

The Highland Council

Agenda Item	4
Report No	HC/31/25

Committee: Highland Council

Date: 30 October 2025

Report Title: Highland Community Planning Partnership 2024 – 2025 Annual Report

Report By: Chief Executive

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The [Highland Outcome Improvement Plan](#) (HOIP) is the strategic plan for the Highland Community Planning Partnership (CPP). Following consideration at Council in March 2024, a revised HOIP for 2024-2027 was agreed by the Community Planning Partnership in June 2024. This review took into account the changing environment, including external factors such as the cost of living crisis, internal Highland factors such as population decline, an aging population and the need for an effective workforce to respond to investment opportunities and sustain local communities. Accordingly, the revised HOIP better aligns with partner priorities and strategic plans, including the Council's Operational Delivery Plan.
- 1.2 The updated HOIP includes three new strategic priorities: People, Place, and Prosperity, and a series of supporting principles and outcomes aimed at improving the lives and experiences of everyone across the Highland area. In September 2024, the CPP Board agreed a [HOIP Delivery Plan and Performance Framework](#) for 2024-2027 in order to deliver on the strategic priorities and outcomes. The Delivery Plan outlines seven cross-cutting themes and their associated actions, while the Performance Framework sets out indicators aligned to the strategic priorities designed to measure the impact of the HOIP at a population level.
- 1.3 This report introduces the annual update on progress against the 2024-2027 HOIP Delivery Plan which was considered and agreed by the Community Planning Board in September 2025. In addition to the annual report, Members also receive an interim update in May to the Communities and Place Committee and, where appropriate, individual elements are reported to the relevant Strategic Committee. The Annual Report will provide assurance on progress and informs future Council engagement with the CPP to ensure continued alignment with corporate priorities.
- 1.4 Key achievements include the launch of innovative service models, strengthened community engagement, and the development of strategic partnerships that align resources and drive impact. The CPP Annual Conference 2025 further reinforced the shared ambition to build a fairer, healthier, and more resilient Highland.

1.5 2024–2025 Key Achievements include:

Delivery Plan Achievements

- Highland Housing Challenge Action Plan launched to address housing needs and support economic growth.
- Highland Property Partnership re-established to coordinate public sector asset management and enable colocation and joint working.
- Single Care Model pilot being developed to integrate childcare and adult social care in rural areas.
- Health Inequalities report being produced, informing targeted interventions and strategic planning.
- Whole Family Wellbeing Programme funded 51 projects supporting families and reducing disparities.
- Highland Social Value Charter and Employer Charter launched to embed community wealth building and fair work.
- Community Wealth Building Partnership established to align investment and promote local economic resilience.

Highland and Local Partnership Achievements

- Nine active Community Partnerships held quarterly meetings, with a range of tools developed to support their progress and strengthen local engagement.
- Creating Hope in Highland Together suicide prevention plan implemented, with 346 participants trained.
- Green Health Partnership and Active Highland Strategy advanced inclusive, nature-based wellbeing initiatives.
- Work. Life. Highland platform launched, attracting over 6,000 users.
- Skills Development Scotland delivered over 20,000 career guidance sessions and supported 2,325 apprentices.
- Integrated Children’s Services Board launched the Children and Young People Participation Strategy.
- Highland Community Justice Partnership expanded the Custody Link Programme and promoted community sentencing.
- CPP contributed to national consultations including the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill and policing and fire service reviews.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:-

- **Consider and note** the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan Annual Update for 2024-2025 which can be found at Appendix 1.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** – There are no new resource implications arising from the report. The revised HOIP is better aligned to the strategic priorities of partner agencies, including the Council’s Delivery Plan and, therefore, enables greater and more effective alignment of partnership resources in order to deliver against the priorities and actions identified.

- 3.2 **Legal** - Community Planning Partnerships have a duty to develop a Local Outcome Improvement Plan that must address inequality in line with the duties in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.
- 3.3 **Risk** - The current financial challenge facing the public and third sectors was a key driver in revising the HOIP. It is essential to redesign partnership approaches to maximise the opportunities from the resources available and reduce duplication. It is essential that partnership and organisational priorities and resources are aligned in order to maximise opportunities and mitigate risks of reductions. There are reputational or strategic implications if delivery falters, which reinforces the importance of continued Council engagement.
- 3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – There are no health and safety implications arising from this report.
- 3.5 **Gaelic** – The revised HOIP includes an additional outcome to support communities to maximise opportunities from Gaelic culture and heritage.

4 Impacts

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children’s Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3 An impact assessment screening was undertaken as part of the development of the HOIP and can be found at the following link:
https://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/83865/item_8_resetting_the_highland_outcome_improvement_plan_hoip This is an update report and therefore no impact assessment screening is required.

5 Background

- 5.1 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires Community Planning Partnerships to produce a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan that focuses on tackling inequality. The first Highland Outcome Improvement Plan (HOIP) was agreed in 2017. In September 2023, in response to significant challenges in the local context, including the lasting impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, cost-of-living crisis, and ongoing financial pressures across public and third sector services the Highland Community Planning Partnership Board agreed to review the HOIP.
- 5.2 These challenges have highlighted the need for collaborative, preventative, and proportionate approaches to service delivery ensuring that support reaches those who need it most, when they need it. The revised HOIP which sets out a shared vision to maximise opportunities and tackle inequality to build a thriving Highlands for all, and provides a coordinated approach to improving outcomes for individuals, families, and communities across the region was agreed in June 2024 with a supporting Delivery Plan and Performance Framework agreed in September 2024.

- 5.3 The [2024–2027 HOIP](#) includes an updated vision, and is built around three strategic priorities:
- People – enabling individuals to live independently, safely, and well within their communities.
 - Place – developing sustainable and resilient local communities through integrated, place-based approaches.
 - Prosperity – creating inclusive economic opportunities that allow all people and places to thrive.
- 5.4 Each strategic priority has a series of supporting principles and outcomes. The focus for the CPP is on improving the lives and experiences of everyone across the Highland area by realising and maximising opportunities to create thriving communities. This involves enabling people to live independently, safely, and well within sustainable and resilient local communities, and ensuring that both people and places can prosper and thrive economically. The CPP recognises the inequalities that exist in our community and that reducing inequalities will provide more sustainable and resilient communities.
- 5.5 The 2024–2027 HOIP demonstrates the CPP’s commitment to tackling inequalities through delivering services that are proportionate to need, while focusing on prevention to address the root causes of inequality and help avoid them arising in the first place. The HOIP is underpinned by a Delivery Plan, which outlines seven cross-cutting themes and targeted actions across areas such as Housing, Employability, Community Wealth Building, and Whole Family and Community-Based Approaches.
- 5.6 The Highland region faces unique demographic and geographic challenges, including population decline in working-age groups, rising demand for care, and barriers to sustainability in rural areas. The HOIP responds to these challenges by aligning resources, fostering innovation, and empowering communities to shape local solutions.
- 5.7 As the strategic framework for community planning in Highland, the 2024–2027 HOIP also supports and connects a range of partner strategies and plans, ensuring coherence and shared ambition across sectors. This Annual Report reflects the first year of delivery under the refreshed HOIP and provides a foundation for continued progress toward a fairer, healthier, and more prosperous Highland.
- 5.8 This Annual Report focuses on the first year of progress against the 2024-2027 HOIP Delivery Plan, each Annual Report will be considered by the Council in October each year. It should be noted that given the alignment between the HOIP and the Council’s Delivery Plan, a number of the actions are also reported to other Strategic Committees over the course of the year.

6. 2024 – 2025 Annual Report Overview

- 6.1 The 2024–2025 Annual Report provides a comprehensive account of the first year of delivery under the refreshed Highland Outcome Improvement Plan (HOIP) 2024–2027. It captures the collective efforts of the Highland Community Planning Partnership (CPP) to address inequality, improve outcomes, and unlock opportunities for communities across the region.

6.2 The report is structured around the HOIP's three strategic priorities People, Place, and Prosperity and highlights progress made through the Delivery Plans cross-cutting themes. These themes reflect the interconnected nature of the challenges facing Highland communities and include Housing, Whole Family and Community-Based Approaches, Employment and Employability, Community Wealth Building, Shared Commissioning, Funding Alignment, and Data and Intelligence.

6.3 Key achievements from the year 2024 – 2025 include:

Delivery Plan Achievements

Strategic Collaboration:

- Highland Housing Challenge Action Plan launched to address housing needs and support economic growth.
- Highland Property Partnership re-established to coordinate public sector asset management and enable co-location and joint working.

Developing Innovative Service Models:

- Progress made towards the piloting of the Single Care Model and a toolkit of flexible childcare options developed. Reflects the commitment to integrated, person-centred service delivery, jointly led by the Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Care and Learning Alliance (CALA) through the Regional Economic Partnership.

Tackling Inequality:

- Health Inequalities report being produced, informing targeted interventions and strategic planning.
- Whole Family Wellbeing Programme funded 51 projects supporting families and reducing disparities.

Inclusive Economic Development:

- Highland Social Value Charter and Employer Charter launched to embed community wealth building and fair work.
- Community Wealth Building Partnership established to align investment and promote local economic resilience.

Highland and Local Partnership Achievements

Community Empowerment:

- All nine Community Partnerships have strengthened local engagement through networking events, priority action trackers, and the rollout of new guidance and toolkits.

Mental Health and Wellbeing:

- Creating Hope in Highland Together suicide prevention plan implemented, with 346 participants trained.
- Green Health Partnership and Active Highland Strategy advanced inclusive, nature-based wellbeing initiatives.

Strategic Partnership Contributions:

- Work. Life. Highland platform launched, attracting over 6,000 users.
- Skills Development Scotland delivered over 20,000 career guidance sessions and supported 2,325 apprentices.
- Integrated Children's Services Board launched the Children and Young People Participation Strategy.
- Highland Community Justice Partnership expanded the Custody Link Programme and promoted community sentencing.
- CPP contributed to national consultations including the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill and policing and fire service reviews.

- 6.4 The report also reflects on the success of the 2025 CPP Annual Conference, which brought together over 100 delegates to share insights, strengthen partnerships, and reaffirm the shared ambition to build a fairer, healthier, and more resilient Highland.

7. Risks and Challenges

- 7.1 While the first year of delivery under the 2024–2027 HOIP has demonstrated strong progress and collaboration, several challenges have emerged that may impact future delivery if not addressed proactively.

Workforce Capacity: Across sectors, staffing and recruitment challenges particularly in rural and remote areas have affected the pace and scale of service delivery. This has been especially evident in areas such as childcare and health and social care.

Rural Service Access: Geographic barriers continue to impact equitable access to services, with transport, digital connectivity, and infrastructure limitations posing challenges for both service users and providers.

