

Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations Review and Third Sector Requirements - April 2020 to March 2021

The Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI) is commissioned by the Scottish Government to support the Highland third sector through the delivery of four outcomes.

1. The understanding of the impact and diversity of activity delivered by the Third Sector in Highland will be improved.
2. Influence and impact on policy and decisions in Highland will be expanded and developed from common sector-wide based understanding
3. Opportunities for collaboration, networking and co-production will be improved and expanded
4. Third Sector organisations in Highland will better informed of opportunities for development, engagement and influence

Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations are HTSI's delivery Partner in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross. We provide support in developing the capacity of third sector groups, volunteer management and facilitating a strong third sector voice in community planning. To ensure the services we deliver meet the needs of the local third sector we have carried out two service review/engagement activities. The first was a Covid-19 Community Response and Resilience Survey in October 2020, the second Skye and Lochalsh Service Review Survey in March 2021.

Covid-19 Community Response and Resilience Survey October 2020

The Covid-19 Community Response and Resilience Survey was run in partnership with the Highland Council and High Life Highland as part of the Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross CLD Network. Its purpose was 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.

43 groups responded to the survey of which:

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

Services provided include:

- Telephone helpline / Information sharing
- Prescription / shopping delivery
- Food bank/food share/growers hub
- Food or meals delivery
- Food/fuel vouchers
- Telephone befriending
- Care packages and children/youth activity packs

Support requirements:

- Funding for activities and staff
- Help to identify funding opportunities.
- Support to effectively identify groups who will benefit from a groups work.
- Support to develop clear intended outcomes to facilitate working with other local organisations to provide meaningful and useful services
- Co-operation and volunteers.
- Support managing volunteers.
- Continuing of the clear guidance from the government that gets updated as things change
- General emotional and practical support

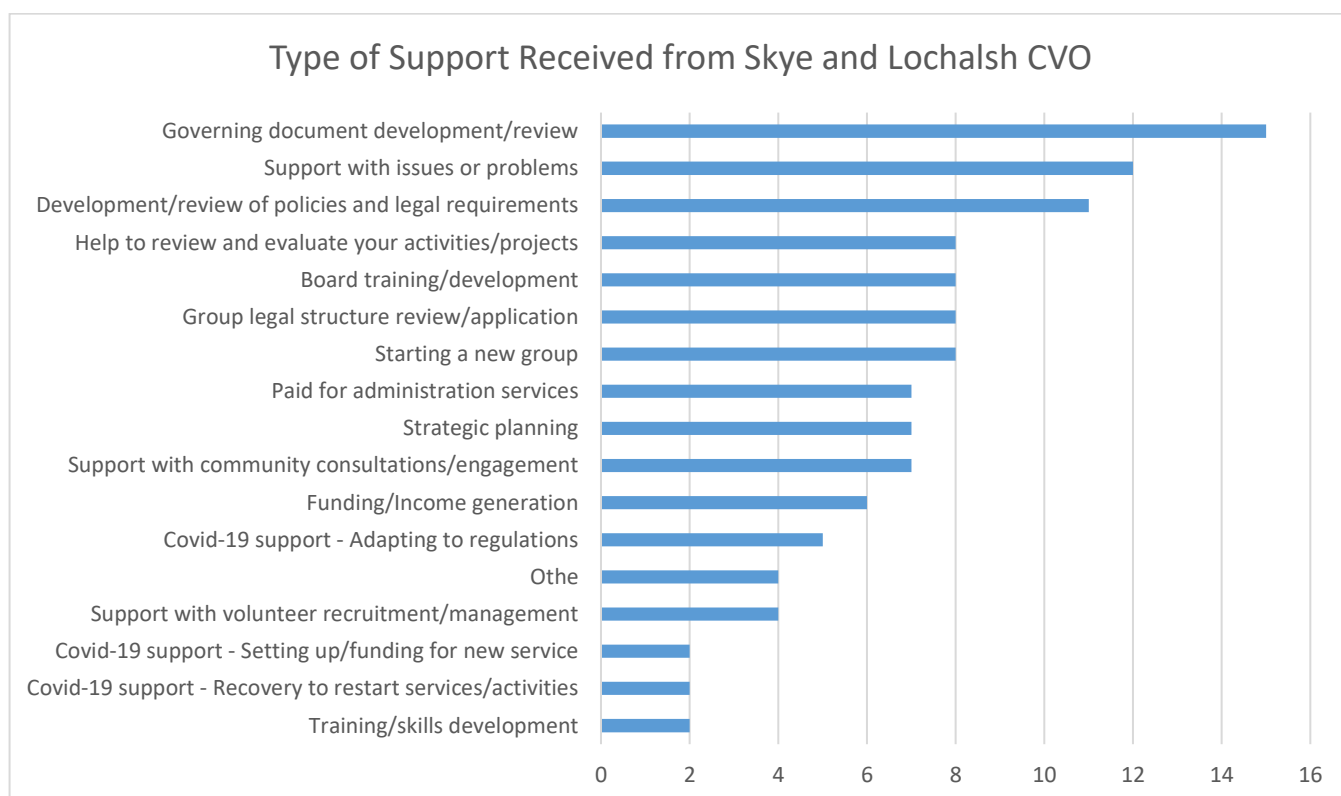
For a copy of the full report please mail jo.ford@slcvo.org.uk

