

Highpoints

Sàr Phuingean

Performance edition

**Ambitious,
Sustainable,
and Connected**

A vision for Highland



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Welcome

This edition of Highpoints focuses on performance and how we measure up against a range of nationally benchmarked figures.

The Highland Council is ambitious to be a high performing Council and our new corporate plan sets out what we want to achieve and that we are an ambitious, sustainable and connected Highland.

We took a new approach in preparing the budget this year. The Chief Executive, Donna Manson, Budget Leader, Cllr Alister Mackinnon, and other senior councillors and officers spent weeks out talking with staff, groups and communities across the Highlands in over 50 engagement sessions. The feedback was presented to Members as part of a two

day cross-party seminar which considered both the budget and governance of the Council.

There is a positive feeling of change and members have really shown the will to work together with staff to tackle what are huge challenges for the Council.

We identified important key themes from our public and staff engagement and these have helped us develop priorities for the Council moving forward.

Equally important is the good practice and innovation which goes on across the Council, by hard working staff who care about the communities they serve and the people they work with. You can read about some examples in this issue of Highpoints.



Cllr Bill Lobban Highland Council Convener

Ambitious for performance

I am ambitious that we are a high performing council, and a performance framework which sets ambitious targets and regularly monitors our progress is fundamental to this. We have some great examples of high performing teams and best practice which can be shared and supported across our services. Let us build on success and challenge where things can be improved or made more efficient. This will enable us to be more sustainable and to do the best for our communities.

We must also be honest about areas where performance is not good enough and identify ways to do things differently and better. This is the basis on which the Council's budget for 2019/20 onwards has been built and will be supported through a corporate performance framework moving forwards.

Donna Manson,
Chief Executive



Council Programme

Local voices | Highland choices

Feedback has been fundamental to developing the Programme which presents a vision for the Council - to be an Ambitious, Sustainable and Connected Highland. The Programme sets out 51 commitments to be delivered over the next 3 years under six priority themes:

- **A Council that champions the Highlands**
- **A place to live**
- **A place to thrive**
- **A place to prosper**
- **A welcoming place**
- **Your Highland Council**

Ambitious

The Council's success in delivering its priorities is wholly dependent on how it uses its substantial financial and physical resources in a sustainable way. The Council has to connect its ambitions for the Highlands with the resources required to deliver them.

www.bit.ly/HighlandCouncilProgramme

Corporate Plan

The Council's Corporate Plan sets out the strategic and operational priorities of the organisation along with the improvement priorities from the Change Programme. The plan also sets out the measures and actions required to deliver and monitor the Council's priorities for 2019-2022.

www.bit.ly/HighlandCouncilCorporatePlan

Ambitious

An Ambitious Highland

As well as our ambition for a high performing council, delivering excellent services and award winning projects, we are ambitious for the Highlands. We are ambitious for our children to achieve their best potential. We are ambitious for our communities and for a vibrant, innovative and sustainable economy. And we are ambitious for our staff.

www.bit.ly/HighlandCouncilProgramme

www.bit.ly/HighlandCouncilCorporatePlan

Award for Caol Campus

Caol community school in Fort William has just been awarded a commendation for best new building at the Inverness Architectural Association biennial awards, and was highly commended in the placemaking category. The buildings are designed to make use of natural light, offer views out across Loch Linnhe and Ben Nevis, and to provide something for all members of the community.

The project brings together both denominational and non-denominational education from three previous schools in the Fort William area – Lochyside and St Mary's RC schools - and Caol primary, and cultural and community facilities – hall, library, offices, an arts organisation, weddings and funerals – on the site of the former Caol primary and community hall.

Kingussie Courthouse

The Kingussie Courthouse also won a commendation for place-making and was the overall winner in the new life for Old Buildings in the Inverness Architectural Association awards.

The aim of the Kingussie Courthouse Rationalisation project was to secure the future of the Grade B listed building which had fallen into disrepair, by providing new office accommodation, service point and community space and which would allow a number of smaller offices in the area to join together in one central location.

The existing building had lain empty for over 10 years and had serious structural issues and dry rot. The works to the building included the removal and reinstatement of the majority of the interior, external stone repair, a new roof and the creation of a new extension and external courtyard to the rear.



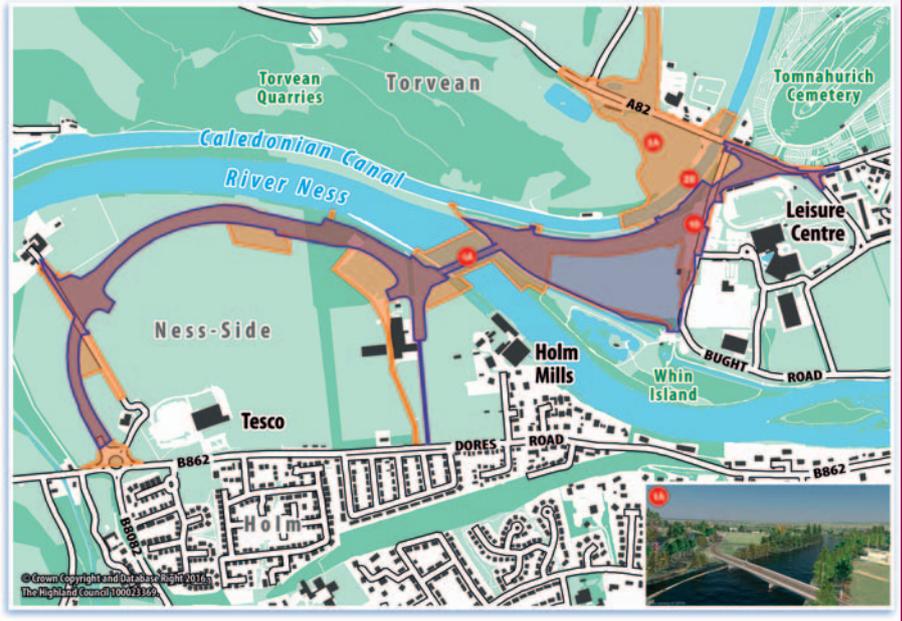
Caol Community Campus. Photo by A Brightside Photography



Kingussie Courthouse. Photo by The Highland Council

Stage 1 West Link construction work May 2016 to December 2017

Stage 2 West Link will commence Spring 2019 for completion December 2020



West Link

Stage 1 of the West Link was completed in December 2017. West Link Stage 2 works which have now begun include the building of a second swing bridge. Part of the work will be to develop an accessible park land area and opening up of new land for housing development.

More information can be found here:
<http://bit.ly/InvernessWestLink>

First Newton Rooms created in Highland

The first Norwegian style learning centre in the UK was officially opened in Thurso on 25th March. Newton Rooms are designed to inspire more young people to become interested in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), and encourage them to study these subjects in school and beyond.

Work on the Newton Rooms began as part of the City-Region Deal in 2017. The rooms will provide an inspirational setting for school pupils, their families and others in the local community to take part in practical activities which complement the STEM sectors found in the region.

The centre at North Highland College UHI in Thurso is the first of a network of Newton Rooms being created in the Highland region by the Science Skills Academy, a partnership project led by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) with £3m from the Inverness and Highland City-Region Deal. Organisations behind the initiative include

Skills Development Scotland, the University of the Highlands and Islands, The Highland Council and NHS Highland.

Scotland's second Newton Room in Lochaber opens in April and, in the interim period, will be hosted at Caol Youth Centre. It is intended that it will later be part of the new Centre for Science and Technology in Fort William which is being planned by West Highland College UHI.

The Inverness and Highland City-Region Deal is jointly funded by the Scottish and UK Governments. The Scottish Government have committed up to £135 million in the Deal, the UK Government has committed up to £53 million, and the Highland Council and regional partners have committed up to £127 million over 10 years.



Newton Rooms will inspire more young people into STEM subjects. Photo by Alison White/HIE

Gaelic Film Awards for Highland schools

Duaisean Film Gàidhlig do Sgoiltean na Gàidhealtachd

Three schools in the Highlands have brought a number of prestigious awards home from the 11th FilmG Awards held on 8th February in Glasgow's Old Fruitmarket.

FilmG is a brilliant platform for filmmakers and creative people to try new ideas, or to showcase their talents, and a further opportunity to use their Gaelic.

FilmG is run by MG ALBA and Skye-based media company Cànan Graphics Studio, to encourage the growth of Gaelic media talent. It has been running for 11 years, and has been the platform for many people now working within the Gaelic TV and film industry.



Bun-Sgoil Stafainn, Peoples' Choice Award

Bun-Sgoil Stafainn won The Peoples' Choice Award & Best Youth Group Film. Millburn Academy S4 pupils won the FilmG Award for Gaelic-Learners; and Elissa Hunter-Dorans from Milburn Academy, won the Best Mobile Short in the Youth category. Lochaber High won Best Film in the Youth category.



Milburn Academy, Gaelic Learners Award

Ambitious

Another big winner of the night was Glaiste, which won two of the three awards it was nominated for. Eilidh Johnson from Dingwall is the force behind the award-winning Glaiste, which is a haunting stop-motion film about mental health.

The thought-provoking piece won Best Mobile Short and HIE Most Promising Director, seeing Eilidh win two incredible placements within the media industry including at BBC's The Social.



Eilidh Johnson, Best Mobile Short and HIE Most Promising Director

The Scottish Government sponsored the top prize in the youth category, Best Film, which this year went to Lochaber High School in Fort William. Like many of this year's entries, their film Origami focusses on bullying, but from the unusual perspective of the bully.



Lochaber High School, Best Film Award



New homes for Ullapool

Work is well underway to transform the site of a former West Coast hotel into new affordable homes to rent and buy.

The site of the former Glenfield Hotel, on Old Moss Road in Ullapool was acquired by The Highland Council in 2013 for a mixed tenure development that will include houses and flats for rent by the Council and housing association as well as opportunities for low cost home ownership and outright purchase. Depending on gaining all statutory consents it is anticipated that works will commence on a first phase of around 16 units during late summer 2017 with the first houses being completed late 2018.

The area is located within the Ullapool Settlement Development Area and the development has been backed by the Scottish Government.

Housing HUB

The Highland Housing HUB was set up in response to the Scottish government's commitment to deliver 50,000 new affordable homes. This cross agency partnership has doubled the amount of new affordable homes in the Highlands, maximised the use of limited resources, improved the quality of new housing and has been recognised by Scottish Government Ministers as innovative best practice worthy of replication throughout Scotland.

Step closer for new city homes

Work is progressing well at 79 Academy Street to transform the derelict site into 37 new 1 and 2 bedroomed affordable flats for rent along with commercial units.

The development will be called Wyvern House after the Wyvern car, a popular model in the 50's and 60's sold from a garage on the site. A Wyvern is a legendary creature with a dragon's head and wings that often appears in heraldry and features in many Celtic images.

The project is funded by a package including money from The Highland Council, Highland Housing Alliance, the Scottish Government and the Highland City-Region Deal. It complements the regeneration work already underway on Academy Street.

Iconic mosaic panels return to Academy St

As part of the Inverness Townscape Heritage Project, the original mosaics on the AI Welders buildings are considered an important element of Inverness' industrial heritage. Originally made by Craven Dunnill Jackfield, the mosaics have been restored by the Mosaic Restoration Company and reinstalled at Rose Street Foundry and are being followed by full restoration of the building to bring it back into use.



Photo by The Highland Council

Sustainable

A sustainable Highland

The Council's success in delivering its priorities is wholly dependent on how it uses its substantial financial and physical resources in a sustainable way.

