

Director of Public Health Annual Report 2020-2021: key findings

Health and Wellbeing Board

8 June 2022

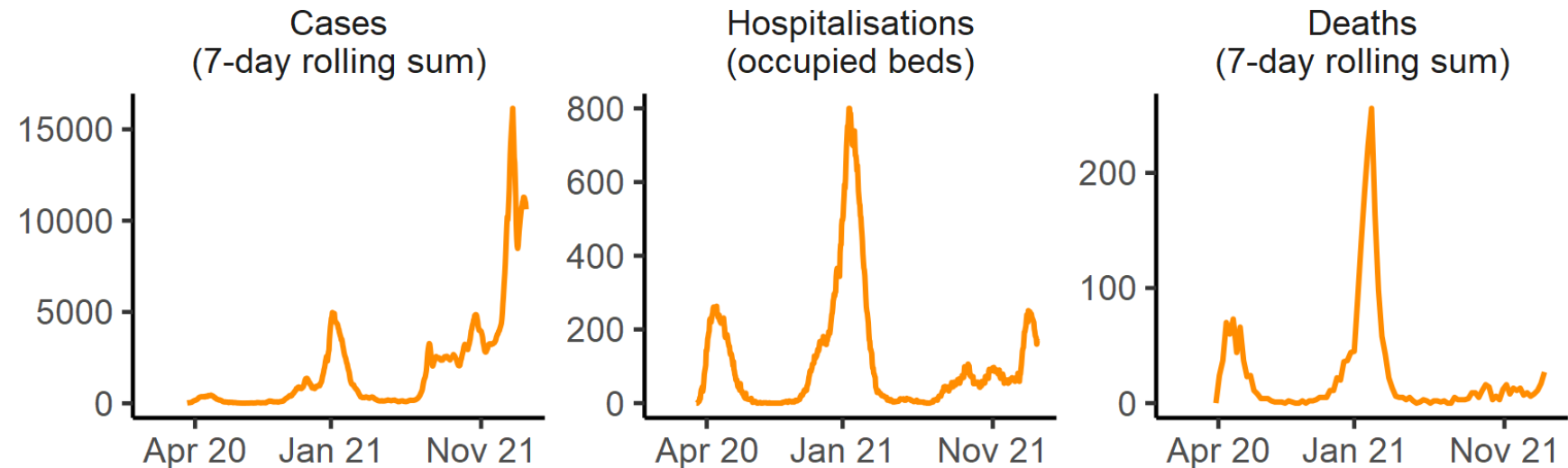
Diane Steiner, Deputy Director of Public Health

DPH Annual Report 2020-2021

- Statutory duty – independent report on health of Norfolk.
- The report covers:
 - Two years on direct impacts of Covid-19:
 - cases, hospitalisations, tests, vaccinations, deaths.
 - Local area variation.
 - Unequal impacts on different groups.
 - Core health protection actions taken.
- Data covers March 2020 – January 2022 unless stated otherwise.

