



Annual Report 2025/26

NHS Highland Charity

NHS Highland Charity is the
working name of Highland Health
Board Endowment Funds SC016791



**NHS
Highland
Charity**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

04

About NHS Highland Charity

11

Celebrating our Impact

26

Celebrating our Supporters

35

Looking Ahead



A message from our Vice Chair to all our supporters

Thanks to you, NHS Highland Charity continues to make a real difference to people across Highland and Argyll & Bute, supporting patients and families, and the staff who care for them every day.

Because of your efforts, we have been able to fund improvements that go beyond what NHS Highland can do alone. Thanks to local generosity, people in our communities experienced more comfort, dignity and support, whether through improved clinical spaces, new equipment or opportunities for staff to develop and pilot innovative ways of delivering care. This impact reflects the strength of our partnership with NHS Highland.

Over the past year, we have also taken steps to be more visible and accessible with our new brand identity and working name, and our increased presence on the NHS Highland website, sharing more about the difference donations make and strengthening how we connect with supporters and colleagues online.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who has supported the Charity this year. Every act of kindness, large or small, helps improve experiences for people across our community.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to managing our precious funds responsibly, working in partnership with staff and communities, and supporting projects that strengthen health and care close to home for the people of Highland and Argyll & Bute.



JOANNE MCCOY

Vice Chair, Charitable Funds Committee



409

**grants awarded this
year**



£874,843

**invested to support
health and care**



£1,534,137

**raised to support our
charitable aims**

*Cover page image: The
Broadford Hospital
Cancer Team with their
new scalp-cooling
machine.*

About NHS Highland Charity

Learn more about our role in
supporting outstanding health and
care for the people in our community.



Our Vision

Our vision is to enable equitable and outstanding health and wellbeing across Highland and Argyll & Bute, supporting our communities and colleagues to deliver healthcare that goes beyond expectations.

We are the official charity of NHS Highland. Our role is to support healthcare for people across the region by funding improvements that go beyond core NHS provision. We bring in new ideas, additional resources and practical support where it is needed most.

By funding local initiatives, supporting NHS staff and working closely with communities, we help to improve experiences for patients and families, support staff wellbeing, and strengthen services close to home.

Together with our supporters, we create lasting improvements that benefit people across Highland and Argyll & Bute.

We help health and care thrive in every community.



Staff from the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service on a professional development day in Craig Dunain Community Woods.



Residents of Pulteney House care home in Wick on a coastal sea tour



A glimpse of one of the newly installed Kintyre landscapes in the radiography department of Campbeltown Hospital.

Our Purpose

We are constituted under the National Health Service (Scotland) Act 1978

Our charitable purpose is the advancement of health through:



1.

Improvement in the physical and mental health of the people of Scotland

2.

The prevention, diagnosis and treatment of illness

3.

The provision of services and facilities in connection to points 1 & 2

4.

Research into the causation, prevention, diagnosis or treatment of illness

5.

Research into such other matters relating to the health service as the Trustees see fit

6.

Observation of any conditions of a donation or legacy by a donor so far as possible

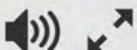
Watch our short video by clicking below to learn more about us.

We are



NHS Highland Charity

WATCH VIDEO



How our Funding Works

Supporting health and care across our communities is a shared effort. Here's how we raise, manage and use funds to support patients, families and staff.

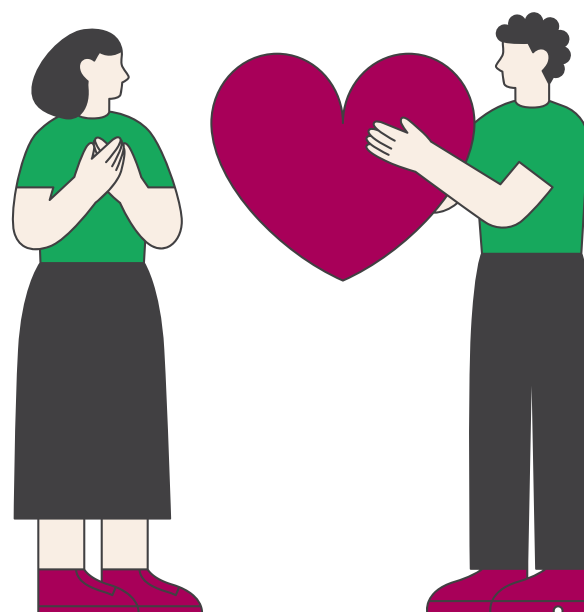
Where the money comes from

Our funding comes from people and communities who choose to give in aid of NHS Highland.

This includes:

- donations from patients, families and the public
- community fundraising and events
- legacies left in wills
- grants and partnerships
- income generated from investments

Every contribution, large or small, helps fund improvements that go beyond what the NHS can provide.



How decisions are made

We work closely with NHS Highland teams to understand where funding will make the greatest difference for patients, families and staff.

Funding requests are led by NHS Highland staff, applying on behalf of their service. This helps ensure that projects are aligned with NHS Highland priorities and can be delivered safely and effectively.

