

Agenda Item	11.
Report No	EDU/20/22

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Education Committee

Date: 23 November 2022

Report Title: High Life Highland Progress Report

Report By: Chief Executive High Life Highland

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report is in three parts:

Part one - presents information on the performance of High Life Highland (HLH) during the operating period to 30 September 2022, including information on HLH's contributions to the Council Corporate Plan 2019-22.

Part two - provides general updates since the last report to the Council's Education Committee in November 2021.

Part three - provides information on an aspect of the work of HLH, this time, innovation and service development during and beyond the pandemic.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note:

- i. the information on the performance of High Life Highland (HLH) during the operating period to 30 September 2022;
- ii. the general updates provided in section two of this report;
- iii. that HLH continues to deliver Public Service Obligations on behalf of the Council as set out in the Service Delivery Contract;
- iv. HLH's innovation and service development during and beyond the pandemic.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource – please see section 6, financial position, below.

- 3.2 Legal – there are no legal implications for the Council arising from the recommendations in this report. However, the HLH zero reserve position has potential implications for both organisations. In mitigation, a letter of comfort has been issued to HLH by the Council.
- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island) - there are no community implications for the Council arising from the recommendations in this report.
- 3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever - there are no climate change/carbon clever implications for the Council arising from the recommendations in this report.
- 3.5 Risk - there are no risk implications arising from the recommendations in this report. The HLH Board has its own Corporate Risk Register and associated management plans.
- 3.6 Gaelic - there are no Gaelic implications for the Council arising from the recommendations in this report.

4. Background

- 4.1 HLH was established as a charity by the Highland Council (THC) in October 2011. The Council has contracted with HLH to deliver its Public Services Obligations (PSO) through a Service Delivery Contract (SDC) to deliver the following areas of work: Adult Learning, Archives, Arts, Countryside Rangers, Leisure, Libraries, Museums, Music Tuition, Outdoor Activities, Sports Development and Youth Work.
- 4.2 HLH was set up to deliver services for the Council while at the same time protecting them. Each year, its existence saves the Council c. £2m p.a. through non-domestic rates relief. As well as these savings, annually:
- there is annual adjustment to the Council's funding to HLH, being the same percentage movement in the Scottish Government grant settlement with the Council. In years where the Council's grant settlement has reduced, this has resulted in relative reduction to the funding to HLH and a saving to the Council; and
 - HLH meets the cost of inflationary increases for staff salaries, pensions, living wage and pension increases.
- 4.3 This arrangement has consistently returned revenue savings with recent revenue savings averaging between 3% and 5% of gross turnover. Savings have been achieved through income and efficiencies, whilst minimising service reductions. Notably, HLH has continued to take on additional services at the request of the Council with 44 new services and facilities having been added to HLH since it was established in 2011. Except for music tuition, this has mainly been due to volunteer group fatigue. During the first 10 years of operation, annual customer engagement numbers with HLH services have increased from 2.3 million to 8.9 million pre-pandemic.

5. HLH Governance

- 5.1 HLH Directors are appointed by the Council (8 independent Directors and 4 Councillor Directors). The HLH Directors can be seen on the HLH web site: <https://www.highlifehighland.com/about/board-directors/>.

5.2 The HLH Trading Board Directors are appointed by the HLH Board (5 independent directors and 4 HLH Board Directors). The trading company Directors can be seen on the HLH web site: <https://www.highlifehighland.com/about/trading-company-directors/>

5.3 Following the restrictions associated with the pandemic having been removed the HLH Board approved a new business plan at its December 2021 meeting. The business plan identifies eleven business outcomes:

1. Seek to continuously improve standards of health and safety.
2. Commit to the Scottish Government's zero carbon targets and maintain the highest standards in environmental compliance.
3. Use research and market analysis to develop and improve services to meet customer needs.
4. Increase employee satisfaction, engagement and development to improve staff recruitment and retention.
5. Improve the financial sustainability of the company.
6. Value and strengthen the relationship with THC.
7. Develop and deliver the HLH Corporate Programme and seek to attract capital investment.
8. Use research and market analysis to develop and deliver proactive marketing and promotion of HLH and its services.
9. Initiate and implement an ICT digital transformation strategy across the charity.
10. Develop and strengthen relationships with customers, key stakeholders and partners.
11. Deliver targeted programmes which support and enhance the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the population and which contribute to the prevention agenda.

5.4 To further HLH's financial sustainability the business plan also identified the following priority growth areas:

- Increasing highlife subscriptions
- Development of catering
- Increasing donations
- Events and festivals
- Outdoor activities
- Visitor attractions
- Prevention agenda
- Levelling Up Fund projects

6. Financial Position

6.1 At its meeting on 27 October, The Council considered financial forecasts provided by HLH for the current year and the steps HLH have taken and continue to take as part of the post pandemic recovery work. This included Council agreement to enable HLH to implement the SJC pay award for their own staff. It also set out the product of positive yet challenging discussions with HLH at Executive and Board level, as to how the Council and HLH can continue the close partnership with a particular focus on service redesign and contract review over the coming months.

6.2 Redesign and contract review is a key aspect of the current discussion between the two organisations. The financial crisis is such that there is a clear need to work together in

partnership to deliver sustainable budgets and financial savings. There is a real opportunity to embrace a joint redesign review, and a contract review, as means by which both organisations can contribute to and develop recommendations to help address current and future financial challenges. There are already strong links with HLH in relation to Asset Management, and these can be strengthened further and, by working together, inject further pace into that activity. The other budget strategies adopted by the Council, including the capital plan and contract management, are other clear examples of relevance to the relationship with HLH. This activity will be taken forward, with reports back to Council, with the intent that budget recommendations can be considered by Council in its budget setting for 2023/24.

6.3 HLH is continuing to reduce costs and has:

- implemented strict recruitment controls; and
- implemented new ways of working and is reducing its office estate in two ways:
 - vacated its Dingwall office (working with the Council on property rationalisation);
 - is working with the Council on options for vacating its Ardross Street office.

6.4 The recruitment controls are in place to minimise the amount of additional Council funding required during FY 2022/23. They are being implemented in advance of the work on the review of the service delivery contract which will consider service redesign, property rationalisation and partnership working and are likely to lead to service reductions or temporary facility closures/reduced operating hours for the remainder of the financial year. Where posts are not filled the service impact will be communicated with Council officers.

7. **Part One - Service Delivery Contract Monitoring**

7.1 The Service Delivery Contract with HLH was originally made up of objectives from the Council's Education Service Plan. At its meeting held on 5 December 2019 the Education Committee agreed that HLH reporting be changed to reflect the Council's Corporate Plan 2019-22 which was approved by the Highland Council at its meeting held on 5 September 2019. A summary of HLH's contributions to the Council's Corporate Plan can be found at **Appendix A**.

7.2 There are performance indicators which THC has asked HLH to report as an assessment of its overall performance:

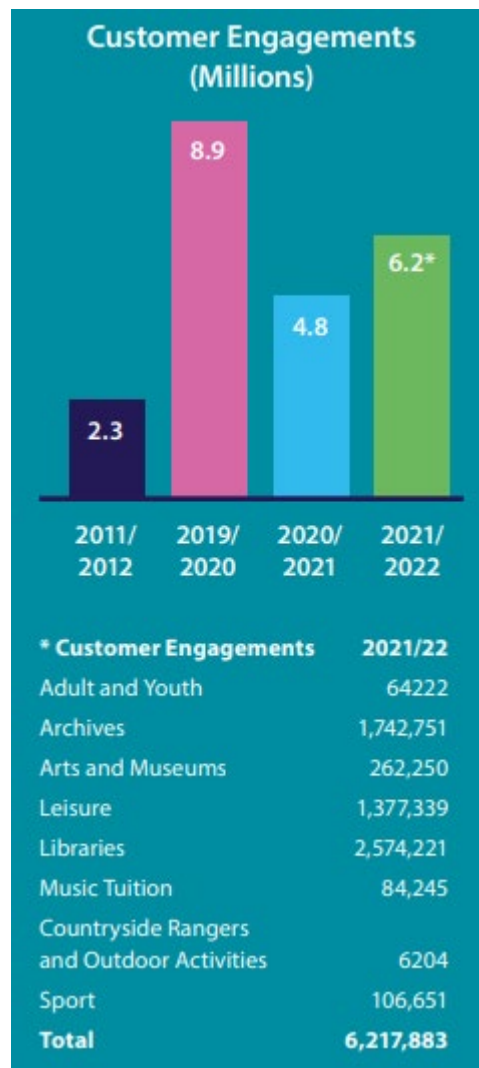
- HLH customer engagements.
- Percentage of population with a High Life Highland card.

