



Annual Report 2025

(1st Dec 24 – 31st Dec 25)



Kyle of Sutherland Hub Ltd, The Bus, South Bonar Estate, Bonar Bridge, Sutherland IV24 3AQ

Charity Registered in Scotland SC036130

Company Limited by guarantee registered in Scotland No 501958

"The Hub is the best thing to come to our community in many years, & I think it's due to its inclusive activities appealing to everyone. There is literally something for everyone from young to old. The staff are hardworking and always welcoming. It's always a pleasure to meet people you may not have seen for a long time & to meet new people. It is a unifying experience which is very important to the cohesion of a community. I take my hat off to all of you who work so hard to keep it running. Well done all of you & thank you."

Chairs Message

Welcome to this year's snapshot of the wonderful facilities and services offered by the Kyle of Sutherland Hub team who provide grassroots, wanted and needed opportunities to this remote rural population. Each year I am tasked with writing this message and each year I wonder how I am going to elaborate on what is a fundamentally important and amazing project, but the team make that so much easier. They constantly listen to the wants and needs of the communities we serve and so whilst the core services remain fixed the additional ones are constantly moving to meet these needs and changing local challenges. The need to retain the core service is evident, without it the area would be thrown back into a socially isolated community as is the need to retain and develop additional services that provide equal access, aspiration, resilience, connections and opportunities to engage for all ages. They help transitions from one life stage or circumstance to the next and are the basis for community cohesion. So many members of our community talk of the hope and trust the Hub has brought to the area. The voice it gives to shape service and outcomes to the people and the tools to manage their lives as individuals and as part of a community.

The Hub is a place to talk, connect, give and receive support, it assists in attracting and keeping people living in the area which contributes to this wonderfully vibrant remote rural community and as the quote below evidences is actively assisting in reducing depopulation.

The Hub is a project which is proactive, yet also reactive to emergency changes when necessary, all enabled through the engagement we have with the community.

Over the following pages you will see samples of our service, many happy faces and hopefully gain a sense of the truly magical environment provided to assist in the development of our communities health and wellbeing.

Thanks to the dedicated staff team and volunteers who make this happen, to all who use and visit the project and to the funders who enable the fantastic work. It really is making a difference.

This year the Hub team have lost several valued community members, we miss you, we keep you in our conversations and forever in our hearts.

Hayley

"The Hub being close by was one of the reasons we moved to this area over other parts of the Highlands. Having a community space that is so welcoming and provides such a wide range of activities for such a range of ages is invaluable. Our kids love the after school club - it's such a fantastic opportunity for them to play and create with their friends. We are very lucky to have The Hub and the lovely team of staff!"

About Us

The Kyle of Sutherland Hub is an incorporated registered charity and social enterprise. The Hub aims to enhance the social, physical, intellectual, creative, and emotional well-being of the residents from the three remote rural parishes, Creich, Lairg and Ardgay and district (dispersed population circa 2,500), as well as our neighbours from outlying communities and tourists. After years of planning and dedication by a group of volunteers and with huge community support, The Hub opened the doors to this new vibrant facility in August 2017, addressing the severe lack of opportunities available to support healthy and engaged lifestyles for all ages.

We work hard to provide a good quality, wanted, and needed service. We strive to adapt and meet the changing needs of our communities, and ways that we can enhance the area as a place to live, work and visit. 😊 We continuously consult with our community and those who use our service to plan and develop the services offered and to engage more people. The Hub sees over 38,000 visits to the project annually, amazing given our location and population.

Equal opportunities are at the core of our services and is embedded in everything we do. We are at the Heart of the community, a truly welcoming, non – judgemental and accommodating project which has breathed life, hope, and opportunity into an area with a range of disadvantages associated with our remote rural location.

The Hub is managed by a voluntary Board and employs 5 full time and 2 part time members of staff as well as younger casual staff. 3 of our full-time staff, both part time and casual employees are supported through our social enterprise activity. Our staffing levels vary depending on project specific and core funding. We actively support volunteering and offer opportunities for young people to achieve awards through partnership with schemes such as the Saltire Awards. We have a range of income generating facilities and services including a gym, café, and a soft play which support running costs. We also offer several non-income generating services to ensure accessibility and support for all which are supported through funders and our own income.

	MONDAY 21 st July	TUESDAY 22 nd July	WEDNESDAY 23 rd July	THURSDAY 24 th July	FRIDAY 25 th July	SATURDAY 26 th July	SUNDAY 27 th July
Soft Play	Soft Play 9.30am-5.30pm	Soft Play 9.30am-5.30pm	Soft Play 9.30am-5.30pm	Soft Play 9.30am-5.30pm	Soft Play 9.30am-4pm	Soft Play 9.30am-4pm	Soft Play 10.30am-3pm
Café	Café open 9.30am-4pm Last orders 3.30pm	Café open 9.30am-4pm Last orders 3.30pm	Café open 9.30am-4pm Last orders 3.30pm	Café open 9.30am-4pm Last orders 3.30pm	Café open 9.30am-3pm Last orders 2.30pm	Café open 9.30am-4pm Last orders 3.30pm	Café open 10.30am-3pm Last orders 2.30pm
Morning	Family Hobby Horse Circuits 10.30am – 11.30pm	Pre-school Fun & Balance Bike Circuits 9.30am – 11am	Family Crafty Café 10.30am – 12pm Egg Box Pond Scene	Citizen's Advice Bureau 9.30am-11.30am	Family Crafty Café 10.30am – 12pm Decorate a Wooden Shell Box		
Afternoon	Youth Quiz with Prizes 2pm – 3pm	Mixed Led Bike Ride 12.30pm – 2.30pm	Adult Crafty Café 1.30pm – 3pm Summer Box Frames	Family Science Experiments 1pm – 2pm	Youth Café 3pm – 5pm		
Evening			Youth Club 3pm – 5pm				
Fitness							
Gym	Gym Open 9am – 7pm	Gym Open 9am – 7pm	Gym Open 9am – 7pm	Gym Open 9am-7pm	Gym Open 9am-4pm	Gym Open 9am-4pm	Gym Open 10am-3pm

We look forward to welcoming you at The Hub and hope you enjoy reading about what we offer in this beautiful part of the country from our unique building.

Round Up

For the period covering 1st December 2024 to 31st December 2025 the Hub has provided 794 community-based activities totalling 7,099 visits. This is in addition to our core services.

- *60 Pre-school activities ~ 739 visits
- *25 Pre-school balance bike sessions ~ 156 visits
- *51 Adult activities ~ 422 visits
- *11 Adult craft evenings ~ 94 visits
- *75 Family activities ~ 1,187 visits
- *5 Family bingo sessions ~ 141 visits
- *12 Over 60's bingo ~ 266 visits
- *9 Over 60's coffee and chat sessions ~ 130 visits
- *96 Over 60's Fitness Sessions ~ 768 visits
- *46 Youth cafes ~ 449 visits
- *31 Wednesday Youth Club ~ 198 visits
- *8 Youth gym sessions ~ 41 visits
- *2 Youth Mountain Biking sessions ~ 7 visits
- *1 Youth BBQ & Treasure Hunt ~ 22 visits
- *2 Youth Off-site activity ~ 42visits
- *31 After School Clubs ~ 840 visits
- *4 Kitchen Dancers classes ~ 38 visits
- *2 Book Buddies sessions ~ 2 visits
- *2 Meditation Breakfast sessions ~ 14 visits
- *40 Latin Fit and Ballroom classes ~ 339 visits
- *20 Latin Fit classes ~ 207 visits
- *19 Line Dance classes ~ 191 visits
- *7 Reflexology sessions ~ 34 visits
- *1 Mindfulness sessions ~ 4 visits
- *1 Singing for Health sessions ~ 4 visits
- *4 Stress & Burnout, group and individual sessions ~ 15 visits
- *2 Dream Big sessions ~ 16 visits
- *13 Mediation & Hypnosis sessions ~ 51 visits

- *1 Gut Health session ~ 11 visits
- *4 Flower arranging sessions ~ 64 visits
- *2 Ceramic Art session ~ 32 visits
- *4 Menopause support group sessions~ 23 visits
- *1 Pamper Day ~ 43 visits
- *7 Sound baths sessions ~ 72 visits
- *2 Breakfast & Blether sessions ~ 41 visits
- *1 Women's Paddleboarding session ~ 6 visits
- *3 Men's Paddleboarding sessions ~ 13 visits
- *1 Bike maintenance session ~ 2 visits
- *30 Mixed Bike Led Ride sessions ~ 103 visits
- *6 Men's Led Bike rides ~ 33 visits
- * 90 Community E-bike loans ~ 90 visits
- *3 Community Wide Events ~ 117 visits
- *Facilitated 9 activities by external providers ~ 80 visits
- *50 Citizens Advice Bureau Drop-in Clinics ~ 100 visits

Visits to our core, income generating services are below.

