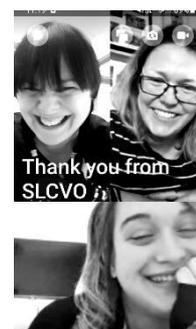


# SKYE AND LOCHALSH COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS



## Annual Report

April 2020 – March 2021

# Chairman's Report

PETER URQUHART

**April 2020 to March 2021 has been defined by the Covid-19 pandemic and, at the time of writing this, it is still very much present in our daily lives. 2020/21 was an extremely busy time for the Skye and Lochalsh CVO team with our covid-19 emergency call service and supporting groups to start again as social isolation measures were lifted.**

The team did an amazing job under very difficult circumstances and, with the support of volunteers, made sure 57 people had a daily call, connecting them to their community and emergency support for 6 months.

The team continued to work on our Advancing Active Journeys project and I would like to thank Melanie and Sarah from Skye For All for their support with this. Sarah was awarded Paths for All's Active Travel Volunteer of the Year for her work on the project and the board are very proud of her achievement, Jo Ford, who nominated Sarah for the award says it best:

*"I am so pleased Sarah won, she often just tells people she just does Skye For All walks because she likes it and is very humble about the impact her and Melanie have. Sarah is an inspiration and a very valued volunteer; she deserves this award many times over"*

The team continued to deliver the Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI) commissioned services through which we:

- Provided 337 instances of support to third sector groups supported
  - Completed 19 of 22 HTSI performance indications
  - Completed 33 of SLCVO's 45 work plan activities
- 9 workplan activities were not completed due to the effects of Covid-19 and 3 were not completed due to lack of resources.

To enable us to provide a 7 day a week befriending call service during the first Covid-19 lockdown we received funding from Highland Council Ward 10 Eilean a' Cheò Councillors and National Lottery Awards for All. I would like to thank the Eilean a' Cheò Councillors John Finlayson, John Gordon, Calum MacLeod and Calum Munro, and Ward Manager Willie MacKinnon whose immediate response enabled us to have a service running within 10 days of the Covid-19 lockdown.

As of the 31 March 2020 SLCVO remain in a healthy position with unrestricted funds of £69,739, Tangible Fixed Assets of £52,143, Restricted funds of £11,124 and Designated funds of £68,500. A reduction in travel expenses and a grant for the building during the Covid-19 lockdown has resulted in an overall year-end surplus of £16,688. £11,124 of this is restricted funds (£10,864 for Befrienders Skye & Lochalsh and £260 for the Mental Health and Well-being Forum.

On behalf of the SLCVO Board I would like to thank our staff and member groups for not only supporting us but, supporting communities across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross during the Covid-19 pandemic. We are all still trying to find our way through Covid-19 infection control regulations and procedures but as always the SLCVO team are there to help the third sector across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross.



# Operational Report

## By Jo Ford SLCVO Chief Officer



**2020 to 2021 has been a very different operational environment to previous years due to the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on the local third sector and communities.**

SLCVO staff worked from home from the end of March 2020, enabling us to run a very flexible service 7 days a week while taking care of our families. We set-up a Covid-19 emergency response check in call system through our Skye & Lochalsh Befrienders Service. We continued to support third sector groups across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross, delivering activities that support the Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI) 4 core services and worked with Skye for All on an active travel project (Advancing Active Journeys Skye & Lochalsh).

### HTSI Commissioned Services

HTSI core commissioned services are measured through 22 performance indicators of which SLCVO completed 19. Our 2020-2021 local work plan identified 45 activities of which 33 were completed, 9 were not completed due to the effects of Covid-19 and 3 were not completed due to lack of resources.

### HTSI Outcome 1: The understanding of the impact and diversity of activity delivered by the Third Sector in Highland will be improved

To ensure there is a strong evidence base of the third sector in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross we developed an Access database to record third sector organisations in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross. Data was taken from OSCR and Companies House, SLCVO's members database, Skye and Lochalsh Health and Well-being Directory and HTSI 2016 Census. From this information we created an area profile of third sector groups in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross.

