

# Measuring our performance

An annual report of Corporate Performance is prepared each autumn, covering performance for the previous financial year. An assessment of Council performance against the Corporate Plan and the Council's Programme covers the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015. Good progress is reported with 94% of the commitments (130 out of the total 139) being either completed, on target or where performance is being maintained. The Council will report on statutory performance indicators including national benchmark positions for 2014/15 in March 2016 once national results are available. More information on Council performance is available at [www.highland.gov.uk/performance](http://www.highland.gov.uk/performance)

## Supporting the economy



We aim to support local businesses by paying invoices quickly to enable a healthy cashflow.

We have exceeded our targets to pay **60% of invoices** within **10 calendar days of receipt** and **90%** within **30 days**.

During 2014/15 we paid **76.9% of invoices** within **10 days** and **94.3%** of invoices within **30 days**.

We spent over **£116million** with Highland businesses during 2014/15 and over **£85m** of this with smaller businesses.

We are achieving our target to increase our spending with Highland businesses by 5% by 2017.

During 2014/15 our Business Gateway **supported 424 business start-ups**, up from 250 in the previous year and provided 1013 businesses with advice, information or training.

This was more than double the number in 2013/14.

Get SET for Growth: **Women in Business programme** has been specifically designed to help women grow their businesses by providing business support from people who understand the challenges not just of business in general, but for women in business in particular.

The **percentage of women in our top 5% of non-teaching earners also increased to 48.2% in 2014/15** compared to 46.7% in 2013/14. This is a national benchmark indicator and for available data for 2013/14 we were ranked 22 of 32 in Scotland with a national average of 50.7%.

We monitor our progress in supporting large-scale employment opportunities through the available unemployment rates in key Travel to Work Areas (TTWA).



	2013/14	2014/15
<b>Thurso</b>	2.8%	2.1%
<b>Invergordon</b>	2.9%	2.5%
<b>Inverness &amp; Dingwall</b>	1.8%	1.0%
<b>Skye &amp; Lochalsh Ullapool &amp; Gairloch</b>	2.2%	1.7%

These show good progress against the Scottish average in 2014/15 of 2.5% and progress towards the Highland average of 1.43%.

Our target is to increase the **percentage of young people leaving school moving into education, training or employment** by 3% by 2017.

We achieved **92.7%** in 2013/14.

Figures for 2014/15 (as normal) will be available in January 2016.

We hosted the **Royal National Mod** in October 2014 and this **injected some £3.57 million into the local economy**. This most successful Mod ever was an integral part of the Scottish Government's Homecoming 2014 Programme, with over 3,000 competitors taking part and attracting some 9,000 people.

## Children & young people

**Our bi-annual survey of school pupils** carried out in October 2013 shows a positive picture with **87.5% reporting a positive learning environment**. The results of the latest survey are due in early 2016.

The Physical Activity Plan for pupils aged 5-15 years aims to ensure that **pupils receive two secondary school periods and two hours in primary schools of physical activity** each week. **98%** of schools achieved this during 2014/15, up from 96% the previous session.

For 2013/14 the average tariff scores for examinations in secondary schools within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) cover the average total points awarded for all exam results.

### The scores are:

S4/5/6 **lowest 20%** at **175**, higher than the (national comparator of 163, against a baseline of 151 in 2011/12.



S4/5/6 **middle 60%** at **793**, slightly up on the baseline of 789 in 2011/12.



(national comparator 805)

S4/5/6 **top 20%** at **1763**, up on the baseline of 1747 in 2011/12.



(national comparator 1817)

The proportion of children with **Additional Support Needs** who are able to sustain full time education increased from 94% in 2013/14 to 99% in 2014/15.

## Communities and Infrastructure

The number of people receiving **self-directed support** (SDS) increased to **349** in 2014/15 compared to **262** the previous year.



262 ► 349

Telecare involves the use of technology to support people to live in their own homes. **Telecare also provides a wide range of support** from basic community alarms to enhanced telecare sensors and packages. The full range of **services reached 7512 people in 2014/15** in settings, including sheltered and very sheltered housing, residential and care homes.