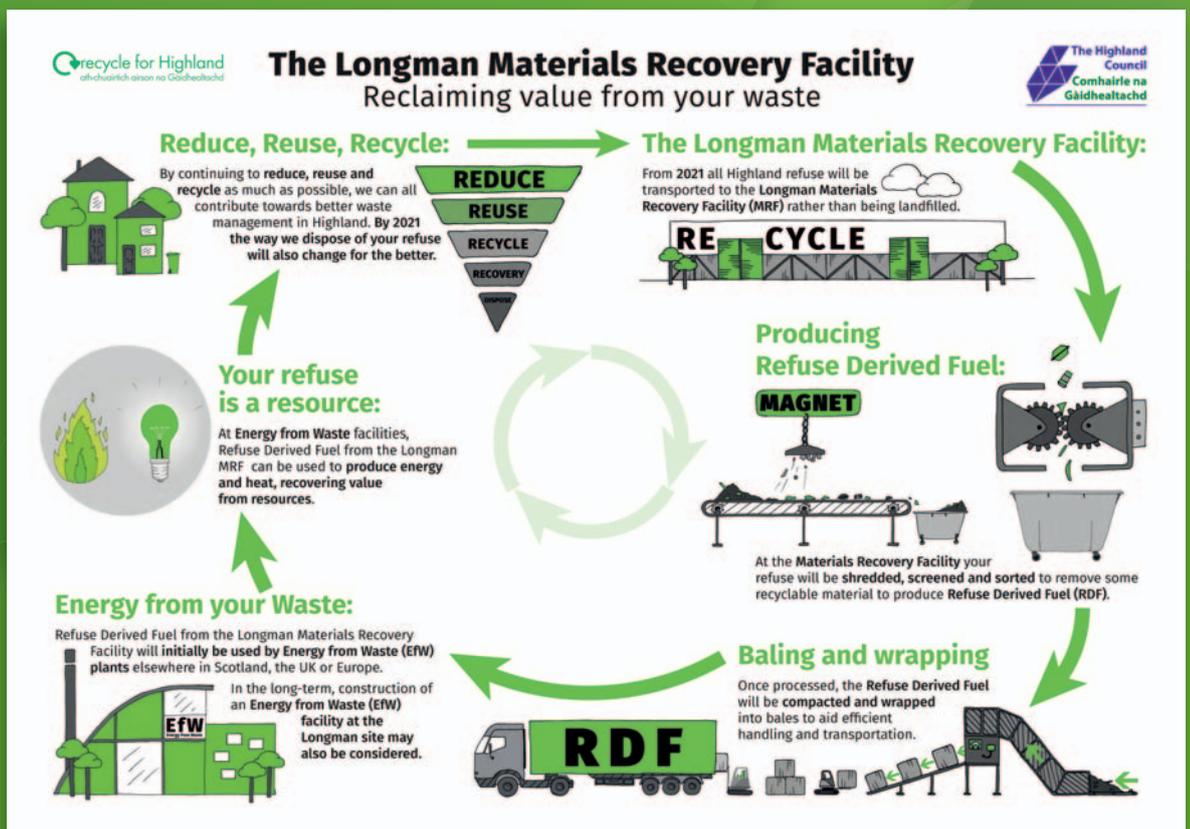
The Council has to connect its ambitions for the Highlands with the resources required to deliver them.

The new Change Programme will ensure appropriate governance, resourcing and scrutiny of the more ambitious and cross-service changes being proposed. This Programme will cover a wide range of projects, and will include recommendations arising from the work undertaken by a Redesign Board and Commercial Board. Transformation projects will help us to deliver more sustainable

education by matching resources to needs; a more sustainable environment by managing our waste, reducing single-use plastics, cutting land-fill and reducing energy costs; and more sustainable communities by investing in infrastructure, supporting businesses and delivering outcomes with partners.

Planning application submitted for Materials Recovery Facility

A planning application has been submitted to construct a new centralised waste management facility (Materials Recovery Facility) to recover recyclates and produce Refuse Derived Fuel, as the Council's preferred interim arrangements for meeting the requirements of the ban on landfilling which commences in January 2021.



The application can be viewed at <https://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam> using the reference number: 19/00503/FUL

Modern Apprenticeship in the Council

Scottish Apprenticeship Week 2019 took place in March. Over 110 new modern apprenticeships began in the last 16 months with The Highland Council. These include IT, Civil Engineering, Early Years Practitioners, Quantity surveyors, Joiners, Electricians, Painters, Plumbers, Mechanics and Business administration opportunities as well as many more.

More exciting opportunities are coming soon and this year the Council will be looking for more Early Years Practitioners, Building Standards Surveyors, and Business administrators.

Jessica Gordon

Jessica is one of our newest Graduate Apprentices training to become a Building Surveyor. Jessica explained:

"I am training to become a Building Standards Surveyor whilst studying a degree in Building Surveying on block release. I am thoroughly enjoying my role which is primarily work based and well supported by both colleagues and the university. It gives me the opportunity to get on the job experience whilst simultaneously gaining qualifications."



Jessica Gordon



Joe Tuddenham

Joe Tuddenham

In November 2018, Joe joined the Council as our first Modern Apprentice Housing Management Assistant. Joe, a school leaver from Inverness, is being supported by an in-house assessor, internal verifier and a mentor. In addition to the Modern Apprenticeship, Joe is also working on a Chartered Institute of Housing level 2 award in Housing Practice.

Emily Currie

Emily, from Dornoch, is a Graduate Apprentice in the Project Design Unit, studying for a degree in Civil Engineering at Inverness College. She did the first year of her degree before starting her apprenticeship. She says:

"Getting this job based in the Project Design Unit at Drummie and studying at Inverness means



Emily Currie

Photos by The Highland Council

that I can stay at home rather than move away to another University. I am really enjoying it so far. I am gaining more experience every day and getting the opportunity to be involved in different projects across Highland. Both of my parents are in Construction so Engineering seemed like a good fit for me. My aim is to complete my degree, become professionally qualified and continue to work as a Civil Engineer in Highland."

Rebecca Winton

Rebecca from Rosemarkie, started with the Council in October 2017 as a Modern Apprentice in Business Administration based in Ruthven House, Inverness. Rebecca studied SVQ 3 Business and Administration SCQF Level 6. She said:

"I'm delighted with my new appointment as it makes me feel like all my hard work studying has paid off and I am looking forward to gaining more office experience and being given more responsibility within a permanent job. I am also really happy to have job security in gaining my full time position. I hope to achieve more office experience and learn more about The Highland Council in general. I would like to be given the opportunity to further my studying if possible, with the aim of moving up the career ladder within The Highland Council. I am enjoying

my position so far as I have got to meet lots of new people and learn how office life works. I feel more confident in dealing with telephone calls and working with different financial systems."

Anyone interested in a Modern or Graduate Apprenticeship this year should keep a look out on MyJobScotland and Apprenticeships.Scot where they will be advertised.



Sustainable

www.myjobscotland.gov.uk

www.apprenticeships.scot

North West Sutherland Schools learning together

The creation of the North West Sutherland Schools effectively responded to the teaching challenges faced by rural Highland schools.

Back in August 2017 four Sutherland schools; Kinlochbervie Primary and Secondary, Durness Primary and Scourie Primary, clustered to form the North West Sutherland Schools. This collaboration has seen each school effectively embrace the all through 3-18 model that was introduced to positively impact, improve and sustain education and attainment in the area.

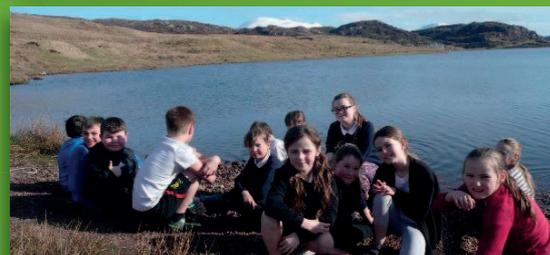
Embedded in a supportive local rural community sharing similar values, it is these attributes that provided the foundation from which the head teacher and senior management could work together for continuous improvement; offering children a richer learning experience and staff a wider support

network. This collaboration has combated isolation and produced a number of positive outcomes, such as effective professional development and mutual support.

Regularly, both staff and pupils from Durness and Scourie Primary Schools are bussed to Kinlochbervie to join their peers for a day of shared teaching, learning and socialisation. Primary pupils visiting the secondary school allows for richer experiences where children now have access to lessons in the science laboratory and gym hall.

Parents talk of how children have started looking forward to coming together as they've formed friendship bonds with their peers from neighbouring schools. There has also been praise for how the familiarity of surroundings and the development of relationships with peers, leaders and mentors

contributes to a smoother transition for those starting S1. Head teacher, Mr Graeme Smart,



Photos courtesy of Kinlochbervie Primary School

is committed to facilitating access to a broader curriculum where there is pupil demand.

He further pointed out that with their shared educational background and experiences, pupils enter S1 on a solid foundation from which to continue with the Curriculum for Excellence into secondary.

The Highland Council is committed to delivering equity and excellence in learning and teaching.

The North West Sutherland Schools have effectively embedded seamless learning across stages. It is evident that the pooling of resources and expertise, and the sharing of good practice to deal with common issues, is having a positive impact on educational outcomes in the area.



Benefits and Welfare team setting the standard high

A team of Highland Council staff has created a dynamic and customer-focussed model which provides local services at the point of need and single access to Council entitlements.

Their impressive performance, translates into tangible outcomes for local people in a manner that improves their financial and overall wellbeing.

Effective leadership, highly skilled and motivated staff and their collaboration with partners are key to their performance, including increasing benefit take-up by £6M for customers and delivering service cost savings over £1.3M.

The team lifted the UK Institute of Revenues, Rating & Valuation (IRRV) Benefits & Welfare Reform Team of the Year Award in October 2018. The Award recognised the team has demonstrated they were raising standards of service to achieve high levels of performance, customer satisfaction and effective administrative procedures in all aspects of welfare benefits with excellence in delivery and a customer focused service.

Sustainable ways of working

Significant savings in both costs and emissions have been achieved by adopting a new business travel strategy, with the introduction of 35 Enterprise Car Club vehicles. In the six months between September and February 2019, the council saw average business road travel costs decrease by around a third. It has already reduced the Councils carbon footprint by approximately 50 tCO₂e. Combined with wider policies to reduce costs and emissions, such as technology to replace face to face meetings and a new travel policy, the Council has ensured a managed and progressive approach to business mobility.



Photo by The Highland Council

Trial air services take off

In March Members of the Skye & Raasay Committee approved a recommendation for the Chair of The Highland Council's Environment, Development and Infrastructure (EDI) Committee to write to the Transport Secretary on behalf of the local Working Group partners (the Council, HITRANS and HIE) requesting financial and technical support to introduce trial air services between Skye and Glasgow utilising the existing airstrip at Ashaig.

Good transport links, including regional air connectivity, are vital to the economic success of communities in the Highlands and Islands. Skye is one of the areas in Scotland that is furthest away from a scheduled air service. Due to the airstrip's location it won't only bring benefits to the Isle of Skye but Lochalsh, Wester Ross, and the wider west coast of the Highlands will also benefit.

Last year work was commissioned which undertook an analysis of best value options, based on a 19-seat twin otter aircraft, on Skye

in the short term. Highlands and Islands Airports (HIAL) provided significant input that has enabled the project to benefit from the extensive expertise their staff have from operating and maintaining a network of similar airports across the Highlands and Islands.

Ranald Robertson, HITRANS Partnership Director said:

"The technical work we have undertaken, with the invaluable input from HIAL's team, has identified that a trial service is a proportionate way for testing

the demand for re-establishing air services between Skye and the central belt that involves using and upgrading the existing airstrip at Ashaig. Residents of Skye and Lochalsh have amongst the longest journey times to Glasgow and Edinburgh of any regional centre in Scotland and this modest investment would enable Skye to capitalise on economic opportunities that it has missed out on as a result of the time it takes to get there and the inability to do a day return either to/from Skye."

Connected

A connected Highland

Your Voice, Your Council, Your Future signalled the start of a new approach to listening to and working with our staff and communities and establishing a more connected Highland.

A key message from communities has been the importance of hearing local voices and changing the relationship with the Council. Communities are keen to be more involved with the Council and supportive of regular engagement but also to work with us, developing strong partnerships to collaboratively take forward local priorities.

Living and working in communities across the Highlands, Council staff are integral to this change in approach. Staff knowledge of their communities,

what is important locally but also how the Council as an organisation needs to change and improve, are key elements moving forward.

Partnership is crucial to achieving a sustainable future for Highland. This is not only working with staff and communities but with the third sector and other public sector partners. Developing shared outcomes and working together to deliver these are essential to a connected, successful and sustainable service delivery.

Your Voice, Your Council, Your Future

– what staff and communities told us

Our new engagement programme sought views on what staff and communities felt was important to them and what they believed the Council should prioritise. This feedback has helped shape the Council's Programme and Corporate Plan.

The key priorities noted were:

- Roads maintenance, infrastructure and winter maintenance
- Caring for vulnerable adults and children and older people remaining within their own homes
- Involving communities in decision making
- Local housing infrastructure to support sustainable communities and rural jobs
- Improving educational outcomes
- Support for tourism infrastructure
- Support for local jobs across the Highlands

Key messages were:

- Opportunities for greater efficiencies in Council processes through: reducing the use of external contractors, agency staff and doing more in-house; improved cross-service working and streamlining internal roles and functions; improving digital technology and systems to automate processes and reduce duplication.
- Prioritising increasing income over service reductions and considering new opportunities to generate income.
- Improving and redesigning service areas such as changing how we manage and maintain our buildings; reducing our travel and using alternative communication mechanisms; and being more responsive to local priorities and involving communities in priority setting.
- Developing and supporting our workforce.

Happy homes for Highland children

Ever thought you could provide a happy home for a child who needs one?

A new website has been set up so that you can see what skills and experience is required, and find out about the assessment process involved if you or someone you know is thinking about fostering and adoption.

Alison Gordon, Highland Council's Fostering and Adoption Resource Manager explained:

"We work hard to try and keep children in their local communities and in contact with their families. We have created this website to try to make it easier for anyone living in the Highlands who is considering fostering or adoption and we have tried to make the process of applying easier too.

We need homes for children of all ages from babies to 18 year olds. Families are also needed for the adoption of siblings (so they can stay together), as well as children with complex health needs."

