



**OSCR**

Scottish Charity Regulator

[www.oscr.org.uk](http://www.oscr.org.uk)

Registered Charity  
SC016791

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024/2025

Highland Health Board  
Endowment Funds Charity

Scottish Registered Charity Number SC016791

# WELCOME

Welcome to our Annual Report for 2024/2025

This report is our opportunity to share who we are, why we exist, what we aspire to achieve, and the difference we have made across the NHS Highland region.

The Highland Health Board Endowment Fund Charity is a Registered Scottish Charity (SC016791). Our mission is to support NHS Highland hospitals, services, staff, and communities. Our work is made possible by the generosity of patients, families, the wider public, and partner organisations who contribute through donations, grants, and legacies. Together, these gifts create a lasting impact on the health and wellbeing of people across the NHS Highland region.

Since our last annual report, we have experienced growth across every area of our work. This has enabled us to fund more projects, extend our reach into more communities, and provide greater support to patients, their families, and NHS Highland staff.

In this report, you will find stories and examples that bring to life the projects and initiatives we have supported over the past year. You will also see the difference the generosity of our supporters has made and a look ahead to our ambitions for the future.

Thank you for taking the time to read our report and for your continued support. Every project delivered, every donation received, and every message of encouragement helps us go further in our mission: to improve healthcare and wellbeing for people across Highland and Argyll & Bute.





## CONTENTS

---

**04**

Message from our Chair

---

**05**

**TRUSTEES' REPORT**

---

**06**

Our Vision

---

**07**

Our Partner

---

**09**

Grants Awarded

---

**11**

Highlights of the Year

---

**25**

Plans for the Future

---

**27**

**FINANCIAL AND  
GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

---

**28**

Financial Review

---

**32**

Policies

---

**34**

Structure, Governance &  
Management

---

**35**

Our Trustees

---

## MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

On behalf of the Trustees, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all our donors, community partners, NHS Highland staff and volunteers for their support over the past year. Together, you have helped us continue delivering targeted and meaningful support to improve health and wellbeing across the Highlands and Argyll & Bute.

This year the Charity has supported a broad range of initiatives, from enhancing patient comfort to investing in the skills and wellbeing of our dedicated workforce. Whether funding cutting-edge equipment for the endoscopy service or piloting innovative models of care with our collaboration with My Self Management, every project reflects our commitment to supporting NHS Highland go above and beyond.

I am particularly proud of our work this year to support young people's mental health through a pioneering social prescribing project, made possible by a highly competitive Innovation Challenge grant from NHS Charities Together and match-funded by our own charity.

We were also deeply honoured to receive a remarkable £1 million donation to transform ophthalmology services. This gift provides a unique opportunity to strengthen care for patients who rely on this vital service.

As part of our continued investment in the workforce, we were delighted to work with another generous anonymous donor to launch an innovative three-year project to strengthen the resilience, wellbeing, and leadership development of our Raigmore Hospital nurses.

These successes, alongside continued investment in research, leadership development, green spaces and enhanced patient environments, show the breadth and impact of what charitable giving can achieve.

At a time when NHS Highland is navigating ongoing demands on services, your generosity enables us to remain a trusted and strategic source of support, enhancing care and wellbeing for patients and staff alike, across both urban centres and our most remote communities. Thank you for standing with us.



**PHILIP MACRAE**

**CHAIR, ENDOWMENT FUNDS COMMITTEE**





# **TRUSTEES' REPORT**





# OUR VISION

***To achieve equitable, outstanding health and wellbeing across Highland and Argyll & Bute, supporting NHS Highland to deliver healthcare that goes beyond expectations.***

We're the official charity of NHS Highland, and we're here to help make healthcare better for people across Highland and Argyll & Bute.

We support projects that go beyond what NHS Highland can do on its own—bringing in new ideas, extra help, and added support where it's needed most.

By funding local health initiatives, backing NHS staff, and working closely with communities, we help improve care, strengthen services, and build healthier lives for everyone.

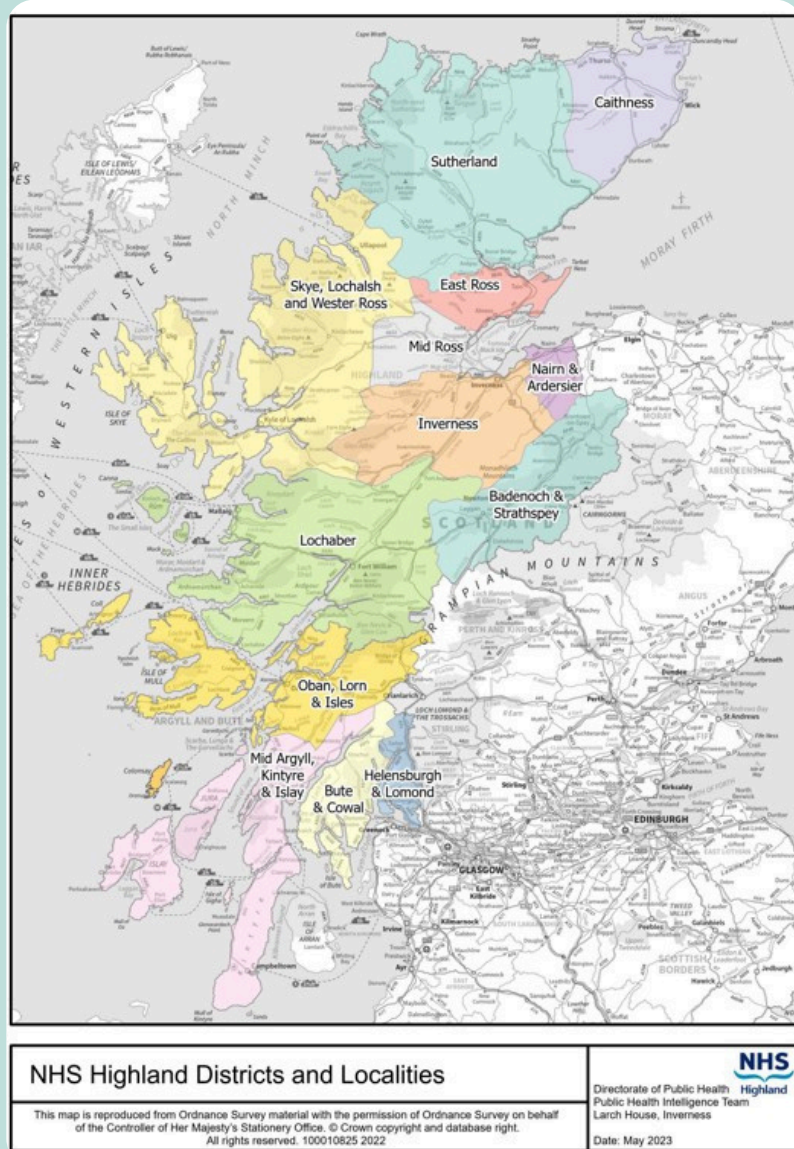
Together, we create positive, lasting change that transforms lives across the region.





## OUR PARTNER NHS HIGHLAND

NHS Highland provides a full range of primary, community, and acute hospital services across the Highland region, home to some of the most remote and rural communities in Scotland. In addition to local provision, it supports patients from neighbouring areas and plays a leading role in developing innovative approaches to rural and remote healthcare.



As the largest health board in Scotland by geography, NHS Highland serves over 320,000 people across 42% of the country's landmass—from urban centres such as Inverness to some of the UK's most isolated communities. This wide dispersion presents distinct challenges in access, recruitment, and service delivery.