***3,482 visits to the Gym**

***7,388 visits to our soft play**

Reducing isolation and the negative impact this has on people's health & wellbeing is at the forefront of all the activities we offer. The services, and the warm space we provide, 7 days a week, are so important to our success as a cohesive and resilient remote rural community. We consult our community regularly and our activities evolve and change according to our users' needs and wants. 1,542 feedback forms during this reporting period have been completed, all of which are read, listened to, recorded, and acted upon.

"Coming to the hub and seeing all the friendly faces really makes you feel welcome within the community Coming to the hub and seeing all the friendly faces really makes you feel welcome within the community."

"Such a lovely, friendly place to come along to and connect with others."

Do you enjoy the activity on offer? Yes ☒ No ☐

Does offering these Activities free of charge make them more accessible? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did this activity help you feel less isolated? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did this activity help you to feel more included in the community? Yes ☒ No ☐

Living in a remote rural community, do you feel this activity was beneficial to you? Yes ☒ No ☐

Do you have the opportunity to attend any other similar activities in the wider community? Yes ☐ No ☒

We would love a comment from you:
Great fun, thank you

What does the Hub mean to you?
Smiles, fun, laughs.

Do you enjoy the activity on offer? Yes ☒ No ☐

Does offering these Activities free of charge make them more accessible? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did this activity help you feel less isolated? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did this activity help you to feel more included in the community? Yes ☒ No ☐

Living in a remote rural community, do you feel this activity was beneficial to you? Yes ☒ No ☐

Do you have the opportunity to attend any other similar activities in the wider community? Yes ☐ No ☒

We would love a comment from you:
It was amazing fun!

What does the Hub mean to you?
The Hub is the heart of this community

Do you enjoy the activity on offer? Yes ☒ No ☐

Does offering these sessions free of charge make them more accessible? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did the activity help you feel less isolated? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did this help you to feel more included in the community and in turn feel less isolated? Yes ☒ No ☐

Living in a remote rural community, do you feel these sessions were beneficial to you? Yes ☒ No ☐

Do you have the opportunity to attend any other similar activities in the wider community? Yes ☐ No ☒

We would love a comment from you:
We absolutely love the hub as it offers so much that it really brings the community together. It is so welcoming the staff are wonderful and we appreciate everything it offers to our children. Keep up the excellent work!

Do you enjoy the activity on offer? Yes ☒ No ☐

Does offering these sessions free of charge make them more accessible? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did the activity help you feel less isolated? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did this help you to feel more included in the community and in turn feel less isolated? Yes ☒ No ☐

Living in a remote rural community, do you feel these sessions were beneficial to you? Yes ☒ No ☐

Do you have the opportunity to attend any other similar activities in the wider community? Yes ☒ No ☐

We would love a comment from you:
It was 5 star Patsie was very helpful and kind to me and I made a Rhino & an elephant and it was great fun!

Do you enjoy the activity on offer? Yes ☒ No ☐

Does offering these sessions free of charge make them more accessible? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did the activity help you feel less isolated? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did this help you to feel more included in the community and in turn feel less isolated? Yes ☒ No ☐

Living in a remote rural community, do you feel these sessions were beneficial to you? Yes ☒ No ☐

Do you have the opportunity to attend any other similar activities in the wider community? Yes ☒ No ☐

We would love a comment from you:
I love love love love love it so much. The crafting was fun and I got to see some of my friends.

Does offering these Activities free of charge make them more accessible? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did this activity help you feel less isolated? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did this activity help you to feel more included in the community? Yes ☒ No ☐

Living in a remote rural community, do you feel this activity was beneficial to you? Yes ☒ No ☐

Do you have the opportunity to attend any other similar activities in the wider community? Yes ☐ No ☒

We would love a comment from you:
What a friendly lot. Enjoyed "masal" immensely. Steaks are excellent. Power to that elbow X

What does the Hub mean to you?
THE BEST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED!

Do you enjoy Bingo today? Yes ☒ No ☐

Does offering this Bingo free of charge make them more accessible? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did the Bingo help you feel less isolated? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did the Bingo help you to feel more included in the community and in turn feel less isolated? Yes ☒ No ☐

Living in a remote rural community, do you feel these Bingo sessions were beneficial to you? Yes ☒ No ☐

Do you have the opportunity to attend any other similar activities in the wider community? Yes ☐ No ☒

We would love a comment from you:
Coming to the hub makes me feel welcome, included and less isolated. With the area I live.

Do you enjoy the activity on offer? Yes ☒ No ☐

Does offering these Activities free of charge make them more accessible? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did this activity help you feel less isolated? Yes ☒ No ☐

Did this activity help you to feel more included in the community? Yes ☒ No ☐

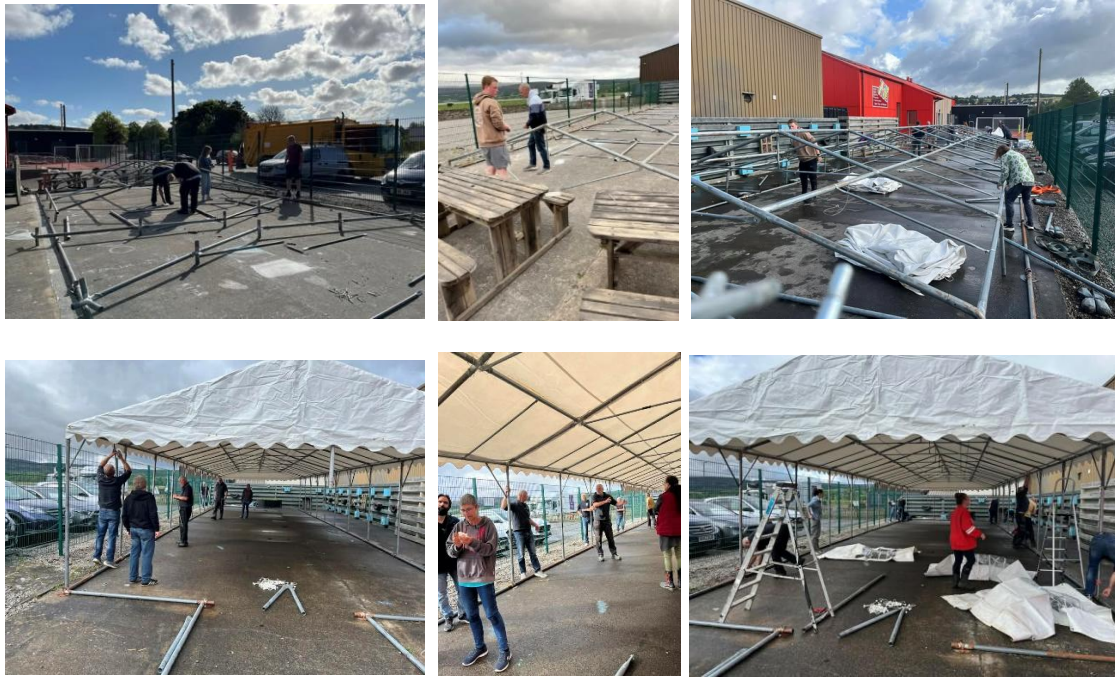
Living in a remote rural community, do you feel this activity was beneficial to you? Yes ☒ No ☐

Do you have the opportunity to attend any other similar activities in the wider community? Yes ☒ No ☐

We would love a comment from you:
Enjoyed coffee morning and cakes - thanks to everyone.

