

Islay Community Council Update

Dr Angus MacTaggart of Islay Medical Services provided this Covid-19 Vaccination Update:

By the time this edition is published, we expect to have given the first dose of a Covid-19 vaccine to the vast majority of residents of Islay aged 80 and over. This is in addition to those resident in Gortanvogie as well as all Health and Social Care workers and means that we will have given the first Covid-19 vaccine dose to just under 500 staff and patients.

To date, the short notice of vaccine deliveries and urgency to immunise those at highest risk have resulted in us only being able to hold clinics at the Islay Hospital site where we have dedicated space set aside for higher numbers of patients to be vaccinated each day. We have been advised that the delivery of vaccine doses should stabilise over the coming weeks which will allow us to plan the continued roll out of the vaccination programme and organise clinics in each of the 3 practice sites.

Guidance from Scottish Government clearly outlines the order in which patients should be vaccinated and we are working as fast as vaccine supply will allow to invite as many patients as possible to receive their first dose. Thanks to the hard work of our practice, community and hospital nursing teams as well as the invaluable help of some recently retired healthcare colleagues, the vaccination programme is currently having a minimal impact on our ability to continue to provide Covid-19 safe GP services. We are also extremely grateful to the Islay Resilience Group who are providing assistance with logistics and transport.

The following guidance will help us to ensure the vaccination programme is as efficient and streamlined as possible:

- Please do not contact the practice to enquire about an appointment to receive the Covid-19 vaccine. We have a team of staff working on the vaccine roll-out and they will make direct contact to offer an appointment when we reach your age or risk group.
- Please attend your appointment at the time and location given and contact us as far in advance as possible if you will be unable to attend. This is especially important if you or any household members develop symptoms consistent with Covid-19. In this case, you and your entire household must immediately self-isolate and organise for the symptomatic person to have a test by contacting 01496 305308.
- When attending your vaccination appointment, please ensure you wear either a 3-layer fabric mask or a medical grade surgical mask (unless you are medically exempt). Medical grade surgical masks will be provided for those who wish to wear one but do not have access to a personal supply.
- Should you require assistance with transport, please let the team know when they get in touch to book your appointment. We will co-ordinate your appointment time and, with permission, pass your details on to the Islay Resilience Group who will organise transport assistance.

Vaccination is the best way to protect ourselves from severe Covid-19 and we would strongly encourage all those who are offered the vaccine to take it up. We appreciate your continued patience as we work through the vaccination priority groups. Further information on the Covid-19 vaccine, the evidence to support its safety and effectiveness, and which priority group you fall into can be found at www.nhsinform.scot/covid-19-vaccine.

Further ICC updates:

ICC continue to monitor/service hand sanitiser units at bus stops throughout Islay.

ICRG received £480 from Islay Covid19 Fund (delivered through SID) to finance the services of a minute taker.

Feis Ile 2021 has been cancelled until 2022.

Since the mainland became Level 4 and effectively on lockdown, leaving Islay on 'tier 3', concerns were raised by members of the public regarding controls/monitoring at Kennacraig to deter any temptation for travel to Islay outwith legal compliance requirements. Dr MacTaggart raised similar concerns and Cllr Currie advised he had requested more control at ferry ports, when discussing with the depute first minister. ICRG contacted the police Area Commander and also a helpful Sergeant at Lochgilphead. We were later informed that they have consequently attended some sailings at Kennacraig.

Further restrictions placed on businesses that remain open as we moved into level three. The huge downside with level three as was with level one is that we no longer have any grant aid/financial support for businesses. Emma Clark explained Argyll and the Isles Tourism Cooperative have campaigned for this to change and senior government officials met Friday afternoon which was deemed to have been positive however as yet we do not have any more news.

Argyll College students continue to study from home and pre-Christmas some vocational training took place with the NC Professional Cookery students who had a 3 day practical in the school hospitality kitchen. This was such a positive experience for them as they got their chef whites and knife sets at the same time. Argyll college had hoped to continue this in January but unfortunately, we are unable to because of the new restrictions. They are unable to provide face to face commercial training at the moment.

Private childcare providers **are** now allowed to run as normal providing their usual childcare with safety measures in place. This is a much better solution for everyone. However not every child is going to their placement as parents continue to work from home but this allows to assist the more vulnerable youngsters.

Gill Chasemore of Islay Resilience Group stated the group are still meeting and are supporting people in the community. They have two new coordinators for the Rhinns areas, Susan McGillivray for Port Charlotte and Laura Young for Portnahaven and Port Weymms. Islay Resilience Group are still short of volunteers in all areas, should the lockdown continue. However, the need for volunteer shopping has decreased due to click and collect from the Coop. The coop delivery has seen an increase in deliveries since Christmas and now is averaging 120 per week. Newsletters continue to go out every month, and over Christmas we delivered over 70 treat bags to vulnerable and isolated people. Islay Resilience Group provided Christmas lunch for 10 people they also continue to provide support for people who are isolating and/or in quarantine.

At the airport passenger numbers are very low with passengers being asked if their journey is essential at Glasgow prior to boarding. All general aviation flights and out of hours movements have been cancelled unless for essential journeys. This will be reviewed on the 18th January. Loganair operating a single flight a day Mon – Fri in the morning, no flight on a Saturday and one on a Sunday afternoon.

New Islay ferry: Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL), in partnership with CalMac Ferries Limited and Transport Scotland, held an online community consultation meeting on Thursday 14th January 2021 to engage island communities and community stakeholders in the design and planning process for the new vessel to service Islay and Jura. This meeting provided update on the new vessel feasibility studies, which have been ongoing throughout 2020. Key considerations in the extensive range of studies have included: passenger and vehicle requirements; maximising vehicle capacities – particularly for freight; forecast demand; operational requirements; requirements and arrangements for passengers and crew; accessibility; vessel operating speed and timetable; port fits, limitations and improvements; emission and fuel consumption analysis; air quality; reliability, manoeuvrability and sea-keeping; shore power and overnight noise; benefits and disbenefits, and costs (capital and operational). Attendees had the opportunity to share their views and comments and ask questions during the meeting.