### Money advice

The financial benefit to customers from advice services during 2014/15 was:

£  
**3.974**  
million

compared to: **£3.974 million** the previous year.

We also assisted **1330** customers with our money advice and welfare rights service.

Customer contact levels with Citizen's Advice Bureaux (CAB) remain high with **55,419** customer contacts in 2014/15, compared to **42,415** the previous year, and with cases presented increasingly complex, including successfully appealing welfare benefit decisions.

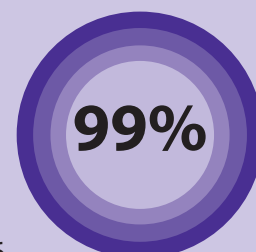


42,415 ► 55,419

### Clean streets

**99% of Highland streets** met the standards of the new **national benchmark indicator** "Cleanliness Score" in 2013/14 compared to the national average of 96%.

We were also **ranked 4 of 32 nationally**. Data for 2014/15 will be available in March 2016.



## Housing

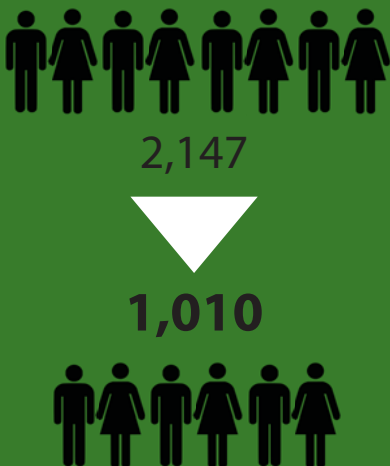
We built 173 council houses in 2014/15, exceeding our target of 120. We have now **built 434 houses** against our target to build 688 houses by March 2017.



We aim to enable the building of 5000 new houses through planning policy by March 2017. We achieved 2599 in the first three years of this 5 year target, including 874 houses in 2014/15. We continue to work with partners and the housing industry to assist in the delivery of the overall target.

The proportion of our council **housing stock meeting the energy efficiency standard in 2014/15 increased to 88.0%**, compared to 75.7% the year before. (subject to verification) This is on trajectory towards a target of 93%, however, there have been particular problems in finding renewable heating options in areas not served by town gas supplies.

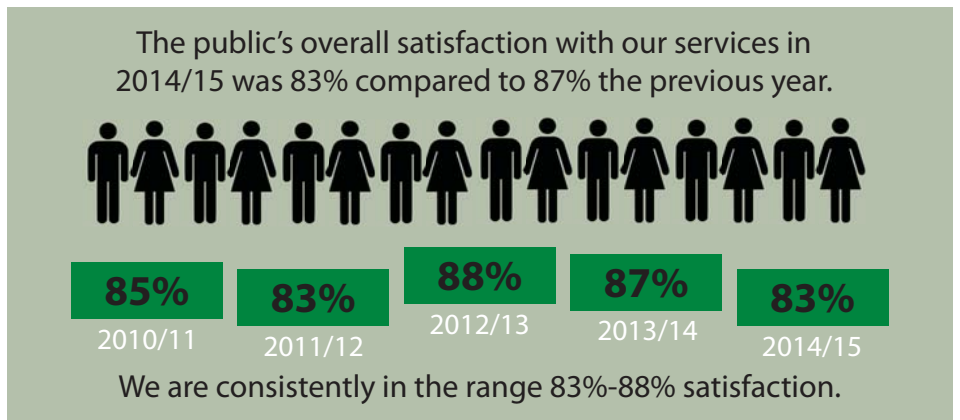
Homeless presentations have reduced from **2,147** in 2010/11 to **1,010** in 2014/15, against a target to reduce presentations to below **1,000** by 2016/17.



# How did we do?

Highland Council's annual Performance and Attitudes survey continues to show a high level of satisfaction with Council services. Every year the Council surveys members of its Citizen's Panel, which is designed to be representative of the adult population. This year 1,024 respondents of a possible 2,346 replied to the survey which asked for opinions on a range of topics.