Data and Intelligence Gaps: While progress has been made in developing shared indicators and dashboards, further work is needed to improve data sharing, integration, and real-time analysis across partners to support evidence-led decision-making.

Financial Pressures: Ongoing budget constraints across public and third sector organisations have limited the ability to scale successful initiatives and invest in preventative approaches.

Engagement Consistency: Ensuring consistent representation and participation across all partners and communities—particularly in thematic groups and delivery partnerships—remains a priority to maintain momentum and inclusivity.

8. Next Steps

- 8.1 As the CPP moves into the second year of delivery under the 2024–2027 HOIP, the focus will be on consolidating progress, embedding learning from year one, and strengthening delivery mechanisms across all strategic priorities. The Council will receive annual updates, with progress updates also going to Communities and Place Committee in May each year, and through the relevant Strategic Committees.

- 8.2 Key areas of development will include:

- Complete the database of public sector land and building to support both the Points of Delivery approaches and increasing housing
- Establish Local Development Forms to support the understanding of local housing need and related development
- Delivery of a partnership operating agreement for shared spaces
- Framework in place for tackling inequalities and prevention
- Integrated Single Care Model piloted
- Project Bank implemented
- Data capabilities of the Partnership enhanced to better track impact.

- 8.3 The Partnership will also continue to build capacity across sectors, promote innovation, and prepare for the implementation of national policy developments including the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill. These efforts will ensure that the 2024 – 2027 HOIP remains responsive, inclusive, and effective in delivering improved outcomes for Highland’s communities.
- 8.4 2026 will be a pivotal year for shaping the future of community planning in Highland. The CPP will initiate a structured and inclusive process to develop the new 10-year Highland Outcome Improvement Plan for 2027 - 2037. This will build on the learning from the current HOIP and respond to emerging challenges and opportunities.
- 8.5 Key actions will include:
- Develop a timeline for the HOIP development process.
 - Launch a region-wide engagement programme to gather insights from communities, service users, and frontline staff.
 - Align with new and existing national policy developments and local strategies.
 - Facilitate cross-sector engagement to co-design the new strategic outcomes, and cross-cutting themes.
 - Ensure the new HOIP reflects the diversity of Highland’s communities and addresses needs and inequalities.
 - Explore opportunities for shared analytics to support decision-making.
 - Ensure the new HOIP embeds preventative approaches and builds resilience across services and communities.
 - Integrate climate adaptation, digital inclusion, and workforce sustainability as core principles.
 - Develop a resource alignment strategy to support delivery from 2027 onwards.

Designation: Chief Executive

Date: 14 October 2025

Author: Alison Clark, Chief Officer Housing and Communities
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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Highland Community Planning Partnership 2024 – 2025 Annual Report



HIGHLAND COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2024 - 2025



Highland
Community
Planning
Partnership

Com-pàirteachas
Dealbhadh
Coimhearsnachd
na Gàidhealtachd

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2024–2025 Annual Report marks the first year of delivery under the refreshed 2024–2027 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan, which sets out a shared vision to maximise opportunities and tackle inequality to build a thriving Highlands for all. Developed in response to significant local and national challenges including population decline, the cost-of-living crisis, and workforce pressures the revised 2024–2027 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan is structured around three strategic priorities: People, Place, and Prosperity.

This report highlights the collective efforts of the Highland Community Planning Partnership to deliver meaningful change across the region. Through the implementation of a robust Delivery Plan and Performance Framework, partners have worked collaboratively to address inequality, improve access to services, and support inclusive economic and community development.

Key achievements include the launch of innovative service models, strengthened community engagement, and the development of strategic partnerships that align resources and drive impact. The CPP Annual Conference 2025 further reinforced the shared ambition to build a fairer, healthier, and more resilient Highland.

2024–2025 Key Achievements

Delivery Plan Achievements

- Highland Housing Challenge Action Plan launched to address housing needs and support economic growth.
- Highland Property Partnership re-established to coordinate public sector asset management and enable co-location and joint working.
- Single Care Model pilot being developed to integrate childcare and adult social care in rural areas.
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INTRODUCTION

The Highland Community Planning Partnership (CPP) is pleased to present the 2024-2025 Annual Report for the 2024-2027 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan (HOIP). This report reflects our collective progress in delivering on the shared vision to **maximise opportunities and tackle inequality to build a thriving Highlands for all**.

As the overarching strategic framework for community planning in Highland, the HOIP sets out our commitment to improving outcomes for individuals, families, and communities across the region. It is built on three strategic priorities **People**, **Place**, and **Prosperity** which guide our collaborative efforts to address the complex challenges facing our communities and to unlock the potential of our region.

This first year of delivery under the refreshed 2024–2027 HOIP has taken place against a backdrop of ongoing recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, a deepening cost of living crisis, and significant financial pressures across public and third sector services. These challenges have underscored the importance of partnership working, and the need for innovative, integrated, and preventative approaches to service delivery.

Throughout 2024–2025, partners have worked together to implement the HOIP and the Delivery Plan, which sets out cross-cutting themes and targeted actions to address inequality, improve access to services, and support sustainable economic and community development.

This report highlights the progress made across each strategic priority, showcases examples of collaborative working, and outlines the measures of success that are helping us track impact and inform future planning.

We remain committed to our shared values of **accountability, inclusivity, fairness, respect, integrity, and openness**, and to the behaviours that underpin effective partnership working. By listening to our communities, aligning our resources, and fostering innovation, we aim to deliver meaningful change and ensure that all people and places in Highland can thrive.

This Annual Report is both a reflection of our achievements and a reaffirmation of our commitment to continuous improvement. It provides a foundation for the next phase of delivery and invites ongoing engagement from all partners and communities as we work together to build a fairer, more resilient Highland.



2024 - 2027

HIGHLAND OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The 2024–2027 HOIP sets the strategic direction for the Highland CPP. It is the strategic framework through which partners collaborate to address the region’s most pressing challenges and inequalities, while unlocking opportunities for people and communities to thrive. To drive this ambition forward, the Partnership has identified three strategic priorities:

People

We are committed to enabling individuals to live independently, safely, and well within their communities. This means designing services that are person-centred, trauma-informed, and proportionate to need—ensuring that support reaches those who need it most, when they need it. By focusing on prevention and early intervention, we aim to improve health and wellbeing outcomes and empower people to shape the services that affect their lives.

Place

We believe in the power of place to transform lives. By working in partnership to develop sustainable and resilient communities, we are building the foundations for long-term prosperity and wellbeing. Our approach is integrated and place-based, with a focus on climate resilience. We are committed to empowering communities to lead local decision-making and to co-create solutions that reflect their strengths and aspirations.

Prosperity

We are creating opportunities for all people and places to prosper through inclusive economic growth. This means aligning investment, innovation, and skills development to support a thriving Highland economy. We are strengthening partnerships with businesses and social enterprises, promoting fair work, and investing in the future workforce. By embedding community wealth building and supporting local enterprise, we are ensuring that prosperity is shared and sustainable.



The 2024- 2027 HOIP also defines outcomes that partners aim to achieve through collaborative action:

- Improved access to services and support.
- Tackling depopulation and barriers to community sustainability.
- Embedding community wealth building and maximising natural capital.
- Supporting young people with education, employment, and training opportunities.
- Strengthening local decision-making and resilience.

This strategic framework is supported by a detailed Delivery Plan, which outlines Cross-Cutting Themes, actions, and measures of success. These include initiatives around housing, employability, shared commissioning, natural capital, and aligning funding and data practices across the Partnership.

Together, the 2024 - 2027 HOIP and its Delivery Plan provide a roadmap for transformational change across Highland ensuring that services are responsive, inclusive, and designed to meet the diverse needs of our communities.

2024 - 2027 HOIP DELIVERY PLAN

The Delivery Plan sets out the practical framework for delivering the Partnership's shared vision: **to maximise opportunities and tackle inequality to build a thriving Highlands for all**. It translates strategic priorities into coordinated actions, aligning resources and efforts across public, third sector, and community partners.

The Delivery Plan is structured around seven cross-cutting themes that reflect the interconnected nature of the challenges and inequalities facing Highland communities. The seven cross-cutting themes are:

- **Housing and Place-Based Planning**
- **Whole Family and Community-Based Approaches**
- **Employment and Employability**
- **Community Wealth Building**
- **Shared Approaches to Commissioning**
- **Funding Alignment and Joint Opportunities**
- **Data and Intelligence**
- **Workforce Development**

Each theme is supported by clear purpose, deliverables, senior officer sponsorship, and delivery mechanisms. The Delivery Plan promotes innovation, integration, and prevention ensuring services are proportionate to need and responsive to local contexts.

By embedding the Delivery Plan within the HOIP framework, the Partnership is able to:

- Strengthen collaboration across sectors and communities.
- Reduce duplication and maximise the impact of shared resources.
- Respond effectively to complex issues such as depopulation, poverty, and access to services.
- Build capacity for long-term change through aligned investment and strategic planning.

The Delivery Plan is a living document, designed to evolve with emerging needs and opportunities. It ensures that the HOIP is not just a statement of intent, but a blueprint for action driving meaningful progress across Highland.



PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

POPULATION INDICATORS

To support delivery of the 2024 - 2027 HOIP, a set of Population Indicators has been identified to track long-term trends and measure progress against the Partnership's strategic priorities: **People**, **Place**, and **Prosperity**.

These indicators provide a high-level view of the health, wellbeing, safety, and economic resilience of Highland's communities. They are drawn from national and local datasets and reflect both the challenges and opportunities facing the region.

- Under **People**, indicators focus on improving health outcomes, reducing preventable deaths, tackling child poverty, and increasing access to care and physical activity.
- **Place** indicators monitor housing delivery, migration trends, environmental sustainability, and community safety.
- **Prosperity** indicators track economic activity, employment, skills development, and income levels—key drivers of inclusive growth.

Together, these measures will help the Partnership assess the impact of its work, identify areas for targeted intervention, and ensure that progress is being made toward a fairer, healthier, and prosperous Highland.