What does the Hub mean to you?
The Hub means a lot to me gets me out meeting people.

The Hub is an integral part of our local and wider community. It is people led, place based, with measurable impacts and tangible grassroots benefits. **99.5% of feedback responses** said the Hubs activities had reduced isolation. **99.8% of people** told us the free activities make engagement and opportunity more accessible.



Once again, this year with the huge support of a volunteer team we were able to put up our marquee for the summer months. This creates much needed extra space for our community activities and events to take place to a greater number of people. It also increases our income generation which is vital to our long term viability. Peak Tours book in to the Hub twice a month over the summer months and the marquee is a welcome space for our bikers to rest and recharge their batteries, ready for the next stage of their tour.

“Such a lovely, friendly place to come along to and connect with others.”

“Great social meeting place for all ages to meet and enjoy activities.”

“Coming to the hub makes me feel welcome, included and less isolated with the area I live.”

Our Facilities

Soft Play

We are very proud of our soft play facility. Over 80% of our clients are from out with our local area with Tain and Seaboard villages, Lairg, Dornoch, Invergordon, Alness and Golspie being the largest users. We are also seeing users coming from as far as Thurso, Inverness and beyond to use our facility. Feedback tells us our clean facility and friendly staff make travelling from further afield worth it.



The Soft Play facility assists children's development through access to year-round, fun physical activity which helps fitness, coordination, and social skills regardless of Highland weather! The soft play area incorporates three levels of challenging activity for children aged 0-11 with a separate baby and toddler area. There are slides, climbing tunnels, hideouts, and climbing nets all designed to keep children on the move. The space has a capacity of 48 with toilet facilities incorporated and a viewing window from the café, allowing parents/carers to watch their children while catching up with friends. This is the North Highlands premier soft play facility, chosen by children and parents at design stage.



The soft play is a particularly important aspect of the Hub. Our climate makes the winters harsh and long, and isolation for parents is a real issue. Prior to the Hubs opening there was a 100-mile round trip to access such a facility. It is also important in providing opportunities for children in a rural area to meet and play with others, broadening their peer group. The soft play is a resource for other groups and schools

within the Northern Highlands. The facility is also a favourite destination for local primary schools for their end of year trips. This year we hosted 7 school summer and Christmas trips. Incorporated into these trips are access to the outdoor area with equipment set up for the children to play on. The schools also have access to the marquee for their picnic lunches. The soft play additionally contributes to the area as a place to holiday and supports the area as a destination supporting local businesses in this fragile economy.

Membership packages are available for regular users reducing the entrance fee.



The soft play is the Hubs biggest attraction, and one of our main income generators. From 1st December 2024 to 31st December 2025, the facility saw 7,388 visits.

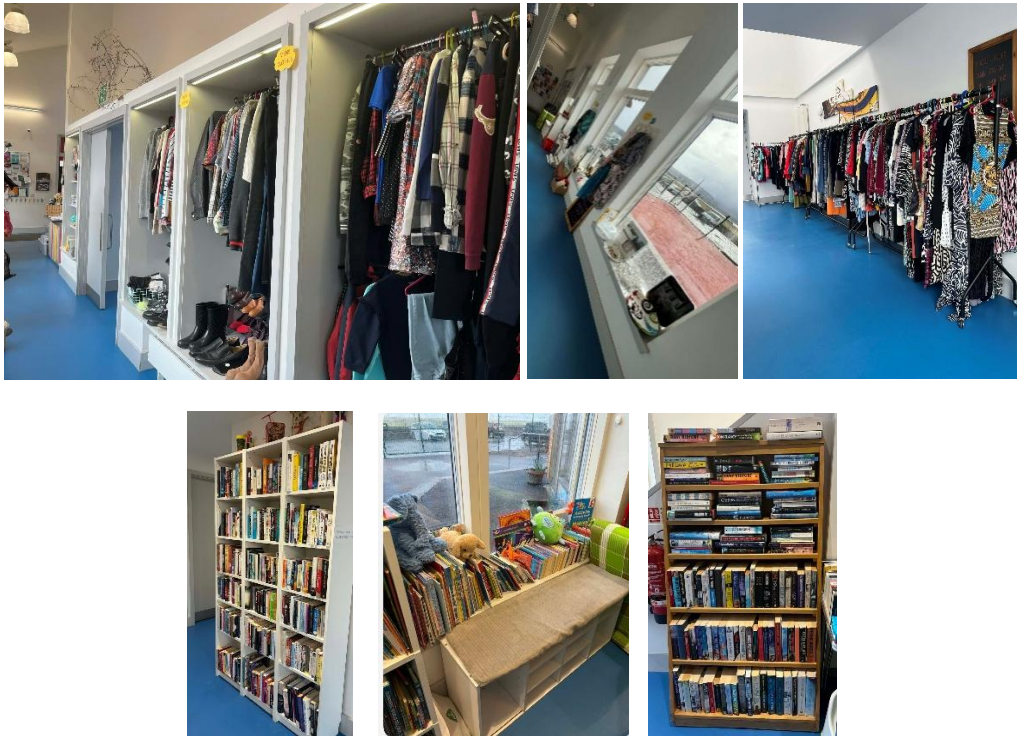
The Hub offers soft play parties for up to 24 children. This year we have facilitated 33 soft play parties.



“The set up of the party was super, staff were great. The kids loved it. The food was very tasty, and the staff went above and beyond to ensure our stay was fantastic!”

“Thanks so much for the party. The kids all loved the soft play + the room was decorated really nicely. It was a real stress free party for the parents considering there were so many kids there!”

Second-Hand Point



Our second-hand sales point is housed in a series of fitted alcoves in the reception area of the Hub. This area supports the organisations volunteering aspirations creating opportunities for older people to engage and participate in a part of the project which directly supports community benefit. Volunteers assist in managing donations and pricing them, we are incredibly grateful for their support. The second-hand sale point opens our service to those who feel they do not wish to use the other core services in the Hub. It provides an informal reason to pop in, browse and perhaps have a blether and catch up, and is a further example of how we address social isolation. It provides affordable clothes, books and toys and is helping to reduce the areas carbon footprint an agenda the Hub actively supports. Our users have told us this is a vital service for the community and the support we have received from the donations people make to those who use the service has been phenomenal. 😊

During this reporting period, second-hand sales have generated an amazing income of £34,971.26. Our second-hand sales just keep growing, thanks to the donations we receive from our community. It is a service which directly supports the amazing opportunities we offer at The Hub.

*"We love coming to the Hub for a rummage in the second-hand shop -
we never leave without a bargain!"*

*"When our children are in soft play, we always manage to find
something to buy in the second-hand shop!"*

The Café

The café menu offers something for everyone, and all food is freshly prepared on site. We strive to bring an exciting variety of fun, and creative menu choices in our relaxed and open plan café at affordable prices. We promote healthy options and offer a large variety of home baking. The café continues to be one of few in the local area open, particularly with a dine in option. The café has enabled The Hub to provide training and work experience opportunities supporting young people to achieve their Saltire awards and volunteering opportunities for adults.



The Hub café is the “heart” of our facility, a place for catching up and gathering after attending one of our activities or bumping into a friend after popping in to browse through the second-hand point. Located next to the reception area it is the first visual point of connection for users. For our soft play users, the café adds to the experience providing a space to relax and enjoy refreshments between the physical excursions.

The Hub is situated on the outskirts of the NC500 tourist route. During the summer months our café supports cyclists, tourist groups and visitors, with the marquee providing additional seating when there are no activities on allowing us to cater for large groups, this provides an essential service where access to such facilities are sparsely located. This reporting year we have provided soup and sandwich lunches to Peak Tour Bike Rides for groups of up to 30 cyclists; they use the Hub as a welcome stop on their journeys from Lands’ End to John O Groats.

