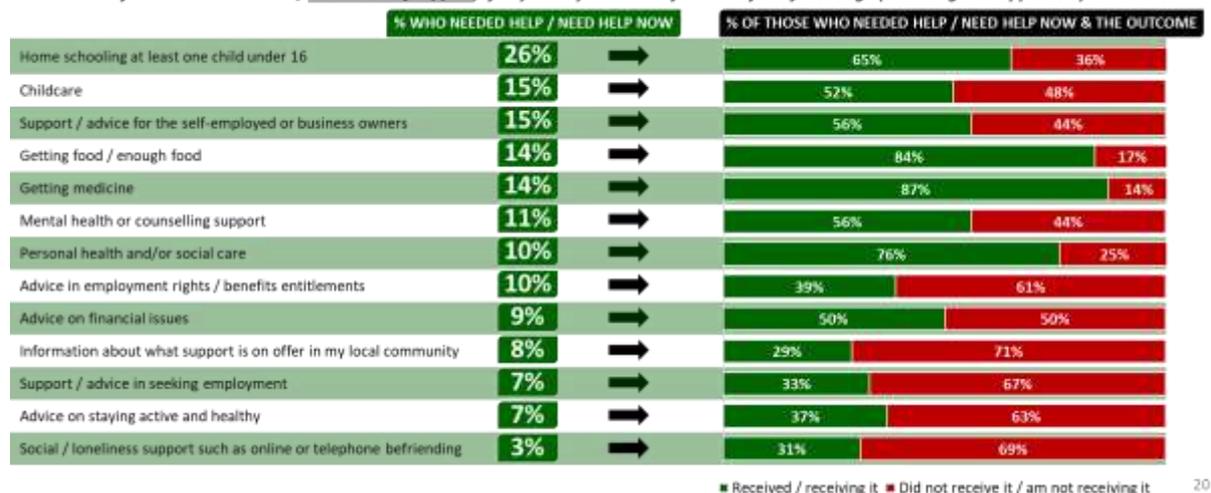
There are gaps in service provision for some types of need

"I just want my knee surgery to be sorted out so I can get on with day-to-day life" – Woman from Frensham, Waverley

Services with a greater demand tend to have been more accessible, but services with a lower demand have been harder to access, for example employment and befriending services.

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As a result of the coronavirus crisis, what level of support, if any have you needed for each of the following? (Excluding Not Applicable)



And residents have found information around guidelines and rules confusing

Only four in ten residents believed they had received the right amount of information and guidance from government with just over a third believing they had received too little.

Our ethnographic research revealed that although residents were aware of grants available for businesses from district and borough councils, many were uncertain of how to obtain this sort of financial support or lacked awareness as to what they may be eligible for.

Confusion around accessing support was likely exacerbated by the fact that many people suddenly required support services which they had never needed before.

Our Rapid Needs Assessments were powerful in conveying the impact of not understanding guidance or being able to access support (financial and social) on vulnerable communities.

Part 4 – The Second Wave

Cases have started to rise again

The number of Covid-19 cases began to rise again in Surrey in September, taking the total to 20,315 cases since the start of the pandemic. As we enter the second wave we will use the findings from the Community Impact Assessment to inform our response.

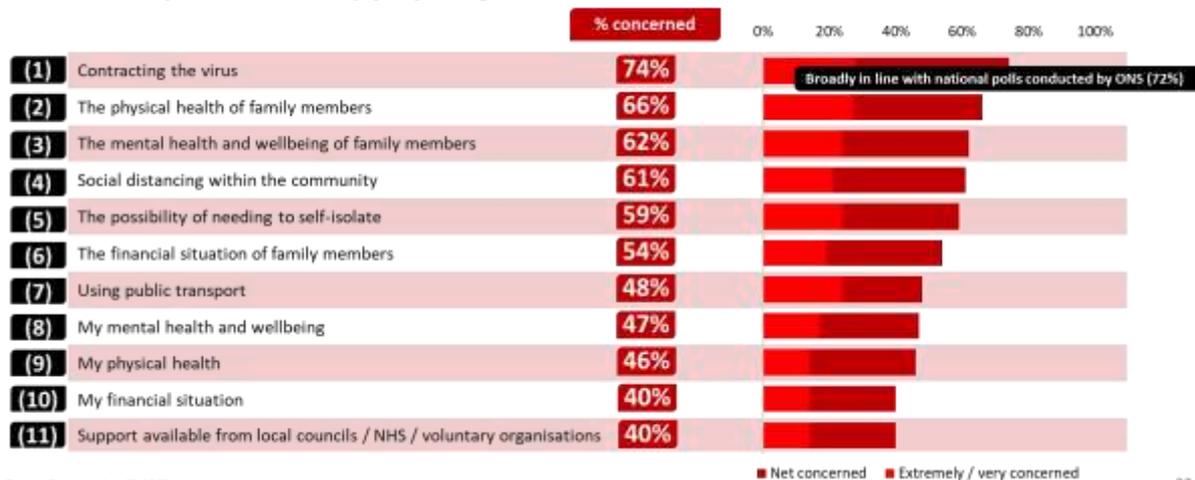
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Many residents still have concerns for themselves, family and friends
 Many residents are concerned about the future, in particular the physical and mental health of themselves and family members. Many are also concerned about their financial situation and the finances of loved ones.

