

## Covid-19 Community Response and Resilience Survey for Skye, Lochalsh, Wester Ross and Strathpeffer, October 2020

The Covid-19 Community Response and Resilience Survey is a partnership study by Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations, the Highland Council and High Life Highland as part of the Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross CLD Network. Its purpose is to record local Covid-19 emergency response initiatives in council wards 10 and 5, map what services are continuing to support local communities and identify what support local response initiatives require.

### Ward: 10 Eilean a' Cheò

Ward 10 includes the of the Isle of Skye and Raasay. There are 15 Community Council areas supporting a population of around 10,591 (statistics.gov.scot 2019).

#### Councillors

- John Finlayson
- John Gordon
- Calum MacLeod
- Calum Munro

#### Ward Manager

- Willie Mackinnon

For contact details see

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/772/politicians\\_elections\\_and\\_democracy/463/council\\_ward\\_information/10](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/772/politicians_elections_and_democracy/463/council_ward_information/10)

#### Community Councils

- Broadford & Strath Community Council
- Dunvegan & District Community Council
- Glendale Community Council
- Kilmuir Community Council
- Kyleakin & Kylerhea Community Council
- Minginish Community Council
- Portree and Braes Community Council
- Raasay Community Council
- Sconser Community Council
- Skeabost & District Community Council
- Sleat Community Council
- Staffin Community Council
- Struan Community Council
- Uig Community Council (in abeyance)
- Watermish Community Council (in abeyance)

### Ward: 5 Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh

Ward 5 includes Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh. There are 19 Community Council areas supporting a population of 11,886 (statistics.gov.scot 2019).

#### Councillors

- Isabelle (Biz) Campbell
- Ian Cockburn
- Alexander MacInnes
- Derek MacLeod

#### Ward Manager

- Dot Ferguson

For contact details see

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/councillors/specificWard/5/05\\_wester\\_ross\\_strathpeffer\\_and\\_lochalsh](https://www.highland.gov.uk/councillors/specificWard/5/05_wester_ross_strathpeffer_and_lochalsh)

#### Community Councils Wester Ross

- Applecross Community Council
- Aultbea Community Council
- Coigach Community Council
- Gairloch Community Council
- Lochbroom Community Council
- Lochcarron Community Council
- Shieldaig Community Council
- Torridon and Kinlochewe Community Council
- Wester Loch Ewe Community Council

**Community Councils Lochalsh**

- Dornie and District Community Council
- Glenelg & Arnisdale community Council
- Kyle Community Council
- Lochalsh Community Council
- Lochduich Community Council
- Plockton Community Council
- Stromeferry Community Council

**Community Councils Strathpeffer**

- Contin Community Council
- Garve and District Community Council
- Marybank, Scatwell and Strathconon Community Council
- Strathpeffer Community Council

**Survey Respondents**

43 community groups responded to the survey

- 26 are existing groups providing a Covid-19 emergency response
- 10 are new groups set-up to provide a Covid-19 emergency response
- 7 are informal mutual aid groups to help neighbours

**Funding**

- 31 groups received funding for their emergency response
- 10 groups did not receive funding
- 2 groups did not provide information
- 3 groups received funding beyond September 2020, the rest was for March - September 2020

**Governance**

- 24 groups are constituted or belong to a group that is
- 12 groups are not constituted
- 7 groups did not answer

