

Greens reveal coronavirus testing postcode lottery



3 August 2020

- **Data shows Cardiff test results take on average up to 34 hours longer than Milton Keynes**
- **Freedom of Information request shows worrying disparity across country, and gaps in the Department for Health's information**
- **Jenny Jones: "Our testing system should not be a complete postcode lottery"**

People taking coronavirus tests face a worrying postcode lottery in the time it takes to get results, with some parts of the country waiting on average up to 34 hours longer than others, the Green Party can reveal.

Data obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request has revealed that the longest delay was in Cardiff where people had to wait an average of 45 hours. [1]

The second longest delay was in Wembley, London, where people waited an average of 33 hours, and Lincoln had the third longest wait with 24 hours.

Meanwhile, those with the shortest wait were Milton Keynes, Glasgow and Llandudno with average times of 11, 12 and 13 hours respectively.

The data shows four of the testing sites, including the Nightingale Excel Walk In, are taking on average longer than the target set by Boris Johnson of 24 hours. [2]

Green Party peer Jenny Jones said:

"Our testing system should not be a complete postcode lottery with over a full day's difference in waiting time for results between some regional testing centers.

"We need Johnson to meet his commitment for all tests to be returned well

under 24 hours, and we must level up all testing sites to the highest possible standards of efficiency.”

The FOI request also revealed that the Department of Health had no records on how many results of tests are unsuccessfully returned to those who took the tests.

Wales Green Party leader Anthony Slaughter said:

“At a time when lockdown measures have been significantly relaxed across Wales, the news that the average time taken to receive Covid- 19 test results in Cardiff is forty five hours is a deeply worrying failure on the part of Public Health Wales.

“This unacceptable delay is endangering public health and reducing the efficiency of any attempts at a meaningful Test, Track and Isolate strategy.”

Caroline Russell, Green Party London Assembly member, said:

“As we are being encouraged back to city centres and to reopen more parts of the economy, it’s worrying to hear there are such disparities in the time taken to return test results.

“Every hour counts as we try to stay on top of the virus and contact the people who have been in touch with confirmed cases so they can isolate to keep others safe.

“It’s not fair to affected communities if the time taken to get test results is letting down the track and trace system.”

ENDS

Notes

1

The data provided was for the period 6 July 2020 to 12 July 2020 inclusive. It refers to the median hours from the time of test to the time of result communicated.

By RTS Site

ACF Code	Site Name	Median Hours
DFW	RTS – Cardiff City Football Club	45.13
WEM	RTS – Wembley	33.09
LNC	RTS – Lincoln	24.63
NGE	RTS – Nightingale Excel Walk-in	24.09
LEE	RTS – Leeds	23.31
LEI	RTS – Leicester	22.66
MDE	RTS – Birmingham Smethwick	22.24
STK	RTS – Stoke	22.13
NTM	RTS – Nottingham	22.09

HUL	RTS – Hull	22.03
DEE	RTS – Deeside	21.93
BRM	RTS – Birmingham Edgbaston	21.57
YOR	RTS – York	21.52
STA	RTS – Stafford	21.50
BRA	RTS – Bradford	21.36
TEL	RTS – Telford	21.26
IOW	RTS – Isle of Wight	21.08
DNE	RTS – Doncaster Airport, Sheffield	20.97
SHF	RTS – Sheffield	20.94
NOT	RTS – Nottingham Motorpoint	20.91
WRE	RTS – Worcester	20.76
COV	RTS – Coventry	20.75
PRE	RTS – Preston College	20.43
BLA	RTS – Blackburn	19.64
RMA	RTS – Ramsgate	19.32
PYE	RTS – Plymouth	19.27
SAL	RTS – Salisbury	19.12
CPR	RTS – Bournemouth	19.09
DCR	RTS – Derry City Rugby Club, Londonderry	18.98
GLO	RTS – Gloucester	18.97
BLE	RTS – Belfast Odyssey Arena	18.95
ENN	RTS – Enniskillen	18.84
WOB	RTS – Abercynon	18.83
EXE	RTS – Exeter	18.81
TAU	RTS – Taunton	18.66
NEW	RTS – Newbury	18.63
TIP	RTS – Portsmouth	18.59
POR	RTS – Portadown	18.56
EBV	RTS – Ebbw Vale	18.34
BRE	RTS – Bristol Airport	18.24
SWI	RTS – Swindon	17.94
HYE	RTS – Haydock Race Course	17.90
GWE	RTS – Gatwick Airport	17.22
ABE	RTS – Aberdeen Airport	17.20
MCM	RTS – Manchester Airport	17.05
IVE	RTS – Inverness	16.92
HEA	RTS – Heathrow	16.82
SLO	RTS – Slough	16.74
LIV	RTS – Liverpool Airport	16.41
LVE	RTS – Edmonton Lee Valley	16.33
MES	RTS – Manchester Etihad Stadium	16.27
PRS	RTS – Prestwick	16.22
AFE	RTS – Ashford	16.12

GUD	RTS – Guildford	16.10
PBO	RTS – Peterborough	15.99
PFK	RTS – Penrith	15.98
PER	RTS – Perth	15.88
CAM	RTS – Cambridge	15.87
EBB	RTS – Ebbsfleet	15.79
NWE	RTS – Newcastle Great Park & Ride	15.74
CHE	RTS – Chessington	15.70
NRW	RTS – Norwich	15.48
SAE	RTS – Stansted Airport	15.33
OXF	RTS – Oxford Parkway	15.26
TWE	RTS – Twickenham Stadium	15.14
BGE	RTS – Brighton	15.06
GRE	RTS – Greenwich	14.66
IWE	RTS – Ipswich	14.54
EDE	RTS – Edinburgh Airport	14.22
TPR	RTS – Oxford	14.09
WEL	RTS – Welwyn Garden City	14.07
DWR	RTS – Llandudno Coach Park	13.58
GLM	RTS – Glasgow Airport	12.59
MKE	RTS – Milton Keynes	11.31

2

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/boris-johnson-covid-tests-24-hours-by-end-of-june_uk_5ed76617c5b6a209e0b9dc16

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