We also work with community organisations, charities and partner groups, where their work benefits local services and the people who rely on them.

Funding decisions are guided by:

- **Local need** — where funding will most improve care, experience or wellbeing
- **Fairness** — making sure support reaches communities and services across the region
- **Impact** — delivering clear, practical benefits
- **Donor wishes** — respecting how and why funds have been given

We review applications through a structured and transparent process. Every application is considered carefully and decisions are clearly communicated.



How our Funding Works

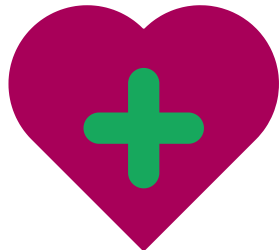
How we are governed

NHS Highland Charity is a registered charity with its own responsibilities and oversight in how funds are managed and protected.

- Trustees are responsible for ensuring funds are used appropriately and in line with charitable purposes
- All spending follows clear standards of governance, accountability and public trust
- We carefully manage every donation, making sure it is used as intended and in line with the law.

The Charity works in partnership with NHS Highland, while remaining separate from NHS core funding.

This ensures that every donation is used responsibly, and makes a clear, meaningful difference.



Our commitment

We are committed to:

- being open about how funds are raised and used
- making decisions fairly and transparently
- showing clearly the impact of every contribution
- ensuring local communities benefit from local generosity

Together, we help health and care go further in every community across the Highlands and Argyll & Bute.

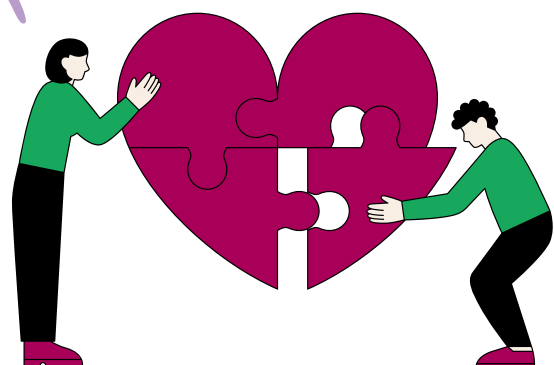


What this means in practice

In practice, charitable funding supports the extras that make a real difference, such as:

- improving environments and patient comfort
- supporting staff training, development and wellbeing
- funding new ideas, equipment and innovation
- helping people access care closer to home

These are the things that help care feel more personal, more supportive and closer to home, going beyond what NHS funding alone can provide.



Our strategic partnership with NHS Highland

We work in close partnership with NHS Highland to support health and care services across Highland and Argyll & Bute, while remaining a separate and independent registered charity.

NHS Highland delivers frontline health and care services. The Charity's role is to enhance that care, funding projects, equipment and initiatives that go beyond what statutory NHS funding can provide. This partnership allows charitable support to be directed flexibly and locally, responding to the needs of patients, service users and staff across the region.

While we share a common purpose with NHS Highland: helping people experience compassionate, high-quality care close to home, the Charity has its own governance, responsibilities and decision-making structures. Trustees are responsible for ensuring that all charitable funds are used in line with our charitable purposes and donor wishes.

By working together, NHS Highland and the Charity are able to maximise the positive impact of charitable giving. Every pound raised is used to support local services and communities, strengthening care environments, supporting staff wellbeing and development, and improving experiences for patients and families.

Further information on governance and financial performance is available in the Charity's [annual accounts](#).



325,250: our population



2 Local Authorities covering 42% of Scotland's landmass



24 hospitals, 25 day and residential care facilities



10,745 NHS Highland staff

Our Trustees

The trustees of the Charity during 2025-26, and up to the date the financial statements were approved, are listed below. No key management personnel are directly employed by the Charity.

- Fiona Davies
- Alexander Anderson
- Emily Austin
- Graham Bell
- Louise Bussell
- Muriel Cockburn
- Sarah Compton-Bishop
- Heledd Cooper
- Garret Corner
- Albert Donald
- Karen Leach
- Philip MacRae
- Joanne McCoy
- Gerry O'Brien
- Boyd Peters
- Janice Preston
- Steve Walsh

Joiners:

- Jennifer Davies - Joined July 25
- Graham Illsley - Joined November 25
- Gavin Smith - Joined October 25
- Brian Steven - Joined October 25
- Allyson Turnbull-Jukes - Joined September 25
- Neil Wright - Joined July 25

Leavers:

- Tim Allison - Resigned July 25
- Elspeth Caithness - Resigned September 25
- Alasdair Christie - Resigned November 25
- Catriona Sinclair - Resigned August 25



Celebrating our Impact

See just a few examples of our impact
this year that have enhanced health
and care across Highland and Argyll &
Bute.



How we made a difference this year

During the year, the Charity focused on three key areas for funding:

Improving patient and service users experience

Together we helped improve comfort, dignity and wellbeing for patients, residents and service users across our region. Support during the year included projects that:

- enhanced care environments
- provided therapeutic and meaningful engagement activities
- provided enhanced amenities and resources for patients and families
- improved access to services

Supporting the people who care for us

Looking after the wellbeing and development of NHS staff is a vital part of delivering high-quality care.

