

Your views about temporary changes at your GP practice during COVID-19

How Seaforth Village Surgery, Litherland Practice, Netherton Practice, Thornton Practice, Crosby Village Surgery and Crossways have been working during the pandemic and how to share your experiences of using their services

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Introduction

All GP practices in Sefton have continued to be open to treat patients throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, including seeing anyone who needs a face to face appointment.

Practices have been able to carry on working and provide services during this time because of some national measures that were introduced at the start of the pandemic. These measures have included offering telephone or video appointments whenever possible and limiting the number of people coming into practices at any one time to keep staff and patients safe.

As well as these nationally required measures, six local GP practices took some additional steps to make sure they could deal with the challenges of treating their patients during the pandemic. The practices are Seaforth Village Surgery, Litherland Practice, Netherton Practice, Thornton Practice, Crosby Village Surgery and Crossways.

The practices started working together in pairs to strengthen the services they have been able to offer during this time. It has meant that one practice from each of the three pairings has been temporarily closed. This has enabled staff from each pair of practices to join together and work as one stronger team, operating from a single base.

So, if you are a patient at one of those practices that has been temporarily closed, any face to face appointments you have needed have been held at a different location as follows:

- **Seaforth Village Surgery patients are seen at Litherland Practice**
- **Netherton Practice patients are seen at Thornton Practice**
- **Crosby Village Surgery patients are seen at Crossways**

The six practices are working with Primary Care 24 and NHS South Sefton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to ask about your experience of all these temporary changes and measures. This will help us to understand what has worked well, what has not and what will work in the future.

We will explain how you can comment and how to request any support you may need to do this later in the document.

Your GP practice

Seaforth Village Surgery, Litherland Practice, Netherton Practice, Crosby Village Surgery, Thornton Practice and Crossways Practice have been run by an organisation called Primary Care 24 since 2017. All these practices were rated 'good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) when it last inspected the standard of the care they provide. They serve a total of 16,801 patients and you can see the numbers for each practice in the table below:

Seaforth Village Surgery	2068	Thornton Practice	2832
Litherland Practice	3715	Crosby Village Surgery	3002
Netherton Practice	2684	Crossways Practice	2500

You can find out more about these practices from their websites

Seaforth Village Surgery - www.seaforthvillagesurgery.nhs.uk

Litherland practice - www.litherlandpractice.nhs.uk

Netherton Practice - primarycare24.org.uk/location/netherton-practice/

Thornton Practice - www.thorntonpractice.co.uk

Crosby Village Surgery - www.crosbyvillagegpsurgery.nhs.uk

Crossways Practice - www.crosswaysgppractice.nhs.uk

About Primary Care 24

The Liverpool based organisation provides a range of urgent and primary care services to just over 1.3 million people across Halton, Liverpool, Knowsley, St Helens, south Sefton, Southport and Formby and Warrington. Primary Care 24 is a social enterprise, so it has members rather than shareholders and operates on a not-for-profit basis. You can find out more about Primary Care 24 from its website:

www.primarycare24.org.uk

About NHS South Sefton CCG

NHS South Sefton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is made up of 29 GP practices and covers a population of nearly 157,000 patients.

We are responsible for planning and buying nearly all healthcare services that our residents need from a range of providers. Working with NHS England, we have responsibility for managing primary care services in the area. You can find out more about NHS South Sefton CCG from its website: www.southseftonccg.nhs.uk

The current picture

Changes to how all GP practices have been working during COVID-19

GP practices across Sefton have continued to provide advice, support and treatment to their patients throughout the pandemic. Face to face appointments have also continued for anyone who has needed to be seen in person.

At the start of the pandemic NHS England and Improvement required your practice put a range of measures in place to make sure services could continue safely, protecting patients and staff. We call these measures 'triage'.

What is triage?

As well as keeping you and staff safe 'triage' helps your practice to better manage its patients and balance its workload. Triage measures could include:



Asking you to make contact by telephone or online first, using a system called e-consult rather than walking into your practice without an appointment



Asking you some extra questions when you contact your surgery to understand what help you need and who is best placed in the practice or elsewhere to provide it



Offering you a video or telephone appointment with a member of the practice team whenever it is medically appropriate

Different GP practices operate their triage systems differently. For example, some practices will use video consultations, whilst others will offer telephone appointments.

Why is triage still happening?

