

## **Fixed penalty notices issued under COVID-19 emergency health regulations by police forces in England and Wales**

### **Introduction**

This release presents the latest data on the police use of COVID-19 enforcement notices issued under all emergency health protection regulations in force as at 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021<sup>1</sup> (including fines issued under local “lockdowns”, that is local areas where restrictions have been temporarily tightened and includes revisions to previously published figures).

Data on FPNs issued in England and Wales is collated centrally by the ACRO Criminal Records Office and cover the 43 territorial forces, the British Transport Police (BTP) and Ministry of Defence Police.

The figures below relate to enforcement activity by police forces and these data should be seen in the context of wider police activity to engage with the public to explain and encourage compliance with the new regulations. As outlined in previous releases, the police have recorded hundreds of thousands of Covid-19 related incidents since the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020. This will include incidents where officers have proactively offered advice to people, responded to reports from the members of the public about breaches of the regulation by others and offences where criminals have sought to take advantage of the pandemic to commit a crime.

### **Headline figures for FPNs issued under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations, England and Wales**

In total, 42,675<sup>2</sup> notices have been recorded as having been issued in England (38,452) and Wales (4,223) between Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and Monday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

In England:

- 15,947 notices were issued under number one regulations;
- 569 under number two regulations;
- 250 for holding a gathering of more than 30 people;
- 1,102 in relation to breaches of local “lockdowns”;
- 2,904 under the “Local COVID-19 alert levels”;
- 6,869 under number four regulations (national restrictions) and
- 10,811 notices issued under the “All Tiers” regulations:
  - 12 notices for Tier 1 (Medium);
  - 936 notices for Tier 2 (High);
  - 3,103 notices for Tier 3 (Very High);
  - 6,760 notices for Tier 4 (Extremely High), just over a thousand of these were issued prior to the national restrictions coming into force on January 4<sup>th</sup>.
- The forces issuing the most fines under “All Tiers” regulations were: Metropolitan Police (1315), Greater Manchester (696) and West Midlands (588).

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<sup>1</sup> For a full list of all regulations please see: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/coronavirus> and <https://gov.wales/coronavirus-legislation-and-guidance-law>

<sup>2</sup> Three notices are recorded as having been issued in England prior to March 27<sup>th</sup>

In Wales:

- 2,664 notices were issued under number one regulations;
- 174 notices were issued under number two regulations;
- 278 notices were issued under number three regulations;
- 598 notices were issued under number four regulations;
- 504 notices have been issued under number five regulations,
- 2 notices were issued under regulations relating to holding a gathering of more than 30 people
- 3 notices were issued under the International Travel Regulations

Chart 1 shows previously published figures for earlier reporting periods together with the latest revisions as more FPNs have been processed. In earlier releases this was reported on a daily basis but, given the length of time these regulations have been in place, this is now summarised on a weekly basis.

The weekly count for England and Wales shows that in recent weeks there has been an upward trend in the number of FPNs issued, with 2,564 FPNs issued in the last full week (8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021), compared with 2,225 FPNs in the previous week. The chart shows that these figures are likely to be revised upwards as more fines are processed.

The recent upward trend began in the week 18<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> December 2020, coinciding with the introduction of Tier 4 as part of the “Local COVID-19 Alert Levels” regulations and continued to rise with the introduction of the new national restrictions on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 2021 (when all areas of England were moved into Tier 4).

The current level of enforcement is returning to levels seen in the first period of restrictions in March and April 2020, with a peak of 3,294 FPNs issued between 10<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> April 2020 during the week of the Easter Bank holiday. After this initial high level of enforcement, there was a considerable reduction in enforcement activity as the restrictions were progressively eased, particularly in England. This low number of FPNs continued from June to early September, after which there was a gradual increase as restrictions were tightened. This was then followed by a dip in the number of FPNs issued between late November to mid-December 2020 as restrictions were relaxed after the end of the second national restrictions.

