

## Community Briefing – 05.06.26

**Dear Colleagues and Partners,**

Welcome to the fortnightly Community Briefing delivered in collaboration with the Highland Community Planning Partnership and Highland Council, containing information about funding, training, support, resources, and news for Highland wide and local communities.

If you have anything you want included in a future Briefing, please e-mail:

[communitybriefing@highland.gov.uk](mailto:communitybriefing@highland.gov.uk)

To join the mailing list complete this short form: <https://forms.office.com/e/rSS3hXbGTa> or scan the QR Code:



FUNDING	NEWS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tesco Stronger Starts</b> funds thousands of local community projects across Scotland and the UK. Eligible Tesco stores in Thurso, Wick, Ullapool and Tain. Applications welcome from groups and projects that support children and young people with a stronger start in life. A wide range of projects fit the bill - improving school playgrounds, biodiversity, growing and food projects, outdoor play and adventure, community arts projects and purchasing kit for healthy activities. Projects that include a food element (e.g. providing healthy snack or lunch) are currently being prioritised.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Directories:</b> The Highland Community Planning Partnership website now has a page dedicated to Directories, here you will find links to ALISS, Highland Directory of Services and Highland Mental Wellbeing. Click <a href="#">here</a> to find out more.</li> <li>• <b>The Climate Collective – a space dedicated to young people passionate about climate action:</b> The Highlands and Islands Climate Hub are pleased to launch The Highlands and Islands Climate Collective. A space for young people in Highland, Orkney &amp; Shetland aged 16-30 who are passionate about climate action.</li> </ul>

The scheme provides grants of up to £1500. To find out more or to apply, please visit the Tesco Stronger Starts page [here](#).

- **The National Lottery** is investing an extra £2.2 million to help communities across Scotland deliver Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games-inspired activities. Through Awards for All Scotland, groups can apply for up to £10,000 to boost participation in arts and sport, strengthen communities, support wellbeing, celebrate diversity, and create a lasting local legacy. To find out more, click [here](#).

- **Community Regeneration Funding:** Historically, Community Regeneration Funding (CRF) was primarily accessed through open calls for projects. These often led to oversubscription, causing disappointment and frustration among applicants. As CRF moves away from open calls, the first resource to help prioritise funding will be the [BeConnected map](#).

Decision-makers will use this map to identify eligible projects in their area and consider which best align with the fund's outcomes. Those invited to progress will receive feedback and be asked to submit an Expression of Interest, outlining their project's current development stage and key details. Expressions of Interest will then be assessed and presented to decision-making groups, which will select projects to proceed to a full application. Community Regeneration Funding brings together a range of external, community-led funding programmes. While the overall approach is moving away from open calls, individual funds may operate under different governance arrangements and application processes.

- **Funding Opportunity:** An opportunity for rural communities to apply for funding to support their projects is now open. The Highland Local Action Group (LAG) is inviting organisations to apply for grants up to £10,000. [Read more and find out all details here](#)

The Highlands and Islands Climate Collective spotlights ways that young people can act against the climate emergency, connect with community groups and organisations, and help build skills to enter sustainable careers. To find out more, please see the document attached.

- **Highland Power of Attorney Month 2026:** [NHS Highland and The Highland Council have launched Highland Power of Attorney Month](#), a joint public awareness campaign running throughout June 2026 to encourage every adult across the Highland region to consider putting a PoA in place.

The campaign is the first of its kind in Highland and comes as national research reveals a significant gap between public awareness of PoA and the number of people who actually have one.

Research by the Standard Life Centre for the Future of Retirement, published in March 2025, found that:

fewer than 1 in 10 adults across Great Britain have an up-to-date PoA in place

45% have never thought about putting one in place at all

View YouTube Short video clips of David Fraser, Chair of The Highland Council Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Committee, talking about PoA:

[What is Power of Attorney really about?](#)  
[What are some misunderstandings about PoA?](#)

- **Short Term Let Control Areas – Have Your Say:** A public consultation opens today on proposals to introduce Short Term Let Control Areas (STLCA) in Highland with the aim of striking a better balance between tourism growth and local housing need.