The indicators have been chosen as a balanced way of measuring effectiveness and HLH's reach into the Highland population, in recognition that it is important that HLH achieves a balance between meeting the social and financial objectives of THC.

7.3 HLH's customer engagements continue to recover. In the pre-pandemic year they were 8.9m and in 2020/21 and 2021/22 were 4.8m and 6.2m respectively.

Customer engagements have continued to grow following the remaining pandemic restrictions having been lifted at the end of April 2022 and the year to September figures have increased by 10%.

The graph to the right shows customer numbers at HLH's start-up, then the pre-pandemic year and recovery following the pandemic.



7.4 The percentage of the population with a High Life Highland card has reduced during the pandemic. In 2019/20 40% of the population had a leisure or library card (or both) and in 2020/21 this dropped to 32%. HLH's reach into the Highland population is recovering again and in 2021/22 was 37%. This indicator is continuing to recover during 2022/23.

8. Part Two – General Updates

8.1 This section of the report contains a series of updates following the last update provided to the Education Committee in November 2021.

8.2 Following a decision by the Council to provide £75k p.a. along with match funding from Dounreay Site Restoration Limited, the North Coast Visitor Centre (NCVC) in Thurso was opened, providing the people of Caithness and visitors to the area with a local museum again. The previous museum there was forced to close several years ago due to operating difficulties. This was widely regarded as a huge loss to the area, culturally and economically from a tourism perspective. The community and local stakeholders are delighted that the museum has reopened and are strong supporters of NCVC.

8.3 The museums team took advantage of several external funding and partnership opportunities to enable a range of projects. These included the development of reminiscence and learning resources, youth group summer day visits, historic buildings refurbishment and exhibition development. External funding also enabled a significant

digital project at Highland Folk Museum, creating a legacy of 360-degree digital tours of its historic buildings and unique collections.

- 8.4 The archives service achieved national accreditation, one of the first Archives in Scotland to do so. Being accredited demonstrates that the service meets or exceeds exacting professional standards and practices and delivers high quality outcomes for service users.
- 8.5 The archives digital offering was further expanded by the addition of online classes and courses. Overall, there were 1.58m electronic engagements throughout the year. The hugely popular 'Learn with Lorna' weekly webcast celebrated its 100th edition and was featured on the STV evening news.
- 8.6 A partnership with the National Galleries of Scotland resulted in 'A Portrait Without Likeness', a prestigious exhibition of the work of the renowned contemporary artist Alison Watt, being exhibited in Inverness Museum & Art Gallery immediately after it debuted at the National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh. Inverness was the only place outwith Edinburgh given the opportunity to host the exhibition.
- 8.7 With funding from the Highland Council, the Sports team operated the Milton Holiday Hub in Easter Ross for the duration of the summer holidays. In addition to offering participation in a range of sporting activities and day trips, the children were provided with breakfast, lunch plus food packages to take home.
- 8.8 All Active Schools Coordinators were trained in the Paralympic sport of boccia. Boccia is a sport that is accessible to all, irrespective of physical disability, the strategic aim of Scottish Disability Sport is to make boccia available nationwide and the Highlands are leading the way in this respect. This training along with investment in boccia sets enabled boccia sessions to be created in Wick, Alness, Nairn, Inverness and Glen Urquhart with more planned in the coming year.
- 8.9 The Highland Athlete Travel Scheme was launched with **sportscotland** offering grants to support athletes to access training facilities and competitions which would benefit their development. 14 athletes were successful, representing a variety of sports including athletics, golf, badminton, surfing and downhill mountain biking.
- 8.10 A number of facility improvements were made during the year including the expansion and development of the gym at Inverness Leisure, doubling its size and installing state of the art cardiovascular, fixed resistance and strength and conditioning equipment. In addition, a new strength and conditioning unit was developed at Lochaber Leisure Centre.
- 8.11 Indoor Group Cycling, one of the charity's most popular studio classes, was introduced for the first time in Thurso and Wick, broadening the fitness offering in the Caithness area.
- 8.12 External funding from donors enabled the team at Inverness Botanic Gardens to create nearly 100m of disability access growing space, spreading the enjoyment of gardening to more people.
- 8.13 The charity continued to provide support for people with a range of long-term health conditions and older adults through online and face-to-face activities and exercise classes with participation levels continuing to recover well following the pandemic.

- 8.14 Along with external partners (Parkinson's UK and NHS Highland) High Life Highland received the "Highland Partnership" award from the Highland Third Sector Interface recognising the joint work of the organisations in supporting people affected by Parkinson's Disease.
- 8.15 High Life Highland Libraries were awarded Customer Service Excellence status for another year achieving full compliance against all 57 criteria while also being recognised as 'Compliance Plus', sector leading, on 23 criteria. This prestigious award was developed by the Cabinet Office to acknowledge excellence in public services.
- 8.16 New partnerships were formed in libraries including the 'Tech for Tots & Teens' digital inclusion project with local non-profit organisation Budding Engineers. Unused computer equipment within the Highland community was donated at local libraries, reconditioned and sent on to support the digital requirements of local families in need.
- 8.17 A blended delivery approach to music tuition with a combination of virtual and face-to face lessons was piloted by a number of instructors. The reduction in travel time has allowed instructors to spend more time teaching whilst reducing carbon emissions.
- 8.18 The outdoor activities team partnered with the youth work team to deliver biking and paddle-sports courses to targeted young people with difficulties engaging at school. Through this programme a number of young people found the resolve to reconnect with their education, build friendships and develop confidence in their own capabilities.
- 8.19 The outdoor activities team worked with the disability sports team to develop a recreational adventure programme operated throughout the summers of 2021 and 2022 delivering adaptive canoeing and archery sessions for children with disabilities.
- 8.20 The countryside ranger team made progress in digital engagement with the general public, this was achieved through virtual educational film tours, including those around the NC500 (Bone Caves and Clachtoll beach), receiving 2.5K views on YouTube.
- 8.21 A successful application to the national Youth Work Recovery Fund enabled youth work in East Sutherland, Dingwall and Fort William to focus on engaging with and supporting young people, their families and communities who needed it most, including those disproportionately disadvantaged by COVID-19. Based on the "5 ways to health and wellbeing" young people articulated their thoughts, challenges and achievements demonstrating improved confidence and personal and social skills, better support for their mental health and wellbeing, increased engagement with learning and school, and more access to youth work activities including outdoor learning. There were improved partnerships internally with High Life Highland services as well as external organisations like schools, young carers and mental health charities.
- 8.22 In addition to HLH achieving Young Persons Guarantee status with DYW, only the second organisation in the region to do so, the High Life Highland Youth Work team supported four young people aged between 18 and 22 through the government employment scheme Kickstart. Aimed at those on Universal Credit and at risk of becoming long term unemployed, the Youth Work teams in Ullapool and Invergordon employed the young people on a six-month placement. The experiences were varied from helping in rural skills classes, assisting in summer holiday hubs, co-leading in the delivery of John Muir Awards and High Life Highland's Leadership Programme. All four were also involved in helping to plan and run youth clubs in the two communities. They all gained new skills, improved

their confidence and developed transferable skills thereby opening up more job opportunities. As one of them put it “I feel the scheme has allowed me to grow since I started in the summer and that’s everything that I could have asked for and more.”

- 8.23 The adult learning team played a key role in maintaining and developing the Community Learning Development (CLD) contribution to the UK Government funded Refugee Resettlement Scheme by broadening and enriching the learning offer for Syrian and Afghan refugees settling into life in the Highlands. In particular, access to a wide range of learning activities reduced social isolation enabling individuals and families to build connections and a sense of belonging, especially for those with greater barriers to overcome such as women and people living in rural areas.
- 8.24 The pandemic provided both a need and an opportunity to accelerate the digital and remote adult learning offer. A pilot project was delivered using a new, bespoke online learning environment which provided the opportunity for a more comprehensive digital skills programme as well as service wide efficiencies through the development of pan-Highland projects.

9. Part Three - Innovation and Service Development During and Beyond the Pandemic

- 9.1 HLH progress reports normally contain a focus on a specific service or topic. This time round the focus is on innovation and service development during and beyond the pandemic. **Appendix B** contains examples, from each of the specialist areas of HLH work, of innovation and development which highlight the customer or service need for the development the impact of the work and a summary of how this will be continued into the future.