Communities that have been disproportionately impacted by Covid-19 are concerned about the long-term impact on their health and wellbeing.

To what extent are you concerned about any of the following over the next six months?

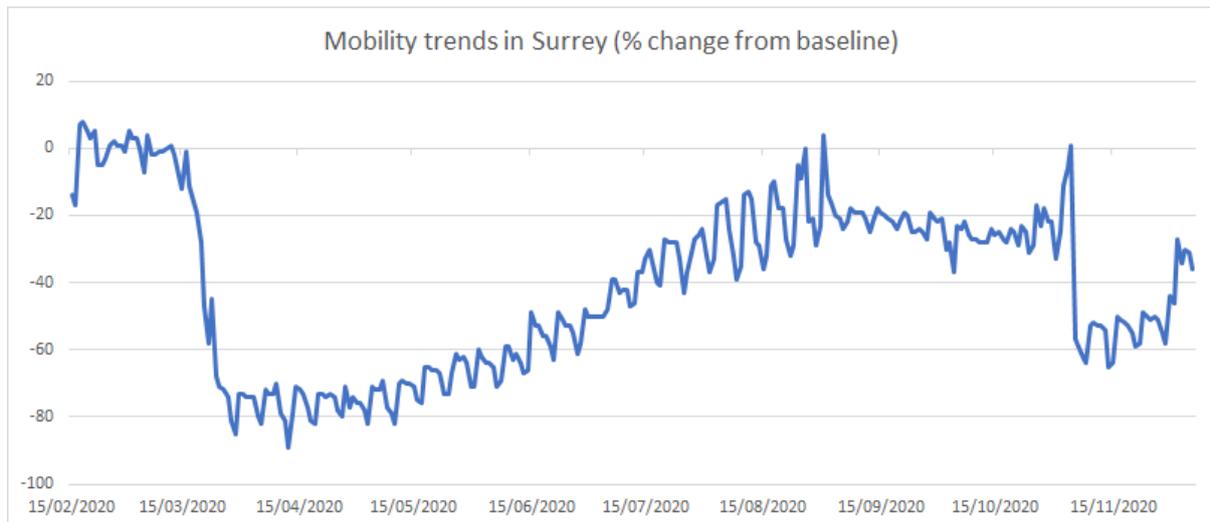


Part 5 – Looking to the Future

Local recovery efforts have started to show results

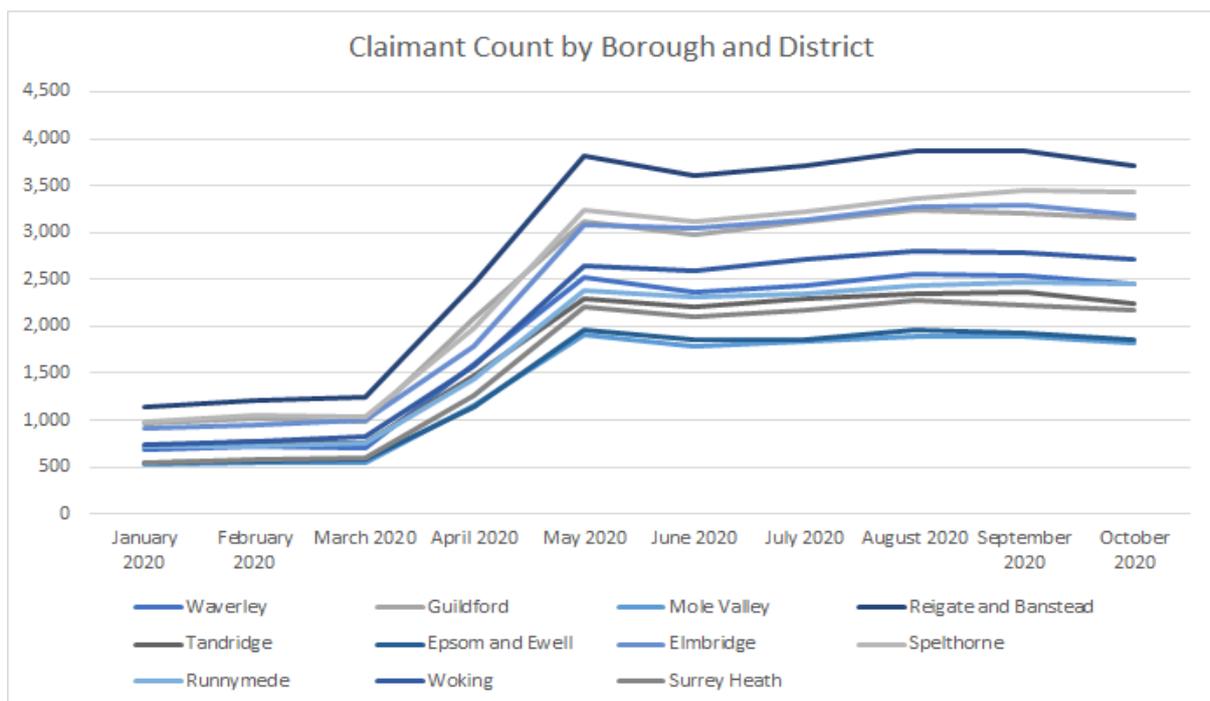
As lockdown eased, many residents started to return to their daily lives. For example, mobility trends around retail and recreation activities nearly returned to pre-pandemic levels before the second national lockdown and are slowly starting to recover again.

