



COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ANNUAL REPORT
2024-25

WELCOME

Welcome to the Community Learning & Development Annual Report for 2024-2025.

This Annual Report reflects key areas of work undertaken by Community Learning & Development (CLD) staff to support the young people and communities we engage with to build greater resilience and stronger communities in the Outer Hebrides.

Firstly, it is important to meet the team of staff who provide the support to individuals and communities.

OUR TEAM



Fiona
MacInnes



Katie
Denehy



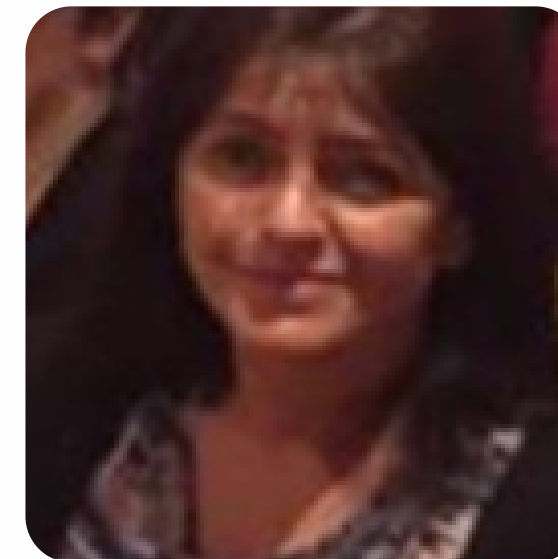
Joanne
MacLennan



Eilidh
Mackay



Laura
Skinner



Angela
Macritchie



Alice
Murray



Mairi
MacIver



Erica
Clark



Morven
Greensheilds



Sharon
Reid

FOREWARD

I am pleased to present the 2024-25 Annual Report for Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Community Learning & Development (CLD), which outlines just some of the achievements and work that CLD has been involved in from 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025.

Community Learning and Development (CLD) support people to make positive changes in their own lives or in their community, by using a range of different approaches, including youth work and community development.

The current iteration of the CLD Partnership Plan 2024-2027 was published in September 2024 (it requires to be refreshed every 3 years). The plan created in conjunction with key partners sets out the priorities for CLD and its Partners across five key areas – Promoting Lifelong Learning; Strengthening Community Engagement; Enhancing Social Inclusion; Empowering Youth and Evaluating and Improving. Progress against the plan is recorded by an annual self evaluation with partners and externally by colleagues in HMIE who do regular inspections on the CLD Plan Progress.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and youth work are intrinsically linked, with youth work playing a crucial role in upholding and advancing children's rights. Within this Annual Report CLD are highlighting the range of UNCRC Articles that are being met through each project.

Fiona Macinnes (CLD Manager)

YOUTH WORK

Relevant UNCRC
Articles
12, 15, 31

Pointers Youth Cafe

Pointers Youth Cafe

Friday afternoon drop in has continued throughout the year. We have seen some new faces from S1 & S2 coming along now. A Saturday evening drop in started after the young people requested it. This continued for about 5 months until we put it on hold over the summer to use the staff hours to offer more activities throughout the summer period. Saturday evening drop in then ceased due to staffing issues. Regular drop ins were held over the summer break with different activity days as requested such as a water fight and getting festival ready with hair and face painting for the Heb Celt Festival.

There were requests for something for the older age group. A Thursday evening drop in for 18-25 year olds was set up. This unfortunately also had to stop due to staffing issues.



Santa's Grotto

The annual Santas Grotto was held, run very efficiently by a group of young people from the Youth Committee leaving the staff with nothing to do but enjoy the evening! We had over 300 people on the evening and donations raised for Alzheimer Scotland – Western Isles, as voted for by the young people, raised an amazing £350! The Community Pay Back team took the Youth Committees vision and painted the grotto, built a fireplace and put up all the high up decorations. We are very grateful to team for their assistance.

A fundraising music night was held in partnership with local musicians where we had 5 musicians performing aged 16 – 30. Pointers hope to get back to holding music nights on a more regular basis. These are open to all in the community, not just young people.

YOUTH WORK

Pointers Youth Cafe

Relevant UNCRC
Articles
3, 5, 6, 18

Young Carers Group

This year Pointers Young Carers Western Isles has been launched offering support to all young carers from Primary 4 – Secondary 6 Western Isles wide.

Young Carers Group in Lewis continue to meet weekly for a social time, giving them a break from their caring roles. Regular weekly activities include cooking, sports, chilling out & game days.



Young Mums Group.

Pointers are working in partnership Family Support Team. There are now 2 weekly groups running with 17 mums being supported over the last year. Groups meet weekly, with termly plans development with mums, to offer both mums and children, a fun, safe space to learn and play.

Opportunities provided allow mums to find out more about different services available to them such as apprenticeships, mental health support and more in-depth support that the family team can offer such as one to one support, Anti-natal and post-natal Peep – Learning Together Programme, Positive Parenting Programme, baby massage and much more.

Some of the activities this year included outings to the Castle Grounds and the swimming pool, learning about weaning and cooking foods for the babies, Summer outing to Ness swing park, crafts and learning lots of songs and reading stories with Bookbug.

YOUTH WORK

Uist Youth Cafe

Relevant UNCRC
Articles
3, 5, 6, 18



Uist Youth Cafe is open to secondary age students, with over 30 young people attending. Each week S6 pupils volunteer and are working towards their Saltire Award and Youth Scotland Awards.

