

Community Resilience Group Weekly Briefing - 51 21 January 2022

Covid Update

Over the last 7 days there have been 1149 new positive PCR cases in Highland up to 20 January compared to 2009 positive PCR cases up 13 January. The seven-day rate for this period is 488.3 per 100,000 population, compared to 853 per 100,000 population a week ago. From January the Scottish Government has made changes to their published data in line with their recent guidance that those without symptoms testing positive with a lateral flow device no longer need to get a confirmatory PCR test. This means that the current daily numbers are capturing fewer positive cases than before.

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 seven-day PCR test positivity rate on was 14.9% on 18 January compared to 18.9% on 11 January.

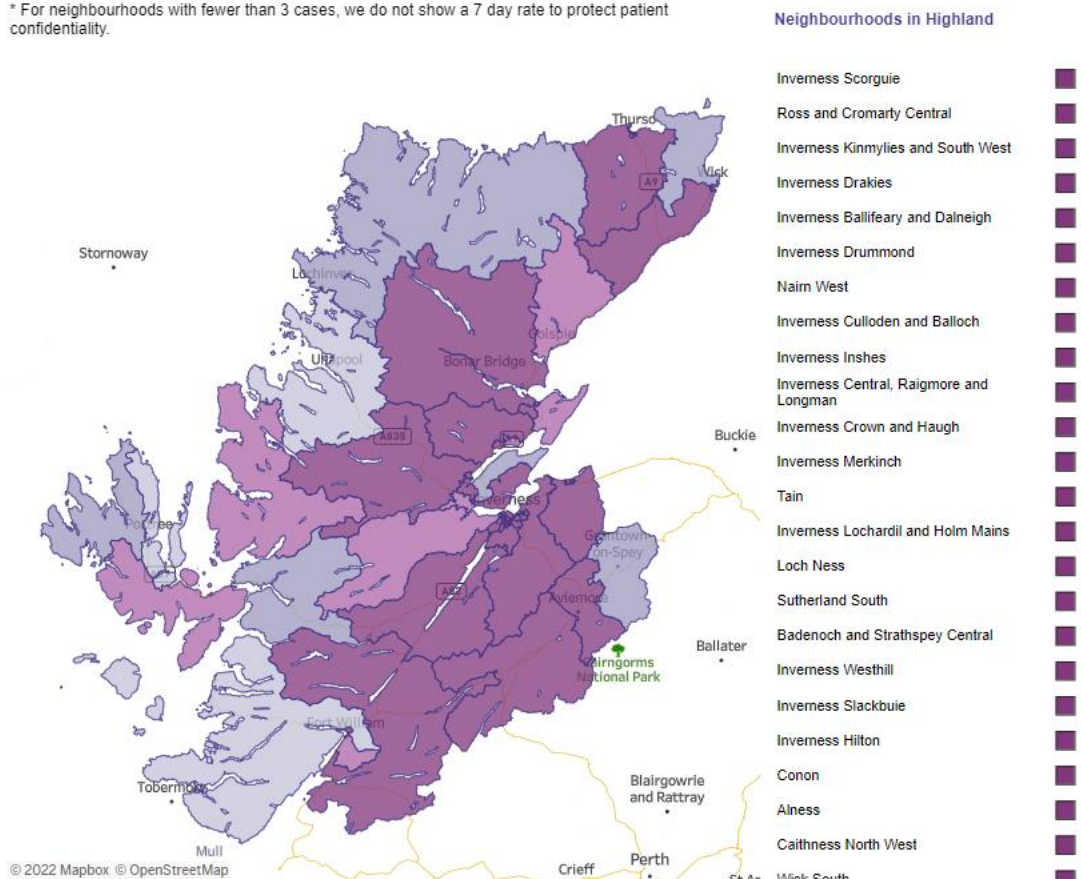
7 day positive PCR cases in Highland based on people tested between 12 January 2022 and 18 January 2022

7 day positive PCR cases	7 day positive PCR rate per 100,000 population	7 day PCR test positivity rate
1,149	488.0	14.9%

7 day positive PCR rate per 100,000 population



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



Scottish Government Guidance on Coronavirus (COVID-19): staying safe and protecting others

The Scottish Government revised its rules and guidance on how to stay safe and help prevent the spread of COVID-19 on 18 January 2022. You can find the most recent version here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/>

Scottish Government messages this week

The First Minister gave a Coronavirus (COVID-19) statement to the Scottish Parliament on 18 January 2022

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-first-ministers-statement-18-january-2022/>

Key Points include:

The First Minister set out the latest data and explained why, although significant pressures and uncertainties do remain, the data nevertheless gives confidence that a corner has been turned on the Omicron wave.

Cases continue to fall across most age groups although caution is needed in interpreting case data given the recent changes to guidance on PCR and lateral flow testing. Additionally, the full impact of the return to work and school after the festive break won't be apparent yet in the data and it is possible that case numbers may rise again in the next couple of weeks.

From Monday 24th January, remaining statutory measures introduced in response to Omicron will be lifted, including:

- limits on attendance at indoor public events;
- the requirement for 1 metre physical distancing between different groups in indoor public places;
- the requirement for table service in hospitality premises serving alcohol on the premises; and the closure of nightclubs.

Also from Monday 24th:

- guidance advising adults against non-professional indoor contact sports removed
- guidance asking people to stick to a 3 household limit on indoor gatherings to be lifted.

However, people are advised to remain cautious when mixing socially and should continue to take lateral flow tests before meeting up with people from other households.

Work from home should continue where possible, but a hybrid return is being considered from February.

Face coverings are to remain in indoor public settings and on public transport.