To address these, NHS Highland works in close partnership with two Integration Joint Boards—Highland and Argyll & Bute—responsible for planning, commissioning, and delivering health and social care across their respective areas. Services are delivered by a dedicated workforce of around 10,745 staff working across hospitals, community settings, and primary care.

The challenge of providing equitable healthcare across such a vast and diverse area is central to Together We Care, NHS Highland's strategic plan for 2022–2027. The strategy sets out a clear vision for evolving health and care services, with a strong emphasis on collaboration, compassion, and sustainable, community-led models of care.

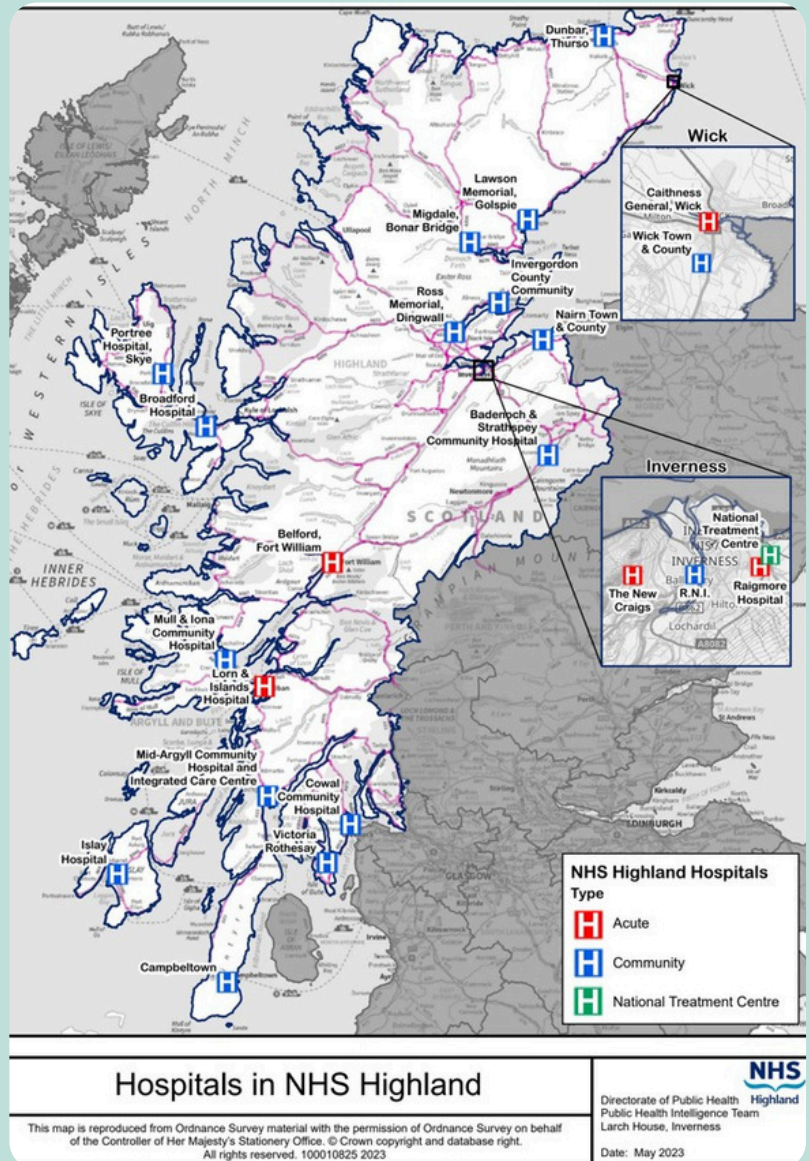
## OUR PARTNER NHS HIGHLAND

NHS Highland provides acute, community, mental health, and primary care services across one of the most geographically extensive and rural areas in Scotland.

Acute hospital care is delivered through a network of key hospitals supported by community hospitals and health centres throughout the region.

In addition to the District General Hospital in Raigmore, Inverness there is:

- the National Treatment Centre serving the North of Scotland
- three Rural General hospitals at Wick, Fort William and Oban
- a dedicated psychiatric hospital at New Craigs in Inverness
- 17 community hospitals delivering essential healthcare services, step-down care, minor injuries treatment, and out-of-hours support.
- 25 day care centres and residential care homes
- There is also an extensive network of GP and dental practices, along with opticians and pharmacies which support healthcare delivery across the region.

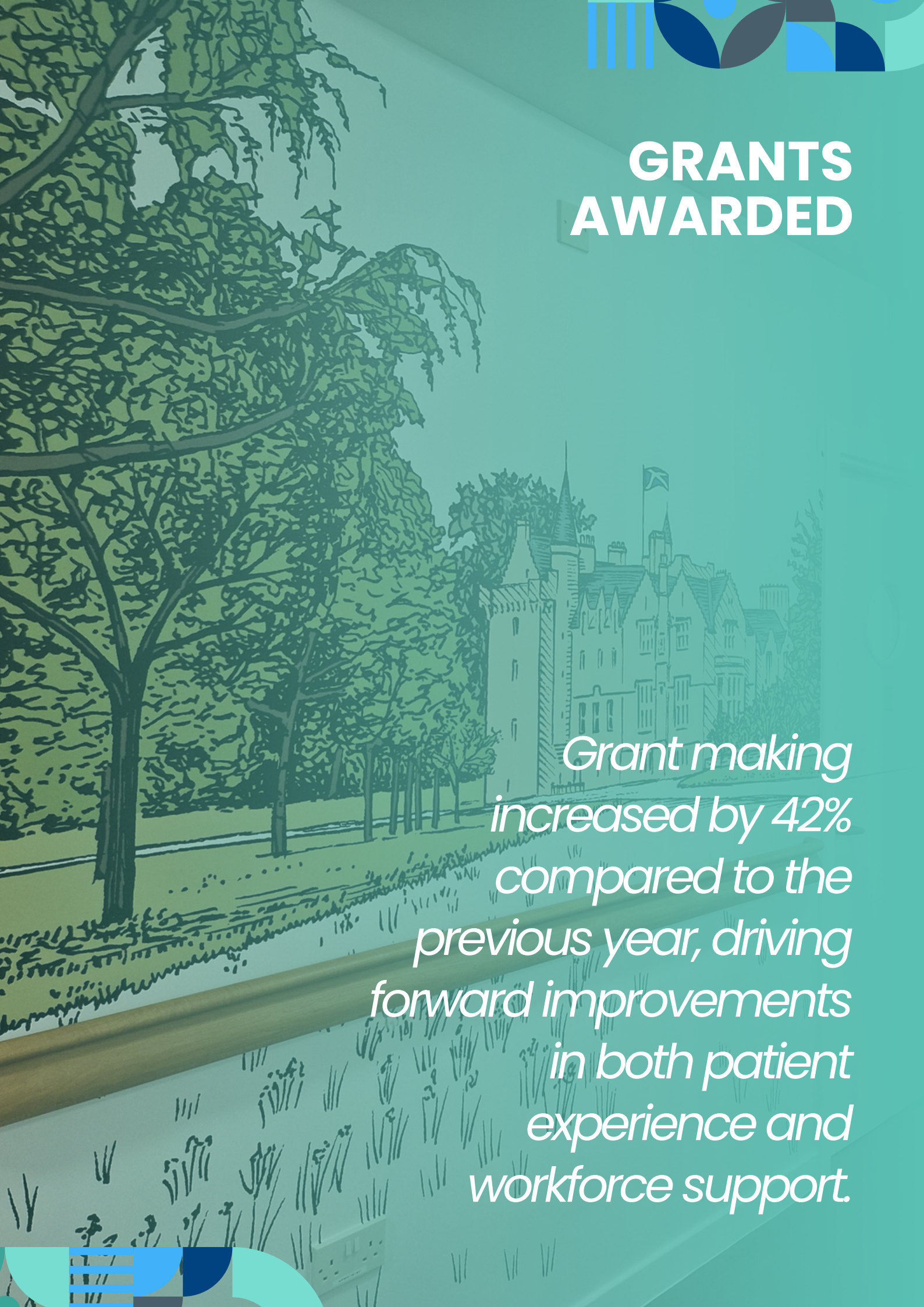


**Alongside NHS Highland's 10,745-strong workforce, over 4,900 healthcare professionals are employed by independent sector providers across the region.**






