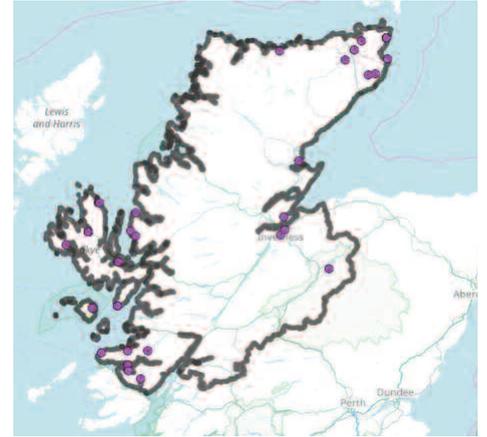


# Distribution Maps

Distribution maps are a way of displaying information about where things are or were. We have included a distribution map of where the different types of artefact have been found within the Highlands, for example carved stone balls in the map to the right. The Highland Council area is outlined in black and the artefact find-spots are indicated by purple dots. These are based upon data in 2019, but new data is being added all the time. Distribution maps can be very useful, but are also limited by many factors.



It is easy to get a sense of how common and widespread particular finds are by noting the frequency and spread of dots on a map. It can also be possible to identify areas where there have been lots of finds of a particular kind of artefact, or indeed where there appear to have been none.

However, there are lots of factors that may affect the number and spread of dots. These maps are based upon finds that have been entered into the Highland Historic Environment Record (HHER), and we know that there are many more to be added. The HHER is a database of artefacts, heritage sites and investigations within the Highland Council area that commercial and community archaeology projects report to. It is maintained by Highland Council staff.

Historic finds, such as discoveries made in the 18th and 19th centuries, tend to be vague or inaccurate in noting the location in which something was found. Some artefacts may have been found but not reported. Also there is a bias towards places where lots of development and activity takes place, as discoveries are more likely to be made. This may account for the density of finds around Inverness for many artefacts. Other 'hot spots' show where metal detectorists have been working and recording their finds, or where research projects have taken place.

The HER can be accessed and searched online by the public. It is an excellent resource for exploring artefacts, sites and archaeological investigations throughout the Highlands. You can also report finds or sites that are previously unrecorded, or add information and photographs for those that are already known. You can explore the HHER at <https://her.highland.gov.uk/>

## **Things to think about:**

***Why might artefacts not be reported?***

***Where might discoveries be less or more frequent?***

***What artefacts have been found near you?***