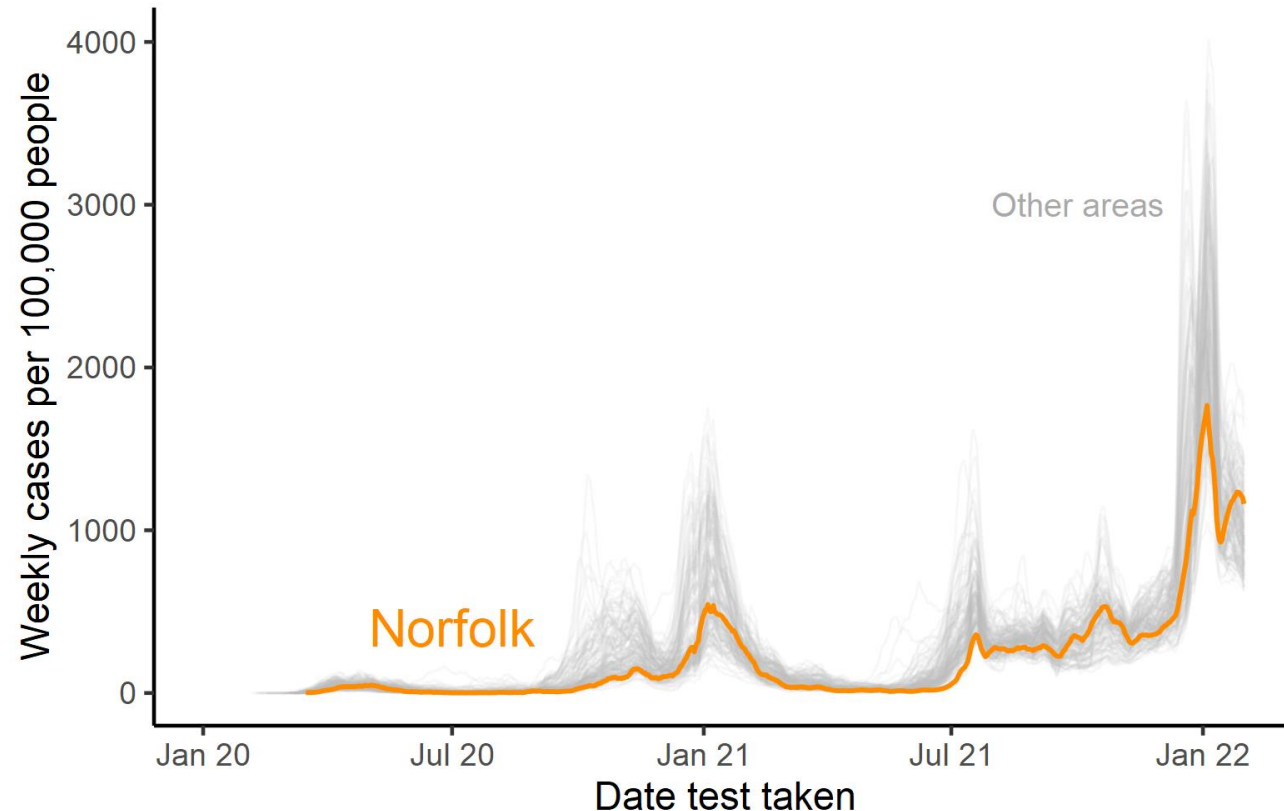
Impact of Covid-19 changed over time

- Spring 2020: first wave, no immunity in population.
- Winter 2020-21: more testing to find cases, large wave, limited immunity, hospitalisations and deaths peaked.
- Summer 2021 onwards: immunity from vaccination/previous infection, hospitalisations and deaths remained relatively low compared to large number of cases.



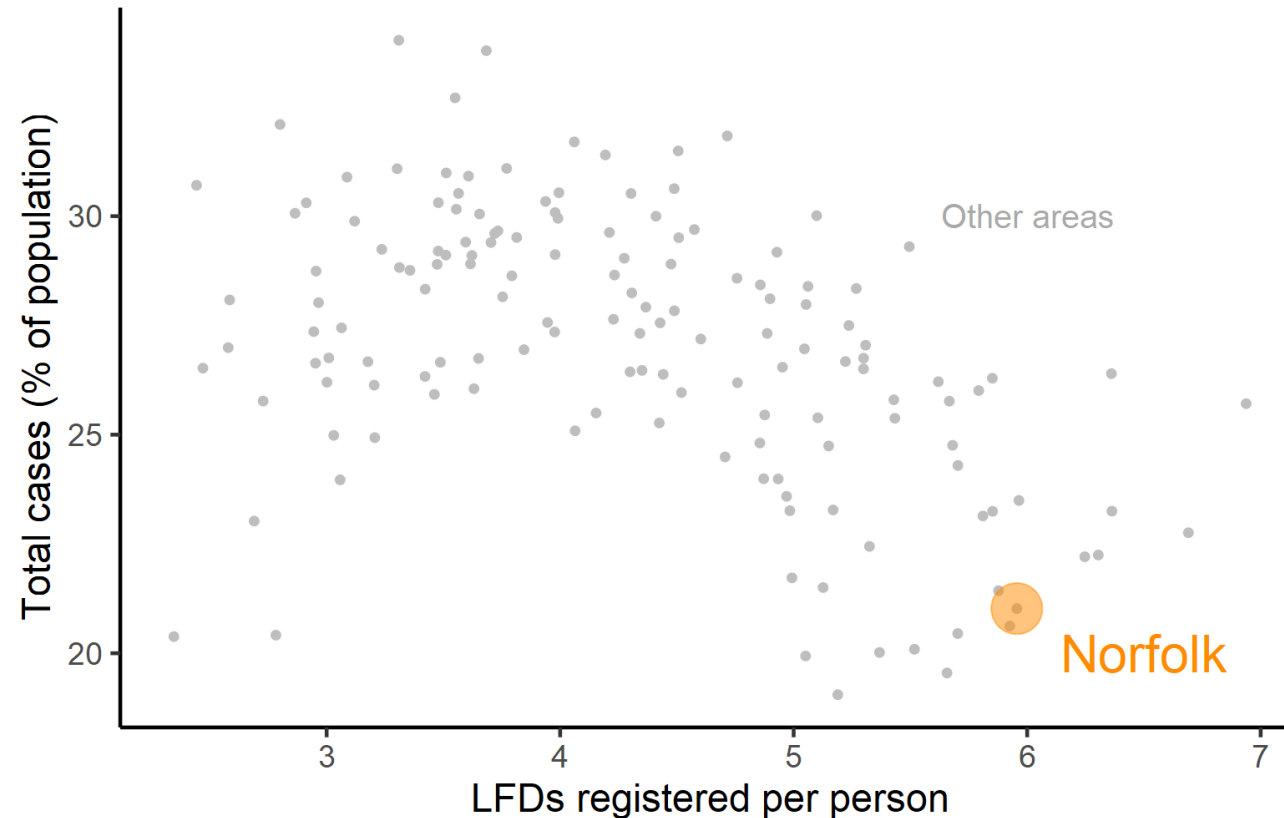
Cases

- 192,139 confirmed cases – around 1 in 5 people in Norfolk.
- Norfolk had one of lowest case rates in England.
- Waves followed national pattern.