The Highland Council is seeking views from residents, communities, businesses and

- **National Lottery Awards for All Scotland:**

The National Lottery funds projects that bring people together and help communities across Scotland thrive. Social connections and community activities are at the heart of healthier, happier lives, that's why they support community-led projects. For more information, including application guidance, please click [here](#).

- **[The National Lottery Community Fund \(Scotland\) - Strengthening Organisations:](#)**

This funding is for organisations in Scotland, that we currently fund. We want to support organisations to try out new ideas and ways of working. Or to develop their organisation and improve their current work.

Deadline: Ongoing

- **[Service Pupil Support programme:](#)** The Service Pupil Support programme sits with MOD's dedicated Armed Forces Families Fund. The MOD has partnered with the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust to administer the AF3 Fund. Under this programme, the Trust will award grants for projects which support service children along their educational pathway.

Closing date: 30 Sep 2026

- **[Warmer Homes Scotland:](#)**

**Need help to make your home warmer?**

If you need help to reduce your heating bills and make your home cosier, you could receive support worth £10,000 or more from the Scottish Government. You could be eligible for energy-saving home improvements like heating and insulation to help make your home warmer, cosier and cheaper to heat.

- **[CARES funding](#)** is now open for applications for the 2026/27 funding year. CARES supports a wide range of community energy projects - from

the tourism sector on [proposals](#) to introduce two STLCA's:

Inverness City STLCA, which would cover the wards of Inverness West; Inverness Central; Inverness Ness-side; Inverness Millburn; and parts of Inverness South, including Westhill, Milton of Leys and Slackbuie, and;

Highland Rural STLCA, which would cover the wards of Lochaber; Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh; Sutherland; Skye and Raasay; Aird and Loch Ness; and parts of Inverness South, including Tomatin and Daviot.

To take part in the consultation, click [here](#).

There are a number of public drop-in events taking place across Highland, please see documents attached for further information.

- **NHS Stakeholder Briefing:** Information on the publication of the NHS Highland Director of Public Health report for 2025. The report focuses on the need for early investment as both a moral imperative and the most cost-effective action system leaders can take. There is also information on the tenth anniversary of the opening of Highland Children's Unit. To read the full briefing, please see the document attached.
- **Armed Forces Covenant: Education Health and Housing:** Highland Council and NHS Highland holistically support our Armed Forces and Veterans community and deliver the Armed Forces Covenant Duty. More information can be found [here](#).
- **Highland Equalities & LGBTQ+ Young People's Networks:** Are you a young person living in the Highlands? If so, you might be interested in shaping the new Highland Equalities and LGBTQ+ Networks. This is an opportunity to share your 'voice', work alongside other young people and adults, and help influence positive change for everyone across Highland.

community ownership of renewable technologies to installing renewable systems in community buildings, as well as community benefits and shared ownership opportunities. Applications are now open, and we encourage you to apply as soon as possible. We will process, assess and queue applications. However, due to the Scottish Election in May, we cannot issue grant offers or confirm overall scheme funding until a new Government is in place and approves new awards. Read on to find out more about these funds and if they could support your community energy project.

- **Hydro Community Fund:** At SSE Renewables, we are proud of our hydro heritage which has been vital to bringing clean energy to the north of Scotland for over 80 years. Our new £10 million community fund is open to projects that support residents in the community council areas which proudly host our hydro assets.

The Hydro Community Fund priorities are:

To protect the natural environment of the local area, including landscapes, natural habitats and biodiversity.

To enhance access to safe, affordable and sustainable community transport opportunities and low-carbon solutions within the local area.

To improve access to affordable, quality and safe housing, including developing community housing initiatives, enhancing local housing stock and improving home energy efficiency schemes.

To encourage the establishment and sustainable economic growth of small businesses, including social enterprises.

To develop and improve community assets and infrastructure such as halls, hubs and paths.

There is no deadline to register your interest, however Derek Sawyer will begin meeting with interested young people following the summer break, around August/September.

If you'd like to get involved or find out more, please contact Derek Sawyer, Strategic Lead for Equalities, at [derek.sawyer@highland.gov.uk](mailto:derek.sawyer@highland.gov.uk)

- **Together We Care:** 11 Highland communities have come together to support each other to meet the fundamental changes in care delivery we have been informed about. They want to ensure the best possible outcomes on behalf of friends, neighbours and family in our communities and in others that may not have the resources to respond.