People	Baseline
Decrease emergency hospital admissions per 100,000 population (65 years +) (based on 3- year aggregates) (2021/24)	20,235
Decrease deaths from probable suicide (based on period reporting average) (2019/23)	45
Reduce alcohol-specific deaths (based on period reporting average) (2015/23)	53
Reduce drug-related deaths (based on period reporting average) (2015/24)	21
Increase number of people (65 years +) with long term care needs receiving care at home (2023/24)	358
Reduce number of children living in poverty (2023/24)	9,776
Reduce number of households in temporary accommodation (2024/25)	479
Increase number of people more active more often (2024/25)	79%
Increase life expectancy (based on latest 3-year period) (2021/23)	Male: 77.4 years Female: 81.9 years
Place	Baseline
Increase net migration (2022)	1,030
Increase number of homes built based on Scottish housing investment plan (affordable homes) (2023/28)	3,300
Record annual population projection numbers against projected by age group to 2030 (2024)	0-15: 1,954 16-44: 4,487 45-64: 4,081 65-74: 1,942 75-84: 1,320 85+: 433 Total: 14,217
Reduce greenhouse gas emissions per capita (2019)	12.7 tCO ₂ e
Decrease rate of recorded crimes for 10,000 population (2023/24)	470
Decrease number of serious road traffic collisions and road deaths (2023/24)	119 and 10
Reduce number of total dwelling fires and fire fatalities (2023/24)	119 and 1
Prosperity	Baseline
Increase percentage of people who are economically active (2024)	78.4%
Reduce number of the working age population who are employment deprived (2024/25)	£11,600
Increase employment rate (2024/25)	76%
Reduce percentage of population (aged 16-64) in receipt of out-of-work benefits (2023/24)	2.3%
Increase number of 16-19 year olds participating in education, employment or training (2024)	93.8%
Increase percentage of school leavers in positive and sustained destinations (2024/25)	95%
Increase number of modern apprenticeship starts (2024/25)	1,493

DELIVERY PLAN PROGRESS 2024 -2025

In the first year of delivery, the HOIP's strategic priorities **People**, **Place**, and **Prosperity** have guided collaborative action across the Partnership to address inequality and unlock opportunity. Progress has been made across the Delivery Plan and identified Cross-Cutting Themes, which underpin and connect the strategic priorities. These themes, ranging from Connecting People and Places, Community Wealth Building to Housing have enabled more integrated, innovative, and locally responsive approaches. The Impact Highlights outlined reflect the Partnership's commitment to delivering meaningful change and building a fairer, more resilient Highland through joined-up action and shared ambition.

2024 - 2025 Impact Highlights:

- **Highland Property Partnership:** Facilitates strategic property asset management across public sector partners to support service delivery, enable co-location and joint working, and contribute to the HOIP cross-cutting theme of Connecting People and Places. The Partnership, led by Highland Council, promotes innovation, best value, and alignment of future investment in property to maximise community benefit.
- **Health Inequalities Short Life Working Group:** Led by the Director of Public Health, NHS Highland, this group developed a robust evidence base on health inequalities demonstrated earlier within the Annual Report, supporting targeted action planning and informing the Whole Family and Community-Based Approaches cross-cutting theme with a focus on prevention, early intervention, and reducing disparities in health outcomes.
- **Single Care Model:** A pioneering concept to be piloted in Highland to explore integrated care delivery combining childcare and adult social care under a single registration and employer. Developed in partnership with CALA and rural communities, the group working towards this includes Highland Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, this work supports the cross-cutting theme of Whole Family and Community-Based Approaches by addressing workforce challenges and improving access to care in remote areas.
- **Natural Capital Short Life Working Group:** Established to support the development and application of the Natural Capital Tool, this group is enabling partners to adopt a natural capital approach to planning and investment. Their work, led by NatureScot, sits under the Whole Family and Community-Based Approaches but aims to support the HOIP across all strategic priorities by embedding environmental value into decision-making and identifying opportunities that benefit both people and nature.
- **Highland Community Wealth Building Partnership:** Coordinates strategic action across the CPP to tackle inequality by embedding inclusive economic models, aligning public investment, and supporting initiatives such as the Social Value Charter, Employer Charter, and Highland Project Bank. The Partnership aims to ensure that wealth generated in Highland is retained and reinvested to benefit local communities, in preparation for the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill.
- **Partnership Coordinating Group:** Provides strategic support across the CPP structure, facilitating collaboration, resource alignment, and performance monitoring. It acts as a communication hub, promotes best practice, and drives delivery of the HOIP by connecting Community Partnerships, Delivery Groups, and thematic initiatives bringing partners and others together under the cross-cutting theme of Aligning Partnership Practices.

DELIVERY PLAN

HOUSING: HIGHLAND HOUSING CHALLENGE

Housing is one of the Cross-Cutting Themes within the Delivery Plan but also underpins across the **People**, **Place** and **Prosperity** strategic priorities. Housing is both an enabler of economic growth but critical to alleviating and addressing the impacts and effects of poverty. Housing, along with childcare and transport, is also critical to supporting and sustaining communities; ensuring young people are able to remain, sustaining older people with care in their own homes and attracting people to communities across the Highland area.

In June 2024, Highland Council agreed a Highland Housing Challenge in recognition of both the issues in meeting the current need for housing across communities in Highland and the anticipated future demand for housing based upon the economic opportunities coming to the area. The need to address this Challenge is also reflected in the actions in the Delivery Plan.

Progress against these actions are summarised as follows:

- Develop a database of public sector land and building assets – this is being progressed through the Highland Property Partnership. As part of the place-based reviews, assets surplus to requirement are being identified that could have an alternative use. This approach will continue throughout this work.
- Understanding of housing needs demand – work to develop a new Housing Need Demand Assessment for Highland has commenced. Partners are contributing to the evidence base through the provision of critical data and this will sit alongside evidence focus groups, particularly around economic opportunities and health and social care needs. This will also help to understand key-worker housing need.
- Understanding the need of key workers – the Housing Need Demand Assessment will assist in progressing improved understanding of key worker need. Alongside this, there is a commitment to re-establish Local Development Forums to provide improved local intelligence and understanding of need. This has been piloted in one area with the intention to roll-out across Highland. In addition, the Council has agreed to develop its own mid-market rent model to increase provision of this type of housing across Highland, which will have a particular focus on supporting key-worker housing. A Project Manager has been appointed to oversee and progress this work.
- Community housing development pack – this work is being progressed through the Regional Economic Partnership Housing sub-group. Work has commenced on gathering learning and good practice from other areas which will bring this together to support community led models of housing development.

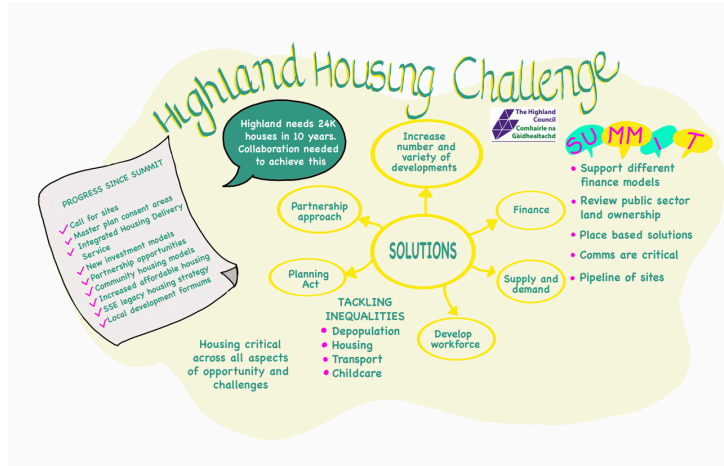
In June 2025, the Highland Housing Challenge Partnership Action Plan was agreed at a meeting of the Highland Council. This reflects the commitments from developers, contractors, Registered Social Landlords, investment partners and public sector partners to accelerating the growth of housing across all tenures across the area.

The Partnership Action Plan outlines important areas of activity, targets and timescales and partner contributions and commitments for action in three key thematic areas – increasing finance for housing development, increasing land for housing development and increasing developer capacity. Key priorities include those identified within the HOIP in relation to housing but also around building capacity within the construction sector (Employment and Employability Delivery Plan priority) and exploring accommodation solutions to support people remain in their own homes (**People** priority outcomes).

DELIVERY PLAN

HOUSING: HIGHLAND HOUSING CHALLENGE

CONT.



Work has already progressed across a number of priority areas which includes:

- Established a call for sites which has delivered 250 sites, with a potential 25,000 housing units which will support deliver against the target of an additional 12,000 houses over the next 10 years;
- Agreed an approach for identifying and progressing masterplan consent areas to support accelerating building across Highland;
- Established an integrated property service which will support accelerating the pre-application processes for developments;
- Working with Scottish National Investment Bank, good progress is being made in establishing a new public/private joint venture model;
- Agreed for the Council to progress developing and delivering mid-market rental properties, with a particular focus on key worker accommodation; and
- Through the Social Value Charter, SSEN Transmissions have committed to delivering on legacy housing for Highland, with a minimum of 400 housing units.

Highland
Housing
Challenge

DELIVERY PLAN

CONNECTING PEOPLE AND PLACES: HIGHLAND PROPERTY PARTNERSHIP

The Highland Property Partnership was established in November 2024 in order to coordinate the property related interests of public sector partners and identify opportunities for improving service delivery and addressing 2024 - 2027 HOIP priorities and outcomes.

This coordinating structure has representation from across the public sector, benefiting from participation from: Highland Council, NHS Highland, Police Scotland, Fire Scotland, Nature Scot, Highland & Islands Enterprise and High Life Highland. As well as developing solutions for shared premises strategies it is serving wider functions, including:

- Planning link between local and national public sector agencies, to achieve joint working within strategic property asset management delivering a capital base that provides best value for the public purse.
- Creating an environment to foster innovation and better ways of working and ultimately release capital/revenue resources from property to better support the delivery of service strategy.
- A structured platform to align all potential future investment in strategic property asset management ensuring all opportunities of co-location but more importantly joint working are maximised.

This partnership provides an effective forum to achieve coordinated and impactful delivery of the Highland Investment Plan (HIP) and other key investment and/or asset management opportunities that align with the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan (HOIP).

Key work priorities include:

- Creation of a shared database/asset map of owned/leased property, land owned and services delivered by public sector partners that is accessible to all members.
- Exploration of opportunities for sharing, co-location, and integration of property/land to aid the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan (HOIP) and support service re-design and reform through locality based investment planning.
- Develop an operational agreement for shared spaces for legal, ICT and general costs to support sharing, co-location, and integration of property/land.
- Align as far as reasonably practicable the agencies' property asset management strategies and capital programmes (relating to strategic property asset investment).

DELIVERY PLAN

CONNECTING PEOPLE AND PLACES: HIGHLAND PROPERTY PARTNERSHIP CONT.

