

SKYE AND LOCHALSH COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

Annual Report

April 2024 – March 2025



Contents

CHAIR’S REPORT	2
STAFF UPDATES AND TRANSITIONS	2
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW	2
SLCVO SERVICES AND PROJECTS	3
THIRD SECTOR SUPPORT SKYE & LOCHALSH	3
BEFRIENDERS SKYE AND LOCHALSH	3
SKYE & LOCHALSH HEALTH, WELLBEING, WELFARE AND SOCIAL CARE COLLABORATION.....	3
SKYE AND RAASAY FUTURE (SARF).....	3
SLCVO 2024-2025 OVERVIEW	4
MEETING OUR CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES	5
PROMOTION OF CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY.....	5
PROMOTION OF VOLUNTEERING.....	6
PROMOTION OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR	6
PROMOTION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OR EFFICIENCY OF THIRD SECTOR GROUPS AND CHARITIES.....	7
ADVANCEMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	7
RURAL REGENERATION	7
PUBLIC BENEFIT	8
ABOUT SKYE AND LOCHALSH CVO	9
TRUSTEES	9
STAFF.....	9
SLCVO MEMBERS (AS OF 06 OCTOBER 2025).....	9

Chair's Report

Siobhan Barker

This year, SLCVO continued to champion community development and civic engagement across Skye and Lochalsh. We led strategic initiatives such as the Skye and Raasay Future (SARF) Plan and the Empower Skye & Lochalsh Programme, amplifying the voice of the third sector in local planning.

Our Befrienders Service supported vulnerable individuals, while our volunteering outreach strengthened community participation. We provided tailored support to over 80 organisations, hosted key forums, and advanced rural regeneration through collaborative projects like the Skye & Lochalsh Health, Wellbeing, Welfare and Social Care Collaboration.

Staff Updates and Transitions

In August 2024, we were delighted to welcome back Michelle Seviour as our Research and Engagement Officer for the Skye and Lochalsh Health, Wellbeing and Welfare Collaboration. Michelle brings a wealth of experience and insight to the team, and we are excited to have her rejoin us.

In November 2024, we said a very sad goodbye to Sammy-Jo McArthur, who had worked with SLCVO for almost ten years. During her time with us, Sammy-Jo became a highly valued member of staff. She obtained a Higher Education Diploma in Community Development from Dundee University, played a key role in establishing the Befrienders service, and led our sector support services with dedication and passion.

To continue the work of the Befrienders service, we recruited Matthew Davis in January 2025. Matthew has quickly become a key member of the team, taking the lead in reviewing and redesigning the Befrienders service to better meet the needs of our community.

As many of you may know, our Chief Officer, Jo-Anne Ford, was diagnosed with breast cancer earlier this year. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Michelle and Matthew for their unwavering support to Jo-Anne and the Board during her treatment.

Financial Overview

SLCVO managed its finances carefully this year, securing £65,946 in new funding for the Empower Skye and Lochalsh Programme, strengthening our position.

Total income was £164,207, up from last year due to early payments and cost savings. The Highland Third Sector Interface grant was £57,431, slightly lower than last year. Member donations totalled £798, and rental income was £11,355.

We've allocated £100,600 to ensure stability beyond March 2025:

- £54,000 for six months' operating costs
- £18,000 for potential redundancies
- £15,600 for staff sick pay
- £13,000 for closure-related costs

Additional reserves include:

- £63,935 in restricted funds
- £44,253 in fixed assets
- £79,318 in unrestricted funds

SLCVO Services and Projects

Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations (SLCVO) is a community development organisation dedicated to supporting the social, health and community wellbeing of Skye and Lochalsh. With 4 key areas of activity, we provide support services to communities and groups, enhancing third sector capacity and collaboration.

Third Sector Support Skye & Lochalsh

As the rural delivery partner for the Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI), we provide free, tailored support to third sector organisations across Skye and Lochalsh. Our mission is to strengthen community groups, charities, and social enterprises by offering expert guidance and practical tools to help them thrive.

We support organisations at every stage of their journey, with services including:

- **Starting-up:** Free toolkits and one-to-one support to form a new group
- **Governance & Legal Structures:** Guidance on constitutions, legal forms, and compliance.
- **Organisational Development:** Group health checks and support to clarify purpose and powers.
- **Community Engagement:** Helping you connect with your community and identify local needs.
- **Strategic Planning:** Board development and long-term planning support.
- **Funding Guidance:** Exploring funding opportunities and strengthening funding applications.
- **Crisis Support:** Assistance during challenging times (excluding mediation in broader conflicts).
- **Best Practice Coaching:** Practical advice and mentoring to improve operations.
- **Community Planning Insights:** Understanding the wider Highland planning landscape.