In response to calls to participate in the co-design and production of innovative delivery services, they believe an effective way to do this would be to create a Highland Community Health and Social Care Network as a mechanism for dialogue, information and support. They would like to ask you to take part in our consultation on the objectives, structure and role of such a network in relation to your work.

Access the questionnaire here [Stakeholder Questionnaire](#)

Access the questionnaire here [Third Sector Questionnaire](#)

You can find out more about the steering group here [Highland CHSC Working Group](#)

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Responses would be appreciated by Friday 19th June.

To promote the physical and mental well-being of communities through community arts, culture, sports and recreation.

For this fund, the panel are also interested in projects that support education, skills development, and employment opportunities. However, no specific priority will be given, as all project areas will be considered equally.

- **BeConnected Highland – Put your community project on the map:** The Highland Council is piloting BeConnected, a new digital platform to support community organisations and groups in accessing funding, in-kind support, and opportunities to collaborate across the region.

Traditionally, community funding has been accessed through open calls for projects. While this approach has enabled many successful projects and initiatives, short competitive funding windows can also lead to oversubscription and disappointment for groups unable to secure support. In response, the Council is evolving its approach to ensure that funding decisions are better aligned with local priorities, particularly those identified within Area Place Plans, and to make support more accessible to groups at all stages of project development.

BeConnected is an interactive online map that allows community groups to highlight priority projects they are working on in their area. By doing so, it provides funders, including the Community Regeneration Fund, with a clearer picture of grassroots activity across Highland and enables them to track the progress of emerging proposals. Community groups are encouraged to explore the map, familiarise themselves with their Area Place Plan and add their projects to ensure they are visible to funders and potential partners. For more information please visit [BeConnected Highland](#)

- **The Robertson Trust** provide funding to third-sector organisations that help people

- **Highland Senior Citizens Network:** A great website with recent news including the health benefits of social connection, local activities including creative sessions, games, rewilding, veterans' advocacy, youth mentoring, intergenerational events, and community lunch clubs. Updates on carers' research, dementia support, fire safety visits, vitamin D guidance, flu vaccination, energy-saving tips and more.
- **Highland Repair Directory:** The Highlands and Islands Climate Hub is pleased to welcome the Highland Repair Directory to their list of projects supporting communities in Highland. The Repair Directory is an online resource which makes it easier for people to share or repair items, instead of sending them to landfill and replacing with new. For more information, click [here](#).
- **Free Period Products** are available in Highland to everyone who needs them. They can be accessed at community locations, through a home delivery service and are also available to pupils in schools. For more information and how to access products, click [here](#).

and communities in Scotland living with poverty and trauma. Information on who and what they fund, useful links and resources and FAQs can be found [here](#).

- **Robertson Trust Offer for Small Grant Holders:** The Supporting Resilience Fund offers £2,000–£10,000 to Small Grant Holders to invest in work that strengthens their organisation from the inside.

This funding is for organisational and staff resilience rather than programme delivery. It is intended to support internal development, creating space to address pressures that are often difficult to fund but are essential for long-term sustainability.

We are prioritising Small Grant Holders in recognition that these organisations often have fewer reserves and less flexibility to invest in resilience-building activity.

#### **What could the fund support?**

The fund can support a wide range of activity aimed at strengthening your organisation's foundations, including:

Leadership, governance and strategic planning

Financial planning, systems and infrastructure

Organisational development and sustainability planning

Staff and volunteer wellbeing, particularly in high-pressure or trauma-informed environments.

For more information, including how to apply for the fund, click [here](#).

- **SSEN Distribution's Community Funding:** Almost £350,000 has been awarded to successful applicants in the 2025 round of SSEN Distribution's Powering Communities to Net Zero fund.

A total of 25 projects across the Highlands, Western Isles, Argyll, Perthshire, Angus, Aberdeen City, Shetland and Aberdeenshire are receiving grants.

Successful projects include the installation of heat pumps and solar panels at community hubs, the purchase of pavement gritters, and flood-protection equipment.