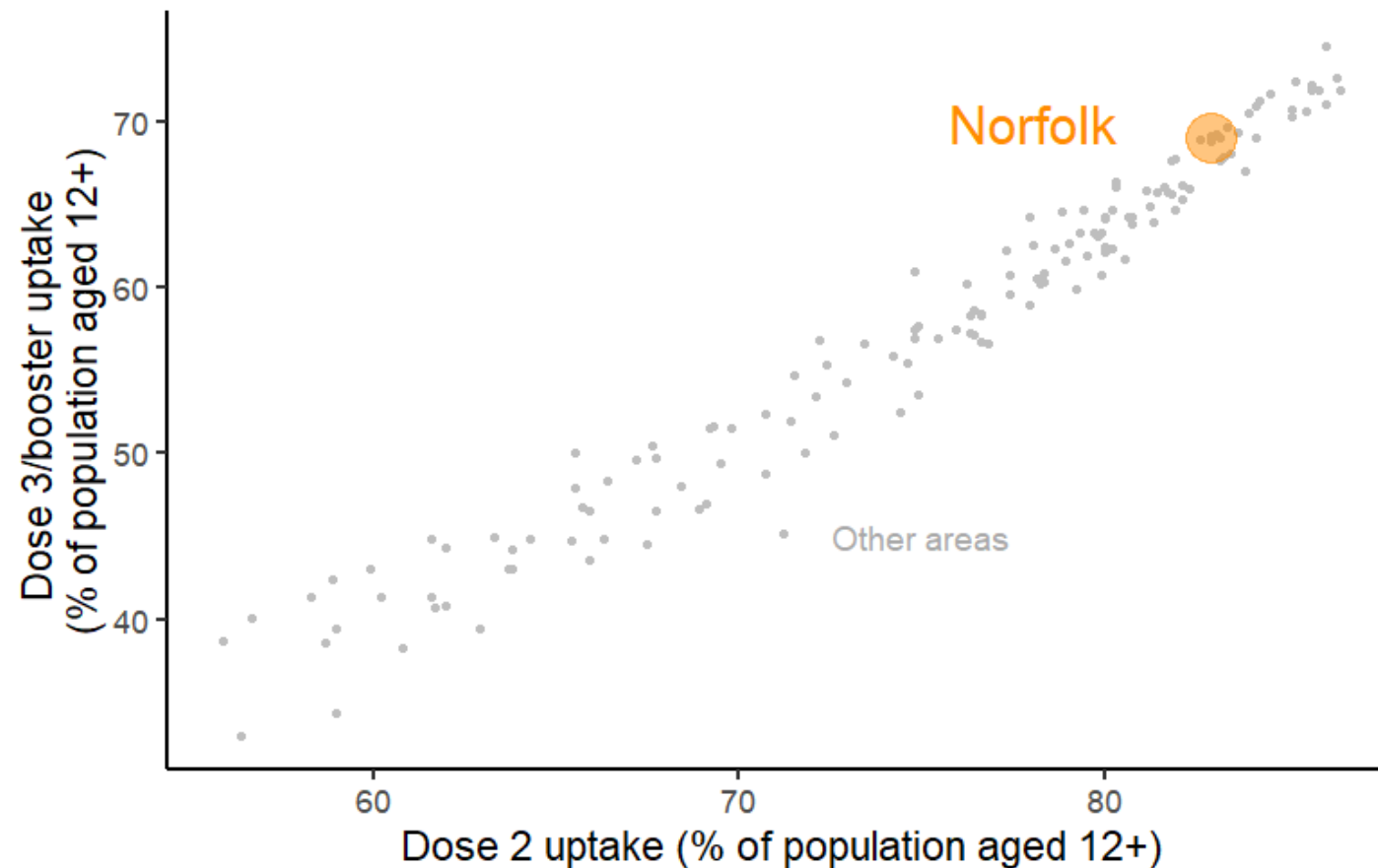
Tests

- Norfolk 7th highest rapid (LFD) testing in England.
- 1 in 4 cases in Norfolk found via LFDs.
- In general, areas with higher LFD uptake had lower case rates.