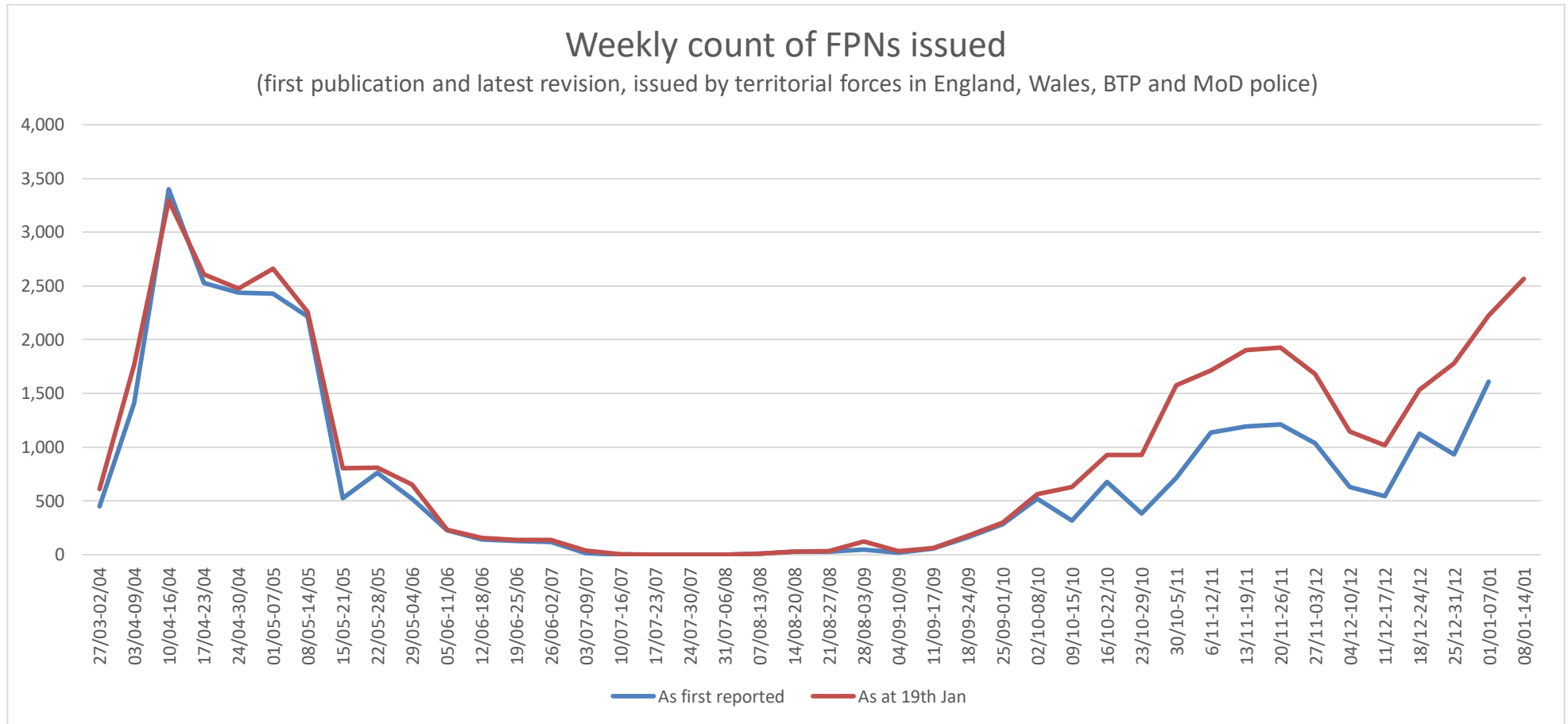
Of all enforcement notices issued in England and Wales:

- The vast majority (13,994) have been issued for “Contravene requirement as to restriction of movement during emergency period” (Table 1).
- The large majority (over 7 in 10) were issued to males (Table 2).
- Over 7 in 10 were issued to the under 35s; with 44% issued to 18-24 year olds, 16% to those aged 25-29 and 12% to those aged 30-34 (Table 3).
- Of those FPNs where the individual issued with the notice had a self-identified ethnicity<sup>3</sup> recorded, 80% were issued to people who self-identified as White. Around one in ten (11%) went to those who self-identified as Asians and 6% to those identifying as Black (Table 4).