The Youth Cafe also offered summer outings including fishing trips, venturing around South Uist, visiting Uist Unearthed along with organising 2 workshops at Cothrom.



YOUTH WORK

Youth Work In Schools

Relevant UNCRC
Articles
3,12,13,31

Nurture Groups

Nurture groups are safe places for pupils in schools to come together to take part in activities that build resilience and promote positive relationships between peers. In Harris, CLD visits Leverhulme Memorial School and Sir E Scott School to work with pupils on a weekly basis.

Enhanced P7 transitions have been delivered to some pupils needing extra support in addition to the CLD Transitions programme and other activities include enterprise projects, arts and crafts and games.



Mentors in Violence Prevention

The Mentors in Violence Prevention programme was delivered to nearly 60 S6 pupils in the Nicolson Institute at the beginning of the term. There are plans to run the programme again, with the aim of including S2 pupils in the next phase.



YOUTH WORK

Youth Work In Schools

Relevant UNCRC
Articles
2,3,12,13,17,28

P7 Transitions

Community Learning & Development in partnership with local schools deliver a programme for pupils on P7 who will be moving onto Secondary School.

The purpose of the Transition programme is to:

- Increase young people's confidence in making the transition from primary into secondary
- Increase young people's knowledge of practical aspects of secondary school
 - To introduce them to their peers from other communities
- To answer any questions and dispel myths and fears

While doing the transitions workshops pupils worked towards a Dynamic Youth Award.



YOUTH WORK

Youth Work In Schools

Guidance Inputs

CLD deliver Guidance Inputs to pupils in secondary schools. Topics include Duke Of Edinburgh's Award and Young Scot.



Youth Work Week

Youth Work Week is celebrated in November and CLD provided a range of events and activities across the islands.

In Harris, CLD along with local partners, ran a consultation session in SES for P6-S6 pupils to get their input for the Local Place Plan being prepared by the Harris Forum Development Officer.

In Lewis, CLD hosted a free youth event in the Stornoway Town Hall bringing together youth work partners - offering fun activities, games and lots of freebies.

In Uist, youth work partners shared youth information with young people in Sgoil Lionacleit and at the Youth Cafe.

In Barra, CLD worked with other local partners and had a stall in the school where pupils took part in MSYP survey and also gave input into the Local Place Plan with Area Forum Development Officer.

Relevant UNCRC
Articles
2,3,4,12,13.17

Youth Drop Ins

CLD run a weekly drop ins for pupils in the Nicolson Institute. Drop In Sessions run on Tuesdays for DofE participants and on Thursdays for S1 pupils.



YOUTH WORK

Duke Of Edinburgh's Award

Relevant UNCRC
Articles
3, 5, 6, 13, 31

DofE helps young people build life-long belief in themselves, supporting them to take on their own challenges, follow their passions, and discover talents they never knew they had. Annually we celebrate young people's achievements with an Awards Ceremony which in Lewis is held every November. This is an opportunity to showcase the young people's achievements through the Award we also acknowledge the contribution that volunteers and leaders have made in helping the young people achieve their Award. In Harris, Uist & Barra this is usually held at the School Prizegiving events in these areas.



The Award continues to be a success in the Western Isles thanks to the number of Volunteers that support our Young People to achieve their goal. This Year the Angus Clinton Memorial Award was presented to Donald Macsween who supports the Nicolson Institute Group, this award was presented by Alasdair Allan, MSP.

The Mark Elliott Hebrides Mountain Rescue Team Memorial Award

This year the Western Isles Duke of Edinburgh's Award worked in partnership with the Hebrides Search and Rescue team to commemorate Mark Elliot who was a dedicated member of team since its inception in 2010. The HebMRT Team wanted to have an award that would be presented to a Duke of Edinburgh's Award participant who demonstrated exceptional abilities to work as part of a team, make decisions under pressure, has good problem-solving skills, demonstrates leadership, enthusiasm and commitment.

The recipient of this Award is Katie C Shaw from Stornoway who participates in the Award through the Nicolson Institute Group is pictured receiving the Mark Elliot Memorial Award from Alasdair Allan, MSP.

YOUTH WORK

Duke Of Edinburgh's Award

Barra Group DofE Awards

17 young people took part in the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award and 8 Barra participants took part in their Silver award. This award is popular in Barra with over 80% of S3-6's signing up to take part each year. All the young people who sign up help to volunteer in local clubs and organisations and in 2024, over 210 volunteering hours were amassed between them all and this is a tremendous amount of volunteering hours given back to the community by young people.