As the pandemic continues triage remains important because:



It helps your practice signpost you to the right medical or health and care professional



It helps reduce the number of people visiting practices, reducing the risk of spreading infection and saving patients unnecessary trips to their GP practice



It helps practices to better manage the increasing number of patients who need their advice, support and treatment

Other changes to how your GP practice has been working

Primary Care 24 took extra steps to those described on page 5 to make sure its practices could cope with the pandemic and that they could continue to provide patients with the care they have needed. These extra steps have seen six practices in south Sefton temporarily joining together in pairs to work as one:

- **Seaforth Village Surgery is working with Litherland Practice**
- **Netherton Practice is working with Thornton Practice**
- **Crosby Village Surgery is working with Crossways**

By pairing up, the practices have been able to bring their staff together on one base. It has meant temporarily closing Seaforth, Netherton and Crosby Village practices. Seaforth and Netherton have been operating as COVID-19 vaccination centres for some of the time that they have been closed for face to face GP appointments.

The current picture

What this has meant for you

If you are registered with Seaforth, Litherland or Crosby Village practices any appointments that you have needed since the start of the pandemic have been over the phone or by video. Or, if you have needed to be seen in person, your face to face appointments have been held at the following locations:

- **Seaforth Village Surgery patients are seen at Litherland Practice**
- **Netherton Practice patients are seen at Thornton Practice**
- **Crosby Village Surgery patients are seen at Crossways**

Importantly, if you are a patient at any of these six practices you can still expect all the other services your practice would normally offer including:

- Accessing services online if you choose
- Being offered a home visit if you need one
- Getting your medication delivered to your nominated pharmacy

And:

- You can still contact your practice on its usual telephone number
- You continue to have services provided to you by familiar staff from your practice who are part of a bigger single team



The current picture

Why this is happening

All GP practices are currently facing increased demand for their services due to COVID-19 and these six practices are no different.

The temporary closure of Seaforth, Netherton and Crosby Village practices is helping to make sure patients can continue to access the services they need by creating three single bigger and stronger teams at Litherland, Thornton and Crossways.

Each of the three teams now has a greater number of staff including GPs, nurses, medicines management professionals and administrative staff. So, the practices have been able to provide more appointments and they are better able to deal with cover for periods of staff sickness or leave. This has been particularly important during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.



Travelling to these GP practices

We understand that these temporary practice closures have travelling implications for any patients who need face to face appointments. In this section, we have set out some of the public transport and other travel options for Litherland, Thornton and Crossways practices.

Over the next few pages you will see some maps and details of travel. Distances, driving and walking times have been generated by Google Maps. Each section includes a map showing bus travel times. Each colour represents the average length of time it takes to travel to the practice from different places on the map. Travel times include any walking needed as part of the journey, such as from an address to the bus stop, or from a bus stop to the surgery.

There are areas on each of the maps without a colour. This is because it would take longer than 45 minutes to travel to the practice by bus from these areas, or because they are further than 400 metres from a bus stop that serves the practice.

The travel times on the maps also take into account journeys that may be used to get to the practices but would involve changing buses to one of the routes mentioned part way through the trip. These additional bus routes are not shown.

More details of bus routes and timetables can be found on the Merseytravel website www.merseytravel.gov.uk

If you are particularly concerned about travel to Litherland, Thornton or Crossways practices, please contact your practice directly to talk through how your needs might be supported while Seaforth, Netherton and Crosby Village practices remain temporarily closed.