This year we supported staff through:

- wellbeing initiatives and spaces
- mentoring and professional development programmes
- projects that enhance staff experience, working environments, equipment and morale

By investing in the people who deliver care, we helped support a healthier, more resilient workforce, benefiting patients and services alike.

Investing in innovation, equipment and improvement

Thanks to our supporters this year we invested in:

- new or improved equipment
- innovative models of care
- pilot projects and service improvements
- research and development activity

These projects helped services test new approaches, improve efficiency, and enhance the quality of care provided across our region.

Susanna, NHS Highland Physiotherapist and 2025 Professional Development Grant recipient:



I thought this was an amazing opportunity and I really valued it.

I was able to hear talks and take part in workshops in a variety of areas, which is ideal for me. I was also able to talk to lots of people working in different geographic areas. I was also able to see poster presentations of up-to-date research.

There were some things I can put into practice straight away, and other things I need to investigate further.

Thank you, I really felt this was so useful and I came away feeling inspired.”



Our Year in Grants



409

grant applications
approved, including
four transformational
large grants over
£25,000



91%

approval of
applications processed

What we funded:



£36,776

Research & Development



£48,923

Workforce Professional Development



£59,872

Infrastructure Enhancements & Other
Equipment



£90,606

Patient Support and Amenities



£163,107

Medical Equipment



£244,787

Workforce Support and Amenities



Enhancing the Healing Environment



Campbeltown Hospital, Kintyre

[Click to read our
case study](#)



The need

When the new radiography department at Campbeltown Hospital opened, staff wanted the environment to feel calm, welcoming and reassuring for people who might be in pain, anxious or unwell. The team recognised that the clinical space needed warmth and character, but enhancements of this kind sit outside normal NHS budgets.

Pictured below is one of the new images installed in the radiography suite.



What we did

Through a £1,400 grant from the Charity, the department purchased a series of photographic prints by a local photographer featuring Campbeltown and Kintyre landscapes. The images were professionally printed, framed and installed throughout the department, including at the hospital entrance, adding a strong local sense of place while also supporting the local creative community.

The artwork immediately made the new department feel more calming and personal. Staff reported that the images helped distract and reassure patients, encouraged conversation, and even allowed some people who were unable to get out much to reconnect with familiar local places. It is a simple but powerful example of how environment can improve the everyday experience of care.

Carolyn, Specialist Radiographer:



The patients and staff absolutely love them. It has made for such a calm and inviting environment which, when people are in pain or not feeling their best, has been a great distraction and conversation starter.”



Creating Connection in Care Homes



Pulteney House Care Home, Wick

[Click to read our case study](#)



The need

Many residents at Pulteney House live with dementia or reduced mobility, and some are unable to spend long periods away from the home. Staff knew that alongside comfort and safety, residents also needed enjoyment, stimulation and connection with the wider community to support their wellbeing and quality of life.

Therapy ponies, pictured below, visited residents' rooms, ensuring everyone could take part.



What we did

Thanks to local donors' support, the staff team delivered a varied programme of activities throughout 2025, including therapy pony visits, petting animal sessions, accessible boat tours, afternoon tea outings, flower arranging and live music. Funding made it possible to design activities that were enjoyable, inclusive and carefully adapted to residents' needs.

The impact was clear in residents' day-to-day lives. People talked about the visits and outings for days afterwards, shared photos and memories, and used the experiences as conversation starters with staff, visitors and family members. Staff also reported improved morale and more opportunities for meaningful personal interaction, helping create a warmer and more uplifting atmosphere across the home.

Jacqui, Pulteney House staff member:



The staff really enjoy the animal and therapy pony visits as they get to interact with the animals too.

The staff love supporting residents to hold and stroke the animals."



Nature-Based Support for Mental Health



**Dunoon &
Isle of Bute**

[Click to read our
case study](#)



The need

Across Cowal and Bute, the Mental Health Occupational Therapy (OT) Service supports people living with significant and enduring mental health difficulties, including severe anxiety, agoraphobia, depression, low confidence, and profound social isolation. Some clients rarely leave their homes and struggle to engage with traditional hospital-based services.

What we did

Because of your donations, we were able to help the team to deliver outdoor wellbeing groups in local woodland settings in partnership with Bullwood Nature Trail and Moss Wood community trusts. Funding supported equipment, materials and simple resources, allowing the groups to run safely and consistently.

The programme gave people a regular reason to get out, connect with others and build confidence. Participants reported that the sessions became a highlight of their week, helping improve mood, reduce isolation and support recovery in a positive, practical way.

Participants of the group shared:



It gets me out of the house and gives me something to do."

"It has improved my abilities."

"Being out improves my mood, health and wellbeing."

"It makes me feel alive."

"The woods feel like 'my church'."

Group participants, left, engaged in woodworking as part of the activities.



