

Outstanding Achievements – Care, Learning & Housing Committee: 30 May 2018

Daniel Mackay

While a number of Highland pupils go on to sign for professional football teams, Daniel MacKay did it in style. At the age of 16, the Millburn Academy pupil scored for Scotland's schoolboys against England on a Friday evening in March. The Inverness Caledonian Thistle Manager collected Daniel from York, so that he could play in the final of the Irn-Bru Cup the following day, where Daniel set up the winning goal.

Digital Schools

Caol Primary School has become the third Highland Primary School to be named as a 'Google Reference School'

Milton of Leys Primary School has won a Digital Schools Award. This national awards programme is accredited by Education Scotland, to promote, recognise and encourage a whole school approach to the use of digital technology in primary and secondary schools.



International Council of Education Advisers at Cauldeen Primary School

The Scottish Government's International Council of Education Advisers met at Cauldeen Primary School on Friday 27 April. The meeting was chaired by the Deputy First Minister, and was the first occasion that the Council has met outwith Glasgow and Edinburgh. The day started with a meeting between the Deputy First Minister and Councillor Baxter, followed by a tour of the school led by Headteacher, Angela Downie.

Joe MacKenzie

A Highland footballer is working to raise £2500, having been selected to represent Team GB at the 2019 Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi. Joe from Alness, who plays for Highland United, had been selected for the British Team when the games were last held in the USA, but was unable to attend because of a lack of funds. He said he was 'speechless' when he got selected again, following the Team GB trials in February.



John Byrne National Drawing Competition

Thousands of budding young artists from across Scotland took part in the John Byrne National Drawing Competition, which is open to pupils from Primary 4 to S3. Astrid Fraser, a Primary 7 pupil from Avoch Primary School was

awarded third place, and John Byrne said: "I'm delighted to have awarded Astrid third place. Her artwork caught my eye during the judging process and I was really impressed by the sensitive drawing and lovely composition in her portrait."



A number of other Highland pupils were among those recognised as runners up:

- Rowan Urquhart, Primary 5 pupil, Lochardil Primary School
- Ryan Merry, Primary 6 pupil, Miller Academy Primary School
- Aleksandra Wilkowska, first year pupil, Inverness High School

Kinlochleven High School

Kinlochleven pupils continue to develop their green energy activities. As previously reported, in February the S1 team entered a robotics race challenge for Scottish schools – and produced the fastest-ever self-powered Lego robot in the UK, covering four metres in just 1.66 seconds! This led to the UK-wide Tomorrow’s Engineers Robotics Challenge final in Birmingham, where the team’s robot went head to head with 44 other schools from across the country. They didn’t win, but they were invited to attend the Scottish Big Bang event in Perth on 12th June as Scottish champions.

And not happy to rest on their laurels, the school’s S2 pupils are about to launch a ‘Green Energy Manifesto’, using Lego models to showcase ideas on how green energy can be used to transform the area.

Rock Challenge

Highland Rock Challenge took place over three sold out nights at Eden Court in March. Coulhill and Ben Wyvis Primary Schools won the J Rock competition. Alness Academy and Thurso High School won the Rock Challenge heats, and go on to the Scottish Finals in June, along with Dingwall Academy (Scottish Champions) and Invergordon Academy .

Sea Scouts

There are 105 Sea Scout Groups in the UK, affiliated to the Royal Navy in order to foster a close relationship between the Royal Navy and young people in the Scout Association by making naval facilities and equipment accessible. There are only three groups in Scotland - two of which are in the Highlands – 18th Inverness (Muirtown) and 1st Avoch Sea Scouts.

On 10th and 11th May, the Royal Navy conducted a water based review of these two groups. Over a hundred young people, largely from Charleston and Fortrose ASGs took to the water in Muirtown Basin and on the Moray Firth, and the reviewing officer renewed the royal navy recognition of these two high performing scout groups.

Lt Cdr Loughran said that he was impressed with the high standards of programme and safety for young people at sea. He noted that Avoch Sea Scouts are the only scouts to use Gaelic as a formal part of their programme. He commented on the successful inclusion of young people with additional needs ranging from physical to learning disabilities.

He noted Muirtown Sea Scouts commitment to work with Scottish Canals and Highland Council to look at a new base for community use, including the expansion of early learning and childcare and developing outdoor learning.

New Build Adapted Property – Old Edinburgh Road

This small housing development of 6 houses suitable for wheelchair users was completed on Old Edinburgh Road in April.

The homes feature wider doors and halls, level access showers and height adjustable wash hand basins, sinks and worktops.

The living areas have full height windows and glazed doors that open out onto a back patio and provide unimpeded views from a seated position.

Each property has its own driveway providing parking close to the front door and there is a generous roof overhang to provide shelter from the rain.

The houses are well insulated and have photo-voltaic panels on the roof which generate electricity.

The picture shows Councillors Trish Robertson; Isabelle MacKenzie and Ian Brown welcoming Mr and Mrs Davidson to their new home.



Keeping Senior tenants safe

Sheltered Housing tenants from across Highland attended a Senior Safe Highlander Event on Friday 27 April 2018 at the National Hotel in Dingwall.

The event was aimed at raising awareness of important issues such as doorstep crime, marketing scams, fire safety and door management. Tenants attended from Dingwall, Muir of Ord, Aviemore, rural Caithness, Thurso, Fortrose, Cromarty and Avoch.

The Highland Council also took this opportunity to discuss the Scottish Government's National Strategy to tackle loneliness and social isolation and to use delegate feedback to respond to the associated consultation.

The event was a tremendous success with 96% of tenants finding this event useful and informative.

The Housing Tenant Participation team will continue to tackle these issues by meeting and discussing with groups of our elder and vulnerable tenants across the Highlands. This is part of the Council's participation strategy to encourage our tenants to get more involved and help improve the standards of our housing conditions and services.

'Count Your Cash' money saving workshops



(from left) Gail Ward, Highland Council; Fiona Munro, Albyn project Co-ordinator (with scarf); Liberty Bligh, Libertie Project; Ley-Anne Forsyth, Cairn Housing and Amanda Gregory, Highland Council

The Housing service has run a successful programme of 'Count Your Cash' sessions in locations across Highland.

The 'Count Your Cash' workshops aim to raise awareness of the tools that are available to reduce the extra household costs often associated with living in a rural community, as well as support those currently making the transition to Universal Credit

The sessions have so far enabled around 252 people save an average of £199 by switching energy suppliers, telephone providers, and other household services. The sessions were a joint initiative with The Highland Council partnering with Albyn Enterprises, Highland Housing Register partners, The Libertie Project and Citizens Advice Bureau.