# GRANTS AWARDED



*Grant making  
increased by 42%  
compared to the  
previous year, driving  
forward improvements  
in both patient  
experience and  
workforce support.*



## GRANTS AWARDED

During the year, the charity continued to make a significant and positive impact across the region by funding a wide range of initiatives aligned with our charitable aims. Trustees prioritised expenditure across the following key areas:

- **Patient expenditure:** Funding was provided for comfort items, therapeutic resources, meaningful activities, and enhancements that improve the overall experience of patients while in NHS Highland's care.
- **Workforce development and support:** The charity invested in advanced training opportunities, leadership development programmes, and wellbeing initiatives designed to strengthen resilience and support the health and morale of NHS staff.
- **Specialist equipment:** Donations enabled the purchase of specialist diagnostic and treatment equipment, enhancing the quality of care and contributing to improved clinical outcomes.
- **Research, Development & Innovation:** Support was given to pilot projects and small-scale research initiatives focused on advancing clinical practice and testing innovative models of care delivery.
- **Pioneering services:** The charity contributed to the development of new and creative approaches to healthcare, trialling ways to deliver services more effectively across the region.
- **Environmental enhancement:** Investment was directed toward improvements in both the built and natural environments across NHS Highland estates, enriching spaces for patients, visitors, and staff.

### WHAT WE FUNDED



**£123,590**

Research &  
Development



**£135,233**

Medical and  
Other Equipment



**£105,323**

Workforce  
Professional  
Development



**£95,553**

Patient Support  
and Amenities



**£154,209**

Workforce Support  
and Amenities



**£376,116**

Building and  
Infrastructure  
Enhancements



## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

This year, we invested significantly to enhance health and social care environments and improve the experiences of patients, residents, and families. These projects go beyond delivering essential care, they create moments of comfort, dignity, and connection that make a real difference in people's lives.

Donations supported music therapy sessions at Invernevis House care home, filling the building with song and giving residents the chance to connect through the power of music.

For children facing loss, we provided specialist books to help them and their families through bereavement, while young patients in Inverness undergoing chemotherapy were offered art therapy as a creative outlet during some of their most difficult days.

At Mid Argyll Hospital, donations supported the creation of a more welcoming space for visitors at the cancer care suite. Some new furnishings and thoughtful touches such as shower caps, disposable slippers, toothpaste, and toothbrushes, were provided to offer added comfort to visiting families. These small but meaningful details help ensure that relatives feel more at ease during what can be an incredibly difficult time.

In Lochaber, cancer patients benefited from access to hydrotherapy, easing symptoms and supporting their wellbeing, while day trips for care home residents offered vital opportunities for socialisation and enjoyment beyond their usual surroundings. Families visiting loved ones at Town and County Hospital in Wick now have a newly refurbished relatives' room, a comfortable and welcoming space during challenging times.

**£471,669**  
*invested in our  
environment and  
patient  
experience*



**HELPING HOSPITALS FEEL  
LESS LIKE HOSPITAL**

Creativity and community were also central to our work, with arts and crafts materials supplied to day centre service users, and gardening equipment and plants helping to transform outdoor spaces into calming green environments. The café at Invergordon Community Hospital was refurbished with an £11,000 investment, making it a brighter, more inviting space for patients, staff, and visitors alike. At Christmas, gifts for residents and patients ensured that no one felt forgotten during the festive season.

Each of these projects, whether large or small, reflects our commitment to making care not only effective but compassionate—helping to create healing environments, brighter experiences, and moments of hope for people across the NHS Highland region.

# Enhancing Sensory Activity at the Isobel Rhind Centre

## IDENTIFYING THE NEED

The Isobel Rhind Centre in Invergordon provides tailored support to adults with learning disabilities through a wide range of bespoke sessional activities.

A key feature of the Centre is its sensory room, used daily by supported people to aid relaxation, stimulation, and wellbeing. Over time, much of the equipment had broken down, reducing the quality of the experience.

## THE CHALLENGE ON THE GROUND

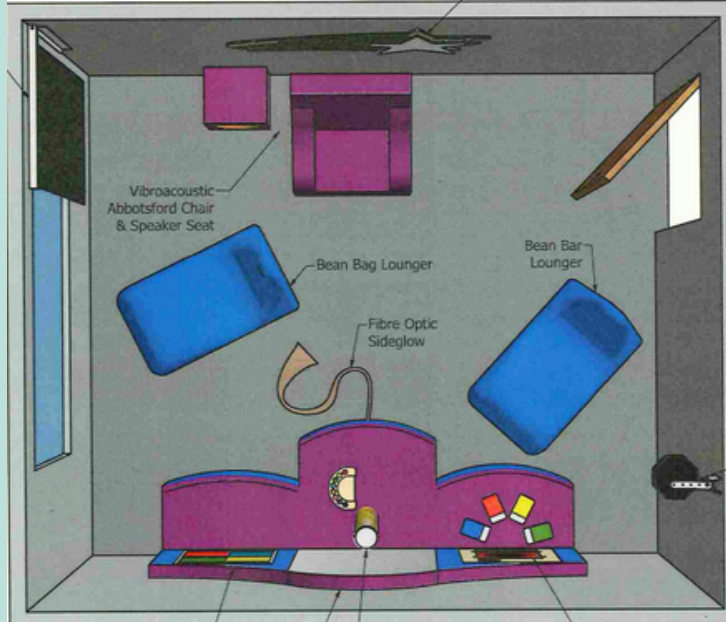
Without fully functioning sensory equipment, supported people had reduced opportunities for stimulation, relaxation, or personalised activity sessions. The absence of interactive and calming features meant sessions could not always be tailored to individual needs. As the only service of its kind in the local area, there was a clear need to refurbish and upgrade the sensory room.

## HOW WE RESPONDED

In 2024 a grant of £6,480 was provided to the Centre to purchase new sensory equipment including:

- an LED mood light and LED infinity tunnel
- Interactive shooting star panel and LED rainbow light and bubble tube
- Vibroacoustic Abbotsford chair with speaker set and soft play equipment

Together, these additions created a modern sensory environment, offering a wide range of experiences to meet diverse preferences and outcomes.



## THE CHANGE WE ACHIEVED

- **For Supported People:** The refurbished room now offers greater choice and flexibility. Users can select equipment that suits their individual needs, whether calming, interactive, or stimulating. Supported people have responded positively to the new experiences, with many making more use of the room as a result.
- **For Staff:** Staff welcomed the transformation, noting that the new equipment made sessions more engaging and effective. They reported improved opportunities to deliver personalised support. Suggestions for the future included adding even more sensory items and colours to further enrich the environment.

