SLCVO Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations

SKYE AND LOCHALSH COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

Annual Report

April 2025 – March 2026

Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations, a charity registered in Scotland number SC013885,
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Chair's Report

Siobhan Barker

As Chair, I am pleased to reflect on a year of significant progress for SLCVO and the communities we serve.

Through strong partnerships, community engagement and a shared commitment to local solutions, we have strengthened the voice of the third sector, increased support to community organisations, secured investment in new Community Outreach Hubs, and continued to drive forward the Skye and Raasay Health, Wellbeing, Welfare and Social Care Collaboration.

These achievements demonstrate the power of collaboration and the resilience of our communities as we work together to create a stronger and more connected future for Skye and Lochalsh.

Five highlights for the Board are:

1. Securing Funding for Community Outreach Hubs
One of the year's most significant achievements was securing funding for the development of Community Outreach Hubs across Skye and Lochalsh. This programme will improve access to advice, information, wellbeing support, and community services in rural communities while addressing issues identified through community engagement, including isolation, transport barriers, hidden poverty, and access to support.

2. Strengthening the Voice of Communities and the Third Sector
SLCVO continued to play a leading role in ensuring community and third sector voices influenced local and regional decision-making. Through the Skye and Raasay Future Plan, Health, Wellbeing, Welfare and Social Care Collaboration, Community Forums, and representation on strategic partnerships, local people and organisations were supported to shape priorities and influence future investment and service development.

3. Record Growth in Support to Local Organisations
Demand for support from community groups and charities increased significantly during the year. SLCVO supported 120 organisations through 193 individual support sessions, representing a 43% increase on the previous year. Support focused on governance, funding, sustainability, organisational development, and strengthening community resilience.

4. Building Stronger Collaboration Across Skye and Lochalsh
The organisation successfully brought together communities, third sector organisations, development trusts, and public sector partners to address shared challenges. The establishment of regular Development Trust Forums and continued growth of the Health, Wellbeing, Welfare and Social Care Collaboration has strengthened partnership working and created a stronger collective voice for the area.

5. Supporting Community-Led Solutions
Through the Empower Skye and Lochalsh Programme SLCVO supported practical responses to key local issues. This work has helped communities move from identifying challenges to developing community-led solutions such as the Community Outreach hubs and volunteer transport service.

Financial Overview

SLCVO's total income for the year ended 31 March 2026 was £259,486, an increase from the previous year. This is largely due to funding for the Skye and Lochalsh Community Outreach Hubs project having been received within the year.

The Highland Third Sector Interface grant to deliver Third Sector Interface Support Services in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross remained largely stable at £57,416. Donations from member organisations reduced to £671 and rents received reduced to £10,450. Total expenditure for the year was £102,578, a decrease from the previous year's £111,740.

The bulk of the expenditure was directed towards charitable activities with costs to maintain the three employees, representing a significant portion of the charitable expenditure.

Part of the overall cost reduction was a result of the charity being able to claim a refund of overpaid rates during the year ended 31 March 2026.

Looking forward, the majority of our income is from grants, emphasising the need for continued grant support, diversifying income sources and maintaining control over expenses for sustained financial health.

Free Reserves Policy
When allocating £100,600 to Designated Contingency Funds the Directors have taken into account:-The uncertainty of core funding beyond March 2026 and the need to designate sufficient funds to remain operational whilst alternative funding is sourced for six months equating to operating costs of £54,000- The organisation's redundancy commitments £18,000- The organisation's commitment to organisational sick pay for six months to cover absence £15,600- Costs to wind-up the organisation including disposal of assets and Chief Officer salary for three months

Restricted funds are £183,945.
Tangible Fixed Assets are £42,756.
Unrestricted funds are £218,621, inclusive of the designated amounts above

The Board would like to extend its sincere thanks to SLCVO staff and volunteers, the many community groups we work alongside, and our public sector and third sector partners across Highland for their support throughout the year. Their commitment, collaboration, and shared vision have helped lay strong foundations for the future and will be key to achieving our collective ambitions for Skye, Raasay, and Lochalsh.
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SLCVO Services and Projects

Although able to operate across the Highlands, Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations is a community development organisation with a primary focus on Skye and Lochalsh.