A Season of Compassion: Christmas 2025



Across Highland and
Argyll & Bute

[Click to read our
case study](#)



The need

Christmas can be especially difficult for people who are in hospital, living in care homes or receiving support away from family and friends. Staff recognise the need to create warmth, dignity and a sense of normality for patients, residents and service users who might otherwise feel isolated or forgotten during the festive period.

Pictured are the staff of Lorn and Islands Hospital who went above and beyond to spread some Christmas cheer.



What we did

Teams across our region were supported to provide festive gifts, treats, decorations, activities and celebrations in hospitals, care homes and day services over Christmas 2025. This gave staff the flexibility to add the thoughtful extras that core budgets would not normally cover.

These small but meaningful touches brought some joy at an emotional time of year. Staff told us that patients who were in hospital over Christmas felt cheered up and cared for, families were reassured that loved ones were being treated with kindness, and the festive atmosphere also lifted staff morale during holiday working. The impact was felt across the region, helping Christmas still feel special even when people could not be at home.

Elizabeth, Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban



The patients were delighted to have gifts and treats on Christmas day, seeing as they were stuck in hospital, it cheered them all up and they were very grateful. Families and friends of the patients were delighted their relatives and friends had been treated so well on Christmas Day”



Mentoring Support for Doctors



Across Highland and
Argyll & Bute

[Click to read our
case study](#)



The need

Doctors in NHS Highland work across large geographical areas, often under pressure and at times facing significant career transitions or personal challenges.

Alongside formal supervision, there was a need for a safe, confidential space where doctors could reflect on wellbeing, confidence, career direction and work-life balance with a trained peer.

What we did

With £30,000 of funding from the Charity, NHS Highland launched a two-year pilot mentoring scheme in May 2023 and completed in late 2025. Funding supported protected time for clinical leads, administrative support, mentor training and the collection of anonymised feedback. The scheme was open to all doctors, at any career stage.

During the pilot, 80 doctors accessed mentoring support and 26 mentors were trained. Feedback showed the scheme helped doctors build confidence, gain clarity and feel better able to sustain their careers.

In response to strong demand and positive results, NHS Highland has committed to continuing the service beyond the Charity-funded pilot.

A mentoring participant shared:



Mentoring helped me continue with, and finish, my training and without it, I don't think this would have been possible."





A Space to Pause and Reflect



**Campbeltown Hospital,
Kintyre**

[Click to read our
case study](#)



The need

Staff at Campbeltown Hospital wanted a more welcoming environment that reflected the care and pride they have in their workplace. An unused area at the hospital entrance felt “scruffy and neglected” according to staff.

When Campbeltown Community Council approached the hospital with a wish to donate a memorial bench in honour of the late Cathie Duncan, a much-loved community member and supporter of the hospital, it presented the perfect opportunity to create something special, a welcoming space for patients, visitors, and staff to enjoy.

What we did

Charitable funding of £9,396 allowed the team to transform the space into a memorial garden with accessible paths, seating and planting. Working with local partners, staff helped shape a calm and welcoming area that could be used by everyone, including staff taking time out during their working day.

The new space has created a place where staff, patients and visitors can step away from the clinical environment, providing space for a quick break in a nice setting. Staff have said the improvement has boosted morale and created a renewed sense of pride in their workplace, helping make the hospital a more positive place to work.

Gillian, local staff member:



There has been a lot of positive feedback from staff as well as community members.”

Community council members were joined by hospital staff and some of Cathie’s family and friends for the unveiling on 28 June 2025.

Photo Credit: Kenny Craig, West Coast Today.





Supporting Staff to Learn and Grow



Across Highland and Argyll & Bute

The need

Staff across NHS Highland are keen to build their skills and confidence, but training opportunities can be hard to access without extra funding. This is especially true for courses, conferences and learning that sit outside core training budgets. Staff told us these opportunities can make a real difference to their practice, development and the care they provide.

Sandra, Speech and Language Therapist and conference attendee:



Thank you for the opportunity. It was great and give me a new energy for trying to improve aspects of our service.”

What we did

In 2025, the Charity awarded £33,772 through its individual Professional Development Grants programme across four funding rounds. A total of 56 grants were awarded and the programme helped staff access courses, conferences and other learning that may not otherwise have been possible.

It supported professional growth across nursing, allied health professions, administrative services and other staff groups. By helping staff develop their knowledge and skills, charitable funding is strengthening the workforce and supporting better care for patients and communities across NHS Highland.

Lorna, Physiotherapist:



As a result of this learning, I have undertaken a service improvement project evaluating the impact of speech recognition software on the physiotherapy discharge process.

This was a fantastic course - I highly recommend it.”





Restoring and Growing our Volunteer Service



Across Highland and Argyll & Bute

[Click to read our case study](#)



The need

After COVID, volunteer numbers had reduced and some hospital sites had not restarted their volunteer services. There was also inequalities in access, with some areas benefiting from regular volunteer support while others, especially Argyll & Bute, had little or none. Staff recognised the need to rebuild and grow volunteering so more patients and teams could benefit from companionship and practical support.

Pictured is Barbara, a ward volunteer in Nairn Town & County Hospital. Her role includes managing the tea and coffee rounds and patient companionship.