Skye and Lochalsh CVO Service Review March 2021

The Skye and Lochalsh CVO Service Review survey was shared with SLCVO members, groups who had revived support in the last 12 months and via community and third sector social media pages across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross.

55 groups participated in the survey of which 60% had used SLCVO services in the last 12 months.

- 93% of groups using SLCVO services described the service they received as excellent, 7% as good
- 74% of respondents said they felt they were kept informed about funding, training, events, consultations and forums.
- 75% of respondents said they felt they have the opportunity to be involved in local and regional community planning and co-production processes



General comments about SLCVL from survey participants

- We think you are doing an amazing job in the most challenging of times
- Always very welcoming in the Portree office. Grateful for this valued service on our doorstep
- SLCVO provides an incredible resource for the huge number of voluntary organisations in the area and we greatly appreciate the support they have given.
- Thank you for all the support particularly during a crisis such as COVID
- Their services have been critical to the continuation of our club over the last three years.
- I am unable to suggest improvements at this time, but certainly the service must be maintained and properly funded as it is invaluable for small charities.
- Just keep doing what you do and make sure we have a local branch

We asked groups what worked well in their interactions with Skye and Lochalsh CVO

- Our group was developed to our needs and our governing document tailored exactly to us rather than a boiler plate approach. That attention to detail and desire to understand is often lacking in these situations. Not so as SLCVO.
- The amount of help, advice, guidance and the approachability of staff was exemplary.
- The fact that there is a local branch means you can pick up the phone and know who you are going to speak to. They know you and your organisation and understand your issues. Its quick its easy and very solution focused.
- The lovely friendly faces with fantastic knowledge base. When I started out as Project Officer they were one of my first stops and as I continue in my role they are a support when questions arise.
- SLCVO are very friendly and approachable
- Friendly, professional, knowledgeable
- Very informative and friendly service.
- Openness, level of Professionalism, Knowledge & support
- Staff expertise, quick and enthusiastic response and willingness to advise
- Very quick to respond, efficient, very approachable and has presented effective solutions to problems in a clear and concise manner.
- Personal input from SLCVO staff
- The small group of staff are very friendly, and efficient with a detailed understanding of our requirements as a group.
- Quick response, I have never used them before and emailed to ask something. The response and information was great
- staff always available and very knowledgeable about what we needed
- SLCVO extensive knowledge
- Really supportive. Wanted to really learn who we are as a community group. Could offer signposting and ideas.
- Clear communication
- Explaining processes in layman's terms to me, responsiveness to enquiries
- Great support in getting is started as a trust.
- Help we received for interpreting Articles of Association, following correct procedures, developing policies and dealing with issues.
- It was bespoke, practical help and the support was not just given to us. It was SLCVO coming alongside at particular points to give us the benefits of their experience to direct us.
- Knowing they are there for advice and provide good value admin

We asked groups what could have been improved in their interactions with Skye and Lochalsh CVO

- Face to face
- Organise more training session for volunteers, trustees and those that train/recruit volunteers. More info on volunteering benefits for communities. Why local groups need volunteers/trustees. And best procedures for recruiting volunteers.
- Perhaps more pro-active advice on access to grant funding
- Sometimes it can take a while to access services
- Speed of reply was often a few days, whilst for some that isn't that long at all but I am very much a reply by return kind of person so get frustrated by waiting. But quite honestly this isn't an end of the world criticism especially with all the work that has been down this year in exceptionally difficult and challenging times.
- The service is impeccable what could be better is a wider knowledge of just how much SLCVO can offer!!!
- We couldn't have asked for any more.
- We have no suggestions as the service provided has gone beyond our expectations.