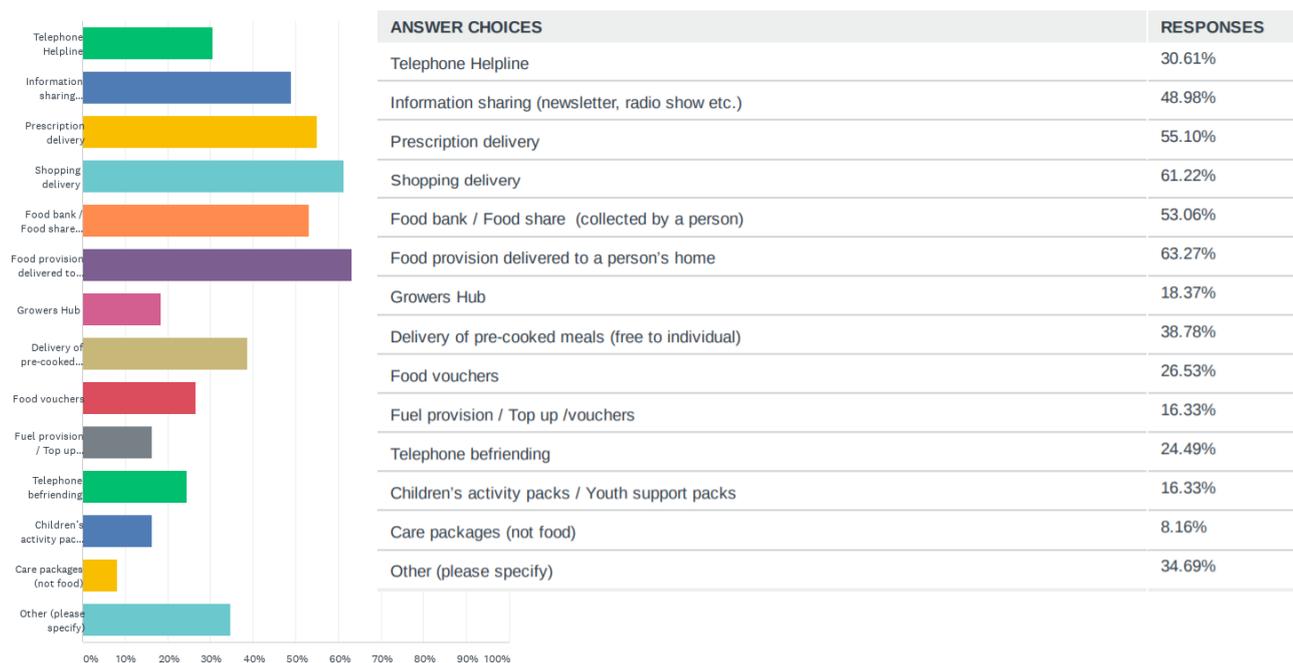
**Legal Structures**

- 12 Companies Limited by Guarantee (7 of which are charities)
- 11 Charities (7 of which are incorporated)
- 11 Voluntary Groups
- 5 SCIO's
- 3 Community Councils/Highland Council
- 1 Private Enterprise

**Continuing Services**

- 40 groups said they would activate again if there was another emergency (3 did not respond)
- 37 groups said they intend to continue services
- 3 groups do not intend to continue services

## Emergency Response Activities Provided by Groups



### Other Activities

- Weekly zoom meeting to discuss current needs. Set up Community Food Box, Offered telephone support - though not used, worked on information for visitors, tried to identify those who might be most vulnerable and ensure they were ok.
- Connection of vulnerable people to Social Services and third sector support groups such as Skye and Lochalsh Counselling Care
- Pastoral care
- £500 per household community grant.
- Build "blessings box"
- Virtual events - online and telephone
- Dog walking
- Purchased face coverings for general public and purchased food vouchers for Young Carers
- 33 concerts delivered via Zoom to Kyleakin Connections; Budhmor Care Home; An Arcasaid Care Home; Home Farm Care Home
- Sourcing and supply of PPE to hospitals/care homes/health centres within the area, manufacture and supply of theatre scrubs to same, and to Raigmore Children's Unit.
- outreach support to vulnerable adults. Support to our isolated members unable to attend activities.
- Partnered with SLCVO to produce and deliver green health packs which are distributed to our volunteers and to recipients of Community Calls
- Supply of PPE and advice re: PPE to voluntary groups, health and social care providers and some businesses.
- Mail Delivery, Pastoral Care
- We supported people in our Community with Social issues that arose specifically during Covid lockdown and used our contacts in NHS or Highland Council to get them the support they needed
- We registered with Skye Community response as a group of people willing to be called on to meet unmet need but were never contacted by Skye Community Response. However, as individual members of our communities, we did what we could to help people by keeping in touch, doing shopping etc.

