

# Skye & Lochalsh Third Sector Conference

Portree 26th March 2025

Networking

Innovation  
in the  
Third  
Sector

Growing  
your  
volunteer  
community

Statistics  
to show  
need

Tackling  
rural  
challenges

Amplifying  
the rural  
voice

Community  
Assets

What makes a  
good funding  
application?

## EVENT REPORT

*Shaping tomorrow together - supporting sustainability and the future wellbeing, health and social care of our communities.*



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## INTRODUCTION

On 26th March 2025 a total of 73 representatives from a wide range of Third Sector organisations and Public Sector agencies gathered to take part in the Skye & Lochalsh Third Sector Conference Shaping Tomorrow Together - supporting sustainability and the future wellbeing, health and social care of our communities.

Organised by Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations (SLCVO) the event was part of the Skye and Lochalsh Health Wellbeing Welfare and Social Care Collaboration project.

The programme included a lively mix of talks, table discussions, facilitated capacity building sessions and the chance to delegates to add their thoughts and comments to a series of key questions relating to support service delivery.

Skye and Lochalsh Health, Wellbeing  
Welfare and Social Care Collaboration

### **PROJECT AIMS**

Improve health wellbeing welfare and social care service delivery and community resilience by offering a more joined-up care approach, strengthening partnerships between Third and Public sector agencies and identifying developing and delivering Third Sector services that address the diverse health wellbeing and welfare support needs of the communities of Skye and Lochalsh

Increase capacity building and sustainable growth by supporting Third Sector service providers and ensuring that they the skills resources and support to deliver effective services and projects.

Foster innovation and effective working by encouraging the sharing of knowledge continuous learning and the exchange of expertise and experiences.

Skye and Lochalsh  
Third Sector Conference

### **EVENT AIMS**

Provide an opportunity for Third Sector and Public sector representatives to get together and enjoy face to face networking / information exchange

Afford opportunity for meaningful discussions on how to address challenges and gaps in current support service provision

support the sustainability of local Third Sector groups by including capacity building content in the event programme

offer an opportunity to explore the possibilities of a new Skye & Lochalsh Health and Social Care Forum

## METHODOLOGIES

### Event Evaluation

Following the event a Survey Monkey feedback form was emailed to all delegates. A total of **35** people completed the feedback form.

- **83%** from Third Sector attendees
- **11%** from Public Sector

In addition, a total of 7 comments were received by email. All responses were analysed, and comments noted.

### Analysing the Event Engagement

The event programme itself included opportunities to encourage engagement on key themes central to the *Skye and Lochalsh Health Wellbeing Welfare and Social Care Collaboration Project*.

A tabletop session *Amplifying the Rural Voice* offered delegates the opportunity to consider, discuss and record their thoughts on the following: -

**HOW:** - *List your ideas for how the third sector can amplify the rural voice in the public sectors participation processes*

**WHO:** - *list the different groups of people in your communities who you feel should have a voice in health & social care service design*

**CHALLENGES:** - *identify the challenges these people may face when trying to engage in service design processes*

Discussions during the *Amplifying the Rural Voice* session generated 271 individual responses

In total **363** written notes and comments were gathered during the event. These were recorded on a spreadsheet and a list of keywords compiled across three primary domains:

#### **Groups Involved      Challenges      Solutions Proposed**

A count was made of the number of times each keyword was mentioned. Mentions were normalized across different wording/spelling variations (e.g., "carers" and "unpaid carers"). This frequency analysis enabled identification of the most pressing concerns and dominant ideas raised during the Skye and Lochalsh Third Sector Conference.

During the event a series of posters invited participants to consider and comment on the following: -

- **WHO are we not reaching?**  
*From your experience which groups of people are a priority for support or who are currently under-served in Skye and Lochalsh?*
- **CHALLENGES**  
*What are the biggest challenges for third sector groups to survive and develop?*
- **HOW can we make access easier?**  
*What would make it easier for individuals, carers and professionals to navigate and access available third sector support?*
- **TRAINING**  
*What would you like to see in a shared training programme for third sector groups (this could be for your volunteers, staff and/or board members)*
- **LOOKING FORWARD**  
*If you had £50,000 to develop a new health, wellbeing, welfare and social care project what would it be and who would it be for?*

## SUMMARY REPORT

The **Skye and Lochalsh Third Sector Conference 2025** provided a powerful platform for sharing challenges, celebrating achievements, and shaping a more inclusive, collaborative future for health, wellbeing, welfare, and social care services. It clearly demonstrated that while the Third Sector continues to face persistent systemic pressures—such as short-term funding, limited capacity, and increasing demand—it also holds significant potential to drive meaningful, community-led change.

A recurring theme throughout the event was the importance of participation that is authentic, inclusive, and impactful. From digitally excluded older adults to unpaid carers and neurodivergent young people, the message was clear: **every voice matters**, and services must reflect the realities of those they aim to serve.

The energy, insights, and willingness to collaborate displayed during the event offer a strong foundation for ongoing work. The key now is to translate this momentum into sustained action and tangible outcomes.

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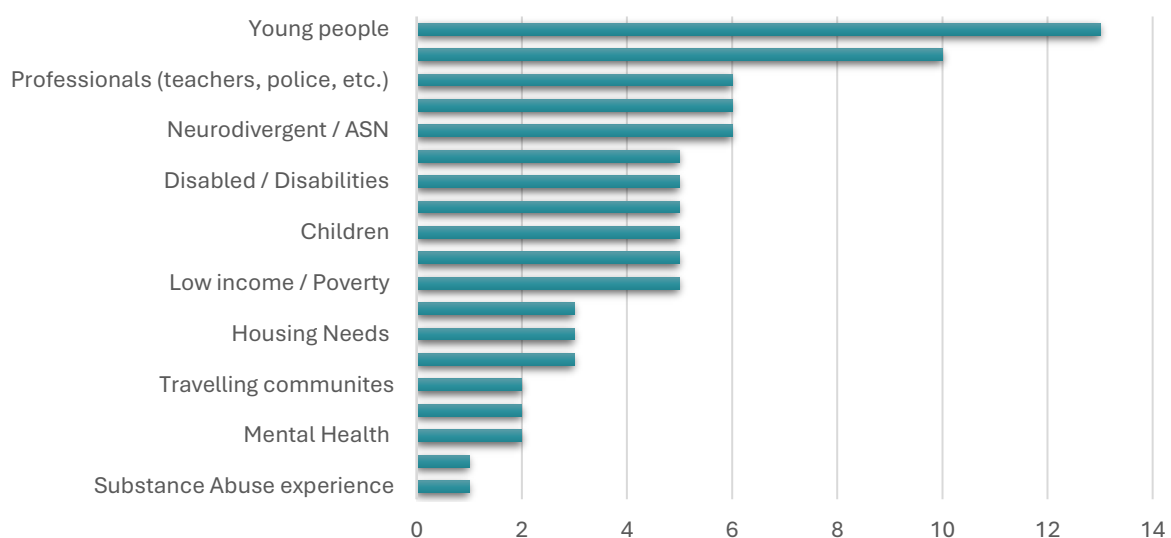
The event affirmed that transformation is possible when communities, professionals, and organisations work in genuine partnership. The next chapter **must** build on these relationships with trust, transparency, and collective ambition.