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<sup>3</sup> 22% of FPNs issued did not have the self-defined ethnicity of the individual identified.

**Chart 1: FPNs issued under COVID-19 regulations between 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021**



Note: excludes 3 FPNs with incorrect date of issue.

**Table 1: Reasons for which FPNs has been issued under emergency COVID-19 regulations, between 27th March 2020 and 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021 in England and Wales**

Regulations	Jurisdiction	Reason for issue	England	Wales	Total
<b>No.1, No.2, local lockdowns (England only); No.3 and No.4 (Wales only)</b>	<b>England and Wales</b>	Contravene requirement as to restriction of movement during emergency period	11,784	2,210	13,994
		Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering in public of more than two people	4,177	280	4,457
		Contravene a direction or fail to comply with instruction	2,337	371	2,708
		Contravene requirement from a relevant person	432	52	484
		Obstruct person carrying out a function under the regulations	285	10	295
		Contravene requirement to not participate in an indoor gathering of two or more people	33	21	54
	<b>England only</b>	Contravene requirement to not participate in an outdoor gathering of more than six people	76	N/A	76
		Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering of more than thirty people – dwelling/houseboat	25	N/A	25
		Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering of more than thirty people – vessel (other than houseboat)	-	N/A	-
		Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering of more than thirty people – land (certain public outdoor spaces)	25	N/A	25
		Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering of more than thirty people – indoor amplified music	10	N/A	10
		Entry into and/or remaining in a restricted area	3	N/A	3
		Failure to restrict access to a restricted area	1	N/A	1
		Stay overnight other than at place of living / linked household, in England, without reasonable excuse	7	N/A	7

		Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering of more than six people	471	N/A	471
		Contravene requirement to not participate in gathering of two or more persons in the protected area	45	N/A	45
		Contravene requirement to not participate in gathering of two or more persons outside the protected area	1	N/A	1
		Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering of more than two people – dwelling / houseboat	847	N/A	847
	<b>Wales only</b>	Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering of more than thirty people	N/A	60	60
		Enter/Remain in a local health protection area in Wales without reasonable excuse	N/A	142	142
		Leave or remain away from place when living in local health protection area in Wales without reasonable excuse	N/A	205	205
		Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering in public	N/A	83	83
		Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering in private	N/A	218	218
		Contravene a requirement not to participate in a gathering outside of a private dwelling that consists of more than 4 people	N/A	41	41
		Contravene a requirement not to participate in a gathering in holiday or travel accommodation with people outside of their household	N/A	-	-
		Contravene a requirement not to participate in a gathering in a private dwelling with any other person apart from the household or extended household	N/A	489	489
		Contravene a requirement not to participate in a gathering in a private dwelling consisting of more than 15 people	N/A	127	127
		Contravene a requirement not to be involved in organising an indoor event of more than 15 people	N/A	5	5
		Contravene a requirement not to be involved in organising an outdoor event of more than 30 people	N/A	5	5

		Contravene restriction that no person living outside Wales may enter or remain in Wales without a reasonable excuse	N/A	60	60
		Contravene restriction that no person living in Wales may leave Wales without a reasonable excuse	N/A	-	-
		Contravene a requirement of a person required to isolate, may not to leave or be outside the place where they are living	N/A	10	10
		Contravene a requirement of a child required to isolate, may not to leave or be outside the place where they are living	N/A	-	-
		Contravene a requirement to provide details to contract tracer when requested to do so	N/A	-	-
		Contravene a requirement to not carry on restricted business or service at premises	N/A	1	1
		Contravene a requirement to not carry on restricted business or service at premises	N/A	-	-
		Contravene a requirement to not sell or supply alcohol between restricted times	N/A	-	-
		Contravene a requirement that an operator of public transport displays adequate signage	N/A	-	-
		Contravene the requirement to wear face covering on public transport	N/A	-	-
		Contravene the requirement to wear face covering in certain indoor places	N/A	4	4
		Contravene a requirement not to participate in a gathering in a private dwelling which consists of more than 6 people	N/A	1	1
<b>Local COVID-19 Alert Levels/All</b>	<b>England only</b>	Obstruct person carrying out function under the regulations	60	N/A	60

