

Community Resilience Group Weekly Briefing - 29 06 August 2021

Covid Update

Over the last 7 days there have been 220 new positive cases in Highland (to 5 August), a decrease from last week when 304 were reported. This means the latest rate per 100,000 has decreased from 129.1 per 100,000 last week to 93.4 per 100,000 as of 5 August. Whilst this is a continued decrease, it remains important to be careful and stick to the Scottish Government guidelines.

In terms of neighbourhood data, the map below and accompanying table, highlights the positive cases per 100,000 in communities across the Highland area. The test positivity rate on was 4% on 3 August, down from 5.3% on 27 July.

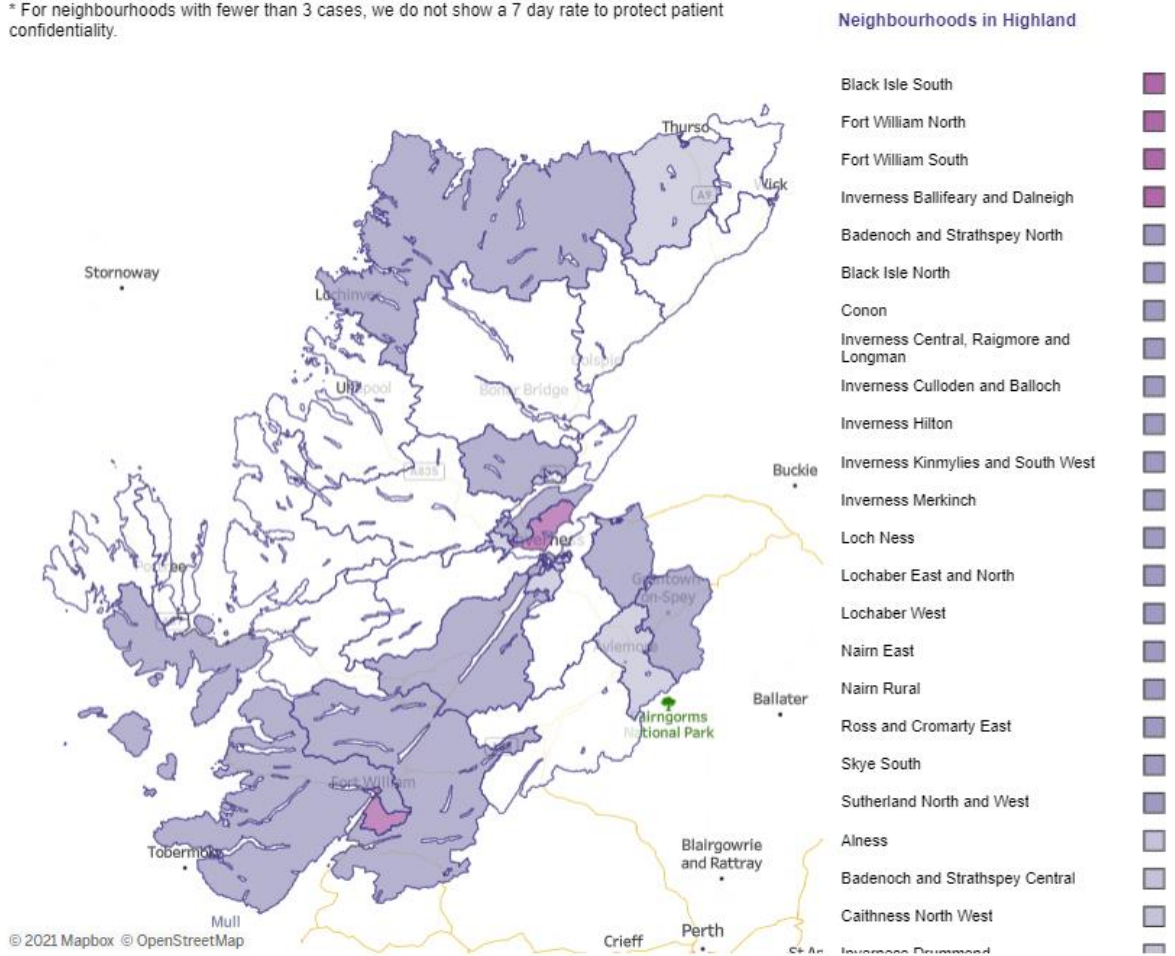
7 day positive cases in Highland based on people tested between 28 July 2021 and 3 August 2021

7 day positive cases	7 day positive rate per 100,000 population	7 day test positivity rate
220	93.4	4.0%

7 day positive rate per 100,000 population



* For neighbourhoods with fewer than 3 cases, we do not show a 7 day rate to protect patient confidentiality.



Scotland Moves Beyond Level Zero / Staying Safe and Protecting Others

From Monday (9 August), most of the remaining legally imposed restrictions in Scotland will be lifted. This includes the removal of the need to physically distance and limits to the size of social gatherings.