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## IDENTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS

Through engagement carried out during the first 6 months of the Skye & Lochalsh Health Wellbeing Welfare & Social Care Collaboration Project SLCVO had already begun to identify groups of people who are currently not being supported. The Third Sector Conference event also gave participants the opportunity to identify further groups of people who should have a voice in the development and design of health, wellbeing, welfare, and social care services.

**Table 1 Stakeholders identified by Third Sector Conference event participants**



Summary of people who should have a voice in health and social care service design

<b>COMMUNITY MEMBERS</b> individuals and groups essential to the development and design of health, wellbeing, welfare, and social care services	
Children	People experiencing Trauma/affected by abuse
Community Justice-experienced	People experiencing poverty or financial vulnerability
Crofting and aquaculture communities	People with addictions
Digitally excluded individuals	People with Language Barriers
Elderly residents	People with Learning Needs
Families and Parents <i>(including young parents and those of children with additional needs)</i>	People with mental health challenges
Geographically Isolated Groups	People without transport
Individuals with disabilities or chronic illness	Tenants & people with housing needs
Isolated individuals /People living alone	Travelling communities
LGBTQI+ community	Young people <i>(including school leavers, young carers, neurodivergent youth)</i>
Men, particularly isolated or older men	Unpaid carers
Minority ethnic groups	
Neurodivergent Individuals	
<b>PUBLIC SECTOR /THIRD SECTOR COMMUNITY WORKERS/PROFESSIONALS</b> who bring insight from working directly with those who need care and support.	
Community connectors, navigators, and champions	Social workers
GPs and Allied Health Professionals (AHPs)	Teachers and PSA staff
Paid carers and personal assistants	Volunteers and third sector staff

## CHALLENGES

<i>A Summary of the Challenges Faced by Third Sector Organisations</i>		<i>A Summary of the Challenges for Service Users trying to access services</i>	
<p><b>Short-term funding cycles</b></p> <p>Inability to plan or sustain services due to insecure, year-to-year contracts.</p>	<p><b>Competitive funding environment</b></p> <p>Organisations compete instead of collaborating.</p>	<p><b>Transport</b></p> <p>lack of transport makes accessing services difficult</p>	<p><b>Digital exclusion</b></p> <p>Difficulty accessing online services or information.</p>
<p><b>Volunteer fatigue and burnout</b></p> <p>Lack of paid support leads to over-reliance on stretched volunteers.</p>	<p><b>Siloed working</b></p> <p>Limited collaboration among organisations; duplication of services.</p>	<p><b>Low confidence and stigma</b></p> <p>Fear, pride, or shame stop people from seeking help.</p>	<p><b>Lack of awareness</b></p> <p>People don't know what services exist or how to access them.</p>
<p><b>Limited staff capacity</b></p> <p>Lack of core funding makes it difficult to recruit or retain skilled staff.</p>	<p><b>Weak succession planning</b></p> <p>Cultural and structural barriers to leadership transition.</p>	<p><b>Accessibility barriers</b></p> <p>Unwelcoming venues, complex language, and inaccessible formats.</p>	<p><b>Feeling unheard</b></p> <p>Many believe feedback doesn't result in visible change.</p>
<p><b>Pressure from shrinking public sector</b></p> <p>Third sector expected to fill in service gaps.</p>	<p><b>Communication gaps</b></p> <p>Poor coordination and lack of shared resources/databases.</p>	<p><b>Cultural and Structural Barriers</b></p> <p>restrictions placed on charities /negative stigma around seeking support</p>	<p><b>Time constraints</b></p> <p>Especially relevant for working individuals or unpaid carers.</p>
<p><b>Childcare/caring responsibilities</b></p> <p>Prevents attendance at meetings or services.</p>			



*A Summary of Challenges to Participation in Service Design*

<p><b>Transportation and infrastructure</b></p> <p>Common barriers, especially in rural or under-resourced areas.</p>	<p><b>Physical venues and space</b></p> <p>Distance and inaccessible locations limit in-person involvement, particularly in rural areas.</p>
<p><b>Financial constraints</b></p> <p>Affect both participants and providers, limiting access and engagement</p>	<p><b>Access barriers</b></p> <p>Event formats, timings, and locations often exclude those with jobs, caring responsibilities, disabilities, or in rural areas.</p>
<p><b>Time, capacity, and dependents</b></p> <p>Competing priorities, caregiving responsibilities, or being overwhelmed limit involvement.</p>	<p><b>External life circumstances</b></p> <p>Individual life challenges outside engagement processes can limit participation</p>
<p><b>Emotional and cultural barriers</b></p> <p>Sharing experiences can feel exposing, especially in formal settings. Stigma, fear of judgment, and complex systems discourage participation.</p>	<p><b>Awareness, access and knowing what's available</b></p> <p>Many are unaware of opportunities or how to get involved.</p>
<p><b>Lack of visible impact</b></p> <p>Communities expect tangible outcomes, not symbolic gestures.</p>	<p><b>Missing invitations</b></p> <p>People may not engage unless directly invited or identified as stakeholders</p>
<p><b>Communication methods &amp; outreach</b></p> <p>Poor strategies, generic messaging, or missed audiences reduce effectiveness.</p>	<p><b>Digital-first formats</b></p> <p>Create issues for those with low digital access, confidence, or skills.</p>
<p><b>Language and terminology</b></p> <p>Jargon, literacy issues, and unclear communication hinder engagement; plain, respectful language is preferred.</p>	<p><b>Engagement fatigue</b></p> <p>Repeated requests for input without visible outcomes lead to apathy and mistrust</p>
<p><b>Negative past experiences and apathy</b></p> <p>Previous disappointments reduce trust and future participation.</p>	<p><b>Overload, duplication, and noise in engagement</b></p> <p>Too many or poorly coordinated efforts reduce impact, frustrate participants, and affect response quality.</p>
<p><b>Confidence and comfort in engagement</b></p> <p>Participants may feel judged, uncertain, or unqualified to contribute.</p>	<p><b>Service design process barrier</b></p> <p>Lack of clear planning, tailored approaches, meaningful consultation, and overall vision hinder engagement.</p>

