

Community Resilience Group Weekly Briefing - 52 28 January 2022

Covid Update

Over the last 7 days there have been 929 new positive PCR cases in Highland up to 27 January compared to 1149 positive PCR cases up to 20 January. The seven-day rate for this period is 394.6 per 100,000 population, compared to 488.3 per 100,000 population a week ago. From January, the Scottish Government 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, meaning that current daily numbers capture 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 13.2% on 25 January compared to 14.9% on 18 January.

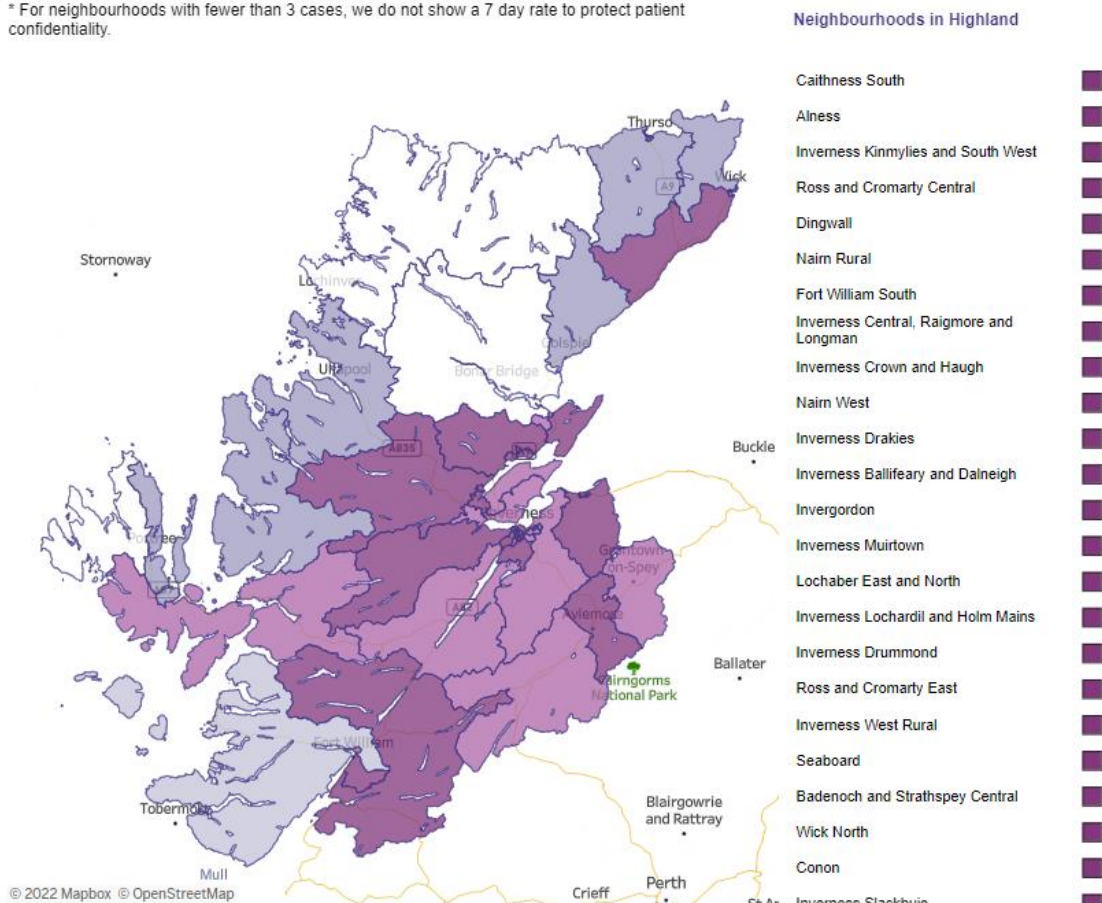
7 day positive PCR cases in Highland based on people tested between 19 January 2022 and 25 January 2022

7 day positive PCR cases	7 day positive PCR rate per 100,000 population	7 day PCR test positivity rate
929	394.6	13.2%

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 21 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 25 January 2022

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-first-ministers-statement-25-january-2022/>

Key Points include:

The First Minister set out the latest data and outlined some further changes intended for the period ahead.

Although cases remain high, recent data gives a broadly positive picture. There have been significant reductions in every age group, except the under 15s - in this younger age group, cases have increased by 41%, reflecting to some extent the impact of the return to school.

The decline in new cases is now reflected in a fall in the number of people being admitted to hospital with COVID.

On the strength of the latest data, Cabinet concluded this morning that some further easing of measures is possible.