Relevant UNCRC
Articles
3, 5, 6, 13, 31

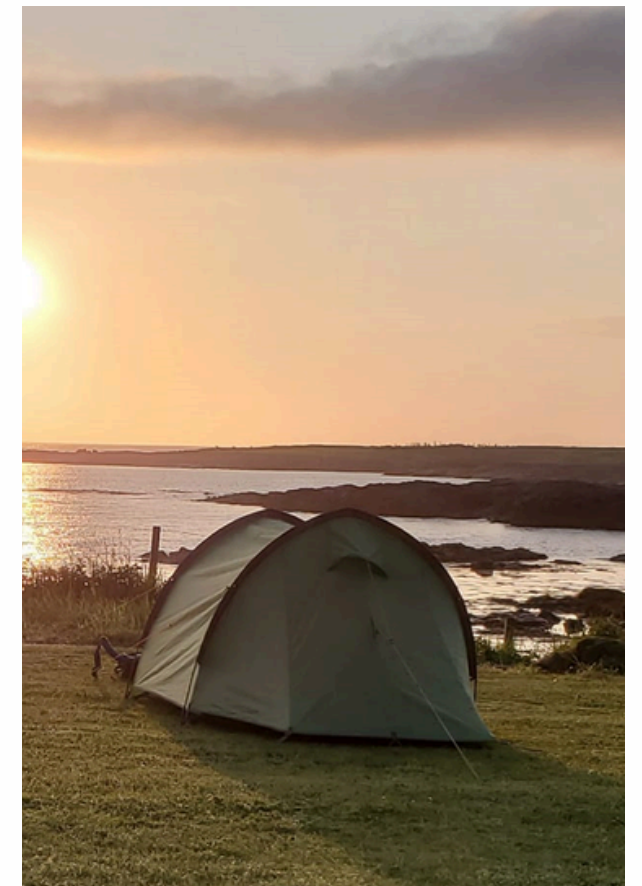
Sir E Scott Group DofE Awards

Sir E Scott participants were presented with their Awards at a School Assembly in September 2024. There were 7 Full Bronze Awards, 12 Bronze Section Certificates; and 7 Certificates of Achievement were presented



Lewis Annual Award Presentation – December 2024

The Western Isles Duke of Edinburgh's Award Ceremony for Lewis participants took place on Friday 29th November in the Assembly Hall, Nicolson Institute, Stornoway. This year's Ceremony was opened by Cllr Paul Finnegan, Chair of Education Sports & Children's Services Committee, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. Over 100 young people were presented with Duke of Edinburgh's Award Certificates which is a significant achievement. 44 Bronze Sections certificates; 19 Full Bronze Awards; 30 Silver Section Certificates; 5 Full Silver Awards; 15 Gold Section Certificates & 1 Gold Award completed. 40 Certificates of Achievement were also presented. The Awards were presented by Alasdair Allan, MSP.



YOUTH WORK

Young Scot

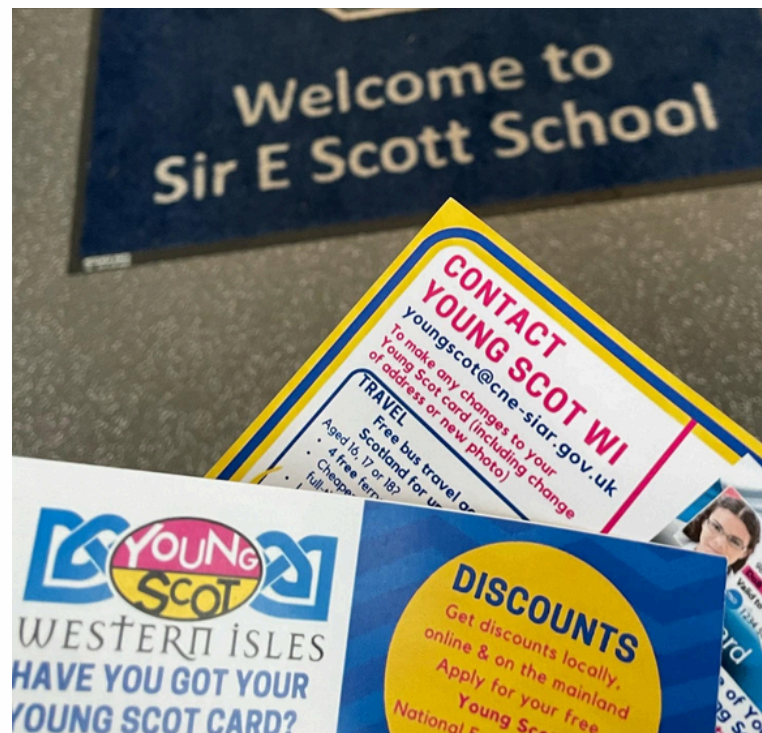
Young Scot is delivered through Community Learning and Development (CLD). CLD promote the Young Scot opportunities through school inputs, youth work activities and their social media. CLD manage the applications and processing of all Young Scot applications for the Western Isles.

- 3,651 young people have a valid Young Scot NEC in the Western Isles. This represents 88% of the estimated population of 11 to 25 year olds in the area
- 606 young people are signed up to Young Scot Membership - giving access to a range of entitlements such as rewards and online discounts.
- 40 young people in the Western Isles received Young Scot Reward vouchers in April (Coop, ASOS & Amazon) - total value of £600.
- Young people with cards issued in the Western Isles have made 2686 bus journeys from April 2024 - March 2025.
- CLD ran fortnightly 'Drop-in & Chat' events in Pointers Youth Cafe.

Relevant UNCRC

Articles

2, 12, 13,
17, 24, 27



YOUTH WORK

Barra Summer Activities

Relevant UNCRC
Articles
12, 13, 15, 28, 31

In Barra, 40 young people took part in sit-on kayaking sessions during the summer months of 2024. Living so close to the sea, it was a great opportunity to encourage as many young people as possible to take part in these activities. Great fun was had by everyone!





YOUTH WORK

Youth Awards

Relevant UNCRC
Articles
3, 5, 6, 13, 31

CLD deliver Decider Skills courses in primary schools, learning about the 12 Decider skills and how to use them when they are feeling uptight, stressed.