## SOLUTIONS

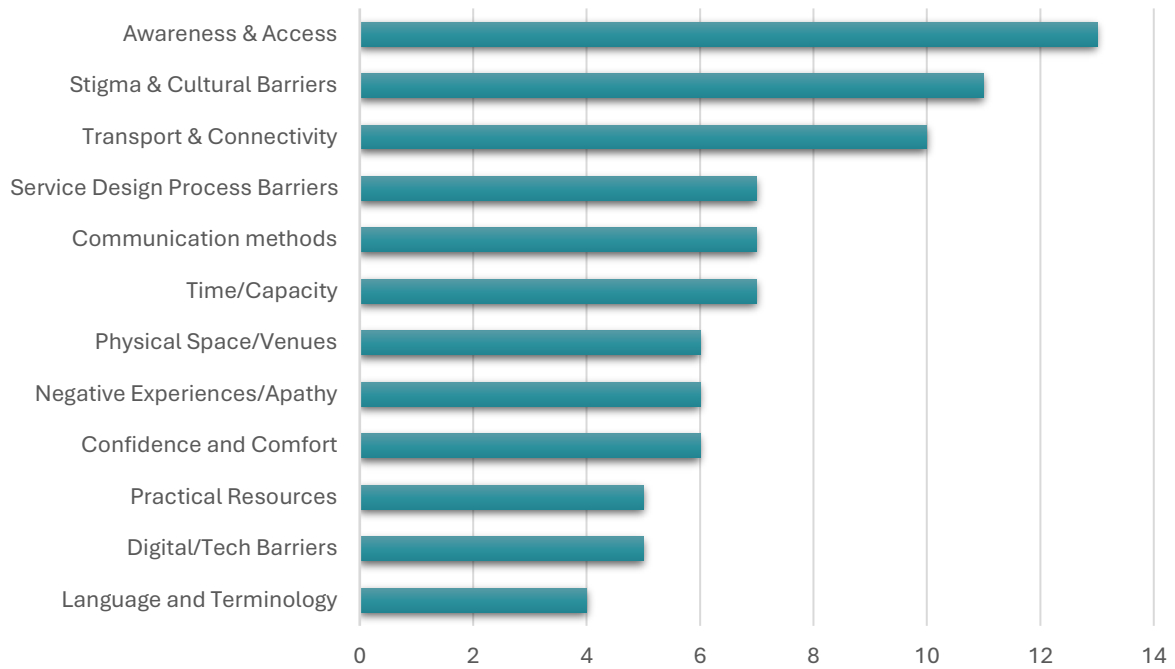
Event participants expressed a high level of interest in collaborative infrastructure (shared databases, community connectors) and tailored engagement. Solutions should focus on: -

- Identifying the people we need to reach
- looking at the barriers that they currently face
- reviewing of current participation processes and identifying how they might be improved.

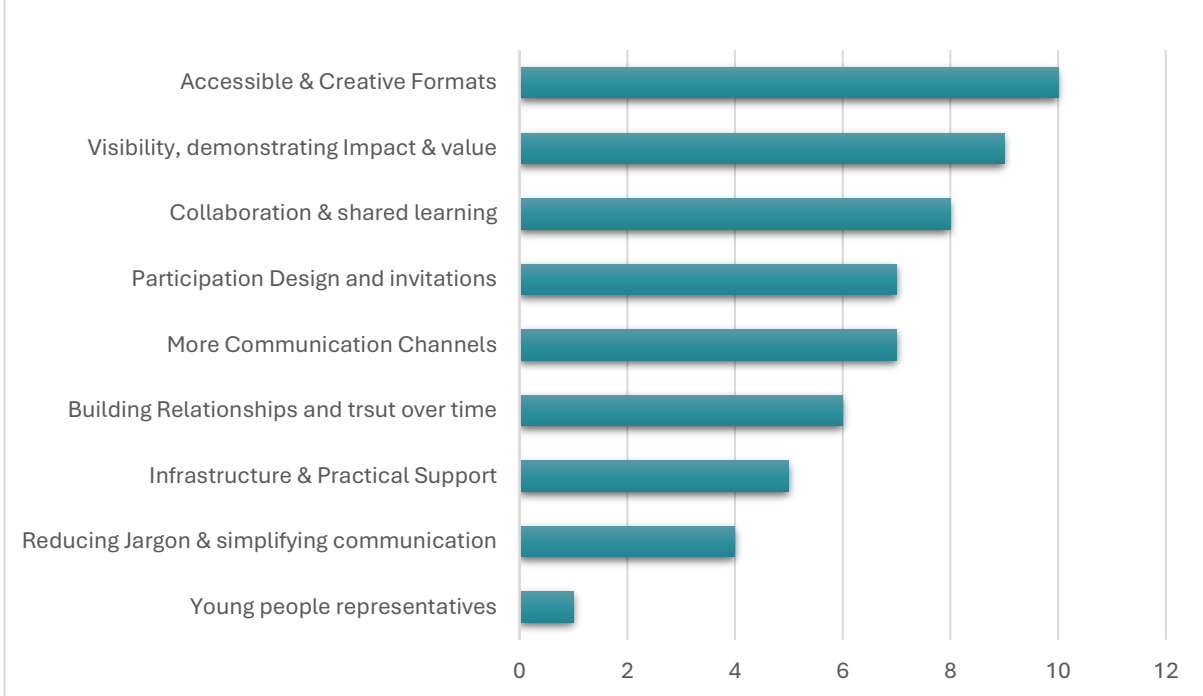
Participants identified a wide range of ways to help make access easier- for individuals, carers and professionals navigating the services available from third sector support.

<p><b>Better Communication Tools</b></p> <p>Platforms to share information, opportunities, and build networks.</p>	<p><b>Capacity Building</b></p> <p>Training and development for volunteers and community leaders.</p>	<p><b>Community Events &amp; Workshops</b></p> <p>To promote connection, learning, and support among locals.</p>
<p><b>Flexible Small Grants Pot</b></p> <p>Let local groups bid for micro-funding to run community-led projects.</p>	<p><b>Local Champions</b></p> <p>Fund part-time community connectors or navigators.</p>	<p><b>Mental Health Support</b></p> <p>Fund counselling or peer support groups, especially in isolated areas.</p>
<p><b>Mobile Hub or Outreach Van</b></p> <p>To reach rural and isolated communities with services and information.</p>	<p><b>Technology Support</b></p> <p>Devices and digital skills training for people at risk of exclusion.</p>	<p><b>Transport Solutions</b></p> <p>Subsidised transport for rural residents to access essential services and events</p>
<p><b>Youth Programs</b></p> <p>Activities and support targeting younger demographics to keep them engaged locally</p>		

**Table 2: Most Frequently Mentioned Challenges**



**Table 3: Most Frequently Suggested Solutions**



## KEY ACTIONS

To build on the momentum of the March 2025 Third Sector Conference, SLCVO will spearhead the establishment of a Skye & Lochalsh Forum for Health, Wellbeing, Welfare, and Social Services (HWWS Collaboration Forum)—a cross-sector platform for continued dialogue, joint planning, and strengthened collaboration between the voluntary and public sectors.