Befrienders Skye and Lochalsh

A volunteer-led befriending service run by SLCVO, with support from Highland Hospice and NHS Highland. Tailored to individual needs, the service offers companionship through home visits, regular phone calls, and hospital befriending, helping to reduce isolation and build meaningful connections.

Skye & Lochalsh Health, Wellbeing, Welfare and Social Care Collaboration

The Skye and Lochalsh Health, Wellbeing, Welfare and Social Care (HWWS) Collaboration is a transformative three-year initiative led by SLCVO, designed to reshape how health and social care services are developed and delivered across the region. In response to the unique challenges faced by rural communities—such as fragmented services, short-term funding, and limited development support—the collaboration brings together third sector and public sector partners to co-produce sustainable, community-led solutions that reflect local needs and priorities.

Skye and Raasay Future (SARF)

Skye & Raasay Future (SARF) is the region's Area Place Plan, launched in 2021 to set out shared priorities for development, services, and investment. Co-created with communities, public sector bodies, and third sector organisations, SARF ensures that local voices shape decision-making and that resources are aligned with community needs. The SARF Delivery Programme is managed by Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations (SLCVO), which supports the SARF Board and helps coordinate community-led development across the region.

SLCVO 2024-2025 Overview



Volunteering Support

- Delivered 37 episodes of volunteer support.
- Supported 18 individuals to engage in volunteering
- Held 5 online networking sessions for volunteer coordinators.
- Delivered monthly outreach sessions in Broadford and Kyle.
- Hosted 6 volunteer drop-in sessions at Portree Library
- Delivered 312 hours of befriending support to 26 individuals



Third Sector Support

- Delivered 273 episodes of 1:1 support to 84 third sector organisations.
- Hosted a Third Sector Conference: with over 70 participants.
- Third Sector Profile: Mapped over 368 local organisations.
- Engagement: Consulted with 210 groups, including outreach to under-represented organisations.
- Held 18 collaboration meetings
- Participation: Attended 31 meetings to advocate for the third sector.



Community Development

- SLCVO became the support body and delivery coordinator for the Area place Plan the Skye and Raasay Future (SARF) and Board
- Enabled inclusive, community-led development through developing and leading the Skye and Lochalsh Health, Wellbeing, Welfare and Social Care (HWWS) Collaboration
- Facilitated community development through:
 - Lochalsh Collaboration Meetings
 - Childcare Crisis Workshops
 - Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross Drug & Alcohol Forum



Advocacy & Engagement

- Participated in national consultations (e.g., Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's Shaping Our Future Service).
- Joined the steering group for the Wind Farm Community Benefits Fund.
- Attended the Human Rights Defenders Community Empowerment event in Portree.
- Supported 7 local groups to present lived experiences to the Scottish Parliament's Health, Social Care and Sport Committee.
- Participated in NHS ighlland Place-Based Commissioning events

Meeting our Charitable Objectives

Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations objects are the advancement of citizenship and community development within Highland including:

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

Promotion of Civic Responsibility

Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations promotes civic responsibility by encouraging and facilitating engagement with local planning and political processes and delivering services that foster social inclusion, community engagement, and mutual support.

In 2024/25, we played a key role in amplifying the voice of the third sector across Skye and Lochalsh, ensuring local organisations and communities were represented in strategic planning and policy discussions. We took on a leadership role in regional planning through our management of the Skye and Raasay Future (SARF) Plan, supporting the SARF Board to embed inclusive, community-led approaches and strengthen third sector participation in local decision-making.

We also:

- Supported community engagement with national consultations, including the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's *Shaping Our Future Service*.
- Advocated for broader third sector involvement in the development of a new Wind Farm Community Benefits Fund, securing a place on the steering group and pushing for more inclusive funding criteria.

- Participated in health and social care discussions, including a roundtable on children and young people's mental health, and supported NHS Highland's efforts to involve local groups in urgent care and communications sub-groups.
- Facilitated the participation of seven local groups to share lived experiences and highlight funding and service delivery challenges in rural healthcare to the Scottish Parliament's Health, Social Care and Sport Committee.
- Attended the Human Rights Defenders Community Empowerment event in Portree, contributing to discussions on rights-based approaches to local service delivery.