From 9 August, no venues will be legally required to close. However, a number of measures will remain in place, including:

- coverings must continue to be worn (subject to exceptions) in indoor public places and on public transport
- Indoor hospitality and similar venues will continue to collect the contact details of customers.
- Localised restrictions and travel restrictions may continue to be used to control outbreaks, as and when necessary.
- The advice remains to continue to work from home where possible.
- Large-scale events will, for a limited period, need to apply for permission. This applies to outdoor events of over 5,000 and indoor events of over 2000.

Rules of self-isolation to change

- Fully vaccinated adults who are identified as a close contact of a positive case will no longer have to isolate if they return a negative PCR test.
- Children aged 5 to 17, who are not vaccinated, will not need to isolate if they get a negative PCR test.

Changes in schools

- In schools, a more targeted approach will identify close contacts at highest risk of infection.
- Teachers and secondary school pupils will still be asked to wear face coverings in classrooms for the first six weeks of the new term.
- All school staff and secondary pupils will be asked to take a lateral flow test 1-2 days before returning to school for the new term, then twice a week.

The Scottish Government has issued associated guidance that applies from 9 August, ***Staying Safe and Protecting Others***, on how to stay safe and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The key message in the guidance is that although we are moving beyond the Protection Levels, the pandemic is not over and we must continue to focus on suppressing the virus to a level consistent with alleviating its harms while we recover and rebuild for a better future. The guidance is on the Scottish Government website <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/>

Asymptomatic Testing

It continues to be important that people test themselves even if they don't have symptoms. Taking a rapid LFD test twice a week can help stop new variants earlier, limiting the spread of the virus.

Test kits are available at pharmacies, or to order online from www.nhsinform.scot/testing, or by calling 119.

Test kits are also available at Community testing sites. The details for where these are next week is outlined below.

Symptomatic Testing

If you do believe you have symptoms, please self-isolate and book a PCR test.

Postal PCR kits are available through NHS Inform either online [here](#) or by calling 0800 028 2816.

In addition to the local support that is available, people can get support to self isolate by calling the Council's helpline number: 0300 303 1362. This can include access to food and supplies to self isolate and individuals may be entitled to a £500 self isolation support grant.

Community Testing 9 August – 13 August

The community testing programme offers rapid COVID-19 tests for people without symptoms. Next week mobile testing units will be in Nairn and Inverness

- **The mobile testing unit Testalot will be at the Falconers Lane car park, Falconers Lane, Nairn, IV12 4DS:**

Monday 9 August, 11am-3.30pm

Tuesday 8 – Thursday 12 August, 9.30-3.30pm

Friday 13 August, 9.30am-1pm

- **The mobile testing unit Moves Like Jagger will be at the B&M store car park, 7 Carsegate Road, Inverness, IV3 5LS:**

Monday 9 August – Thursday 12 August, 9.30am-4pm

Friday 13 August, 9.30am-3pm

Just to emphasise that there is no specific outbreak in these communities this is to support normalising testing across the area.

No appointment is necessary, and it will be open both for asymptomatic testing and to collect LFD test kits.

Please note that these drop-in sessions for community testing are only for people without symptoms. Anyone that becomes unwell should isolate immediately and

seek a **PCR test**. PCR tests can be booked through NHS Inform online or by calling 0800 028 2816.

I would appreciate it if you could encourage people across your networks to attend.

Vaccination Update

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

Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES) Funding

The Scottish Government launched a new round of CARES Funding on 30 July. This new funding round is specifically focused on supporting community buildings across Scotland. Through CARES grant funding, advice and support is available to community organisations, charitable organisations and faith groups that want to decarbonise their community buildings by installing low carbon or renewable energy systems, such as heat pumps or solar panels.

Funding is available for many types of community buildings, including:

- community cafes
- community hubs
- faith buildings
- public halls
- community halls and centres.

CARES has already supported many community organisations throughout Scotland to successfully install renewable technologies in their community, including:

- [Inverness Masjid](#) installed solar panels and battery storage at its mosque.
- [Aboyne and Mid-Deeside Community Shed](#) installed four air source heat pumps to provide space heating at its community shed.
- [Loch Ness Hub](#) installed solar panels and an air source heat pump to decarbonise the building's heat and energy supply.

Through a combination of grants and loans, CARES can fund up to 100% of the eligible project costs. Funding operates on a first come basis, and early applications are encouraged. Expressions of interest should be submitted in the first instance. The funding call will close to new applications on Thursday 30 September 2021, or earlier should the funding call budget be reached.

Further details are attached or visit www.localenergy.scot/net-zero-community-buildings.

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

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

Energy Advice

energyadvisors@hi.homeenergyscotland.org

AbilityNet - IT advice or support AbilityNet

Helpline 0800 048 7642.

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