“As long distance cyclists we were delighted to stumble across the Hub’s sit in café! Very welcome for our weary legs! Lovely food and friendly staff. Will definitely recommend.”

“A great example of community spirit and facilities. Well done!”

“Excellent as ever. Polite, comfortable, relaxed. Food excellent. We will be back.”

The Multi Use Room

The Multi- Use Room is a flexible room used during busy times as additional seating for the café when there are no other classes requiring the space. This room provides us with the space to run fitness activities, dance classes, crafts, training, and a meeting space for other local organisations/businesses. It is a space that has facilitated partnership working between the Hub and other community groups. It is also now used to hold rails of second hand clothes as demand for this service has increased.



Activities include, over 60's fitness classes, Latin Fit, Ballroom & Latin dance classes, family crafty cafés, adult crafty cafés, youth café, bingo, craft evenings, Christmas craft activities, Sound Bath classes, meditation classes, over 60's coffee afternoons and community events.



“A place to meet, a place to learn. The Hub is the centre of our community.”



“The Hub is such an important, accessible and convenient community resource. My kids love coming!”



"The holiday activities are great fun."



"Great to be back to normal after all the snow & meet up with friends. Enjoyable craft & company."



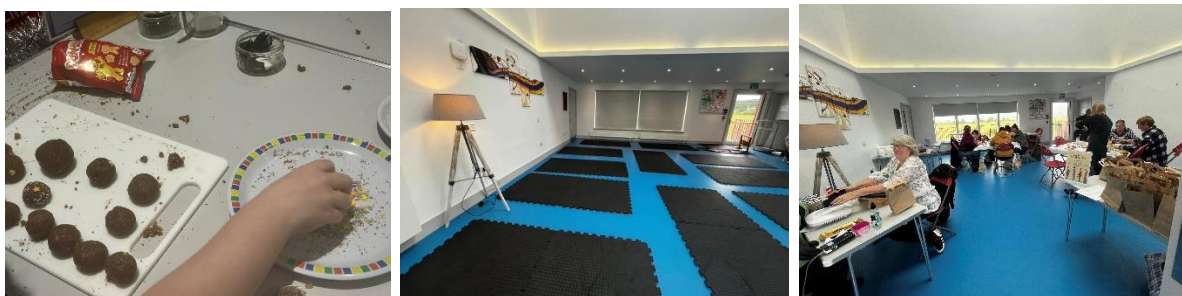
"Really enjoyed the crafting and the craic! Thanks Pauline."



"Absolutely fabulous, very relaxing much needed after a very stressful day, feeling very invigorated."



"Having classes like this helps a lot with my mental health and being new to the area."



"It is a place that promotes friendship, fun, opportunity, lovely coffee, lovely food, a great meeting place and absolutely wonderful staff (non-related!!) Appreciated by many people in this whole area!"

"I would be totally lost without the Hub. The Hub to me is a wonderful resource. It has given me new friendships, new skills and immense enjoyment and fulfilment."

"Can not believe how lucky we are to have this amazing facility on our doorstep. The wonderful staff are so welcoming and all for a very reasonable price."

"The Hub is, quite simply a lifeline for our community. Being able to be together, have wonderful food, get fit (if we choose!) and learn is for us a very special environment. So many of our neighbours are alone, elderly or simply in need of enrichment- The Hub provides this and so much more. We are so proud to have The Hub as the centre of our community and appreciate every one of the team who work so hard to make it happen - thank you."

The Fitness Suite

Our fitness suite, located on the first floor at the Hub, offers breathtaking views of the Kyle of Sutherland, people are blown away when they enter the suite. It may just be Scotland's most scenic gym.

With 15 workstations there is cardio, resistance, and strength training opportunities with a focus on community general use rather than power training making it more broadly accessible.

A variety of membership options ensures that everyone has the opportunity to benefit from the facility.



Before the Hub opened, local residents had to travel a 28 mile round trip to access a fitness suite. The Hub now provides a much needed and highly valued space where people can improve and maintain their physical health beyond general fitness. The facility also plays an important role in rehabilitation and the management of chronic health conditions, offering accessible opportunities for people to stay active and support their long-term well-being.

We have **provided 83 dance / fitness classes**, with **838 visits**. We have facilitated **96 Over 60's fitness classes** with **768 visits**. We have an average of **45 active gym members per month**, with a total of **3,482 visits to the gym**. These figures highlight the vital role the gym plays in our community's well-being. Particularly in a remote area where access to such facilities was limited.

"Having access to the gym is good for my strength. The friendly group is a bonus. I also love the bookshop and second-hand store. Overall the Hub is a huge bonus to the community."

"It provides my social life, keeps me fit and healthy and happy!"

"I just love coming along to our over 60's sessions at the Hub gym, they give me purpose. My social life has never been so full, this is all thanks to the Hub."



"The hub is so important to me, I am fitter physically and mentally. I meet others regularly for chats so socially it is very important. The gym is an excellent resource and user friendly. Without the Hub my life would be rather quiet and retiring. For me I can afford the gym prices but it's not expensive compared to others. It's very good value. It's great fun and the staff make it very enjoyable."

The Hub runs supervised Youth Gym sessions that are proving extremely popular. These sessions provide young people with a safe, structured space to exercise independently, building both confidence and responsibility without the need for parental supervision on-site. Free youth access has been supported by the Westminster Foundation



"I like coming to the gym, I get to hang out with my friends and do some exercise too."

The Hub offers Latin Fit, Ballroom and Latin dance classes and Line Dance, led by an external provider. These classes have been incredibly well received by the community. We are continuously looking for ways to attract people to become engaged in physical activity as the benefits extend way beyond just physical health. The classes have also supported the development of social networks further enhancing the areas cohesiveness.



"I just love the line dancing class, it is great fun. I love it that no one takes themselves too seriously. It is all about having a laugh whilst exercising. No-one pays any attention to mistakes...which is really lovely!"



"The ballroom and latin fit class at the Hub is great fun, a lovely way to spend an afternoon."

"I look forward to my weekly dance classes. They are fun."

"Kitchen dancers is just brilliant! Great music and we just dance! I burn so many calories without thinking about it!"

Community Support Room

The Community room is a quiet and welcoming space, where support and observational work can take place by specialist agencies. The Community Room is also used for small meetings and one-to-one services for projects facilitated by The Hub such as Stress and Burnout sessions, part of our PAUSE project. The Citizens Advice Bureau use this room to provide a weekly drop-in service—locally and confidentially. Without this service people would have a round trip of 58 miles to access the service where there are no direct transport links.



“Kyle of Sutherland Hub has been a life line for the community and outwith. As a Mental Health Support Worker it has provided a safe space for people to come and socialise, the staff are amazing and welcome everyone with a smile, understanding and deliver amazing activities! I can't thank them enough for the service they provide. Since moving away I miss them all and haven't found anywhere that provides the support this Hub does! I want to congratulate the whole team, you are amazing!”

“It's a fantastic resource for the community - and for all ages. We are really lucky to have it in such a small place. The staff do a wonderful job.”

Community Activities

The Hub continues to play a vital role as an anchor organisation within our community, bringing people together and creating opportunities that support emotional and physical wellbeing. Its strong community focus is reflected in the consistently high levels of attendance and engagement across our activities.

Our programme is delivered thanks to the generous support of the National Lottery Community Fund, The Robertson Trust and the Creich Community Council Coire Na Cloiche Fund. This funding enables us to employ a dedicated Activities Coordinator and provide the equipment needed to deliver a wide range of accessible activities.

At the heart of community life, the Hub offers engaging, creative and social opportunities for people of all ages, from birth to 90+. For many participants, these activities provide opportunities that would otherwise not exist locally. By removing financial barriers, we ensure that everyone in the community can take part.

Demand for sessions remains high, with many activities regularly reaching capacity and operating waiting lists. This continued participation clearly demonstrates how valued and needed these community-based activities are, helping to build a more connected, cohesive and resilient community. 😊



“Offers great activities for all ages and has helped us become more social and get out the house. Thanks.”

“The Hub is such a nice to come here as everyone is so friendly.”