## What groups said was best thing about their emergency response

### The Volunteers

- Volunteers continued to provide an increased service. community support and donations great.
- Increase in number of volunteers and expansion to cover wider area more comprehensively.
- Willing group of volunteers well received by communities.
- The willingness of volunteers
- The speed with which we were able to pull it together, the fact that representatives from each community felt that they were fairly sure anyone who needed help was getting it. The teams of volunteers who galvanised to help.
- The way the community came together and worked through the scheme that we were offering. A lot of volunteers from those who could move around to those who were shielding and able to telephone people. It was a good, co-ordinated response to the Covid situation.
- Volunteers from throughout the community responded to offer support.
- Community coming together. Huge response to JustGiving appeal for Skye-wide projects. Numbers of volunteers.
- Enthusiasm of volunteers and pulling together of the community.
- Supporting isolated vulnerable adults ensuring vulnerable people were not isolated without support over the 24 weeks plus of the lock down and that volunteer trustees organised a garden maintenance programme at our community garden.
- That it mobilized a large (150+) group of volunteers who had the time, skill and will to help and that it provided an opportunity to donate for those on and off island who wanted to support the response on Skye.

### Coming Together

- Community pulling together
- Dunvegan lots of little communities. great to see so many people come together to help out and offer/provide support. great to see community spirit when it sometimes doesn't seem to on the surface. every request met within a few hours each time.
- Collaborating with various local groups and Applecross village shop Being able to offer a range of support services made the sense of community a thing of value
- Contact with people out with our usual circles of contact
- Volunteer organisation to distribute increased number of food bags. Remarkable community support in terms of food and cash donations.

### Helping People

- It was first advertised as being just our Church group, then other members of the community joined, including the community council.
- Involving the community and helping to organise hand sanitizer units and community growing beds
- It was put in place quickly and appreciated by those who used the services on offer.
- Giving people an active and mindful activity to do during lockdown by growing their own food.
- Identifying the need and being able to respond
- The appreciation given by the community to the service delivered. Being local was a huge advantage, knowing the community well allowed us to "best guess" the circumstances of each household and we estimate this to have been 95% correct
- Enabled us to put out a newsletter digitally and in Hard Copy. Paid for distribution of some of our produce and additional staff time to reintroduce clients to the project when restrictions were lifted.
- Recognised a need immediately in the village. covering whole peninsula. nearest was Portree/Broadford. used local bunkhouse for cooking etc and as a food bank. very useful for a lot of people and nice and discrete. 14 staff from the Old Inn so always someone there on hand.
- Able to help people who did not qualify for other schemes
- People were delighted to receive the help we gave
- Prescription delivery was a major success.
- The positive responses from the residents, service users, staff, carers and families. Being able to support local musicians during lockdown.
- We were able to provide food to families in need

- It was fully operational, including providing cooked meals for up to 7 days a week, right from (even before) day one of lockdown. We didn't have the problem with handling clients' money that many services had.
- delivering essentials to the most vulnerable, keeping them safe
- Ensuring that vulnerable groups did not have to risk catching the virus by leaving their home to pick up prescriptions, shopping etc
- We weren't needed very much because everyone was helping their neighbours and friends on an informal basis. But we were available as a safety net.

## What groups said did not work so well

### Volunteer Capacity

- Volunteers capacity which got less as time went on.
- Only issue was really too many volunteers to get everyone involved. Think half were turned off after some individuals took on too much.

