

Community Resilience Group Weekly Briefing - 34 10 September 2021

Covid Update

Over the last 7 days there have been 1,432 new positive cases in Highland (to 9 September), an increase from last week when 1,263 were reported. This means the latest 7-day rate per 100,000 has increased from 536.5 per 100,000 last week to 608.3 per 100,000 as of 9 September. Cases numbers continue to increase at present therefore it is extremely 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 9.5% on 7 September, down slightly from 10.5% on 31 August.

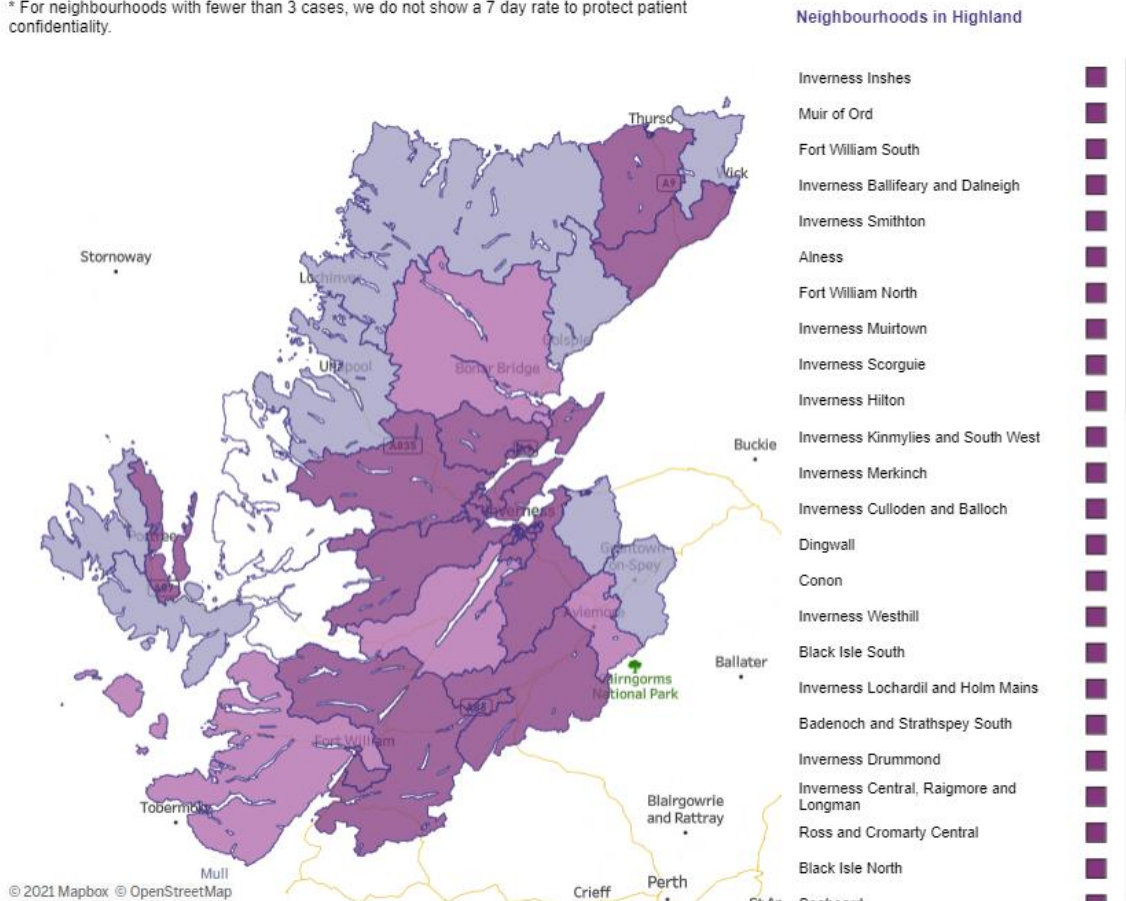
7 day positive cases in Highland based on people tested between 1 September 2021 and 7 September 2021

7 day positive cases	7 day positive rate per 100,000 population	7 day test positivity rate
1,432	608.2	9.5%

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 has Moved Beyond Level Zero – First Minister’s Announcements this Week

From 9 August 2021 the whole of Scotland moved to beyond Level 0. You can find Scottish Government guidance for everyone on how to stay safe and prevent the spread of COVID-19 here.

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

Despite high levels of positivity, the First Minister has said there is ‘cautious optimism’ and that the rate ‘may now be slowing’. Everyone should continue to act carefully and remain cautious.