“The hub is a fantastic place to go everybody is so kind and helpful I take my wife over from Golspie every Wednesday for the adult crafty cafe and she really enjoys it.”

Pre school



Early child development sets the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour, and health. The experiences children have in early childhood shape the brain and the child's capacity to learn, get along with others, and to respond to daily stresses and challenges. We offer a minimum weekly activities aimed specifically at 0-5 years. These sessions have been a lifeline to our pre-school families reducing loneliness and providing some respite, and the opportunity to build networks.



We delivered **85 pre-school activity sessions**, welcoming **895 visits from children and their parents**. These sessions support children's emotional, physical, social, creative and intellectual development, providing valuable opportunities that would otherwise be very limited within our rural community.

The activities also support parents and carers by creating opportunities to participate alongside their children, reduce isolation and build supportive social networks. Families gain ideas and confidence to recreate activities at home, extending the benefits beyond the sessions themselves. Local school nurseries are also able to attend, giving children the opportunity to experience new environments and meet peers who will later transition into nursery. This helps support a smoother and more confident transition into early years education.

"The Hub is an invaluable source of toddler socialising outside school hours."

"It's great that you can go along without worrying about costs."



"Great to get down to pre-school club. Really nice session, and lovely to see so many little ones."



"It's lovely to have such a welcoming place to come to in the village."



"Great Pre-school event, the hub means we have access to somewhere fun for our kids - hard to find up here!"



"Brilliant selection of activities for pre-school children. We are very lucky to have the hub within our community. Thank you."



Our pre-school activities run throughout the year, with each session including an art activity alongside free play. Activities have included painting, playdough, music and fun fitness sessions, encouraging creativity, movement and social interaction.

We have also hosted ad-hoc sensory discos and welcomed early years practitioners to deliver engaging sessions such as Music Maker. During the summer months, and when weather permits, these activities move outdoors to our marquee, providing additional space for play and exploration.

Feedback from families highlights the importance of these sessions, with **100% of pre-school users** reporting that attending the activities helped them feel less isolated and more included in the community.



"seemed to really enjoy the baking session! Especially the icing!"



"Lots of fun, great for the community."

"The Hub is such a vibrant and busy place, great activities, thank you."

Primary/Family

Support for children of primary school age is delivered through our weekly, weekend and holiday art and family craft sessions. During term time these take place once a week and every other weekend, increasing to three sessions per week during school holidays.

These activities provide creative opportunities for children while also offering families and carers a reliable and consistent service. This regular provision helps families plan from week to week, supports parents who are working and provides structure for extended family members who assist with childcare.

By offering a dependable programme of activities, we ensure children and families have consistent opportunities to connect, be creative and support their wellbeing.



"It was fun - I like going to the Hub."



"Fab Fun crafty café as always, thank you."



"Such a friendly place that is amazing for kids."

Each session provides children with an art activity as well as sports & fitness opportunities on our outdoor games area. Examples of the hundreds of crafts offered are science sessions— potion making, decorate a cake stand and cupcake, seaside wreaths, egg box ponds, Easter bonnets, family tree canvas, decorate a frisbee and monster flowerpots.



"The pancakes tasted really good, I loved all the sprinkles."



" I loved making the pancakes, getting to toss them in the frying pan was really good fun!"

"The Hub is a jolly happy place, everyone is so friendly. 😊"



"Thank you to the hub for providing loads of fun activities and ways to meet new people."

These activities give children the opportunity to create their own artwork to take home while also spending time with friends, including those who attend different schools. Within our communities there are five small primary schools, making opportunities to meet and build wider peer groups particularly important.

By bringing children together through shared creative activities, these sessions help strengthen friendships across schools and support a more confident transition to secondary education, while also encouraging greater connection across our dispersed communities.

"It was lots of fun and very good. I had a good time, I love the cakes at the hub."



"Fantastic activity for a rainy day. Thank you."

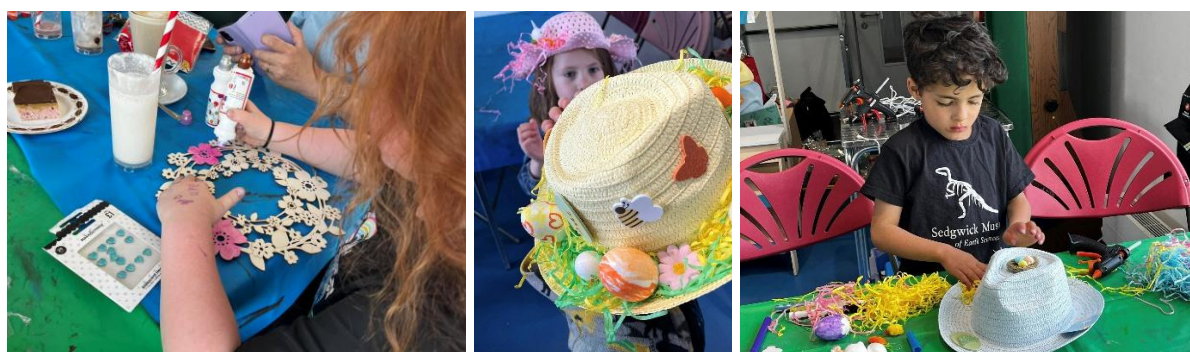
"My children and I loved the bingo, enjoyed meeting people. Thanks everyone."



“The Beetle Drive was brilliant fun, super well organised and inclusive for everyone. A lovely day well spent.”



“Fabulous activity, very inclusive and well organised. Thankyou.”



98% of users said offering the activities free of charge makes them more accessible. **97%** also told us they felt less isolated with the activities the Hub has to offer.



During this reporting period, children of primary school age had access to **111 activities**, generating **2,168 visits** and providing regular opportunities for creativity and play.

“The Hub has such great facilities for children.”

Our ever popular After School Club runs every Thursday during term time, providing a supervised space where parents can drop off their children. This service is vitally important, as it offers one of the few regular opportunities for children of this age to socialise outside school hours. We have provided **31 After School Club sessions** with **840 visits**.

With pupils attending several small local primary schools, the club enables children to mix, build friendships and strengthen connections across the wider community.



"I love Hub Club! I get to play with all my friends."



"Hub club is the best! We do lots of fun things."



"Hub club is so much fun. I love the toast!"

Youth

Young people are the future of our communities and it is important and necessary that they are considered, provided for and given a voice to shape what does, and is going to, affect them. We are extremely privileged to be able to offer the support we do to young people living in our communities and how the service we provide makes a real difference to their physical and emotional well being and supports them through their transitions into young adults. Without our service there would be no opportunity for young people to regularly meet and socialise out of school hours. We have supported over **48 young people** to access opportunities, activities and engage in physical activity, with this service being full to capacity weekly. We have provided **117 youth activities** during the reporting period, generating **1,174 visits**.



"I like youth club because I get to meet up with my friends."

Every Friday, we run a vibrant Youth Club that offers a range of activities, including art, free play, and team games. Additionally, each week, our young people are provided with a free meal.



"I like going to the Hub to play football."



"The quiz games we play are fun, I like the prizes."



"Decorating the Easter bonnets was a good laugh."



"I like it when we get chicken wraps, they are my favourite."

Thanks to generous funding from the Westminster Foundation, we have been able to deliver a Wednesday youth club sessions, which will now run until June 2026.

These additional sessions provide a quieter and more supportive environment than our larger Friday sessions. This smaller setting is particularly valuable for young people who are less confident or who may find busy groups overwhelming. By offering a calmer space, we are able to help them build confidence and gradually feel comfortable participating in our busier Friday sessions.

Each week, the sessions include themed activities designed to encourage creativity, teamwork, and conversation. Young people are also provided with a snack, helping to keep them energised and engaged before dinner.



"The pumpkin carving was good fun."