Our work supports community-led action, strengthens the third sector, and helps local people and organisations work together to address opportunities and challenges across the area. We deliver this through three key areas of activity:

Third Sector Support Skye & Lochalsh

As the rural delivery partner for the Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI), we provide free support to third sector organisations across Skye and Lochalsh.

We support organisations at every stage of their journey by offering expert guidance and practical tools to help them thrive, including:

- Starting Up: Helping local people turn ideas into action, with free toolkits and one-to-one support to establish new groups and organisations.
- Governance and Legal Structures: Guidance on constitutions, legal structures, trustee responsibilities, and meeting regulatory requirements.
- Organisational Development: Support to review how your organisation is working, identify opportunities for improvement, and build confidence for the future.
- Community Engagement: Helping you connect with local people, understand community needs, and ensure local voices help shape your work.
- Strategic Planning: Working alongside boards and committees to develop clear priorities, strengthen leadership, and plan for long-term sustainability.
- Funding Support: Helping identify funding opportunities and providing advice to strengthen funding applications and project proposals.
- Support Through Challenges: Providing practical guidance and support when organisations face uncertainty, change, or difficult circumstances.
- Sharing Good Practice: Offering mentoring, coaching, networking opportunities, and access to resources that help organisations learn, develop, and thrive.

Befrienders Skye and Lochalsh

A volunteer-led service that helps reduce loneliness and social isolation by connecting people with trained local volunteers for regular social contact and companionship.

The service supports adults who may feel isolated due to age, ill health, bereavement, caring responsibilities, disability, changes in circumstances, or living in remote rural communities. Through regular visits, phone calls, walks, shared activities, and informal conversation, volunteers help people stay connected, build confidence, and remain involved in community life.

At the heart of the service is a team of dedicated volunteers who give their time to support others. By creating meaningful relationships and reducing social isolation, Befrienders Skye and Lochalsh helps strengthen communities and ensures that people feel valued, included, and connected.

Empower Skye and Lochalsh Programme

Commencing in March 2024, the Empower Skye and Lochalsh Programme is a three-year initiative focused on strengthening communities, improving wellbeing, and supporting long-term community-led development across the area. The programme has two key strands: the Skye and Lochalsh Health, Wellbeing, Welfare and Social Care Collaboration, and support for the implementation of the Skye and Raasay Future Area Place Plan.

These strands bring communities, voluntary organisations, and public sector partners together to identify local priorities, develop collaborative solutions, and ensure that community voices help shape the future of Skye, Lochalsh, and Raasay.

The Skye and Lochalsh Health, Wellbeing, Welfare and Social Care (HWWS) Collaboration is a three-year initiative designed to reshape how health and social care services are developed and delivered across the region. This year we published the Skye & Lochalsh Caring Communities Plan 2025–2030, a third sector led plan that provides a practical roadmap for ensuring services are better connected, more resilient, and reflective of local needs. We also established a network of forums that bring together third sector and public sector partners to co-produce sustainable, community-led solutions that reflect local needs and priorities. From which the Community Outreach Hubs were developed.

The Skye & Raasay Future (SARF) is the Area Place Plan for Ward 5, developed collaboratively in 2021 by communities, public sector partners, and third sector organisations. It provides a shared framework for guiding local development, service provision, and investment. As part of the Empower Skye and Lochalsh Programme, SLCVO committed to supporting the revitalisation and administration of the SARF Board, helping to reconnect partners, strengthen governance, and drive progress against the plan's shared priorities.

SLCVO 2025-2026 Overview -

Meeting our Charitable Objectives

Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations (SLCVO) is a community development organisation supporting third sector groups and communities of Skye and Lochalsh.

Our charitable objects are the advancement of citizenship and community development within Highland including:

- The promotion of civic responsibility, volunteering, the voluntary sector or the effectiveness of efficiency of charities
- Rural and urban development and regeneration
- Such other similar charitable purposes and the company from time to time determines.

2025/2026 Statistics

- Delivered 190 episodes of 1:1 support to 120 third sector organisations.
- Supported 3 groups in crisis
- Facilitated 21 events/meetings for third sector groups to network, collaborate and share leaning. Including The Reduce Reuse Recycle Event and The ‘Gaps In Services’ Adult Social Care Workshop
- Attended 78 meetings to advocate for and represent the local third sector.

