

Community Resilience Group Weekly Briefing - 12 26 March 2021

Scottish Parliament Election

This week's virtual briefing provides an outline of the upcoming Scottish Parliament election. It provides information on who can vote, how to register to vote, the different ways people can vote and the new measures in place at polling stations to keep people safe.

Key dates to remember are:

How to register to vote:

- You can register to vote online at: [Register to vote](#) or you can request a paper invitation to register by calling **0800 393 783**
- The deadline to register to vote is: **19 April 2021**

How to apply to vote by post:

- Download and print [here](#) or request a paper application form to be sent to you.
- You can return the completed application form to any of Electoral Registration offices by post or by email to absentvote@highland.gov.uk
- Call **0800 393 783** or email ero@highland.gov.uk
- The deadline for applying for a postal vote is **6 April 2021**.

Help with funeral costs and other supports

The Council's welfare team have developed a booklet which is included within this week's email briefing. It provides information on funeral and other costs as many people may experience financial worries following a bereavement, particularly if they have less money coming in that they had previously.

It is designed to provide advice and assistance with the benefits that are available following a bereavement, showing how someone may be eligible and how those benefits can be claimed.

It provides details on:

- Bereavement support payment
- Funeral Support Payment
- War Widow's or Widower's Pension
- Tell us Once bereavement notification service

The Council's Welfare Support Team can provide advice on the benefits and other entitlements that are available. They can be contacted on:

Free Phone: **0800 090 1004**

Email: welfare.support@highland.gov.uk

DWP Benefits Checking Tool

DWP have launched a new benefits checking tool to help people who think they might be eligible for Universal Credit. It takes a few minutes, and doesn't require any detailed information, nor does it process or store personal data. It is an easy first step for anyone who is unsure whether they want to start a claim.

Further information and access to the tool can be found [here](#)

NatureScot's Better Places Green Recovery Fund – Round 2

A fund of £2.75 million has been announced to help ensure that services and infrastructure are in place to manage visitor numbers and behaviours during the 2021 season.

The fund will support:

1. **Visitor management operational services:** Funding for new and additional seasonal ranger and visitor management posts. The funding of staff posts is for the 2021 season only and will extend as a maximum to the end of October 2021.
2. **Visitor infrastructure:** Funding for projects that can be delivered quickly and help address visitor pressures at busy hot spot locations, including temporary or permanent infrastructure. Applicants can apply for up to a maximum of £75K.

Applications should relate to a specific location or area. More than one application can be made by a single organisation.

The fund is available for local authorities, community groups and NGOs.

Further information on the type of projects that can be funded and on how to apply can be found at: www.nature.scot/funding-and-projects/better-places-green-recovery-fund

Vaccination Update

The latest update from NHS on the vaccine can be accessed at the following link:
www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine

A stakeholder briefing from NHS Highland is also attached to this briefing

Food Support for Groups

We know that a number of you continue to provide support to the most vulnerable in your communities and that most of you already have well defined routes for accessing food to provide this support or are supporting individuals to access their shopping or community fridges/food tables.

If you are struggling to access food to continue support to vulnerable people locally, please do contact us through the policy mailbox and we can look at ways that we can support your group going forward.

Contact: policy6@highland.gov.uk

Resilience Network Contacts

Should any group not already be involved with these networks, the contact details for each is below.

- Caithness –If any groups aren't involved and wish to be please contact Alan Tait at Caithness Voluntary Groups allan@cvg.org.uk
- Sutherland – If any groups aren't involved and wish to be please contact Karina Ross at Highland and Islands Enterprise karina.ross@hient.co.uk
- East Ross – Helen Ross, Ward Manager, will facilitate this network. For future involvement in this network please contact policy6@highland.gov.uk
- Black Isle - If any groups aren't involved and wish to be please contact Asia Cielecka at communities@black-isle.info
- Wester Ross and Dingwall – Dot Ferguson, Ward Manager, will facilitate this network. For future involvement in this network please contact policy6@highland.gov.uk
- Skye and Raasay - If any groups aren't involved and wish to be please contact Fiona Thomson at Skye Community Response Development Team fiona@portreeandbraes.org
- Lochaber – Emma Tayler, Assistant Ward Manager, will facilitate this network. For future involvement in this network please contact policy6@highland.gov.uk
- B&S –If any groups aren't involved and wish to be please contact Karen Derrick enquires@vabs.org.uk
- Inverness City – David Haas, City Manager, will facilitate this network. For future involvement in this network please contact policy6@highland.gov.uk

- Inverness Rural – Charles Stephen, Ward Manager, will facilitate this network. For future involvement in this network please contact policy6@highland.gov.uk
- Nairn – Willie Munro, Ward Manager, will facilitate this network For future involvement in this network please contact policy6@highland.gov.uk

Helpful Links

Welfare Support Team -

www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/102970/benefit_advice

Self Isolation Support Grant - www.highland.gov.uk/info/20016/coronavirus/940/self-isolation_support_grant

Fuel Support Fund

www.highland.gov.uk/fuelsupportfund

Energy Advice

energyadvisors@hi.homeenergyscotland.org

AbilityNet - IT advice or support AbilityNet

Helpline 0800 048 7642.

Business Support Grants -

www.highland.gov.uk/info/20016/coronavirus/945/strategic_framework_business_fund

Covid Resilience Grant Support -

www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1422811/supporting_community_resilience/category/155/grants_for_community_groups

HTSI Community Group Helpline

Telephone Number 01349 808022

Winter Conditioning reports -

www.highland.gov.uk/news