Key projects and updates include:

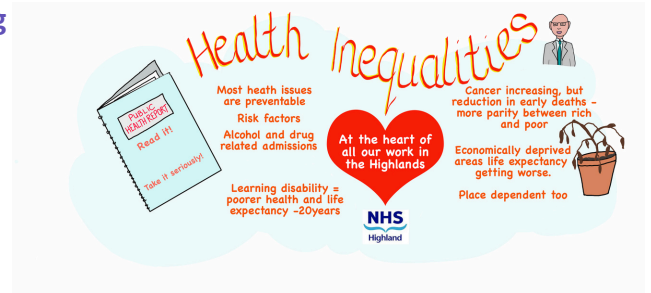
- Hub North have agreed to facilitate and co-ordinate activity on behalf of partners, providing secretariat and programme management support.
- In line with a commitment to shared intelligence, place-based reviews are underway which comprehensively identify and map public sector partner assets in each location and help to identify opportunities for improving the efficiency of assets, founded on service improvement policies. Briefing workshops have been held with all partners to consider co-investment opportunities on priority projects and seek alignment in activity.
- The Highland Property Partnership is meeting regularly to maintain an overview of potential property and asset management improvements and savings. The priority work of the group is shaped by the Highland Investment Plan and the Scottish Government's Single Scottish Estate which emphasises the delivery of national and local outcomes as key drivers for change.
- In Dingwall partners are being given the opportunity to co-locate in the first of the Council's landmark community Points of Delivery POD that are central to the Highland Investment Plan. This coincides with options for improving depot facilities in the area that bring similar opportunities for partners. Options associated with health and social care provision are also being developed as part of the wider investment opportunity.
- This is setting the template for similar proposals for a community POD in Thurso which will set the scene for a wider examination of Council and partners services in the Caithness area.
- Work is progressing to develop a shared accommodation agreement that will break down any real or perceived barriers to public sector co-location, and for understanding and addressing the financial, legal and logistical arrangements for bringing partners together.
- Work is progressing to develop a log of all relevant strategic policies that partners are taking forward in order to align timelines and enable partners to effectively collaborate.



DELIVERY PLAN

WHOLE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACHES: HEALTH INEQUALITIES

With thanks to the Health Inequalities Short Life Working Group, and in particular to NHS Highland's Public Health Intelligence Team, for their work in preparing the Health Inequalities Report. Their contribution has provided a vital evidence base to inform strategic planning and delivery across the Partnership.



The Highland CPP Health Inequalities Report 2025 provides a robust evidence base on the scale and nature of health inequalities across the region. It highlights disparities in life expectancy, premature mortality, child poverty, access to services, and outcomes linked to deprivation, geography, and demographic factors.

The report is structured around the eight Marmot principles, offering insight into the social determinants of health and identifying priority areas for action. These findings are directly aligned with the 2024–2027 HOIP, which places tackling inequality and maximising opportunity at the heart of its vision.

The HOIP's three strategic priorities **People**, **Place**, and **Prosperity** are underpinned by a commitment to prevention, fairness, and proportionate service delivery. The Health Inequalities Report supports this by:

- Informing the development of whole-system approaches to early intervention and integrated service delivery.
- Providing data to guide local decision-making frameworks and targeted action planning.
- Highlighting the need for multi-generational models, improved access to childcare, and support for families in poverty.
- Identifying geographic and socioeconomic barriers that impact health outcomes, which are being addressed through the HOIP Delivery Plan's cross-cutting themes such as housing, transport, and community wealth building.

By embedding the findings of this report into the HOIP Delivery Plan, the Partnership ensures that its actions are evidence-led, targeted, and responsive to the lived realities of Highland's communities. This alignment strengthens the Partnership's ability to reduce inequalities and deliver improved outcomes for all.

Once finalised and approved by the CPP Board, the final version of the Health Inequalities Report will be available for download via the Highland CPP website at www.highlandcpp.org.uk.



DELIVERY PLAN

WHOLE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACHES:

MULTI-GENERATIONAL CHILDCARE MODEL(S)



Flexible Childcare in Rural Areas

One of the most significant achievements of the Poverty Reduction Delivery Group in 2024/25 was the advancement of flexible childcare models in rural Highland communities, a priority under the “Getting Started” theme. Recognising the unique challenges faced by families in remote areas including limited childcare options, high costs, and barriers to employment the group led a collaborative effort to design and pilot innovative solutions.

Funding was secured from the Scottish Government’s Addressing Depopulation Action Plan, enabling Highland Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, and Care and Learning Alliance (CALA) to work with consultants to develop business plans for new childcare models. These models aim to provide flexible and affordable childcare that supports parental employment and addresses underemployment in key sectors. A comprehensive evidence report was submitted to Scottish Ministers to advocate for regulatory changes that would facilitate these new approaches.

Progress is being made towards piloting an Integrated Single Care Model (SCM) in Highland communities. This model seeks to combine childcare, early learning, and family support into a single, community-based service. Community engagement is planned as part of the next phase, and the initiative has received positive feedback from regulatory agencies and the Scottish Government. However, further legal advice from the Care Inspectorate is awaited to support implementation.

A toolkit of flexible childcare options was also developed to support rural communities in exploring and adopting suitable models. CALA presented the SCM initiative at the CPP 2025 Annual Conference and will collaborate with Highland Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise to submit a follow-up report outlining key asks and next steps.

This work represents a strategic and innovative response to the childcare challenges in rural Highland, with the potential to improve access, affordability, and employment outcomes for families. It also aligns with broader efforts to address depopulation and economic sustainability in remote communities.

DELIVERY PLAN

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

Community Wealth Building has emerged as a cornerstone of the Highland CPP's approach to inclusive economic development. As one of the Cross-Cutting Themes within the Delivery Plan, Community Wealth Building is being embedded across public sector services and partner organisations to ensure that the wealth generated in Highland benefits its communities directly.

Strategic Alignment and Delivery

The Highland Council's Community Wealth Building Strategy and Action Plan, approved in September 2024, is fully aligned with the 2024 - 2027 HOIP and its Delivery Plan. It is structured around five key pillars:

- **Spending:** maximising community benefit through procurement
- **Fair Employment:** promoting good work and local talent development
- **Land and Property:** enabling community ownership and housing solutions
- **Financial Power:** ensuring local investment and benefit from renewables
- **Inclusive Ownership:** supporting social enterprises and community-led models

Each pillar contributes directly to the HOIP strategic priorities **People**, **Place**, and **Prosperity** and is supported by measurable actions and governance.

2024 - 2025 Key Achievements:

- **Community Benefit Policy:** All Council procurement now includes community benefit clauses, with a focus on fair work, local supply chains, and educational pathways.
- **Highland Project Bank:** being developed to match private sector contributions with community needs.
- **Highland Housing Challenge:** A Partnership Action Plan has been launched to deliver 24,000 new homes over the next decade, including key worker accommodation and legacy housing through renewable energy partnerships.
- **Highland Social Value Charter:** Adopted in June 2024, by the CPP and Highland Council, this Charter aims to ensure that renewable energy investments deliver long-term community benefit. A Strategic Investment Plan is being developed to manage investment.
- **Childcare Innovation:** Pathfinder models such as subsidised childminding and single care models are being developed to address rural childcare gaps, supported by national funding and regional collaboration.
- **Area Place Plans:** All Council Committee areas have adopted Area Place Plans, enabling targeted investment, decision-making and delivery of local priorities through community-led and cross-sector partnerships.

Collaborative Impact

The inaugural meeting of the Highland Community Wealth Building Partnership in April 2025 marked a significant step in aligning efforts across the CPP. Evidence mapping is underway to identify overlaps, gaps, and opportunities for joint action. Highland Council also contributes to regional and national CWB networks, ensuring best practice and policy alignment.

Looking Ahead

With the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill progressing through Parliament, Highland is well-positioned to meet future statutory requirements. The Council's approach embedding Community Wealth Building into business-as-usual activity and aligning with HOIP priorities ensures that economic development in Highland is inclusive, resilient, and community-led.

DELIVERY PLAN

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING CONT.

Highland Employer Charter

One of the key deliverables within the Delivery Plan under the Community Wealth Building Cross-Cutting Theme is the Highland Employer Charter, being led by Highland Council's My Future Highland team.

This initiative promotes good employment practices across four pillars:

- Fair Pay: advocating for the Real Living Wage
- Employ Highland: supporting local workforce development
- Procure Highland: strengthening local supply chains
- Employers of Choice: promoting wellbeing, equity, and training.

Pilot testing of the Charter has begun, and it now serves as a proactive engagement tool between businesses and the Council, supporting both economic development and social value.

The Charter reinforces the **Prosperity** priority and actively address cross-cutting themes:

- Community Wealth Building through recognition of good employment practices and local investment;
- Employment and Employability via youth engagement and skills development;
- Connecting People and Places by positioning Highland as a destination of choice.

Community and partnership engagement has been central to development. Pilot groups tested both the Charter and placements, while collaboration with UHI Inverness, SDS, Chambers of Commerce, DYW, and others shaped the initiative. Roundtable discussions with businesses and Council departments informed design, and placements were promoted through the Positive Pathways Network.

Challenges such as limited staff capacity and the need to avoid duplication were met with innovative solutions, including SharePoint automation, employer support networks, and strengthened internal collaboration.

Highland Social Value Charter

Another key deliverables within the Delivery Plan under the Community Wealth Building Cross-Cutting Theme is the Highland Social Value Charter, being led by Highland Council's Community Benefit team.

The Charter aims to transform how renewable energy investment benefits local communities. In partnership with Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES), Highland Council and the CPP are developing a Strategic Investment Plan to guide the creation of a Strategic Fund, a bold new mechanism designed to deliver inclusive growth and community wealth building across the region.

The Fund proposes a range of voluntary contributions, including £7,500 per installed MW per annum from renewable energy developers, supplementing existing community benefit payments. These resources will be directed toward strategic priorities such as community-led housing, skills and employment, transport and digital connectivity, and whole-family support.

This approach moves beyond traditional, site-specific benefit models to a region-wide strategy that addresses inequality, supports local ownership, and empowers communities. It reflects the Charter's ambition to ensure that Highland's natural resources generate lasting social value for all.

The Charter is closely aligned with the 2024 - 2027 HOIP. By targeting investment in housing, connectivity, employment, and family wellbeing, benefits from the implementation of the Charter supports the HOIP's overarching goal of tackling inequality and improving outcomes for people and places across Highland.



DELIVERY PLAN

EMPLOYMENT / EMPLOYABILITY

Work. Life. Highland

The Highland Employability Partnership (HEP) aims to tackle labour market inequalities by supporting a collaborative approach across public, private and third sector organisations. This approach leads to better integration and alignment of services creating clearer pathways to work for clients.

Work. Life. Highland is the brand under which the HEP delivers and aims to create a single, accessible gateway for both individuals and employers to engage with support services.

Supplemented by radio and social media campaigns, over the 10 months since its launch in Autumn 2024, the website worklifehighland.co.uk has attracted over 6,000 visitors and has proved to be an important new route for people to self-refer to access services.

“**Get in touch**” is the key call to action underpinning the Work. Life. Highland brand, encouraging people of all ages across the Highlands to make contact and start on their journey into work, or to help low-income working parents to potentially raise their household income.

A programme of community engagement events is underway to improve outreach across the Highlands, particularly focused on engaging parents and economically inactive individuals. A parallel programme of employer engagement seeks to identify current and emerging labour market opportunities and demands. This intelligence enables services to be designed to address these needs with the aim of leading to inclusive and sustainable outcomes.