Promotion of Civic Responsibility

We continued to promote civic responsibility by encouraging participation in local planning, consultation, and decision-making processes. We amplified the voice of the third sector across Skye and Lochalsh, ensuring that local organisations and communities were represented in strategic discussions, national consultations, and policy development.

This included:

- Coordinating the Skye and Lochalsh Health, Wellbeing, Welfare and Social Care Collaboration.
- Hosting monthly community forums focused on children, families, and adult services, bringing together residents, organisations, and professionals to share learning and identify local solutions.
- Supporting community involvement in the development of a local Wind Farm Community Benefits organisation by helping establish fair membership arrangements and governance structures.

These activities created opportunities for communities, voluntary organisations, and public sector partners to influence local planning, service development, and investment decisions.

Promotion of Volunteering

We promoted volunteering opportunities through our website, social media, newsletters, blogs, community networks, and direct engagement with local organisations. We also provided advice and guidance on volunteer recruitment, management, governance, and good practice, helping organisations strengthen their volunteer programmes.

Although dedicated volunteer development funding transferred to the Highland Third Sector Interface during the year, volunteering remains embedded across our wider community development work. The Befrienders Skye and Lochalsh service continued to demonstrate the value of volunteering, increasing from 16 to 25 volunteers who contributed approximately 1,000 hours of support to people experiencing loneliness and social isolation.

Looking ahead, we will explore opportunities to strengthen local volunteering through a proposed Volunteer Bank feasibility study, identifying ways to better match community needs with volunteer capacity.

Promotion of the Voluntary Sector

We continue to promote and represent the voluntary sector by acting as a knowledge hub, supporting partnerships and networks, advocating on behalf of local organisations, and encouraging community participation.

During the year, we expanded our information-sharing role through a weekly blog, newsletter, online Community Information Hub, and the Skye and Raasay Future Plan platform. We also represented the sector within a range of strategic partnerships, helping ensure the contribution of voluntary organisations is recognised in local planning and service delivery.

In addition, we gathered intelligence on emerging community needs and future funding opportunities, including community benefit investment linked to major infrastructure projects.

Promoting the Effectiveness and Efficiency of Third Sector Organisations

We continued to strengthen the capacity of local third sector organisations through one-to-one support, training, networking opportunities, and partnership development.

During the year, we supported 120 organisations through 193 support sessions, covering governance, funding, project development, organisational sustainability, volunteering, and new group formation. Governance and funding remained the most common areas of support, alongside increasing demand for assistance with trustee recruitment, succession planning, volunteer engagement, and organisational sustainability.

We also established quarterly Development Trust Forums, creating opportunities for shared learning, capacity building, and collaboration across Skye and Raasay. Through our collaborations, forums, and networking events, organisations were able to identify shared priorities, develop joint solutions, and strengthen local partnerships.

Advancement of Community Development

Community development remained at the heart of our work during 2025/26 through the Empower Skye and Lochalsh Programme, including the Skye and Raasay Future Plan and the Health, Wellbeing, Welfare and Social Care Collaboration.

We brought together communities, third sector organisations, and public sector partners to identify priorities and develop solutions to local challenges. This included facilitating community forums, development trust meetings, partnership events, and thematic networks focused on issues such as health and social care, childcare, transport, poverty, and community wellbeing.

A significant achievement was securing funding for the development of Community Outreach Hubs across Skye and Lochalsh. These hubs will improve access to advice, wellbeing support, and community services in response to issues identified through engagement, including transport barriers, social isolation, hidden poverty, and difficulties accessing support.

We also continued to represent community voices within local and regional planning structures, ensuring that local priorities informed discussions on healthcare reform, transport, unpaid carers, mental health, community wealth building, and future investment.

Through these activities, communities were supported to identify priorities, influence decisions, and develop local solutions, strengthening community leadership, resilience, and wellbeing across the area.

Rural Regeneration

Throughout 2025/26, we worked with communities and partners to address challenges associated with rural living, including access to services, transport, workforce shortages, demographic change, and community sustainability.

Key areas of activity included the Skye and Raasay Future Plan, Community Benefit Fund discussions, SSEN Transmission consultation activity, Development Trust collaboration, and the development of Community Outreach Hubs.