<b>Tiers (England only)</b>	Contravene a requirement imposed, or a direction given, by a relevant person	269	N/A	269
	Contravene a reasonable instruction given by a relevant person	163	N/A	163
	Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering in a Tier 1 area of more than six people	510	N/A	510
	Contravene a Tier 1 Restriction	-	N/A	-
	Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering indoors in a Tier 2 area of two or more people	2,379	N/A	2,379
	Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering outdoors in a Tier 2 area of more than six people	153	N/A	153
	Contravene requirement that no person living in a Tier 2 area may participate in a gathering outside the restricted area which consists of two or more people indoors	17	N/A	17
	Contravene requirement that no person living in a Tier 2 area may participate in a gathering outside the restricted area of more than six people outdoors	25	N/A	25
	Contravene a Tier 2 restriction	25	N/A	25
	Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering in the Tier 3 area of two or more people - private dwelling/any indoor space	2,982	N/A	2,982
	Contravene requirement that no person living in a Tier 3 area may participate in a gathering outside the restricted area which consists of two or more people - private dwelling/any indoor space	209	N/A	209
	Contravene a requirement to not participate in a gathering in a relevant public outdoor place in the Tier 3 area of more than six people	145	N/A	145
	Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering in any other outdoor place in the Tier 3 area of two or more people	253	N/A	253
	Contravene requirement that no person living in a Tier 3 area may participate in a gathering outside the restricted area which consists of more than six people in a relevant public outdoor place	49	N/A	49

		Contravene requirement that no person living in a Tier 3 area may participate in a gathering outside the restricted area which consists of two or more people in any other outdoor place	21	N/A	21
		Contravene a Tier 3 Restriction	40	N/A	40
<b>No.4 regs (national lockdown, England only)</b>		Contravene a requirement to not participate in a gathering in the Tier 4 area of two or more people - private dwelling/any indoor space	3,077	N/A	3,077
		Contravene a requirement to not participate in a gathering in a specified outdoor place in the Tier 4 area of more than two people	348	N/A	348
		Contravene a requirement to not participate in a gathering in any other outdoor place in the Tier 4 area of two or more people	1,005	N/A	1,005
		Contravene requirement that no person living in a Tier 4 area may participate in a gathering outside the restricted area which consists of two or more people - private dwelling/any indoor space	97	N/A	97
		Contravene requirement that no person living in a Tier 4 area may participate in a gathering outside the restricted area which consists of more than two people in a specified outdoor place	45	N/A	45
		Contravene requirement that no person living in a Tier 4 area may participate in a gathering outside the restricted area which consists of two or more people in any other outdoor place	69	N/A	69
		Contravene requirement to not leave or be outside of place of living	1,947	N/A	1,947
		Contravene a requirement/direction/instruction from a relevant person	267	N/A	267
		Contravene requirement to not participate in an indoor gathering of two or more people	4,049	N/A	4,049
		Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering of more than two people in public outdoor place	1,216	N/A	1,216
		Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering of two or more people in other outdoor space	310	N/A	310
	<b>Holding a gathering</b>	<b>England only</b>	Contravene requirement to not leave or be outside of place of living	1,161	N/A



		Contravene requirement not to hold, or be involved in holding, a gathering of more than thirty people – dwelling/houseboat	124	N/A	124
		Contravene requirement not to hold, or be involved in holding, a gathering of more than thirty people – vessel (other than a houseboat or a vessel used for public transport)	1	N/A	1
		Contravene requirement not to hold, or be involved in holding, a gathering of more than thirty people – vessel (other than a houseboat or a vessel used for public transport)	52	N/A	52
		Contravene requirement not to hold, or be involved in holding, a gathering of more than thirty people – land (certain public outdoor spaces)	74	N/A	74
	<b>Wales only</b>	Holding a gathering[1]	N/A	2	2
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>41,701</b>	<b>4,397</b>	<b>46,098</b>