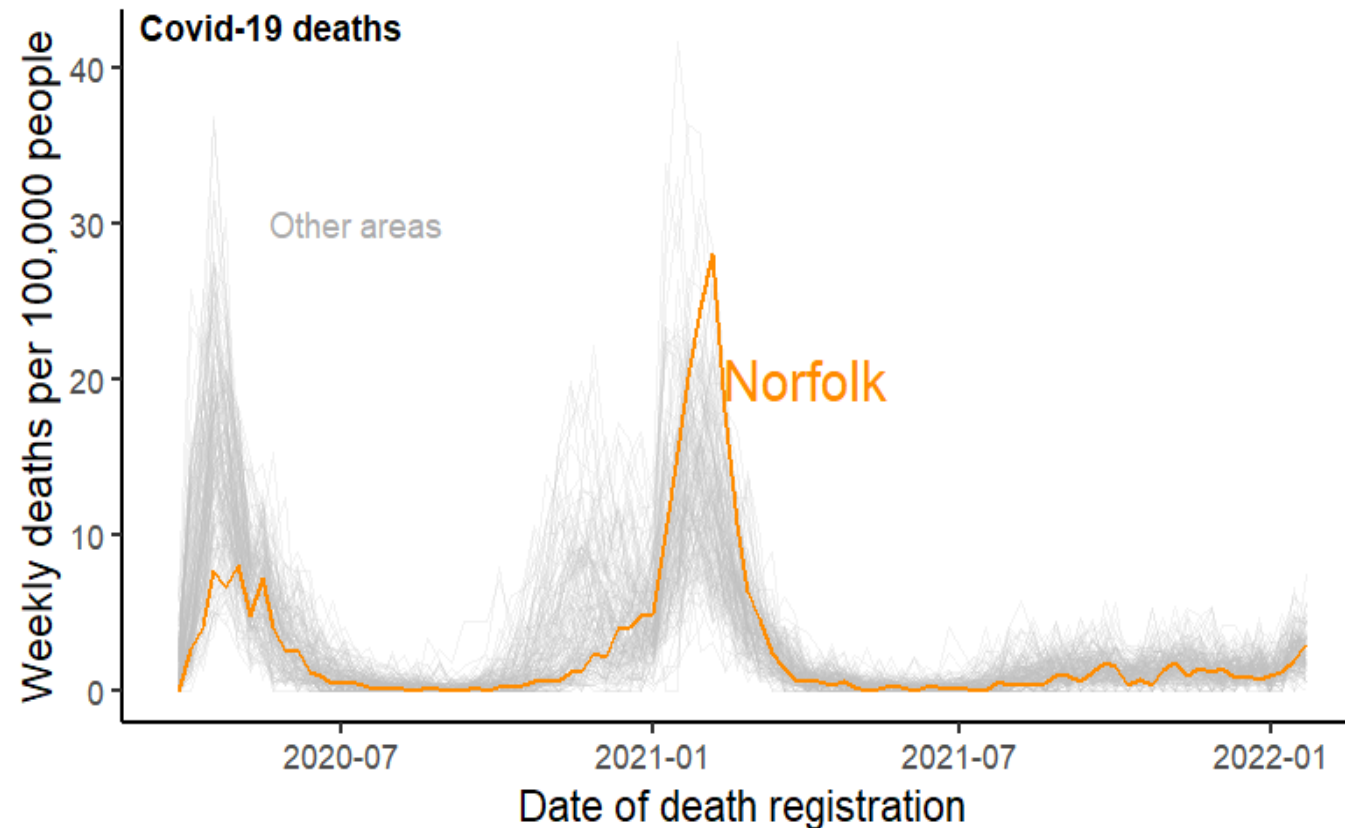
Vaccinations

- Norfolk one of highest vaccination rates in England.
- Of those aged 12+ more than 8 in 10 people had at least two doses.