We continued to deliver the Befrienders Skye and Lochalsh Service, supported by the Highland Hospice, and completed the final year of our pilot project supporting individuals transitioning from hospital to home. This service plays a vital role in promoting civic responsibility by:

- Encouraging Social Inclusion - The service supports individuals particularly at risk of loneliness or isolation. Through regular companionship and social engagement, it helps people feel valued and remain connected to their communities.
- Preventing Social Exclusion - By targeting individuals who are vulnerable due to age, health, or social circumstances, the service helps them stay engaged and independent, reducing the risk of marginalisation.
- Fostering Community Values - Befrienders, all of whom are volunteers, model empathy, compassion, and civic engagement. Their involvement builds a culture of mutual support and reinforces the principle that communities thrive when people care for one another.

- Reducing Emergency Interventions - Early intervention through befriending helps address loneliness and mental health challenges, reducing the likelihood of crisis situations that could lead to emergency interventions.

In the latter half of the year, we experienced service disruption due to the departure of our coordinator and delays in recruitment, which were caused by uncertainty around funding beyond March 2026. Recruitment resumed in February 2025 following confirmation of a further three years of funding from NHS Highland. The newly appointed coordinator focused on rebuilding relationships and re-establishing key partnerships. Despite this, we maintained service delivery, providing approximately 312 hours of befriending support to 26 individuals over the year.

Promotion of Volunteering

Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations actively promotes the value and practice of volunteering across Skye and Lochalsh by supporting individuals and organisations to engage meaningfully in volunteer activity.

In 2024/25, we:

- Facilitated five online networking sessions for volunteer coordinators, providing a space to share challenges, best practices, and ideas for volunteer recruitment and retention.
- Delivered monthly outreach sessions in Broadford and Kyle, offering in-person support to groups seeking to develop or expand their volunteer programmes.
- Promoted volunteering opportunities through our digital channels, including social media, newsletters, and direct communications with local groups.
- Delivered six volunteer drop-in session at Portree Library.
- Supported volunteer-involving organisations (VIOs) by offering guidance on volunteer management, recruitment strategies, and inclusive practices.

Although some initiatives, such as the Portree Library drop-ins, were discontinued due to low

uptake, our targeted promotion and networking activities helped promote volunteering and champion volunteering as a vital part of community life. We provided 37 episodes of volunteer support to third sector organisations through a 1:1 and networking opportunities. Additionally, we helped 18 individuals engage with volunteering activities, contributing to increased community participation and strengthened local capacity.

Promotion of the Voluntary Sector

Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations promotes the voluntary sector by acting as a knowledge hub, supporting networks and partnerships, representing sector interests in strategic planning, and encouraging wider community participation, particularly among under-represented groups.

In 2024/25, we strengthened our role as a knowledge hub for the third sector through the development and publication of the 2025 Skye and Lochalsh Third Sector Profile, which mapped over 368 local organisations and identified key service gaps and opportunities. This work was informed by extensive engagement with 210 groups and targeted outreach to under-represented/ harder to reach organisations.

We also launched the Empower Skye and Lochalsh Programme, which includes two strategic projects:

- Management of the Skye and Raasay Future (SARF) Plan, positioning us as the support body for the SARF Board and leading on delivery coordination.
- Development of the HWWS Collaboration, focused on co-producing health, wellbeing, welfare, and social care services with local third sector partners.

Throughout the year, we contributed to advocate for and promote the third sector in strategic forums (31 meetings) including the Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross Community Partnership, the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme Partnership group, the Sir Lewis Ritchie Implementation Group and NHS Highland local District Planning Group, ensuring a better understanding of the impact and role of the third sector in service delivery and community development.

Promotion of the Effectiveness or Efficiency of third sector groups and Charities

Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations helps to promote the effectiveness or efficiency of third sector groups and charities by supporting third sector groups to be well-governed, resilient, and better equipped to deliver high-quality services to their communities.

In 2024/25, we supported the improvement of local charities by delivering 273 episodes of 1:1 support to 84 third sector organisations. These included strengthening governance, coaching Boards around issues and good practice, conflict of interest management, improving access to funding, support for strategic planning, organisational health checks and crisis support.

We also:

- Shared best practices and sector updates through monthly bulletins, social media, and direct communications.
- Facilitated networking and collaboration via regular outreach sessions, quarterly Lochalsh Collaboration meetings, and the Third Sector Conference, which brought together over 70 participants. (18 meetings)
- The launch of the Empower Skye and Lochalsh Programme, which aims to improve access to funding, training, and development opportunities as well as promoting shared learning and strategic development.
- Hosted outreach sessions and online volunteer coordinator networking, which provided ongoing support and peer learning.
- Sharing information on consultations, funding, training, and legislation changes to help organisations stay informed and adaptable.