Our youths have had another incredible year of opportunities at the Hub. Thanks to funding from The Scottish Children's Health Lottery, Allander Trust and Highland Council – Mental Health and Well-being Fund, we were able to offer a variety of off-site summer activities. These included paddleboarding, locally led bike rides, a special ride to explore the Contin Forest Trails. A meal out with a fun Christmas shopping trip, a trip to Innoflate and a trip to Roller Bowl. We also continue to facilitate Drugs and Alcohol Awareness sessions helping our youths stay informed and safe as they transition from adolescence to adulthood. These activities play a vital role in boosting their self-esteem and confidence, while encouraging them to embrace new challenges both physically and socially.



"Innoflate was so much fun."



"I loved the paddleboarding, I hope we can do it again."



"Dinner at Invershin was awesome."



"The quiz we did was good fun."



"It was fun."



"Rollerbowl was good fun, I liked being in a team with my friends."

"It was exciting getting to go to Inverness on the bus for dinner."



“I had a great time, the tracks were really good fun.”



“I loved doing the jumps on my bike! I would love to go again.”

“Youth café is fun.”

“Getting to go to Inverness for dinner and shopping was so much fun.”

It is with huge thanks to our funders - your support enables us to continue this essential work, which is vital in our remote rural location. 😊

Adult

The Hub has successfully delivered **178 adult focused activities** attracting **1,295 visits**. The activities offered include adult crafty cafés, over 60's tea and bingo, bingo with Santa, coffee and chat afternoons, ladies' breakfasts & blethers, crafty cafés, pamper hamper, craft evenings, and men's led bike rides.



"Great craft class and leisure time crafting and catching up with other ladies."

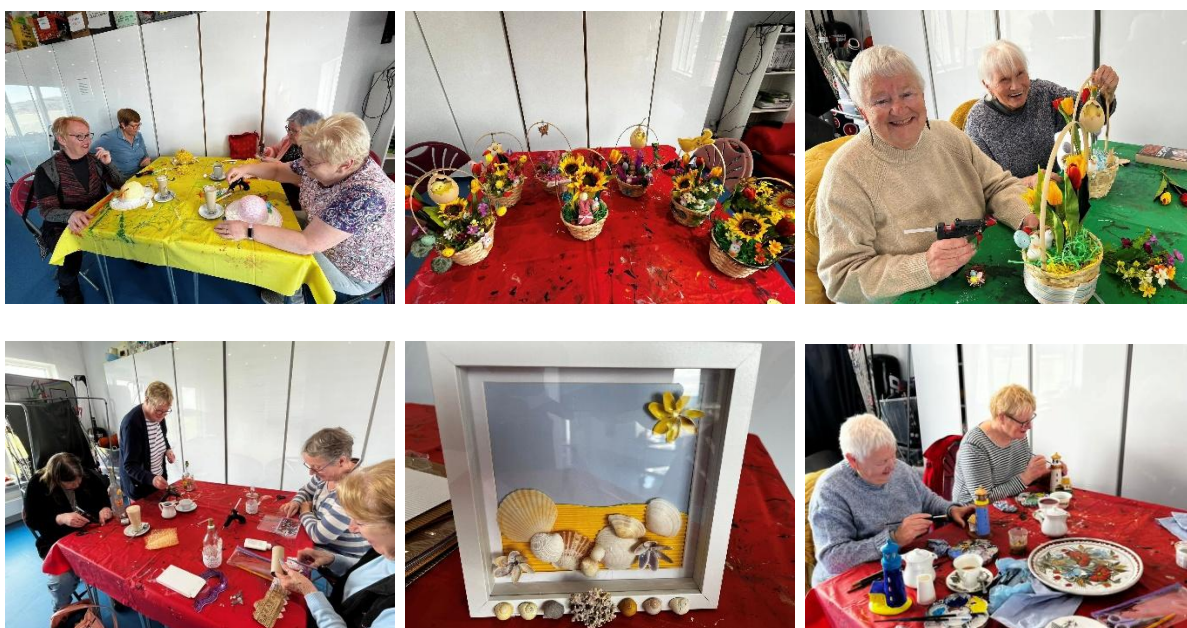


"Love these sessions. Big thank you to Pauline."





“My visit today has been very enjoyable, it is so nice to come here, lovely staff and great crack!”



“The Hub provides great social opportunities to see people. Lovely to have something to go to. Amazing that its free and accessible.”

Friendships have blossomed through these activities, and without the Hub’s services, many of these connections wouldn’t exist. Our regular users love coming along for a blether, a cuppa, and a slice of cake. For some, the Hub is their only social interaction throughout the week—it truly is their lifeline.



In March, we hosted two mornings of art lessons that welcomed participants of all abilities. The sessions were led by Dawn, who created a relaxed and encouraging environment for everyone involved. Her supportive approach helped participants build confidence in their creative abilities, making the morning an enjoyable experience for all who attended.



"Thanks for the crafts today, I always look forward to Wednesdays."

In December the Hub hosted 2 Wreath making sessions, these were lovely classes which offered a welcome break from everyday life and a chance to relax with some mulled wine and a mince pie. The sessions were led by Rebecca, from RH Florals. These sessions were full with waiting lists, highlighting the strong interest from our community.



"We loved the wreath making event. It was so much fun. The drinks and mince pies were a nice touch."



Our Over 60's coffee and Catch Up sessions take place each month, offering a welcoming space for those who prefer a relaxed social gathering rather than a crafting activity. These sessions offer the opportunity to come along to the Hub, catch up with friends and enjoy the company without any financial barriers. These are just a lovely, relaxed time at the Hub.

100% of our adult users said offering the activities free of charge makes them more accessible. **100%** also told us they felt less isolated with the activities the Hub has to offer.

"We are very lucky to have the hub and all the lovely friendly people running it."



Our Pause Project made possible with 12-month funding from the Highland Third Sector Interface Mental Health & Wellbeing fund has been hugely successful. The Hub has hosted Sound Baths, Meditation and Hypnotherapy sessions, Hand Reflexology sessions, Menopause group chat sessions, Men's Led bike rides, What is Healthy group sessions, Breakfast & Blethers, Ceramic Painting to name but a few.



“I enjoyed getting out and meeting up with others.”

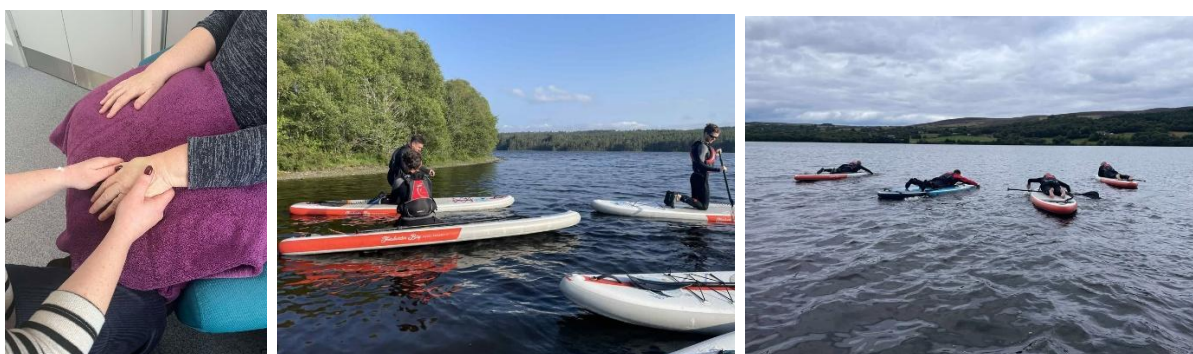
PAUSE is a blended approach to prevention and management of mental health and wellbeing. A project which will empower people to manage their own circumstance through group and individual holistic therapy sessions, activity, community support groups, and training. Through sessions based on the four pillars of health this project aims to equip people with knowledge and tools to make everyday changes which have lasting impact. PAUSE is about taking time and moments to avoid or break out of fight or flight and to reduce the isolation of living in a remote rural location where such opportunities are extremely limited.



“Great idea - bringing people together especially those folk who are on their own. Many thanks Pauline.”



"I truly enjoyed this beautiful workshop. It was relaxing, creative and peaceful. Perfect finish to my busy day. I loved our instructor and flowers provided. Thank you so much."



"The Hand Reflexology was a wonderful experience, thank you."