Designation: Chief Executive, High Life Highland

Date: 17 November 2022

Authors: Steve Walsh/Douglas Wilby

Background Papers: None

A Council that Champions the Highlands	
Our ambition is to make the Highlands the best place to live, work and do business.	
Outcome 1.1: We will engage at all levels of the political process to represent and promote the Highlands to ensure that the full potential and ambition of our people and region are realised.	<p>The High Life Highland Chief Executive represents HLH on the national organisation for Cultural and Leisure ALEOs - Community Leisure UK.</p> <p>HLH's Sports Development section has been recognised as sector leading by sportscotland, Scotland's national sporting agency and is one of the few organisations with a four-year funding agreement because of this. The current funding is approx. 1M p.a. to deliver the active schools and sports hubs programme which includes having an Active Schools Coordinator in each associated school group in Highland.</p> <p>HLH is represented on the following national organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Leisure UK - Youth Work Managers Scotland - CLD Managers Scotland - Music Education Partnership Group - Scottish Libraries and Information Council
Outcome 1.2: We will champion the role our staff play at every level of the organisation in delivering high quality locally responsive services and report annually.	HLH holds an annual volunteer and staff awards ceremony where the contribution that volunteers and staff make to making life better for Highland people are recognised and celebrated.
A place to live	
Our ambition is to make the Highlands an even better place to live.	
Outcome 2.1: We will attract more people to make the Highlands their home and younger residents to stay here.	<p>HLH provides modern apprenticeships through its leisure facilities which support young people who wish to remain in Highland and develop their careers at home.</p> <p>HLH delivers a programme of Literacy and Numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Classes and 1:1 support.</p>
Outcome 2.2: We will support our older citizens to live longer	<p>HLH provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a falls prevention programme in care homes and leisure facilities to support older people to remain active.

<p>independent lives in their communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the “You Time” programme is delivered across Highland and includes activities delivered by archives; leisure facilities; libraries; countryside rangers; and is supporting older people to sustain and improve their physical and mental health and wellbeing and reduces social isolation and loneliness. • HLH created, and working with third sector partners, embedded in communities Highland’s ‘House of Memories’, an App based resource which benefits people living with dementia and their carers. • HLH offers supported and personally rewarding volunteering opportunities throughout the Highlands.
<p>Outcome 2.3: We will protect and enhance our natural resources, culture and heritage providing opportunities to develop new cultural experiences for all.</p>	<p>HLH provides a range of activities through Archives and Library services that protect and enhance the environment as well as encouraging people to enjoy environmental activities and participate in environmental education projects. Countryside ranger programmes further contribute to this outcome. There is further information on HLH’s provision of cultural activities below.</p>
<p>Outcome 2.4: We will improve our processes for waste management meeting our obligations as a result of the landfill ban by 1st January 2021, delivering a more commercial waste service and improving our recycling performance.</p>	<p>Inverness Botanic Gardens is fully committed to 100% recycling and is a sector leader the sector in terms of carbon reduction and biodiversity.</p>
<p>Outcome 2.7: We will promote and support the Gaelic language and culture through the third generation Gaelic Language Plan.</p>	<p>HLH collaborates with THC Gaelic Team to deliver specific targets within GLP3 and supports the promotion of Gaelic language and culture primarily through its Archives, Museums and Music Tuition services.</p> <p>Am Baile, a bi-lingual cultural heritage website managed by the HLH Highland Archive Service has seen increasing customer engagement and in 2021/22 had 1,061,865 visits. The site has bilingual descriptions of content and new Gaelic content is added on a regular basis using skilled Gaelic translators. A third of all social media posts are now bi-lingual and customer feedback illustrates that these posts are proving useful for Gaelic learners to improve their language skills. Community heritage groups are increasingly seeking to use Am Baile as a digital place of deposit for their digital heritage</p>

	<p>collections and they are supported to create Gaelic content as part of their projects.</p> <p>HLH libraries has a Gaelic book collection and delivers Gaelic Bookbug (0-4 age rhyme, song and storytelling sessions with parents/carers).</p>
<p>Outcome 2.8: We will work with High Life Highland, partners and communities to develop and promote opportunities in culture, learning, sport, health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>The formal performance indicators for this area of work are as follows and are reported annually as part of the Council's report on Statutory Performance Indicators: Net cost per attendance to leisure Facilities; Net cost per visit to libraries; and Net cost per visit to museums.</p> <p>HLH operates 70 libraries on behalf of THC and fulfils its statutory obligation to provide adequate library services.</p> <p>HLH operates the two regional Museums, the Highland Folk Museum and Inverness Museum and Art Gallery, and their associated engagement programmes and is supporting the ongoing work of the Council to develop the Inverness Castle/Spirit of the Highlands programme.</p> <p>The former Caithness Horizons facility has been re-launched as the North Coast Visitor Centre, operated by HLH on behalf of THC.</p> <p>HLH operates four Archive Centres, in Caithness, Skye, Lochaber and Inverness and provides Am Baile, the extensive, web-based heritage resource.</p> <p>HLH operates 22 stand-alone and joint school/community leisure centres.</p> <p>HLH programmes visual arts exhibitions and related activity programmes in three galleries.</p>
<p>A place to thrive</p>	
<p>Our ambition is that no matter where they live or whatever their needs, all of our citizens are supported to be successful and our communities are helped to be safe, healthy, and nurturing places for all.</p>	
<p>Outcome 3.1: We will work together with partners and within our communities to reduce inequality and tackle poverty and discrimination with a specific focus on mental health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>All of the services delivered by HLH contribute towards mental health and wellbeing. The links between mental health and wellbeing and physical activity have been well established and it is widely recognised that activities which engage people and reduce social isolation and loneliness make a positive contribution to the mental health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. The High Life membership scheme is premised upon accessibility at an affordable price; the budget membership scheme provides a safety net for</p>

	<p>hard-pressed families to enjoy access to facilities at an affordable price.</p> <p>Projects which HLH are delivering which contribute to health and wellbeing include: falls prevention; cardiac rehabilitation; cancer rehabilitation; older adults health and wellbeing; type II diabetes and physical activity; physiotherapy in leisure centres; and dementia friendly initiatives including “House of Memories”.</p>
<p>Outcome 3.2: We will improve educational attainment across all groups and reduce the attainment gap for young people from deprived areas.</p>	<p>HLH provides a targeted youth work service across all 29 Associated School Group areas in Highland.</p> <p>HLH runs a Young Persons’ Leadership Programme and is now developing leadership opportunities across other parts of the organisation in addition to sports development.</p> <p>Youth work staff provide opportunities for young people to gain achievement awards (Saltire Awards, DofE etc.) which are of significant benefit for young people in gaining employment or higher and further education places. HLH leisure facilities continue to deliver modern apprenticeships.</p> <p>The active schools and youth work programmes provide a wide range of activities. There is a particular emphasis placed by Active Schools Co-ordinators on encouraging girls to remain active and there is therefore a focus on less traditional activities such as dance and exercise to music and gymnastics. (Activities with rhythm are recognised as being of benefit for young people who have experienced trauma).</p> <p>The Active Schools programme is already meeting the Scottish Government and sportscotland target of delivering all extra curricular activity free of cost for participants.</p> <p>HLH library staff deliver an extensive programme of activities to support early years literacy and numeracy, including Bookbug sessions and early years/family STEM activities. Libraries also support learning and teaching through the provision of the school library service.</p>
<p>Outcome 3.4: We will transform the approach to supporting children with</p>	<p>HLH has Development Officers for disability sport, coaching/volunteer development and community sports hubs. These posts work in partnership with the national governing bodies of sport to develop sports clubs, support community-based sports clubs and deliver locally based coach and volunteer training.</p>

