

Highland Senior Citizens Network Chairman's Annual Report April 2024 to March 2025

For the financial year 2024 to 2025 the Network continued to receive funding from NHS Highland in recognition of the role HSCN plays in representing service users for which we were grateful. We also thank The Great Wilderness Challenge for continuing to support HSCN as one of their nominated charities and Dingwall Academy pupils for championing HSCN in a successful bid for Youth Philanthropy Initiative funding. Currently we have approaching 400 individual members and 110 Group members. What do we get up to? A flavour of work undertaken by the Network is detailed below.

Our Coordinators have continued to provide an excellent service on behalf of the Network. Above all we strive to provide a point of contact for all older people across the Highlands that is trusted and readily accessible. We support opportunities for older people to engage, get involved and be heard in planning activities, care, and services that contribute to our wellbeing and prevent ill-health/harm. We make particular efforts to engage with older people disadvantaged by social isolation; living in remote and rural areas; facing difficulties accessing information and support; being digitally excluded or disadvantaged; living with dementia, caring for someone, or living in a care home; living with disability, long-term conditions, sensory impairment; or just feeling that their voice isn't being heard.

What follows is just a fraction of the service we provide by both our Coordinators and Trustees.

Activities connecting with and supporting groups and services

- Badenoch Men's Shed Steering Group: supporting initial public meetings
- Café to Connect: holding 2 events in Badenoch and planning for future
- Connecting through Indoor Kurling: 4 groups borrowed equipment and held sessions
- Sunday Lunch Club Inverness: supporting to appoint new co-ordinator to continue opportunity
- Talk Lochaber: recruiting new volunteers to continue service
- Annat Village Gathering Project: supporting the group in planning/promoting and at the event
- Playlist for Life Musical Tea: event, radio show and media articles promoting the charity
- Lochaber Action for Moss Park: giving and gathering support throughout this campaign
- Voluntary Action Lochaber Befriending Project: assisting with scoping and seeking funding
- Improving Information Exchange: bringing Third Sector and NHS representatives together
- Alzheimer Scotland Inverness and Badenoch & Strathspey: strengthening links
- Highland BlindCraft Sensory Services: promoting information re new service
- Care Inspectorate: research in Care Homes project – Ambivalent Noise
- NHS Highland 'Near Me' in Fort William: connections for promoting new venue
- Scottish Care: supporting Care Home Olympics and Care Homes Career events
- NHS Highland Vaccination Service: encouraging participation in consultation
- Age Scotland: collaborating on "How to Age Well" workshops" Highland Roadshow
- Youth Philanthropy Initiative: Dingwall Academy successfully bid to fund HSCN £3000
- Inverness OpenArts: Steering Group and joint funding application for new project
- Generations Working Together: promoting and contributing to planning for conference

We also connected through giving talks, holding information stalls and attending meetings and events throughout Highland.

Engagement as Stakeholders

- Joint Monitoring Committee
- Highland Health & Social Care Partnership Strategic Planning Group
- Fort William Community Action Group
- Lochaber Area Place Planning Stakeholder Group
- NHS Highland Re-design Stakeholder Group
- NHS Highland Lochaber District Planning Group and Waiting and Keeping Well Working Group
- Safety on Highland Public Transport Meetings
- AbilityNet BT Digital Voice Roll-out
- Highland Hospice – End of Life Care Together Oversight Group
- Social Security Scotland
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Consultation
- Highland Council re Equalities Outcomes engagement planning
- End of Life Support for Everyone (EASE)

Individual and Group Requests – some examples

- Individual request for information re visual impairment following closure of Sight Action
- Older Carer looking for information/signposting re dementia diagnosis
- Individual needing help with overpayments to energy company
- Where to borrow, hire or buy mobility scooters
- Where to get a Stair Lift
- How to avoid dementia
- How to deal with suspected neglect of an older person
- Support for older person without English language
- Where to get advice with Computer Virus
- Linking an individual with NHS Lead re service re-design
- TOLL NHS Project re promoting final events and shaping legacy
- Scams Talks requests
- National Trust for Scotland, Torridon: how to engage with and involve older people
- Connecting Carers Disabled Carers Consultation – promotion to potential participants
- Inverness OpenArts Project – participation in new joining project
- Befriending Caithness - loaned Kurling Equipment
- Community Council re Digital Voice and impact on Help Call
- Avoch School re Intergenerational Gardening

HSCN Tea-Breaks

The hour long weekly on-line Tea-breaks have continued, providing a forum for connection for those attending regularly from Ross-shire, Skye, Sutherland, Inverness and its environs. Once a month an invited guest spoke to their specialist interest. These included Glaucoma UK, Alzheimer Scotland, Red Chair (Digital Support), Marie Curie Right to Palliative Care Consultation, Caithness Museum Archive, Highland Folk Museum, Pension Age Disability Benefit Launch, Home Energy Scotland, NHS Highland Health Improvement Specialist, Highland Council Welfare Support Team, Highland Council Equalities Strategy.