"I am just back from my first ever paddleboarding session and I am buzzing! Chris was a fantastic instructor. I learnt loads on my first try and was even standing upright on the board! Thank you."





"I bring my mother to these sessions as she suffers from dementia. We are always looking for new things to take her to. It helps her to experience things in life. The activities offered here are priceless and a very integral part of this and other communities. You all do a fabulous job and all offer enthusiasm and happiness in all activities. Well Done."



"Really enjoyed the pottery painting session and definitely helped/encouraged me to come as it was free."



"Thank you so much, it was a really nice activity and a good group of people. Good to take a breather mid work week."



"I truly enjoyed relaxing sound bath with Stacey, I feel recharged and more balanced, thank you."



"I had a fantastic time, can't wait to get back out!"

99% of our users shared that they do not have the opportunity to attend these activities without our service and having these activities free at the point of access makes them far more accessible. They also expressed that these activities help them feel more included in the community, less isolated and more knowledgeable and able to manage their own circumstances. 😊

Community Cycling Project

Thanks to funding from The Highland Council Ward Discretionary Fund and the Beinn Tharsuinn Windfarm Fund (Ardgay & District Community Council), the Hub has been able to facilitate weekly Mixed Led rides in Ardgay and Lairg. These rides are led by Amanda from Pedal Pursuit and vary in length, making them accessible to a range of abilities. The sessions have been very well received in the community.

The funding has also enabled us to deliver Balance Bike sessions for Pre-school children. During the summer months these sessions were held on the astro at the Hub, while in winter we delivered outreach sessions in Bonar Bridge Primary School and Lairg Primary School. These fun and engaging sessions introduce children to cycling from a young age, helping to build confidence, balance, and a positive relationship with physical activity. They have proven to be hugely beneficial for the children who take part. As part of the cycling project, we have facilitated 90 Ebike loans.



"I'm very grateful, thank you for my recent 1:1 cycling lesson. It really made all the difference. I have been out a couple of times so far (dodging the rain) and have had no problems changing gears."

You really did change me from someone who could not ride a 17 speed bike at all to someone quite happy on one. You also did it in such a nice way: I felt encouraged and supported at every stage."

So, thank you again - it was a great experience, and I would recommend it to anyone. "

"Pedal Pursuits rides are a great way to meet likeminded people for social rides and to discover new trails in the area, all while improving fitness levels."



"We are extremely grateful to have received the balance bike sessions for our nursery children. Since starting, we have noticed a huge increase in their confidence and skills when using the balance bikes. The children look forward to each session eagerly, often asking every week if it is "balance bike day!" They especially enjoy seeing the creative adventures Amanda sets up for them in the gym. Each session is carefully tailored to the different age ranges and abilities of the children, allowing them to develop balance, coordination, and confidence at their own pace. The sessions have had a very positive impact on both the children's physical development and their enthusiasm for active play."



"My kids look forward to the session all week - they really enjoyed it thank you!"

"Thank you so much for putting these sessions on, my son just loves the balance bikes, Amanda is great with the little ones, such a fun set up."

Community Events and Developments

The Hub is dedicated to reducing social isolation and fostering community cohesion for residents of the Kyle of Sutherland and surrounding areas. We aim to achieve this by offering accessible facilities, hosting community events, and providing classes and activities that develop skills while supporting physical and emotional well-being and of course assisting in the development of social networks which really is the backbone of community resilience.

This year, we held a Gatsby-themed event at the local village hall. It was a fantastic evening, with everyone who attended embracing the spirit of the occasion by dressing up in true Gatsby style. The performance was highly entertaining, and guests thoroughly enjoyed the night. Attendees were also treated to a unique teacup charcuterie, which added a special touch to the evening.

Our Grand Raffle was drawn at the event. Thanks to all the local businesses that donated prizes.



“This was one of the best events I have been at, so well organised. The games were a great laugh. It was lovely to be able to get dressed up. Thank you to the Hub team for organising it all.”

Our activities coordinator took “Hub crafts” to a local primary school for their Health and Well-being Day. The children enjoyed making fresh fruit smoothies and then got creative decorating a fruity suncatcher. It was a fun hands-on experience that promoted healthy living.



In August we supported the Kyle of Sutherland Gala week in their car treasure hunt and a Youth Treasure hunt. It was a great weekend of activities, and we are delighted to have been able to be a part of it.



"The treasure hunt was good fun, I loved "To Steal or Not to Steal."

In December, we were delighted to collaborate with the Kyle of Sutherland Joggers on the now annual Santa Run. This much-loved community event welcomed participants of all ages and abilities. A shorter walk/run route allowed families with young children to take part, while a longer route was available for those looking for more of a challenge.

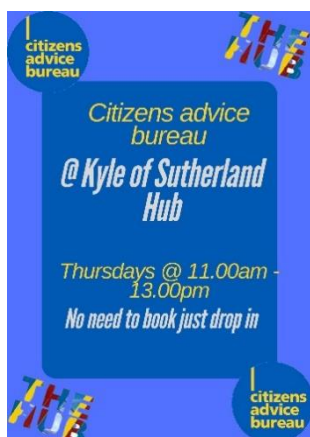
The event began and ended at the Hub, where participants and supporters gathered afterwards to enjoy tea, coffee and cake together. Many people embraced the festive spirit by taking part in fancy dress, creating a jolly atmosphere. It was a wonderful opportunity to bring the community together and celebrate the season while encouraging people to get active.



"A lovely way spend a Sunday morning, such a fantastic community event for all ages."

Partnership and Community Business support

Great things happen when the community works together, and our residents benefit from a cohesive network of delivery. We are active supporters of many local groups and businesses which helps us **all** to achieve our aims, successfully deliver projects, remain viable and above all ensures our communities needs are met through increased opportunities. This year we have provided and received support from (not exhaustive)



- The Lairg & District Learning Centre
- The Kyle Action Christmas Lights Group
- The local Primary Schools
- The Creich & Kincardine Centre (The Bradbury)
- Music Makers
- Bonar Bridge Football club
- Bonar Bridge children's Christmas Party committee
- The Golspie Bothy
- Kyle of Sutherland Gala
- Heavens Bike & Boards
- Simone Laraway Health Coach
- The Citizens Advice Bureau
- Highlife Highland

- Reflex Highland
- East Sutherland Art Society
- Jo's Therapies
- Stacey's Sound baths
- Peak Tours
- Planet Youth



Volunteering

Volunteers are an invaluable asset to the Hub and to the wider community we serve. We value their contribution enormously. Each volunteer brings a different set of skills and experiences to the project. They all bring a tremendous amount of joy. The multi-faceted aspect of The Hub enables us to support a wide variety of volunteering opportunities ranging from hands on in the café, support at children's and adult craft sessions, sorting second hand donations, maintenance, and administration. Volunteering opportunities range from regular sessions to one off events, tailored to each individual's needs and circumstance. We are very fortunate to receive the support we do from volunteers; the addition they make to the Hub and the team is key to the difference we make in the community.

Throughout the year we also support young people by offering volunteering and work experience opportunities that help them develop practical skills, build confidence, and gain valuable experience. Many of our young volunteers take part in the Saltire Awards scheme, which recognises their achievements and commitment to volunteering.

This year, one of our young volunteers reached an impressive milestone of 80 hours of volunteering at the Hub. With the next Saltire Award milestone at 100 hours, we look forward to celebrating this achievement with him very soon. 😊



I enjoy volunteering at The Hub because it gives me valuable skills and experience. I also enjoy working with a wonderful team of staff and meeting all the customers.

Conor



I have volunteered at the Hub since it opened in 2017! I love volunteering here. I like the company, and I think the Hub is an amazing place. Helping sort all the clothes makes lots of money for the Hub and that is great.

Marion



I have volunteered at the Hub for almost 4 years. I really enjoy being able to help the staff. It is my way of saying thank you to them all for giving the community such a wonderful resource.

I would really be lost without the hub. It is an important part of my life. I know there are lots of others who feel this way to. My volunteering is always valued and I always look forward to my time as a volunteer.