Note: a) The total in this table exceeds the headline measure of total FPNs issued as an FPN can be issued for more than one reason.  
b) No FPNs have been issued for the reason of: ‘Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering of more than thirty people - vessel (other than houseboat)’

**Table 2: FPNs issued under emergency COVID-19 regulations, by gender, between 27th March 2020 and 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021 in England and Wales**

	<b>England</b>	<b>Wales</b>	<b>Total</b>
Male	72%	72%	72%
Female	27%	27%	27%
Other	0.01%	0%	0.01%
Unknown	1%	1%	1%

**Table 3: FPNs issued under emergency COVID-19 regulations, by age group, between 27th March 2020 and 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021 in England and Wales**

	<b>England</b>	<b>Wales</b>	<b>Total</b>
18-24	44%	35%	44%
25-29	16%	16%	16%
30-34	12%	14%	12%
35-39	9%	11%	9%

40-44	6%	8%	6%
45-49	5%	5%	5%
50-54	3%	4%	4%
55-59	2%	3%	2%
60-64	1%	2%	1%
65+	1%	2%	1%
Unknown	0%	0%	0%

**Table 4: FPNs issued under emergency COVID-19 regulations, by self-defined ethnicity, between 27th March 2020 and 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021 in England and Wales**

	England	Wales	Total
White	78%	88%	80%
Asian and Chinese	11%	8%	11%
Black	7%	1%	6%
Mixed	2%	2%	2%
Other	1%	1%	1%

Notes: Excludes 22% of FPNs where the ethnicity of the individual issued with the notice was unknown (24% for England and 7% for Wales).

### **Headline figures for FPNs issued under the face coverings regulations, England and Wales**

A total of 251 notices have been recorded as having been issued by police forces under the Wearing of Face Coverings on Public Transport Regulations between 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021, and 1,068 notices have been issued under the Wearing of Face Coverings in a Relevant Place Regulations between 24<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

#### **Face coverings on public transport**

A weekly count of FPNs issued under face coverings on public transport regulations has shown that an average of seven FPNs have been issued each week (with 251 notices issued to 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021 since 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020). There is no discernible trend apparent from the data.

Further breakdowns of FPNs issued under the Face coverings on public transport regulations are presented below.

- The vast majority of FPNs issued under this regulation type were issued to males (around 8 in 10).
- Over half (59%) were issued to individuals aged between 18 and 29.
- Of the 138 records where ethnicity was provided, the majority (68%) were issued to individuals who self-identified as White, a lower proportion than other FPNs. This may reflect public transport being more prevalent in metropolitan areas.
- As might be expected, the BTP issued most of such FPNs to date (115 out of 251) for individuals not complying with the transport regulations.

- Most FPNs issued under these regulations were for contravening the requirement to wear a face covering when on public transport (225 – Table 5).

**Table 5: Reasons for which FPNs has been issued under the wearing of face coverings on public transport regulations, between 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021 in England and Wales**