### Getting Help To People

- Getting the food to people who really need it (some did get sent out with community hubs)
- It missed out on some people due to the process.
- Difficult to find those in need of food aid
- Not knowing if there were people we didn't know about who could have benefitted from support
- No assistance from official bodies in identifying those most in need.
- Difficult getting help (food/money) to those who needed it most - how to identify who needs help
- We know there were some people who needed help but would not come forward or let anyone access it on their behalf
- Local's didn't get in touch as much as we'd thought. especially ones who we knew needed help.
- There were some complaints from a few people that the food vouchers weren't always going to needy people.
- Some misuse of free meals which meant we had to limit numbers of meals for all.
- More supply than demand
- At the start, too many people were trying to do the same thing. We brought this under one roof and it worked so much better.
- We were very focussed and our team knew exactly what was required of them. We anticipated a bigger uptake from families looking to source IT equipment for home schooling, only one person came forward
- Initial gaps in Portree for food deliveries
- Shopping for individuals - too complicated with regards to payment. A COOP click and collect would have been brilliant

### Communications

- The huge geographic area and lack of understanding of the size of the area by some who were coordinating centrally in Inverness
- Trying to ensure communication reached everyone across the area. Internet poor to non-existent in some areas so social media / internet-based comms not suitable for all.
- Would've been used more if we had a budget to be able to send out flyers/info. had emergency bags ready for people closer to the end. some sort of database for people in the area to get information (from social services for example). some went to Portree instead as they didn't know about ours.
- Liaison by Zoom was difficult and client groups were not interested in that type of communication

### Resources

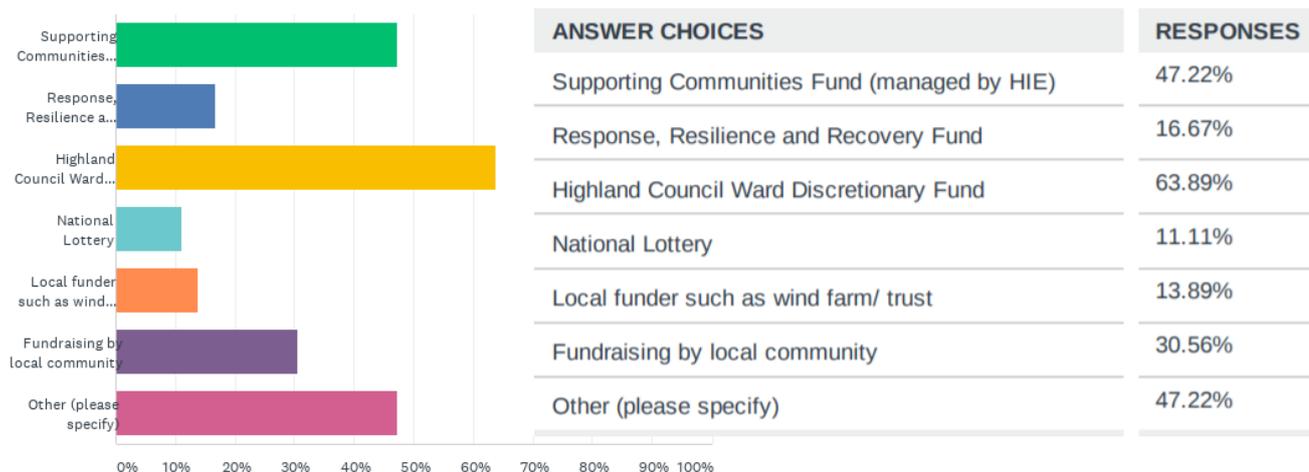
- Only two months of funding available. Have applied to Independent Age and Awards for All to continue the project. Gap in funding while waiting for decision. Fundraising locally to plug the gap.
- Additional staff hours useful but not enough and also existing P/T staff had other commitments so very tricky
- The SCR response service being led primarily by PBCT could be challenging as the group were managing both response in the area (Portree and Braes) and the wider response across Skye simultaneously. It was often difficult for the core team and the wider public to differentiate between activities. The fundraising was much more

successful than first expected and as a result the team have been responsible for distributing around £150,000 - a large task in itself and one that we have had to draw heavily on trust resources to carry out. We are still receiving requests every week for funding as most groups are struggling financially.

- Difficulties in reopening the community garden Re opening the garden to members and the public..