The website explains about the needs of the children that require fostering or adoption, including:

- the different types of foster carers the Council is looking for, including: temporary, long term or permanent, respite, and intensive fostering;
- suitability of potential applicants as adoptive parents;
- information on support

provided to adopt, how to apply for adoption and what happens after approval;

- adoption counselling for adults who have been adopted;
- relative fees and allowances for carers.

Councillor Linda Munro, Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board:

"There is no ideal foster family or foster carer. What is important is that you have a sense of humour as well as time, energy and commitment. I urge anyone who is thinking about fostering and adopting to take the first simple step and visit the new website."

www.highland.gov.uk/fosteringandadoption

New Corporate Parenting Board to champion Highland's children and young people

The first meeting of the Highland Corporate Parenting Board took place in February, bringing together elected members, senior officers from a wide range of public agencies, care experienced young people and representatives from the Third Sector.

Last year, members of the Highland Community Planning Board agreed to establish the Corporate Parenting Board to ensure all agencies are meeting the needs of children and young people in Highland for whom we have responsibility as corporate parents.

The Board has a duty of care for around 500 'Looked After' children and young people in Highland.

The first meeting, held at Clachnaharry Old School, was an opportunity for all of the Board representatives to get to know each other, and chat to some of the young people who had come along.

The purpose of the Board is:

- maintaining a strategic overview of developments, plans, policies and strategies for care experienced young people and make appropriate recommendations for action.
- ensuring there are good working arrangements between services and agencies in support of the plans and strategies.
- providing a forum for care experienced young people to influence policy and to share their experiences of services they've received.
- promoting the Corporate Parenting role and responsibilities across all relevant bodies in Highland.



The first meeting of the Highland Corporate Parenting Board by Ewen Weatherspoon

£4.7m boost for Highland digital connectivity

The Highland Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) have secured a major partnership bid to the UK Government's Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) programme for £4.7m funding to provide full fibre networks in Inverness, Fort William, Wick and Thurso.

Local businesses will have the opportunity to benefit directly from the fund as a proportion of IT will include the provision of around 150 vouchers to the value of £3000 which will be aimed at encouraging businesses to adopt higher speed connectivity.

The objective of the bid is to provide a local access full fibre network to provide Gigabit capable open access to public sector sites. The five public sector partners are – The Highland Council, National Health Service (NHS) Highland, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE).

The Local Full Fibre Network project for Inverness, Fort William, Wick and Thurso aims to increase:

- full fibre footprint in the most northerly and largest mainland local authority area in UK;
- the economic viability and capacity of the area by increasing productivity, efficiency and innovation; and
- the number of business seeking to invest in, locate to and remain in the region.

It also aims to encourage service innovation and stimulate greater commercial investment in the region; and create the capacity for the provision of better digital services to customers and increase digital inclusion.

James McClafferty, Head of Regional Development and Investment at CityFibre, said:

"This deal will see Inverness, Wick, Thurso and Fort William become home to some of the UK's northernmost Gigabit sites, making it possible for local public services to access next generation full fibre connectivity – a claim which currently, just six percent of UK premises can make. This will not only drive efficiency and improve the experience of staff and members of the community alike, it will position the area for economic growth, investment and digital innovation."

Connected



Jim Crawford, Capita, James McClafferty, CityFibre, Drew Hendry MP, Margaret Davidson, Leader of The Highland Council, John Robertson, The Highland Council

Your Cash Your Caithness

Local people cast their votes on Saturday 26th January 2019 at a Highland Council participatory budgeting event held at the Pulteneytown Peoples Project in Wick. Twelve out of 22 projects bidding for £10,000 community funding were successful, voted for by just over 100 local people. Successful bids included diverse projects such as gymnastic club equipment,



wheelchair access path at Noss forest, lip reading classes, and the annual science festival.

Contractor appointed for extension and refurbishment at Invergarry Primary School



Artists impression of Invergarry Primary External Front View Design © Colin Armstrong Architects

The contract for an extension and partial refurbishment at Invergarry Primary School has been awarded to Morrison Construction.

The £800,000 project will see the replacement of a double classroom unit that is in poor condition with an extension to the school comprising two classrooms, toilets and cloakroom area. The former school house, which has been vacant for some time, will be refurbished to provide an entrance and reception area, office/meeting room and a fully accessible pupil toilet/changing facility.

Work started in February with the building due to be ready for occupation by the start of the new school session in August.

Cllr John Finlayson, Chair of The Highland Council's Care, Learning and Housing Committee said:

"I am delighted that this contract has been awarded as part of our commitment to offer pupils in the Highlands safe and modern learning environments. As a council we continue to develop plans for improving the fabric of our school buildings and going forward, in partnership with the Scottish Government, we will hopefully see other communities receive the very welcome news that Invergarry has just received."



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to purchase a gift voucher

*located just 17 miles north of Inverness



Coul House Hotel, In the hills above Contin, Strathpeffer, Ross-shire, IV14 9ES
01997 421 487 www.coulhousehotel.com

Highland Facts & Figures

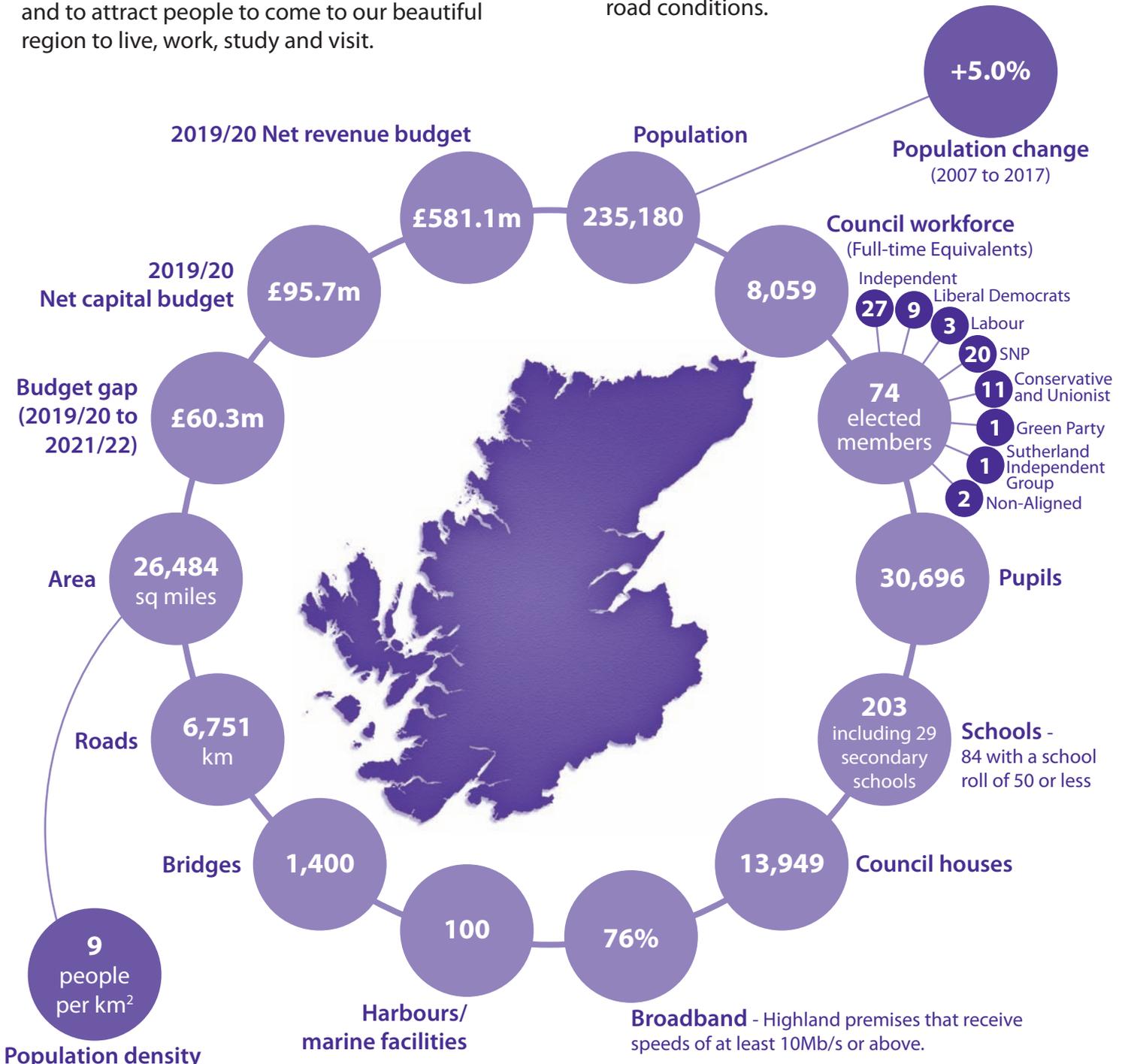
Our changing population

Although the overall population of the Highlands grew by 5% in the ten year period from 2007-2017, there have been increases and decreases in the populations of local communities. The continuing trend is also for an ageing population, with older people making up a much larger proportion of our demography and a reduction in the number of working age people. These trends will have an impact on our services and economy.

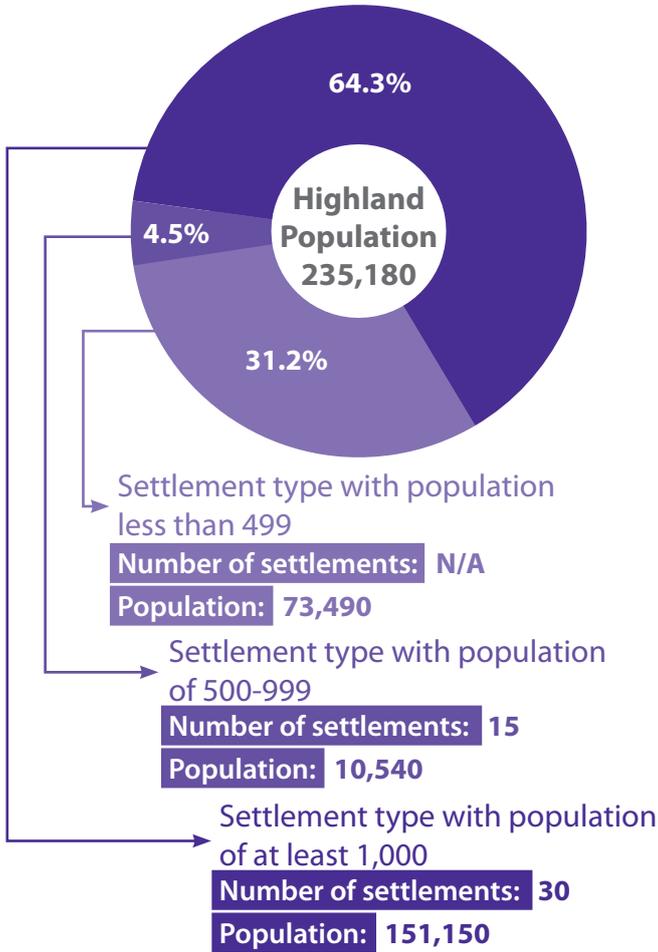
The Council's ambition is to develop sustainable and connected communities throughout the Highlands and to attract people to come to our beautiful region to live, work, study and visit.

Just some of the things the Council is doing to achieve this ambition are:

- Promoting the Highlands as a welcoming, diverse, safe, and friendly place.
- Supporting economic growth and creating and protecting jobs across the Highlands.
- Supporting our older citizens to live longer independent lives in their communities.
- Working with partners to reduce inequality and strengthen digital connectivity.
- Improving our infrastructure and road conditions.