Pictured are pupils from Breasclete School who completed their Decider Skills Course. These pupils also completed a Hi5 Award.



30 Hi5 Awards and 116 Dynamic Youth Awards were achieved through CLDs work in local schools and in youth groups. They are credit-rated awards that can act as a framework to record and recognise young people's achievements.



Resilient Kids

The Resilient Kids Together program was created by Highland council with the design to foster a person's emotional literacy. This program widely recognizes that when emotional intelligence is targeted within a school curriculum, academic achievement is raised, nurturing builds resilience and being included has a positive effect on emotional wellbeing and behavior.

16 sessions were delivered in total to P1-4 and P5-7 Nurture groups in Castlebay Primary School with the aim of the program to help pupils to develop skills, build confidence and become more resilient. 8 sessions were delivered to S3 year group and the program explored various issues which helps pupils to develop skills, build confidence and become more resilient.

YOUTH WORK

Hot Spot Intervention Team

Relevant UNCRC
Articles
12, 13, 15, 28, 31



The Hotspot Intervention team project is aimed at responding to the wants and needs of young people through a need-led programme. The H.I.T (Hotspot Intervention Team) work primarily in Stornoway North and South and in pockets where there is little to no youth work provision, and in areas where anti-social behaviour and the associated risks have been highlighted as an issue. The main aim of all activities offered is that young people are engaged in positive youth work activities within their area to deflect from risk taking behaviour.

Since April 2024 158 young people have registered and taken part in activities organised by CLD and H.I.T



2024 Activities

- Grab and Go Bruch Club in Newmarket and Cearns
- Activity Run pop up event
 - Zorb Balls
 - Swimming
- Fishing species hunt
- Monthly Sea Fishing competitions
- One to One support
- Small Group support
- Hebridean Celtic Festival
- Summer Drop in at the Sea Angling
 - Football Coaching
- Sport Centre free play activity
 - Christmas Rave
- Christmas Drop in and parties
 - H.I.T Bus
 - Pantomime



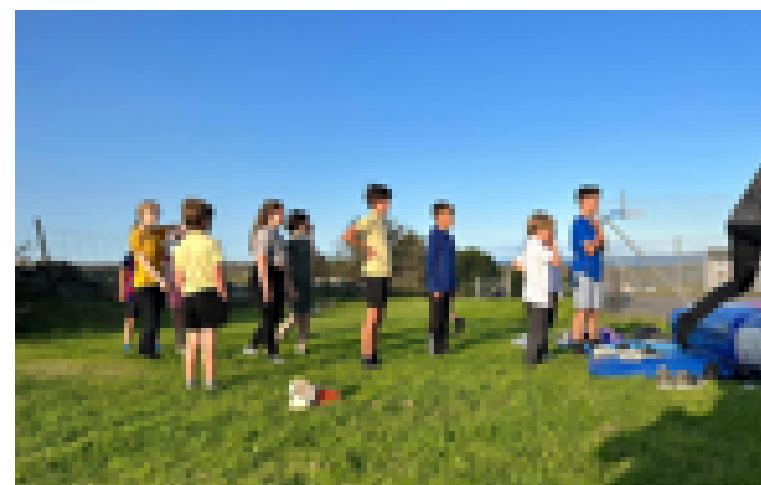
Sea Angling Junior Group

Sea Angling Junior Group running every Monday in the Sea angling in partnership with H.I.T and the SYSAC targeting 1st to 4th years. 47 young people are registered for this group with 26-30 attending each week on average

April to October The Sea Angling Juniors participate in monthly Sea Angling competitions on the SYSAC2. A Juniors presentation ceremony was held in December 2024. This is the 2nd of its kind to take place in over a decade. With the first one taking place in December 2023.

YOUTH WORK

Hot Spot Intervention Team



Relevant UNCRC
Articles
12, 13, 15, 28, 31

Christmas Event

SSEN Transmission's Lewis Hub project donated £2,000 to the HIT Christmas Events. Among the activities were parties for under-5s and Primary 1-7s that featured a Santa's grotto and cupcake decorating, among many other activities. Meanwhile, a Christmas rave for S1-4 pupils featuring local DJ Gordie Campbell included gaming stations and a disco dome. These activities provided support, snacks, entertainment and gifts to over 300 young people, and engaged with over 150 parents and guardians over two days of events.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Youth Voice

Members of Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs)
Ellie Denehy MSYP and Alannah Logue MSYP both attended the 81st Sitting of the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) in Stirling.



Ellie Denehy and Alannah Logue (Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament for the Western Isles) conducted a youth survey during Youth Work Week 2024.

219 young people completed the survey, 96% were aged between 12-16 years old.

Through the initiative, Alannah and Ellie, sought to give young people the chance to share their perspectives on life in their island communities and what could be improved. They have compiled a report which has been sent to Councillors and decision makers for consideration and action.



Relevant UNCRC Articles
2, 3, 12, 13, 14, 29

MSYP Training

MSYPs had the opportunity to join their peers from Orkney and Shetland for a series of valuable training sessions, delivered in partnership by the Scottish Youth Parliament and the Scottish Government. The sessions focused on the National Islands Plan and provided an important opportunity for island MSYPs to connect, collaborate, and strengthen their understanding of key issues affecting island communities.

This opportunity was generously funded by the Scottish Government.