Advancement of Community Development

Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations supports community development by empowering individuals and groups to identify local needs and take action. Our work includes building partnerships between the third sector and

public bodies, promoting participation in decision-making, particularly among under-represented groups, and providing infrastructure such as outreach sessions, shared spaces, and digital communications.

In 2024/25, we played a vital role in enabling communities across Skye and Lochalsh to identify and address their own needs. Through initiatives such as the Empower Skye and Lochalsh Programme, the Skye and Raasay Future (SARF) Plan, and the HWWS Collaboration, we supported inclusive, community-led development and helped local groups shape priorities around health, wellbeing and social care.

We strengthened local partnerships by hosting and participating in strategic forums such as the Lochalsh Collaboration Meetings, Childcare Crisis Workshops the Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross Drug & Alcohol Forum, and the Place-Based Commissioning event. These platforms brought together third sector organisations, public bodies, and community representatives to align efforts and advocate for shared priorities in community planning structures.

Rural Regeneration

Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations contributes to rural regeneration by supporting community-led planning and addressing the social and economic challenges faced by communities across Skye and Lochalsh—areas where geographic isolation, limited services, and economic fragility contribute to ongoing social decline. Our work aligns with the definition of regeneration as the process of reversing economic and social decline.

In 2024/25, we delivered regeneration-focused activity through initiatives such as the Empower Skye and Lochalsh Programme, the Skye and Raasay Future (SARF) Plan, and the HWWS Collaboration. These programmes enabled communities to identify local challenges—such as Demographic Pressures, Fragmented Services and Under-resourced organisations—and take practical steps to address them. One key issue identified was the inequalities in access to health and social care services, particularly in our most rural areas. Geographic barriers—including long

travel times, limited public transport, and poor digital connectivity—make it difficult for many residents to access essential support.

In response, we are supporting the development of a Family Outreach Hub, a community-led, multi-agency initiative designed to tackle improve access to early intervention services. This project exemplifies how local groups are leading change by identifying needs and co-producing solutions that directly address rural social decline and improve quality of life.

Public Benefit

The activities of Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations (SLCVO) deliver substantial public benefit by fostering inclusive community development, strengthening the voluntary sector, and promoting civic engagement

across Skye and Lochalsh. Through initiatives such as the Empower Skye and Lochalsh Programme, the Befrienders Service, and strategic involvement in planning forums, we empower local groups to identify and address community needs, enhances access to essential services, and supports vulnerable individuals. Our work in promoting volunteering and improving the governance and sustainability of third sector organisations ensures that public resources are used effectively and that services are responsive, resilient, and community-led. By facilitating collaboration, sharing knowledge, and advocating for under-represented voices, Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations contributes to a more connected, equitable, and empowered society—clearly aligning with our charitable purpose of promoting civic responsibility and advancing community development

About Skye and Lochalsh CVO

Trustees

- Siobhan Barker, chair - joined SLCVO's board in November 2021
- Clive Pearson, Vice Chair - joined SLCVO's board in November 2006.
- 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 2021
- Peter Urquhart- joined SLCVO's board in September 1997, resigned 01/025/2025
- Gordon Higgins – joined SLCVO's board in April 2016, resigned 29/10/2024
- Calum Munro - joined SLCVO's board in December 2020, resigned 01/05/2025

Staff

- 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

SLCVO Members (as of 06 October 2025)

As a Scottish Registered Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee SLCVO's Board of Trustees is made up of representatives from our membership. We have 139 members representing the third sector in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross and six individual members.

- Achmore Community Hall Association
- Advocacy Highland (Skye & Lochalsh)
- An Comunn Gaidhealach – Skye Branch (Local Mod)
- Applecross Community hall
- Ardvasar Community Hall Association
- Arnisdale and Loch Hourn Community Association
- ATLAS Arts
- Aultbea Community Hub
- Balmacara Community Trust
- Bracadale and Duirinish Church of Scotland
- Braes Village Hall
- Breakish Community Trust CIC
- Breakish Village Hall
- Broadford & Strath Community Company
- Broadford & Strath Community Council
- Camuscross and Duisdale Initiative
- Carbost Pier Ltd
- Care and Learning (Family First)
- Clan Donald Lands trust
- Comunn Eachdraidh Shleite (Sleat Local History)
- Connecting Carers
- Counselling Care Skye and Lochalsh
- Crossroads Care Skye & Lochalsh