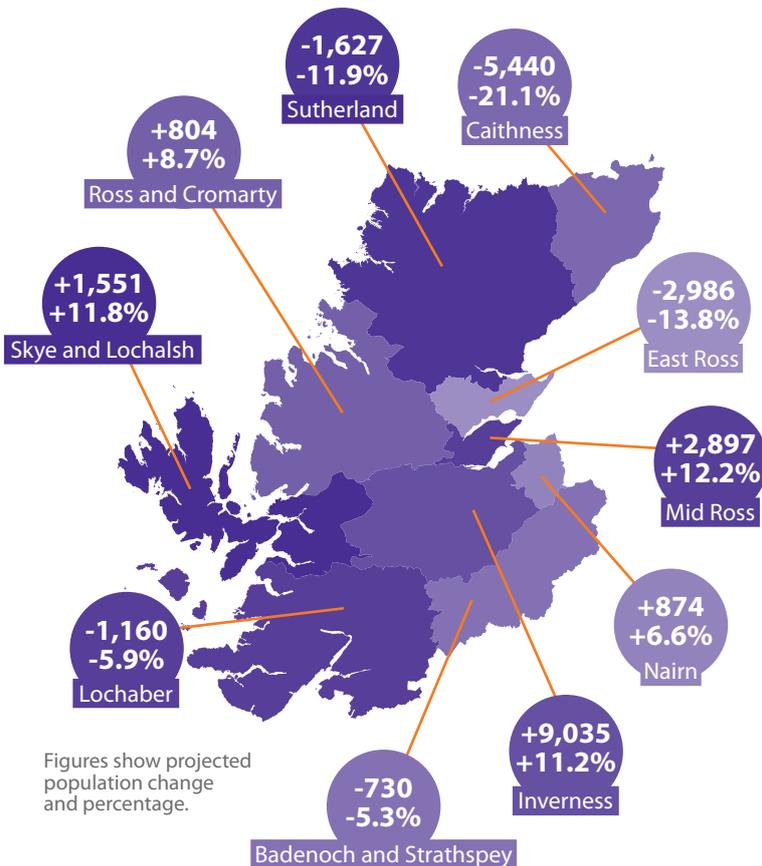
Population by Settlement Type



Population trends 2011 to 2016

Settlement	2011 to 2016	Population change	
		-/+	%
Fortrose and Rosemarkie	2,095 to 2,306	+211	+9.2%
Portree	2,427 to 2,523	+96	+4.0%
Inverness	62,285 to 63,780	+1495	+2.3%
Nairn	9,919 to 10,022	+103	+1.0%
Fort William	10,292 to 10,175	-117	-1.2%
Wick	6,932 to 6,798	-134	-2.0%
Thurso and Scrabster	8,234 to 7,850	-384	-4.9%
Kinlochleven	879 to 807	-72	-8.9%
Mallaig	828 to 758	-70	-9.3%

Regional area population projections 2016 to 2041



Households in fuel poverty

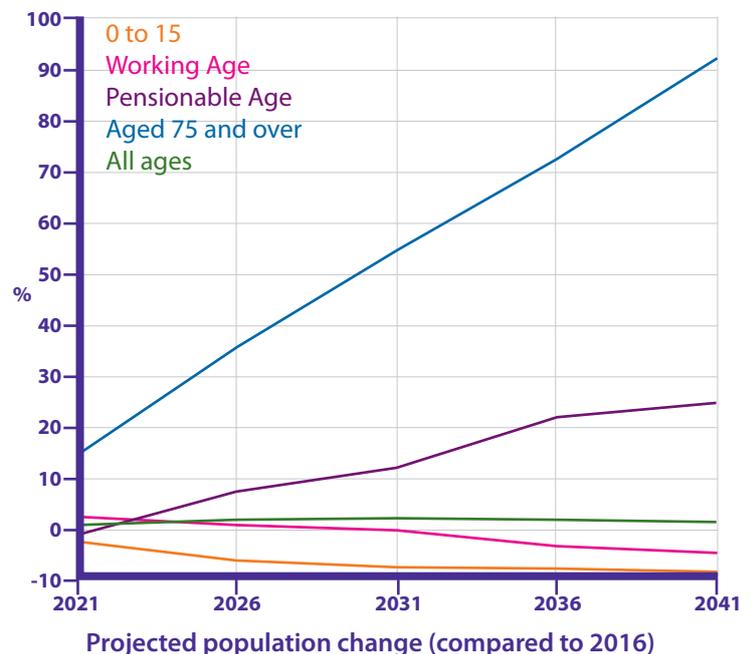
(required fuel costs >10% of income)

2016/2017

Highland 52.1%

Scotland 30.7%

Highland population projections by age group





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Inverness, IV3 5DA.
Contact: Donna Laing
01463 717974

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How are we performing?

The Annual Performance Report for the period 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018 showed good progress being made in delivering the Council's Programme: Local Voices, Highland Choices. 93% of the commitments (28 out of the total 30) were either completed, on target or performance being maintained. For 2 commitments (7%) there is mixed performance.

A Place to Live

With our partners, we have a target to build, on average, 500 new affordable homes per year by 2021/22. This will mean a total of 2,500 new affordable homes. In 2017/18, 290 new homes were completed, with 602 tenders approved to go on site.

We continue to review both our own and external evidence on poverty. Our Poverty and Inequality Working Group agreed to initially focus on understanding the experience of child poverty, although rural aspects are being incorporated as part of this work.

We have updated our rural impact assessment web based support. With the introduction of the Fairer Scotland (socio-economic) duty in April 2018, work began to review current processes and guidance on impact assessment to develop a more integrated approach. This incorporated rural impact assessment alongside equality impacts and the Fairer Scotland duty.

The tenant participation survey also indicates that tenant satisfaction with the management of the neighbourhood they live in is 69% (2015-17).

Inside Housing Awards

The recently completed Raining's Stair development in Inverness was entered into the UK-wide competition run by the publication - Inside Housing.

The project was nominated in 3 of the 14 categories winning the award for the Best Residential Development of Under 70 Homes.

The development delivered 16 new flats for affordable rent with funding from the Scottish Government, The Highland Council and the Inverness and Highland City-Region Deal.

The project was a successful collaboration between The Highland Council, The Highland Housing Alliance, developer ARK Estates, Trail Architects and Inverness contractor WGC (Scotland).



Photo of Raining Stairs by Ewen Weatherspoon

A Place to Learn

Overall attainment is monitored through the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and key attainment indicators are nationally benchmarked. Local and national SCQF performance for the 2017/18 school year will not be confirmed until early 2019.

During 2017/18, we spent £23.1m (net) on capital improvements in the school estate. Major achievements include: condition and suitability improvements across the school estate; the opening of the new Wick community campus; completion of Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Phort Rìgh (Portree Gaelic Primary School); and commencement of projects for a new Alness Academy, major refurbishment of Inverness High School, and a new/refurbished Merkinch Primary School.



Photo of Wick Community Campus by Robert MacDonald

The position for the 2017/18 academic year is:

61% of pupils achieved 5+ awards at SCQF Level 5 and we were ranked 19th nationally. (2016/17: 59%; Ranked 22nd) This compares to Scottish average which is 62%.

31% of pupils achieved 5+ awards at SCQF Level 6 and we were ranked 22nd nationally. (2016/17: 31%; Ranked 24th) This compares to the Scottish average which was 34%.

31% of pupils from deprived areas achieved 5+ awards at SCQF Level 5 and we were ranked 25th nationally. (2016/17: 27%; Ranked 28th) This compares to the Scottish average which was 42%.

9% of pupils from deprived areas achieved 5+ awards at SCQF Level 6 and we were ranked 25th. (2016/17: 11%; Ranked 22nd) This compares to the Scottish average which was 16%.

Participation rates for 16-19 years olds was 93.8% and we were ranked 11th. (2016/17: 93.0%; Ranked 11th) This compares to the Scottish average which was 91.8%.

School attendance rates were 93.4% (2015-17) and we were ranked 17th nationally. This compares to the Scottish average of 93.3%. School attendance rates for Looked After Children were 91.1% (2015-17) and we were ranked 18th nationally. This compares to the Scottish average of 91.0%.

School exclusion rates were 22.7 per 1,000 pupils (2015-17) and we were ranked 17th nationally. This compares to the Scottish average of 26.8. School exclusion rates for Looked After Children were 108.8 per 1000 pupils (2015-17) and we were ranked 20th nationally. This compares to the Scottish average of 80.0%.

Photo of Portree Primary School



Our Modern Apprenticeship Programme (approved in August 2017) has created more than 100 Modern Apprenticeships (as of June 2018). We are on track to exceed the target of 150 Modern Apprenticeships by September 2019.

Modern Apprenticeship opportunities in The Highland Council

The Highland Council's commitment to Modern Apprenticeships continues at pace with over 110 new apprenticeship starts in the last 16 months.

These include IT, Civil Engineering, Early Years Practitioners, Quantity Surveyors, Joiners, Electricians, Painters, Plumbers, Mechanics and Business Administration opportunities as well as many more.

More exciting opportunities are coming soon and this year the Council will be looking for more Early Years Practitioners, Building Standards Surveyors, and Business administrators.

The creation of a new Modern Apprenticeship Programme in The Highland Council, which will aspire to create 150 new apprenticeships within 2 years, was approved approval by Members in August 2017. The Council will access training funds from the Council's £1.15M annual contribution to the Modern Apprenticeship Levy, for developing new apprentices and the upskilling or retraining of existing employees.



Anyone interested in a Modern or Graduate Apprenticeship this year should keep a look out on:

www.myjobscotland.gov.uk and

www.apprenticeships.scot

where they will be advertised.



A primary objective of our Workforce Planning Strategy (2017-2023) is to develop processes for staff transitions and retraining which supports our Redesign process and ensures our workforce is flexible. This is the focus of a cross-service working group that will report on progress later in 2018.

The percentage of children meeting developmental milestones (27-30 months) is a nationally benchmarked indicator. For the most recent reporting year, 2016/17, 68.2% of children in Highland met their developmental milestones (27-30 months), compared to 61.1% in 2015/16. For 2016/17, we were above the Scottish average of 66.2% and Highland was ranked 18th.

The pupil/ teacher ratio continues to be better than the national average. The pupil/ teacher ratio in Highland is 13.1 pupils per teacher, compared to 13.7 nationally.

74% of head teachers report that we are supporting them to minimise any increase in workload.

83% of head teachers report they receive adequate leadership opportunities.

The number of teacher vacancies at the start of the 2017-18 session, is less than half of the previous year.

A Place to Thrive

Through the City Region Deal we committed to delivering The School of Health and Life Sciences by 2021 with lead partner The University of the Highlands & Islands (UHI), which will improve the commercial activity of Life Sciences across the Highlands. The project is on track and a contract has been let to deliver The School of Health Innovation (please note new name), the elective hospital, and associated Highlands and Islands Enterprise incubator building. Research appointments have been made and research is underway.

A commercial director has been appointed who is deploying a business development model with new and inward investing companies and health innovations.

Over the last ten years we have successfully delivered the Business Gateway Service, supporting businesses across the Highlands to start-up and trade successfully. Our Local Growth Accelerator Programme has been crucial in supporting growing businesses with specialist advice and growth workshops. We also continue to collaborate with key stakeholders to ensure these businesses are supported at all stages in their development. Evidence suggests that growth in the Inverness and Caithness areas is continuing across a range of sectors. The North Coast 500 route has resulted in an increase in visitors to the Caithness, Sutherland and Ross-shire areas. It continues to receive national and international publicity, and now features in the marketing activity of businesses on the Route. Seven successful 'Taster For Growth' workshops were run over the year. The Digital Boost programme delivered by Business Gateway attracted almost 300 attendees over a six month period. This service achieved the following in 2017/18:

- 259 start-up businesses were assisted;
- 1,963 business enquiries were successfully dealt with;
- 76 growth businesses were supported, with a number looking to employ people, take on new premises, and develop new markets.

We agreed a revised set of Equality Outcomes in 2017. We will report on progress by April 2019, along with other specific equality duties which include: reports on pay gap information; equalities in employment; and how the Council mainstreams equality into its work. In 2018, we will review the Fairer Highland Plan to incorporate the revised set of outcomes and our approach to equality and diversity. This will also include a review of our equality impact assessment process and incorporating the new Fairer Scotland duty.

The percentage of children and young people sustaining full time attendance at school was maintained at 99.0% in 2017/18.

Against a target of 90%, 100% of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAHMS) referrals were seen within 18 weeks in 2017/18.

Our access to finance service delivered 10 loans to growing businesses to a value of £369,000 in 2017/18.

Adult Care

We have new governance arrangements for adult care with NHS Highland. This involves a strategic and financial delivery plan as the core element. A timescale was agreed, involving preparation of the plan by the end of 2018.

The review of the Partnership Agreement for Adult Services is being progressed.

Local delivery plans are now well developed in all local partnerships, and the new governance arrangements make it clear that these should take account of the strategic plan.

Transformation of Care at Home services was a feature of a recent joint workshop, and as a consequence, NHS Highland is taking forward further plans for community-led Care at Home initiatives. New outcomes and measures for Health and Social Care continue to be developed and considered on an ongoing basis, and will be a key aspect of the strategic and financial delivery plan.



Above: The North Coast 500, Scotland's iconic touring route along Scotland's northern coastline is part of a national campaign to clean up the country's roads.

This initiative, led by environmental charity Keep Scotland Beautiful and supported by North Coast 500 Ltd, the company behind the NC500, urges road users to 'give your litter a lift, take it home'.

Left: "Don't drop your litter and spoil this beautiful scenery!" is a message from a Chilean cyclist travelling on the NC500 in the Highlands. Rodrigo Salvatierra Arraño, a mechanical engineer from Santiago, visited the Highlands on his tour of Europe in 2018. He said: "The Highlands are beautiful and remind me of the scenery in Patagonia." Whilst cycling the NC500 Rodrigo filled his panniers with litter he collected along the way, highlighting the message - put your litter in a bin or take your litter home with you.

A Welcoming Place

A Highlands and Island's Talent Attraction Strategy is in place and partners are progressing the regional and local activity required. As an early contribution, we are refreshing our Enterprising Highland portal website as a critical source of local information.

With our partners we have established the "Talent Attraction, Retention and Returns Strategy Group". Through this we are developing flexibility in the workforce between the different partners, coordinating recruitment, and looking to develop opportunities for shared services and joint working.