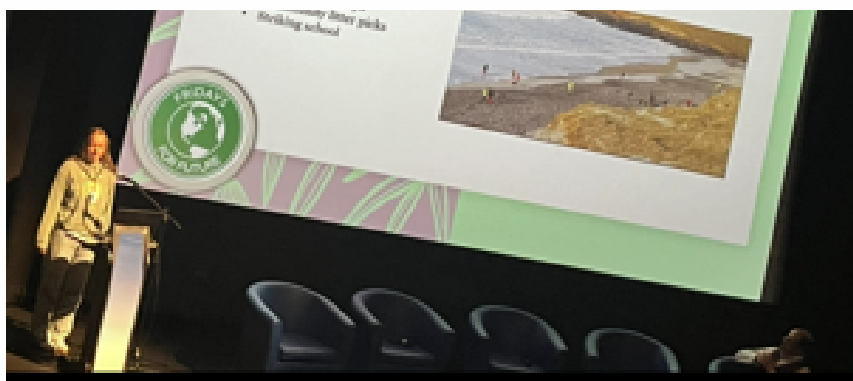
OH-HOP1

Ellie was a key note speaker at the Outer Hebrides Climate Conference sharing the passion she has to tackle climate change.

This was Ellie Denehy's first Sitting as an MSYP and the Sitting proved to be a great start to the 2023-2025 Membership. Members of Scottish Youth Parliaments (MSYPs) debated motions from free access to outdoor sporting facilities to calling for improved public transport.

The Western Isles for the first time has an MSYP as a trustee on the SYP Board - Alannah. In this important role, Alannah will be involved in key decision making within SYP. This is a huge achievement.

The 82nd Sitting of the Scottish Youth Parliament took place in November at the Scottish Parliament. MSYPs debated many topics including Gaelic education and vaping. Unfortunately due to fog Ellie was unable to attend.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Harris Youth Council

Harris Youth Council took part in a Radio Nan Gaidheal Feasgar programme which came from Leverburgh. Young people were given the chance to talk about the Youth Council, their hobbies and how important the Gaelic language is to them.

They also organised a Health and Wellbeing event for S3 to S6 girls where they enjoyed a delicious lunch, did some journalling and made a candle with the Essence of Harris team. The day was rounded off with some ceilidh dancing led by the Harris Ceilidh Dancing Group



Youth Voice



Barra & Vatersay Young Islanders Youth Voice

The Young Islanders of Barra & Vatersay have been working hard in highlighting local concerns they have about the flooding of their local grass pitch and also have highlighted the poor state of the playpark in Castlebay. They did a walkabout and highlighted all the blocked culverts and areas that need improved in Castlebay and written to their local Councillors to highlight these issues as well as met with their local MSYP.

The young islanders also took part in a conservation project which involved taking a boat trip to Mingulay and working with National Trust ranger and bird volunteers. They learnt a lot about the seals and the bird colony and the importance of biodiversity and also enjoyed "beating back the bracken" at the old village to help reduce the weeds taking over the ruins of the village

Relevant UNCRC Articles

2, 3, 12, 13, 14, 29

The Lewis Youth Council

The Lewis Youth Council meet monthly and have engaged in local and national consultations, promoting healthy screen habits for young people and running well being opportunities for young people.

The Lewis Youth Council received funding from Western Isles Development Trust to provide activities during the Summer. These included well being workshops for new S1 pupils, island road trip and Pizza with a PC to allow pupils to get to know the new Schools Police Officer.

Uist Youth Cafe

As part of the Youth Cafe activities young people engage with decision makers and are consulted on their views. The Cabinet Secretary for Transport Scotland, Fiona Hyslop, visited Youth Café to discuss transportation issues affecting young people living on the Uist Islands.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Youth Voice

YIN Skye Residential

The Young Islanders in Barra took part in a Young Islanders Network Skye Residential, meeting with 30 other young islanders from Lewis, Coll, Tiree, Skye, Raasay and Orkney. As well as going to Raasay to take part in a conservation project, they actively engaged with representatives from the Scottish Government's Islands team to discuss the National Islands Plan. This involved making contributions to 7 themes linked to the National Plan as well as engaging in the Housing challenge report which highlighted the lack of affordable housing for young people throughout the islands.



Lewis and Harris Meet Up

Lewis and Harris Youth Councils set up an S1 meet up for pupils in Sir E Scott and The Nicolson Institute. The young people discussed the positive aspects of island life and developed their ice skating skills.



Relevant UNCRC
Articles
2,3,12,13,14,29



Learning for Sustainability

The Scottish Youth Parliament consulted the Lewis Youth Council and pupils at the Nicolson Institute on behalf of the Scottish Government and Learning For Sustainability Youth Leadership Team, on their understanding and experiences of Learning for Sustainability. Topics discussed included outdoor learning, fast fashion, and school and youth residential opportunities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Area Forum

CLD support the various Area Fora throughout the Western Isles. Barra & Vatersay Area Forum; Harris Forum; Pairc Area Forum; Uig Forum; Dalmore to Lochgavich Forum, Ness & Westside Forum, Point Forum.

Who is on the Area Forum?

The Area Forum group is made up of representatives from all community groups in the area.