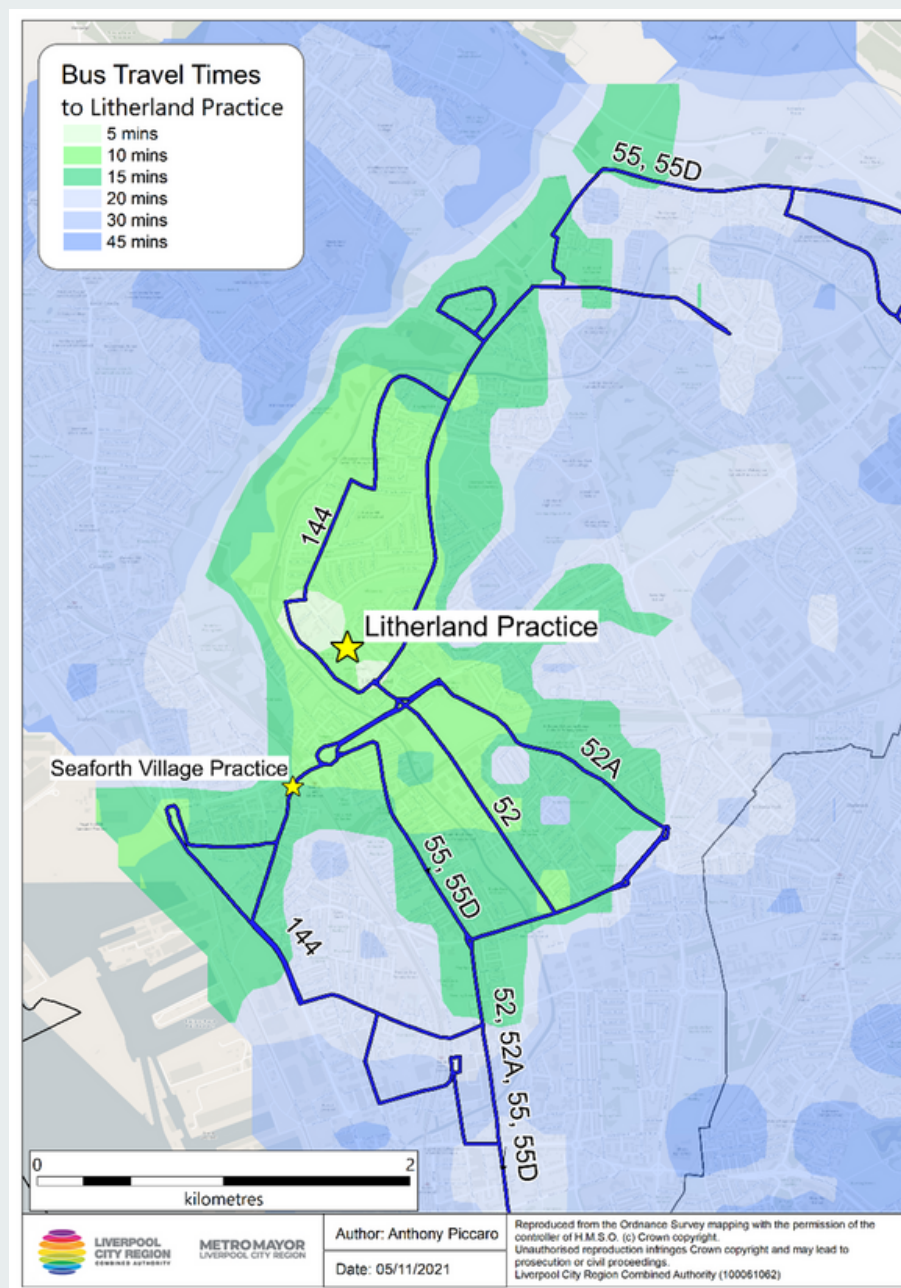
Getting to Litherland Practice

Driving and walking times

The distance between Seaforth Village Surgery and Litherland Practice is just under 1 mile (0.7 miles). This is about an 8 minute drive by car, or a 15 minute walk at an average speed. There is a small car park at Litherland Practice with disabled spaces.

Travel times by bus to Litherland Practice

The map shows bus routes that directly serve Litherland Practice: 52, 52A, 55, 55D, 144