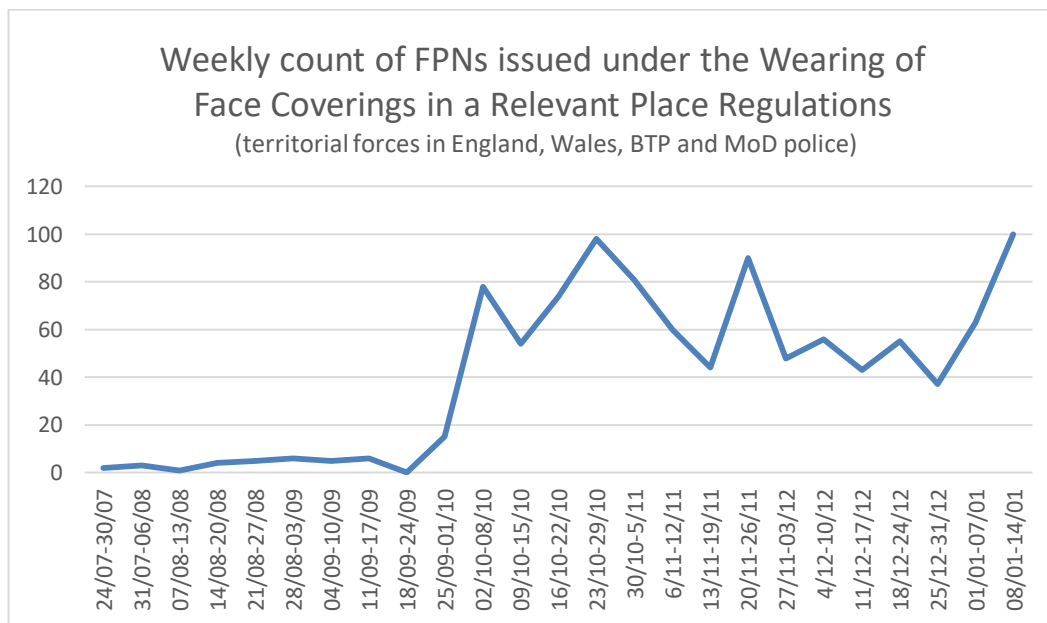
REASON FOR ISSUE	
Contravene requirement to wear a face covering when on public transport.	225
Obstruct person carrying out function under these regulations	4
Contravene direction given under these regulations	33
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>262</b>

Note: a) The total in this table exceeds the headline measure of total FPNs issued as an FPN can be issued for more than one reason

#### **Face coverings in a relevant place**

Between 24<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021, 1,068 FPNs were issued under face coverings in a relevant place regulations. Very few FPNs were issued in the first couple of months that the regulations were in place. However, at the start of October the number of FPNs increased with 78 FPNs issued between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> October 2020. The number of FPNs issued each week then remained around this level before declining in late November. The number of FPNs remained relatively stable, before an increase to 100 in the last full week of 8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

**Chart 2: FPNs issued under Face coverings in a relevant place regulations between 24<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021**



Further breakdowns of FPNs issued under the Face coverings in a relevant place regulations are presented below.

- The majority of FPNs issued under this regulation type were issued to males (around 8 in 10).
- Less than half (42%) were issued to individuals aged between 18 and 29.
- Of 866 the records where ethnicity was provided, the majority (63%) were issued to individuals who self-identified as White.
- West Mercia issued a quarter of the FPNs to date (209 out of 1,068) for individuals not complying with the rules regarding face coverings in a relevant place.

**Table 6: Reasons for which FPNs has been issued under the wearing of face coverings in a relevant place regulations, between 24<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021 in England and Wales**

REASON FOR ISSUE	
Enter / remain in relevant place in England without wearing a face covering	797
Contravene direction given to wear face covering within a relevant place (Direct that person to wear such a covering)	275
Contravene direction given to wear face covering within a relevant place (Direct that person to leave the relevant place)	32
Obstruct person carrying out function under regulations regarding face coverings	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,116</b>

## **Understanding the data**

These data cover the number of FPNs issued under COVID-19 regulations which came into effect from 27th March 2020.

Data presented in this release represent the number of FPNs issued. While the vast majority of FPNs relate to a single individual, some people have been issued with an FPN more than once. An FPN can be issued for more than one reason.

Figures on the number of FPNs issued should not be seen as a measure of the amount of police activity involved in policing the new measures, or the level of public non-compliance, since fines are issued as a last resort after initial attempts to engage with the public to explain and encourage compliance with the new regulations have not been successful.

Owing to the time taken to process FPNs, figures presented here are likely to underestimate the volume of FPNs issued each day and will be updated with each release as new data are received, although the rate of increase in revised data has slowed significantly.

The nature of the administrative process involved in issuing an FPN is such that there is sometimes missing data or discrepancies when data are returned. For example, as ethnicity is self-defining this is not always completed, and the level of missing data needs to be considered when interpreting such figures.

Force level figures are presented for England in Annex A and Wales in Annex B. However, caution should be taken to make comparisons between forces as variation in is likely to reflect a range of factors including how the force has decided to police non-compliance as well as differences in local context (e.g. composition and density of the local population).