We have surveyed our staff to determine the broad workforce implications potentially arising from Brexit, and have actively encouraged partners to conduct similar analysis. This information will enable evidence based lobbying of Scottish and UK Ministers to influence the freedom of movement required to sustain the working age population in the Highlands.

A Redesigned Council

Redesign is involving reviews of services to identify where blockages and delays occur, to cut out waste and improve services for people using them.

As part of the Redesign programme, a number of projects were selected for review using an approach which involves "Lean" principles. This is a recognised methodology which means improving services by creating more value for customers with fewer resources. Training in "Lean" processes has been given to staff across Council services in order to develop in-house expertise in this approach to problem solving.

Redesign projects

Early years:

Improving the process for billing and receiving income for childcare services, streamlining the process from 80 to 28 steps with a possibility of this reducing to 15 steps. The new process automates data entry, and reduces backlog, saving £12k per year in postage costs.

Fly-tipping prevention:

In 2017 over 900 cases of fly-tipping had been reported but under-reporting was estimated at 50%. The improvements made by the Lean team include a new e-form to make it easier to report fly-tipping and a new mapping tool to identify hot spots where preventative action can be targeted and enforcement activity can be coordinated. In addition to avoiding future budget pressures, annual savings of £0.080m will be delivered next year.

Grey fleet:

The project is reducing travel, and where travel is necessary, to reduce the spend and carbon emissions associated with it by greater use of pool cars, car clubs and for shorter journeys to use active travel. Changes are estimated to provide around £500,000 in savings annually from 2018.

Key achievements include:

Between June 2017 and June 2018 the Redesign Board has: commissioned 11 peer reviews (5 concluded, 1 is underway and 5 are to be tasked); provided a steer on three reviews being undertaken in Services (school lets, harbours, and vehicle maintenance); overseen the expansion of the Lean review programme, with 8 showcased, 7 underway and at least 10 in the pipeline, with 48 staff to be trained as facilitators by the end of the summer; agreed two new types of reviews – peer spending reviews and community reviews; and supported the commercial approach to energy generation and supply.

Music tuition:

This service transferred to High Life Highland on 1st April 2018 to enable the service to be affordable, sustainable and with scope to grow, reaching other people and places.

Occupational Health:

This project reduced the referral process from 57 steps to 7, has freed up resource in Human Resources to better support services, has reduced the time taken from initiating referral through to the employee being assessed and advice being provided to the manager. This has reduced costs by £62k.

Solar Energy:

A project was initiated to generate energy through solar PV on the council estate.

Bulky Uplifts:

The Bulky Uplift project has reduced time taken to process requests, improved the bulky uplift service for customers, extending the service over Christmas and New Year, including reducing the notice required for an uplift from 48 to 24 hours and making the whole service more direct and responsive, saving £57k.

Taking a commercial approach

We have developed an action plan for our Commercial Board with a rolling programme of projects. Work on a wider commercial strategy covering up to 2022 began and initial commercial proposals have been developed with projects at varying stages of development. A number of opportunities are being pursued in the energy, tourism, land and property sectors. Work on our fees and charges policy is running in parallel. The income and commercial budget work played a key role in setting a one year budget for 2018/19 with income generation proposals of £3.059m contributing to meeting the budget gap. Commercial proposals, developed through the commercial board, were factored into the budget process for 2019/20 to 2021/22.

Localism

Local workshops were run with Councillors in 2017/18 to identify how to develop localism. Common themes were: new conversations with Community Councils; making real choices on the disaggregated community services budgets; developing Participatory Budgeting not only for grants but also for mainstream services and service choices; community involvement in transport arrangements; and other ideas.

By combining views fed back from: Members in local workshops, Area Chairs and the Redesign Board; the Commission on Highland Democracy; our Citizens' Panel; community bodies; and from good practice from elsewhere, localism is becoming defined as:

- Making our representative democracy work better by: Making full use of powers devolved to local committees; devolving more powers locally; and involving more people in the decisions affecting them.
- Improving participatory democracy by trialling new approaches to civic engagement.
- Encouraging more community action and community-run services.

Participatory budgeting has been rolled out to each local committee area. Five participatory budgeting events were held in 2017/18 covering six wards. Work began in adapting this model of decision-making for the public to make choices around mainstream budgets, initially for the disaggregated Community Services budget, and creating a process for engaging Members and communities in choices such as devolved car-parking charges.

Partnership working

The second pan-Highland development day for all Community Partnership members was held in October 2017. The Chairs development group meet quarterly to address ongoing issues and share knowledge and good practice. This group has now been formalised as part of the Community Planning Partnership structure. Self-evaluation and peer support tools were developed during 2017/18 to support the development of the nine partnerships.

We produced our annual report on Community Asset Transfers in May 2018. This showed 50 expressions of interest, 11 full community asset transfer requests and upwards of 250 current leases at nil or nominal cost to community bodies.

The Commission on Highland Democracy interim findings were reported at a Council meeting in June 2017 and final recommendations published in December 2017. The Commission's recommendations were used as part of workshops with local Members and also to support the engagement process agreed at Council in June 2018 on car parking/ disaggregated budgets. They were included in the well-attended Local Democracy Seminar in April 2018 and supported in the facilitative

leadership training piloted for Members, partners and staff. It was agreed to test Community Planning Partnership decisions against findings of the Commission on Highland Democracy. The findings will also be built into and taken forward by the Partnership Communication and Engagement subgroup and will be crucial to the delivery of the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan outcome on Community Participation and Dialogue.

A five year financial plan aligned with priorities, statutory duties, and our workforce plan was not completed in 2017/18. We instead produced a one year budget in line with the Scottish Government producing one year grant figures. The Council took the decision in June 2018 to agree a strategy leading to a three year budget, approved in February 2019.

What did our survey tell us?

The Highland Council's annual Performance and Attitudes survey is used to better understand levels of satisfaction with Council services.

Every year the Council surveys members of its Citizens' Panel. This group of residents is randomly selected and is designed to be representative of the adult population in the

Highlands. This year we received 1,152 responses from a possible panel of 2,634 panel members, including 641 electronically, providing a 44% response rate.

Maintaining good quality local services is the quality valued the most by the panel. The Council's ability to sustain levels of service is severely challenged by the financial position. The Council will use the results to understand the extent to which the relationship

between the Council and its public has to change given our budget context. As services are redesigned, cut back or stopped we will expect communities to do more for themselves and in their communities.

Overall satisfaction with Council services

63% of the panel say they were satisfied overall with Council services in 2017/18 compared to 73% in 2016/17.



Overall satisfaction with Council services



Council qualities

We asked questions on the qualities people feel are important about their Council.

We have used these to better understand what matters to people about how their Council behaves as well as what it achieves. Overall results in this section include:

- 57% of the panel believe the Council meets or exceeds their general expectations, (64% the previous year).
- The most important quality that the panel want the Council to demonstrate is that it "maintains good quality local services". Following this, the panel want the Council to provide value for money, and to listen to local people. These top three most important qualities are the same as in the previous two years.

Quality as ranked in order of importance by respondents in 2018 survey	Respondents mentioning quality in their top 5		
	2016 %	2017 %	2018 %
1. Maintains good quality local services	75	75	78
2. Provides value for money	60	57	57
3. Listens to local people	61	54	57
4. Is efficient	46	47	51
5. Is aware of people's needs	42	35	38

The panel were asked whether they felt the Council met a number of qualities. More people agreed than disagreed that The Highland Council is:

- Approachable;
- Cares for the environment;
- Is helpful;
- Maintains good quality local services;
- Treats all residents fairly;
- Asks you for your ideas on how to do things better;
- Is aware of people's needs; and
- Helps people to help each other.

Council Services

There are eight Council services that 85% or more of respondents say they use:

- Refuse/bin collection (99%)
- Winter roads maintenance (98%)
- Road repairs & potholes (98%)
- Recycling facilities (97%)
- Street cleaning (92%)
- Pavement maintenance (91%)
- Street lighting (90%)
- Grass cutting (85%)

The table below highlights the most important services to respondents where at least 10% of the panel place them in their top 10 most important.

The top three most important services for the public are: road repairs and potholes; winter road maintenance, and primary education.

Importance of services to respondents - appearance in respondents' top five

Services	2014 %	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %	2018 %
Road repairs and pot holes	57	63	66	55	70
Winter road maintenance	43	50	43	42	49
Primary education	19	21	23	24	25
Refuse/bin collection	47	45	26	27	24
Public parks and other open spaces	21	20	24	21	24
Secondary education	18	17	21	19	20
Swimming pools	16	15	18	17	15
Care at home services	8	9	13	15	15
Street cleaning	15	14	10	13	15
Pavement maintenance	16	15	14	10	15
Recycling facilities	30	28	18	15	14
Other sports facilities	13	15	16	13	14
Public toilets	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	13
Libraries	20	17	14	14	11
Walking routes e.g. Great Glen Way	8	9	7	6	11
Residential homes for disabled/elderly people	6	7	11	13	10
Council Service Points	11	10	11	11	10

Community Life

The panel were asked their views on life in their communities. Key results included:

75% feel that the Council has strengthened the profile of the Gaelic language to a great or some extent (77% in 2016/17).

Community safety – 96.2% of respondents consider the area within 15 minutes' walk of their home to be 'very' or 'fairly' safe compared to 98.1% the year before.

Community safety - the top three areas of concern remain the same as in previous years. 81% are concerned about road safety, 66% about alcohol abuse, and 66% about drug misuse.

When asked about awareness of the impact that hate incidents or crimes have on people in Highland, 78% said they were aware (73% in 2016/17) with 22% saying they were not aware (27% in 2016/17).

Equalities – 78% agree that Highland should do everything it can to get rid of all types of prejudice. This is a notable increase from 67% when the question was first asked in 2011.

Out of the 48 main services that the Council provides, respondents indicated that primary education is the 3rd most important service, secondary education is the 6th most important, and pre-school education is the 22nd most important service. Net satisfaction with these education services is:

Pre-school education: 70%

Primary education: 62%

Secondary education: 56%

Using our online services

This is the third year asking a set of questions to gauge the panel's views on overall satisfaction with their online experience at: www.highland.gov.uk

Overall 74% said they were very or fairly satisfied with online services compared to 71% the year before.

In relation to questions on the quality of online services:

- 78% said they would use online services again (81% in 2017);
- 74% agreed that online services were easy to use (72% in 2017);
- 76% said they were able to find the online services they needed (73% in 2017);
- 67% agreed that online services were quick to complete (64% in 2017);
- 71% agreed that online services were easy to find (65% in 2017).

Involving Communities

This is a developing set of questions around community engagement, participation and localism.

Results from this section include:

- When asked to define their community, the most popular answers selected by the panel were: my village (42%); my street/ immediate neighbourhood (40%); Highland (40%); and my town (39%).
- 58% say they volunteer in the community by helping a neighbour, family or friend with 37% saying they volunteer through an organised group or club.
- 79% feel they have no or not very much influence over decision making in their communities.
- The main reasons given for not having an influence were: 'I don't think this would make a difference' (37%); 'Public bodies don't listen to community views' (35%); and 'Not enough time' (31%).
- 51% say they would like to be very or fairly involved in decision-making in their area.
- 63% felt that their community could become more involved in providing the services that they and their community need.
- The majority of the panel were aware of their local community council (72%), and 20% had been in contact with their community council over the past 12 months.
- The panel were asked about the Council's approach to participatory budgeting. 31% of the panel were aware that the Council is developing this approach. If a participatory budgeting event was happening in their community, 66% said they would want to be involved by putting forward ideas for new projects, and 83% by choosing projects they liked the most.
- 72% of the people who responded also said they would be interested in community discussions about how local services are provided and making choices within budget limits.

Areas for improvement

The impact of financial austerity creates a challenging environment in which to drive improvement in public perception.

Improvement activity needs to continue to be focused on improved communication with the public, informing budget planning and budget decisions and driving new ways of local engagement with communities.

We want to develop a shared sense of vision and purpose with our communities. These are challenging financial times and change is inevitable, but we are committed to working with our citizens to improve the Highlands.

Actions:

- Engage with local communities on service delivery options including community opportunities to lead on delivery.
- Communicate budget decisions and their impact on service delivery to the public.
- Use the survey results to inform Council redesign and choices on the balance of cost and quality when determining service delivery options.
- Management teams will use the results to inform their ongoing improvement activity.
- Continue to promote the Council's positive performance through Council press releases, events, and reports.

Your Voice
Your Council
Your Future

How did we do: Statutory Performance Indicators and Key Performance Indicators 2017/18

The latest year's report on Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) for 2017/18 shows a positive picture of performance. The Council has 144 SPIs which it uses to understand, demonstrate, and improve its performance. Overall, the performance of 102 SPIs (78%) improved by 5% or more or was maintained compared to the year before.

Of these 144 indicators, there are 27 which are considered to be our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These have been carefully selected to provide a high level overview of how well the Council is performing around the delivery of key service functions. Overall the Council's KPIs are performing well with 81% (22) either improving or being maintained.