<p>additional needs adopting a whole system approach to wellbeing and inclusion.</p>	<p>The Active Schools team are working with partners in Highland Council to improve targeting to identify opportunities for extracurricular sport and physical activity opportunities and reduce barriers for participation.</p> <p>HLH works in partnerships with schools to enable pupils with additional support needs to visit libraries during the school day.</p>
<p>Outcome 3.5: We will improve outcomes for Looked After Children and young people and achieve better value from resources to support them.</p>	<p>HLH participates in the work of the CHAMPS board and CEYP are provided with free memberships to leisure facilities. HLH continues to provide both specific youth work opportunities for looked after children and to encourage engagement in its wider youth work offer.</p>
<p>Outcome 3.11: We will lead the development and implementation of the Community Learning and Development Plan with our Community Learning Partners.</p>	<p>HLH played a part in the development and implementation of the CLD plan, including supporting inspections and the delivery of the CLD plan: “Highland Community Learning and Development (CLD) Plan 2021-2024 – <i>working and learning together to reduce inequalities in Highland</i>”</p> <p>A range of HLH services contribute to CLD including adult learning through the provision of literacy, numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes and programmes, archives and museums through projects such as the House of Memories dementia project, leisure facilities through supporting and training young people into employment through modern apprenticeships, libraries through its volunteering programmes and the range of activities that they provide, music tuition through its musician in residence programme, youth work through programmes such as the leadership programme and the informal learning and personal development provided by youth work staff which include supporting young people to achieve positive destinations.</p>
<p>A place to prosper</p>	
<p>Our ambition is to maximise the economic potential of the Highlands.</p>	
<p>Outcome 4.1: We will work with the public, private and third sector stakeholders to strengthen our infrastructure and digital connectivity</p>	<p>Libraries provide free public access computers in sixty locations across the highlands which is a significant contribution to social inclusion. In addition, they provide free Wi-Fi in all of its libraries.</p>

<p>Outcome 4.2: We will support economic growth and create and protect jobs across the Highlands.</p>	<p>HLH delivers a programme of Literacy and Numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Classes and 1:1 support. These were provided over the lockdowns to ensure continued support of some of the Highland's most vulnerable people and this supports employers with migrant workers.</p>
<p>Outcome 4.5: We will work with partners to ensure fewer people experience transport as a barrier to accessing opportunities, including working with communities on community transport schemes.</p>	<p>The provision of local facilities minimises the requirement to travel and HLH provides facilities in communities throughout the Highlands on behalf of the Council. HLH provides mobile libraries which operate throughout the Highland area.</p> <p>Online and virtual developments, many as a result of the need to pivot due to the pandemic, are further opening up opportunities to access services that did not previously exist for all ages pre pandemic e.g. music tuition, Archives and Libraries sessions. In addition to online leisure classes for all age groups, cardiac recovery, Macmillan and Parkinson exercise classes are all available online.</p> <p>The Active Schools team aims to offer volunteer led activity in all Highland Schools, this work is focused on equalities and teams are working hard re-establish this now that restrictions have been eased.</p> <p>On behalf of THC, HLH provides five community minibuses which can be hired by local groups.</p>
<p>A welcoming place</p>	
<p>Our ambition is to develop sustainable and connected communities. We have an increasingly diverse population and we welcome people of all faiths, nationalities and backgrounds who wish to live, study, work or visit here.</p>	
<p>Outcome 5.1: We will promote the Highlands as a diverse, safe, and friendly place to live, study, work and visit.</p>	<p>HLH contributes to this outcome through the provision of its services and facilities throughout the Highland Council area. Its approach to low cost access to leisure facilities has achieved and sustained high participation rates as well as an improved financial provision. Archives, museums and visitor attractions also form part of what the Highlands has to offer and they improve the quality of life for residents and improve the visitor experience.</p>
<p>Outcome 5.3: We will work with communities and partners to raise awareness around sustaining and improving our natural, built and</p>	<p>HLH operates the two regional Museums, the Highland Folk Museum and Inverness Museum and Art Gallery and is supporting the on-going work of the Council to develop the Inverness Castle Spirit of the Highlands project.</p> <p>Countryside ranger programmes and activities also contribute to this outcome.</p>

cultural environment.	
Your Highland Council	
Our ambition is to improve and strengthen the relationships between the Council and the communities it serves. Communities are happier, healthier and more resilient when they are listened to and can play an active part in the development and delivery of the services that matter to them.	
Outcome 6.1: We will deliver meaningful engagement with Highland communities listening and responding to what we hear and encourage more community activity and community run services.	<p>HLH led the development of the Youth Work strategy which was considered by the Council's, then, CLH Committee at its August 2019 meeting. The strategy was co-produced with young people and has been recognised nationally as a model of good practice which is being considered for the national Youth Work Strategy where a similar co-produced approach was adopted.</p> <p>HLH actively promotes volunteering and has a volunteering policy which includes recruitment, induction, training and review for volunteers (Annual volunteer figure over 1000).</p> <p>Through the sportscotland funded Active Schools and Community Sports Hubs staff local volunteers are encouraged to establish and run local sport and physical activity groups and sessions.</p>

Appendix B

Innovation and Service Development During and Beyond the Pandemic

HLH Area of Work: Adult Learning

Innovation/Service Development: Holistic support and approach to learning for refugees.

Customer/Service Need: English Language, health and wellbeing, accessing services and being a part of communities.

Customer/Service Impact: Increased ability and confidence to use English in daily life and work, reducing risk of isolation and loneliness, promoting and celebrating the value of first language and culture.

Future Development: HLH works closely with the Council and other partners in supporting refugees in various resettlement programmes including those supporting people from Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine and also unaccompanied minors. Learning over recent years has shown the value of taking a more holistic and Community Learning and Development approach to this work to support positive and sustainable outcomes across the various needs this work addresses. This has proved more effective than focussing providing stand-alone English language learning.

Afghan families from different locations across the Highlands come together for a green health event in Golspie in 2022



8 families (approximately 40 people in total)- from Kyle, Inverness, Thurso and Wick met and connected in person for the first time. This aspect of making connections with other families resettled in Highland was one of the biggest highlights of the day.

HLH Area of Work: Archives

Innovation/Service Development: Care Home resource packs/Befrienders Highland carers' packs

Customer/Service Need: At the beginning of lockdown the archive service produced a series of storyboards featuring stories and images from our archive collections and from www.ambaile.org.uk which were circulated to over 40 care homes throughout the Highlands providing opportunities for residents to reminisce using the content of the packs as prompts for conversation. The archive service then sought to extend the circulation and supplied storyboards to Befrienders Highland (a voluntary organisation who work with adults across Highland who experience mental ill health memory difficulties or dementia and their carers), who circulated them through their networks.

Customer/Service Impact: Befrienders Highland developed a 'Carers' Pack' using the storyboards supplied and distributed them specifically to carers who support those with memory difficulties and dementia. The feedback has been very positive showing that the packs have enabled new conversations and interactions between the friends and carers. One example of feedback: 'one elderly carer whose husband no longer communicates says that the storyboards are one of the very few things that get a reaction from him! His eyes light up and he seems to enjoy looking at the photographs.'

Future Development: Partnership working with Befrienders Highland continued with storyboards being sent at regular intervals.

One of the team compiling Packs for delivery to care homes during lockdown



HLH Area of Work: Archives

Innovation/Service Development: Learn with Lorna (LWL)

Customer/Service Need: With the archive centres closed and customers unable to access the collections the Archive Service began delivery of a weekly online talk 'Learn with Lorna'. The hugely successful series is presented by the Archives' Community Engagement Officer with support from throughout the service to source and create unique content for the production every week. The series has been broadcast on Facebook and YouTube since April 2020 with over 120 episodes and 280,000 views to date.

Customer/Service Impact: In April 2021 the archives launched a customer survey to find out the impact of the Learn with Lorna series. Customers across the globe reported that they had been able to learn more about Highland history and felt part of a close-knit LWL community. 98.5% of respondents said LWL had been helpful to them during the pandemic; 85.2% said learning something new was helpful and 91.5% said LWL had made them feel more connected to the Highlands and Scotland.

Future Development: The LWL series continues to be delivered across Facebook and YouTube with views of between 1k-1.5k per episode.

Multiple editions of Learn with Lorna



HLH Area of Work: Archives

Innovation/Service Development: Online classes and online Family History consultations

Customer/Service Need: The archive service's in-person classes and 1-1 family history consultations were converted to online delivery as the archive centres were closed. The change allowed customers from across the globe to participate for the first time and the online environment allowed for a more flexible approach in delivery with evening classes/consultation appointments also being offered. The online setting also enabled staff from all four archives to co-present the classes which is beneficial for both staff and customers.

Customer/Service Impact: Classes were fully subscribed with additional sets being offered to meet demand. Students from America, Canada, New Zealand and Australia as well as throughout Scotland, the rest of the UK, and Europe, have participated. From November 2020 to date over 1,000 new online customers have engaged in our series of online classes and online family history consultations.

Future Development: Continued provision of successful online classes and online family history consultations with a new Advanced Family History class being delivered.