<p><b>Establish HWWS Collaboration Forum</b></p> <p>The forum will serve as a key mechanism for cross-sector coordination, ensuring voluntary sector voices are embedded in regional planning and service design.</p>	<p><b>Celebrate &amp; share third sector success stories</b></p> <p>The forum will explore ways to promote &amp; celebrate local impact—via events, newsletters, and social media—to boost morale, raise visibility, and foster inspiration across the sector</p>	<p><b>Continue funding advocacy</b></p> <p>SLCVO will maintain its advocacy efforts at local and regional levels for long-term, flexible funding models that support innovation, sustainability, and workforce retention</p>
<p><b>Seek formal recognition of Forum from key public sector bodies</b></p> <p>The HWWS Collaboration Forum to be positioned as a primary engagement &amp; participation pathway for public sector partners, including Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross District Planning Group; SLWR Community Partnership and the Skye and Raasay Future (SARF) Programme.</p>	<p><b>Access Solutions</b></p> <p>Develop pilot projects to test mobile service delivery models and subsidised or community-based transport schemes for rural and isolated populations</p>	<p><b>Centralised Information &amp; Resource Platform</b></p> <p>Develop a single point of access for service promotion, knowledge exchange, funding opportunities, training resources, and a shared services database.</p>
<p><b>Skye &amp; Lochalsh HWWS Third Sector Delivery Programme</b></p> <p>Include suggested initiatives in the Skye &amp; Lochalsh HWWS Delivery Plan and Programme</p>	<p><b>Community Engagement Framework</b></p> <p>co-design a framework that offers hybrid engagement options, leverages trusted community connectors, and prioritises inclusive and accessible participation methods.</p>	<p><b>Strengthen sector capacity and leadership</b></p> <p>Through the HWWS Collaboration, SLCVO will integrate third sector supporting leadership development, succession planning, and volunteer training into its work</p>
<p><b>Digital Inclusion Initiatives</b></p> <p>Explore projects such as device lending schemes and digital skills training to ensure equitable access to services and information.</p>	<p><b>Mobile Outreach Hub Pilot</b></p> <p>Already underway via the Whole Family Wellbeing Hub Partnership and HWWS Collaboration, this pilot aims to enhance rural access to services.</p>	

## EVENT CONTENT



### Skye and Lochalsh Health, Wellbeing, Welfare and Social Care Collaboration Project

The event programme began with a presentation that explored the aims and current progress of the *Skye and Lochalsh Health Wellbeing Welfare and Social Care Collaboration Project*.

The event afforded an ideal opportunity to highlight some of the findings from the mapping and engagement stage of Year One of the project. Sector intelligence gathered during this stage has been compiled into a new **Skye and Lochalsh Third Sector Profile** a copy of which was included in delegate packs. Posters highlighting some of the key findings were also available at the event.

The mapping and engagement activities carried out during year one of the project confirms that the Third Sector in Skye and Lochalsh continues to be

**STRONG AND RESILIENT** – with a good solid tradition of volunteer-led activity and many years of experience. 50% of Third Sector constituted groups in Skye and Lochalsh have been operating for over 10 years (and many for a lot longer)

**THRIVING AND RESPONSIVE** – willing and able to respond to the changing needs of our local communities; and keen explore future collaborative projects

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE THIRD SECTOR PROFILE

**Sector Size** - there are **258** constituted Third Sector groups active in Skye and Lochalsh offering a wide range of. A further **107+** un-constituted clubs and volunteer-led community groups are operating on a more informal basis

**Sector Status** - all types of legal status are represented with many constituted groups choosing to be incorporated. **67%** of Third Sector groups in Skye and Lochalsh have registered charitable status.

**Sector Activity** - over **75** different types of activity or service are being delivered locally across 7 broad categories.

**69** groups operating locally are delivering some kind of health/social care/welfare/social justice support to a wide range of people (including tailored services for people with chronic mental health conditions or learning disabilities)



Part of the aims of gathering intelligence on the local Third Sector was to identify some of the challenges and gaps in service provision. The mapping and engagement process not only highlighted the positives but also: -

- A general feeling amongst Third Sector support service providers that they are **undervalued** by public sector agencies and that there is a need for more respect and recognition.
- Funding issues – the sense of **being in competition** with each other for funding and the lack of funding for increased referrals
- Increased **complexity** in health welfare and social care issues
- Challenges of recruiting young people onto boards/committees and tackling **volunteer fatigue**.

## Capacity Building Sessions



Three 30-minute capacity building sessions were held during the event.

Places were pre-booked by delegates.

- 21 people took part in the **What Makes a Good Funding Application** session run by Marie-Anne Gray and Mark Crowe from The Highland Council
- 21 people took part in the **Community Assets** session facilitated by Onie Tibbett (DTAS)
- 21 people took part in the **Using Statistics to Evidence Need** session facilitated by Hayley Graham and Ann Gillies Highland Council Whole Family Wellbeing Programme

Each session facilitator took a different approach to delivery with some including a general presentation as introduction to the topic and others dividing their groups into smaller discussions. Each session encouraged attendee participation and supported a shared learning approach.

## Amplifying the Rural Voice

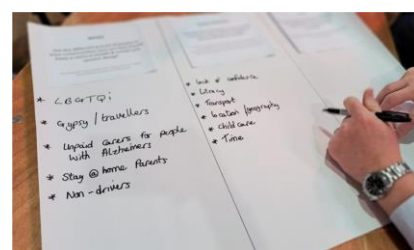


An integral part of the event programme was encouraging delegate participation, and everyone took part in the Amplifying the Rural Voice tabletop activity. Delegates were given the opportunity to discuss and comment on three key discussion topics: -

**WHO** do you think should have a voice in health and social care service design?

**CHALLENGES** - identify the challenges these people may face when trying to engage in service design processes.

**HOW** can the third sector amplify the rural voice in the public sectors participation processes?



## Growing your Volunteer Community

One of the challenges facing local groups is volunteer fatigue and an acknowledgement of the need to recruit more younger people as volunteers. Guest speaker Mhairi Wylie from HTSI delivered an affirming talk on Growing your Volunteer Community. With the number of volunteer numbers down nationally, this presentation looked at some of the reasons behind people's reluctance to volunteer as well as giving some ideas for attracting volunteers such as breaking down tasks into manageable and identifiable areas so that people can have a clear idea on the amount of time they may be committing to.

Delegates were invited to think about:

- Looking beyond their usual demographic and being more diverse
- Consider what they are asking of volunteers - is it realistic or too overwhelming?
- Making volunteers feel welcome –
- Asking volunteers why they leave and listening to their responses.
- Show people what you do – the difference it makes/what fun it can be

## Innovation in the third sector



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*“We recognise that if we are to succeed in improving equity of care across the region. We cannot do this alone.”* Highland Hospice

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A stimulating talk from guest speaker Harry Tedstone (Highland Hospice) focused on **Innovation not Invention**. With dwindling resources and funding opportunities the Third Sector must be innovative and responsive. This is not a time for creating new groups necessarily but by looking what already exists and looking at ways of working together more.