A total of almost £350,000 in grant funding has been awarded to not-for-profit community groups in Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SEN) Distribution's north of Scotland licence area in the 2025 round of the Powering Communities to Net Zero fund.

The fund has two aims; firstly, to support groups who are looking to cut the carbon from their activities through the adoption of solar panels, battery storage, EV chargers and heat pumps. And it also seeks to help communities become better prepared ahead of severe weather which may affect the local electricity network and cause the power to go off or have other impacts.

Successful applications in the north of Scotland include requests to fund the installation of solar panels in village halls, heat pumps in community centres, an emergency exercise training session, and neighbourhood pavement gritters.

A total of 10 low carbon technology and 15 resilience projects are being funded in the north of Scotland, with values of £189,000 and £160,000 respectively.

The fund has a total value of £3m and runs annually, concluding in Spring 2028 at the end of the current ED2 price control period. The fund will reopen for applicants as part of the 2026 round in March. For more information, and to read the full details of what's involved in applying, click [here](#).

- [HTSI](#) produce a monthly Funding Bulletin for their [members](#), which details current

funding opportunities in Highland. They can provide workshops for staff or volunteers in Highland’s third sector, to address some of the challenges they’re aware of when it comes to applying for funds. They also distribute funds to third sector organisations on behalf of agencies in the public sector, find out more information here: [HTSI Funding](#).

- The [National Lottery Community Fund](#) has a number of Funding Programmes available including Awards for All, Community Action Scottish Land Fund, Climate Action Fund and more, many with a focus on Scotland. Find out more information [here](#).
- **S4GI Community Benefit Fund:** S4GI partner Cellnex UK has grants of up to £2,000 available to support initiatives focused on digital projects, community wellbeing, learning & development and more. The fund will prioritise projects located near any of the 55 S4GI mobile masts.

Communities and organisations interested in applying can find further information about eligibility criteria and a link to the application process on Cellnex’s [website](#).

**TRAINING/EVENTS**

**EMPLOYABILITY/VOLUNTEERING**

- **Community Car Wash:**

- **Connecting Carers:** A Highland based Chairty that provides support to unpaid carers (Carers) – people who look after a loved one, friend, or neighbour due to illness, disability, mental health conditions, or age-related needs. Please see attached flyer and poster for further information.
- **Childminding Academy:** Work.Life.Highland has partnered with SCMA to run childminding training for a Third year. SCMA has funding from Scottish Government for 15 places in



- **NHS Social Prescribing Group:** Are you interested in finding out more about social prescribing?

The Highland Social Prescribing Group have been developing a social prescribing framework for Highland and would like to invite any interested individuals or organisations to register for one of four events being held across Highland in May and June. Please see flyer for locations, dates, and times plus information below.

Registration for each event can be done using the individual Eventbrite link below:

[Inverness 8th June](#)

[Fort William 18th June](#)

- **Carers Week:** Join Connecting Carers in celebrating Carers Week 2026 from 8th–14th June.

Throughout the week, a range of events will be taking place across Highland, creating opportunities for unpaid Carers to connect with others, access support, share experiences and focus on their wellbeing.

Highland which we successfully filled last year. They have continued to partner with SCMA to allow their clients who wish to pursue a career in Childminding through the Childminding Academy.

#### SCMA provide :

One-year public liability insurance

Info sessions to support with CI applications and regular drop-in sessions to answer candidates' specific questions,

Funding for startup business cost of £750. (after being officially registered),

Online childminding business courses, Tailored group, and individual support from SCMA, promotion of business via SCMA find a childminder search engine,

Food health, and Hygiene certificate.

#### How can Work Life Highland Support?

Dedicated Key worker to help with accessing funding and providing mentoring support

Funding assistance for the following;

PVG membership

Disclosure Scotland

Care Inspectorate registration fee

GP Health declaration fee, ICO – GDPR Insurance

Paediatric First Aid

Launch Pad funding while being supported by our childminding key worker.

For more information, please contact [mairi.annan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:mairi.annan@highland.gov.uk)

- **Highland Adult Learning Development Group** have published their first bulletin. Use this link to access the bulletin: [HALDG Newsletter](#) or scan the QR code:

This year's theme, "Building Carer Friendly Communities," highlights the importance of creating supportive and inclusive places where people feel recognised, valued and connected.