## THE JOURNEY AHEAD

The equipment has revitalised the sensory room and enhanced the service's daily offer. The centre will build on this success using feedback from service users and staff. Above all, the project shows the impact of local support for the Isobel Rhind Centre, which made it possible for the benefit of people across Invergordon and East Ross.





# Bringing Play to the Children's Ward at Raigmore Hospital

## IDENTIFYING THE NEED

The Children's Ward at Raigmore General Hospital cares for young patients of all ages, many of whom spend long periods in hospital. While it had an outdoor play area, the equipment was old and limited, with few options for older children. Families and staff stressed the need for both outdoor play and age-appropriate indoor entertainment to support children's wellbeing.

One family, whose child is regularly admitted to the ward, recognised this need first-hand. Staying in a side room that overlooked the outdoor play area, the child decided to ask for donations instead of gifts for their birthday, raising £300 to improve the play space for all children on the ward.

## THE CHALLENGE ON THE GROUND

Children in hospital can feel isolated, anxious, and bored, especially when treatment keeps them from school, friends, and routines. Limited outdoor equipment restricted active play, while older children struggled to find activities to match their interests or distract them during treatment. Both children and parents hoped for more resources to make time on the ward easier and more engaging.

## HOW WE RESPONDED

Thanks to the generosity of the birthday fundraiser, and additional support from the Charity, the ward was able to purchase:

- A wooden playhouse and mud kitchen for the outdoor play area
- Footballs, badminton gear, and other outdoor games
- A range of new Nintendo Switch games to keep older children engaged indoors

Together, these additions provided a balance of active, imaginative, and technology-based play to meet the needs of children of different ages and interests.



## THE CHANGE WE ACHIEVED

- **For Patients:** The outdoor equipment gave younger children opportunities for imaginative and physical play, helping them to burn off energy and enjoy time outside during their hospital stay. Indoors, the updated Nintendo Switch games proved a huge success with older patients, providing distraction during procedures and helping them to connect with peers through multiplayer play. Parents shared how relieved they felt to see their children relaxed and happy despite difficult circumstances.
- **For Families:** Families expressed gratitude for the new play options, especially the type of technology on offer, which many did not expect the hospital to provide. Knowing their children had access to up-to-date and engaging activities brought comfort during what is often a stressful time.
- **For Staff:** Nurses reported that the equipment has made a noticeable difference to the ward environment.

“Of the new Nintendo games, Senior Play Specialist, Stephanie, said *“It helped to relax the children in our care and help to distract them whilst having procedures. Children interacted with each other which meant happier, relaxed patients which helped with staff morale.”*

## THE JOURNEY AHEAD

This small project highlights the vital role of play, whether outdoors, imaginative or tech based, in supporting children's wellbeing during hospital stays. We will continue helping the team secure the little extras that make a big difference for children and families. These purchases were made possible by generous donors, especially the young fundraiser and their family, whose gift has left a lasting legacy on the ward.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



### Neonatal Transport Facility

Approximately 100 babies were born 'pre-term' i.e. before 36 weeks gestational age, over the past four years at Raigmore Hospital. These babies often require admission to the neonatal unit or transfer to other parts of the hospital for specialist care.

To ensure they receive the highest standards of support during these critical early moments, a brand new neonatal transport facility was purchased for the Paediatric Department at a cost of £35,000.

This specialist equipment provides enhanced ventilation and precise temperature control while babies are moved within the hospital, significantly improving safety, comfort, and clinical outcomes for some of the most vulnerable patients in our care. Funding also enabled staff to receive hands-on, simulation-based training, giving them confidence to use the system effectively from the very start.

**£135,233**  
invested in  
specialist  
medical  
equipment

Thanks to your  
support in 2024/25,  
we were able to make  
a real difference for  
the people who  
depend on the care  
and compassion of  
NHS Highland.



# Technology That Transforms Workforce Training

## IDENTIFYING THE NEED

Raigmore Hospital's Endoscopy Unit has been nationally recognised for its quality of care, passing assessment by the Joint Advisory Group on GI Endoscopy (JAG). However, it could not progress to national training faculty status without specialist video equipment, limiting staff development and forcing many patients to travel long distances for procedures that could be delivered locally.

## THE CHALLENGE ON THE GROUND

Endoscopy training is vital for a wide range of staff, from junior doctors and nurses to consultants seeking to increase their skill set. Yet without the right technology, NHS Highland could not provide structured training sessions without disrupting patient care. This meant:

- Limited training capacity for NHS Highland staff.
- Fewer opportunities to upskill the local workforce.
- Patients travelling more frequently for treatment.

Staff knew they were close to becoming a national training centre but lacked the final piece of equipment to get there.

## HOW WE RESPONDED

In 2024 thanks to a grant of £19,000, the Endoscopy Unit was able to purchase the specialist video training equipment it needed. This allows live training sessions to take place in one of the four procedure rooms without reducing patient capacity.

The equipment also enables sessions to be recorded, allowing trainees to review procedures in detail and giving trainers the opportunity to reflect and provide better feedback. Consultant colorectal surgeon, Raymond Oliphant is pictured with the new screen purchased as part of the project.



## THE CHANGE WE ACHIEVED

### For Patients:

- More procedures can now be delivered locally, reducing long, difficult journeys.
- Patients will be seen sooner, with fewer repeat appointments.
- Improved quality of procedures thanks to upskilled staff.

### For Staff:

- Morale has been boosted, with staff describing the change as "something worth celebrating."
- New opportunities for trainers and trainees
- A stronger pipeline of skilled endoscopists for the future.

### For NHS Highland:

- The endoscopy team were encouraged to apply for training centre status by the JAG assessment team in 2024 when the team became the first Acute unit in Scotland to achieve JAG Accreditation, a national mark of excellence.
- Hosting training courses will develop the service and strengthen recruitment.

## THE JOURNEY AHEAD

The new equipment has positioned the Endoscopy Unit as a future centre of excellence. The team plans to run regular courses in basic skills and specialist techniques which supports patients today while building a stronger, better-trained workforce for the future.

The excitement among staff shows just how much this has meant to the team:

“This is going to grow the workforce of tomorrow.”  
“The staff are thoroughly excited to start training”  
“This gives me everything I need in one place.”

Above all, it was made possible by generous donors, whose support ensures better care closer to home for years to come.



## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



£184,327  
of grants  
secured



### Expanding Volunteer Support in Argyll & Bute and North Highland

The charity successfully secured a significant grant from NHS Charities Together which we match funded to support the creation of two new Volunteer Coordinator posts aimed at expanding our volunteer programme to better serve patients and staff in North Highland and Argyll and Bute.

These roles will be instrumental in increasing our volunteer numbers and ensuring more consistent support for patients across these regions. The Co-ordinators, Tasha and Ellie (pictured with Raigmore wayfinding volunteer Rose), each aiming for a portfolio of approximately 50 volunteers, will enhance patient contact and contribute valuable support to ward routines, freeing up staff time for direct patient care.



By building strong partnerships with funding partners, the charity is successfully unlocking additional income to expand the reach and impact of our work.



## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

### Transforming mental health support for children and young people



The charity was one of only six in the UK to receive a grant of £98,200 from the first round of the NHS Charities Together Innovation Challenge fund.

Aimed at improving the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in Lochaber and Inverness and match funded by a further £37,050 from the charity, the initiative will bring together health and community partners to deliver nature-based and creative activities that address health inequalities.