Skills Development Scotland (SDS) plays a vital role in delivering the Plan through career services, apprenticeships, and workforce development, closely aligned with the Cross-Cutting Theme of Employment/Employability.

A core contribution is SDS’s Career Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) service. Between April 2024 and March 2025, SDS delivered over 20,000 CIAG engagements to 11,000+ school pupils in Highland, and 2,575 sessions to 1,344 post-school customers, supporting career transitions and training access. Notably, 74% of maintained school pupils are now registered on SDS’s My World of Work platform.

SDS also strengthens the region’s skills base through apprenticeships. In 2024/25, there were 1,493 Modern Apprenticeship starts, over half involving young people aged 16–24. A total of 2,325 apprentices were in training, with a 78.8% completion rate. SDS also supports Foundation Apprenticeships in partnership with schools and employers.

In terms of participation and resilience, 94.8% of 16–19 year olds in Highland were in education, employment, or training as of December 2024. SDS also supported 301 individuals and 15 employers through the PACE programme, helping manage redundancy and transitions.

A key strategic development was the launch of Workforce North, a collaboration between SDS, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, UHI, Highland Council, and the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport. Responding to £100+ billion in regional investment, especially in renewables, the initiative addresses demographic challenges and promotes co-investment in talent. An April 2025 summit helped shape a shared action plan to strengthen the regional workforce.



DELIVERY PLAN

ALIGNING PARTNERSHIP PRACTICES

Funding and Joint Opportunities

- Progress:
 - A shared secure virtual space has been identified and will be implemented to improve access to policies, plans, and consultations.
 - A coordinated Project Bank is being developed under the Community Wealth Building Cross-Cutting Theme to support quick, joint responses to national funding calls.

Data and Intelligence

- Progress:
 - Inequality indicators and metrics have been identified and agreed upon. Additional work has been undertaken with regards Health Inequalities indicators.
 - Relevant national and regional data sources have been identified.
 - A data dashboard will be developed to monitor and report on annual progress.

Workforce Development

- Progress:
 - A community planning induction module is being developed.
 - Partners will be integrating this module into internal training.
 - Cross-sector workforce development is underway.
 - Increased access to training on community planning and tackling inequalities.

Partnership Coordinating Group

The Group plays a central role in supporting the strategic delivery of the 2024 - 2027 HOIP by acting as a key enabler of collaboration across the CPP structure. It brings together officers and partners to ensure that regional ambitions and local priorities are effectively aligned and translated into action.

- Functioning as both a strategic support mechanism and a communication hub, the Group facilitates a collaboration between Community Partnerships, Delivery Groups, partners and thematic initiatives.

The Group has been instrumental in:

- Promoting best practice across the CPP.
- Raising awareness of new and thematic opportunities being delivered by partners.
- Enabling local and thematic partnerships are prepared and aligned.



DELIVERY PLAN

ALIGNING PARTNERSHIP PRACTICES CONT.



2025 HIGHLAND CPP ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Held in April 2025, the CPP Annual Conference brought together over 100 delegates from across sectors to explore strategic priorities, share insights, and strengthen collaboration. The theme, Maximising Opportunities Together, reflected the collective ambition to align local delivery with national policy and community needs.

Highlights and Impact

- Engaging Presentations:** Speakers were praised for their relevance and delivery, with standout contributions from:
 - Calum MacPherson – on the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport development and its potential for Highland.
 - Lewis Gillies – sharing global lessons from community projects.
 - Scott Dalgarno – discussing the school/community hub approach.
 - Mhairi Wylie, Dr. Tim Allison and Jaci Douglas – all commended for insightful and impactful sessions.
- Networking and Collaboration:** Delegates highlighted the value of face-to-face networking and the opportunity to connect strategy with real-world impact. Many appreciated the chance to hear directly from a diverse range of voices involved in community planning.
- Feedback Themes:**
 - Most Impactful:** Networking, strategic presentations, and discussions on childcare and community engagement.
 - Areas for Improvement:** Desire for more third sector representation, shorter afternoon sessions, and increased interactivity.
 - Suggestions:** More time for discussion, stronger links to local delivery, and activities focused on practical solutions.

Reflections

The Conference was widely regarded as a success, with many noting it had “levelled up” from the previous year. It reinforced the importance of inclusive dialogue, strategic alignment, and showcasing the tangible impact of community planning across Highland.

DELIVERY GROUPS

POVERTY REDUCTION

Central to delivering the 2024 - 2027 HOIP, this multi-agency Delivery Group leads efforts to reduce poverty across Highland. In 2024/25, it coordinated initiatives targeting the key drivers of poverty, income from employment, cost of living, and income from social security, through partnerships with Highland Council, NHS Highland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, third sector organisations, and community groups.

Guided by a life-course framework, the group delivered targeted actions across three life stages: Getting Started (pre-birth to age 5), Growing Up (primary years), and Moving On (secondary and young adulthood). Achievements included flexible childcare models, expanded financial inclusion pathways, employability support, and improved access to sanitary products and poverty-sensitive training. The group has begun preparing for the next strategic phase (2026–2031) through self-assessment and stakeholder engagement.

2024 - 2025 Key Achievements:

- **Flexible Childcare in Rural Areas:** Developed new childcare models in partnership with HIE and CALA, supported by Scottish Government funding. A toolkit and business plans were created to improve access and affordability.
- **Multiply Programme:** Delivered 881 adult numeracy courses with 4,964 participants and 1,207 qualifications achieved, enhancing financial literacy and employability.
- **Whole Family Approach Funding:** Awarded to 36 local projects under Element 1 to eight projects under Element 2, supporting priority family groups through wellbeing and poverty mitigation initiatives.
- **Financial Inclusion Pathways:** Welfare Advice and Health Partnership continued in rural GP practices; Welfare Support Team provided fortnightly support in Job Centres.
- **Sanitary Product Access:** products distributed via mail order and 149 collection points established across Highland.
- **Delivered Money Counts Training:** Expanded training to include a new Stage 3 course for managers, promoting poverty-aware practice.
- **Parental Employability Support:** 266 parents supported by Highland Council's Employability Team, including both out-of-work and in-work parents seeking better opportunities.

Community and Partnership Engagement

The group worked collaboratively with public, third sector, and community organisations to co-design and deliver services. Community involvement was central to planning and implementation, particularly in childcare, financial support, and employability initiatives.

Challenges and Learning

Efforts to address regulatory barriers in childcare provision led to evidence-based advocacy with Scottish Ministers. Partnership working enabled the development of innovative tools and approaches, such as the Money Counts Stage 3 training and the WorkLifeHighland platform.

Further Information

For a detailed overview, refer to the Highland Child Poverty Action Report 2024/25 which can be found on the CPP website.

DELIVERY GROUPS

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Delivery Group has made a significant contribution to the delivery of the 2024 - 2027 HOIP, particularly through its leadership and coordination of suicide prevention, mental health improvement, and wellbeing initiatives across Highland.

Key achievements include the launch and implementation of the Creating Hope in Highland Together suicide prevention action plan, which outlines eight strategic objectives. Notable progress includes the development of a Suicide Cluster Response Framework, targeted interventions at high-risk locations like the Kessock Bridge, and the planned rollout of bereavement resources and educational films informed by lived experience.

The group has also strengthened crisis support through service mapping and exploration of new community wellbeing centres, while enhancing workforce capacity via a comprehensive training programme. This includes courses on suicide prevention, mental health first aid, and workplace wellbeing, with over 340 participants trained in the past year.

In addition, the Children and Young People Mental Health and Wellbeing Steering Group has advanced service mapping, delivery planning, and community-based support development, aligned with national frameworks. Through the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme, the group has supported a wide range of local projects from nature-based therapies and creative arts to youth-led initiatives and family hubs ensuring a holistic, preventative, and inclusive approach to mental health and wellbeing across Highland communities.

2024 - 2025 Key Achievements:

Strategic Planning and Coordination

- Launched the Creating Hope in Highland Together suicide prevention action plan with eight clear objectives.
- Established sub-groups to lead on specific priorities including suicide cluster response, crisis intervention, bereavement support, communications, and training.

Suicide Prevention and Crisis Response

- Addressed high-risk locations like the Kessock Bridge, reducing incidents through targeted interventions.
- Developed bereavement support resources including packs, and public leaflets.

Training and Workforce Development

- Delivered **38** mental health and suicide prevention training courses to **346** participants across NHS Highland, Highland Council, third sector, and education partners.
- Promoted the Highland Prevent Suicide App and coordinated a training prospectus for partners and communities.

Children and Young People's Mental Health

- Developed a Children and Young People Mental Health Delivery Plan aligned with national frameworks and local priorities.
- Mapped services using the Thrive Model and identified strategic gaps.

Community Engagement and Funding

- Supported the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme deliver the Children & Young People Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund, supporting **46** community-led projects across Highland to the value of **£397,222**.
- Projects included nature-based therapies, creative arts, youth-led participation, bereavement support, and family hubs.

DELIVERY GROUPS

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING CONT.

Highland Green Health Partnership

The Green Health Partnership (HGHP) is making a significant contribution to the 2024 - 2027 HOIP by promoting inclusive, nature-based approaches to health and wellbeing. Rooted in the national Our Natural Health Service framework, HGHP focuses on reducing health inequalities, particularly for deprived and underrepresented communities. Through initiatives like **Nature Prescriptions** and **Green Health Week**, the partnership encourages trauma-informed, person-centred care and improves access to green spaces across the region.

HGHP's work aligns with HOIP's strategic priorities of **People**, **Place**, and **Prosperity**, and supports cross-cutting themes such as Connecting People and Places, Whole Family and Community-Based Approaches, and Aligning Partnership Practices. Community-led projects like Stepping Stones in Kinlochleven and Ullapool (a copy of this report is available on the CPP website highlandcpp.org.uk) demonstrate strong local engagement and collaborative funding.

Despite challenges in securing representation and funding, HGHP has developed a replicable model for locality-based initiatives and continues to be recognised nationally for its innovative and inclusive approach to partnership working.



The Highland Green Health Partnership

Active Highland

The Active Highland Steering Group made strong progress in shaping the new Active Highland Strategy and Action Plan, aligned with HOIP strategic priorities. The strategy champions inclusive access to physical activity as a driver of health, wellbeing, and community cohesion, with a focus on reducing inequalities in access and outcomes. It draws on Scotland's Physical Activity for Health Framework and international best practice.

A person-centred, whole-systems approach underpins the strategy, aiming to reduce social isolation, improve mental health, and strengthen community connections. A key theme Active Places and Spaces promotes place-based planning across Highland's 29 Associated School Groups, improved access to green spaces, and development of wellbeing-focused pathways and activities.