From community walks and local café drop-ins to guided meditation and pamper sessions, there are plenty of opportunities to come together during the week. Whether it's meeting others with shared experiences, taking time for yourself, or discovering new ways to support your wellbeing in your caring role, there's something for everyone.

Find out more and sign up for events via the Connecting Carers website: [Activities and Events | Connecting Carers](#)

- **The Nation's 5k!**

The poster for The Nation's 5k! Inverness 5k 27 June 2026. It features a woman running in a blue top and black shorts. The text includes: "We're hosting a FREE 5km run club in every city in the UK and you're invited!", "Inverness 5k 27 June 2026", "Start: 9am", "Meet: Torvean Park, Inverness, IV3 8JL", "5000KM ACROSS 27 CITIES", "5KM RUN IN EVERY CITY", "Hosted by Esmée Gummer", "For more info:", a QR code, "We're on a mission to get a million people moving!", and the website "thenations5k.com".

- **What's on South Inverness – June 2026:** As ever, a host of fantastic activities on offer, from a Carers Support Group to Feel Good Fitness with Highlife Highland. For a full list of activities, please see the document attached.



- **Volunteer Academy:** The Highland Volunteering Academy is dedicated to sparking and nurturing a movement of engagement through volunteering, tailored to the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century with our evolving and diverse communities. Find out what volunteering opportunities are available [here](#).
- **MyJobScotland:** for public and third sector [vacancies](#).
- **totaljobs:** for private sector [vacancies](#).
- **Work.Life.Highland:** one-stop support for job seekers, low-income parents & employers in Highland—offering advice, training & employability services. For information on news, events and how to get in touch, click [here](#).
- **HTSI Fellowship Programme:** Designed to advance volunteer practices through targeted learning and collaboration, through grants to undertake study and learning visits. HTSI now f/our live Fellowships open for application. Full details and application instructions can be found on the Volunteer Academy [website](#).

- **Work and Wellbeing:**



- **Alcohol Brief Interventions:** This course is for anyone who might benefit from being able to discuss alcohol with service users, to help them make an informed choice about their alcohol use. Before attending, please complete the Drugs and alcohol : alcohol brief intervention eLearning [module](#). The aim is to support the embedding and ongoing delivery of Alcohol Brief Interventions (ABIs). Places for the online training are available on the 11th of June and the 26th of August - [Drugs and alcohol : alcohol brief interventions \(ABI\) | Turas | Learn](#)

**MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING**

- [Highland Mental Wellbeing](#) – this website is a list of services, information and training around the subject of mental health and wellbeing. It also provides information about training and resources for community/service volunteers or paid staff, in a ‘helping’ or supporting role.

**COMMUNITY SAFETY & RESILIENCE**

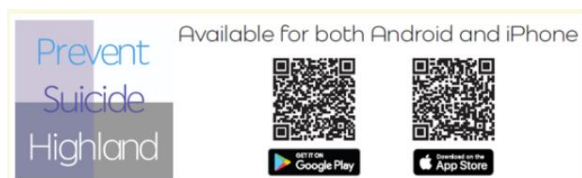
- **Consultation for Digitisation of Herbert Protocol Forms:**  
Police Scotland is currently seeking the views of the public in relation to a proposed digitalisation of information that helps trace missing people living with dementia. As part of the Herbert Protocol, families/carers can obtain, print and

The Highland Mental Wellbeing website is accessible on desktop and laptop computers, mobile devices and wherever an internet browser is available.

[www.highlandmentalwellbeing.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.highlandmentalwellbeing.scot.nhs.uk)



- **Prevent Suicide Highland App** - This easy-to-use app helps should you ever find yourself in distress, feeling hopeless or suicidal in the future. The app is available on Google Play for Android devices and the Apple App Store for iPhone and iPad.



- **Think Health Think Nature** - Taking time to enjoy local outdoor green space could bring you huge health benefits – getting outdoors is good for your physical, mental, and social well-being. Regardless of age and ability, there really is something for everyone.
- **Trail Therapy for Young People Now Open:** We're taking referrals for Young people (16-25) for sessions in Fort William

In March and April we hosted our first block of Trail Therapy sessions in Kinlochleven. Our participants received hands-on coaching on mountain bike trails, alongside tools and techniques to combat stress, reduce anxiety and improve Wellbeing. One of the participants said:

"This experience was more than just a physical challenge; it opened a door to new adventures and provided a deep sense of personal validation."