Dr Nick Barnes, Psychiatrist with Highland Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), said of the project: *"This is a hugely significant opportunity for children, young people and their families within Lochaber and Inverness. We are very aware of how hard it can be for some young people to access support, or even engage in what is available, and see this award as an opportunity to address this need. We are looking to build on the growing evidence that working and supporting young people in green, nature-based spaces and/or through creativity, can have a profound impact not only on the individual and their overall sense of wellbeing, but also the inequalities that compound children and young people's mental health difficulties."*

*"Lochaber and Inverness have been chosen as we are looking to build on pilot projects that have been in development in these areas. One of the aims of the project will be to support the roll out of this approach across the whole of the Highlands, making this a sustainable offer for all children and young people."*



Jon Goodwin, Head of Grants at NHS Charities Together, said: *"We're delighted to award the Highland Health Board Endowment Funds charity £98,200 to support projects over the next three years. We know that sadly where someone is born can affect their long-term health, and this and other projects across the UK are aimed at tackling unfair health inequalities and giving every young person the support they need."*

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

### Supporting Wellbeing While Waiting for Care

We were delighted to see significant progress this year in delivering a much-needed project that supports Highland residents as they await treatment for a range of conditions.

In late 2023, the charity secured a grant of nearly £112,000 from NHS Charities Together to launch *Waiting Well* – a collaborative partnership between MySelf-Management and NHS Highland.

The pilot project has enabled the recruitment of two new Link Workers at MySelf-Management who are dedicated to supporting people while they wait for healthcare appointments.

Through a series of one-to-one sessions, the Link Workers have been providing holistic, non-medical support that helps people enhance their emotional wellbeing and improve their quality of life while waiting for procedures. This includes guidance on self-care, symptom management, building positivity, and exploring healthy lifestyle options. Participants have been encouraged to engage with complementary activities online and in person, making self-care a priority.

To maximise accessibility and convenience, sessions are delivered flexibly through Near Me video consultations or by telephone.

Thanks to this project, people are not left unsupported during long waiting periods but instead receive practical tools, encouragement, and connection that make a real difference to their wellbeing.



## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



### Supporting Research and Innovation

The charity is proud to support clinicians and staff from across the region to undertake vital research and pilot studies. Over the year funds were awarded for a diverse range of projects including:

- the exploration of artificial intelligence and virtual reality capabilities to enhance services or trial new approaches to healthcare
- research exploring the effective diagnosis of Long Covid
- research into Alpha-Gal syndrome and the risk of tick-borne encephalitis
- support for a study into the mental health of new mothers as part of the 'Mellow Babies' research project
- the investigation of cutaneous melanoma
- the incidence and management of Lyme disease
- an exploration of the factors which influence rural GP's work within the region

**£123,590**  
*invested in  
Research*

***Investing in  
research today  
drives the  
breakthroughs  
of tomorrow.***

***Our funding  
helps NHS  
teams explore  
innovative  
solutions that  
improve care,  
outcomes, and  
the future of  
health across  
the Highlands.***



# Advancing Cardiac Rehabilitation Through Research and Social Prescribing

## IDENTIFYING THE NEED

The Highland Heartbeat Centre in Inverness has supported cardiac rehabilitation and research since 2005. While hospital-based programmes have proven benefits, uptake is low and many patients remain at risk after a cardiac event. COVID further reduced access, highlighting the need to rethink delivery. Community-based activities and social prescribing are increasingly recognised as ways to address patients' wider physical, psychological, and social needs. A major legacy donation enabled the charity to fund a three-year PhD, ensuring a rigorous approach to exploring new models of support.

## THE CHALLENGE ON THE GROUND

Recovering from a heart problem is about more than just medical treatment. People often face ongoing challenges in staying healthy. Not everyone takes up the offer of cardiac rehabilitation, and many continue to struggle with low activity levels, anxiety, depression, or feelings of isolation.

COVID made things even harder, as many hospital-based programmes were reduced or stopped altogether, and some have not been restarted.

As acute services shift focus, this project will assess how community and third sector initiatives can meet patients' non-medical needs.

## HOW WE RESPONDED

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, in 2024 the charity enabled the Heartbeat Centre to launch a PhD programme led by Julie Munro (pictured).

Julie's PhD investigates "The role of social prescribing in rehabilitation following a cardiac event." Julie's work will include:

- Identifying unmet needs among cardiac patients.
- Exploring referral pathways to existing community programmes such as walking groups, Highlife Highland activities, Bravehearts, and Men's Shed.
- Co-producing services with patients and partners.
- Testing the role of cardiac rehabilitation "signposting" to encourage participation.
- Establishing a Cardiac Advisory Group to involve stakeholders throughout the research.



## THE CHANGE WE ACHIEVED

Although still in its early stages, the project is already shaping service development and collaboration. Initial assessments confirm high levels of unmet need and the importance of a holistic approach to rehabilitation. Early research with 110 patients showed 68% had low physical activity, 39% experienced anxiety or depression, and 65% required unscheduled care. These findings highlight the need for new ways to support recovery after a cardiac event.

## THE JOURNEY AHEAD

Over the coming years, Julie's PhD will continue to investigate how community-based programmes can complement clinical care and address the wider needs of patients following a cardiac event.

Plans for a Cardiac Advisory Group are also well underway.

The work has the potential to:

- Shape new models of cardiac rehabilitation in the Highlands and beyond.
- Inform NHS Highland's approach to social prescribing.
- Support the development of sustainable community-based rehabilitation groups.

By investing in this research, the Highland Heartbeat Centre is helping to pioneer approaches that not only improve patient outcomes but also strengthen collaboration between health services, communities, and the third sector.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



£154,209  
invested in  
workforce health  
and wellbeing

Caring for patients begins with caring for the people who deliver that care. This year, we invested £154,209 in initiatives to support the health, wellbeing and development of NHS Highland staff, helping them feel valued, supported, and equipped to provide the best possible care.

Our funding helped create welcoming spaces where colleagues can rest and recharge. At Invergordon Community Hospital, we provided furniture and supplies for a newly established staff wellbeing room, while staff at Tain Health Centre and Islay Hospital benefited from new furniture for their own dedicated space.

At Belford Hospital in Fort William, massage chairs were introduced to give staff the opportunity to recuperate during demanding shifts, and for the Mid Ross Community Nursing Team, specialist kneeling stools were purchased to support them in their physically demanding work in the community.

Recognising the importance of ongoing learning and development, we supported professional growth across a range of teams. This included sponsoring team paediatric trauma training for staff in Fort William and leg ulcer education for Community Nurses in Ross-shire. We were also proud to sponsor the 2025 NHS Highland Leadership and Management Conference, bringing world-class learning opportunities to leaders and managers across the organisation.

We also invested in resources to help staff look after both their professional practice and their own personal growth. Books were provided for the Raigmore Hospital Respiratory, Renal, and Coronary Care staff libraries, while small appliances were funded across the region to ensure staff could more easily access suitable nutrition and hydration during their shifts.

Together, these small initiatives demonstrate our commitment to supporting those who dedicate their time and energy to caring for others. By enhancing staff wellbeing, learning, and working environments, we are helping to sustain and strengthen the NHS Highland workforce, ensuring they can continue to provide compassionate, high-quality care for our communities.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

### Supporting the hands that heal

This year the charity received an incredible gift from an anonymous donor, enabling the launch of a major new initiative to support the nursing and midwifery workforce at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

Match-funded by the charity, this £150,000 investment will support a three-year programme focused on wellbeing, resilience, and leadership development for nursing staff.