An online Family History for Beginners class



HLH Area of Work: Arts

Innovation/Service Development: Upon the easing of national COVID restrictions, developing a post-pandemic exhibitions programme from scratch and at short notice at the art galleries, having cancelled all previous programmes due to lockdown. The new programme, which was designed specifically to attract visitors back to the venues after the pandemic, included a Scottish Colourist exhibition at Inverness Museum & Art Gallery. Additionally, four online gallery tours of the exhibition were produced, building on occasional provision of digital content during lockdown.

Customer/Service Need: As the lockdown lifted people were cautious about visiting public venues and visitor numbers were significantly down on pre-pandemic levels, despite extensive safeguarding and Covid prevention measures being undertaken by operational staff.

Customer/Service Impact: Staging a big-name exhibition of the quality of the Scottish Colourists at Inverness Museum and Art Gallery helped to attract visitors back to the venue and figures improved substantially with a consequent rise in donations and shop sales. The accompanying digital engagement programme of gallery tours and talks supplemented the exhibition, reaching out to those unable to visit in person due to shielding or geographic reasons and responses were very positive.

Future Development: Continue to build on digital engagement offering to complement the exhibitions programme and encourage a diverse range of visitors to the venues.

Scottish Colourists installation shot at IMAG



HLH Area of Work: Arts

Innovation/Service Development: The Visual Artists and Craft Makers Awards (VACMA) is a Scotland-wide scheme funded by Creative Scotland in partnership with local authorities. At Creative Scotland's invitation the Highlands, Moray and Western Isles (*Na h-Eileanan Siar*) scheme is run by HLH's Exhibitions Unit. At the outset of the pandemic, in response to the needs of artists and makers, the scheme was repurposed from providing project funding to awarding artists' bursaries. This change was so positively received by the sector that the new approach has been retained.

Customer/Service Need: Artists and craft makers suffered badly during the pandemic and afterwards, as, being self-employed or sole traders, often with irregular work, most weren't eligible for any of the government pandemic funding schemes. The decision was made to realign the VACMA scheme and award small bursaries of £500 or £750 to successful applicants, with two competitive rounds per year with deadlines in October and February.

Customer/Service Impact: Approximately 50% of artists who apply to the scheme are successful. They all agree that the bursaries are invaluable in supporting them to develop and continue in their practice in these difficult times. Some of the artists who applied have also been invited to exhibit in HLH galleries.

Future Development: The funding for the scheme has to be re-applied for from Creative Scotland every year but the team are confident of being successful whilst the VACMA scheme exists. The decision has been taken to continue running it in the bursary format as it better meets the needs of artists and makers.

Leon Pratchett, Touchwood Sculpture, who was a VACMA award recipient



HLH Area of Work: Countryside Rangers

Innovation/Service Development: Development of a Google Classroom: **Highlife Wildlife Week**

Customer/Service Need: To continue to engage with schools when they reopened but access was restricted.

Customer/Service Impact: Increase the reach of the Ranger service and environmental education programme for example this school on Raasay where there would have been logistical challenges to attending in person: <https://raasayprimary.com/2021/11/23/highlife-wildlife-week/>

Future Development:

Incorporating a Google Classroom week into each annual schools delivery programme, and embedding this into the Outdoor Learning Strategy for THC Schools.

Photo/Promotional image caption:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/14079/highlife_wildlife_brings_the_outdoors_inside



HLH Area of Work: Leisure

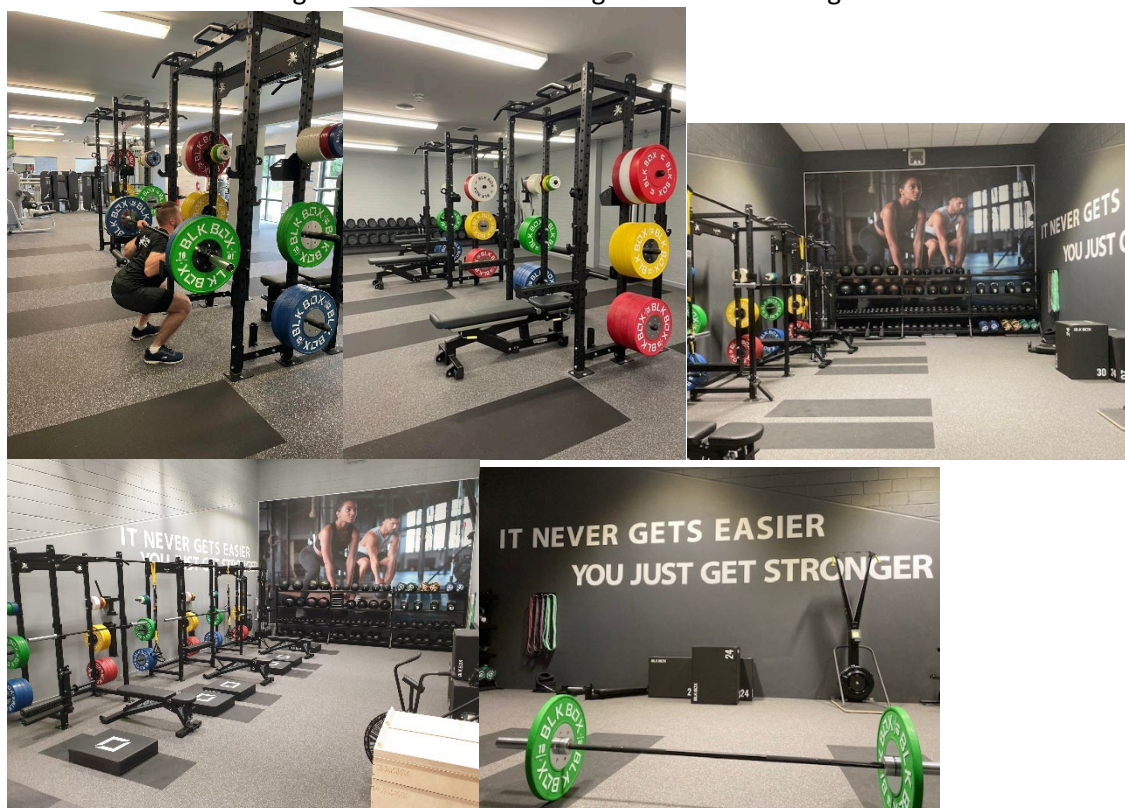
Innovation/Service Development: Development of new Strength and Conditioning Facilities

Customer/Service Need: With customer numbers having dropped during the pandemic and then the cost-of-living crisis creating a difficult environment in which to build customer numbers this partnership project with the Highland Council, through the use of developer contributions squash courts in Invergordon and Lochaber Leisure Centres were converted into strength and conditioning areas taking facilities in the leisure centres where use had been declining and creating vibrant customer spaces. The facilities in Invergordon and Fort William opened on 29th April and the 25th of April respectively.

Customer/Service Impact: Since opening 822 customers have been inducted into Invergordon and Fort William. This has generated an additional £26,983 of customer income.

Future Development: The use of the facilities are being further enhanced through their use as venues for HLH's "Love to Train" product which is a small group exercise activity which is sold as a premium product generating additional income over and above the *highlife* card.

Photos of the new Invergordon & Lochaber Strength and Conditioning Suites.