## Local Showcases

### *Kyleakin Connections*

Charlene Macleod gave a heartwarming presentation about the innovations at Kyleakin Connections. Kyleakin Connections have been providing services for people with learning disabilities since they were first established in 1981. They offer a day resource, run a cafe & bookshop, and manage individual support packages for adults with learning disabilities. Working with their service users they have developed a bespoke till system using a combination of Makaton and pictorial design to make it more inclusive and easier for taking orders and payments in the café. As well as offering the charity a welcome income stream, the café offers a wealth of benefits including learning opportunities, social interaction, empowerment and confidence building.

### *Dunvegan Community Trust*

An interesting presentation on the work of community engagement carried out by the Trust. Development Officer Mali MacLennan highlighted the extent of community consultation involved in compiling a community action plan as well as giving an example of a project that developed from a grass root need. The Dunvegan Community Playpark opened recently following intense community fundraising and determination!

### *Xcel Church and The Keys Project*

An affirming example of partnership working to address local need. Recognising the need for support for people with drug and alcohol additions, Xcel church in Portree now offers this structured faith-based recovery support programme and is helping local people with their road to recovery. Conference delegates heard from Anne Harley about the programme and the difference it is making.



## APPENDIX 1: Participants

**54** Third Sector representatives along with **18** Public sector representatives attended the event.

Third Sector delegates represented a total of **33** different organisations.

**63%** of Third Sector attendees were representing organisations that deliver a range of health/social care, welfare/social justice support services. These included staff and volunteers from the nine local organisations who have already indicated their intent to be part of the Skye and Lochalsh Health Welfare and Social Care Consortium/Partnership.

- Alzheimer Scotland – Skye and Lochalsh
- Skye and Lochalsh Citizens Advice Bureau
- Skye and Lochalsh Community Care Forum /Young Carers
- Crossroads Care – Skye and Lochalsh
- Counselling Care Skye and Lochalsh
- Kyleakin Connections
- Rag Tag and Textile
- Skye and Lochalsh Mental Health Association
- Viewfield Garden Collective

**25%** of Third Sector participants were representing groups active in community development including 6 local development trusts based in Skye and Lochalsh and active in a wide range of community development projects.

- 6 Third Sector organisations based elsewhere in the Highlands (each of which offer outreach or direct support to Skye and Lochalsh communities.)
- 4 charitable organisations whose Scottish remit go beyond the Highlands (but who offer outreach and support in Skye and Lochalsh)

Public sector attendees from NHS Highland, The Highland Council and HIE included staff with roles in: Adult Social Care, Community Planning, Education & Learning; Economic Development & Community Regeneration; Social Work (Children & Families) and the Highland Whole Family Wellbeing Programme

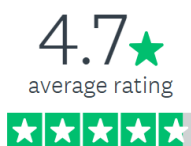
### Third sector groups represented

1. Age Scotland
2. Alzheimer Scotland
3. Befrienders - Skye and Lochalsh
4. Broadford & Strath Community Company
5. Change Mental Health
6. Counselling Care – Skye & Lochalsh
7. Crossroads Care – Skye and Lochalsh
8. Communities Housing Trust
9. Dunvegan Community Trust
10. Dyslexia Scotland - Skye and Lochalsh
11. Development Trusts Association Scotland (DTAS)
12. Highland Hospice
13. Highland Senior Citizens Network
14. HTSI
15. Inspiring Young Voices
16. Kyle & Lochalsh Community Trust
17. Kyleakin Connections
18. Lifelong Learning Hub
19. Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association
20. Mikeysline
21. Portree & Braes Community Trust
22. Rag Tag and Textile
23. Skye Bridge Studios 124
24. Skye and Lochalsh Citizens Advice Bureau
25. SLCCF/ Skye & Lochalsh Young Carers (SLCCF)
26. SLCVO
27. Sleat Community Trust
28. SLMHA
29. Tarskavaig Communities Hall
30. Thriving Families
31. Uig Community Trust
32. Viewfield Garden Collective
33. Xcel Church

## APPENDIX 2 Event Evaluation

The 2025 Skye and Lochalsh Third Sector Conference received overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees, reflecting the strength of its content, organisation, and overall impact on the local third sector community. Participants described the conference as well organised, informative, and highly engaging. Many praised the opportunity to reconnect with others in the sector, with networking emerging as a key highlight. The interactive elements, particularly the facilitated sessions and opportunities to share ideas, were frequently mentioned as valuable and well-executed.

### How would you rate the overall event?



There was a high level of satisfaction with the event and an overall average rating of 4.75 out of 5-star (Excellent) rating from feedback respondents

### What were your main reasons for attending the event?

Most feedback responses mentioned **NETWORKING** and **LEARNING** opportunities as their main reasons for attending the event.

*"networking and peer learning"*

*"To learn and meet like-minded people who are interested in improving services for the residents of Skye and Lochalsh."*

*"Networking with other charities and learning more about the sector and its challenges"*

### Did the conference meet your expectations?

60% of delegates said that the event exceeded their expectations and 40% of delegate feedback said that the event met their expectations

The facilitated capacity building sessions received a mixed response. Some people felt that they learned a lot and others less so. Feedback suggested a strong appetite for more focused, skills-based workshops. Some attendees suggested that smaller, more targeted sessions might further enhance engagement and learning in future events.

### What do you feel you have learned from the conference?

*"Few key take aways but the biggest one is we have to start working together"*

*"Greater awareness of the unique nature of the third sector in Skye and Lochalsh. Both the challenges that affect the area but also the great community spirit that exist"*

*"I learned that there is an incredible amount of commitment and passion in Skye and Lochalsh in the third sector and that there is the appetite for organisations to work together for the greater good"*

*"it was incredibly valuable to connect with other organizations and gain deeper insight into the work being developed in Skye"*

*"It was a really informative and thought-provoking day"*

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*94% of respondents said that they would be interested in similar events in the future.*

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## Community Assets

50% of respondents attending this session rated it between 5 star and 4 stars. 25% rated it 2 stars and 1 respondent felt that the session was not at all useful. The session was held in the main hall at the same time as the *What Makes a Good Funding Application* and several people commented that this made it hard to hear the facilitator – especially as participants were on separate tables.

*"It wasn't quite what I had expected as it required prior knowledge and experience of community assets which I didn't have. I chose that workshop as it was the topic I knew least about so thought it would be good to learn. However, I did have Elizabeth from CHT at my table who had led on the new Raasay homes, and it was great to hear her experience."*

## Using Statistics to Evidence Need



All the respondents attending this session gave it a rating above 3 stars with 48% of respondents rating it between 5 stars and 4 stars.