Developed in close collaboration with senior nursing leaders in NHS Highland, the project aims to respond to the growing challenges faced by the profession, including workforce shortages, increasing demands, and the lasting effects of the pandemic. With over 1,600 nurses at Raigmore, the programme will target specific staff groups most in need of support.

*"This project marks a major step forward in our commitment to nursing staff wellbeing," said Evelyn Gray, Associate Nurse Director. "By investing in leadership development, resilience training, and enhanced peer support structures, we hope to foster a more fulfilling workplace that ultimately benefits both staff and patient care."*

The project will commence from April 2025. The charity is deeply grateful to the anonymous donor whose generosity and vision made this initiative possible.



“Our donor said: “Nursing is a giving, caring profession that achieves so much under increasingly challenging circumstances. I want to support the nursing staff at Raigmore in a meaningful way that provides long-term, compounding benefits and is guided by the knowledge and expertise of senior nurses”.

”



# Supporting Staff Wellbeing Through Yoga

## IDENTIFYING THE NEED

The East Ross Integrated Care Team includes 12 social work staff who often face significant pressures in their roles. Social work can be demanding and emotionally challenging, and in the Highlands these challenges are compounded by geographical remoteness. Staff also noted the rising cost of fuel inhibiting social contact outside work.

COVID-19 intensified strain, as many worked from home, some lived alone, and 70% had contracted the virus. Staff saw the need for a positive outlet for physical and mental wellbeing and identified yoga as a gentle, inclusive exercise suitable for all.

## THE CHALLENGE ON THE GROUND

The dedicated team had, at times, struggled with stress and reduced opportunities for social connection. Finding a group activity that could fit into the working day, encourage participation, and provide therapeutic benefits for both body and mind was essential. Just as importantly, we wanted to show staff that their wellbeing mattered and that they were valued and supported in the work they do.

## HOW WE RESPONDED

In 2024, a small grant from the Charity enabled the team to receive a series of yoga sessions during working hours. Staff were consulted beforehand, and yoga was chosen as the most suitable activity to help manage stress and promote wellbeing.

Classes provided:

- A regular, structured opportunity to take a short break from work
- Gentle physical exercise accessible to all abilities
- A relaxing, therapeutic environment focused on reducing stress



## THE CHANGE WE ACHIEVED

- **For Staff:** The sessions had a direct positive effect on wellbeing. Staff reported feeling more energised after yoga and valued the dedicated time for self-care. Feedback from participants included:

“Time out just for me!”

“I never get time for a lunch break and this is one day that I take time to get away from work”.

“I feel so relaxed!”

- **For the Team:** Taking part in a shared activity improved morale and camaraderie, creating a stronger sense of connection across the team. The classes reminded staff they were valued and supported, boosting motivation in their demanding roles.
- **For Service Users:** Although indirect, the impact on service users is clear. Staff who feel calmer, more energised, and better supported in turn are able to provide higher-quality care and support to the people and families they work with.

## THE JOURNEY AHEAD

The yoga sessions demonstrated the value of even small-scale wellbeing projects for staff. Challenges included variable attendance due to workload demands, but feedback overwhelmingly showed the benefits of the initiative and a desire to continue classes.

Investing in staff wellbeing not only supports employees but also strengthens the quality of care and support delivered across the community.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

### New and improved approach to workforce professional development

In 2024, the charity invested significantly in workforce professional development, reflecting a renewed commitment to supporting NHS Highland staff at every level.

A new, streamlined grant process has led to higher-quality applications and broader engagement across disciplines. Funding supported attendance at national and international conferences, accredited training, webinars, and team development days—ensuring staff have access to the latest knowledge, skills, and peer networks.

These opportunities not only enrich individual careers but also strengthen services and improve patient care across the region.

#### Testimonials from staff:

**“THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY, IT HAS GREATLY ENHANCED MY PRACTICE AND TO THE BENEFIT OF MY PATIENTS WHO HAVE DEMONSTRATED AN IMPROVEMENT IN WELLBEING”**

**“THIS LEARNING ACTIVITY HAS REVITALISED MY ENTHUSIASM FOR MY ROLE, AND PROVIDED NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEER SUPPORT AND SHARED LEARNING”.**


**“THERE WAS AN INTERNATIONAL FEEL TO THE CONFERENCE, AND WE WERE ABLE TO SHARE EXPERIENCES AND KNOWLEDGE WITH NURSES AND MEDICAL STAFF THE WORLD OVER”.**

**£105,323**  
*invested in  
workforce  
professional  
development*

**Workforce  
professional  
development  
support increased  
104% on the  
previous year**


**“I WOULD NOW ENCOURAGE ANYONE IN THE TEAM TO FOLLOW UP ANYTHING THAT GIVES THEM A SPARK OF INTEREST THAT THEY MAY USE IN THEIR PRACTICE APPROPRIATELY. I FELT VERY LUCKY AND VERY SUPPORTED TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE, THANK YOU”.**

**“THE QUALITY OF CARE MY PATIENTS RECEIVE IS DEFINITELY BETTER. I AM ABLE TO SIGNPOST THEM TO RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS FIELD WHERE HELPFUL”.**



# PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

*As we look ahead,  
we're laying the  
groundwork for even  
greater impact  
across the region.*



## PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

As we look to 2025/26, the charity is focused on growing stronger—so we can do even more to support NHS Highland and make a lasting difference across our communities.

One of our key goals is to increase awareness of the charity and the impact it makes. We'll be launching a refreshed brand and communications strategy to help us connect more widely with the public, NHS staff, and supporters across Highland and Argyll & Bute. This work will also support our ability to raise more flexible, unrestricted income which give us the freedom to respond quickly and fund the areas of greatest need.

To build stronger relationships with donors, we're exploring the introduction of a new donor management system. This will help us engage more personally with supporters and share clearer updates on how their generosity is making a difference.

We'll also continue to improve how NHS staff and partners access funding from the charity. By streamlining our application process, we hope to make it more transparent, consistent, and easy to use—encouraging more great ideas to come forward that enhance patient care and staff wellbeing.

The charity will also prioritise the development of a strategic plan to enhance ophthalmology services across the region, made possible by the extraordinary generosity of an anonymous donor who gifted £1 million this year in support of this vital area of care.

Behind the scenes, we're also reviewing how our charitable funds are structured and managed. With nearly 300 individual funds, we will ensure each is clearly defined and aligned with our goals, while still respecting the intentions of the original donors. This work, supported by expert advice, will help us manage our resources more effectively and transparently in the years ahead.

Together, these initiatives are about one thing: ensuring the charity is modern, sustainable, and ready for the future—so we can continue supporting the people of Highland and Argyll & Bute in the most meaningful and impactful ways.