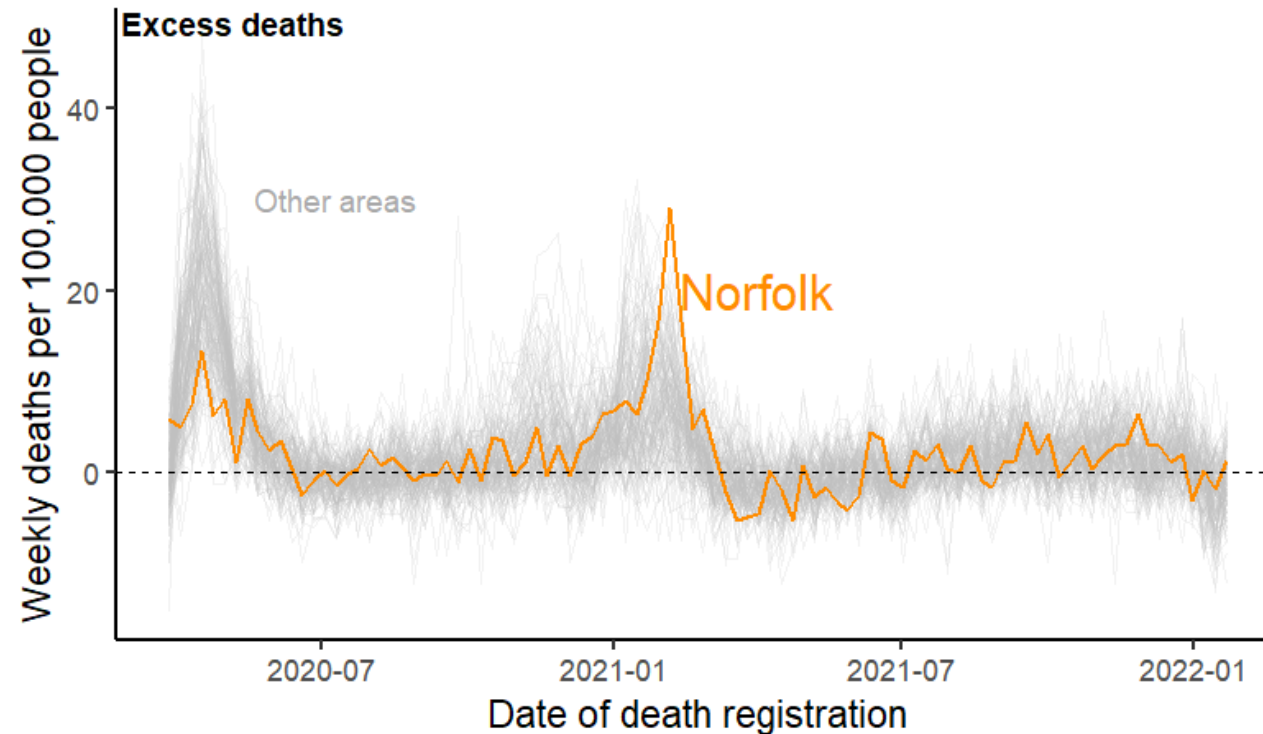
Deaths

- Sadly, 2,329 Covid-19 deaths.
- Once age factored in, Norfolk's death rate one of lowest in country.
- Death rates lower in first wave, higher in second wave.



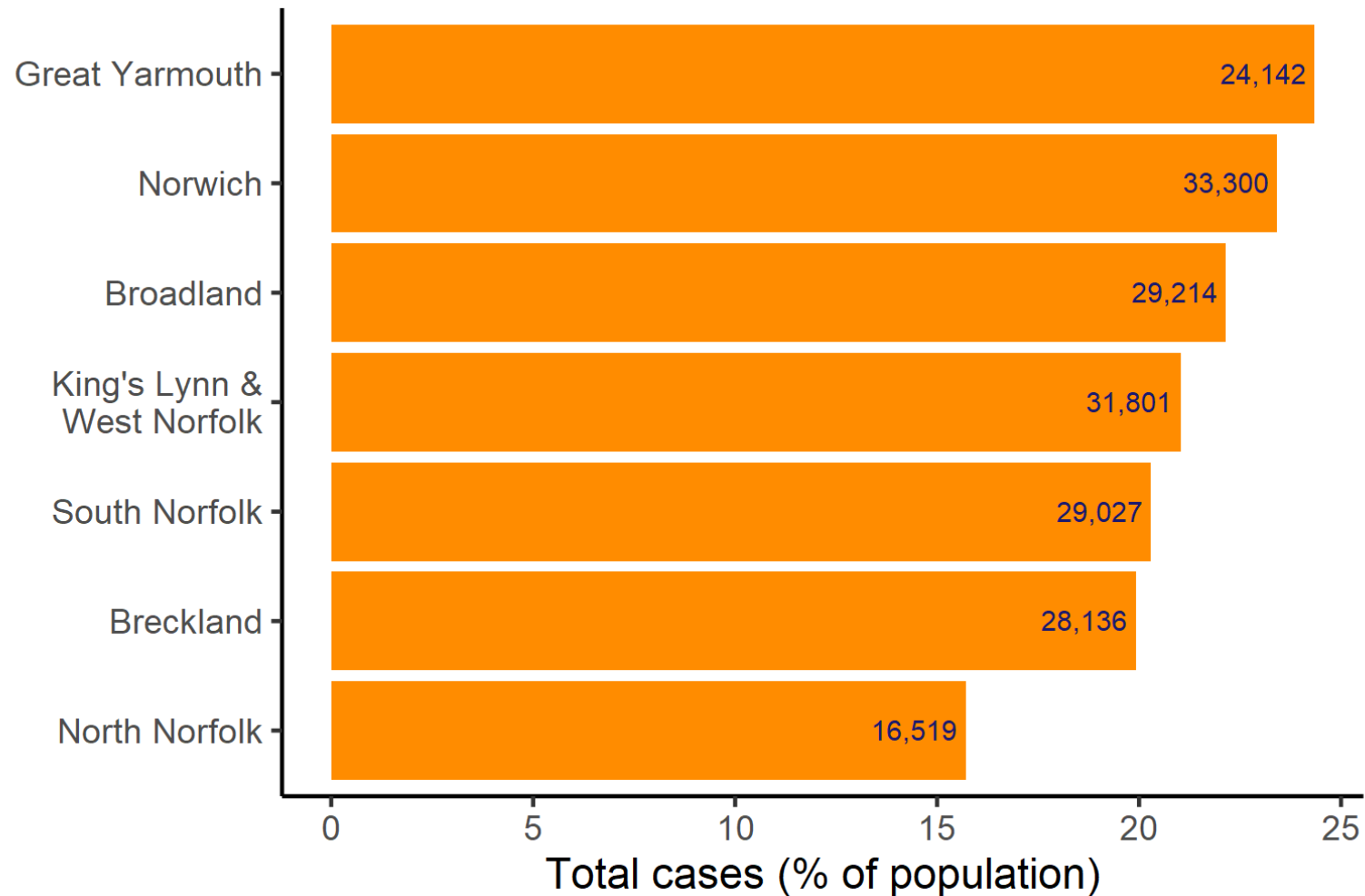
Deaths compared to previous years

- Includes all deaths, not just Covid-19.
- 1,964 more deaths than previous years.
- Once age factored in, Norfolk had fewer excess deaths than majority of areas in England.