The Role of the local Area Forum is:

- to promote and grow the area's economy and maximise the full potential of community and place
- to be a focal point for community driven ideas and solutions that will support reinvigorating the local economy
- to identify, take ownership of, prioritise and drive the delivery of new opportunities
- to make recommendations to the Comhairle, HIE and other agencies on how diminishing resources can best be utilized in support of reinvigorating the local economy
- to engage directly with key sectors to support the delivery of sectoral plans and priorities
- to assess all Crown Estate applications for their Ward area
- to develop local plans for their area.
-



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Locality Group

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 places a responsibility on CPPs to produce two types of plans, outlining local priorities, required actions and timescales. The first is the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP), which encompasses the entire local authority area. The second type is a Locality Plan and covers smaller areas, usually focusing on the areas requiring most improvement. Each CPP will produce at least one Locality Plan. As the main aim is to address local needs and ambitions, it is important the views of the community are heard and incorporated into any plans.

The Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership (OHCPP) have agreed two priority areas, one of which is Stornoway West (Stornoway North) – with a particular focus on the Cearns within the Stornoway West area. As a result, a locality group was formed in the Stornoway West area (NHS) Stornoway North (LA). There are several groups from Stornoway North represented within the group, as well as Police Scotland, NHS, CNES, HHP (Hebridean Housing Partnership) and the Stornoway North Development Worker. As a group an area plan was developed focusing on the wants and needs of the area and working towards improving life chances across the area. In 2019 the first area plan was developed with a 2nd plan published in 2023. Each representative reports to the locality and in turn the locality group report to the CPP.

ADULT LEARNING

Learning for Fun

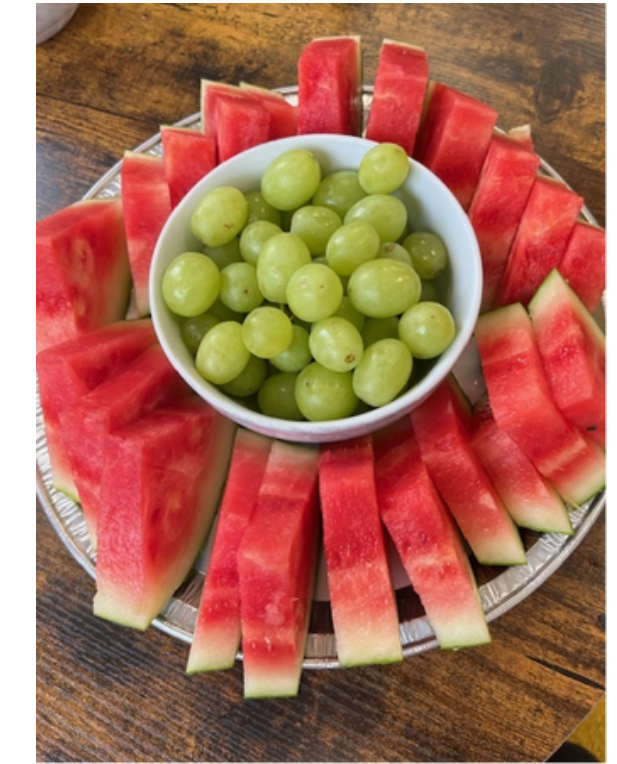
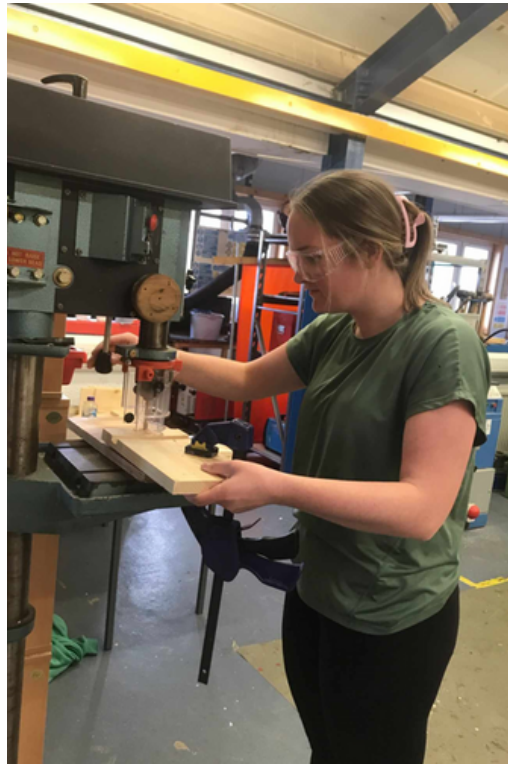
Learning for Fun group is a partnership between CLD, Beairteas Bharraigh & Barra Learning Centre and brings together local tutors on the island who run different adult creative classes. These classes help bring people together in particular during the winter months and have enabled new skills and new friendships to be formed.

- 24 weeks of classes were run from Oct 2024-March 2025
- 70 classes took place between Art, Pottery, Sewing, Cookery & Garland
 - 60 individual adults took part in classes
 - Age of participants 16-80 years old
 - Average age - over 45 years



ADULT LEARNING

International Women's Day



40 women in Barra took part in a Women's Day event in March 2024 which offered 20 different classes throughout the day run by local tutors. These classes varied from Woodwork, bike maintenance, Crowdie making, pickleball, Neurological Art, Creative Arts, Yoga and DNA classes. This event was funded by Spagan, Barra Cancer group and Councillors Ward Fund which enabled free childcare & lunch to be offered as well as helping cover the running costs.

The feedback given from this event was overwhelmingly positive with 100% of the participants stating they would be keen to sign up for future classes and that the single most significant learning benefit was "Meeting other people" and "taking some time out to learn something new".