The strategy was co-developed by a multi-agency group including NHS Highland, High Life Highland, **sportscotland**, The Highland Council, UHI Inverness, and others, with additional input from HITRANS, Disability Sport Highland, and Walking Scotland. Collaborative mapping of pathways and opportunities emerged as a standout achievement, supporting accessible services and active travel.

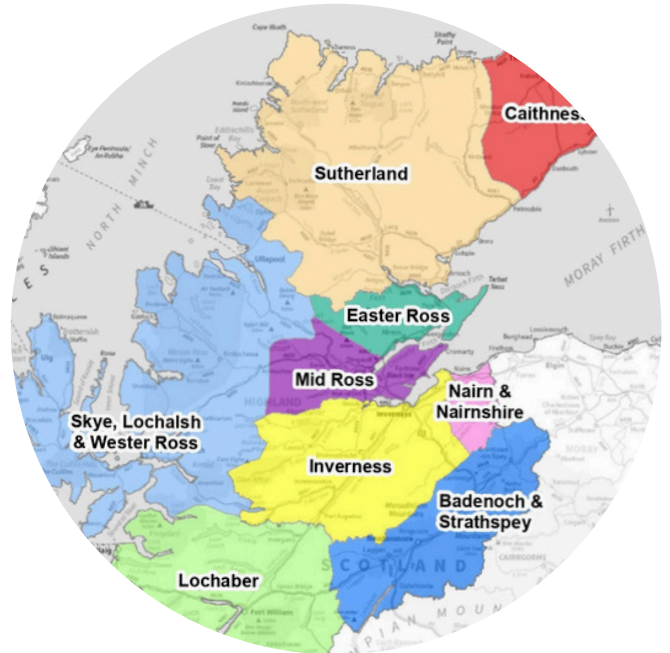
Challenges around consistent partner representation are being addressed through a revision of the Terms of Reference and CPP Board endorsement. Key lessons included the value of senior leadership, clear communication, and continuous feedback. The group's use of whole-system thinking has laid a strong foundation for sustainable, impactful action across Highland.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: PROGRESS UPDATE

Between June 2024 and June 2025, the nine Community Partnerships across Highland made significant progress in supporting the delivery of the 2024–2027 HOIP. This year marked a period of consolidation, innovation, and deepened local engagement, with the Partnership Development Team playing a pivotal role in enabling collaboration and capacity building.

Key Achievements:

- Community Networking Events:** Five successful in-person events were delivered in Easter Ross, Mid Ross, Lochaber, Nairn & Nairnshire, and Badenoch & Strathspey. These events, many of which were firsts for their areas, fostered collaboration among local groups, practitioners, and partners, enabling face-to-face networking and showcasing local services and initiatives.
- Quarterly Partnership Meetings:** All nine Community Partnerships held regular meetings, supported by the Partnership Development Team. These included external presentations on key topics such as transport, suicide prevention, and youth engagement, enriching local dialogue and strategic focus.
- Priority Reviews and Structural Development:** Workshops and surveys were conducted to review local priorities and partnership structures. Sub-groups were established to enhance local engagement and drive forward action planning.
- Priority Action Trackers:** All Community Partnerships have Priority Action Trackers in place, ensuring alignment with the 2024 - 2027 HOIP and enabling consistent monitoring of progress.
- Launch of Community Partnership Guidance and Toolkit:** Officially launched in February 2025, the toolkit includes templates for Terms of Reference, Communications Plans, and Role Descriptors. It has been widely adopted across Partnerships, supporting consistency and clarity in governance and operations.
- Development of Community Partnership Plans:** A standardised plan template is nearing completion, with integrated data sections. These plans are scheduled for launch in 2025 and will further embed HOIP priorities at the local level.



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: PROGRESS UPDATE CONT.

Community Networking Events

Five of the nine Community Partnerships hosted Community Networking Events within their areas between October and November 2024. These events offered Community Partnerships a chance to facilitate networking by inviting various partners, community groups, and organisations to showcase and promote the services, projects, and activities available.

Each event followed a market-stall format, held in-person for a 2-hour session at a local venue within each Community Partnership area. Partners, practitioners, community groups, and organisations were invited to host a stall. Uptake for stalls was excellent with all five events reaching capacity.

The audience for these events included local community members, other community groups and organisations, and practitioners working in the area.

This setting provided an opportunity for community members, groups, organisations, practitioners, and partners to connect, learn, and network. For many, this may have been their first in person meeting, offering a valuable chance to discuss and explore potential collaborative partnerships. For a number of Community Partnerships this was the first event of this nature organised on their behalf within their area.



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: PROGRESS UPDATE CONT.

Badenoch & Strathspey Community Partnership

In April 2025, the Highland Council's Badenoch & Strathspey Area Committee approved the establishment of the Badenoch & Strathspey Transport Forum in response to requests from local Elected Members and support from the Badenoch & Strathspey Community Partnership. The Forum will be created to develop an integrated transport plan for the region, aiming to improve public and community transport services and address local transport challenges collaboratively.

The Forum's remit spans all public transport modes in the area, including local buses, express coaches, community transport, and rail services. It may also consider taxis and heritage rail. Key areas of focus include service timetables, infrastructure, accessibility, and integration with active travel. Although it is not a decision-making body, the Forum can make proposals to relevant authorities such as the Council, Transport Scotland, and transport operators.

Membership includes a broad range of stakeholders: Highland Council officers and Elected Members, NHS Highland, ScotRail, bus operators, community councils, Cairngorms National Park Authority, and voluntary organisations. Meetings will be held twice a year, with sub-groups convening more frequently to progress specific actions.

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening identified several positive outcomes. These include improved access for older people and those with disabilities, enhanced connectivity for isolated and disadvantaged groups, and opportunities for youth engagement. The Forum is expected to strengthen transport links in rural areas and support climate change goals by encouraging a shift from car use to public transport.

The Forum builds on the legacy of the former Transport & Access Group and aligns with priorities identified by the Community Partnership. These priorities include improving transport timing and frequency to support employment, integrating cycling with public transport, expanding community transport services, and investing in active travel infrastructure.

Strategically, the Forum complements the Cairngorms National Park Authority's "Cairngorms 2030" programme, which promotes sustainable travel and improved transport infrastructure. It also supports the Council's Bus Service Improvement Partnership, helping to fulfil requirements for inclusive and community-led transport planning.



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: PROGRESS UPDATE CONT.



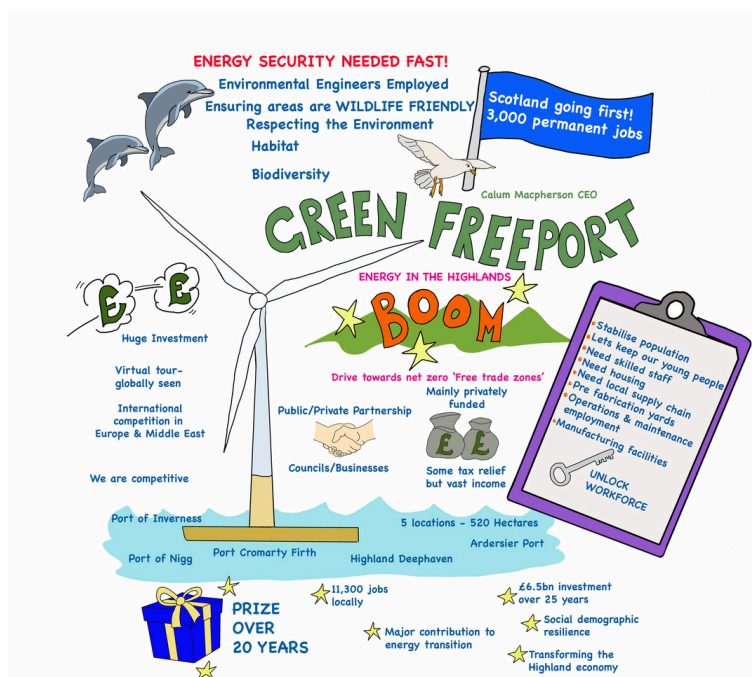
Easter Ross Community Partnership

The Easter Ross Community Partnership has three active thematic subgroups: **People**, **Place**, and **Prosperity** driving forward locally identified priorities.

The **People** sub-group integrates the NHS District Plan and Whole Family Wellbeing Programme, taking a ‘cradle to grave’ approach to supporting individuals and families at every stage of life.

The **Place** sub-group draws from the Easter Ross Area Place Plan, focusing on transport, childcare, and building community capacity to strengthen local infrastructure and resilience. The **Place** sub-group has also been working closely with partners in the Highland Council’s Community Wealth Building Team to identify opportunities to develop the Easter Ross economy.

The **Prosperity** sub-group is action-focused on employability and emerging economic opportunities, including developments linked to the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport. The Chief Executive Officer of the Freeport has attended an Easter Ross Community Partnership meeting to discuss the opportunities for Easter Ross and the Partnership will continue to work closely with the Freeport to advocate for a more prosperous and thriving Easter Ross.



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: PROGRESS UPDATE CONT.

Inverness Community Partnership

Family Links is an 18-month test of concept (September 2024 – March 2026) in the Inverness High School associated schools group area, aiming to develop and test an approach to improving school attendance and engagement through support for whole family wellbeing. The project, developed as a direct response to a need identified by the Inverness Community Partnership, is delivered by an alliance of three third sector organisations – CALA, Homestart East Highland and Thriving Families – and is funded and supported by the Highland Whole Family Wellbeing Programme.

The three Family Links Workers receive referrals from the schools they are linked to and also directly from families and they work alongside families, building trust taking the time necessary to understand the needs and challenges of families, then supporting families to be in the driving seat in overcoming those challenges in a lasting way. In the first year of the test of concept, both families and schools have reported better attendance and engagement at school, in addition to a wide range of wellbeing improvements not directly quantifiable in terms of school attendance, but nevertheless fundamental in terms of empowering families to support optimal outcomes for children and young people into the future.

A full report on the test of concept will be published in April 2026.



The Family Links Workers -Isabelle from CALA, Lisa-Marie from Homestart East Highland and Roni from Thriving Families.

DELIVERY PROGRAMMES

The Promise

The Promise overarching ambition is that all children grow up loved, safe and respected, enabling them to reach their full potential. Its work is also aligned with national strategies including The Promise Plan 24–30, the UNCRC, and the Children’s Services Planning framework.



2024 - 2025 Key Activities and Outcomes:

Language and Trauma-Informed Practice

- A co-designed programme on language and trauma-informed practice was delivered in collaboration with Each & Every Child. This included:
 - A “Language Bin” initiative; An interactive guide on language use; A masterclass and tests of change in two care homes using QI methodology

Corporate Parenting and Staff Training

- The “Who Cares? Scotland” training module was promoted to ensure all Highland Council staff understand their responsibilities to care-experienced individuals.
- A complementary UNCRC training module was made available to all staff, reinforcing children’s rights awareness.