We asked groups to identify areas where we could improve our services and their support requirements. Feedback and suggestions have been grouped into three areas for review.

Improve Communications

- Ensuring that every single group understands the scope of the service available to them.
- Helping more groups
- Keep raising its own profile and services on offer
- As with many other groups an email to the office as opposed to reliance on Social Media would be useful.
- By sending information to an email account. This may have been going to a committee member that is not on the committee now!
- Holding meetings, newsletters,
- Not sure whether the information is being sent to our organisation. Email updates would be helpful.
- Regular email mail-outs?
- Regular emails, social media information
- Sending out information regarding this. Email, newsletters.
- I am not sure if you provide a regular newsletter but if you do we would like to receive it.
- Not sure as it is hard to keep up with all the information that arrives in eg in boxes and SM...I guess you just have to keep sending it out. Its probably been harder because of COVID.

Direct Support and Training

- Assist with funding applications
- Some assistance for new groups who are struggling with volunteer overload
- As an organisation we now need to carry out some research into what would be of benefit to our communities, and evaluate the work we are already doing to see how that can be improved and developed going forward as we emerge from Covid. Any help or advice in this regard would be most welcome.
- More training opportunities in for groups the area. Either online and in person.
- Further website development training
- I am sure it is available but some help with e.g. child protection courses or any other Trust operational policies.
- Training from SLCVO and other providers like volunteer Scotland, disclosure Scotland and social enterprise academy or sessions where info/processes can be shared.
- Increased staff availability
- We are not in the Skye and Lochalsh area although we have common issues and we do work together very effectively but we are peripheral to their main area.

Community Planning and Co-production

- I haven't heard of any of the above events (in relation to Community Planning and Co-production processes)
- I struggle to see what this process brings to people at the community level (in relation to Community Planning and Co-production processes)
- More information on how to go about this, who to contact, ask pre meeting if anything groups would like to be discussed. How do community councils work and how to get involved in making changes in local community Council. How do you get on local community council. (in relation to Community Planning and Co-production processes)
- We have never been asked to contribute to local and regional community planning, but equally we have never asked either! We would certainly welcome the opportunity to be heard and to find out how we and the performing arts can be part of the wellbeing recovery of the area and identify other groups who could benefit from our outreach work.
- Perhaps as a young Community Trust and because of Covid-19 we've not had the experience of involvement in local or regional community planning.

Skye and Lochalsh CVO Services in 2021/2022

From survey findings, we have identified 4 areas of development to improve Third Sector support in 2021/22:

- **Promotion and delivery of SLCVO Services** - To increase awareness of SLCVO services and improve access to them we will:
 - Promote activities and services in local newspapers, community newsletters, radio and social media
 - Develop an online appointment booking/enquiry system reducing the need for back-and-forth emails and speeding-up reply from initial enquiries
 - Facilitate online and, when possible, direct opportunities to meet with third sector groups across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross
- **Production of a monthly Third Sector Bulletin** - During Covid SLCVO produced a quarterly update and sent regular emails to targeted groups however, the reach and content of these needs to be improved. To support this we will produce a monthly email bulletin. This will include information about:
 - Funding opportunities
 - Community planning and co-production opportunities,
 - Training and events and
 - Third sector good practice, research and regulatory change
- **Provision of training** – To improve the range of opportunities and access to training we will:
 - Work with the Third Sector Networks to identify training and development requirements.
 - work with the HTSI, rural delivery partners and other organisations to deliver capacity building and skills development opportunities
 - Promote capacity building, skills development, funding and other development opportunities
 - Update SLCVO's online Community Toolkit with new articles and links to other training providers
- **Development of Third Sector networks** - To better connect the third sector and support two way communications with local, regional and national community planning processes we will set-up and run two third sector networks for Skye and Raasay and Lochalsh and Wester Ross. These networks will:
 - Connect third sector groups in geographical areas to identify and facilitate opportunities for collaboration, networking and co-production
 - Connect community groups of interest across the area to identify and facilitate opportunities for collaboration, networking and co-production
 - Be a tool for input into the HTSI third sector representation pathways
 - Provide information about regulatory change and guidance (Covid-19, GDPR, Health and Safety etc)
 - Identify and develop local capacity building initiatives