## How Were Groups Funded?

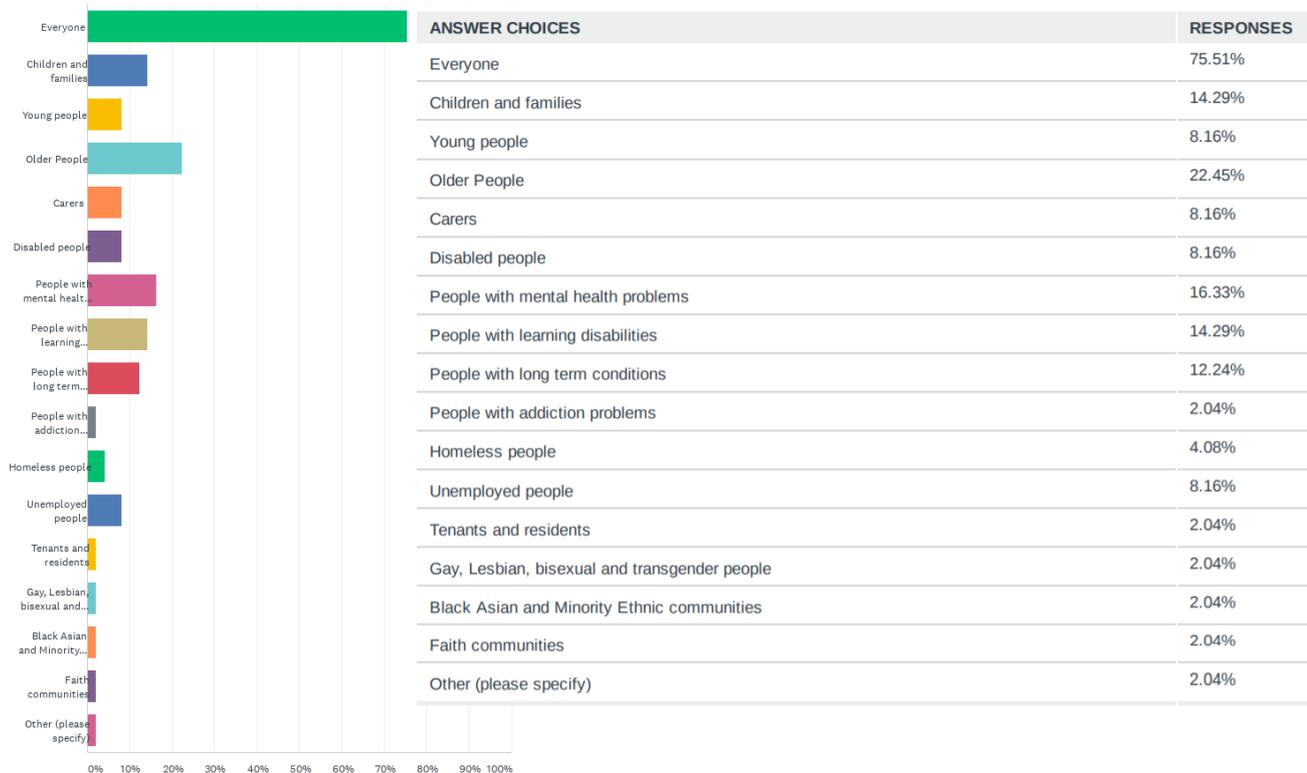
31 groups received funding for their emergency response initiatives, of these 3 groups received funding to support services beyond September 2020.



### Other

- North Highland Initiative Community Support Programme (Covid-19)
- Tesco bags of help
- Local Rotary Club
- Corra Foundation
- Individual donations
- Community Council
- Scottish & Southern electric network