- Dornie Community Hall
- Duirinish Media and Culture Club
- Duirinish Youth Club
- Dunvegan Community Council
- Dunvegan Community Hall Association
- Dunvegan Community Trust / Urras Sgìre Dhunbheagan
- Edinbane Community Company
- Edinbane Community Hall
- Eilean Ban Trust
- Fas Mor
- Feisean Nan Gaidheal
- Friends of An Acarsaid Care Home SC 054151
- Friends of Arms
- Friends Of Portree Hospital
- Fuaran nan Ealan
- Gairloch & Loch Ewe Action Forum
- Gairloch Community Car Scheme
- Glendale Community Hall Association
- Glendale Trust
- Glenelg & Arnisdale Community hall
- individual member - Susan MacVicar
- Individual Member of SLCVO
- Individual Member of SLCVO
- Individual Member of SLCVO
- Individual Member of SLCVO
- Individual Member of SLCVO
- Individual Member of SLCVO
- Isle of Skye Accordion & Fiddle Club
- Isle of Skye Ferry CIC
- Isle of Skye Renewables Co-op
- Kilmore Church
- Kilmuir Community Council
- Kilmuir Community Trust
- Kingsburgh Forest Trust
- Kyle & Lochalsh Community Trust
- Kyle village hall
- Kyleakin Community Hall Association
- Kyleakin Connections Limited aka Skye & Lochalsh Association for Disability
- Lochaber Hope
- Lochalsh & Skye Swimming Pool Association
- Lochalsh Community Council
- Lochalsh Trails Club
- Lochalsh Youth Community Trust
- Lochcarron Camanachd
- Lochcarron Sailing Club
- Marie Curie Skye and Lochalsh Fund Raising Group
- Minginish Community Council
- Minginish Community Hall Association
- Network Tuesdays

- Plockton Community Council
- Plockton Harbour CIC
- Plockton Historical Society
- Plockton Village Hall
- Portree & Braes Community Trust
- Portree and Bracadale Free Church of Scotland
- Portree Angling Association
- Portree Community Centre
- Portree Community Pantomime Group
- Portree District Gaelic Choir
- Portree Local History Society
- Portree Moorings Association
- Portree Nursery Ltd
- Portree Youth Club
- Raasay Community Council
- Raasay House community Company
- Rag Tag and Textile Ltd
- Rionnagan Beaga Dhunbheagain
- Royal Scottish Country Dance Society - Skye Branch
- Sconser Community Council
- Scottish Crofting Federation
- SEALL Community Arts
- Skeabost Bridge Indoor Bowling Club
- Skeabost Memorial Hall Association
- Skye & Lochalsh Citizens Advice Bureau
- Skye & Lochalsh Community Care Forum (Young Carers)
- Skye & Lochalsh Disabled Ramblers
- Skye & Lochalsh Environment Forum
- Skye & Lochalsh Food Link CIC
- Skye Agricultural Society
- Skye and Lochalsh Mental Health Association
- Skye Autism Support
- Skye Beach Clean
- Skye Bible Church
- Skye Camanachd
- Skye Cancer Care
- Skye Chamber Music
- Skye for All
- Skye Girl Guiding
- Skye Nature Group
- Skye Older Peoples Welfare Committee SCIO
- Skye Stroke Friends
- Skye Youth Pipe Band
- Skye, Lochalsh and Lochcarron Indoor Bowling Association
- SkyeDance
- Sluggans Woodland Park
- South Skye Community Campus
- South Skye Mens Shed
- South West Ross Community Car Scheme

- St Columba's Episcopal Church: Portree
- Staffin Community Hall Association
- Staffin Community Trust
- Strath Gaelic Choir
- Struan Community Council
- Struan community trust
- Tarskavaig Communities Hall Association
- The Friends of Broadford Hospital
- The MacAskill's of Rubh' an Dunain Society
- The Macular Society
- Uig Community Hall Association
- Uig Community Trust
- Ullapool Community Trust Limited
- Ullapool Youth Club
- Viewfield Garden Collective SCIO
- 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



Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations, a charity registered in Scotland number SC013885,
A company limited by guarantee SC177372 Tigh Lisigarry, Bridge Road Portree Isle of Skye IV51 9ER
Email: info@slcvo.org.uk Tel: 01478 612921