HLH Area of Work: Leisure

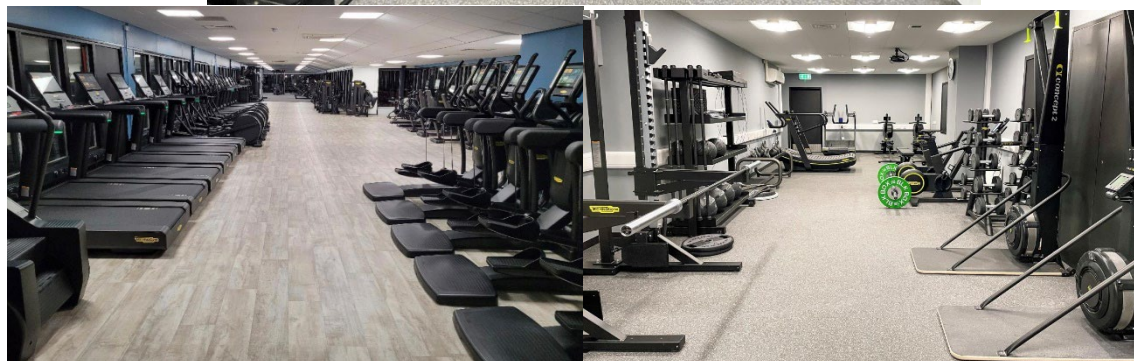
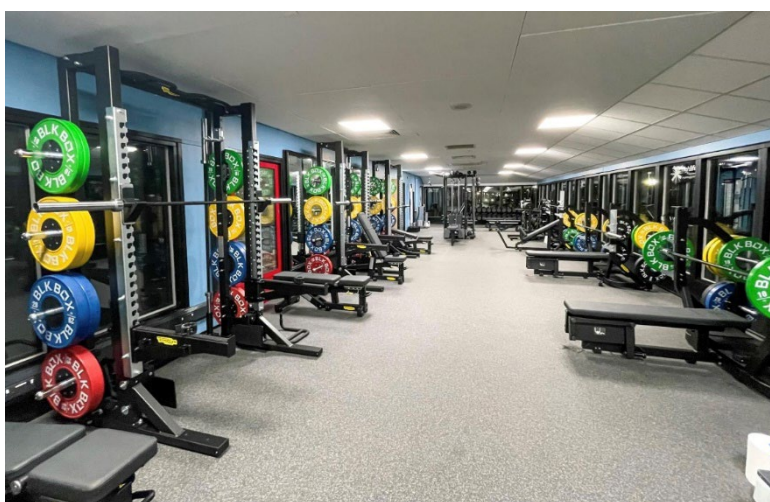
Innovation/Service Development: Doubling of the size of Inverness Leisure Gym

Customer/Service Need: Prior to the pandemic there was significant pressure in the Inverness Leisure gym due to its limited size. Taking this into account, in addition to local competition within the city we reconfigured the entire top floor into a state of the art gym.

Customer/Service Impact: Since opening in December 2021, 15,800 customers have been inducted into the new facility and we welcome 10,000 customers per month which is a 13% increase on pre pandemic levels.

Future Development: A dedicated “Love to Train” room was created as part of the refurbishment for small group exercise activity which is sold as a premium product generating additional income over and above the *highlife* card.

Photos are of the new Gym at Inverness Leisure.



HLH Area of Work: Leisure

Innovation/Service Development: Online Group Fitness Classes

Customer/Service Need: During the pandemic facilities were closed and customers were unable to continue with their favourite group fitness classes. The team worked closely with group fitness instructors and with the support of HLH's ICT team enabled online classes to be delivered from the instructors homes.

Customer/Service Impact: The team produced a weekly programme which was publicised across Highland and continued as buildings progressively reopened, giving customers another option when they didn't feel safe to return to their live classes. To date 2,730 classes have been delivered with 8,040 views.

Future Development: The team will continue to offer live stream classes to complement the overall programme.

HLH On-line classes and activities portal

Welcome to High Life Online Classes

Please choose from the following selection of classes



Leisure and Fitness

Our online fitness classes offer a range of cardio, mind and body, strength and HIIT workouts, perfect for those looking to access our in-studio classes from the comfort of their own home.



Active Health

High Life Highland's virtual Cardiac Rehabilitation and Parkinson's Exercise and Move More (for people affected by cancer) classes are delivered to you by a live instructor via the Zoom platform. Take part in an interactive session from the comfort of your own home, with the added benefits of an instructor delivering workout that can be adapted to suit individual levels and exercise goals.



Archives and Family History

Archives and Family History classes can help you learn about the history of the Highlands or find out more about your Scottish roots. Take part in a variety of interactive classes, all supported by our knowledgeable archive staff who will help you uncover the past and reach your research goals.

To access our online classes, you require a *highlife* card which can be obtained via our [Online Joining](#) site.

If you have a question or need help, please [click here to make an enquiry](#).

HLH Area of Work: Leisure

Innovation/Service Development: Corporate *highlife* Leisure Subscriptions

Customer/Service Need: During the pandemic the high life memberships took a significant reduction as the service could not be delivered therefore customers either froze or stopped their membership.

Whilst High Life Highland had a corporate membership offering, it was not actively promoted or marketed and to assist with the membership recovery there was a renewed focus on increasing membership sales and corporate memberships.

Customer/Service Impact:

Prior to the pandemic High Life Highland had 16 existing corporate clients, this has since increased by 11 new corporate clients. HLH is actively engaging with a further 30 new corporate clients with the aim of developing a relationship and membership sales. The total number of corporate client subscriptions is 985 which is 5.8% of total subscriptions.

Future Development: The team is actively working with new and existing corporate clients to continue to grow the corporate membership.

HLHs new corporate membership web page:

<https://www.highlifehighland.com/corporate-membership/>

Corporate Membership



HLH Area of Work: Leisure

Innovation/Service Development: Promotions and Marketing Campaigns

Customer/Service Need: During the pandemic the high life memberships took a significant reduction as the service could not be delivered therefore customers either froze or stopped their membership. To assist with the membership recovery, the post of High Life Development Manager was created in May 2022 with the focus of increasing membership sales and corporate memberships. A series of campaigns designed and ran to promote, market and increase membership sales.

Customer/Service Impact:

June 2022: Every Membership Counts: 332 subscriptions gained.

June, July & August 2022: Bring a Buddy: 64k vouchers were issued. 633 vouchers redeemed and 45 subscriptions gained.

September 2022: UHI Student and Staff: 32 new subscriptions.

Future Development:

October 2022: Current promotion - Ten Days for £10.00: so far 109 sold, and 11 subscriptions gained.

Nov & Dec 2022: Move it to Lose it



highlife
highland
na gaidhealtachd

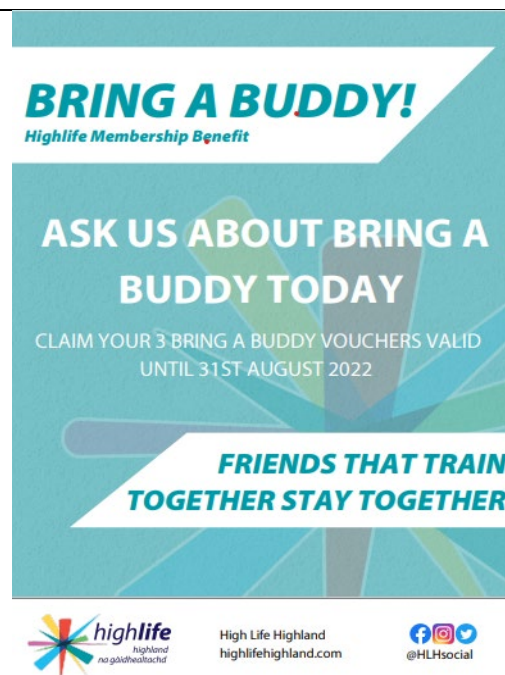
FULL MEMBERSHIP EXPERIENCE FOR 10 DAYS

**10 DAYS
FOR
£10!**

ANY ACTIVITIES. ANY FACILITY. ONLY £10

OFFER IS ONLY AVAILABLE TO HIGHLAND RESIDENTS.
OFFER ONLY VALID OCTOBER 2022 FOR 10 CONSECUTIVE DAYS

Terms & Conditions apply. For full Ts&Cs please visit: highlifehighland.com



BRING A BUDDY!
Highlife Membership Benefit




ASK US ABOUT BRING A
BUDDY TODAY

CLAIM YOUR 3 BRING A BUDDY VOUCHERS VALID
UNTIL 31ST AUGUST 2022

**FRIENDS THAT TRAIN
TOGETHER STAY TOGETHER**

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High Life Highland
highlifehighland.com

  
@HLHsocial

HLH Area of Work: Leisure

Innovation/Service Development: Online Joining

Customer/Service Need: Giving customers the option to sign up to membership or pay-as-you-go (PAYG) without having to travel to sites. Pre pandemic all membership sign-ups were paper applications on site. There are currently 41% of customers who have signed up using the new online joining system.

Customer/Service Impact: Customers – there are now 7,112 subscriptions using the online system out which evidences the desire to be able to sign up online.

Future Development: To develop the online joining system to an online membership management system, where the customer can make changes to their account. Whether that be upgrading or changing personal details.