## Which Client Groups Were Supported?



### Other

- People directly affected by Covid-19 restrictions

## What Initiatives Will Continue?

### Food Initiatives

- Continued and increased Community growing thanks to funding for a polytunnel from Supporting Communities Fund - long term project with no end date. (Broadford and Strath Community Company)
- Community Fridge - have current building until June 2022 and have 5 fridges and freezers. No funding past September. (Broadford and Strath Community Company)
- Meal Share, weekly meal delivery - have Community fundraising which will last for another 6 weeks or so. (Broadford and Strath Community Company)
- We have not yet used the £500 HC discretionary award so will use this initially to keep food bank/hub running, anticipate the £500 should last c5 weeks. After that time will consider the use of a small grant from North Talisker Hydro and community association funds. Other services will cease (food vouchers etc)
- Trotternish Kindness Container (food bank based at Staffin Hall)
- We will continue to provide food and essential supplies to families in need. It will be funded through donations and we are currently researching other funding
- We are doing pre ordered packed ready to collect or deliver grocery boxes.
- We would like to continue with the ready meals service, this however is dependent on part funding being made available to help with costs
- Food Hub for as long as MCHA can afford it
- Applications are in hand to continue our Food Share and meals, prescription deliveries, communications via our dedicated social media and website. We have a reserve in hand to help cover some of these activities until March 2021. We do not consider this emergency to be over.

- We do intend to but as of end September we have no funding in place for coordinator roles to support the continuation of our PBCT emergency food provision projects (foodshare and cooked food deliveries), our SCR fruit and veg deliveries, SCR helpline and prescription deliveries for North Skye, responding to requests for PPE and other support and for general fundraising and administration support. Existing PBCT staff team have their own existing projects to manage however we intend to tread water and keep some services going on the basis that we hope to secure further funding until March 2021 over the next 6-8 weeks. Temporarily the PBCT food share can be run by volunteers and overseen by staff. The prescription runs and helpline will continue to be coordinated by staff however this will require reduced hours working on the Ritchie health care project. The group have concluded that these roles require too much commitment for a volunteer. Project Officer hours will be reduced from full time to part time and the Development Officer will pick up on her SCR work managing funding and administration where possible and prioritising answering inquiries for PPE.

#### **Prescription Services**

- Hope to continue with prescriptions but it's not that straightforward
- Prescription delivery will continue as long as the surgery requires this. All other services are part of a Church and pastoral care response anyway.
- We continue to offer to collect prescriptions/shopping for anyone who is in need. No funding

#### **Shopping and Transport**

- Some services. grocery element. small part of virtual village hall. volunteer delivery - not funded anymore free meals ended this week
- Shopping Transport to Inverness for dentist/doctor
- Shopping deliveries as long as required
- For as long as we still have a pool of volunteers we can offer shopping collection and delivery, dog walking, prescription collection & delivery and moral support by telephone.

#### **Help Line and Communications**

- We will continue to provide a link between those needing help and those offering
- Call line for any upcoming emergencies. the predicted cases of people having to self-isolate and the need for food provision. expected households who will be off furlough and may not have regular employment to return to, so helping those who will need food for families over the next few months. The funding will be from Highland Council in first instance

#### **Health and Social Care Services**

- Subject to funding we intend to continue long term with this work and are currently seeking suitable funding for a two to three year project working with different vulnerable groups.
- We're back to our regular core mental health service which is funded primarily through an agreement with NHS Highland, though this is currently under review and not straightforward.
- Access to community garden activities and public access to garden produce. Reintroduce members and public to community garden activities and sales of produce to the public. 2 days a week supervised opening until mid-December, very limited funds going into 2021

#### **Public Toilets and Community facilities**

- We will continue Covid-19 hygiene measures at least until 31/10/2020 in our community toilets, funded by the Highland Council Discretionary Fund and the North Highland Initiative. We are also applying for more funding for the toilets and to continue our food box scheme for vulnerable residents until 1/12/2020. Possible funding opportunity identified is the Response, Recovery and Resilience Fund. We are also aware of some of the appropriate funds that HIE will make available soon.
- Currently looking at how we support our community venues to re-open and further support to our community having just surveyed them - survey analysis currently taking place.