- Guidance urging people to work from home wherever possible in Scotland is to be relaxed
- A hybrid system of office and remote working will be introduced from Monday 31 January.
- The requirement for 2m physical distancing in certain indoor settings, such as receptionists and people leading religious services, is to be relaxed to 1m
- Face coverings will no longer be required for any adult taking part in organised activities when they are directly interacting with children under the age of five.
- The rules for schools are being "kept under close and regular review". For now, there will be no change to rules on face coverings in secondary schools.
- From this week, five to 11 year olds with specific medical conditions are being invited for vaccine appointments. Parents and carers will either receive a letter inviting them to call the national phone line, or a letter directly from their local health board.
- A new Distance Aware scheme is introduced to help people who might be worried about going out. Badges and lanyards with the Distance Aware logo will indicate to other people that the person wearing the logo would like a bit of extra

space, and a bit more care taken around them. These are available – free – at mobile and community libraries across Scotland this week, and in most ASDA supermarkets. They are also available online from some participating charities.

- From Friday 11 February, fully vaccinated travellers will no longer need to take a test after they arrive in Scotland – although they will still be required to complete a passenger locator form.
- Travellers to Scotland who are not fully vaccinated will still be required to take a pre-departure test no more than two days before they board their plane, and also take a PCR test on, or before, day two of their arrival here.
- For international travel purposes, people are deemed to be fully vaccinated if they have completed at least a primary course of vaccination – for most people, that means at least two doses.

Please continue to take the sensible steps we know help stem transmission

- get fully vaccinated as soon as you can.
- take care when socialising.
- take a lateral flow test before you meet others, every time.
- keep windows open indoors.
- continue to work from home for now - but talk to your employer about a return to hybrid working from the start of next month.
- wear a face covering on public transport, in shops, and when moving about in hospitality.
- and follow all advice on hygiene.

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 31 January – 4 February for those without symptoms (Asymptomatic):

The community testing programme offers rapid COVID-19 tests for people without symptoms. Next week, there are no plans to deploy our mobile testing units to carry out assisted testing. Instead, we continue with our programme of Outreach Delivery, sending small teams to various locations throughout the Highland area to provide testing advice and to hand out test kits. Dates, times, and locations are as follows;

DAY	AM	PM	Location
Mon. 31/1/2022	08.30-12.30		Nairn Co-op Car Park
		13.00-16.00	Inverness High Street Market Brae Steps
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Tues. 1/2/2022	09.00-12.00		Alness High Street seating area off Bank Lane
		13.00-16.00	Invergordon Library High Street
	09.00-12.00		Tain High Street Service Point
		1300-1600	Dornoch Castle Street opposite bus stops
	09.00 – 12.00		Golspie Fountain Road car park
		13.00-16.00	Brora Gower Lane car park
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Wed. 2/2/2022	08.30 – 12.00		Dingwall High Street outside museum
		13.00-1600	Muir of Ord library car park
	08.00 – 16.30		Nairn Coop car park
	10.30 – 15.00		Thurso Rotterdam street
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Thurs. 3/2/2022	08.30 - 12.00		Inverness Retail Park, Eastfield Way
		13.00 - 16.00	Inverness Inshes Retail Park
	08.00 - 16.30		Inverness Telford Retail Park, Carsegate
	08.30 - 16.00		Inverness High Street Market Brae Steps
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Fri. 4/2/2022	08.30 - 12.00		Invergordon library High Street
		13.00 - 15.30	Alness High Street seating area off bank lane
	09.00 – 12.00		Dornoch castle street opposite bus stops
		13.00 - 15.30	Tain High Street service point
	09.00 - 12.00		Brora Gower Lane car park
		13.00 -1 5.30	Golspie Fountain Road car park

For those with symptoms, anyone that becomes unwell should isolate immediately and seek a PCR test. PCR tests can be booked through [NHS Inform online](https://www.nhs.uk) or by calling 119 if you can't book a test online.

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/>.

Welcome To Your Vote Week

We're supporting the Electoral Commissions national campaign – Welcome To Your Vote Week – to encourage anyone aged 16 and over to register before the deadline of the 18th April if they want to take part in the May 2022 Local Government elections.

For your information – here is the news release we issued which includes a message from the Highland Youth Convener -

https://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/14309/young_people_across_the_highland_s_are_encouraged_to_register_to_vote_during_welcome_to_your_vote_week

We've also produced some videos which are available on YouTube:

How do you vote? - <https://youtu.be/971o3cBynjU>

Welcome to your vote - https://youtu.be/F_s7_3D279s

Register to vote - <https://youtu.be/tl4VkOvNt2c>

How do you choose who to vote for? - <https://youtu.be/iBXA3z4-HLQ>

Welcome to your vote (extended) - <https://youtu.be/QkFFUkVwoLg>

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