We collated details about the Covid-19 response initiatives across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross and shared this with local community response groups, the Highland Council Shielding Hubs and HTSI Covid Directory

### Verification/Evidence of Impact

- This year we have focused on the development and population of the database. We anticipate the database and profile will be used more in 2021/22 by public sector forums and groups such as the Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross Community Partnership, the Lochalsh Collaboration Hub who are developing a Community Led Action Plan and other groups looking to engage with the local third sector.
- Information about the third sector in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross can be found on our website <https://www.slcvo.org.uk/local-third-sector>



To improve the understanding of the local third sector across communities we promoted the benefits of volunteering including:

- Undertaking an awareness raising campaign when one of our volunteers won the Paths for All national Volunteer of the Year Award for their role in SLCVO's project Advancing Active Journeys Skye and Lochalsh.
- Celebrating volunteer's week with 4 volunteer video case studies and issuing 201 volunteer certificates to 8 groups. Keep Dunvegan Beautiful, Sconser Hub, Skye Community Response, Community Calls, Broadford & Strath, Skye Young Carers, Here to Help North Skye, Skye Bible Church
- Working with Viewfield Garden Collective to provide Green Health bags to clients of the Covid response Community Calls service and we provided thank you gifts of seed packs to 50 volunteers.

- Promoting local Covid-19 opportunities, national and regional volunteer recruitment drives and the recruitment of volunteers for SLCVO's Covid-19 emergency response initiative - Community Calls (56 volunteers recruited).

#### Verification/Evidence of Impact

- We supported 28 groups in volunteer management best practice and signposted 88 volunteers to opportunities
- The Advancing Active Journeys Skye and Lochalsh project generated 100 social media promotional articles with a reach of 68,073, direct engagements with social media articles was 7,222 and walking video from the project had 733 views
- SLCVO's Volunteer week videos were shared across social media, and you tube [Skye and Lochalsh CVO - YouTube](#)



#### Outcome 2: Influence and impact on policy and decisions in Highland will be expanded and developed from common sector-wide based understanding.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic we had planned to run an awareness raising campaign about community planning processes and participation opportunities. However, this was put on hold as all local community planning activities ceased due to Covid-19.

We continued to work on the Community Planning section of our new websites which was launched in April 2020 <https://www.slcvo.org.uk/copy-of-third-sector-support-1>. This includes information about the Community Empowerment Act, Community Planning forums in the Highland and local area, Community Councils and Parent Councils.

We shared regional forum opportunities and, where possible, participated in these including the Highland Adult Health and Well-being Forum and Third Sector Response Forum.

We promoted national and regional consultations where Third Sector participation was sought - 43 in total.

The Chief Officer was a panellist on the national "Co-production During COVID-19 & Beyond" session run by Corra in August 2020. Approximately 50 people participated in the event from across Scotland, other panellists included: Susan Paxton from SCDC, Zara Todd a consultant and equality rights advocate and Doreen Grove Head of Open Government.

We represented the local Third Sector in SCDC's Covid-19 resource planning meetings, Tesco bags for life meetings, Calmac Communities Fund planning meetings (15 meetings).

We worked with Highland Council Ward 15 and 10 Mangers, Highlife Highland staff and HTSI staff to assess the Covid-19 response and recovery needed by the third sector. This was a soft introduction for many new Covid-19 groups to community planning and participation with the Highland Council. See our website for the survey report [https://ac579b02-524a-4b32-8beb-35172497fd8a.filesusr.com/ugd/Obe1a8\\_81857e8a8db047beb2190275182faaf0.pdf](https://ac579b02-524a-4b32-8beb-35172497fd8a.filesusr.com/ugd/Obe1a8_81857e8a8db047beb2190275182faaf0.pdf)

#### Verification/Evidence of Impact

- In response to the Skye and Lochalsh CVO Service Review in March 2021, 75% of respondents said they felt they had the opportunity to be involved in local and regional community planning and co-production processes.
- 46 Groups took part in the SLCVO and Highland Council Covid-19 Community Response and Resilience Survey for Skye, Lochalsh, Wester Ross and Strathpeffer. 35 groups felt that through providing emergency response services they connect to the Highland Council and other groups.



### **Outcome 3: Opportunities for collaboration, networking and co-production will be improved and expanded**

Due to Covid-19, cross sector collaboration has been focused on Covid-19 emergency response. Public sector led meetings such as the SLWR CPP and Skye and Lochalsh Health Housing and Social Care Forum did not take place due to covid-19 infection control procedures however the Skye and Lochalsh Drug and Alcohol meeting took place online with members agreeing this was a beneficial forum to share information and should be looked at next year.

We took part in 3 regular Covid-19 Community response meetings for Ullapool, Skye and Lochalsh (27 meetings) to share information and good practice as well as build a links between the public sector and on the ground response services.