The on-line joining site

[Join High Life Highland - High Life Highland](#)



FITNESS CLASSES

- Over 100 fitness classes
- Body Attack
- Circuits
- Spinning
- Yoga



GYMS

- Fully qualified gym instructors in every gym
- 1:1 personal training
- Wide range of equipment
- Strength & Conditioning



SWIMMING POOLS

- Leisure pools
- Lane swimming
- Term time swimming lessons
- Love to Swim private lessons
- Steam Room
- Sauna



COURT ACTIVITIES

- Junior sports activities
- Badminton
- Gymnastics
- Trampoline

HLH Area of Work: Libraries

Innovation/Service Development: Online Activities & Events

Customer/Service Need: In 2020, following the temporary closure of library buildings during COVID-19 restrictions, libraries commenced online events to continue engagement with communities during lockdown. This included online Bookbug, story, rhyme and song sessions for under 5s and their families, online science workshops, and online author events. These events proved extremely popular and helped the service to continue connections with customers.

As libraries re-opened, the service offered a blended model of online and in-person events to assist with customer confidence in returning to buildings. With many of our customers now returned to in-person events, benefitting from the social, health & wellbeing opportunities that these provide, our online provision remains an option for those customers that may find it difficult to attend in-person. Examples of this include young children who are attending nursery when Bookbug is taking place, those living remotely and those with mobility issues. High Life Highland Libraries' new blended approach to the delivery of activities and events has helped to enhance our offering to customers, attract new audiences, and create a more inclusive service.

Customer/Service Impact: Online sessions during lockdown enabled High Life Highland to deliver literacy and learning opportunities to customers and stay connected to communities. Since the lifting of restrictions, online provision has helped with the transitioning of customers back to library buildings, while offering an alternative mode of provision for those unable to attend events in person. Approximately 98,000 participants have taken part in events online since their development in 2020.

Future Development: Wherever possible, the service continues to provide an online option for activities and events that take place in library buildings to encourage new audiences and remain inclusive.

A customer attending an on-line bookbug activity:



HLH Area of Work: Libraries

Innovation/Service Development: Encouraging Sustainability & Digital Inclusion

Customer/Service Need: High Life Highland Libraries were contacted by local Community Interest Group 'Budding Engineers' to collaborate on a project called 'Tech For Tots and Teens'. The aim of the project was to recondition no longer used computer equipment within the community and recondition it to gift to families in need. High Life Highland was approached to offer its library facilities as collection centres for members of community to donate no longer used devices.

Customer/Service Impact: To date, High Life Highland has taken receipt of over 350 devices from local communities. Over 200 families and individuals in need have benefited from this reconditioned free equipment. The project has helped HLH Libraries to encourage sustainability within Highland Communities, as well as encouraging digital inclusion. Feedback from these families has demonstrated that the donated devices have supported them with digital inclusion, learning and educational opportunities, literacy, numeracy, social inclusion, mental health, and prevention of poverty.

Future Development: Partner Budding Engineers has received further funding to extend the initiative to other age groups including the elderly and High Life Highland will continue to work with the partner to benefit families and individuals in need.

Collection of donated ICT equipment



HLH Area of Work: Museums

Innovation/Service Development: Creation of digital tours of five of the historic buildings at the Highland Folk Museum (externally funded through the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Trust).

Customer/Service Need: The pandemic highlighted that the digital offering of our museum collections and buildings needed to be improved so that customers could access some of the collection online, if unable to physically visit the museum, and also during the winter season when the museum is closed. Five self-led digital tours allow online visitors to explore five of the buildings, and learn about the history and stories held within. Text, images, video and audio all help to bring the buildings to life.

Customer/Service Impact: The 360 degree tours were created in-house using the ThingLink web-based platform, and can be accessed on the museum's website (www.highlandfolk.com/explore). People who are unable to visit the museum can now experience the museum digitally from afar. The online content has been promoted through social media channels and has been very positively received, encouraging physical visits to the site and online visits to the HFM/HLH website, through which donations can be made. In the first 4 months after the launch in late January 2022, the tours had received almost 3000 views.

Future Development: HLH secured a 4-year subscription to ThingLink, which will allow the museum to continue to add buildings to the interactive map and further expand access to the museum collections and carry on promoting the unique assets of the museum. A 3D digital model of one of the thatched buildings at the 1730s township has already been added to the online content.

Inside the historic Hebridean Blackhouse at the Highland Folk Museum



HLH Area of Work: Museums

Innovation/Service Development: Health, Wealth & Happiness exhibition and contemporary collecting project. £60K grant secured from MGS to fund a 1-year post, collections development and an exhibition plus marketing.

Customer/Service Need: Upon reopening after the two COVID-closure periods far fewer people were visiting Inverness Museum and Art Gallery (IMAG) than previously. This was partly due to there still being nervousness about being in indoor spaces but also because regular visitors had got out of the habit of popping in to see each changing exhibition. Health, Wealth & Happiness was conceived to be a 'Blockbuster' exhibition on a topical and universal subject that could appeal to a wide audience and would reflect the experience of local people. It was designed to attract previous visitors who had fallen out of the habit of visiting as well as new local visitors.

Customer/Service Impact: increased public engagement with museum collections through visits, social media and activities on and off site; raised awareness that the museum collects contemporary objects not just historic e.g. COVID Collection; medical collection improved significantly with new acquisitions from public, businesses and NHS so more representative of diversity of communities and achievements of Highland people. During the two months that the exhibition was on show 8.5k people visited, more than twice as many people as had visited in the two previous months. It 'kickstarted' the recovery in visitor numbers to pre-COVID (2019) levels, which IMAG has now achieved.

Future Development: Build upon the increased inter-teamworking across the museums and arts services and build upon the raised profile of IMAG to communities within and beyond Inverness, as an excellent visitor experience and as a guardian and promoter of Highland-wide heritage.

A section of the exhibition



HLH Area of Work: Museums

Innovation/Service Development: Increase Donations through Tap to Donate

Customer/Service Need: Museums are the largest donation generating service within HLH: in 2019, prior to COVID, the museums brought in £268k in donations. Whilst COVID restrictions were in place cash transactions were generally discouraged and now, even though restrictions and safeguarding measures are no longer in place, visitors are less likely to carry cash. They are also now very familiar with tapping their credit/debit card to pay for services. In response to this changing visitor habit and to ensure that donations income didn't reduce as a result, three new Tap to Donate machines were purchased and installed at Highland Folk Museum, Inverness Museum and Art Gallery and North Coast Visitor Centre.

Customer/Service Impact: The new Tap to Donate donations boxes have been operational since June and donations levels have increased.

Future Development: With external grant funding HFM has just recently purchased an additional, hand held tap to donate machine. The team will be able to use this remotely at events on and off-site and also throughout the winter at the regular Am Fasgadh Collections Tours & Teas . The hope is that this will increase donations further still.

Donations box at HFM with Tap to Donate facility



HLH Area of Work: Music Tuition

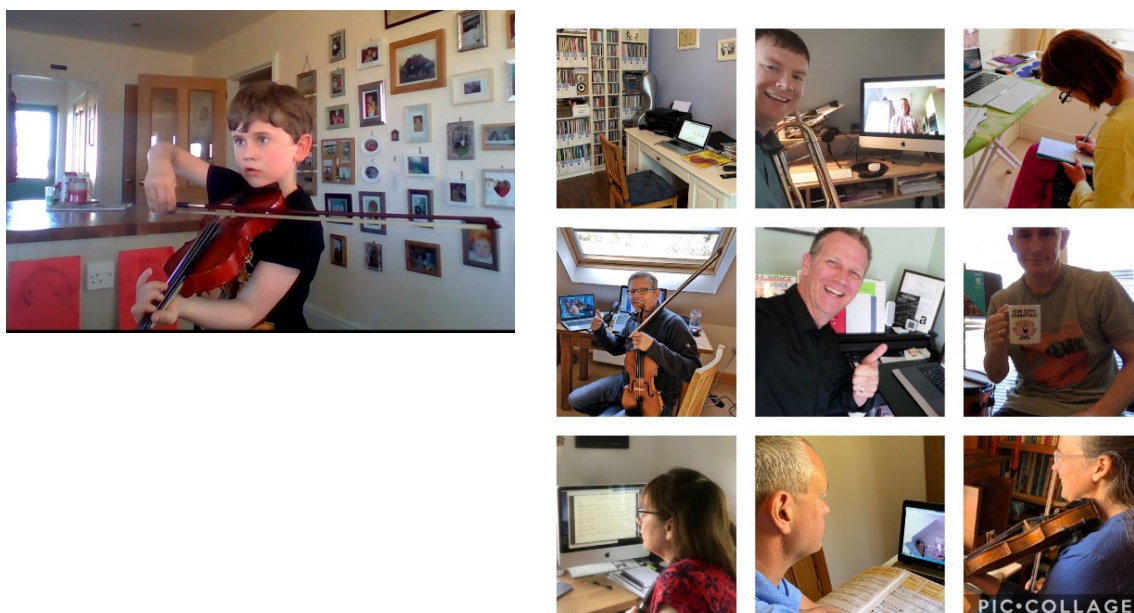
Innovation/Service Development: Online tuition delivery

Customer/Service Need: Prior to Lockdown 1, the delivery of music tuition was almost exclusively face to face. However, with the cooperation of THC Education colleagues involved in the provision of Gsuite in schools, the team was able to move to 100% online delivery within 2 weeks of that initial lockdown. HLH was the first tuition service on Scotland to be able to do this which meant being able to maintain contact with all the pupils whose parents opted to continue tuition (all parents were give the option to ‘freeze’ tuition as it was a chargeable service at that point). Once school access was feasible, online tuition continued into schools rather than pupils homes.