In addition, hospitality businesses must continue to collect details for Test and Protect purposes.

The Covid passport scheme is not to be extended.

Second doses of the vaccine are now available for 12 to 15-year-olds and five to 11-year-olds who are household contacts of people with immune suppression will also be invited to receive vaccination soon.

Covid-19 Testing

Symptomatic Testing (with symptoms)

If you do believe you have symptoms, please self-isolate and book a PCR test. Postal PCR kits are available through NHS Inform either by calling 0800 028 2816 or online <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/test-and-protect/coronavirus-covid-19-how-to-do-a-pcr-test-at-home>.

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.

Asymptomatic Testing (without symptoms)

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.

Community Testing 24 – 28 January for those without symptoms (Asymptomatic):

The community testing programme offers rapid COVID-19 tests for people without symptoms.

Next week a mobile testing unit will be in Inverness.

Next week we have one unit deployed, "Testalot" which will be in B&M's car park at Telford Retail Park, Carsegate Road Inverness IV3 5LS. Opening times are as follows;

Monday 24 January 9am-4pm
Tuesday 25 January 9am-4pm
Wednesday 26 January 9am-4pm
Thursday 27 January 9am-4pm
Friday 28 January 9am-3pm

Just to emphasise that there are no specific outbreaks in this community, 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.

Covid-19 Vaccination Update

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

For details of vaccination clinics in Highland, including drop-in clinics and GP practices supporting the booster roll-out, please check the link below. There are also FAQs on how vaccinations are being delivered in the NHS Highland area. <https://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/COVID19/Pages/Vaccination.aspx>

Vaccination Scams

Scammers are using mobile phone numbers to offer Covid-19 tests using a 'vaccinationpass' website which then demands payment.

If you receive a message, call, or link like this, do not respond. Instead, notify www.scamwatch.scot or call 0808 164 6000.

For information on vaccination scams and other Covid-19 related scams, visit the Trading Standards Scotland website <https://www.tsscot.co.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-scams/>.

Highland and Moray Children's Panel Members Needed

The Highland and Moray Children's Panel are seeking people who care about making a difference in the lives of children attending hearings. A Panel Member's role is to listen and make legal decisions with and for infants, children.

Children's Panel members are part of the Children's Hearings system. The Scottish Government fund the system and Children's Hearings Scotland support the 3,000 volunteers throughout Scotland.

Panel member take part in Children's Hearings with two other Panel members. You will receive written and spoken information from the young person, their family, Social Work and anyone else who needs to be involved. You will need to be able to read quite detailed reports that provide the information to help you decide what is in the best interest of the young person at this point in their life – to ensure they are safe, loved, valued and respected.

It is a rewarding role and valuable to children in your local community. You do not need any formal qualifications but you need to be a good listener, compassionate,

empathetic and trustworthy and relate to young people in difficult circumstances. Full training will be given.

If you are interested there is an information session on Tues 1st February at 6.30pm, virtually on Microsoft Teams.

Please contact Carol Maragh by email: Carol.maragh@chscotland.scot or on the phone: 01463702120 for an invite. Carol can also arrange for you to speak to an existing panel member to get a real feel for the role. The information on how to apply and more detail about the role is on the Children's Hearings Scotland website, www.chscotland.gov.uk.

SSEN Resilient Communities Fund Stakeholder consultation on criteria and scope of the fund

The Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Resilient Communities Fund is a grant-giving fund which is open to not-for-profit community groups and charities in both SSEN's electricity distribution network areas in central southern England and the north of Scotland. SSEN is consulting on the future direction of its Resilient Communities Fund. Further details are in the attached leaflet. Consultation responses must be submitted by email to stakeholder.engagement@sse.com before 5pm on 2nd Feb.

Highland Criminal Justice Partnership Funding opportunities

The CJP is delighted to confirm that there are two proposals for funding new activities in Highland connected to the delivery of Justice related activities.

- **[Small Change for Justice](#)**

Groups interested in the smaller grants, up to £4000, route will be asked to pitch live to a limited audience with a dedicated presentation for each of the groups taking part lasting up to 3 minutes. Applicants need to read [the following Information](#) and complete an [initial application to bid](#). Successful bids applicants will be invited to take part in a limited audience event on March 18, 2022.

Closing date for applications: 7 February 2022. Funding needs to be spent within 12 months of May 2022, which is the latest start date for your proposed activity. Apply here <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/smallChange22>

- **[Community Justice Dragon's Den](#)**

The Community Justice Partnership in Highland would like to invite expressions of interest from third sector organisations for larger grants (minimum of £20k, maximum £40k) for more substantive and targeted initiatives. Short listed applicants will be invited to pitch through a digital interview in late March in a Dragon's Den format.

This is an opportunity to deliver services in a new and imaginative way, specifically in relation to the following criteria:

- Creating opportunities for people to undertake their Community Payback Order with an unpaid work or other activity requirement within communities and on community projects.

- Working with people who have an offending history to support their recovery and reduce their risk of reoffending within rural and remote rural Highland.

Expressions of interest close 7th February. Dragon's Den: 22 March (tbc).

<https://www.highlandtsi.org.uk/cj-dragons-den>

If you have any questions on either fund, please contact Margaret McShane cjmanager@highlandtsi.org.uk or 01349 864289

Leisure Businesses invited to apply for Covid-19 business grant

Grants of up to £3,150 are available to Leisure businesses who have been affected by measures to control the spread of the Omicron variant of coronavirus.

For full up-to-date details of these and any other grant schemes that may become available, affected businesses are advised to go to the Scottish Government's Find Business Support website <https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/coronavirus-advice>.

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