



Highland Senior Citizens Network

Nothing about us without us

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) SCO34260

December 2022

Chair's Introduction: Warm Wishes and Hot Topics

You may well be aware of the growing awareness and discussion around 'hidden disabilities'. There are a wide range of such hidden disabilities that people are living with.

The fact that not all disabilities are visible certainly shouldn't mean that they are given lesser importance, or that people experiencing them are offered fewer resources or solutions. Deafness is one that affects a huge proportion of the population.

Deafness, especially in older people, we know, can mask depression and dementia. It can lead to social isolation and a range of further issues that decrease quality of life. Modern technology offers the possibility to transform the experience of individuals whose lives are blighted by hearing loss. Such provision needs the time and expertise of skilled practitioners. We trust our Service Providers are conscious of this need, and we urge them to resource the relevant practitioners appropriately.

We wish all our members an enjoyable Festive Season and extend our gratitude to those who have roles in looking after our health and wellbeing.

Ian McNamara

Staying in touch with Highland Senior Citizens Network

Phone or e-mail our Co-ordinators

Anne McDonald [07933 653313]

anne-hscn@outlook.com

Jo Cowan [07933 653585]

jo-hscn@outlook.com

call the HSCN phone: 07716 884 989

e-mail on hscn@hotmail.co.uk

write to Box 301, Mailboxes,
8 Church Street, Inverness IV1 1EA

visit our website www.hscn.co.uk

follow us on Twitter and our
Facebook page

Highland Senior Citizens Network will be taking a break from Friday 23rd December 2022 until Wednesday 4th January 2023.



We are looking forward to hearing from our members in the new year about what matters to you and what we should be highlighting in 2023!



Together We Care
with you, for you



Mental Health in Older Adult Services

Over the past year NHS Highland has developed its first ever 5-year strategy: Together We Care, with you, for you. This was written entirely based on what we heard through discussions with our workforce, partners and the population of Highland. Our strategy covers all ages, all walks of life, and all the areas of health and care we deliver. It will take us on an exciting journey over the next five years, and we are already working hard to deliver its objectives.

Within our Mental Health and Learning Disabilities services, we want to continue to work with our population, service users, colleagues, partners and third sector organisations as we deliver this strategy. We want to ensure that the improvements we make are informed by your opinions and experiences. You are the experts on what matters to you!

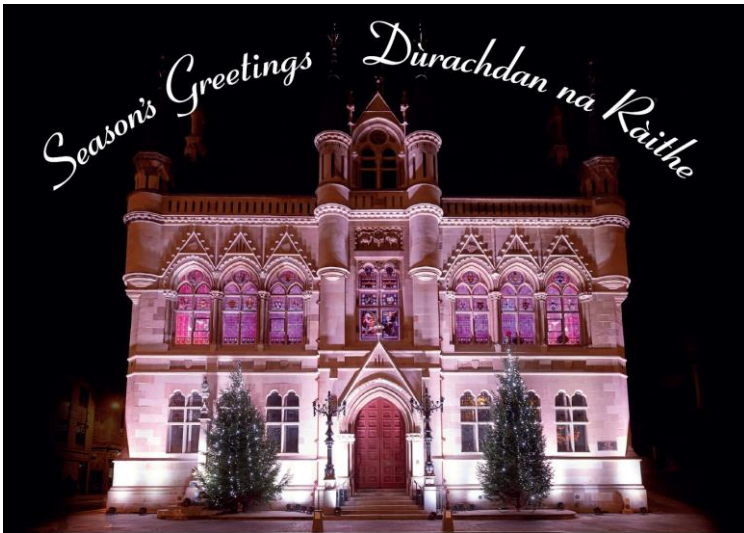
The themes we would love to discuss with you are older adult mental health, dementia, learning disabilities, drug and alcohol, and mental health generally. We would like to hear from carers, those with lived experience, family members and friends. We want to know what works, what doesn't, what we can do better, and what we can do to improve our services to benefit those older adults with mental health illness. We want to listen and to learn.

We need a service level strategy to guide us, and we cannot write it without your input; the services we provide exist for you, so we need to make sure they reflect your needs.

We would like to engage with groups and individuals. How we do this is entirely up to you! We can come to you, organise group feedback sessions, or join in with events you already have organised. Drop an email to **Susan Young** at nhsh.togetherwecareideas@nhs.scot to find out more!

If you are not online, please speak to Anne or Jo, Highland Senior Citizens Network Co-ordinators, and ask them to pass your contact details on to us and we will get in touch with you.

Susan is our guest at our Highland Hello Online Tea-break on 26th January, 11 a.m. until 12 noon. Please contact Anne anne-hscn@outlook.com for a link if you wish to join us.