Child’s Rights & Participation Service

- A new service was developed using the Lundy Model of Participation, supporting the Council’s duty to uphold the UNCRC and embedding co-design principles in service delivery.

Trauma Summit

- A Trauma Summit was held on 3rd September 2024 for executive leaders across Highland. It aimed to:
 - Refresh understanding of trauma-informed approaches; Link trauma-informed practice (TIP) to organisational outcomes; Promote compassionate leadership; Identify shared priorities for a Highland-wide trauma-informed strategy

Reimagining Justice

- Using the Scottish Approach to Service Design, the programme shaped improvement plans for older young people, including those in conflict with the law.

The Promise has been deeply rooted in co-production and community involvement. Care-experienced individuals contributed to the development of the Highland Promise Plan 2024–2028, the Language Bin initiative, and the Reimagining Justice programme. Key partners included:

- Child Protection Committee; Whole Family Wellbeing Programme; Centre for Youth & Criminal Justice; Each & Every Child; Write Right About Me

One of the main challenges faced was the pace of change. Co-design and partnership working require time to build trust and relationships, which can feel slow when the need for support is immediate. However, this approach is essential for sustainable, meaningful change. The programme also identified the Human Economic Cost Model, referenced in The Promise, as a valuable tool that could be better understood and utilised across the CPP.

The adoption of the Scottish Approach to Service Design was highlighted as particularly impactful. It enabled meaningful engagement, improved service delivery, and ensured that changes were informed by lived experience and evidence.

DELIVERY PROGRAMMES

Armed Forces Covenant

Highland Council has demonstrated its commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant Duty, ensuring that children and young people from military families face no disadvantage in education or access to services.

This work is governed through Highland Psychological Services and contributes to the Integrated Children's Services Plan. The Military Liaison Group has played a central role in supporting children and families, co-producing tailored resources and learning presentations in partnership with Education, NHS Highland, and Housing. These resources have been shared widely across the CPP, with positive feedback and increasing engagement from community organisations.

The online learning resource and poster hosted on the CPP website have enhanced accessibility and awareness, particularly given the challenges of engaging consistently across a large rural geography. The Armed Forces Families Highland website and regular newsletters further support community engagement, offering guidance and signposting for families and educators.

This work promotes inclusion, wellbeing, and equitable access to education and services. The collaborative approach strengthens local partnerships and community resilience, while digital engagement helps overcome geographic barriers. Supporting military families contributes to stable, thriving communities by addressing barriers and promoting opportunity.

Whole Family Wellbeing Programme

The Whole Family Wellbeing Programme in Highland is a strategic funding initiative designed to improve outcomes for children and families through holistic, community-led support. Aligned with national frameworks including The Promise, GIRFEC, and the UNCRC, and embedded within the 2024 - 2027 HOIP, the programme delivers targeted investment across three funding elements:

- **Element 1:** Small Grants Fund: £400,000 allocated to 36 grassroots, third sector-led projects addressing local wellbeing needs. Prioritises families most at risk of poverty and exclusion, with a strong emphasis on accessibility, inclusion, and community empowerment.
- **Element 2:** Collaborative Partnership Fund: £900,000 available for locality-based and whole-system tests of concept. Supports innovative, co-produced models involving statutory and third sector partners, with 15 projects funded to date totaling over £3 million. Themes include participatory budgeting, bereavement support, neurodiversity, and contextual safeguarding.
- **Element 3:** Transformational Commissioning Fund: Drives strategic integration of successful models into long-term service design. Focuses on embedding holistic support principles, scaling proven approaches, and fostering system-wide cultural change.

The Programme is a key enabler of the CPP's ambitions around early intervention, place-based support, and reducing inequalities. It strengthens collaboration across sectors, empowers families to shape services, and builds capacity for transformational change. Locality Coordinators and Local Partnership Network Groups are central to this approach, ensuring that funding is responsive, inclusive, and rooted in community voice.

DELIVERY PARTNERSHIPS

Integrated Children's Services Board

The Highland Integrated Children's Services Board leads the strategic planning and delivery of services for children, young people, and families across Highland. Working within the CPP, the Board brings together key partners to deliver high-quality, trauma-informed, and preventative support. Its work is guided by the Highland Children's Services Plan 2023–2026, with a strong focus on collaboration, early intervention, and improving outcomes for all children and families.

Key Highlights include:

GIRFEC Reset and Refresh: Following national updates to Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and Child Protection procedures and practice guidance, the Board completed a refresh of local guidance to align with these changes. This updated approach reflected key national drivers, including The Promise and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The revised Getting it Right for Every Child and Child Protection Procedures and Guidance document went live on 2nd September 2024. It was informed by changes in national policy, feedback from the Joint Inspection, and consultation with services across Highland.

The Board led the delivery of the Reset and Refresh across Highland. This began with a series of multi-agency, face-to-face sessions. Attendees were asked to complete the new e-Learning module in advance, which formed the basis for discussions during the sessions. A wealth of valuable feedback was received, which informed ongoing improvement work. Work also began on developing a mobile app version of the guidance, allowing quick and easy access from any device.

Children and Young People Participation Strategy: Finalised in June 2024, the Children and Young People Participation Strategy was developed by Inspiring Young Voices, with meaningful and equitable participation at its core. Input was gathered from nearly 800 children and young people across Highland. An implementation plan was developed, and work began on creating support tools and a dedicated rights and participation website. The site included the strategy and a Voice Library to capture and share the voices of children and young people across the region. These efforts marked the Partnership's first collective steps toward making Article 12 of the UNCRC "I have the right to be listened to and taken seriously" an everyday reality in Highland. <https://www.childrensrighthighland.co.uk/>

Vision 26: The second annual Vision 26 event, hosted by the Integrated Children's Services Board, took place on 30th August at Inverness Leisure Centre. Over 70 stallholders came together to showcase and celebrate the work being done across Highland to support children and families. The event highlighted achievements from the first year of the Integrated Children's Services Plan and also marked the official launch of the Children and Young People Participation Strategy.



DELIVERY PARTNERSHIPS

Highland Community Justice Partnership (HCJP)

The partnership's activities are guided by the National Strategy for Community Justice, which recognises the link between socio-economic deprivation and offending behaviour. The Partnership promotes constructive, trauma-informed responses to crime, particularly those related to substance use, violence, and generational disadvantage.



**Highland
Community**
Justice Partnership

2024 - 2025 Key Activities and Outcomes:

Custody Link (CLink) Programme

The Custody Link Worker model, delivered in partnership with Police Scotland and NHS Highland works with individuals entering police custody and offers support to address underlying issues contributing to offending. The programme has been nationally recognised as good practice and won the Chief Constable's Partner of the Year Award in November 2024. A case study highlighted the impact of this approach: an individual arrested for drug-related driving offences received support through CLink and NHS services, leading to improved health, employment, and family relationships. The individual credited the intervention with saving their life.

Community Sentences and Unpaid Work

The Partnership has focused on promoting Community Payback Orders and unpaid work as alternatives to custodial sentences. These approaches support rehabilitation, reduce reoffending, and benefit local communities. A Senior Development Officer post was created to raise awareness and support strategic aims, including engagement with Justice Social Work and third sector partners. Unpaid work placements have included beach cleans, community building renovations, and grounds maintenance, with contributions from groups such as Thurso Development Trust, Raasay Heritage Trust, and Kiltearn Community Council.

HCJP has prioritised public engagement to challenge stigma and promote understanding of community justice. Articles were published in local newspapers and social media reach doubled between February 2024 and February 2025. The launch of the Highland Justice Services and Interventions website provided a central resource for justice-related services.

The Partnership also engaged directly with communities through visits to Alness, Wick, Thurso, Nairn, and Portree, strengthening relationships and promoting positive narratives around justice.

Key challenges include Highland's geographic scale, which affects consistent service delivery and access to support, especially for victims and families of those in custody. Public perceptions of non-custodial sentences as "soft" remain a barrier, despite evidence of their effectiveness.

Engagement from statutory partners at both strategic and operational levels has been inconsistent. While hosting the HCJP within the Highland Third Sector Interface offers flexibility, it has also revealed hesitancy from some statutory bodies to fully engage with third sector-led initiatives.

The Partnership's community-focused model, flexible delivery through Highland Third Sector Interface, and emphasis on storytelling and lived experience have proven effective in building trust and promoting justice reform. These approaches offer valuable insights for future partnership working and community involvement.

DELIVERY PARTNERSHIPS

Highland Public Protection Chief Officers Group

The Highland Public Protection Chief Officers Group (HPPCOG) provides strategic oversight and governance for public protection across Highland. The group brings together legally accountable Chief Officers, Independent Chairs, and key partners to coordinate and monitor the delivery of protection services in line with national legislation and guidance.

HPPCOG oversees the work of key partnerships and committees including:

- Highland Child Protection Committee
- Highland Adult Protection Committee
- Highland Violence Against Women Partnership
- Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
- Prevent Multi-Agency Panel

It also receives reports from the Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and the Highland Community Justice Partnership, ensuring alignment with wider community planning priorities.

In 2024–2025, HPPCOG supported significant progress across these areas, including:

- Enhanced training and awareness campaigns on gender-based violence and adult protection.
- Development of strategic plans and performance frameworks.
- Strengthened multi-agency collaboration and data sharing.
- National recognition for creative engagement initiatives such as the Spider in the Glass and Imagine campaigns.

The group has also deepened its connections with national networks, contributing to policy development and responding to emerging risks such as increased demand for services, funding pressures, and the evolving landscape of offender management.

The Group continues to play a vital role in ensuring that public protection remains a core component of community planning in Highland, promoting safety, wellbeing, and resilience across all communities.

Spotlight: Highland Child Protection Committee

The Highland Child Protection Committee has led a range of impactful initiatives to improve outcomes for children and young people at risk of harm. In line with The Promise, the Committee has adopted strengths-based approaches and worked collaboratively with families and partners.

Key highlights include:

- **Bairns Hoose Implementation:** Highland is an affiliate in the national rollout of the Bairns Hoose model, a trauma-informed, child-centred approach. In 2024/25, dedicated spaces were developed across Highland, enabling children to be interviewed in safe, supportive environments. Feedback from families and professionals has been overwhelmingly positive.
- **Youth Justice Engagement:** The Committee worked with Youth Highland and third sector partners to engage young people on their experiences of justice, rights, and safe spaces. Over 120 statements were gathered, highlighting the need for clearer rights information, trusted relationships, and trauma-informed justice processes.
- **Contextual Safeguarding Pilot:** A new multi-agency pilot was launched to support children and families affected by criminal and sexual exploitation. Led by Barnardo's and Action for Children, the project brings together services in a single space to provide intensive support.
- **Community Events:** Co-hosted two major events: Brighter Beginnings and Vision which attracted over 1,300 children and families, showcasing available support and promoting early intervention.
- **Data-Driven Prioritisation:** Continues to monitor child protection trends, with parental substance use, mental health, domestic abuse, and neglect remaining key concerns. This data informs activity and links with other strategic groups such as the Violence Against Women Partnership and Alcohol and Drugs Partnership.