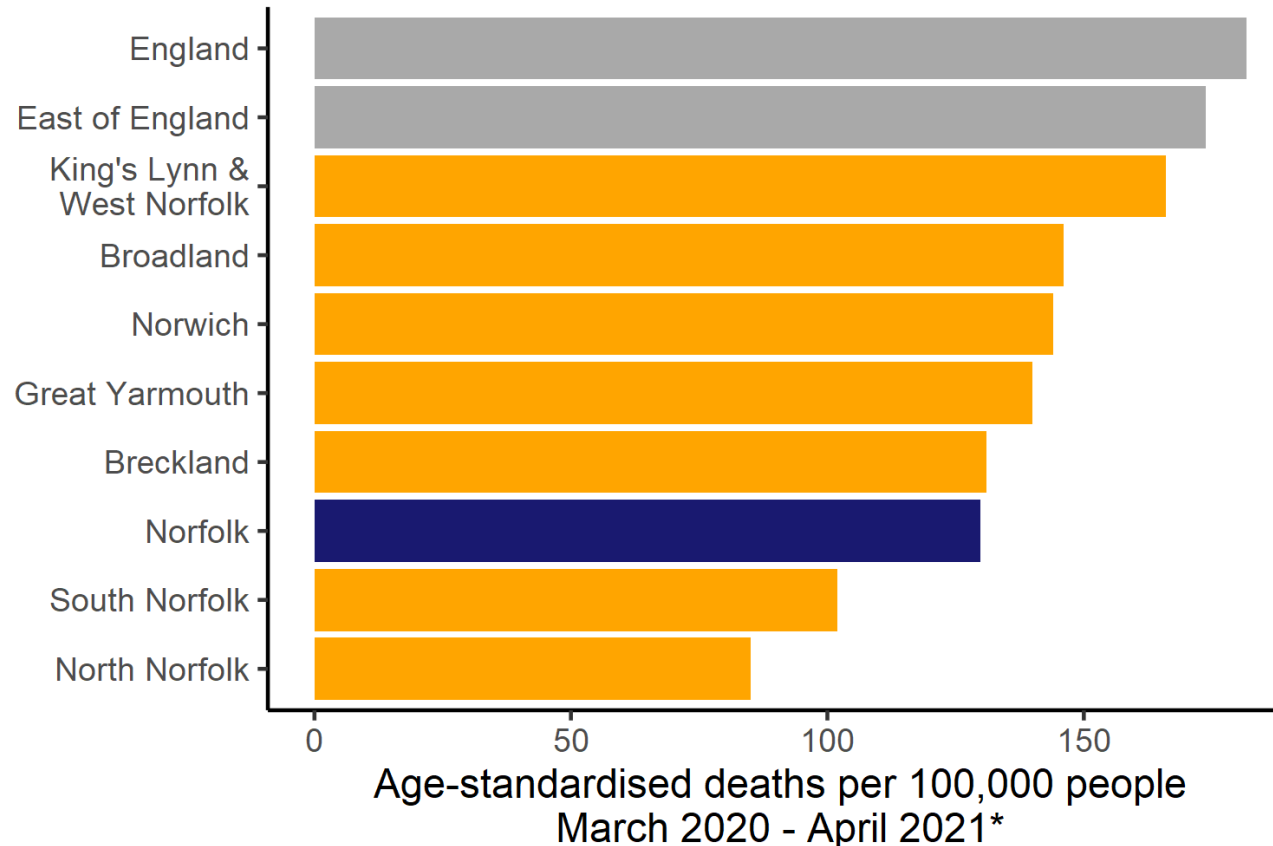
Lower tier local authorities - cases

- Cases: Great Yarmouth highest rate, North Norfolk lowest.



Lower tier local authorities - deaths

- Once age taken into account, Norfolk and all district, city and borough areas had death rates lower than the East of England and England averages.
- King's Lynn and West Norfolk highest, North Norfolk lowest.