Margaret



I have volunteered at the Hub for over 3 years now. Its nice to get out and meet new people and I really enjoy chatting and getting to know them. It is so much fun playing with the toddlers at pre-school classes.

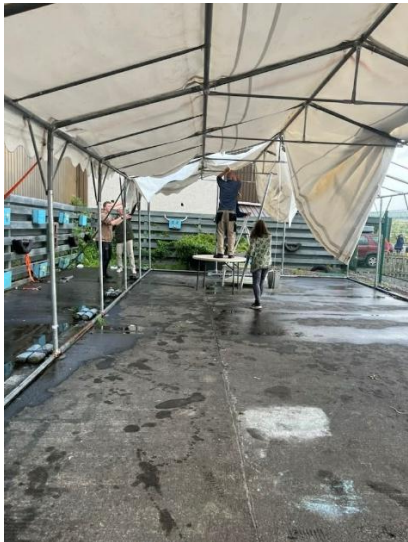
Yvonne

Thank you so much for the time, support, and direction you give to The Hub.

The Marquee & The Den



Hopes of securing capital funding have this year ebbed away, it is just not largely available so for now “The DEN” is on hold. We will continue to search for viable funding and have begun the process of looking into extending the permissions in the hope that one day we will be able to bring this needed, wanted and hugely beneficial addition to our communities.

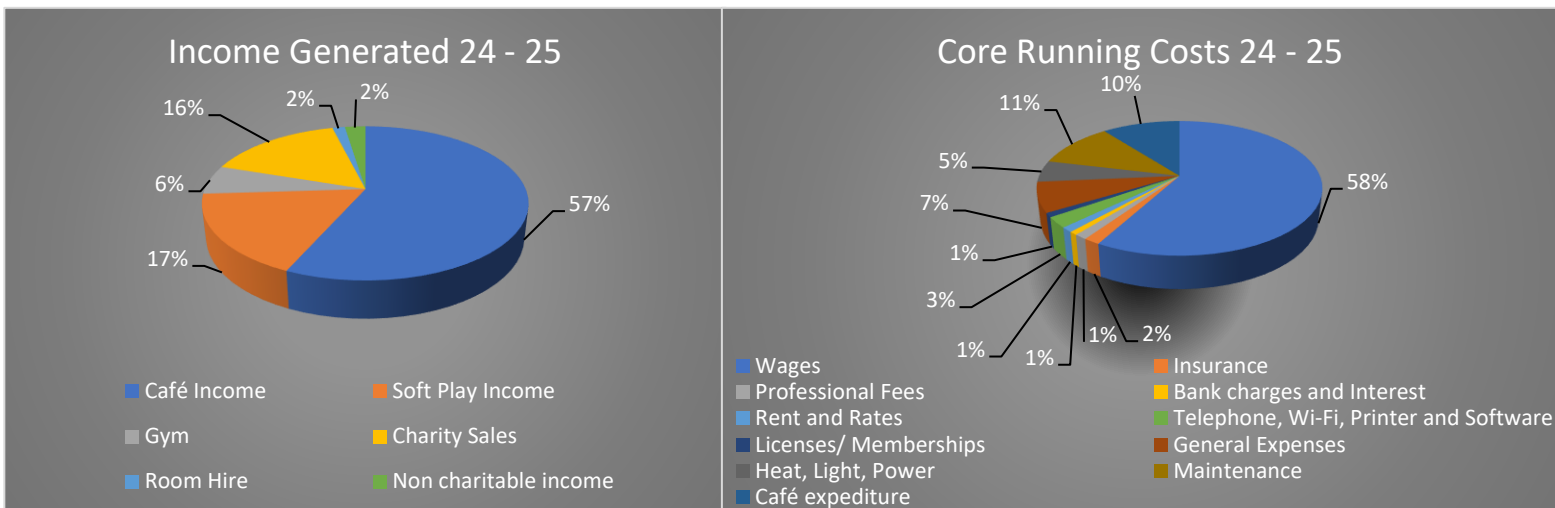


In the summer this year we were caught off guard by an unusual summer storm. We lost our marquee and have been unable to replace it, the costs are just too great. It is a huge loss but we have an enormous amount of valuable memories and experiences that have been gained in the marquee.

Fingers crossed for The Den 😊

Finance

The full Financial Statements of the Hub can be accessed online at Companies House and the OSCR websites. Below are snapshot charts of core Hub activity income and expenditure for financial year April 24 ~ March 25.



The charity recognises that it is important to maintain a free reserve to cover its day to day running costs and is pleased to have met its target of holding at minimum £45,000 of reserves, equating to approximately three months running costs.

During the year the charity incurred an overall deficit of £42,874 (2024 - deficit of £25,913), this includes a non-cash depreciation charge of £60,995 (2024 - £55,043). The overall deficit consists of a restricted funds deficit of £21,370 (2024- deficit of £41,889) and an unrestricted funds surplus of £21,504 (2024 – surplus of £15,976). At the year end the charity had total funds of £1,673,679 (2024 - £1,678,552) which includes restricted funds of £1,583,371 (2024 - £1,604,741) and unrestricted funds of £52,307 (2024 - £73,811).

It has been another challenging year for charities. Costs continue to rise while securing funding is becoming increasingly difficult, particularly for unrestricted income and capital funding.

We are, once again, especially grateful to SSE – Achany and Foundation Scotland – Rosehall for their support towards our core running costs and staff salaries. This funding has provided a vital level of stability, enabling the project to sustain our existing services while also developing and growing new ones. Their understanding of our work and the needs of the community we serve has been invaluable.

We would also like to thank all of our funders who support specific projects. We work hard to ensure that every investment is used to maximise positive impact for our community. Their support enables us to deliver activities and services that provide clear benefits and opportunities that would otherwise not be possible.

A huge **thank you** to the organisations listed below who have shown faith in our project and demonstrated their belief, support, and understanding of why we are here and the difference we are able to make within the community.

In many ways, our funders are the enablers who make our work possible, while we act as the facilitators delivering support where it is needed most. Their continued support allows the Hub to grow, develop, and respond to the needs of our community.

We are extremely grateful for the support of: The Big Lottery - Community Fund, The Robertson Trust, Beinn Tharsuinn Crieich, Ardgay and Edderton Coir Na Cloiche Creich, The Highland Council MH & Wellbeing Adult Fund, The Highland Council MH & Wellbeing Children's fund, SSE Achany, RWE Foundation Scotland, Scottish Government, Cycle Share Fund, Highland Third Sector Interface, and the Westminster Foundation, Scottish Children's Lottery Trust and Allander Youth Activities Charitable Trust.



Allander Youth Activities Charitable Trust

Founded by Alec J Spalding MBE in 2005



Our Team

Directors

Chair: Hayley Bangs

Secretary: Pauline Smith

Treasurer: Alison Agnew

Members: Davy Livingstone, Elaine Robertson, Doris Calder, Linda Douglas, Karen Sutherland, Fiona Porter, Gary Cassap-Brown – deceased July 25.

Employees:

Hub Manager and Finance: Carol Shaw

Café Lead: Stephanie Campbell

Café Assistant: Rachel Holden

Activities coordinator: Pauline Macleod

General Assistants: Paige Matthews, Aileen Matheson and Rosemary Ross-Barnett

Young Casuals: 4 absolute smashers

Volunteers:

Marion Bangs, Michael Shaw, Yvonne Bremner, Reg Bangs, Archie Robertson, Lee Holden, Net Matthews, Karen Sutherland, Alan Sutherland, Cassie Sutherland, Kayleigh Sutherland, Darren Douglas, Neil Shaw, Justin Bangs, Grant Matthews, Hayley Bangs, Tommy Agnew, Alison Agnew, Davie Livingstone, Chris Bowden, Conor Douglas, Scott Vettors, Doris Calder, Shena Shaw, Iain Campbell, Fiona Porter, Margaret Calder, Rosie Baxter, Robert Sawyer, Malcolm Hamilton, Stephanie Campbell, Paige Matthews and Aileen Matheson.

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