#### **Other Comments**

- Everything we currently do until funding or need is no longer
- Only if needed, some funds leftover from HIE

- For as long as required
- We have quietened down but ready available all the time for when anyone needs.
- We will continue with everything that we are doing 1) as long as it is needed and 2) as long as we have funding.
- Continue to until no longer required - run by volunteers so no funding required.
- I think it is unsure what type of needs there will be in the future but we intend to get involved
- as it appears another outbreak can present we will maintain support
- Hopefully not much beyond September as limited capacity for long term commitment, we still have funds for food vouchers for another month or so.
- We are a very small group of volunteers and many of us have returned to full-time work and don't have the capacity to run it at the same scale. We were also loaned growing space that we should give back now. We will remain active but not in the same way. Perhaps just taking on small projects when they arise.

## What support do groups require?

### Funding For Emergency Response And Core Activities

- Financial support to get the meal share back going. lots of community support so potentially not essential.
- Ongoing funding and community support Community support. Funding mainly from community events.
- Just funding and know we can apply for further funding. We are investigating developing a community fridge, which would be a growth of the food share project.
- Funding in support of costs of preparing, supplying and delivering ready meals
- Continued financial support, depending on how the winter evolves and whether a further lockdown occurs. The area has some very vulnerable people living remotely and with limited support network.
- Funds to operate a voucher scheme for groceries. We have just suspended this service but should Covid spike we may need to restart it. Expenses to help cover volunteer mileage costs.
- Funding
- Probably finance
- Funding, - currently looking for about £30,000.
- Funding support is the main thing
- We need core funding for staff!
- Sustainable funding for 12 months of 2021
- Apart from proper core funding we don't need anything - we're well established.
- Funding for the core befriending service to enable us to develop emergency planning and response with local areas
- Money and staff capacity.

### Resources and Support

- We need to be able to effectively identify groups who will benefit from our work.
- We need to have clear intended outcomes so hope to work closely with other local organisations to provide meaningful and useful services.
- Continuing of the clear guidance from the government that gets updated as things change
- Co-operation and volunteers.
- We need funding that is easy and quick to access to maintain and improve our staffing levels to carry on our work and respond to emergencies
- Support managing volunteers.
- Full time staff member for 1 year to pick up on coordinating volunteers to deliver services, administer funding, working with communication and marketing staff to share information. Potential for this role to be managed by a different organisation going forwards.
- General emotional and practical support

## Connecting to the Highland Council and other groups

35 groups said that through providing emergency response services they connect to the Highland Council and other groups.

### Working with Public Bodies

- Excellent partnership working with the local Hubs for the area
- Communication with the highland council has been excellent throughout. Weekly meetings at first and now monthly. Communication with other trust groups and community groups across Skye has increased greatly also.
- Biz Campbell, councillor, attends regular meetings of Lochalsh Collaboration/Community Response. Highland Council was directing people to our food voucher scheme.
- Dingwall Hub, GPs, Social Workers and Nurses were in contact with us as required.
- The whole system was run through the Highland Council. Things were pretty smoothly run.
- Did maybe feel initially that there was quite an expectation on the Charity and not a huge amount of support however as time moved on everyone appeared to become more confident in what they were doing and worked well together
- We discussed rolling out this work across more organisations with Highland Council and SLCVO. Very positive and we will now work with local groups to identify needs and how we can help.
- We were in contact with the Hub and a weekly meeting of groups providing support in our area, which reduced the risk of individuals slipping through the net. Overall, however, we felt less aware of other services and what they were doing. Not seeing people and with meetings generally not happening there was no grapevine - everyone seemed to be working away in their own Covid bubble.
- Co-operation with Highland Council, NHS Highland, HIE, Community Foodbank and other community groups throughout Skye, Raasay and near-mainland. Also to local businesses providing assistance FOC or at cost.