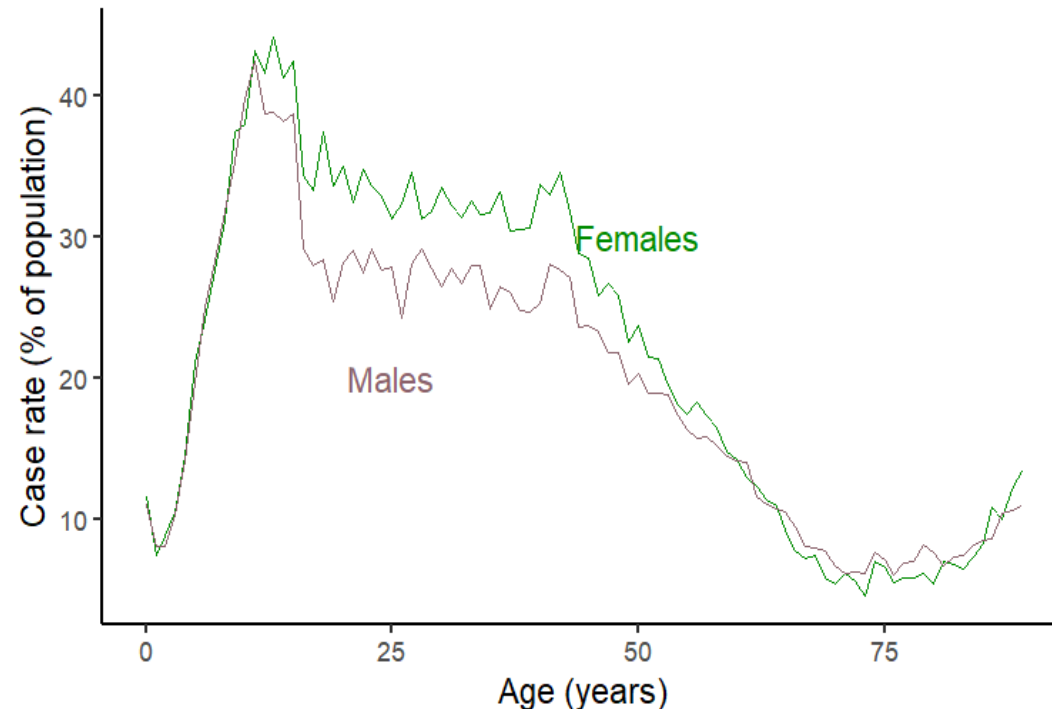


Local variation

- Urban parts of the county tended to have higher rates of cases and lower vaccination uptake than rural areas.
- In general, higher death rates in areas with oldest populations.
- However, 20% most deprived areas had highest case rates, lowest vaccination uptake and highest death rates.

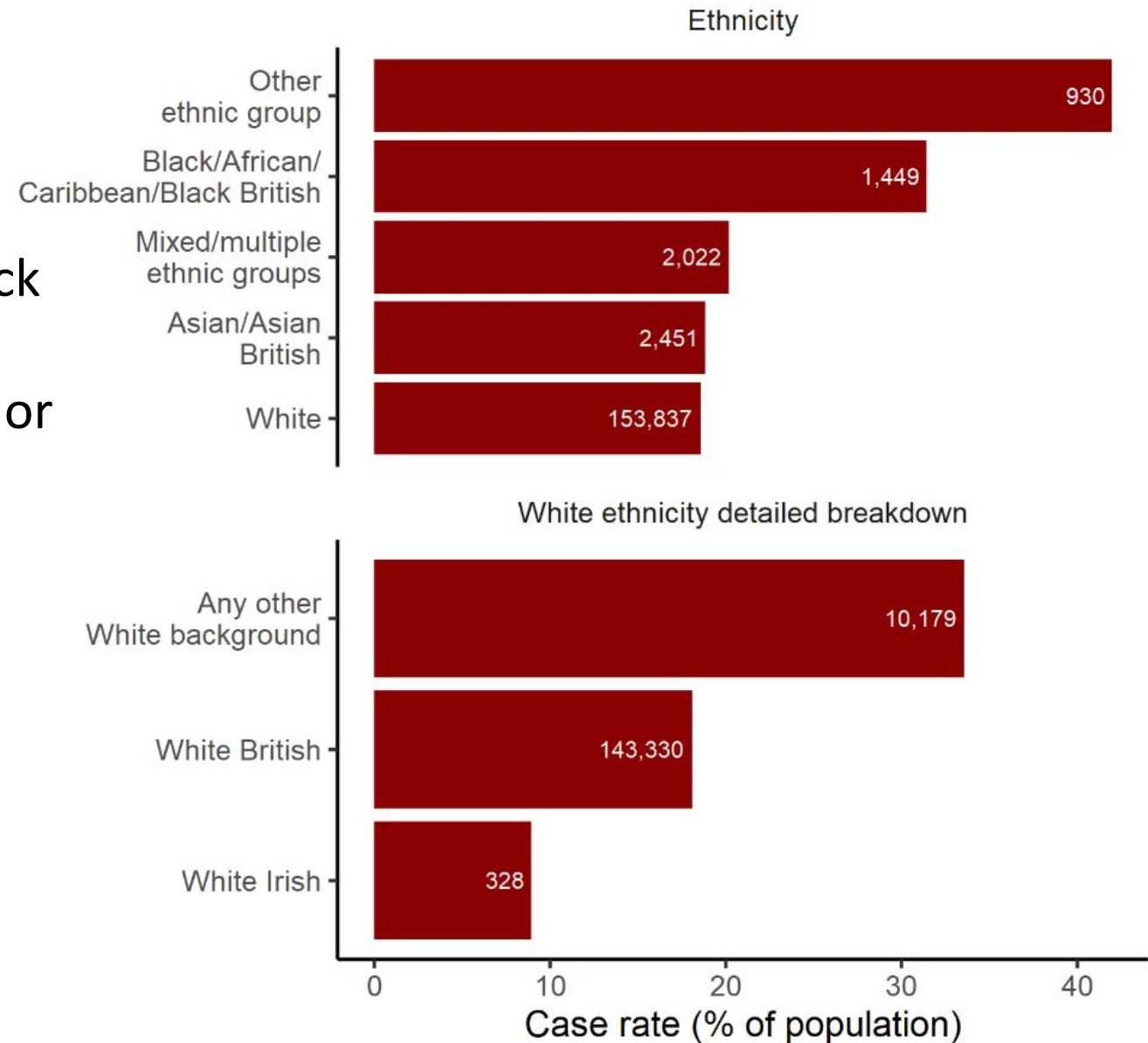
Unequal impacts of Covid-19

- Cases: more female than male. National research: males higher risk of dying.
- Highest case rates in older children and working age adults.
- Link to higher rates of testing in schools/parents, workplaces, care homes?