We also supported communities to access funding, attract investment, and develop projects that contribute to long-term community resilience and regeneration.

The Skye and Raasay Future Plan continued to provide a shared framework for community-led regeneration, helping strengthen coordination between communities, development trusts, public agencies, and investment programmes.

Looking Towards 2026-2027

Over the coming year, we will be reviewing its membership and seeking feedback on our services to ensure we continue to meet the needs of communities and organisations across Skye and Lochalsh.

As the rural delivery partner for HTSI, we will continue to provide Third Sector Interface support services across our area. Michelle Seviour, our Third Sector Support Officer, will lead work to develop our consultancy services, enabling the team to provide more in-depth assistance to groups and organisations at every stage of their development.

We will commence the management and delivery of the Community Outreach Hubs and are recruiting a dedicated Co-ordinator to support their ongoing development, sustainability and impact within local communities.

The Empower Skye and Lochalsh Programme will come to an end during 2026-27. A key priority for us will be identifying how we can build on the successes, partnerships and learning generated through the programme to ensure that momentum is maintained and that the benefits for local communities continue beyond the funding period.

Our Chief Officer, Jo-Anne Ford, will support the development of a Highland Community Health and Social Care Network alongside partners from across Highland. This network will build on the work of the existing working group, providing a stronger voice for communities while ensuring that the needs and interests of local communities are better represented within strategic planning and decision-making processes.

Matthew Davis, our Befriending Co-ordinator, will continue to support the delivery and development of our befriending service. Alongside this, he will take on a broader strategic role as Service Manager, focusing on the future development of services that help meet the needs of local people, particularly those accessing adult social care and related support services.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to strengthening communities, supporting the third sector, and creating opportunities for collaboration that improve community-led services across Skye and Lochalsh. By building on established partnerships, supporting community-based projects, and ensuring that local voices continue to influence strategic developments, we will work to create a stronger, more connected and resilient future for the people and communities we serve.

About Skye and Lochalsh CVO

Trustees as of 01 April 2026

- Siobhan Barker, chair - joined SLCVO's board in November 2021
- Dr Di Van Ruitenbeck - joined SLCVO's board in November 2017
- Jryna Batters, Treasurer - joined SLCVO's board in December 2017
- Julie Mace - joined SLCVO's board in January 2020
- David O'Donnell - joined SLCVO's board in November 20217

Resignations 2025/2026

- Peter Urquhart- joined SLCVO's board in September 1997, resigned 01 May 2025
- Clive Pearson, Vice Chair - joined SLCVO's board in November 2006 resigned 15 October 2025Gordon
- Calum Munro - joined SLCVO's board in December 2020, resigned 01/05/2025

Staff as of 01 April 2026

- Jo-Anne Ford, Chief Officer - Jo.Ford@slcvo.org.uk
- Michelle Seviour, Third Sector Support Officer Michelle.Seviour@slcvo.org.uk
- Matthew Davis, Befrienders Manager - befrienders@slcvo.org.uk

Members (as of 08/11/2026)

As a Scottish Registered Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee SLCVO's Board of Trustees is made up of representatives from our membership. Following a comprehensive membership review in 2026 we have **134 members** representing 128 third sector organisations and six individual members.

- Achmore Community Hall Association
- Advocacy Highland
- An Comunn Gàidhealach - Skye Branch (Local Mòd)
- Applecross Community Hall - Talla-Coimhearsnachd na Comraich
- Ardvasar Community Hall
- Arnisdale & Loch Hourn Community Association
- Atlas Arts
- Aultbea Community Hub
- Balmacara Community Trust
- Bracadale and Duirinish Church of Scotland
- Braes Village Hall
- Breakish Community Company Ltd
- Breakish Village Hall
- Broadford & Strath Community Company
- Broadford & Strath Community Council
- Camuscross & Duisdale Initiative
- Carbost Pier Ltd
- Clan Donald Estate Trust
- Community Contacts - Carr Gomm
- Comunn Eachdraidh Shlèite (Sleat Local History Society)
- Connecting Carers
- Counselling Care - Skye & Lochalsh
- Crossroads Care - Skye & Lochalsh