### Third Sector Partnerships and Networks

- We worked collaboratively with various local groups and organisations. We received funding from the Highland Council Discretionary Fund. Our Covid-19 group is listed in the Highland Third Sector Interface's Community Action Register.
- We give out food through agencies such as Social Work, Housing, NHS and voluntary organisations, other organisations in area could refer people in need.
- We could share garden produce with the local food bank and food share groups.
- Worked in partnership with Ullapool Community Hub, local growing group and UCT and set up a weekly zoom meeting across all partners so everyone worked together
- Lochalsh community trust help with finding/ newsletters and the food share project
- Skye Community Response was good. open communications. good to get other group's views. eg different food initiatives that did in different ways
- Linked with Skye Community Response and Skye and Lochalsh food bank to ensure any requests for local help were directed to local volunteers if that helped organisations or individuals.
- Regular calls with Skye Community Response
- We worked with the Portree & Braes Trust and the Skye Community response. Team work was amazing and is still going well
- Included in Community Leads meetings & heard what was happening around Skye. Included in Skye Community Response initiatives - such as sanitiser units & sanitiser
- Use of the general skye community facilities to promote information use of the prescription services
- Portree and Braes organised virtual meetings of community trusts. They also organised a delivery of sanitiser and masks which they shared out. Great to work with others
- The local group were able to help us with provision of PPE, sanitiser machine etc.
- SLCVO. only real point of contact. Didn't deal with council
- It was great to take part in the regular Zoom Meetings with other groups. Made new connections for other projects

- We regularly liaised with 2 other local groups and supported each other
- We (Lochewe Community Church) are working alongside the Aultbea Community council and a good working relationship and teamwork has built up over this time. This has also led to us being part of the wider Covid reaction and response group that is co-ordinated from Gairloch and involves three Community councils, Lochewe Community church and other relevant organisations.
- We worked together with the neighbouring group of Kilmuir as we had facilities for making meals and share the same grocery shop.
- It was fantastic to see groups pulling together. As a community member I also always felt confident that I or someone I knew would be looked after
- Brought the community closer together.
- Sense of community was great at the time. a lot of open-ness between people with all walks of life. increased knowledge of other services available that are out there.

### Groups who participated in the survey

- Applecross Coronavirus Community Support
- Aultbea community council
- Broadford and Strath Community Company
- Camuscross & Duisdale Initiative (An Crubh)
- Church of Scotland Parish Hub
- Community heart Kyle and Lochalsh
- Community heart, Broadford, Strath and Sleat
- Covid response recover rebuild-Gairloch area
- Edinbane covid help Skye community response,
- Elgol group
- Free Church Glenelg and Inverinate
- Gairloch and Loch Ewe Action Forum
- Garve & District Community Care - Covid19
- Get Ullapool Growing
- Glenelg Community Council and Free Church Glenelg and Inverinate
- Here 2 Help North West Skye
- Highland council Community Hub-Ullapool base
- Highland Council Food Delivery
- Kyleakin and Kylereah community council/ helping in Kyleakin
- Lochalsh Community Response
- Lochcarron Community Dev Co
- Lochewe Community Church working with Aultbea Community Council
- Lochside group
- Minginish Community Response Group
- Minginish Food Hub (Carbost Old Inn)
- Minignish Response Group
- Portree & Braes Community Council
- Portree and Braes Community Trust
- Raasay Community Resilience Group
- Sconser hub
- SEALL at Home
- Skye & Lochalsh young carers
- Skye and Lochalsh Mental Health Association
- Skye Community Response
- Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross Community Calls (SLCVO)
- Sleat Community Trust
- Staffin Helpers
- Strath and Sleat Church Group
- The Community Foodbank Skye and Lochalsh
- The Glendale Trust
- Uig Helpers
- Ullapool parish hub
- Viewfield Garden Collective



## Third Sector Support

Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross

### **Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations**

Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations are core funded by the Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI) to support community groups across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross. We bring together and provide free support to groups and communities across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross, including:

- Help with funding applications
- Recruitment and support of volunteers
- Developing volunteering best practice
- Covid-19 back to operation checks and risk assessments
- Setting-up and running of groups
- Training and capacity development
- Community development, engagement and consultations
- Connecting third sector groups to local planning structures

If you would like to talk to us to see how we can support your group or community initiative call 01478 612921 or email [info@slcvo.org.uk](mailto:info@slcvo.org.uk).

Visit our website [www.slvo.org.uk](http://www.slvo.org.uk) for online support, Covid-19 guidance and project information

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