We represented the local third sector in the Highland Council Covid-19 response meetings, SCDC Covid-19 resource planning meetings and Tesco bags for life (15 meetings)

We attended Highland Council Area Committee meetings for Ward 5 and 10 to discuss third sector Covid-19 response activities, the Wester Ross back to school meetings, Calmac Communities Fund planning meetings, Kyle Green Health Pilot meetings (Highland CPP) and had regular communications with the Ward Managers and local Highland Council hub teams (12 meetings)

We worked with Highland Council Ward 15 and 10 Mangers, Highlife Highland staff and HTSI staff to assess the Covid-19 response and collaboration opportunities of the third sector. From this survey we have proposed a plan to help support cross sector collaboration.

#### **Verification/Evidence of Impact**

The Covid-19 Community Response and Resilience Survey was 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.

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

Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations are working with Highland Council Ward Mangers and High Life Highland Youth Development Officers in Skye, Lochalsh, Wester Ross and Strathpeffer to:

- Record the Covid-19 emergency response initiatives that have supported communities during the last six months
- Map which services are continuing to support local communities
- Identify what support local response initiatives require



From neighbourhood shopping initiatives to prescription delivery services. We want to build a comprehensive picture of all the ways people and groups support each other.

43 groups took part in the survey which can be accessed here. [https://ac579b02-524a-4b32-8beb-35172497fd8a.filesusr.com/ugd/0be1a8\\_81857e8a8db047beb2190275182faaf0.pdf](https://ac579b02-524a-4b32-8beb-35172497fd8a.filesusr.com/ugd/0be1a8_81857e8a8db047beb2190275182faaf0.pdf)

#### **SLCVO Services**

To ensure the services we deliver meet the needs of the local Third Sector we have carried out two service review/engagement activities. Firstly, a Covid-19 Community Response and Resilience Survey was carried out in October 2020. Secondly, SLCVO undertook a review of requirement survey. Both surveys were shared with SLCVO members, groups who had received 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.

#### **Verification/Evidence of Impact**

SLCVO's 2021/22 Work Plan was developed from the findings in both reports. With 4 areas of development to improve third sector support:

- Promotion and delivery of SLCVO Services
- Production of a monthly Third Sector E-bulletin
- Provision of training
- Development of Third Sector networks - To better connect the Third Sector and support two way communications with local, regional and national community planning processes



**Outcome 4: Third Sector organisations in Highland will better informed of opportunities for development, engagement and influence.**

Regular group training, capacity building and individual skills development was put on hold due to Covid-19. As a result, we brought forward the publishing of Community Toolkit downloads on SLCVO website including:

- Identifying Need and Starting a Steering Group
- Legal Structures and Organisation Types
- Governing Documents, Policies and Procedures
- Community Profiling and Engagement
- Group Identity and Promotion
- Feasibility Studies
- Developing and Writing Plans
- Roles and Responsibilities of Management Committees
- The Role of Office Bearers
- The Social Enterprise Directory
- The Community Development Directory
- <https://www.slcvo.org.uk/supporting-groups>

We created a series of snippets (13) for social media (SLCVO Facebook & Twitter and Covid-19 Facebook community pages ) about setting-up and running a group see our Facebook timeline photos <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?vanity=SLCV O&set=a.460492857399311> and worked in collaboration with the HTSI and Caithness Voluntary Group in the development and promotion of Covid-19 guidance for village halls participating in an online Q&A session in September.

- We shared information, Covid-19 risk assessments and returning back to operations. see <https://www.slcvo.org.uk/covid-19>
- We carried out 149 episodes of support to 94 groups of which 3 were supported in crisis management. This is less than previous years due to the effects of the covid-19 pandemic and many third sector groups not operating.
- We promoted 131 articles about collaboration, funding, training, good practice, research and regulatory change

- We supported three third sector response hubs: Ullapool (lead by Ullapool Community Trust); Lochalsh (led by Kyle and Lochalsh Community Trust) and Skye (led by Portree and Braes Community Trust). We attended most meetings (27), sharing information between the Highland Council and hub groups about need and response initiatives.

**Verification/Evidence of Impact**

- Skye and Lochalsh CVO Service Review (March 2021) 74% of respondents said they felt they were kept informed about funding, training, events, consultations and forums.

**Comments from groups:**

- Very quick to respond, efficient, very approachable and has presented effective solutions to problems in a clear and concise manner.
- The amount of help, advice, guidance and the approachability of staff was exemplary.
- 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.
- 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 at SLCVO

<p><a href="http://www.slcvo.org.uk">www.slcvo.org.uk</a>  <a href="mailto:info@slcvo.org.uk">info@slcvo.org.uk</a>                  01478 612921</p>	
	<p>Bringing together and supporting third sector organisations, people and public bodies to make a difference in their communities.</p>



## Community Calls

At the start of Covid-19, SLCVO set-up Community Calls, a daily call service for people across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross. The aim of the service was to keep people connected and make sure they had support to get essential provision such as food, prescriptions and fuel.