We will continue to deliver activities that support HTSI's core services including:

- **Supporting the third sector to deliver well governed, sustainable and quality services** through:
 - Providing 1:1 and crisis support for groups
 - Supporting new groups in their set-up and development
 - Supporting established groups with organisational health checks and planning
 - Signposting and promoting specialist services, funding, events and training opportunities
- **Supporting active citizenship and volunteering** through:
 - Promoting local volunteer opportunities
 - Signposting and referring volunteers to opportunities
 - Providing an enhanced volunteer matching services
 - Supporting third sector groups in the attainment of Volunteer Friendly Awards
 - Delivering Saltire Youth Volunteering Awards
- **Supporting third sector organisations to influence public policy and community planning** through:
 - Facilitating third sector participation in community planning opportunities
 - Developing opportunities for collaboration, networking and co-production
 - Keeping the third sector informed of opportunities for development, engagement and influence

Our 2021/22 work plan for Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross supports the delivery of HTSIs four outcomes and combines the areas for development identified by our service users.

- **To improve the understanding of the impact and diversity of Third Sector activity SLWR we will:**
 - Develop two Third Sector networks
 - Produce a monthly Third Sector bulletin
 - Develop and maintain the intelligence gathered in SLCVO's Third Sector database
 - Work with the HTSI to develop and promote a Highland Third Sector census
 - Develop SLCVO's Third Sector area profiles
 - Promote the use of database intelligence and third sector profiles
 - Co-ordinate and promote Volunteers Week and other third sector celebration activities/events
 - Use SLCVO Third Sector Networks to develop support for those managing or supervising volunteers
- **To support third sector Influence and impact on policy and decisions we will:**
 - Develop and share information about policy and decision making processes and how communities, the third sector and citizens can participate
 - Promote and support local, national and regional consultations where third sector participation is sought
 - Work with the public sector to facilitate third sector contribution
 - Support the third sector to participate in policy and community planning processes
 - Consult the third sector in the development/improvement of SLCVO and HTSI support services
- **To improved and expanded opportunities for collaboration, networking and co-production we will**
 - Manage and promote SLCVO Third Sector Networks to public and third sector
 - Support third sector groups with community and stakeholder engagement
 - Share minutes from relevant activities/meetings
 - Develop and share information about co-production processes and how communities, the third sector and citizens can participate
 - Promote collaboration, networking and co-production opportunities/activities
 - Work with the public sector to facilitate third sector contribution
 - Support the third sector to participate in co-production processes
- **To ensure Third Sector organisations in SLWR are better informed of and have more opportunities for development, engagement and influence we will:**
 - Support and facilitate opportunities for the third sector to collaborate and work together
 - Support third sector community engagement
 - Promote SLCVO, HTSI and rural delivery partner services
 - Develop an online appointment booking/enquiry system reducing the need for back-and-forth emails and speeding-up reply from initial enquiries
 - Facilitate online and, when possible, direct opportunities to meet with third sector groups across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross
 - Work with the Third Sector Networks to identify training and development requirements.
 - Work with the HTSI, rural delivery partners and other organisations to deliver training, capacity building and skills development opportunities
 - Promote capacity building, skills development, funding and other development opportunities
 - Update SLCVO's online Community Toolkit with new articles and links to other training providers
 - Develop a Trustee Mentoring Programme for young people (under 25) with 4/5 established Charities
 - Share information about third sector good practice, learning, research and regulatory change
- **To mitigate the impact of Covid-19 and provide support to communities responding to it we will:**
 - Support the HTSI Resilience Network
 - Share information about Covid-19 restrictions and recovery levels and how this affects the third sector
 - Support groups in the development of Risk Assessments and recovery plans
 - Run a campaign to help covid emergency response groups to formalise and if relevant encourage participation in the HTSI Resilience Network

SLCVO Skye and Lochalsh Council
for Voluntary Organisations

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