Customer/Service Impact: pupils in all areas were able to maintain contact with a familiar face and activity throughout the various stages of lockdowns. Music Instructors built stronger relationships with pupils and also ‘met’ many parents for the first time, strengthening customer loyalty. HLH Music Tuition Service was acknowledged as an innovative and forward-thinking service nationally with many other areas of Scotland only able to maintain minimal (and in some cases no) contact or service delivery. A comprehensive bank of support materials has now been created on Google which can be accessed by pupils as required – this is a resource which can be constantly updated as needs require it to be.

Future Development: Many HLH Instructors have chosen to maintain a blended delivery approach as access to schools has opened up again. This allows them to timetable their teaching weeks in a much more efficient way. In some cases this has enabled them to see more pupils in a week, with the added bonus of decreasing time spent travelling and the subsequent decrease in travel costs.

On Line music tuition delivery.



HLH Area of Work: Music Tuition

Innovation/Service Development: Online tuition applications and admin

Customer/Service Need: HLH Music Tuition Service moved from a paper-based pupil application system and mainly paper-based admin processes. A bespoke system was designed in conjunction with an external IT support company and HLH ICT colleagues. A small number of HLH Music instructors were involved in the system design in order to ensure that it covered all the identified working needs.

Customer/Service Impact: The music system allows pupil applications to be made 24/7 and subsequently to be handled directly by the appropriate Instructor. This includes waiting lists for each school and automated responses where lessons are not available (eg. where a pupil is too young to begin lessons). Progress records are also sent directly to parents after each lesson. The reliance on central admin processes have been substantially decreased. HLH also produces annual pupil progress reports which are emailed directly to parent contacts. A great deal of statistical and management information is produced in the system, which means that the Service Manager can have informed discussions with staff where support may be required for recruitment or over-subscription.

Future Development: HLH Music instructors are encouraged to make system improvement suggestions and in most cases these continue to be implemented very quickly. The team is further developing the system to streamline reporting & progress systems to decrease time required for Instructors to complete these. The online application process/public-facing HLH website information is also to be improved in order to create a more streamlined customer experience.

On-line music system

MANAGE YOUR TUITION

School Music Tuition Highland
We provide tuition to pupils in secondary and primary schools across the Highlands. Playing a musical instrument could benefit your child's wider education.
[Find out More](#)

School Music Tuition
Apply online now to see if you can participate and learn a new instrument. All you have to do is fill in the form and we will do the rest.
[Apply now](#)

Evening Music Tuition
Want to learn guitar, drumkit or improve your singing? Sign up for a block of evening lessons now. Online and face to face options available.
[Find out More](#)

Music Tuition > Manage your Tuition

High Life Highland is delighted to announce that Highland Music Tuition Service can now be managed online:

Update
I do have a child in Tuition

Register
I do not have a child in Tuition

Log In
I have used the system before

Home
School's Out 2019
Music Tuition Highland
Apply For or Manage Tuition
Terms and conditions

HLH Area of Work: Outdoor Activities

Innovation/Service Development: Development of urban spaces for adventure sports

Customer/Service Need: To continue to deliver outdoor activities when young people were unable to be transported in mini-buses due to COVID restrictions (2m apart rules)

Customer/Service Impact: HLH has continued engagement; youth service and schools to aid education recovery work also possible having identified local sites to schools to deliver from.

Future Development: Continuing to identify venues which minimises distance travelled to participate will also assist with achieving HLH Net Zero targets.

Paddle sports at Whin Park Inverness



HLH Area of Work: Sports Development

Innovation/Service Development: Increasing inclusive sports opportunities

Customer/Service Need: During the pandemic and recovery it has been important to ensure the opportunities offered by the Active Schools offering was as inclusive as possible.

Customer/Service Impact: In the 2021-22 academic year, the following pupils participated in Active Schools sessions across Highland: 4663 ASN; 281 assessed disabled; 415 minority ethnic; 503 SIMD 1 & 2; and 1570 who receive free school meals.

After Active Schools Coordinators were trained in late 2020 and late 2021 to train trainers in Boccia and Floor Curling, these two inclusive sports alone have been added to programmes across the Highlands.

The Disability Sport Team has offered disability specific sessions in Frame Running, Canoeing, Cricket, Multi-Sport, Wheelchair Basketball, and Cycling.

Future Development: Future team training will include a Scottish Disability Sport workshop on “Inclusive Approaches in Active Schools”; a practical train the trainers Goal Ball CPD (a fully inclusive sport); and training by The Promise Scotland and Home to Highland Care Experienced Education Team.

ASN pupils from Rosebank Primary School taking part in a teacher led Floor Curling Club.



HLH Area of Work: Sports Development

Innovation/Service Development: Volunteer recruitment

Customer/Service Need: With the new mandate from sportscotland that all sessions must be free at the point of contact for customers, volunteers now more than ever are Active Schools' most highly prized asset. An unfortunate result of the pandemic was that a lot of volunteers were lost, and the network had to be rebuilt to continue a healthy service.

Customer/Service Impact: In the 2021-22 academic year, there were 926 volunteer deliverers in Active Schools sessions across Highland. Nationally, 76% of sessions were delivered by volunteers. In Highland, 88% of sessions were delivered by volunteers. This demonstrates an exceptional effort and great success of the team in volunteer recruitment.

Future Development: Last month, Active Schools Coordinators received two 1.5 hour online training sessions from sportscotland on Volunteer Management. In the coming weeks, Coordinators will be part of a sportscotland Hot Topics sharing session with all local authorities on recruiting; supporting and developing volunteers; and recognition and reward. In addition, the Sports Management Team have recently formed a new working group with Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Moray Councils that shares best practice for volunteer management.

Volunteers from Grantown Active Schools who attended two full days of Mountain Bike L2 training to run biking groups.



HLH Area of Work: Youth Work

Innovation/Service Development: Moving and then mainstreaming Highland Youth Parliament (HYP) to being a blended mix of digital and in person provision and support.

Customer/Service Need: Initially necessitated by lockdowns in the pandemic it quickly became apparent to young people and staff alike that moving some aspects of the Highland Youth Parliament structures to a safe digital space was going to have multiple benefits - these have now been mainstreamed in agreement with the young people of the parliament.

Customer/Service Impact: The key element of this was moving the HYP executive committee online. This group makes key decisions including the current campaign for youth mental health (Mind Us) and also climate change actions that the parliament are progressing. The group has met on a six-week rotation for several years. Moving on-line has proved to be significantly more inclusive for young people, less disruptive to other commitments including educational ones. It also offers others a chance to dip in an out of the group more easily to share lived-experience expert views as required and this supports exec. members to make better informed decisions.

This innovation has also offered efficiencies in terms of both staff and travel costs and makes a contribution to reducing carbon footprint.

There were also some interesting local applications of this in lockdown e.g. Dingwall Youth Forum members who moved away to Higher education during lockdown periods were welcomed to stay on and meet with local digital forum. Those young adults have indicated that this helped with mental health and wellbeing and made living away from home for the first time easier in such challenging circumstances.

Future Development: To look at the further development and application of blended approaches to youth democracy at all levels, local, regional, national and international. This includes work currently in development across 8 Local Authorities in the Northern Alliance area, a recent collaboration with a visiting school from Argentina and will also inform how we take forward our work Highland representation in the Scottish Youth Parliament.

Highland Youth Convenor – Anja Johnston receives her Gold Leadership hoodie which was presented to her by Steve Walsh during the June 2022 Highland Youth Parliament Conference – which is one part of youth democracy work that young people do wish to keep in person and face to face!