We are now taking referrals for our next block of Trail Therapy. We are looking especially for Young People, aged 16 to 25. If you - or someone you know - are impacted by poor mental health, stress and/or anxiety, Trail Therapy might be worth a try.

To register your interest, please complete our referral form [here](#).

complete a pro-forma document from the Police Scotland website that is handed to investigating officers whenever someone with dementia goes missing.

The form records a range of useful information which will allow police to respond swiftly during the crucial first hour - rather than spend it gathering information. At present, families and carers are responsible for owning, updating and providing this document to police.

Engagement and feedback following missing person inquiries has highlighted the additional stress and pressure associated with keeping this document safe and easily accessible for whenever it may be required. As such, the National Missing Persons Unit are beginning a period of consultation with professionals, carers and the Dementia community to explore next steps of this process.

We are now asking for the public to engage with our consultation survey and provide all relevant feedback and viewpoints in relation to the potential digitalisation of the Herbert Protocol form.

You can take the survey [here](#).

The closing date is Sunday, 2 August 2026.

- **New Ready Scotland Website Launched:** The new Ready Scotland website is now live, with a host of great information ranging from how to create an emergency plan, how to stay safe in storms, as well as a plethora of learning material. You can access the new website in full [here](#).
- **Home Energy Scotland:** Home Energy Scotland's advisors are true energy saving heroes. They can help you discover practical solutions to reduce your energy consumption, save money, and create a warmer, more comfortable home this year. Whether it's through energy efficiency tips, grants, or tailored support, their advisors are dedicated to helping you to take control of your energy costs.

Don't let rising bills catch you off guard. Reach out to Home Energy Scotland today

- **Being with Babies Outdoors Toolkit:** **Babies Outdoors** launched their free toolkit in March 2026 via an online webinar which is now available to view on [YouTube](#). Partnering with the Open University the toolkit will support you to explore the benefits to babies and more. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

- **Screen time guidance for under 5s:** Juggling family life and raising children in a digital world can be challenging. Find out more about how to support healthy screen habits for children under 5 by clicking [here](#).

- **Suicide Intervention and Prevention Programme:** This course is available to those who work within the Highland area only. Various dates available.

Who this is for: staff who have patient, client, service user, or public contact and who have had no previous suicide awareness training or last training was more than three years ago.

Course delivery: Please note this course is delivered over two separate 2 hour sessions and you are required to attend both to complete the course. The sessions are usually run a week apart so please check the calendar below to make sure you can attend both Week 1 and Week 2 before booking your place.

Bookable course: [Turas | My Turas | Home](#)

- **Mental health and wellbeing: self-harm awareness - understanding and supporting people who self-harm** (various dates available).

Who this course is for: This session is aimed at anyone who works with or provides support to people who self-harm or at risk of self-harm. 3hr online session

Bookable course: [Turas | My Turas | Home](#)

for expert advice that puts you and your home first. Call Home Energy Scotland's free helpline at 0808 808 2282 or visit [homeenergyscotland.org](http://homeenergyscotland.org)

- **Home fire safety visits:** Find out what is a Home Fire Safety Visit, who can get one, and how to arrange a visit. Click [here](#) to find out more.
- **ALlenergy:** Support people who live in the Highlands from all tenures who are struggling with fuel poverty with Energy Advice and support. They can help clients with: Energy bills: how you pay for your energy, how much you pay and how often; Advise on changes to the way you deal with your energy payments that may result in saving you money; Advise on heating controls and the way you use your heating to ensure you are using it efficiently and cost effectively; Fuel vouchers for people who have a PPM and have no funds to top up. In some cases, if eligible, they can apply to funded schemes to help with paying for your energy, replacement of white goods, alleviation of fuel debt. (subject to funds being available). Further information is available on their website: [ALlenergy](#).
- **Met Office Weather Warnings:** Information from the Met Office on weather related matters.