A Warm Invitation from the Inverness Provost and Councillors

Inverness Town House Open for Christmas

Join us on **Friday 16th & Saturday 17th December 2022** to view the Town House decorated for Christmas.

Complimentary refreshments and entertainment from **12noon to 3pm...** oh, and a few surprises....

This is a free event, but donations welcomed in aid of MFR Cash For Kids.

No need to book – just come along.

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

**Welfare Support
Freephone Helpline
0800 090 1004
welfare.support@highland.gov.uk**

Are you missing out on benefits you might be entitled to, or needing support with money matters or personal budgeting advice?

Get in touch with Highland Council Welfare Support Team for free confidential help and advice.

Writings from Keith

“Autobiography Continued”

Having travelled in Europe, Asia and North Africa, I finally settled in Inverness, having left home late.

Now I live in the suburbs in a nice Council flat.

I am permanent here, but still like to travel locally.

I call my house “DUNTRAMPIN”, having lived off the land.

Warm Words from Our Highland Older People's Champions



Councillor Isabelle MacKenzie

Highlands Older People's Champion

isabelle.mackenzie.cllr@highland.gov.uk 07787 007816

Having brought the Motion to Full Council last December to take effect post May Election, I am delighted that we have three Highland Older People's Champions now.

We are all able to bring our different experiences to this role and, over the next year, will endeavour to increase our presence and connections across Highlands, bringing to the Highland Council chamber anything that might need addressing. We also want to find out what is going on in the Highlands with our senior sector of the population.

I have been involved with a variety of charities with retired folk over the last decade or so. This age group brings a huge relevance to our society in Highland, which we must highlight. There are a variety of clubs and activities going on, and I hope to find out who is doing what where. I am also keen on intergenerational aspects too so, hopefully we can help connect folk and give them a voice. I would like to see improvements around malnutrition and poverty, increase awareness about prevention, boost physical activity where possible and therefore help with retired folks' health and wellbeing.

The last two years during the pandemic have had some effect on these groups, some stopped and not restarted. For example, I'm helping restart a Re-engage Inverness group to be able to meet up again. So, it would be helpful through the HSCN members to know what groups are out there and which need help.

Since August, I have attended the SOPA (Scottish Older People's Assembly) Conference in Perth. Also, we have met up with Catriona Melville, Policy Engagement & Campaigns Officer Age Scotland. There are monthly meetings with other OPC Councillors, which will give an insight as to what they are doing in other areas of Scotland. I have been in touch with Connecting Carers, hearing what help and support there is for Unpaid Carers. Housing and transport have been the most mentioned topics. Age-friendly communities came up at the SOPA Conference, and I am keen to campaign that Highland will have an Age-friendly community in time. Public Transport, as you know, has been much talked about in recent months.

I would like to emphasise that all our seniors across Highland must ask for any support and help if they need it. It is known that a huge proportion do not know about entitlements which could help them, especially going forward through the winter months. So please get in touch.

Isabelle



Councillor Bill Boyd

Highland Older People's Champion

bill.boyd.cllr@highland.gov.uk 07787 105813

I'm hoping many of you will know how to contact me by now. If you don't yet, I will be trying to remedy that soon, early in the new year.

As your ambassador within Highland Council my aim as champion will be, in the first instance, to listen to your needs and wishes in relation to council services. If I can help you with anything in this regard, do not hesitate to contact me by e-mail, text or phone.

I have already been working with the Inverness Provost to arrange tours of the Town House with afternoon tea. Very soon there will also be a weekly Cosy Café in the Bught Stop for those of you who can get there easily. This is just a start, and, if anyone can suggest other venues for afternoon tea, please let me know.

After talking to a few people directly about what they would like to see done, I have discovered that improved communication with the council by all means, including not just phone but also e-mail and letter, is near the top of the list.

Many of you have told me that it can be frustrating hanging on the telephone for long periods trying to get a response. I've experienced this myself, and it's very time-consuming. That sounds like something we could seek to improve.

Of course, I want to know all of your ideas for improving council services. Please let me know - but don't expect everything to get done at once. However, you are entitled to assume that I will be paying attention.

Have a very good festive time. I hope to hear from you soon.

Bill



Councillor Thomas MacLennan

Highland Older People's Champion

Thomas.MacLennan.cllr@highland.gov.uk 07760 708062

As a Highland Older People's Champion, I'm looking forward to having opportunities to listen to and raise issues around improving housing choices and housing suitability for older people across Highland. This is a real passion of mine.

It's not just a case of responding to a need for aids and adaptations as people age, but also planning and building better communities and housing that will be suitable for old and young alike.

It would be fantastic to see our communities become more age-inclusive and dementia-inclusive, and to have generations mixing more. I love the thought of all generations socialising together, supporting and learning from each other.

There are specific issues around ageing in rural communities - and I look forward to hearing from you about your experiences around this and raising these issues at a strategic level in Highland Council.