*"I really enjoyed this session it was informative, collaborative and supportive...only issue was the room was absolutely freezing!"*

## What Makes a Good Funding Application

46% of respondents that had attended this session rated it 5 star (excellent/really useful) and 31% rated it 4 stars.

*"Although I knew a lot of this material it was hugely valuable to put the faces to the names. It now feels less daunting, and instead of blundering through applications I feel more confident to ask for help".*

1 respondent felt that that the session was not at all useful.

The main challenges highlighted from session attendees were in relation to the constraints of the venue acoustics and heating. Having two sessions running in the main hall made it hard for people to hear the facilitators.

There was strong interest in continued engagement with SLCVO, with nearly all respondents expressing that they would attend similar events in the future.

Respondents offered thoughtful suggestions for future conference themes, including:

- More sector-specific discussions
- Opportunities to improve cross-sector collaboration
- Better facilitation of attendee introductions to enhance networking

## APPENDIX 3 Delegates' comments and notes

**Who are we not reaching?** From your experience which groups of people are a priority for support or who are currently under-served in Skye and Lochalsh?

autistic children	neurodivergent people	single parents	veterans
families with CYP [ <i>Children and Young People</i> ] and ASN [ <i>additional support needs</i> ]	people in recovery from alcohol /drug addictions	LGBTQI+	young people
	children with learning challenges	autistic children /adults and families	
people with dementia (no follow up after 1 year)		children/young people who are bereaved	

**Challenges** What are the biggest challenges for third sector groups to survive and develop?

3rd sector undervalued	power and ego
Difficult to succession plan	pressures on public spending and funding
financial security	Relying solely on volunteers is a is hard for all capital projects not sustainable for many
funding resources volunteer fatigue	resistance to change
lack of secure funds	Silo working
very competitive funding environment	Resource and time poor
lack of appetite in public sector to do transformational change, let go of things	short term contracts with NHS highland
no discussion with NHS highland on contract	
There is suspicion around succession planning, like it's a dirty secret (old boys club)	shrinking public sector leaving responsibilities on 3rd sector
Lack of revenue funding to employ staff to manage projects and support volunteers	ongoing community engagement is both essential and exhausting
lack of transport around times activities take place	Negative stigma around reaching out for help (lack of users)

**How can we make access easier?** What would make it easier for individuals, carers and professionals to navigate and access available third sector support?

accessibility -ND [neurodiversity] friendly/ trauma informed/ none stigmatising	Linking with services like GP's e.g. social prescribing / signposting
Single point of access, not a million separate service directories are CVO funded to do this	more continuity of funding to allow developments not short-term projects
advertise meetings	online and in person services e.g. video calls
database online and communications with local areas maybe attending a meeting to explain	outreach
each programme having good knowledge of what's available to tell users help point people to relevant groups	Be aware of community link worker services CLW has been implemented in Portree, Dunvegan, Carbost, Kyle, Broadford and Glenelg medical centres
Key link person	People knowing what is out there
funded transport	stalls and outdoor activities to be accessible
Second the database online!	invite relevant agencies to meetings
transport /use of social media / use of Facebook groups	support to be accessible don't just use words

**Looking Forward** If you had £50,000 to develop a new health, wellbeing, welfare and social care project what would it be and who would it be for

drop in café for aged group 15-25 and a group worker to activate ideas	look at how we work with 3rd sector and public sector to improve support for people in their own homes
linking up similar organisations - collaborating and partnering	start a support service for autistic and ND [neurodivergent] children
open a youth space for young people to meet and shelter	support for neurodivergent parents e.g. group programme 121 support
utilise existing space for a mental health crisis centre	

**Training needs** What would you like to see in a shared training programme for third sector groups (this could be for your volunteers, staff and/or board members)

access to databases/funding training	safeguarding training	mental health awareness around more specialist disorders
mental health self-care	trauma informed training	
ACE [ <i>Adverse Childhood Experiences</i> ]	SVQ to give recognition for their knowledge	vicarious trauma and self-care
GIRFEC [ <i>Getting it Right for Every Child</i> ]	training relevant to roles all the way through organisations	more joined up training between public and third sector
governance training for boards	Neuro-affirming approaches to support	

**Tree of Hope**

Network	Better engagement	Better transport	Opportunities for everyone
Psychotherapeutic Services	Connected groups	Partnership working	Resource bank
Collaboration – end of silos	Communication, trust and Relationships are key	Secure funding for x amount of years to give clients security	Third sector pay and conditions more attractive
Holistic support for all	More consortiums to utilise funding	Meaningful public engagement	Third sector are equal and valued partners
No spot funding contracts	More events like this – <i>thanks</i>	Multi-year funding for voluntary organisations	Professions volunteer organisations with trained volunteers
Accommodation – affordable & accessible	Lots of training resources here and more widely		

## Amplifying the Rural Voice – participants comments

### Who do you think should have a voice in health and social care service design?

Men	Minority languages	Parents	stroke survivors	Gypsy/travellers	school leavers
unpaid carers	Non attendees	non drivers	LGBTQI	Everyone	
folk without transport	young parents	Crofters	Aquaculture	stay at home parents	minority groups
truth all alcohol	transport providers	autistic children/ adults	travelling communities	early dementia support	unemployed
Crofters/ farmers/small holders	children with learning disabilities and families	unpaid carers for people without Alzheimer's	people who are unable to attend in person	teachers and trusted adults for their insights	people with neuro divergence
18- to 25-year-olds with additional needs	people with additional support needs	people with housing needs could help with planning	people with learning disabilities	carers -young and adult	SDS option one workers
refugees and asylum seekers	people with mental health issues	large employers and local industries	teenagers and young people	young people definition of adults 16-18	
young people	low-income families	elderly people	parents of early years	personal assistants	LGBTQ I plus
the elderly	men	unpaid carers	children	paid carers	older people
people with language barriers	people with chronic illness and pain	any groups who might feel particularly isolated or marginalised	financially vulnerable individuals and families	adults with learning disabilities	people experiencing poverty
disabled people	adults with lack of capacity	isolated people	complex trauma	people living alone	visual hearing impairment
frontline practitioners	school non attendees	nothing for us without us	parents and guardians	children and young people	people with disabilities
disabilities	older people	unpaid carers	young people	Everyone	

substance abuse on dependence	council housing association tenants	unattached adults and young people	bereaved children and young people	neurodivergent people including parents	geographic group should all be represented
families affected by domestic abuse AND male victim's	people without a voice no opportunities to speak up for themselves-advocacy	everyone should be involved	parents and carers of children and young people with ASN often don't identify as unpaid carers		
geographically isolated	crofting community	transient community	fishing community	people that are not online	neurodiverse folks
carers	police	young males	young carers	social work	crofters
AHP's	all ASC groups	school leavers	young people	crofters	fishermen
people on payback orders	teachers and PSA's	neurodivergent people	old men/ men in general	people who are digitally excluded	