Ethnicity

- Highest case rates:
 - 'Other ethnic group'.
 - Black / African / Caribbean / Black British.
 - Other White – not White British or White Irish.



Care homes

- Cases
 - 8,127 cases linked to care homes – staff, residents, visitors.
 - Most cases occurred in winter 2021 and winter 2022.
- Deaths
 - 699 care home resident deaths involved Covid-19 – around 3 in 10 Norfolk deaths.
 - Around 1 in 8 of all deaths in care homes linked to Covid-19 – a little lower than national average.

Long Covid

- Nationally, around 1 in 40 people experienced Long Covid.
- That would mean around 22,000 in Norfolk.
- 14,000 would have moderate impacts.
- 4,000 would have more severe impacts.
- Highest rates in females, people aged 35-49 and those living in more deprived areas.

Norfolk's health protection response

- Health protection actions based on years of experience and research in infectious disease control.
- Norfolk was among earliest areas to take on some of these new roles.
- Unprecedented cross-sector working between national, regional and local agencies, as well as businesses, care homes, schools, workplaces, VCSE, volunteers.
- Overseen by senior officers from key organisations (Health Protection Board).
- Engagement Board provided political oversight and guidance on communications with the public.

Testing

- Mobile teams to reach across rural county.
 - Mass testing for variants of concern.
 - Supporting testing in workplaces and other organisations.
 - Distributing tests for members of the public through libraries.
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- In focus: Norfolk's mobile testing teams
 - Carried out over 35,000 observed tests.
 - Tested at over 150 sites and venues.
 - Operated from 10 mobile units.

Contact tracing

- Norfolk one of five areas to pilot local contact tracing September 2020.
- Norfolk among first local authorities to take on all contact tracing from NHS Test and Trace – March 2021.
- Consistently reached and identified contacts of >90% of cases – high performing.
- In focus: Enhanced contact tracing and the Delta variant
 - Recognised threat before reached Norfolk.
 - Local monitoring detected Delta early and we were prepared to act rapidly.
 - In-depth contact tracing to identify clusters of cases and break chains of transmission.
 - May have played a part in delaying Delta wave in Norfolk and keeping case rates among the lowest in the country in summer 2021.

Vaccinations

- Largest vaccination roll-out in NHS history – almost 2.5m in Norfolk and Waveney.
- Led by NHS in Norfolk and Waveney, supported by volunteers, local authorities, businesses, charities and many others.
- People of Norfolk rolled up their sleeves.
- In focus: reaching out to Norfolk
 - Jab cabs.
 - Roving Vaccination bus – 10,000 vaccinations in harder to reach areas.
 - Worry Bus – time and space with clinicians.
 - Website with walk-in site locations.
 - Door knocking to share information.
 - Fast-track clinics for pregnant women.
 - Clinics in over 50 locations.

Community Support

- Support to increase self-isolation and reduce unequal impacts.
- Partnership working between local agencies.
- Proactive contact with those shielding, cases, contacts.
- Could also seek support via NCC Customer Services Centre or speaking to Covid-19 support officers.
- Activities included:
 - 600+ contacts to provide loneliness and befriending support.
 - Over 13,000 prescriptions collections, over 7,000 shopping/food parcel collections.
 - 2,000+ referrals to Norfolk Assistance Scheme.
 - Providing information, referrals into local help hubs, raising awareness of support available.
 - Providing PCR tests to contacts of cases to enable faster self-isolation.
- District, city and borough councils contacted nearly 188,000 people Jan 2021-Feb 2022.

Outbreak management centre (OMC)

- Local authorities took on new role.
- Outbreak management centre set up – multi-agency, multi-disciplinary team of experts.
- Offered advice and guidance, assessing risk, agreeing actions.
- Single point of contact for workplaces, schools, care homes etc.
- OMC team shortlisted for ‘Team of the Year’ in national LGA awards.

Communicating with Norfolk residents

- Provided information, advice and guidance.
- Coordinated across local agencies.
- Encouraged everyone in the county to protect themselves, protect others, protect Norfolk.
- Local communications won a national award.
- In focus: keeping Norfolk informed
 - Weekly media briefings.
 - Business and tourism toolkits.
 - Safety messages on takeaway bags.
 - Covid-19 kits for people experiencing homelessness.
 - Direct mail to 400,000 households.
 - Translated materials, digital advertising, website.

Conclusions

- Substantial and wide-ranging impacts on county from Covid-19.
- Unequal impacts – sex, age, ethnicity, deprivation.
- Large scale implementation of health protection measures.
- While these will have helped lessen impact, sadly lives continue to be lost and many living with long Covid.
- Cases and hospitalisations still occurring.
- Evolution of new variants unpredictable – could be more/less severe or evade immunity.
 - Maintaining readiness to act.
- Astounding coming together of local organisations, businesses and individuals to combat an extraordinary threat to health and wellbeing in Norfolk.