In Stornoway, Community Learning & Development had the privilege of celebrating International Women's Day (IWD) in collaboration with the Western Isles Rape Crisis Centre and Safer Outer Hebrides. The event featured a range of engaging workshops, including journaling, skincare, and craft activities, providing participants an opportunity to connect, learn, and reflect on the importance of IWD.

All participants enjoyed the event and comments included "This event has helped me to open up more and just be myself", "it got me out of the house" and "I enjoyed the crafts and having time to relax with it, and being with other nice women".

ADULT LEARNING

Cearns

A number of drop ins have been made available to the immediate community over the year, including benefits advice, HHP, Budgeting, Cooking sessions and parental employability sessions

UHI – Cook along session

Benefits advice workshops

HHP tenants drop in sessions

Triple P parenting Training

Parental employability support

Smoking Cessation Drop in

T.I.G Information Drop In with a particular focus on energy efficiency

Place Standard

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Crown Estate

The Crown Estate Revenue Fund was introduced as a UK-wide programme created and funded by the UK Government with the aim of encouraging the economic development of UK coastal communities by awarding funding to create sustainable economic growth and jobs. New Scottish arrangements were announced by Scottish Ministers in 2019, replacing the CCF and allocating funding to coastal Local Authorities to deliver coastal community benefit. The funding allocations come from revenue generated from Scottish Crown Estate marine assets out to 12 nautical miles.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar has utilised the Fund for a mix of strategic investments and to create a local Coastal Fund to support local projects and initiatives. Initially, the Comhairle sought to stimulate community wealth building and community empowerment by devolving project consideration and decision-making down to each council Ward area and It is proposed to maintain that broad approach going forward.

The CLD Team has been involved in the dissemination of Crown Estate (renamed Coastal Communities Fund) for the last four years and assists community groups to create change in their communities via locally supported funding applications. Confidence has grown amongst community groups as they have successfully navigated this funding landscape, using the benefits of decentralised decision making to create positive change throughout the Western Isles.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Crown Estate examples of funded projects

Coastal Erosion at Bragar Cemetery

The Cemetery Committee approached Urras Sgìre Oighreachd Bharabhais for help. The Urras was able to offer them administration help and so was able to help apply for funding as well as give advice on setting up the Just Giving page. The funding for the area of most coastal erosion was raised through Crown Estate Fund, Horshader Community Development Trust and the Just Giving page. The work was project managed by Donald Armstrong of Wallace Stone Consulting Civil Engineers. The tender was awarded to AMK with the stone coming from the North West Aggregates quarry in South Shawbost.



Meavaig North Seasonal Toilet

The CERF5 award was made at the end of June 2024. Time was then spent searching for match funding. Suitable funds were secured at the end of October. Planning Approval was secured at the end of January 2025.

It is hoped that this new infrastructure will help protect the local environment from wild-toileting. It will improve the quality of life of residents who share this space with the visitors. It will make the Eagle Observatory a more attractive visitor destination, indirectly increasing visitor spend in Harris. The Crown Estate Revenue Fund award allowed The North Harris Trust to attract match funding for this community-driven project. Its success will only become apparent when the summer visitor season gets underway.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Sandwichhill Development Trust (SDT)

Sandwichhill Development Trust (SDT) has been working on a project to provide a multi-function Community Building to serve the Sandwichhill Community. Three initial options were proposed:

- A new build on the old school building site meaning the demolition of the old school building
 - A new build on the current football pitch
- Repurpose the old Sandwichhill school building to bring it back into use within the community.

After initial conversations with SDT, it was clear that the new build option on the football pitch was not an option that they wanted to progress, and there was a reluctance to demolish the old school building completely, although some demolition of the most derelict sections would be welcomed. It was concluded that the preferred option was to renovate, repurpose and retain the historic school building.

The project is progressing to the next stage of development, and a business plan is in place with a view to purchasing the old school immediately.

CLD will continue to support this project to its fruition.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Fridge

The main aim of the Community Fridge is to stop good food from going to waste and helping to alleviate food insecurities. The Community Fridge helps support families by providing a warm safe space, hot meal, and fresh foods supplies.



- Funding secured in 2024 totalled £5000 which came from the Community Fridge Network HubBub
- Ongoing support from Co-op Stornoway who keep the fridge topped up on a weekly basis with fresh food supplies.
- Built up a strong rapport with Williamsons who are a fruit and veg wholesaler, who deliver fresh produce to the community fridge bi-weekly.
- All meals are prepared with produce we get from our generous suppliers.
- A total of 605.084 KG of foods has been saved from landfill from 2nd February to 6th December 2024. These weights are the equivalent of a chunky Polar Bear or a skinny wilderbeast.
 - 633 people made use of the Community Fridge in 2024
 - 136 hot meals were delivered to senior citizens in July and August
 - Volunteer run



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Newmarket Gateway

- Funding secured through Crown Estates and CLLD totalled £54,618.20 which has enabled the committee to do the following:
- Cleaning services, Maintenance of playpark and grass cutting, Purchase timber and rebuild the wooden bridges throughout the park.