**ANNEX A - Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued in England under emergency health regulations, 27<sup>th</sup> March to 17<sup>th</sup> January<sup>4</sup>**

Force	No.1, No.2 and local lockdown regs	Local COVID-19 alert levels	Hold a gathering of more than 30 people	No.4 regs (November national lockdown)	All Tiers Regulations (including January lockdown)	Face coverings regulations (public transport & relevant place)	International travel regulations	Business regulations	Total number issued to date including local lockdowns (27 <sup>th</sup> March to 17 <sup>th</sup> January)
Avon & Somerset	373	39	2	132	250	1	6	5	808
Bedfordshire	278	2	1	21	106	1	2	4	415
British Transport	324	0	0	14	76	111	5	0	530
Cambridgeshire	138	25	3	67	124	22	7	1	387
Cheshire	203	67	0	150	96	0	11	7	534
City of London	73	0	2	9	14	1	0	1	100
Cleveland	299	0	2	13	17	0	0	0	331
Cumbria	740	13	0	137	190	13	8	11	1,112
Derbyshire	255	5	3	21	161	2	1	3	451
Devon & Cornwall	1,007	47	0	153	178	8	6	3	1,402
Dorset	851	27	1	121	81	2	0	0	1,083
Durham	197	0	1	39	54	5	5	5	306
Essex	274	95	7	83	159	18	6	10	652
Gloucestershire	233	5	2	23	30	1	4	1	299
Greater Manchester	794	380	12	682	696	60	45	27	2,696
Hampshire	255	106	0	109	71	22	2	27	592
Hertfordshire	275	10	3	47	88	11	8	7	449

<sup>4</sup> Nil does not necessarily mean nil FPNs issued, but nil processed by ACRO at the time of the snapshot. Please confirm with forces directly if questions arise and check future publications where appropriate as numbers will be updated.

Humberside	143	3	1	24	0	0	2	0	173
Kent	128	1	7	114	183	4	3	3	443
Lancashire	856	101	12	337	556	46	34	16	1,958
Leicestershire	415	10	15	105	557	0	5	3	1,110
Lincolnshire	237	2	0	90	144	9	8	0	490
Merseyside	619	145	30	487	490	4	14	55	1,844
Metropolitan	1,148	18	69	430	1,315	60	22	74	3,136
Ministry of Defence	37	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	52
Norfolk	411	5	2	35	177	1	2	0	633
North Yorkshire	1,149	4	0	286	517	1	4	2	1,963
Northamptonshire	370	16	10	234	495	163	10	1	1,299
Northumbria	797	1,292	1	993	587	140	11	0	3,821
Nottinghamshire	205	158	15	343	562	10	9	2	1,304
South Yorkshire	375	27	0	288	275	8	10	0	983
Staffordshire	43	15	1	200	494	4	3	2	762
Suffolk	262	1	0	39	185	4	5	0	496
Surrey	513	0	1	19	145	2	5	5	690
Sussex	867	1	1	11	282	7	5	4	1,178
Thames Valley	774	55	5	99	168	2	14	5	1,122
Warwickshire	102	92	3	209	221	21	1	11	660
West Mercia	240	61	4	197	269	214	7	7	999
West Midlands	398	22	16	321	588	63	10	35	1453
West Yorkshire	774	52	17	174	134	4	11	6	1,172
Wiltshire	186	2	1	13	61	3	2	0	268
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,618</b>	<b>2,904</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>6,869</b>	<b>10,811</b>	<b>1,048</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>40,156</b>

**ANNEX B - Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued in Wales under emergency health regulations, 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020 to 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

Force	No.1 regs	No.2 regs	No.3 regs	No.4 regs	No.5 regs	Hold a gathering of more than 30 people	Face coverings (public transport & relevant place)	ITR	Total
British Transport	24	0	0	1	11	0	6	0	42
Dyfed-Powys	1,728	4	43	13	58	0	0	0	1,846
Gwent	132	19	95	68	99	0	0	0	413
North Wales	476	103	20	54	0	2	0	0	655
South Wales	304	48	120	462	336	0	0	3	1,273
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,664</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4,229</b>