

**Communities and Place Committee**  
**Thursday 22 May 2025**

**Good News**

I am delighted to inform members that Whin Park in Inverness has successfully reopened after the £500k refurbishment project was completed on time and within budget. The site has been extremely busy since it reopened, and it is great to see this fantastic facility being so well received by the public. The official opening of the park will take place on Friday 30 May.

The Scottish Governments Play Vision Statement and Action Plan 2025-2030 has recently been published and The Highland Councils Playpark Strategy has been acknowledged in the evidence base and supporting research. Ours was the only local authority to be referenced alongside prominent organisations including Harvard University, Public Health Scotland and the University of Cambridge, we are very proud to have created a child-led strategy and action plan that has played a part in influencing best practice and is being recognised in this manner.

The Amenities team has been shortlisted for a Silver APSE Award in the category of STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE. This is in recognition of the work the Amenities have done in establishing the in house play team. Since their establishment the team collectively have worked with over 50 community groups, refurbished 27 play areas and had the Play Park Strategy and action plan approved for the next ten years. All Silver Award Councils for the Parks, Grounds & Street Scene category will be competing for the Gold Award and were interviewed by an awards panel yesterday (Wednesday 21 May) with all awards presented to participants at the annual dinner tonight. I would like to congratulate the Team on being shortlisted and wish Debbie Sutton and the Amenities team all the best for tonight.

The Council has a new shared service Tree Officer; Jason Simpson who started work with us on 31 May and brings with him extensive experience and expertise. Jason will be a valuable addition to the Council, and we welcome him and wish him every success in this new role.

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## **Waste Management New Household Electrical Recycling Collection Service**

ILM Highland, in partnership with Highland Council has launched a new Household Electrical Recycling Collection Service.

The launch marked the beginning of a new monthly collection service aimed at helping residents across rural communities of Highland recycle unwanted electrical items—whether working or broken. The new service covers Fort Augustus, Caol, Kinlochleven, Mallaig, Kingussie, Golspie, Melvich & Bettyhill, Kinlochbervie, Aultbea, Kyleakin, Lochcarron, Raasay & Sconser.

Funding for the new service was achieved through a successful application made by the Council to the Scottish Government's Recycling Improvement Fund (Small Grant Scheme.)

The funding includes the purchase of a new van which will be operated by ILM Highland to provide the monthly collection to rural communities which have limited access to Recycling Centres, the new service will help increase reuse and recycling of electrical items.



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## **Environmental Health and Bereavement Services**

From the environmental health team, congratulations go to Juliana Teixeira and Prameela Middleton, who both passed their professional exams in March to become fully qualified food safety officers.

In bereavement services, I am pleased to note that:-

- the extension to Croy Cemetery has now been completed. An additional 92 new lairs have been provided adding over 40 years' additional capacity.
- the extension to Duror Cemetery has also been completed. An additional 140 new lairs have been provided, adding over 30 years additional capacity.
- Bereavement Services have been improving Memorial Options available at Inverness Crematorium and from May 2025, the Book of Remembrance, currently housed within the Memorial Tower at the Crematorium, will now be available online, enhancing viewing and accessibility for families and the public.

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## **Customer & Registration Services**

This month Annemarie MacAlpine, Operations Manager, Customer and Registration Service, has taken up the prestigious mantle as President of the Association of Registrars of Scotland (ARoS). ARoS is a professional body established in 1865 to represent Registration Staff in Scotland. The board work closely with National Records of Scotland and staff from Scottish Government on Registration matters. Annemarie will hold this position for the next two years after serving the previous two years as Vice-President. During her time as President, Highland will look to hold the ARoS Annual General Meeting, playing host to Registrars from across Scotland in May 2026. It is a great opportunity to have the voice of a Highland Registrar nationally and we wish Annemarie well in this role.



Congratulations to both Claire Lyall and Carol Littlewood on passing their examination held in March. The ladies are now fully qualified Registrars and were awarded with their Certificate of Proficiency in the Law & Practice in Registration at the Annual General Meeting of the Association of Registrars of Scotland held in Renfrew in May. Claire is part of the team in Inverness Registration Office, and Carol in Fort William Service Point and Registration Office. The exam is the final step of an intensive study programme covering all aspects of day-to-day registration and the legislation which governs it. Pictured with Annemarie MacAlpine and Alpins Byrne, Registrar General for Scotland.