Some areas which show improvement by 10% or more between 2016/17 and 2017/18 are:



Care and Learning

Children's Services - The percentage of Looked After Children in kinship care increased from 17.7% to 19.5%.

Libraries - The number of visits per 1,000 population increased from 13,110 to 15,160.

Culture and Leisure - The number of customers of High Life Highland services increased from 6.7m to 7.5m.

Community Services

Waste - The net cost of waste collection decreased from £78.27 to £62.82 per premises.

Street Lighting - The cost of electricity per street lighting unit decreased from £39.32 to £34.99.

Parks and Open spaces - The net cost per 1,000 population decreased from £8,583 to £7,535.

Development and Infrastructure

Planning - The cost per planning application has decreased from £3,684 to £2,672.

Business - The number of businesses supported by the Council and its Business Gateway service increased from 1,061 to 1,191.

Corporate Resources

Business - Total direct spend with Highland small and medium sized enterprises increased from 33.7% to 40.9%.

Rates - The cost of collection per chargeable property decreased from £20.29 to £17.87.

Some areas where performance has decreased by 10% or more between 2016/17 and 2017/18 are:



Care and Learning

Children's Services - The average number of Looked After Children accommodated by the Council outwith Highland increased from 27 to 34.

Education - Children from deprived backgrounds receiving 5+ awards at SCQF Level 6 decreased from 11% to 9%.

Education - School exclusion rates (per 1,000 pupils) increased from 20.4 to 22.7.

Community Services

Street Lighting - Street light failures completed within 7 days decreased from 91% to 69%.

Housing - The homelessness case duration increased from 37 to 44 weeks.

Development and Infrastructure

Planning - The average time per planning application increased from 10.2 weeks to 11.4 weeks.

Business - The number of Business Gateway start-ups (per 10,000 population) decreased from 12.1 to 11.0.

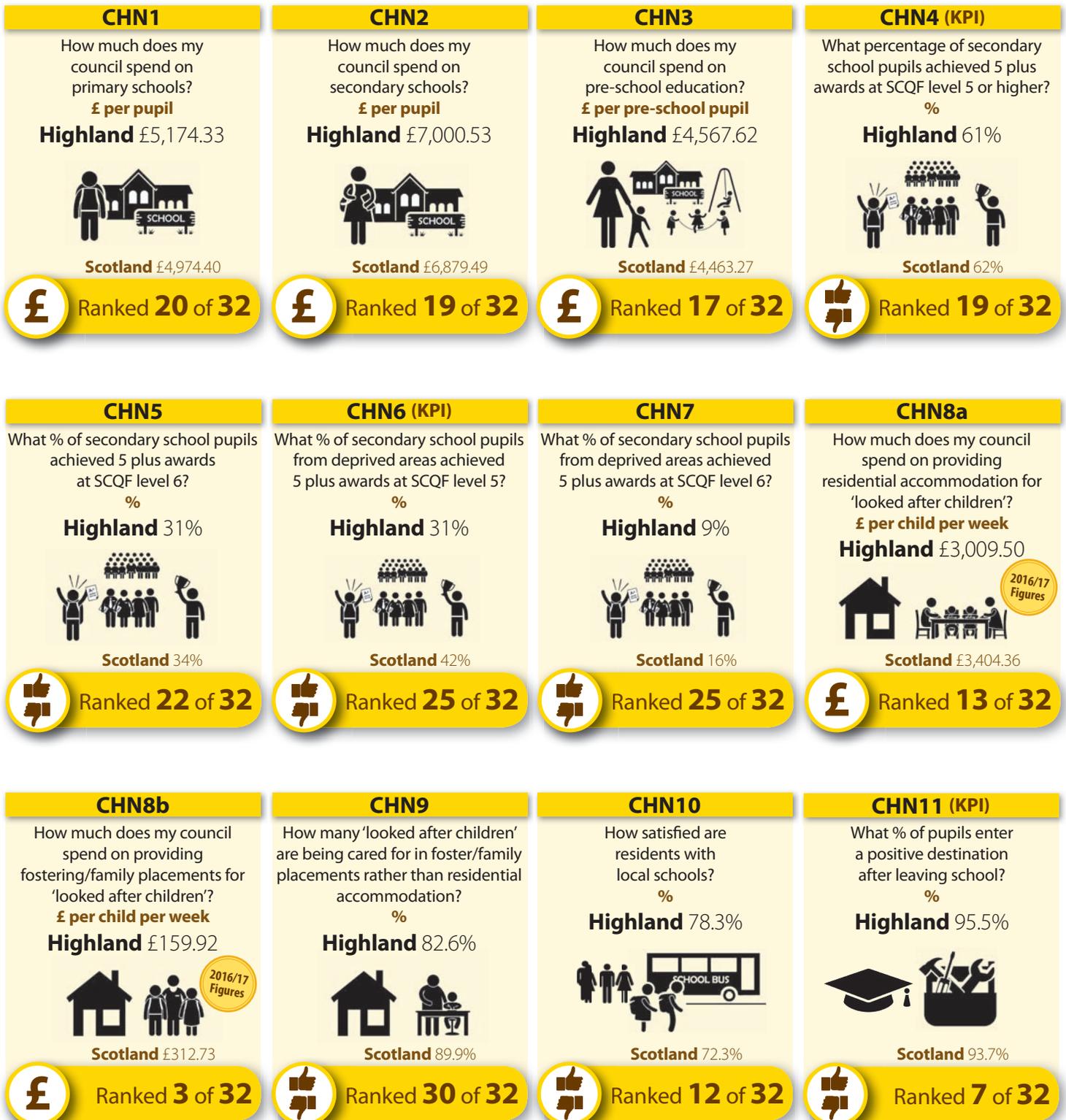
How do we compare: Benchmarking

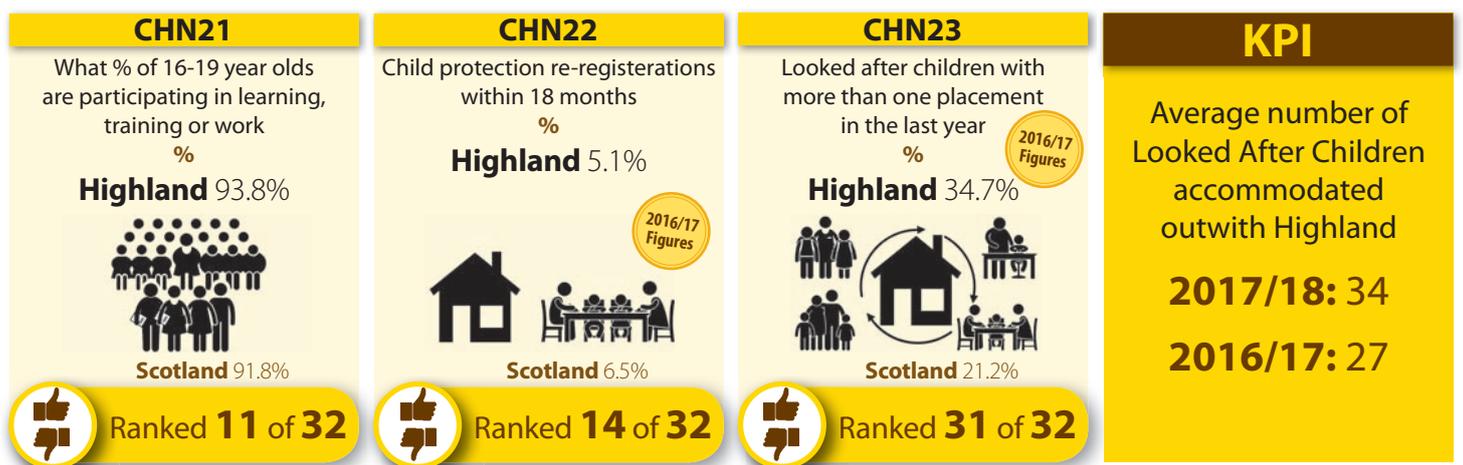
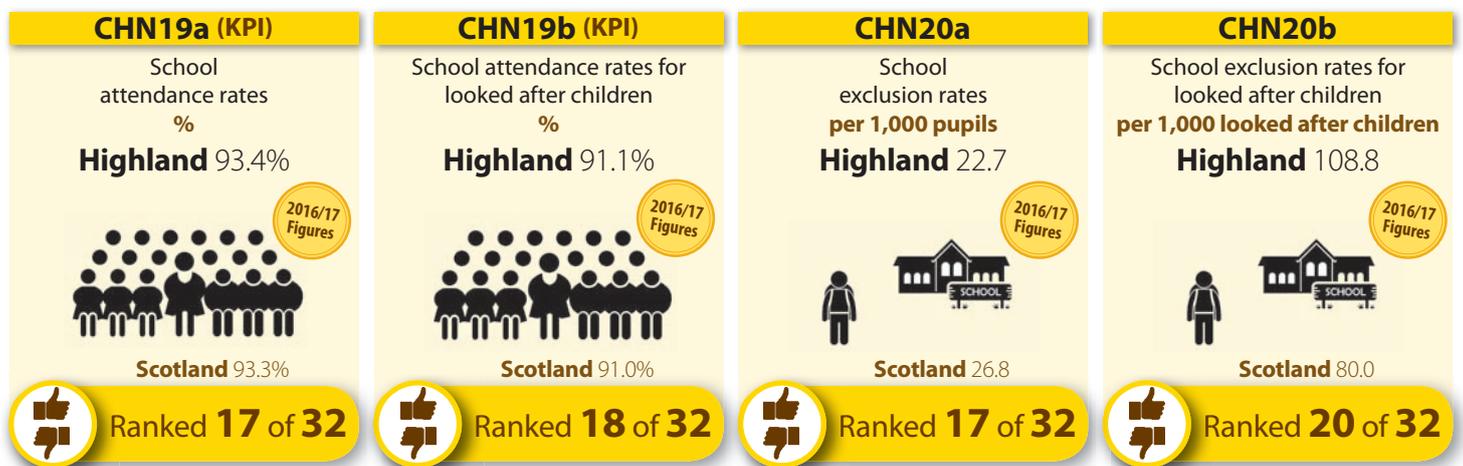
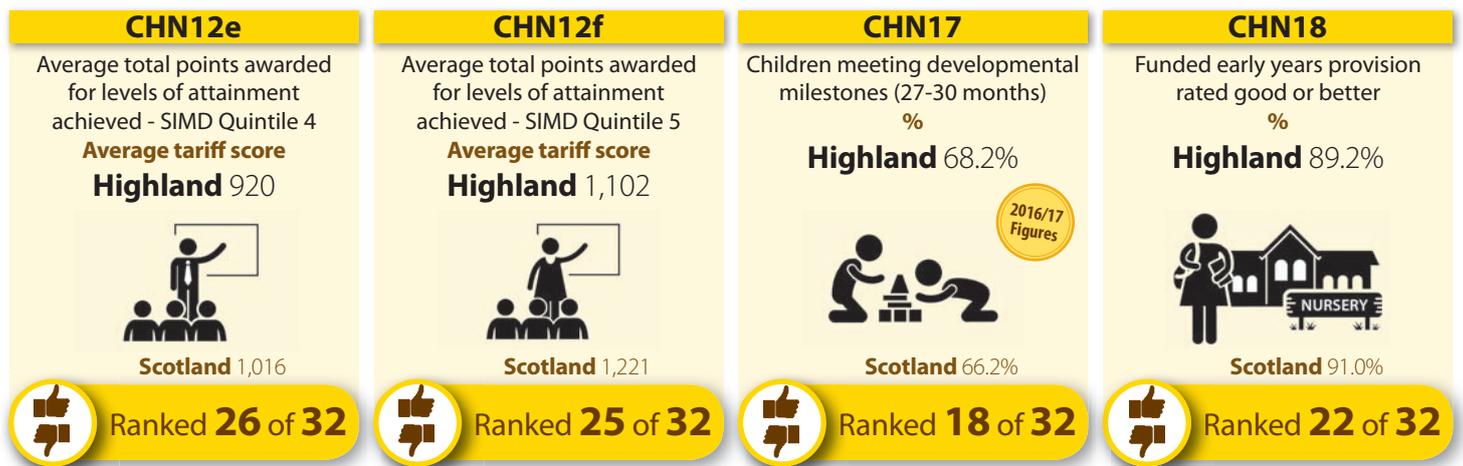
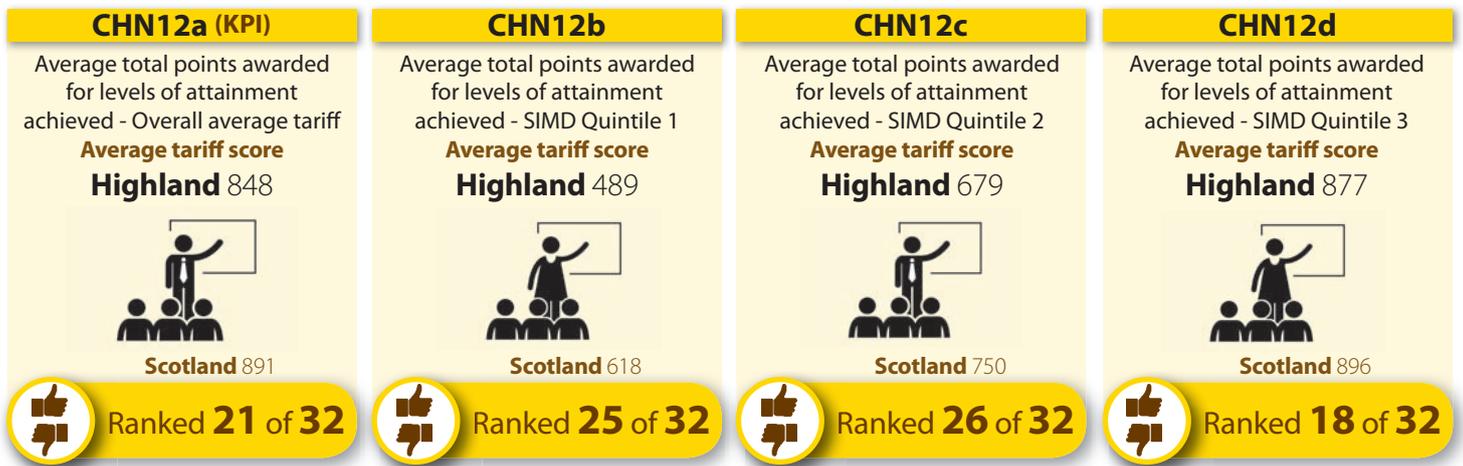


What is the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF)?