- Dornie & District Community Village Hall
- Duirinish Media and Culture Club
- Dunvegan & District Community Council
- Dunvegan Community Hall Association
- Dunvegan Community Trust / Urras Sgìre Dhùn Bheagain
- Edinbane & Communities Company
- Edinbane Community Hall
- Eilean Ban Trust
- Fàs Mòr
- Fèisean Nan Gàidheal
- Friends of An Acarsaid Care Home
- Friends of Broadford Hospital
- Friends of Portree Hospital
- Gairloch & Loch Ewe Action Forum
- Gairloch Community Car Scheme
- GamCare
- Generations Working Together
- Glendale Community Hall Association
- Glendale Trust
- Glenelg & Arnisdale Community Hall
- Individual members x 6
- Isle of Skye Accordion & Fiddle Club
- Isle of Skye Ferry CIC
- Isle of Skye Renewables Co-op
- Kilmuir Community Council
- Kilmuir Community Trust
- Kingsburgh Forest Trust
- Kyle & Lochalsh Community Trust
- Kyle Public Hall
- Kyleakin Community Hall Association
- Kyleakin Connections
- Lochaber Hope
- Lochalsh & Skye Swimming Pool Association (LSSPA)
- Lochalsh Community Council
- Lochalsh Dirty Thirty SCIO (Previously Lochalsh Trials Club)
- Lochalsh Youth Community Trust
- Lochbroom and Ullapool Community Trust
- Lochcarron Camanachd
- Lochcarron Sailing Club
- Marie Curie Skye and Lochalsh Fundraising Group
- Minginish Community Association
- Minginish Community Council
- National Autistic Society Scotland
- Plockton Community Council
- Plockton Harbour CIC
- Plockton Historical Society
- Plockton Village Hall Association
- Portree & Braes Community Trust
- Portree and Bracadale Free Church of Scotland
- Portree Angling Association

- Portree Community Centre Association
- Portree Community Pantomime Group
- Portree District Gaelic Choir (Còisir Sgìre Phort Rìgh)
- Portree Local History Society - Comann Eachdraidh Ionadail Phortrìgh
- Portree Moorings Association
- Portree Nursery Ltd
- Portree Youth Club
- Raasay Community Council
- Raasay House Community Company Limited
- Rag Tag and Textile Ltd
- Sconser Community Council
- Scottish Community Drama Association - Isle of Skye (Currently in Abeyance)
- Scottish Crofting Federation
- SEALL Community Arts
- Skeabost Bridge Indoor Bowling Club
- Skeabost Memorial Hall Association
- Skye & Lochalsh Citizens Advice Bureau (SLCAB)
- Skye & Lochalsh Community Care Forum / Young Carers
- Skye & Lochalsh Disabled Ramblers
- Skye & Lochalsh Environmental Forum (SLEF)
- Skye & Lochalsh Mental Health Association (SLMHA)
- Skye Agricultural Society
- Skye Autism Support Group
- Skye Beach Cleans SCIO
- Skye Camanachd
- Skye Cancer Care (An Caladh - Skye Cancer Care Drop-in Support Centre)
- Skye Chamber Music
- Skye for All
- Skye Girl Guiding - Now Girlguiding Scotland
- Skye Lochalsh and Lochcarron Indoor Bowling Association
- Skye Older People's Welfare Committee SCIO
- Skye Scottish Country Dance Group
- Skye Stroke Friends
- Skye Youth Pipe Band Comhlan Òigridh an Eilean
- SkyeDance
- Sluggans Woodland Park Group
- South Skye Community Campus
- South Skye Men's Shed
- South West Ross Community Car Scheme
- St Columba's Episcopal Church - Portree
- Staffin Community Hall Association
- Staffin Community Trust
- Strath & Sleat Church of Scotland - Kilmore
- Strath Gaelic Choir - Còisir Ghàidhlig an t-Strata
- Struan Community Council
- Struan Community Trust
- Tasaday Communities Hall Association
- The MacAskill of Rubh' an Dunai Society
- The Macular Society - Skye Branch
- Uig Community Hall SCIO

- Uig Community Trust
- Ullapool & District Youth Group
- Viewfield Garden Collective
- Waternish Community Council
- Waternish Community Hall
- Xcel Church

For more information about Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations visit our website www.slcvo.org.uk

OSCR Scottish Charity Regulator www.oscr.org.uk Registered Charity SC013885

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