# **FINANCIAL & GOVERNANCE REVIEW**



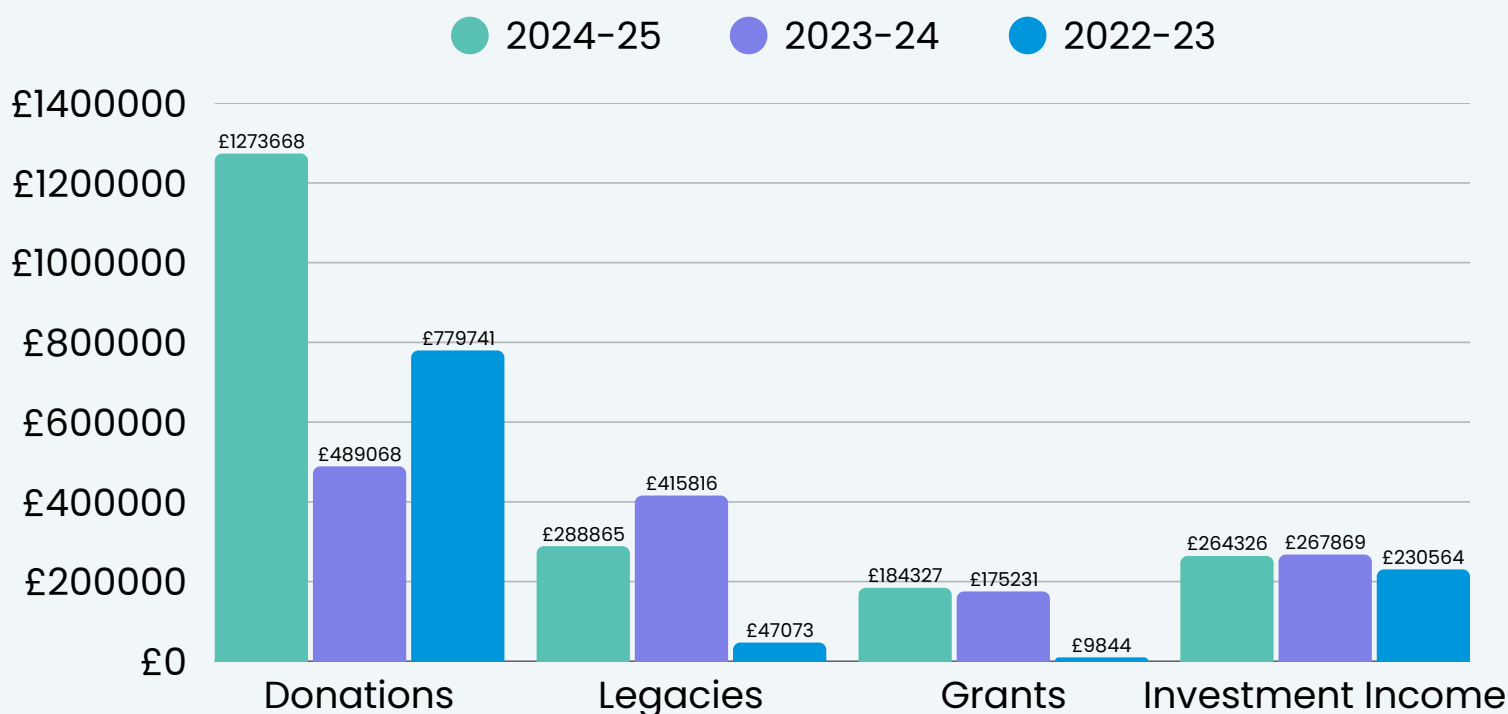
## FINANCIAL REVIEW

As at 31st March 2025 as per the table below, the fund balance is just over £10.5 million. Investment income remained largely comparable to the previous year. There was a large single donation of £1 million received in aid of ophthalmology services which contributes to the significant increase in donations.

	2025 £	2024 £
Fund balance at beginning of period	9,854,792	8,893,469
Income in the period	2,011,186	1,347,984
Expenditure in the period	(1,253,004)	(896,339)
Revaluation (loss)/gain	(77,583)	419,678
Fund balance at end of period	10,535,391	9,854,792

The net outgoing resources on unrestricted funds during the year were £467,573 with losses on disposal of investments and investment valuations resulting in an overall decrease in funds of £540,307. The net incoming resources on restricted funds during the year were £1,225,755 and after accounting for losses on disposal of investments and investment valuations this resulted in an increase in funds of £1,220,906. At the balance sheet date, £3,867,696 was held in general funds and £6,667,695 in restricted funds. More details are shown in the Statement of Financial Activities.

## INCOME SOURCES OVER THE PREVIOUS THREE YEARS





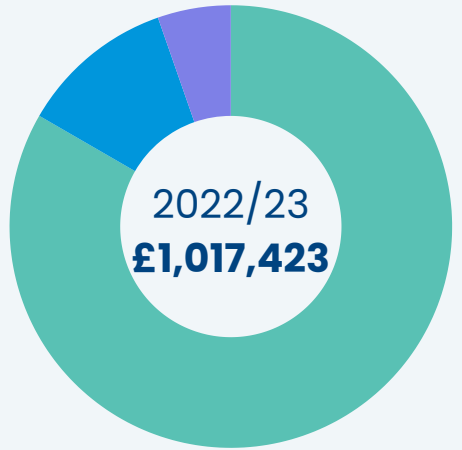
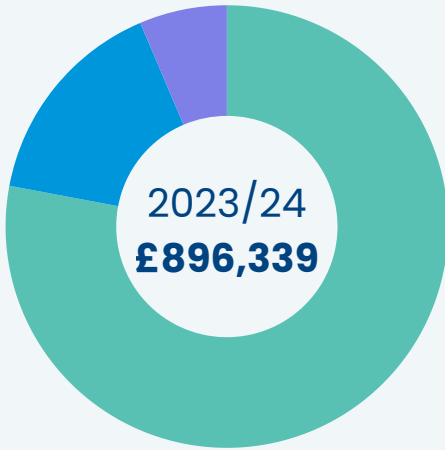
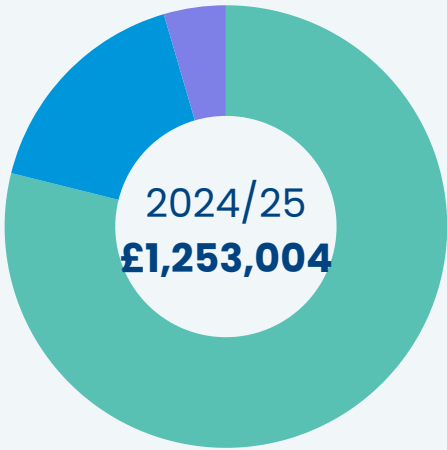


# INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

## INCOME



## EXPENDITURE



Grants awarded **£990,024**  
Staff costs **£208,123**  
Support Costs **£54,857**

Grants awarded **£698,725**  
Staff costs **£140,248**  
Support Costs **£57,366**

Grants awarded **£847,939**  
Staff costs **£115,104**  
Support Costs **£54,380**

To view the complete financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 and Auditors Report please go to [our website](#).



# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
<b>Income from:</b>						
Donations and legacies	73,094	1,666,416	1,739,510	37,456	1,035,309	1,072,765
Charitable activities	-	7,350	7,350	-	7,350	7,350
Investments	174,936	89,390	264,326	228,535	39,334	267,869
<b>Total income</b>	248,030	1,763,156	2,011,186	265,991	1,081,993	1,347,984
<b>Expenditure on:</b>						
Raising funds	35,725	-	35,725	41,885	-	41,885
Charitable activities	679,878	537,401	1,217,279	350,840	503,614	854,454
<b>Total expenditure</b>	715,603	537,401	1,253,004	392,725	503,614	896,339
Net gains/(losses) on investments	(72,734)	(4,849)	(77,583)	174,712	244,966	419,678
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>	(540,307)	1,220,906	680,599	47,978	823,345	871,323
Transfers between funds	(5,125)	5,125	-	(128,733)	128,733	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	(545,432)	1,226,031	680,599	(80,755)	952,078	871,323
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>						
Fund balances at 1 April 2024	4,413,128	5,441,664	9,854,792	4,493,883	4,489,586	8,983,469
<b>Fund balances at 31 March 2025</b>	3,867,696	6,667,695	10,535,391	4,413,128	5,441,664	9,854,792

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

# BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>				
Investments		9,753,996		9,604,774
<b>Current assets</b>				
Debtors	11,164		11,164	
Cash at bank and in hand	894,681		546,971	
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
	905,845		558,135	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	(124,450)		(308,117)	
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
<b>Net current assets</b>		781,395		250,018
		<hr/>		<hr/>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		10,535,391		9,854,792
		<hr/>		<hr/>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>				
Restricted income funds		6,667,695		5,441,664
Unrestricted funds		3,867,696		4,413,128
		<hr/>		<hr/>
		10,535,391		9,854,792

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 24th June 2025.