**Overall satisfaction with Council services continues to remain above the target of 80%**, with the highest scores found for Service Points, walking routes and payment of Council Tax (83%). Refuse/bin collection and parks and open spaces both scored 78%.



Panellists were asked to agree or disagree with statements relating to the Council's values of: listening, being open, valuing, improving, supporting, partnering and delivering. Those that responded agreed that the Council maintained good quality local services, was approachable, helpful and environmentally friendly.

Of those that responded, **88% said that they found it easy to contact the Council**. 60% felt that their request was dealt with by the first person they contacted. 69% of the panel believe the Council meets or exceeds their general expectations, down from 78%.

There are 4 qualities where over half the panel agree with the statements that the Council 'maintains good quality local services' (59% agree), 'is approachable' (58%), 'is helpful' (54%) and 'is environmentally friendly' (53%). On balance, the Council is viewed positively in demonstrating all of these.

In being asked to rank qualities in order of importance, **'maintains good quality services' is ranked 1st**.

Qualities as Ranked in Order of Importance by Respondents in 2015 Survey	Respondents Mentioning Quality in Their Top 5		
	2015 %	2014 %	2013 %
1. Maintains good quality local services	68	69	71
2. Listens to local people	62	58	59
3. Provides value for money	54	51	56
4. Is efficient	38	38	36
5. Treats all residents fairly	36	38	32

The survey also showed an increase in satisfaction with the **Council's website** from last year's survey, with **53% of respondents rating it as good** compared to 39% in 2014. Many more respondents were aware that they could access information via social media, with an increase from 39% to 55%.

Great progress has been made in relation to our on-line services, which have been increased to 23.9% compared to 9.4% the previous year.

<b>% satisfied with elements of website</b>					
Council's website: <a href="http://www.highland.gov.uk">www.highland.gov.uk</a>	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Home page content	53	39	46	46	44
General content	52	36	45	46	45
Ease of use: A to Z	43	31	42	38	35
Navigation	36	23	34	31	30
Search	37	24	32	30	30
Links on Homepage	39	27	35	36	32
Webcasting Council meetings	34	35	46	40	44
Social networking e.g. Facebook, Twitter	26	24	36	49	41



**Almost all aspects of satisfaction with Council website have improved including 53% of respondents rating the homepage as 'good' compared to 39% in 2014.**

### Community life

Respondents were asked to rate a range of local services within their communities. Local schools, local health services and leisure facilities/events (62%) received the top 3 highest ratings.

Highland residents continue to have a high level of engagement in volunteering. **39% of respondents said that they were engaged in volunteering activity**; well above the most recent national average of 28%.



### Handling your complaints

We aim to resolve 80% of all stage 1 complaints within 5 working days and this is an area which requires more work.

During 2014/15 we achieved 48.4%, compared to 53.1% the previous year. We aim to resolve 80%. During 2014/15 we achieved resolution of 65.8% of all stage 2 complaints within 20 working days, compared to 66.1% the previous year.

## Areas for improvement

The survey also highlighted areas that needed improvement. Respondents indicated more dissatisfaction than satisfaction with road repairs and winter maintenance. This is within the context of savings agreed by the council in 2014, which has resulted in fewer gritters. However, work to make these services more innovative and efficient is currently ongoing, with extra funding being made available for roads to ensure that repairs are permanent rather than temporary. The Council is also undertaking a further review of winter maintenance services over this winter.

There was also a reduction in satisfaction levels for some areas of contact with the Council. 56% thought that waiting times for visits to Council offices were "good" compared to 62% in 2014. The number of respondents who were satisfied with the ease of getting through to someone who could help them via telephone fell from 54% to 49%. We are looking to increase the number of services available online and via telephone, to reduce waiting times and give customers a greater choice in when and how they interact with us.

**Leader of the Council, Councillor Margaret Davidson said:**

“The results of this survey show that despite the challenging financial climate and the impact of savings on services to date, Highland Council continues to provide quality services with a very high level of customer satisfaction.”