What we did

Funding from NHS Charities Together and NHS Highland Charity enabled two Volunteer Coordinator posts for two years, covering North Highland and Argyll & Bute. This created the capacity to recruit, train and support volunteers and build more inclusive volunteering opportunities across our region.

By December 2025, 180 new volunteers had been recruited, helping to extend support across hospitals in the region. We strengthened person-centred care for patients, including companionship, wayfinding and therapeutic activity, while also giving ward teams more support. We also widened access to volunteering for people with additional support needs, neurodivergent volunteers, older adults and people experiencing mental health challenges.

Tasha, Volunteer Coordinator:



Having the capacity to be present on wards, to support volunteers properly, and to build trust with staff made all the difference. It allowed the service to recover and then grow.”



Better Eye Care, Closer to Home in Argyll & Bute



Lorn & Islands, Campbeltown and Mid Argyll Hospitals

The need

Ophthalmology clinics in Argyll & Bute are getting busier. More patients are being referred, and many people attending clinics have mobility issues. This makes it important that appointments run smoothly and efficiently.

At the moment, none of the hospital sites have an iCare device to measure eye pressure. Because of this, consultants often need to dilate patients' eyes before seeing them. This takes extra time and slows down clinics. It also limits how many patients can be seen.

What we did

iCare devices provide a quick and simple way to measure eye pressure. They are easy to use, require very little training, and are more comfortable for patients. Staff felt this equipment would be a great help in improving how clinics run.

The Charity funded three iCare devices, one for each hospital site where outreach clinics take place: Lorn & Islands Hospital, Campbeltown Hospital and Mid Argyll Hospital at a cost of £14,995.

These devices can be used by both consultants and nursing staff. With only a small amount of training, nursing staff can now check eye pressure as part of the first assessment.

Catherine, Charity Lead Officer:



This change helps clinics run more smoothly and improves the experience for patients. It also means staff can make better use of their time and may be able to see more patients in each clinic. ”



Image of an iCare tonometer in use. Photo credit: Mainline Instruments.



Continuing Vital Cardiac Rehabilitation Research



**Highland Heartbeat Centre,
Raigmore Hospital, Inverness**

The need

In the second year of this charity-funded PhD, there was a focus on learning more about what life is like for people after a cardiac event. Interviews and survey responses showed that many people still struggle after treatment, including with tiredness, anxiety, poor sleep and getting back to everyday life. Julie Munro, the PhD candidate shared the latest findings.

What we did

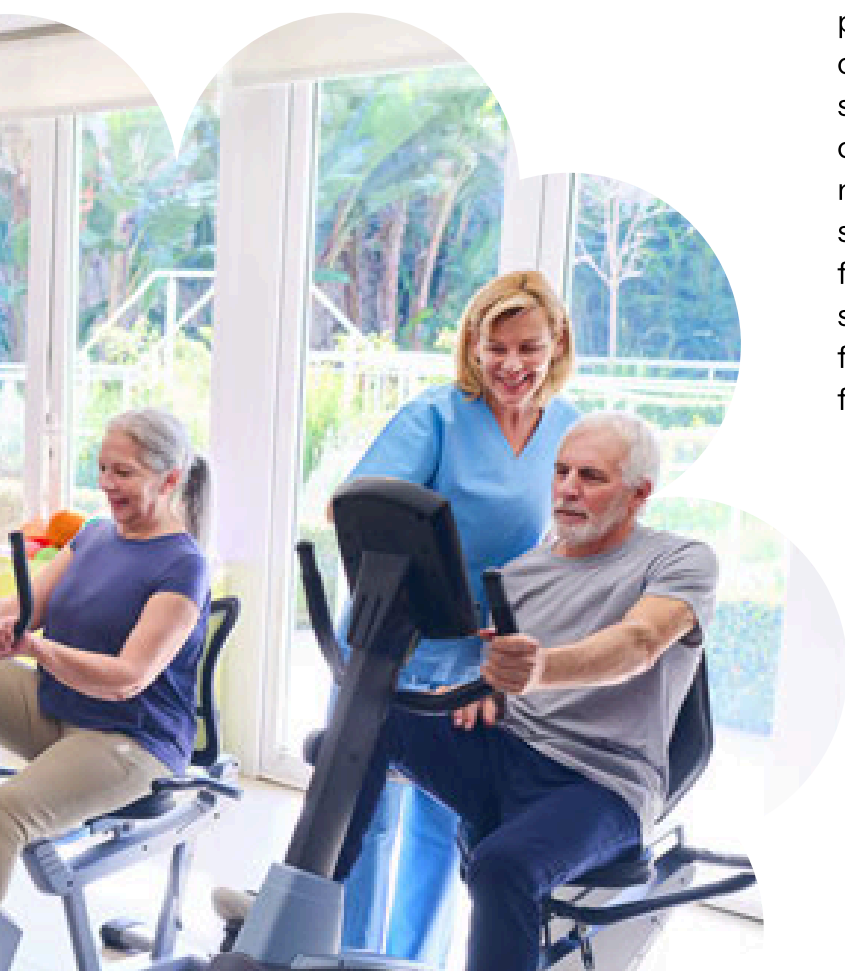
Our support has enabled further research which found that many patients would value more support beyond their medical care. People said community groups, peer support and practical activities could help them feel less alone and support their recovery. The study also showed that some people may miss out on help because services can be hard to access.