## POLICIES

---



### RESERVES POLICY

The combined funds are held across a diversified portfolio managed by the charity's investment managers, a current bank account, and term deposits with approved financial institutions. The Trustees ensure that sufficient liquid resources are maintained at all times to meet routine and anticipated payment obligations.

Surplus funds not required for immediate use are transferred to short-term investment accounts. Where longer-term surplus balances are identified, these are allocated to the investment managers for inclusion in the wider investment portfolio, in line with the charity's investment strategy.

The Trustees have agreed a minimum reserves policy for unrestricted funds, maintaining a baseline of £2.5 million. This reserve is held to safeguard the charity's ability to respond to emerging priorities and ensure operational continuity.

Additionally, Trustees have determined that expenditure from the Budget and General Endowment Funds will be limited to estimated revenue income, in order to preserve capital and ensure long-term sustainability.

### CONCERNS AND FEEDBACK RESOLUTION

In 2024, the Charity launched its Concerns & Feedback Resolution Guide, an important step in strengthening how we engage with donors, supporters, and the wider public. The guide ensures that anyone wishing to raise a concern, offer feedback, or make a complaint can do so through a clear and fair process. It reflects our commitment to the Fundraising Code and Fundraising Guarantee, while underlining our dedication to openness, accountability, and continuous improvement.

The guide explains how concerns will be raised, investigated, and resolved, and highlights that constructive feedback, even complaints, helps us identify shortcomings, improve services, and strengthen relationships. Most concerns are likely to be raised because people care about the Charity and its mission, and by responding promptly and fairly we can build trust and enhance supporter care. Trustees will regularly review outcomes and lessons learned to ensure the Charity continues to grow in line with community needs and expectations.







## POLICIES

---



### INVESTMENT POLICY

The Endowment Funds Committee holds broad investment powers, exercised in accordance with legal duties and the requirement to seek and consider expert advice. To this end, the Trustees have appointed Adam & Company Wealth Management as discretionary investment managers, operating within the investment policies set by the Board of Trustees.

In 2024, the Trustees undertook a comprehensive review of their investment policy, with particular consideration given to their fiduciary duties and current best practice in ethical and responsible investment. The Board recognises that responsible investment practices, such as the integration of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors and active ownership, can enhance long-term financial performance while mitigating ESG-related risks.

As part of this review, the Trustees expanded their existing investment exclusions. In addition to long-standing prohibitions on investments in armaments, alcohol, and tobacco, the policy was extended to exclude companies involved in predatory lending, gambling, pornography, and fossil fuel extraction.

Trustees receive quarterly performance reports from Adam & Co, as well as a comprehensive annual review. Income generated from listed investments in 2024/25 totalled £264,326, compared to £267,869 in 2023/24. This year's disposal of investments resulted in a realised gain of £54,135 compared to last years realised loss of £17,241.

The unrealised loss recorded at the balance sheet date was £131,718 (2024 - (gain) £436,919) which reflects ongoing volatility in global financial markets, driven by a combination of economic uncertainty, inflationary pressures, and geopolitical tensions. While income from listed investments remained stable, market fluctuations impacted the capital value of the portfolio. Trustees continue to monitor performance closely in partnership with the investment managers to ensure alignment with the charity's long-term investment objectives.



## STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Highland Health Board Endowment Funds is a statutory corporation created by statute and is a charity recognised by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator under reference (SC016791), having its principal address at the Finance Department, Assynt House, Beechwood Park, Inverness IV2 3BW.

The charity is administered in terms of section 82, 83 and 84A of the NHS (Scotland) Act 1978 and the Charity and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and Trustees are those appointed as NHS Highland Board Members by Scottish Ministers ex officio. NHS Highland is therefore the corporate trustee.



To accomplish the work of the charity, the Trustees of NHS Highland appoint five of their members to serve on the Endowment Funds Committee (EFC). The EFC meets quarterly to review funding proposals, oversee the governance of the charity, and shape its strategic direction. The Committee ensures that all activities remain aligned with the charity's objectives and deliver meaningful benefit to NHS Highland and its communities.

The EFC holds delegated authority to approve individual grants between £25,000 and £100,000. Any grant request exceeding £100,000 is referred to the full Board of Trustees for consideration and approval. In carrying out their role, Trustees must ensure that the wishes of donors, in particular, legally binding conditions, set out in a will or similar document, are respected.

In addition, delegated authority is granted to designated members of NHS Highland staff to accept donations in line with the charity's aims and to provide support for funding requests up to £25,000, within their approved Delegated Level of Authority. All proposed expenditures are subject to appropriate due diligence and must ultimately be authorised by appointed officers of the charity.

Financial administration and record-keeping are carried out by the NHS Highland Financial Services Department, under the direction of the NHS Highland Director of Finance, ensuring robust financial controls and compliance with regulatory requirements.



## OUR TRUSTEES

---

The trustees of the charity during 2024-25, and up to the date the financial statements were approved, are listed below. No key management personnel are directly employed by the charity.


Tim Allison	Joanne McCoy
Alexander Anderson	Gerry O'Brien
Graham Bell	Boyd Peters
Elsbeth Caithness	Catriona Sinclair
Alasdair Christie	Louise Bussell
Muriel Cockburn	Karen Leach
Sarah Compton-Bishop	Steve Walsh
Heledd Cooper	Emily Austin
Garrett Corner	Bert Donald
Philip MacRae	Fiona Davies (Appointed 1 April 2024)
Neil Wright (Appointed 1 April 2025)	Janice Preston (Appointed 1 January 2025)

### INDUCTION AND TRAINING OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees places great importance on effective induction and ongoing development to ensure members are fully equipped to meet their governance responsibilities.

New Trustees receive a comprehensive induction pack containing key governance documents, the charity's constitution, recent financial reports, and relevant policies. They also meet with the Charity Lead Officer to discuss the charity's objectives, regulatory obligations, and current priorities. This process helps to establish a strong foundation of knowledge and engagement from the outset.

Trustees are encouraged to take part in learning opportunities to remain informed and aligned with best practice. In 2024, the Board benefited from a specialist session with the charity's investment fund managers, providing an in-depth review of the Investment Policy. Additionally, the Lead Officer delivered a development session for all Trustees, focusing on their role and the wider remit of the charity.







# THANK YOU



Click to read more about how  
we're making a difference for  
people in the Highlands and  
Argyll & Bute.



WE'RE COMMITTED  
**TO GOOD FUNDRAISING**  
goodfundraising.scot

**OSCR**  
Scottish Charity Regulator  
[www.oscr.org.uk](http://www.oscr.org.uk)

**Registered  
Charity  
SC016791**