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But recovery is uneven across the county

The economic and financial impact on households has been uneven. For example, Reigate and Banstead, Spelthorne and Elmbridge have seen sharper increases in claimant count figures. Numbers have flattened out but remain high.



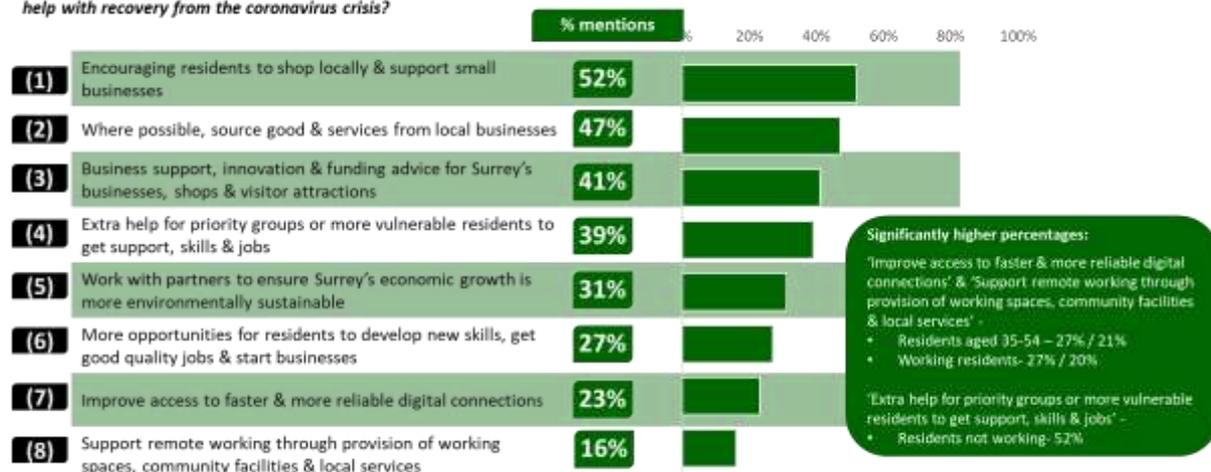
Residents have told us to focus on supporting local businesses and vulnerable people

“There are certain shops that are starting to close down. We’ve lost the shoe shop and the card shop”
– Man from Spelthorne

Over half of residents believe that Surrey partners should focus on supporting local businesses over the coming year.

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What should Surrey County Council and Surrey Heartlands Health and Care Partnership's priorities focus on over the coming year to help with recovery from the coronavirus crisis?



Residents have told us to focus on supporting local businesses and vulnerable people
"We need to ensure that the foundations that have been laid remain and that they are not taken away. We need to ensure we have the financial stability to continue to support clients" – Outreach for homeless clients

- *'Embed local models that enable flexible nuanced care for vulnerable people'*
- *'Timely access to services and support, incl. networks and food charities'*
- *'Facilitate wider service profile uptake through use of online outreach tools'*
- *'Anti-discrimination and cultural awareness'*
- *'Clear advice and support for financial, physical and mental health'*
- *'Implement safeguarding and corporate parenting responsibilities'*
- *'Further joined up, co-ordinated and sustainable support for the local agencies and organisations working with vulnerable communities'*
- *'Reducing health inequalities'*
- *'Effective, adapted, culturally appropriate and communication and engagement'*
- *'Digital inclusion'*