The project has already helped improve patient information, create new online cardiac rehabilitation resources and strengthen links with local community organisations. It is now helping shape the next stage of the work: working with key stakeholders to explore a referral model for community services, the role of peer support for engagement, and using task-focused interventions to help manage fatigue.

Patient interviewee:



I want to know if other folk...feel the way that I do about it. That would be nice. Because I haven't spoken to another person that I know that's had a heart attack."





New Equipment to Strengthen Cancer Care



Broadford Hospital & Belford Hospital

[Click to read our case study](#)



The need

For many people receiving chemotherapy, hair loss is one of the most distressing side effects of treatment, affecting confidence, dignity and self-identity at a highly vulnerable time.

Patients receiving treatment at Broadford Hospital on Skye did not have access to scalp-cooling technology and the system which had been in use at Belford Hospital in Fort William had become defunct. The technology can often help to reduce chemotherapy-induced hair loss and is available at several other larger hospitals in the region.

What we did

Thanks to local supporters we were able to supply a scalp cooling system to each hospital and invested over £29,000 in the new equipment.

Patients now receive chemotherapy closer to home while also having the option to try to preserve their hair, reducing one of the most visible and upsetting side effects of treatment. This helps improve dignity, confidence and emotional wellbeing during a difficult period. It has also given the local cancer teams another important way to support patients more holistically.

Barbara, Cancer Nurse Specialist:



Hair loss can be one of the most challenging aspects of cancer treatment for many patients. The introduction of this scalp-cooling system offers a real opportunity to ease some of that burden and provide comfort during a difficult time. We are immensely grateful to the donors whose generosity has made this possible.



Pictured are the Broadford Hospital Cancer Team with new scalp-cooling machine.

Testing Artificial Intelligence in MRI Scanning



**Raigmore Hospital,
Inverness**

[Click to read our
case study](#)



The need

Before an MRI scan can take place, staff must read a referral and decide the correct type of scan. This process, known as protocolling, is done manually and can take up a significant amount of time. Staff recognised that referral notes are often written in a similar way, creating an opportunity to research the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to support this task and reduce the time needed.

What we did

With £7,618 of funding from the Charity's Research and Development programme, local staff developed a simple AI tool to analyse referral notes and suggest the most appropriate scan. The team collected 7,275 MRI referrals to train the tool which works in two stages. First identifying the general area of the body and then narrowing this down to a specific scan type. Importantly, all AI suggestions are checked by a radiographer, ensuring the system supports safe clinical decision-making.

Early results have shown strong potential that AI can safely support decision-making and reduce workload. The project estimated the potential to save around 300 hours of staff time each year, allowing teams to focus more on patient care. Although only a trial at this stage, the project was a great success.

Dr Tracey, researcher:



We are not looking to develop a perfect model but rather one that is at least as good as the staff who are currently carrying out the task - our work suggests we have achieved that."



Celebrating our Supporters

Recognising the generosity and community spirit that help care go further across Highland and Argyll & Bute.



How charitable funds were raised

Every single person who donates, fundraises or leaves a legacy in their will has a personal reason or connection to the people and services of the NHS. It is our absolute honour to work alongside our donors and supporters and help them say thank you in a way that is meaningful to them. Our NHS colleagues are grateful for the thanks and support they receive.

Funds supporting NHS Highland Charity in 2025/26 came from:

- donations from patients, families and the public
- legacies left in wills
- community fundraising
- partnerships and grants
- investment income

We are grateful for every contribution, which collectively enables us to support a wide range of services across our communities. We would also like to thank the many businesses, trusts, schools and community groups who supported us through contributions for our patients, their families and our staff.

Samantha from Caithness Boxing Club, below:



We would encourage anybody to consider fundraising for the NHS Highland Charity. Unfortunately, none of us know when we might find ourselves in a situation where these services become essential.”



£163,832

legacies left to the Charity



£170,435

grants awarded to the Charity



£248,926

investment income generated



£950,944

donations and gifts received





Members of Caithness Boxing Club presenting Critical Care Unit staff, Rachel and Sandy, right, with their donation. Rachel cared for Megan, pictured below.

A community united in tribute

Members of Caithness Boxing Club came together in November 2025 to take on an extraordinary fundraising challenge in memory of their friend and teammate, Megan Mackay.

Setting an initial target of £2,500 for the Critical Care Unit at Raigmore Hospital, the club exceeded expectations, raising an incredible £2,880.