### What challenges may they face when trying to engage in service design processes

space & venue	what's available	access to user groups	rural areas transport
time			
lack of confidence	venues and locations can be barriers	<i>it is what it is feelings</i>	Allow answering when obtaining voice
everyone knows everyone - this is good and bad	the nomenclature that is used and how to feel confident to take part	have to expose myself and experience to have my feedback validated	What's the point - benefits not explained
Not feeling comfortable engaging in groups	time may have dependants, people wanting to attend meetings	perception of services	communication - not everyone is on social media
Resources	lack of confidence	literacy	transport



Internet access	lack of finances	pride	advocacy
location geography	childcare	too many rules	Technology
cultural practical e.g. PVG, safeguarding	negative views it won't make a difference	knowing who how to access it	awareness of services available
bring back leaflets and notice boards	apathy or resignation to the current situation	cultural stigma- need to have the right person amplifying the voice	digital SoC continues to challenge access to information and support
resistance to change or accept it	childcare	not knowing what's available	not trauma informed practise
transportation	Isolation	not accessible	Finance
lack of meaningful consultation	around seeking support	access transport geography	communication barriers
lack of knowledge in design processes	lack of invitation from people already at the table	availability of people to be involved work hours	Awareness of consultations
bad experiences in the past putting energy into consultations that don't seem to have an impact	people might get involved in engagement but might not ever hear about what is done from their input	health and social care providers don't hear from those who don't have a voice might feel stigmatised	restrictions placed on charities and services delivering to young people for example legislation PBGS insurance
distance, transport, connectivity or engagement all online	lack of time or personal capacity to participate	no road map all sight of the big picture	Awareness transport issues
connectivity confidence	knowing where to go to find information	that people see results from any engagement	lack of support
Childcare	confidence	stigma to ask for help	Time and capacity
lack of tailored approach to engagement	communication needs	lack of relevance to them	Bias

people want face to face support available	transport impact on carers	online digital activity connectivity	Transport to and from a pro points and a services
transport	Shame	negative stigma	
jargon /acronyms /abbreviations - stop!	recruiting new staff and volunteers for the services non /inappropriate referrals		triggering process is limited engagement opportunities
situation where people are welcome can join in no pressure to become a committee member	Service needs to go to them for example dentistry an opticians	housing for staff that's accessible for example rent costs	people need to be given insight into what the possibilities are opportunities can be
transport access no bank etc.	Fear, judgement, Preconceptions	access ability if living rurally if in person	lack of support for carers to support engagement
involvement in planning at a human level where ideas can make a difference	no meetings place/ no services/ few options	people think it's all just a talking shop	ideas from other places and other initiatives etc
mental health challenges impacting on in person engagement	people don't know about available services or how to reach them	the hard to reach are not always approached by commissioners	contact details/distribution lists

**How can the third sector amplify the local voice in public sector participation processes**

how to record people's input - a video	target campaigns to reach wider audience	Overload of surveys	teaching how to be neighbourly
buddy systems	befrienders	collaboration	Local halls
too many places to obtain voice can weaken message	notice boards and leaflets	transport infrastructures	engagement

Radio Skye and other local newspapers	GP surgeries for signposting	bring services to communities	help with expenses
community connectors	advertise each other	communication between services	online ideas forum or portal
information that is valued and accurate	mobile services to access rural communities such as dentist opticians	additional timing for awareness for example posties	notice boards and bus shelters
local employers	data sharing	invite them	reflect service need
more collaboration	peer connection	outreach	mobile services
young people representatives	flexibility hybrid approaches	clever language -lose jargon	people contributing to design
ask people how they communicate best	speak to people service users and service providers	showcasing what can be done and what has been done	connecting things up to the various network networks faint into one
breakdown barriers cold calling is difficult	meeting people where they are	help with transport /lunch to be treated like a delegate which they are	creative ways to involve people who cannot attend in person
time building relationships	appreciative inquiry approach works well	what do the strategies meaningfully mean to people	
linking 3rd sector organisations	make people's involvement obviously purposeful evidence what people will get out of it.	making people feel that time and input is valued and has purpose	bigger profile for community plan presented to reach more people and engage them in different formats
at that way of communication to the people you're trying to reach			
building relationships and trust and it sets in it takes time	client agency - agency client works both ways has to be practised	wester ross community cares appear to work well would work on skye?	shared database of available services
Flexible ways to meet and share ideas- use of social media is key	celebrate local success- things that are already happening	another use HTSI third sector representation pathways	tailored but purposeful conversations
individuals find it difficult to speak groups need to be truly representative	needs to be engaging and attractive to participate in	make evaluation entry go to service provision part of learning and improvement processes	

## APPENDIX 4 Conference Programme

**10:00-10:15** Registration      **10:15-10:20** Welcome address –SLCVO

**10:20-10:50** *Shaping Tomorrow Together - supporting sustainability and the future wellbeing, health, and social care of our communities* – The Skye and Lochalsh Health Wellbeing and Welfare Collaboration Project Jo-Anne Ford Chief Officer / Michelle Seviour Research and Engagement Officer SLCVO

**10:55 -11:25** *30 minute facilitated sessions* – places pre-booked.

**What makes a good application** – Marie-Anne Grey (Economic Development & Regeneration) and Mark Crowe -The Highland Council

**Community assets** – Onie Tibbitt COSS Adviser DTAS

**Using statistics to evidence need** – Hayley Graham and Ann Gillies Whole Family Wellbeing Team – The Highland Council

**11:25-11:55** Amplifying *the Rural Voice* – *the Third Sector role in shaping Health and Social Care Services* – table discussions.

**12:00-13:00** Lunch - plus the opportunity to get involved with our interactive questions.

**13:05-13:20** Innovation that works – *Tackling Rural Challenges* Keynote speech Harry Tedstone Highland Hospice

**13:25-14:00 Showcasing** our local Third Sector

- **Kyleakin Connections** – the development of a bespoke till system for the Nice Café – Charlene Macleod Kyleakin Connections
- **XCEL Church and the KEYS Project** – a partnership solution to local addiction support needs - John Gordon / Ann Harley Xcel Church
- **Dunvegan Community Trust** – developing projects in relation to community needs – Mali MacLennan Development Officer