Plans have been approved for a ‘vaccine passport’ in Scotland. The new rules will mean people over the age of 18 in Scotland will need to show they have had both doses of the vaccine before they are allowed entry to nightclubs or larger events.

Highland Council Schools: advice to parents and carers

Highland Council and the Health Protection Team are working closely to make parents and families aware of how COVID-19 is managed within schools. A letter to parents and carers is attached with the briefing. Public health advice is as follows:

Children who are sick should not attend school and where a child has symptoms that could be from COVID they should stay at home and have a PCR test booked. Once well and with a negative PCR test, they can return to school.

If a case of COVID arises in a member of staff or student at a school, letters will be issued to those who have been in contact with the case which will explain what action needs to be taken.

There will be no need for school contacts to self-isolate unless they are contacted by Test and Protect. In the event of further cases in the school, additional action will be taken and in the event of a significant outbreak advice will be sought from the Health Protection Team and actions undertaken depending on the specific circumstances.

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 13 – 17 September for those without symptoms

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

Next week mobile testing units will be in Inverness and Muir of Ord.

The mobile testing unit Jabbernaut will be at Tesco Car Park, Inshes Retail Park, Milton of Inshes, Inverness IV2 3TW:

- Monday 13 September 9am-4pm
- Tuesday 14 September 9am-4pm
- Wednesday 15 September 9am-4pm
- Thursday 16 September 9am-4pm
- Friday 17 September 9am-3pm

The mobile testing unit "Testalot" will be in the Library Car Park, Muir of Ord, IV6 7PY

- Monday 13 September 9am-4pm
- Tuesday 14 September 9am-4pm
- Wednesday 15 September 9am-4pm
- Thursday 16 September 9am-4pm

Just to emphasise that there is no specific outbreak 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.

Those who attend a COVID-19 Mobile Clinic will also have the opportunity to enter a free monthly draw to win an Amazon Kindle e-reader (10th generation, with 6" backlit display) after completing an exit survey. The winner will be drawn by random at the end of the month.

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.

Vaccination of 16-18 year olds

From 7 August, 16-18 year olds are now eligible for vaccination and will be directed to the drop in clinics - see NHS Highland website for details
<https://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/COVID19/Pages/Vaccination.aspx>.

Community groups in Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh encouraged to apply for Covid funding boost.

Groups from across the Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh ward (Ward 5) of The Highland Council are invited to apply for a "financial covid booster" through a share of the local Community Based Fund. The fund has been set up to help strengthen communities where Covid has exposed gaps

The first of two rounds of funding are now open for groups in Ward 5 to apply for up to £5,000 of support. Groups who run projects or activities that address one or more of the following four impacts of Covid are encouraged to apply:

- The direct harm people have experienced through contracting the virus
- The wider impact on health or social care due to the impact on services and how people can or can't access these services.
- The social impacts as a result of the measures put in place to slow the spread of the virus.
- Economic impacts

Projects with match funding will be prioritised. However, 100% funding could be made available for exceptional projects.

The first round closes on 30 September 2021. There will be a second round launching in mid-November 2021. The application form is the same one used for the Highland Council Ward Discretionary Fund and can be found on the Highland Council Website here:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/457/grans -
ward discretionary fund](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/457/grans-_ward_discretionary_fund)

Anyone requiring any further information or advice can contact the Community Support Co-ordinator for Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh, email lynn.frost@highland.gov.uk.

Update: Post Office card accounts closure extended until November 2022

In an update to an item in an earlier weekly briefing, we have now been informed that Post Office Card Accounts are to be extended for another year in order to safely move existing users over to traditional bank accounts or a new Payment Exception Service.

Full details can be found: [Post Office card accounts closure extended until November 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/post-office-card-accounts-closure-extended-until-november-2022)

World Suicide Prevention Day 2021

Today (10th September) is World Suicide Prevention Day. An awareness day observed on 10 September every year, as a platform to provide commitment, action and promote preventative measures with the aim to reduce the number of suicides and suicide attempts globally.

In Highland, the Community Planning Partnership aim to create hope through action to prevent Suicide. The partners launched the - Prevent Suicide Highland App, available on Android and I-Phone and also delivers the Suicide Intervention and Prevention Programme (SIPP) across Highland.

Suicides are preventable and the Highland Community Planning Partners will continue to work collaboratively with communities across Highland.

If you, or someone you know needs support in relation to suicide, you can download the Prevent Suicide Highland App or call Samaritans on 116 123 or Breathing Space on 0800 83 85 87

https://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/13956/world_suicide_prevention_day_2021

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