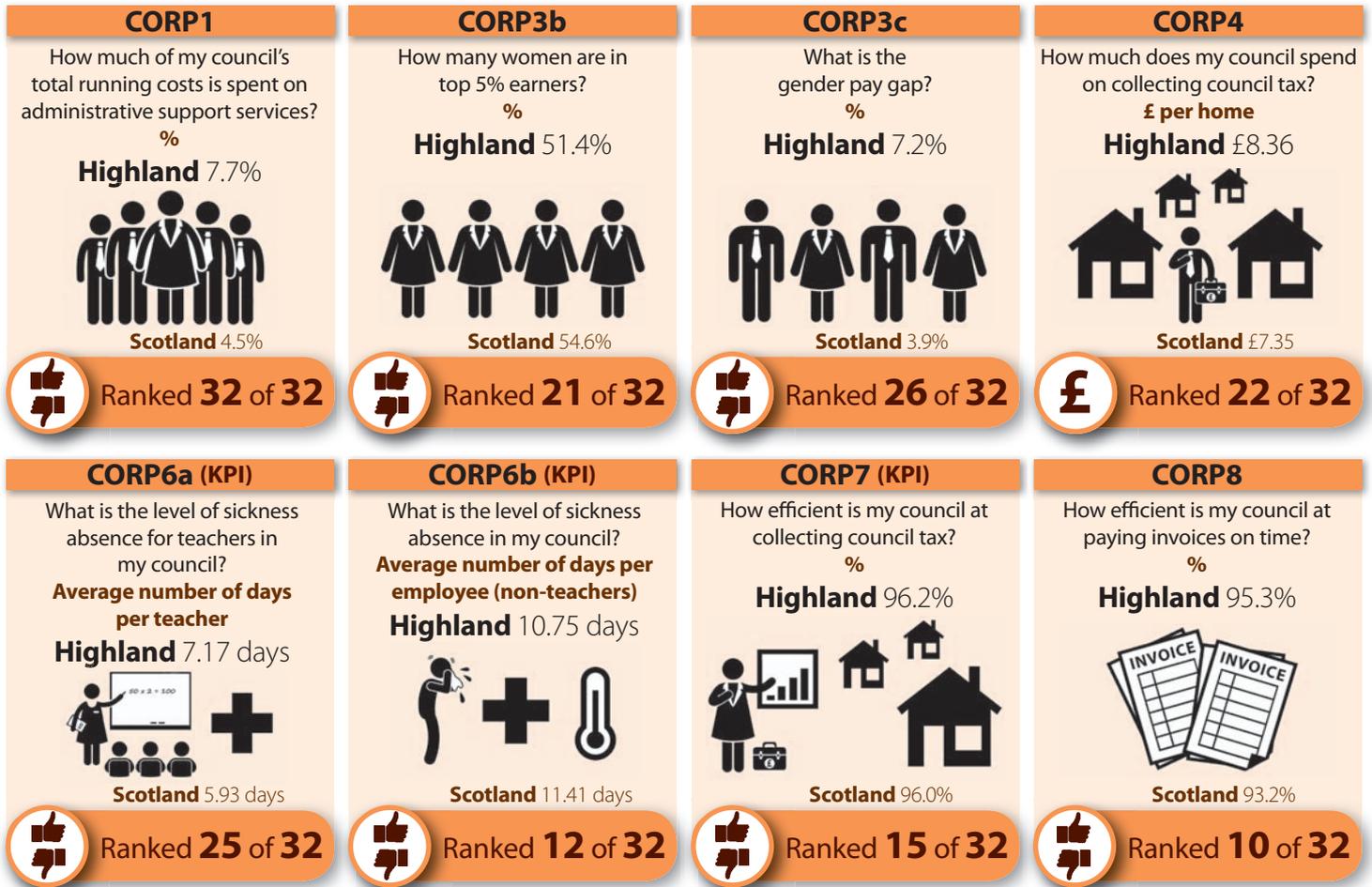
Local councils across Scotland are required to publish their performance information using the LGBF each year. This ensures that councils report standard information on the services councils provide to local communities across Scotland. The indicators were selected through a wide consultation process to cover the major service areas of local authorities. There are 27 indicators that the Council considers to be Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). 21 of these are from the LGBF, and 6 are locally defined indicators. These are highlighted and included in this report.