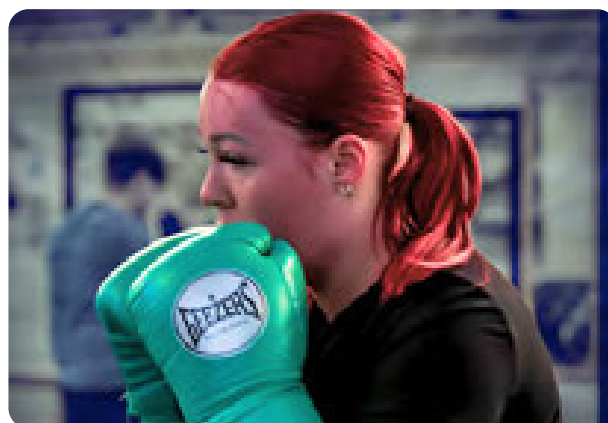
Megan was a valued member of the club, remembered for her dedication, determination and kindness. Her loss in April 2024 had a profound impact on everyone who trained alongside her. During her illness, she received specialist care at Raigmore, inspiring the club to give something back. To honour her memory, members committed to completing a demanding challenge driven by a shared sense of purpose.

Funds raised will help improve the experience for families in Critical Care, particularly in waiting areas where loved ones spend long and difficult hours.

Samantha, Club Secretary, said:



As a club, we were inspired to raise money for Raigmore CCU as a token of our appreciation for the care, kindness and compassion shown to one of our dear members, Megan Mackay, and her family and friends when she became ill last April and very sadly passed away."



Gerry, Clinical Lead Nurse, shared:

"We are very conscious that it is the hardest of times for family and friends who have a loved one in our care and we try our best to make this as comfortable as possible for them in the family rooms we have in the department. This gift will make such a difference to enabling us to do that, thank you."

Turning loss into lasting impact

Local fundraiser Aileen Gillies has donated an incredible £20,000 to the Macmillan Unit at Mid Argyll Hospital and Integrated Care Centre, surpassing the personal goal she set in memory of her mum.

Aileen's motivation is deeply personal:



After my Mum passed away in 2017, I always knew I wanted to raise money for the Macmillan Unit... the nurses had played such a huge role in her care."

What began as a simple idea during lockdown in 2020 quickly grew into a remarkable community effort. Starting with a fundraising calendar, Aileen raised over £5,000 in her first year, far exceeding expectations. Encouraged by this support, she expanded her fundraising through craft fairs, a website and local events, reaching an incredible £20,000 by 2025.

Reflecting on her journey, Aileen said: "I am delighted the Unit is going to purchase a new vein finder. It's now time for a new challenge. I wish the Unit well for the future continuing to offer treatment and services to the local community."

Her fundraising will directly support patient care, helping enhance equipment and services for people across Mid Argyll.

Catriona Watt, Hospital Manager, said:



Our sincere gratitude to Aileen for her exceptional thoughtfulness, dedication and generosity. Her fundraising initiatives help to improve cancer treatment and hospital services for many patients and their loved ones."



(Photo left to right: Anne McGlynn, pharmacy team; Aileen Stewart Gillies; Garrick McCann, Senior Staff Nurse; Emma Kemp, Senior Charge Nurse; Gillian Meikle, Receptionist; Kirsteen Houston, Health Care Assistant for A&E)

Running for change

In November 2025, Theresa set herself a demanding challenge: to run 5km every day for a month in support of the Highland Diabetes Centre. Aiming to raise £500, she more than doubled her target, raising an incredible £1,005.

Living with Type 1 diabetes for more than 14 years, Theresa understands the daily demands of managing the condition and the importance of specialist support. “I am a Type 1 Diabetic. I manage my diabetes through various methods, the main one being diabetes technology. Unfortunately, not every diabetic has access... which often comes down to funding.”

As an Adult Nurse, Theresa also sees the wider impact:



I see firsthand the effects of poor diabetes management. I want to raise funds to allow people to experience the same technology that I have to be able to live a better quality of life.”



Theresa chose to support NHS Highland so her efforts would benefit local people directly.

Dr MacFarlane, Consultant at the Highland Diabetes Centre, said:

“It was fantastic to hear about Theresa’s tremendous achievement. She is an inspiration to others, showing how living with type 1 diabetes should not hold you back.”



Hitting the mark for patients in Caithness

A Wick family's love of darts has helped deliver a lasting boost to patient care in Caithness. Kirsteen Campbell has raised an incredible £4,800 for the Day Case Unit at Caithness General Hospital, alongside a further £400 for the local community nursing team.

Kirsteen, who attends the unit every six weeks for a life-changing lidocaine infusion, understands the challenges of poor vein access.

Linda MacDougall from the community nursing team is delighted:



The East Caithness community nurses are extremely grateful for Kirsteen's fundraising and kind donation."

Pictured below left: Kirsteen and her son Ryan. Pictured right: ladies winner Alison Tait with Vivian Davies from NHS Highland.

Funds raised will support the purchase of a vein scanner—technology that helps staff locate veins more quickly and accurately, improving patient comfort and saving valuable time. The money was raised through a lively community darts day at the Seaforth Club in Wick in September 2025, organised by Kirsteen alongside her family.

Kirsteen shared:



I receive a lidocaine infusion every six weeks... it has transformed my pain but my vein access is very poor. The staff are amazing so I wanted to do something to help them and other patients like myself.

