

Surge testing to be deployed in targeted areas in Merton and Barnet

Press release

Further targeted areas will have additional testing made available to control and suppress the potential spread of the COVID-19 variant first identified in South Africa.



Working in partnership with the local authorities, additional testing and genomic sequencing is being deployed to targeted areas within Merton (Wimbledon Park) and Barnet (East Finchley), where the COVID-19 variant first identified in South Africa has been found.

The increased testing is being introduced in addition to existing extensive testing. In combination with the current lockdown rules and following [Hands. Face. Space](#) advice, it will help to monitor and suppress the spread of the virus. Positive cases will be sequenced for genomic data to help increase our understanding of COVID-19 variants and their spread within these areas.

Enhanced contact tracing will be used for individuals testing positive with a 'variant of concern'. This is where contact tracers look back across an extended period to determine the route of transmission.

People living within targeted areas are strongly encouraged to take a COVID-19 test when offered, whether they are showing symptoms or not.

People with symptoms should [book a free test online](#) or by phone to get tested at a testing site or have a testing kit sent home.

Those without symptoms should [visit their local authority website](#) for more information:

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