Children's Services

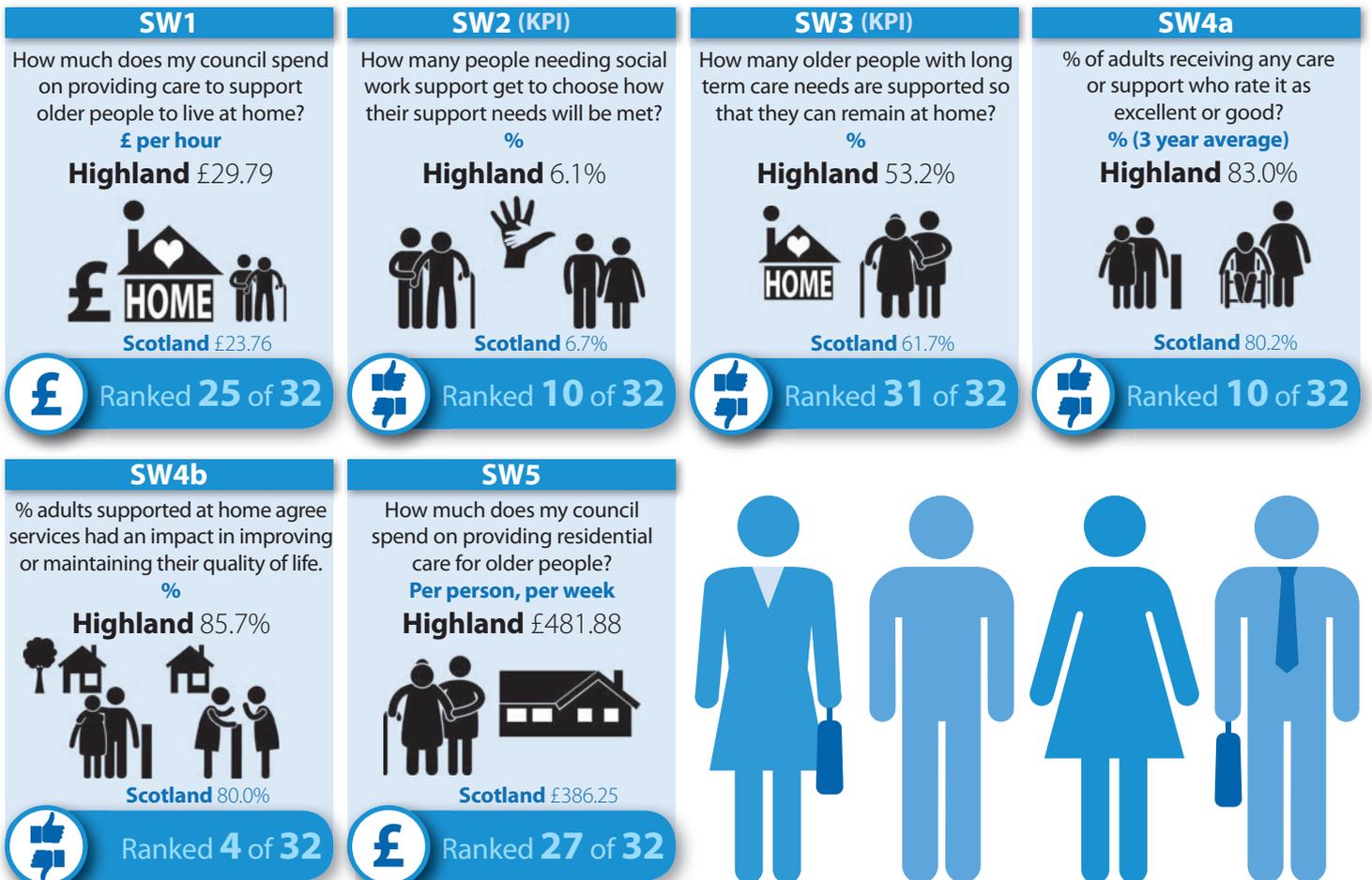




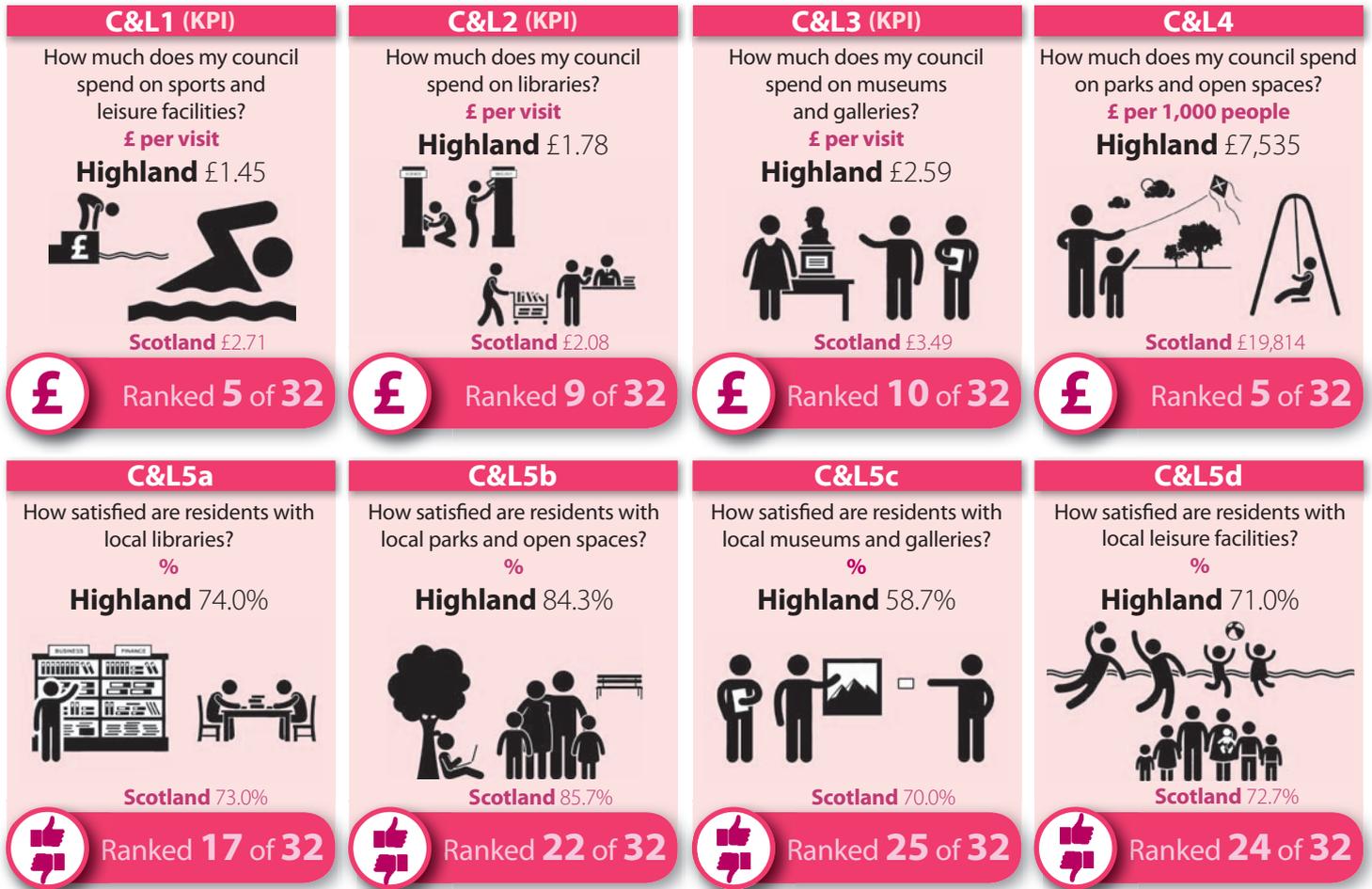
Corporate Services



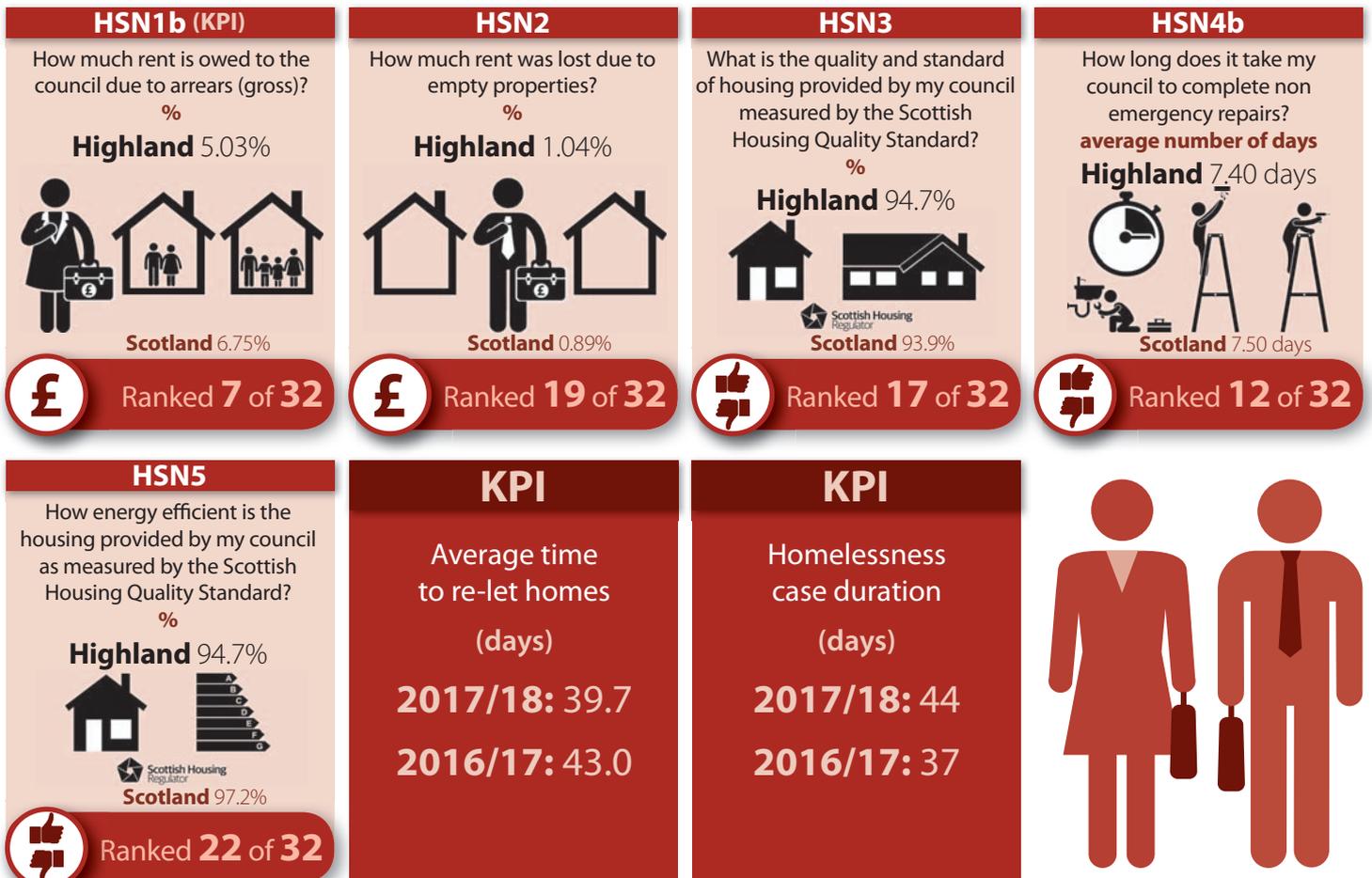
Adult Social Care Services



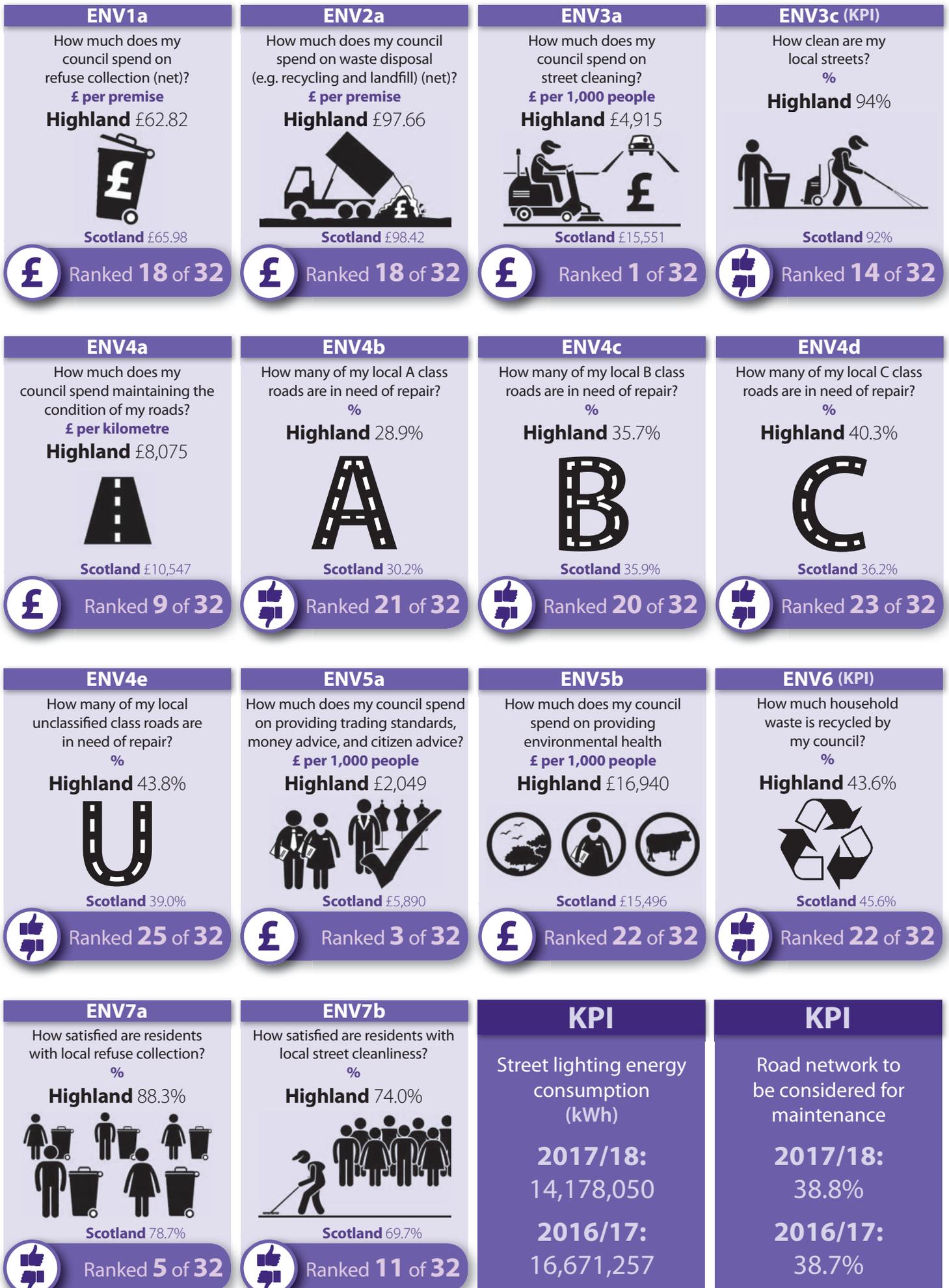
Culture and Leisure Services



Housing Services



Environmental Services



Economic Development

ECON1
How many unemployed people have been assisted into work by my council?
%
Highland 4.9%
Scotland 14.4%



Ranked **27** of **32**

ECON2
Cost per planning application?
£
Highland £2,671.71
Scotland £4,819.00



Ranked **2** of **32**

ECON3 (KPI)
Average time (weeks) per Planning Application
weeks
Highland 11.4
Scotland 9.3



Ranked **26** of **32**

ECON4 (KPI)
Proportion of Council spend to local small and medium sized enterprises
%
Highland 40.9%
Scotland 27.4%



Ranked **4** of **32**

ECON5
Number of Business Gateway start-ups per 10,000 population
Highland 11.0
Scotland 16.8



Ranked **30** of **32**

ECON6
How much does my council spend on Economic Development and Tourism?
£ per 1,000 people
Highland £40,777
Scotland £91,806



Ranked **5** of **32**

ECON7
How many people are earning less than the living wage?
%
Highland 19.5%
Scotland 18.4%



Ranked **13** of **32**

ECON8 (KPI)
How many properties receive superfast broadband?
%
Highland 76.0%
Scotland 91.1%



Ranked **29** of **32**

KPI
Business supported by Council and Business Gateway
2017/18: 1,191
2016/17: 1,061



Corporate Asset

C-AST1 (KPI)
How many council buildings are suitable for their current use?
%
Highland 66.1%
Scotland 81.0%



Ranked **32** of **32**

C-AST2
How many council buildings are in a satisfactory condition?
%
Highland 82.1%
Scotland 86.3%



Ranked **24** of **32**

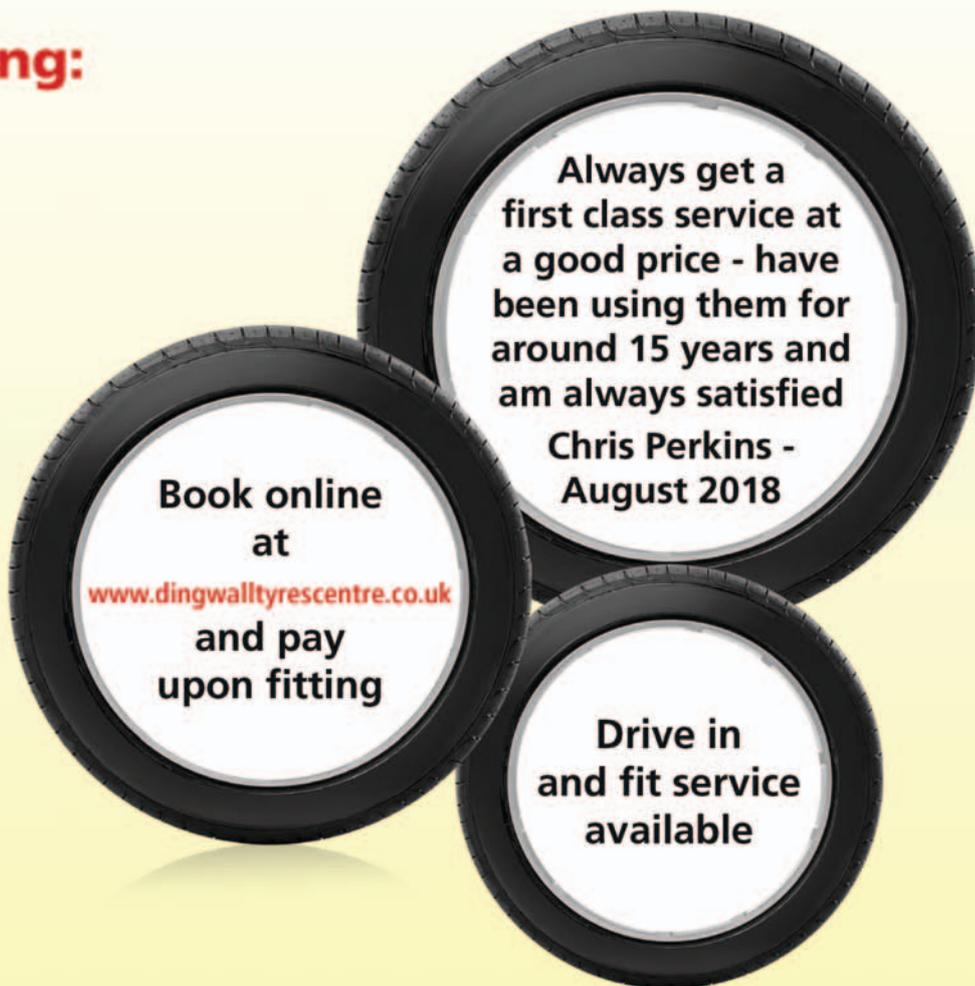


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