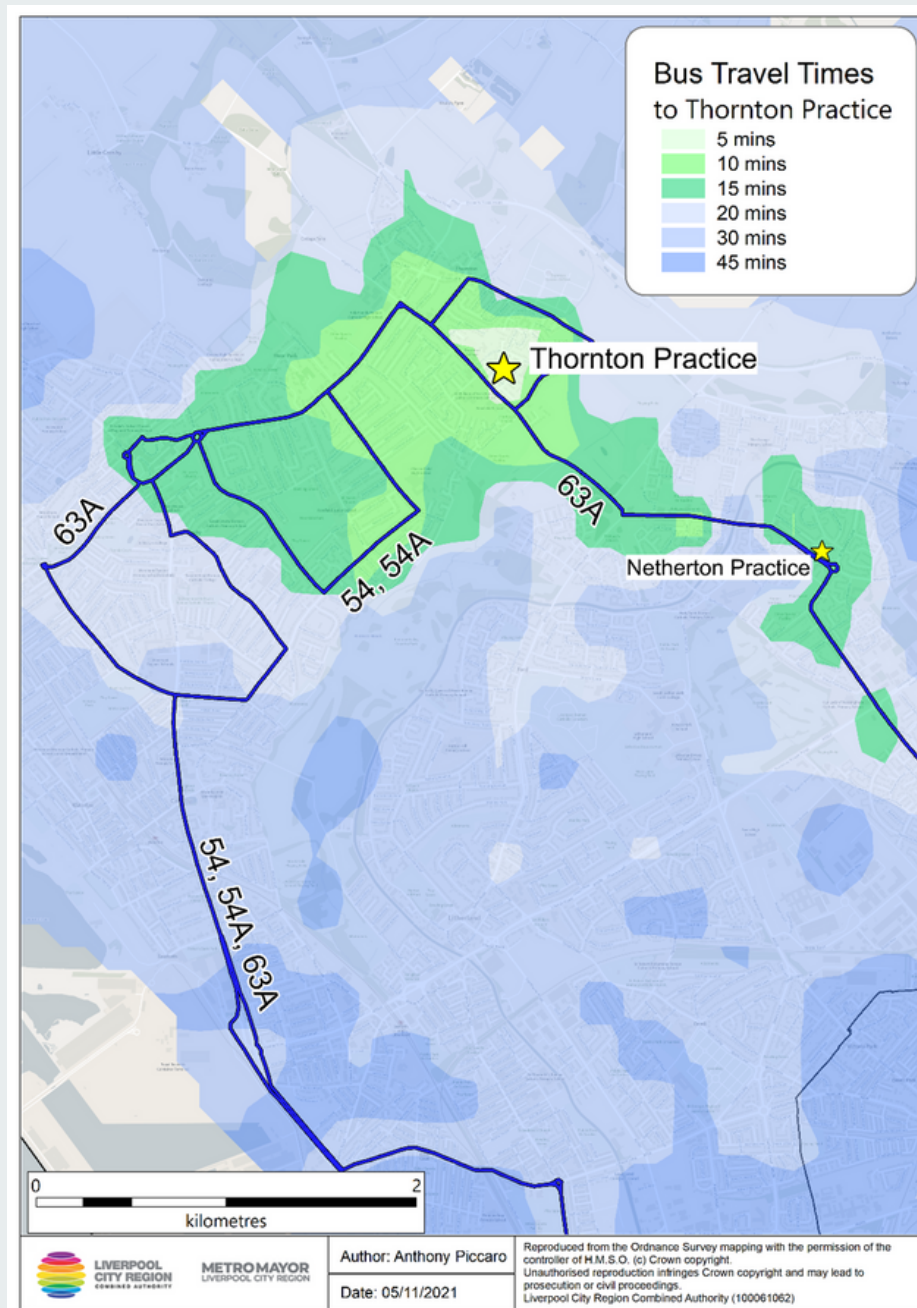
Getting to Thornton Practice

Driving and walking times

The distance between Netherton and Thornton practices is less than 2 miles (1.6 miles). This is about a 5 minute drive by car, or a 27 minute walk at an average speed. There is a small car park at Thornton Practice with disabled spaces.