By the end of September 2020 our Community Calls volunteers made around 2,000 calls. Many of these calls have been much more than a simple check in they have provided companionship to both clients and volunteers.

*“It is good to have someone new to talk to”. “It helps to know that there is someone keeping an eye on you” “Community Calls client feedback*

*“As I discovered during the weeks of the call service, being a befriender has two-way benefits, because as a caller I have found it particularly rewarding to be able to develop new relationships during the lockdown.” Volunteer feedback August 2020*

When advertising for volunteers in March we were astounded by the response. 55 people volunteered with the service, supporting 57 clients 7 days a week between April and July then 5 days a week until the end of September.

**Community Calls**  
 Email [info@slcvo.org.uk](mailto:info@slcvo.org.uk) to register for a daily Community Call

**Would you like to receive a regular phone call to make sure you have all you need?**

**Do you want a loved one to have a daily check-in call?**

Skye and Lochalsh CVO have set-up a Community Call service in response to Covid-19 measures, for communities in Skye and Lochalsh.

Email [info@slcvo.org.uk](mailto:info@slcvo.org.uk) for an application form. If you do not have an email address please call 01478 612921

Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations  
 Charity Registered in Scotland  
 SC013885 and Company Limited by Guarantee SC177372

Working with Highland Hospice

HTSI

The Highland Council Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

Volunteers made it possible for us to run a daily service for six months, and funding from the Skye

Ward Discretionary Budget, the Highland Third Sector Interface and The National Lottery, not only allowed us to provide a Covid-19 emergency response service but also to ensure its sustainability.

In October 2020, 16 community Calls Volunteers joined our existing befriender volunteers to support our new telephone befriending service and 18 Community Call clients will moved on to have a weekly befriending call.

This service ensures that volunteers and clients who want to keep the connections made during lock-down can, in a secure and supported service run by SLCVO.

To see what our volunteers thought of the service visit our Facebook page and watch our video from June. <https://www.facebook.com/SLCVO/videos/178044506943303>

## Green Health Home Packs with Viewfield Garden

Before Covid-19 SLCVO and Viewfield Garden Collective were planning to hold a joint event to celebrate nature on our doorsteps. We planned to invite befriender clients and volunteers to the event in Portree however, social distancing rules meant we had to think of another way to connect people to nature on their doorstep.

Viewfield Garden Collective’s Development Officer, Lucy Cooke, came up with an idea to bring the project to people’s homes, this project was made possible with funding from the EU Leader



Rural Development Fund and Scottish Natural Heritage Green Health Home packs containing bulbs,

information packs and coconut bird feeders have been sent to all our befriending clients. We hope that they will enjoy a little piece of the outdoors within their homes.

## Evaluation Scotland

Evaluation Support Scotland asked us if we would help to trial their new evaluation program 'Demonstrating impact on health inequalities'. The aim of the programme is to help third sector organisations to explain, measure and prove how their work contributes to tackling health inequalities.

Using our befriending service we worked with ESS to produce a case study of our service using the resource 'Recognising our rich tapestry: measuring the third sector's contribution to health inequalities.'

On 24 March 2021 we participated in an online event where we shared our experience of using the resource. You can see our case study here [Recognising our rich tapestry: Befrienders Skye and Lochalsh case study - Evaluation Support Scotland](#)

Total number of people supported through Befrienders Skye and Lochalsh between 2020-21 = 57

Total number of volunteers with our service between 2020-2021 = 62



With grant funding from Paths for All, Smarter Choices, Smarter Places and the Highland Green Health Partnership, Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations (SLCVO) teamed up with local group Skye for All to complete an active travel project. The focus of the project was to create maps of both Portree and Kyle of Lochalsh highlighting the accessibility of both village centres. These locations have significant accessibility issues, the new maps show people where critical access points, such as dropped kerbs and seating areas, making every day journeys easier.

The aim of the project was to raise awareness and understanding of the benefits of getting outdoors and help people incorporate walking into their daily routine. By teaming up with Skye for All, SLCVO hope to encourage people to feel more comfortable going out for short walks. Jo Ford SLCVO's Chief officer said "There are many websites and leaflets promoting walking in Skye and Lochalsh, our project however, is much more focused on short daily journeys for those who may struggle to participate in longer walks and whose mobility is restricted. Working with Skye for All will help us create very unique maps of Kyle and Portree that can be used by individuals, cyclists and walking groups."