We had a great time at the fundraiser. My family all plays darts, so we knew we could pull together the darts community."



A community partnership in action

Residents at Main's House Care Home in Newtonmore are enjoying improved access to outdoor space, thanks to a partnership project supported by Newtonmore Community Woodlands & Development Trust (NCWDT) NHS Highland Charity and NHS Highland itself.

Enhancements to the front garden have introduced accessible pathways, making it easier for residents to spend time outdoors, connect with nature and enjoy the changing seasons.

Shirley Christie, Care Home Manager, said:



Access to outdoor space makes such a difference to the wellbeing of our residents. The improvements to the front garden mean more people can safely enjoy fresh air, watch the world go by, and spend time with visiting family and friends. We are incredibly grateful to NCWDT and NHS Highland Charity for helping us make this happen."

The improved layout supports mobility and independence, helping more people benefit from the calming, therapeutic environment. The project was made possible by a generous gift from local resident Marielle Barclay, who had close ties to both NCWDT and Main's House.

Ian Gibson, Trustee of NCWDT, said:



We were left a generous legacy by Marielle Barclay a local resident. Marielle had been a trustee of NCWDT and also spent the last few months of her life being cared for at Main's House.

The current Trustees knew from conversations with her friends that she had wanted to do something to improve the amenity of Main's House while she was there. Knowing her love of the outdoors, improving access to the front garden for residents was a great project for us to support".

Pictured below are Main's House residents with manager Shirley Christie, back row left and Ian Gibson of NCWDT, right.



Bringing joy to children in hospital

In the lead up to Christmas 2025, Lauren rallied her workplace to collect toys for children spending the festive season in the Highland Children's Unit at Raigmore Hospital.

For Lauren, this was deeply personal. The previous Christmas, she, her partner and their young daughter Harper spent nearly a week on the ward during a difficult time. "We were absolutely blown away by the amount of gifts, Christmas spirit and overall joy. The staff were all incredible. It made a huge difference to us as a family."

She remembers the magic created for families on Christmas Eve:

"We couldn't believe it, Santa delivering presents to every bed and all the staff in Christmas pyjamas. You made our Christmas so magical, even at the worst time."

Wanting to give something back, Lauren organised a toy collection with her colleagues to help create that same experience for others.

Catherine Myles, Charity Lead Officer, said:



A hospital stay can feel especially difficult during the festive season and thoughtful donations for our youngest patients create moments of joy for families when they need it most. We were incredibly grateful to Lauren and her colleagues for choosing to give back in such a meaningful way."

Harper's mother Lauren shared:



We want to help contribute to the magic we received. Every child deserves a wonderful Christmas no matter their circumstances. There is always room for more help, every little thing can make a huge difference."

Pictured are Harper and her mother Lauren during their time on the ward in 2024.





Feeling inspired to support us?

Lynda, pictured above, ran the London Marathon in 2026 to support better care, turning her determination into real support for patients, families and staff across our communities.

If you're thinking about taking on a challenge or organising something of your own, we'd love to help you get started.



If you would like to give back, you can make a donation or start a fundraising challenge today. Visit nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/charity or scan the QR code.

Looking Ahead

As we move into 2026/27 we remain focused on building on this year's progress to support patients, staff and communities across the Highlands and Argyll & Bute.

Looking Ahead

Our focus remains clear.

We will continue to:

- support staff and services across our communities
- invest in projects that improve experiences of health and care
- work in partnership with NHS Highland and local communities
- manage charitable funds responsibly and transparently

Several significant projects approved this year will begin to take shape, bringing real, visible improvements to services across our communities. These include:

- £50,000 shared between Grant House, Main's House, the Glen Centre and the Wade Centre to improve care environments and experiences for older adults in this community
- £37,908 for an innovative new arts project supporting renal dialysis patients at Raigmore Hospital
- £70,000 for an exciting Green Health Small Grants Scheme in Badenoch & Strathspey
- £29,224 towards a pioneering collaborative clinical oncology research project involving several other charities in Scotland

These projects reflect our continued commitment to funding both immediate improvements and longer-term developments that benefit patients, families and staff.

Most importantly, we will continue to share the difference your support makes.

Because this work is not one moment in time, it is part of a continuing effort to help health and care go further across the Highlands and Argyll & Bute.



Thank you

Every improvement shared in this report has been made possible by people who care.

From patients and families who chose to give back, to communities who came together to fundraise, to partners, businesses and supporters across the Highlands and Argyll & Bute, your generosity has helped care go further.

We could not deliver any of the projects and activities highlighted without the support of dedicated NHS Highland staff and volunteers, who provide outstanding care every day. Many go above and beyond in already demanding roles to support the Charity, and we are truly grateful for everything they do.

Because of your support:

- patients, residents and families in our hospitals, care homes and social care facilities have experienced more comfort, dignity and high quality care
- NHS Highland staff have had opportunities to grow, develop and feel supported
- services have been able to try new ideas and improve care closer to home

This is something we are proud to be part of, together.



**Click here to read our
full audited annual
accounts.**