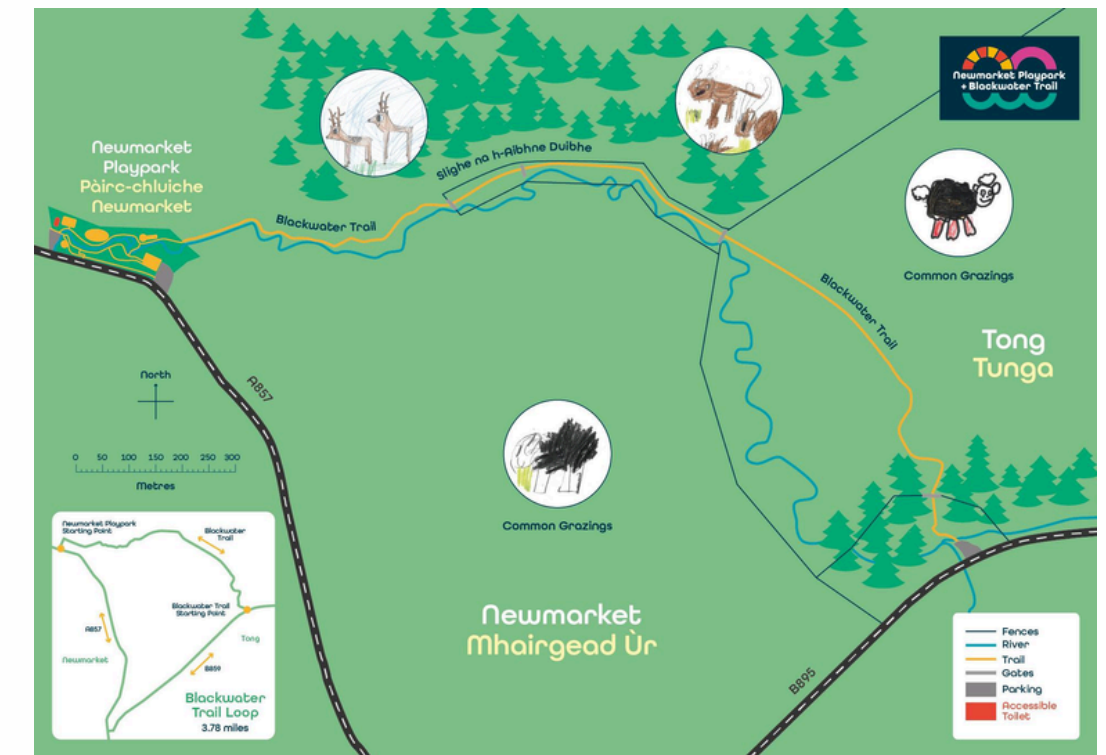
Fundraising Initiatives:

Attended the 3 day Hebridean Celtic Festival with the catering pod. Due to the success the committee have been invited back for H.C.F 2025. This event helped raise much needed funds for the park.

Community Halloween party and Fireworks held at the park for the first time in 2 years. Huge turnout with over 300 people turning out. After purchasing equipment, stock and paying site fees and other vendors the committee raised approximately £3500.

Development Works 2024/25

- New Car Park dug out and developed, providing much needed additional parking
- A new path has been dug out which joins the new carpark to the rest of the park and the bus stop, making access easier and safer.
- New water defences were put in place at the River Bank to stop the river bursting and flooding the park.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Comann nam Parant (Steornabhagh)

The aim of the Association is:

- to promote and support the establishment and maintenance of education through the medium of the Gaelic language, in and around Stornoway, Isle of Lewis. This includes the Stornoway Primary school, Laxdale Primary School and The Nicolson Institute School.

CnES Community Learning and Development (CLD) department in partnership with Comann nam Parant supported and developed several projects in Stornoway South last year.

The partnership supported Stornoway Primary School in developing outdoor pursuit activities that promote the use of Gaelic among children beyond the classroom, encompassing areas such as STEM, sports, and arts and drama.

The MOD tuition programme provides tutors to support pupils preparing to take part in the MOD, motivating them to perform with added confidence. As a result, the school recorded its highest number of entries to date last year.

Eco-resources, including Polycrubs and related equipment, were purchased to support growing and environmental projects. These resources are being actively used, with pupils engaging in approved activities linked to sustainability and environmental learning.

Dileab was supported across various schools, along with the Stornoway Primary play, which was a resounding success—earning the school both 1st and 2nd place in the drama competition.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CLD Strategic Partnership Group

The CLD Strategic Partnership Group (previously known as the CLD Steering Group) was established to create and oversee the delivery of the current Partnership Plan 2024-2027. It consists of key partner organisations who have a role in developing and delivering key targets identified within the plan.

Partners include UHI; SDS; TSi; Public Health WI; Volunteer Centre, Cothrom;

The Strategic Partnership Group in its governance role also undertakes self-evaluation on an annual basis to review progress against targets within the plan and have been engaging with the Improvement Service to add clarity.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Grants

Community Learning & Development staff support the dissemination of grants to community groups. Grants are available to assist groups with running costs of Community Halls; assist Senior Citizens Groups with funding for mainland trips and support youth groups with purchasing equipment.

In 2024-25 3 senior citizens groups received funding for their mainland trips; 16 Performance Grants were paid out to Community Halls/Centres to assist with running costs; North Harris Free Church received funding to assist with purchase equipment for their youth group. The Shed received funding towards a Pilot Project Trip to Glasgow for their youth group.

More information on grants available please follow this link
<https://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/council-tax-benefits-and-grants/community-learning-and-development-grants>

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COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT



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