The brainchild of good friends Sarah Lister and Melanie Moss, Skye for All specialise in identifying short walks that are suitable for people of all abilities and sharing these on their website [www.Skyeforall.co.uk](http://www.Skyeforall.co.uk). "We want people of all ages and abilities to be able to enjoy Skye and Lochalsh and experience some of the quieter hidden gems. Enjoying the scenery and its beauty on foot, in a wheelchair or on a mobility scooter. We want to share the many beautiful places that our home has to offer", Melanie & Sarah, Skye for All.

For her work with SLCVO's Active Travel project and Skye for All, Sarah was recently awarded Paths for All's Active Travel Volunteer of the Year. Sarah, the inspiration behind Skye for All, was left with mobility issues after multiple surgeries for a brain tumour. She is only able to walk short distances with an aid and needs a mobility scooter for longer journeys however, this has not stopped her. Jo Ford, who nominated Sarah for the award said "I am so pleased Sarah won, she often just tells people she just does Skye for All

walks because she likes it and is very humble about the impact her and Melanie have. Sarah is an inspiration and a very valued volunteer; she deserves this award many times over”

For more information about the project visit Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations website [www.slcvo.org.uk](http://www.slcvo.org.uk)

Or download the maps of Portree and Kyle from the Skye for All website <http://skyeforall.co.uk/>

Follow Skye for All on Twitter  
<https://twitter.com/SkyeForAll>

## On-Line Support for Community Groups

### **SLCVO Website and Community Toolkit** [www.slcvo.org.uk](http://www.slcvo.org.uk)

The Skye and Lochalsh CVO website includes our downloadable Community Toolkit guides that help groups in their set-up and running, information about community planning and volunteering, as well as dedicated project and Covid-19 sections.

### **Highland Third Sector Interface** website <https://www.highlandtsi.org.uk/>

The HTSI website contains information about events, training opportunities and vacancies across the Highlands. There is information about their strategic Community Planning Third Sector Representation Pathways, as well as updates from their e-learning platform.

### **Volunteer Scotland** <https://www.volunteerscotland.net/covid-19>

Volunteer Scotland’s website provides information, guidance, and templates to help volunteers and volunteer involving organisations. This includes guidance on volunteer management, PVGs and volunteering opportunities.

### **Scottish Community Development Centre** <https://www.scdc.org.uk/supporting-communities-safely>

SCDC is the lead body for community development in Scotland, their online resource ‘Supporting Communities Safely’ provides advice on how to virus proof the fantastic things communities are doing and reduce the risk of indirect spread.

### **Institute of Fundraising** <https://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/guidance/>

The Institute of Fundraising website provides groups with guidance and information for fundraising, as well as information on rules and regulations.

### **Information Commissioners Office** <https://ico.org.uk/>

The ICO is the UK's independent body set up to uphold information rights. Groups can get information about Data protection obligations and how to comply from their website.

### **The Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)** <https://www.oscr.org.uk/>

OSCR are the independent regulator and registrar for charities in Scotland. Their website has a wealth of information about setting-up and running a charity as well as options to search the Charity Register.

## About Skye and Lochalsh CVO

As a Scottish Registered Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee SLCVO's Board of Trustees are made up of representatives from our membership. We have 144 members representing the third sector in Skye and Lochalsh and 8 trustees.

- Peter Urquhart Chair, from Portree representing the RNLI
- Clive Pearson Vice-Chair, from Glenelg representing the Isle of Skye Ferry CIC
- Jim Towers, from Carbost representing the Skye and Lochalsh Access Panel
- Cllr John Gordon, from Portree representing Highland Council Ward 10 Eilean a Cheo
- Gordon Higgins, from Staffin representing the Staffin Community Trust
- Dr Di Van Ruitenbeek, from Sleat representing Skye and Lochalsh Counselling Care
- Jryna Batters, Treasurer, from Kingsburgh representing Viewfield Garden Collective
- Julie Mace from Kyleakin, representing the Eilean Ban Trust

### Contact Details

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Befrienders Skye & Lochalsh : [befrienders@slcvo.org.uk](mailto:befrienders@slcvo.org.uk)

Chief officer: [Jo.Ford@slcvo.org.uk](mailto:Jo.Ford@slcvo.org.uk)

## About the Highland Third Sector Interface

The Highland Third Sector Interface was formed in 2012. Their Mission is to ensure that the Third Sector in Highlands is strong, developing and a valued community and regional asset. As a Third Sector Interface they work together with five partners (including Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations) to deliver, among other services, four specific themes of work as agreed with the Scottish Government. You can find out more about their work at <https://www.highlandtsi.org.uk/>

**SLCVO** Skye and Lochalsh Council  
for Voluntary Organisations **Funded by:**