Scam Talks

Trustees continued to offer Peer-to-Peer talks on Scams and have also developed new talks on a variety of topics

HSCN News-Sheets

Our bi-monthly News-sheets have continued to be well received and valued by our members and affiliated groups. They provide a forum for information exchange and social contact.

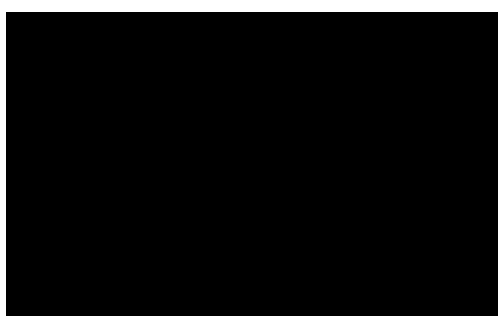
Gatherings and Get-togethers

Gatherings of our members took place at our AGM held at Inshes Church on 12th September. Members's Get-togethers were held in Badenoch & Strathspey on 20th May, in partnership with Age Scotland and, on 18th November, a Lochaber Get-together was held in partnership with Caol Bite and Blether Group and the Highland Council Tenant Participation Team.

The financial year ends with the knowledge that our funding from NHS Highland has been halved for the coming financial year and will stop thereafter. This resulted in redundancy notices being issued to our Coordinators which become effective on 31st July 2025. Apart from the amazing work they have undertaken on behalf of HSCN and older people in the Highlands what will be lost most is their listening voice at the end of a phone willing to find answers to an individual's worries.

The Trustees have submitted funding applications to support the continued work of the Network, specifically local Tea-break Gatherings and our news-sheets, and we will continue to identify projects and funding streams which enable us to benefit older people in Highland.

On behalf of the Network I wish to record our thanks to our Trustees, who give freely of their time and expertise, to our two Coordinators and [REDACTED], our Administrator and Finance Officer, who made it all happen.



HIGHLAND SENIOR CITIZENS NETWORK

SC034260



Receipts and payments accounts							
For the period from	Period start date			to	Period end date		
	Day	Month	Year		Day	Month	Year
	01	04	2024		31	03	2025

Section A Statement of receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Expendable endowment funds to nearest £	Permanent endowment funds to nearest £	Total funds current period to nearest £	Total funds last period to nearest £
A1 Receipts						
Donations	880				880	1,675
Legacies					-	
Grants	5,400	48,000			53,400	53,750
Receipts from fundraising activities	-				-	
Gross trading receipts					-	
Income from investments other than land and buildings					-	
Rents from land & buildings					-	
Gross receipts from other charitable activities					-	
					-	
A1 Sub total	6,280	48,000	-	-	54,280	55,425
A2 Receipts from asset & investment sales						
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets					-	
Proceeds from sale of investments					-	
A2 Sub total	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	6,280	48,000	-	-	54,280	55,425
A3 Payments						
Expenses for fundraising activities					-	
Gross trading payments					-	
Investment management costs					-	
Payments relating directly to charitable activities	3,418	46,097			49,515	56,368
Grants and donations					-	
Governance costs:					-	
Audit / independent examination		100			100	100
Preparation of annual accounts					-	2,445
Legal costs					-	
Other					-	
					-	
A3 Sub total	3,418	46,197	-	-	49,615	58,913
A4 Payments relating to asset and investment movements						
Purchases of fixed assets					-	
Purchase of investments					-	
A4 Sub total	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	3,418	46,197	-	-	49,615	58,913
Net receipts / (payments)	2,862	1,803	-	-	4,665	(3,488)
A5 Transfers to / (from) funds						
					-	
Surplus / (deficit) for year	2,862	1,803	-	-	4,665	(3,488)

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Report to the trustees/members of

Charity name

HIGHLAND SENIOR CITIZENS NETWORK

Registered charity number

SC034260

On the accounts of the charity for the period

Period start date

Day

Month

Year

01

APRIL

2024

to

Period end date

Day

Month

Year

31

MARCH

2025

Set out on pages

PREVIOUS 2 PAGES

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) 2005 Act and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:-

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations

have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed**:

Name:

Date:

01/10/2025

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE IN ACCOUNTING

Address:

VOLUNTARY ACTION LOCHABER

AN DROCHAID

CLAGGAN, FORT WILLIAM

PH33 6PH