Travel times by bus to Thornton Practice

The map shows bus routes that directly serve Thornton Practice: 54, 54A, 63A



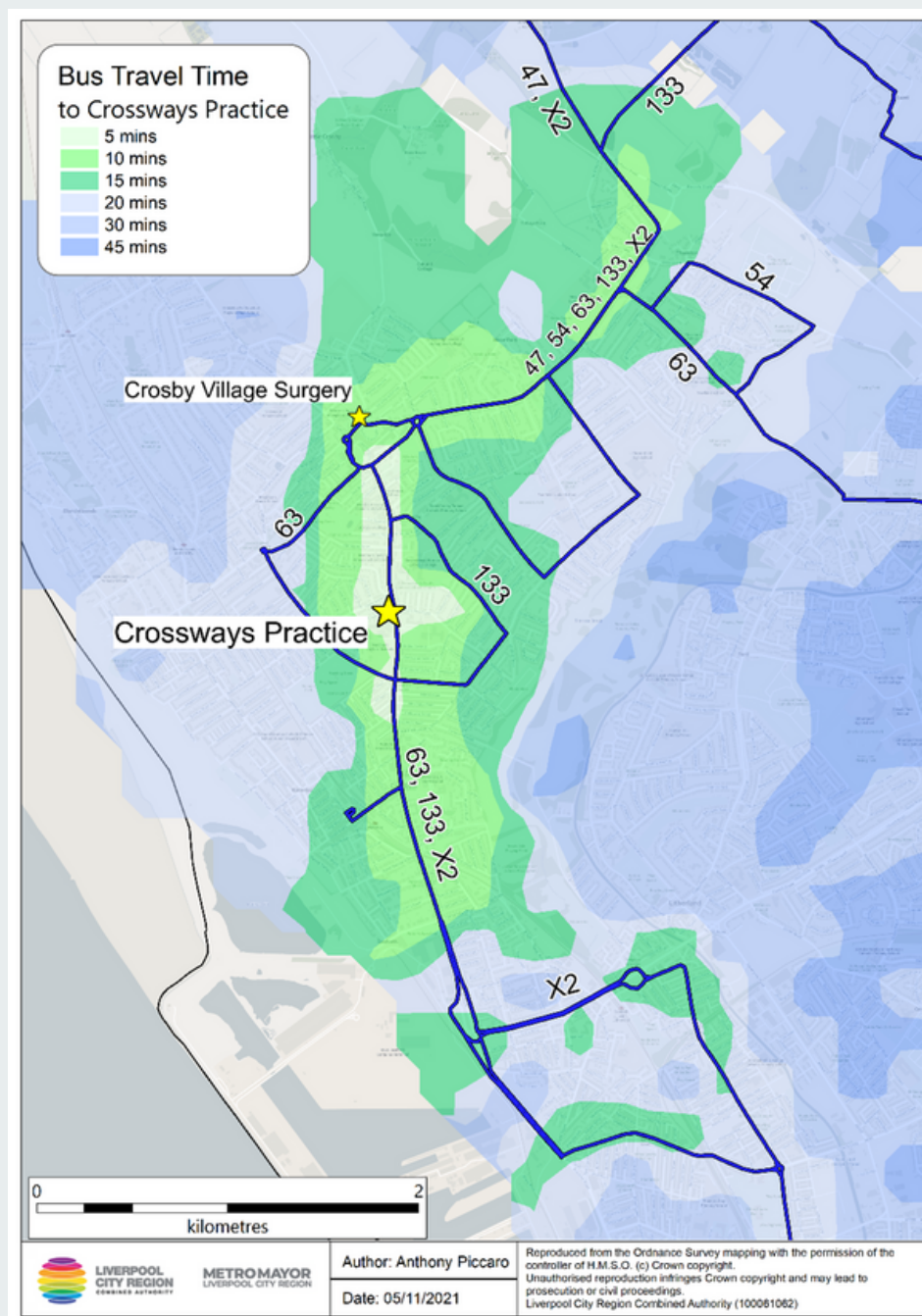
Getting to Crossways

Driving and walking times

The distance between Crosby Village Surgery and Crossways is just over half a mile (0.6 miles). This is about a 2 minute drive by car, or a 13 minute walk at an average speed. There is a small car park at Litherland Practice with disabled spaces.

Travel times by bus to Crossways

The map shows bus routes that directly serve Crossways: 47, 54, 63, 133, X2



How you can have your say

Complete our survey

We want to know what all the changes that we have described to your GP practice since the start of the pandemic mean for you.

This will help us to understand if there is anything we need to consider, or any actions we need to put in place as a result of these changes – including the temporary closure of Seaforth Village Surgery, Netherton Practice and Crosby Village Surgery and the other national measures that all practices put in place during this period to keep patients and staff safe.

We invite you to tell us about your views and experiences by completing a short online survey. You can find out how to do this below.

You can find the online survey online here:

www.southseftonccg.nhs.uk/gpchanges

This survey is for patients registered at Seaforth Village Surgery, Litherland Practice, Nerherton Practice, Thornton Practice, Crosby Village Surgery and Crossways. So, please make sure you choose the practice you are registered with when prompted by the survey questions. Our survey will be open from 31 January - 14 March 2022.

If you are unable to complete the survey online, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Team via:

- **Freephone: 0800 218 2333**
- **Email: MLCSU.customercarelancashire@nhs.net**

You can also contact the team to request the survey or this document in a different language or format such as large print or easy read.

How we will use your feedback

Our GP practices continually look at different ways to cope with the increase in the growing number of people who need to use their services. Taking part in our survey and sharing your views will help your practice to do this.

Your experience of using services at your GP practice during the pandemic will be important in helping shape how your practice works in the future. Your practice will look closely at the feedback from all its patients. This will help your practice make improvements where things have not worked well and do more of the things that patients have benefited from.

It is important that your practice offers the right mix of face to face and digital appointments. Your experiences will help your practices review this. Getting the right balance for each practice will also take account of the different challenges they each face. This includes the number of staff in each practice determining the number of appointments it can offer, or having a small waiting room that limits how many people can be in the building at one time.

Your views will help your practices to identify areas to work on with other local practices through their primary care network to provide specific developments or services, like COVID-19 vaccinations.

Importantly, your feedback will also help us understand if there are any additional measures that need to be put in place to support patients whilst Seaforth Village Surgery, Netherton Practice and Crosby Village Surgery remain temporarily closed.

We thank you in advance for taking the time to take part in our survey.

As the pandemic continues, we would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued patience and support in what has been a difficult and busy period for your practice.