**14:10-14:30** Growing Your Volunteer Community – Mhairi Wylie Chief Officer HTSI

**14:35-14:50** what the future holds – SLCVO Closing summary.

**14:50-15:30** please grab a tea/coffee for a last chance to chat and mingle and reflect on the day.

**16:00 Event end**

## APPENDIX 5 List of Attendees

### Third sector attendees

1. **Gill Adams** *Volunteer Board of Directors* **Skye & Lochalsh Community Care Forum (SLCCF)**
2. **Audrey Alsop** *Volunteer committee member* **Tarskavaig Communities Hall**
3. **Cat Anderson** *Senior Support Worker*  
**Skye & Lochalsh Community Care Forum – Young Carers**
4. **Bryony Anderson** **Dunvegan Community Trust**
5. **Helen Aslett** *Community Outreach* **Highland Hospice**
6. **Menna Augier** *Volunteer Co-ordinator* **Viewfield Garden Collective**
7. **Siobhan Barker** *Volunteer Board of Directors*  
**Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations (SLCVO)**
8. **Jryna Batters** *Volunteer Board of Directors* **Viewfield Garden Collective and SLCVO**
9. **Linda Birne** **Mikeysline**
10. **Sarah Cardno** *Communications & Business Support Officer* **Inspiring Young Voices**
11. **Duncan Clark** *Local development officer* **Uig Community Trust**
12. **Jessica Clarke** *Tenant Engagement & Support* **Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association**
13. **Jo Cowan** *National Community Development Officer*  
**Age Scotland / Highland Senior Citizens Network**
14. **Matt Davis** *Befrienders Co-ordinator* **Befrienders – Skye & Lochalsh**
15. **Aneurin Ellis** *Community Co-ordinator* **Kyle & Lochalsh Community Trust**
16. **Jo-Anne Ford** *Chief Officer* **Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations (SLCVO)**

17. **Sarah Fowler** *Chief Executive* **Thriving Families**
18. **Susan Geale** *Volunteer Board of Directors* **Rag Tag and Textile**
19. **John Gordon** **Xcel Church**
20. **Morag Hannah** *Chief Executive Officer* **Skye & Lochalsh Citizens Advice Bureau**
21. **Kirsty Harding** **Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI)**
22. **Anne Harley** **Xcel Church /Keys Project**
23. **Sarah Hartley** *Counselling Service Manager* **Counselling Care – Skye and Lochalsh**
24. **Lesley Hellon** *Dementia Advisor (West Highland)* **Alzheimer Scotland (Skye and Lochalsh)**
25. **Roger Liley** *Community Worker*
26. **Dafne Lopez Mora Community** *Link Worker* **Change Mental Health Scotland**
27. **Lucy MacCusbic Family** *Support Worker (Skye)* **Thriving Families**
28. **Anne Mackay** *Community Link Worker* **Change Mental Health Scotland**
29. **Grant MacKay** *Manager Skye and Lochalsh Young Carers SLCCF*
30. **Sandra MacKenzie** *Manager* **Skye & Lochalsh Mental Health Association (SLMHA)**
31. **Flora MacLean** *Volunteer* **Sleat Community Trust**
32. **Mali MacLennan** *Development Officer* **Dunvegan Community Trust**
33. **Charlene Macleod** *Manager* **Kyleakin Connections**
34. **Susan MacVicar** *Volunteer* **Dyslexia Scotland – Skye & Lochalsh**
35. **Alec Mcleod Project** *Officer* **Portree & Braes Community Trust**
36. **Julie Mace** *Volunteer Board of Directors* **Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations (SLCVO)**

37. **Beks Marcus** *Support Worker* **SLCCF - Skye and Lochalsh Young Carers**
38. **Jennifer Millington** *Service Manager* **Crossroads Care – Skye & Lochalsh**
39. **Norma Morrison** *Community Co-ordinator* **Broadford & Strath Community Company**
40. **Callum Munro** *Volunteer Board of Directors* **SLCVO**
41. **Peter Richell** *Volunteer Board of Directors* **Crossroads Care – Skye & Lochalsh**
42. **Gaener Rodger** *Chief Officer* **Inspiring Young Voices**
43. **Eliza Sanchez** **Mikeysline**
44. **Michelle Seviour** *Research & Engagement Officer*  
**Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations (SLCVO)**
45. **Lisa Supper** *Volunteer* **Lifelong Learning Hub**
46. **Elizabeth Taggart** *Community & Development Project Officer*  
**Communities Housing Trust / Raasay Development Trust**
47. **Sara Taylor** *Theatre Admin Consultant* **Skye Bridge Studios 123**
48. **Jennifer Teague** *Volunteer* **Dyslexia Scotland – Skye & Lochalsh**
49. **Harry Tedstone** *Community Engagement Officer* **Highland Hospice**
50. **Onie Tibbett** *COSS Advisor* **Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS)**
51. **Sandra Tonagh** *Senior Project Worker* **SLMHA**
52. **Peter Urquhart** *Volunteer Director* **SLCVO**
53. **Lynne Williams** *Volunteer* **Befrienders – Skye & Lochalsh**
54. **Mhairi Wylie** *Chief Officer* **Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI)**

## Public sector attendees

55. **Marie Annan** *Client Services Co-ordinator*  
**The Highland Council (Development & Resources)**
56. **Mark Crowe** *Project Officer - Community Regeneration*  
**The Highland Council (Infrastructure, Environment & Economy)**
57. **Ailish Culbertson** *Community Children's Worker*  
**The Highland Council – Social Work (Children & Families)**
58. **Ann Gillies** *Whole Family Wellbeing Team*  
**The Highland Council – Highland Whole Families Wellbeing Programme**
59. **Hayley Graham** *Whole Family Wellbeing Team*  
**The Highland Council – Highland Whole Families Wellbeing Programme**
60. **Marie-Anne Gray** *Project Officer-Community Regeneration*  
**The Highland Council (Infrastructure, Environment & Economy)**
61. **Jamie Kellas** *Partnership Officer* **The Highland Council (Community Planning Partnership)**
62. **Craig MacDonald** *Social Worker* **NHS Highland (Adult Social Care)**
63. **Therese MacDonald** *Social Worker* **NHS Highland (Adult Social Care)**
64. **Jean MacRae** *Public Health Practitioner* **NHS Highland**
65. **Jennifer MacPherson** *Development Manager (Lochaber/Skye & Wester Ross)* **Highlands & Islands Enterprise (HIE)**
66. **Tracy McIlvar** *ELC Commissioner (West)* **The Highland Council**
67. **Michelle Morrow** *Social Worker* **The Highland Council – Social Work (Children & Families)**
68. **Ian Philp** *Head of Strengthening Communities* **Highlands & Islands Enterprise (HIE)**
69. **Gail Prince** *Partnership Development Manager*  
**The Highland Council (Community Planning Partnership)**
70. **Pamela Scally** *Integrated Team Manager* **NHS Highland (Skye & Lochalsh Integrated Team)**
71. **Catriona Sutherland** *Tenant Participation Officer* **The Highland Council – Housing**
72. **Ian Thomson** *Head of Service (Quality Assurance)* **NSH Highland**



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For more information about the *Skye and Lochalsh Health, Wellbeing, Welfare and Social  
Care Collaboration Project*

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**22 April 2025**