The Committee's work exemplifies the collaborative, preventative, and child-focused ethos of public protection in Highland.

DELIVERY PARTNERSHIPS

Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership (HIREP)

HIREP plays a pivotal role in shaping inclusive and sustainable economic growth across the region. Through strategic collaboration, HIREP brings together partners to unlock investment, advocate for regional priorities, and address shared challenges. Its 2025 - 2035 Regional Economic Strategy outlines a vision for a dynamic, connected, and resilient region one that leads Scotland's transition to net zero and embeds community wealth building at its core.



HIREP is a key delivery partnership for the CPP to realise the region's full potential. This includes aligning efforts to attract investment, strengthen infrastructure, and supporting population sustainability and growth, while ensuring that economic opportunities translate into tangible benefits for Highland's communities that specifically addresses inequalities across the area.

HIREP is a delivery mechanism across a number of elements in the HOIP Delivery Plan including across the Whole Family and Community Based Approaches and Housing priorities. This includes developing the Single Care Model including flexible models of childcare, developing a funding vehicle for rural housing and a community housing development pack.



PARTNERS

High Life Highland (HLH) plays a pivotal role in supporting Community Planning across the Highland region, acting as a key delivery partner for the 2024 - 2027 HOIP. Through its diverse services spanning leisure, libraries, archives, museums, countryside, and sports HLH contributes meaningfully to the HOIP's strategic priorities: **People**, **Place**, and **Prosperity**.

Across its portfolio, HLH delivers inclusive, place-based programmes that promote health and wellbeing, lifelong learning, climate action, and community empowerment. In 2023/24 alone, HLH recorded:

- Over 2.4 million leisure visits, 2.5 million library engagements, and 13,000 ranger interactions
- A surge in volunteering, with over 861 countryside volunteers and 1,177 sports volunteers
- Delivery of over 330,000 library events, 3,775 school nature sessions, and 88,395 archive education views

These outcomes directly align with HOIP priorities, particularly in tackling inequality, improving mental and physical health, and fostering resilient communities.

HLH's work supports the 2024 - 2027 HOIP in the following ways:

- **Health & Wellbeing:** Through Active Schools, Green Health initiatives, and inclusive leisure programmes, HLH promotes physical activity and mental resilience across all age groups.
- **Learning & Opportunity:** HLH's libraries, archives, and ranger services deliver curriculum-linked education, digital inclusion, and employability programmes, reaching thousands of learners and young leaders.
- **Climate & Biodiversity:** HLH Rangers lead award-winning environmental projects such as Puddles to Ponds and Food for Nature, Food for Life, engaging communities in climate action and habitat restoration.
- **Community Empowerment:** HLH fosters local pride and participation through heritage conservation, cultural programming, and support for grassroots volunteering.



HLH's collaborative approach is central to its success. Two examples include:

- **Planet Youth & Active Highland Strategy:** HLH Sports Development works with the Highland Alcohol & Drugs Partnership, NHS Highland, and **sportscotland** to deliver diversionary activities in areas like Thurso and Wick. These initiatives support youth wellbeing and prevention, aligning with the Icelandic model of early intervention.
- **Green Health Partnership & Climate Hub Collaboration:** HLH Countryside Rangers are strategic partners in the Think Health Think Nature initiative and work closely with Highland Adapts and the Highlands & Islands Climate Hub. Together, they deliver nature-based health programmes and community-led climate resilience projects.

High Life Highland is not just a service provider it is a strategic enabler of community wellbeing, environmental stewardship, and inclusive growth. Its integrated, partnership-driven model ensures that the ambitions of the 2024 - 2027 HOIP are not only met but meaningfully embedded in the lives of Highland residents.

PARTNERS

The **Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)** continues to deliver a responsive and community-focused Community Safety Engagement (CSE) programme across the Highland Local Senior Officer (LSO) Area. This work is directly aligned with the 2024 - 2027 HOIP, supporting its strategic priorities through prevention, protection, and partnership.



SFRS operates under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and is guided by the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland, which defines its purpose as:

“To work in partnership with communities and with others in the public, private and third sectors, on prevention, protection and response, to improve the safety and well-being of people throughout Scotland.”

The Framework’s seven strategic priorities Prevention and Protection, Response, Innovation, Climate Change, Governance, Partnership, and People are reflected in SFRS’s local delivery model and its contribution to the 2024 - 2027 HOIP.

As a statutory partner under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, SFRS plays an active role in the CPP across Highland. The Service supports the delivery of the 2024 - 2027 HOIP through:

- Collaborative working with local partners to address inequality and improve outcomes.
- Integration of community safety into local station planning and operational priorities.
- Targeted interventions led by the Highland Community Action Team (CAT), supported by Wholetime and On-Call personnel.

Fifteen workstreams have been identified and grouped into 16 priority areas for 2024–25. These are embedded into business-as-usual operations and are subject to ongoing review and horizon scanning to identify emerging risks. This approach supports the HOIP’s emphasis on early intervention, prevention, and place-based solutions.

SFRS has identified the following priorities, which align with CPP’s thematic areas:

- Reducing Accidental Dwelling Fires – Prevention, casualty reduction, and property protection.
- Reducing Deliberate Fire Setting and Antisocial Behaviour – Community engagement and education.
- Supporting CPP and HOIP Delivery – Active participation across all areas.
- Targeting High-Risk Individuals and Communities – Data-led interventions to reduce harm.
- Youth Engagement – Including Fire Skills, Stay on Side, and the Young Volunteer Scheme (YVS).
- Corporate Parenting – Supporting care-experienced young people.
- Community Justice Engagement – Collaborative work with justice partners.
- Water Safety (PAWS) – Promoting Partnership Approach to Water Safety groups.
- Road Safety – Active role in the Highland Road Safety Forum.

An example of partnership working is the Stay on Side Fire Skills Project, which contributes to HOIP outcomes around employment, youth engagement, and community resilience. It has been recognised by the CPP for its impact and scalability.

SFRS remains a committed and strategic partner in delivering the 2024 - 2027 HOIP. Through targeted community safety engagement, collaborative delivery, and alignment with priorities, the Service continues to improve safety, wellbeing, and resilience across Highland communities.

PARTNERS

Police Scotland has made contributions to the 2024 - 2027 HOIP through a wide range of preventative, partnership-based initiatives that enhance safety, resilience, and wellbeing across communities.

Under the **People** priority, Operation Protector has delivered multi-agency responses to drug-related harm, supporting vulnerable individuals and disrupting organised crime, particularly around County Lines. The Harm Prevention Officer, funded by the Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, has played a key role in linking individuals and families affected by substance use to timely support, while suicide prevention efforts, including work with Change Mental Health and the Mental Health Taskforce, have strengthened crisis response and bereavement support.

Police Scotland's Prevention and Intervention Team has worked closely with partners to provide security advice and technology to those vulnerable to cuckooing and supported assertive outreach following overdoses.

Under the **Place** priority, Police Scotland has led community engagement through fraud awareness campaigns, youth programmes, and domestic abuse prevention, while also chairing key groups like the Community Safety & Resilience Delivery Group and the Suicide Prevention Steering Group.

Community voices remain central to shaping policing priorities, with input from Community Councils, Youth Groups, Action Groups, and Elected Members, and through the 'Your Police' survey, which directly informs local policing activity.

In Merkinch, engagement with over 400 young people led to £30,000 of investment in community projects. Despite challenges such as rural geography, rising demand, and limited capacity for engagement with hard-to-reach groups, Police Scotland continues to innovate through digital engagement, mobile pop-ups, and youth-specific outreach.



Under **Prosperity**, policing indirectly supports community wealth building and housing stability by fostering safer environments that underpin economic activity and wellbeing.

Police Scotland's embedded role in multi-agency governance, including the CPP and Highland Community Justice Partnership, ensures strategic alignment and shared approaches to commissioning.

Through trauma-informed custody practices, alternatives to prosecution, and visible local presence, Police Scotland promotes better outcomes, reduces inequalities, and strengthens trust with communities and partners alike.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Highland
Community
Planning
Partnership

Com-pàirteachas
Dealbhadh
Coimhearsnachd
na Gàidhealtachd

Partnership Development Team

The Partnership Development Team played a central role in advancing community planning across Highland throughout 2024 and into 2025. Building on the foundations laid in their first year, the team provided consistent and tailored support to all nine Community Partnerships, enabling quarterly meetings, workshops, and the implementation of Priority Action Trackers and other tools aligned with the 2024 - 2027 HOIP.

Beyond local delivery, the team strengthened strategic coordination across the Highland CPP, supporting governance structures, reporting, and the development of shared resources such as the website and Community Briefing. Their work has helped embed consistency and collaboration across the Partnership.

Importantly, the team also deepened connections with national networks, representing Highland CPP in key forums and consultations. Contributions to the Whole Family Support Working Group, the Community Wealth Building Bill, and national policing and fire service reviews have ensured Highland's voice is reflected in shaping policy and practice at a national level.

Despite changes in staffing and capacity, the team has remained agile and committed, reinforcing its role as a trusted enabler of community planning across Highland and beyond.



Highland Community Planning Partnership

The Highland Community Planning Partnership Board would like to extend sincere thanks to all those who contributed to the progress and achievements outlined in this Annual Report.

We are especially grateful to:

- Community Partnership members across Highland for their continued commitment, collaboration, and local leadership.
- Partner organisations for their active engagement in meetings, workshops, and events, and for their contributions to the delivery of the 2024 - 2027 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan.
- Speakers and facilitators who enriched the 2025 Annual Conference with their insights and expertise.
- Third sector representatives, volunteers, and community groups whose work continues to shape and strengthen local outcomes.
- Elected Members and Board representatives for their strategic guidance and support throughout the year.

Your dedication and partnership are vital to the success of community planning in Highland.

FINALLY



Highland
Community
Planning
Partnership

Com-pàirteachas
Dealbhadh
Coimhearsnachd

na Gàidhealtachd

Alternative Formats

This report is available in alternative formats upon request.

Please contact the CPP for more information: highlandcpp@highland.gov.uk

To find out more about the Highland Community Planning Partnership, visit our website at www.highlandcpp.org.uk

Sign up for our fortnightly Community Briefing to stay informed of all things Community Planning happening across Highland.

Community Briefing Sign-up Form