Thomas

Some Magic Needed for A Cinderella Service

Our introduction touched on social and cultural exclusion that can affect people living with hearing problems or deafness, and the consequent adverse impact on someone's wellbeing. Long waiting times to access a service which can provide positive and life-enriching support take their toll, not just on people awaiting support but also on the staff providing it.

With a current waiting time of over 20 weeks in the NHS Highland area for an initial assessment from Audiology, it's surely time for the fairy-wand of resources to be waved decisively in the direction of this vital service. Audiology has been operating without a permanent Head of Service for 3 years and running with significant staffing shortages.

There is a lack of understanding about the importance of Audiology Services. It is estimated there are 945,000 people living with hearing loss in Scotland, one in six of the population, and of those, 70 per cent are over 70. This figure is projected to increase by 50 per cent by 2034.

Technology continues to offer better solutions in terms of more effective hearing aids, but people require significant support to maximise the benefits of these aids. Aids need to be programmed appropriately for an individual so that they adjust and adapt to their lifestyle and environments.

If we are planning a future where people are less isolated by deafness, we need to be planning an Audiology service which is well enough resourced to support people experiencing hearing loss to access the best solution for their individual circumstances.

Brian Devlin is one of our HSCN Trustees and has been profoundly deaf for most of his life.

He said “When I was a child my mum asked whether my hearing would ever improve. The doctor told her ‘No. But the equipment he’ll use will.’ And he was absolutely right. Nowadays, with Bluetooth streaming and loop-systems and a whole range of innovations, a new world of possibilities has opened up for deaf and hard of hearing people. Audiologists are the specialist clinicians, the link between industry that produces the latest state of the art hearing aids, and the deaf patient. That’s why I am concerned that we are learning of an audiology department that is under-staffed.

*I would urge health leaders to make the staffing and development of this service a priority. I’d also like to see more thought going into the simple things – like how patients can get replacement hearing aid batteries in places where patients are. I noticed on a recent visit to the hospital that the audiology department no longer hands them out. This is a big mistake in my view. People often pop in when they are in the hospital anyway. Same with GP surgeries. These discussions **must** include patients. Ask us what would make life easier for us.”*

In January 2022, the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care announced that a **national audiology review group** would be established to examine hearing services provided to both children and adults in health boards across Scotland, as well as to make recommendations on improvements for the service.

In March 2022, the Cabinet Secretary announced the review group would be led by independent chair Professor Jacqueline Taylor and tasked with making recommendations to improve audiology services in Scotland. This work includes a separate reference group to ensure lived experience is at the heart of the review process and wider stakeholder views are understood and considered by the national audiology review group.

Warm Spaces, Warm Welcomes and Hot Drinks and Food

A growing number of community groups, community venues, churches and businesses are offering somewhere warm to come, spend time with other folk and have a hot drink/soup/food often completely free of charge. We’ve heard from many of these groups that it’s as much about giving people opportunities to come together in the community as it is about everyone pulling together to get through difficult times. Please try and support your local groups by going along!

The spaces and events are too numerous to mention here – but some are registered on www.warmspaces.org . Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI) has been gathering information on winter support across Highland and has a list on their website <https://www.highlandtsi.org.uk/> If you want to know about opportunities in your area but you aren't online, please contact our Co-ordinators Anne or Jo and they can check what is listed for your area.

Warm Thoughts for Winter.... Our Communities Caring and Coping

It's been heart-warming to hear from you about things that are working. Here's a story from the Minginish area that shows what community-spirit can achieve.

New Beginnings in Minginish Hall



So many communities are in this position: their lunch club or social group stopped over Covid, and for various reasons hasn't started up again. What do you do about it?

One young community member in the Minginish area of Skye has tackled this gap face on, with a bit of trepidation and a lot of humour. Claire Sinclair attends a baby group in Minginish Hall on a Thursday. *"My grandparents moved to Skye a year and a half ago, and I was really aware that so many things had stopped due to covid. The wee lunch club which had met in local eating places was struggling to restart because of lack of an accessible venue. I'm in the hall on a Thursday anyway, so I thought, "Why don't I organise the lunch club?" I'm full of good ideas, me!"* she laughs.

Claire did something about her "good idea", visiting her former teacher, one of the organisers of the past lunch club, to discuss plans. So was born a little lunch club in Minginish Hall on a fortnightly basis for the winter months.

Members of the local community have been really supportive, with volunteers beginning to come forward and the local community minibus offering transport. 12 people came along to the first lunch, and 19 to the next one.

Claire reflects on the benefits of having such a local gathering. *“It’s about giving people something to do without having to travel too far. Something to look forward to. Just even the activity of going out is good for folk. There may just be small numbers when you do something very locally – but it’s good to bring people together in their own community.”*

Two happy attendees echo Claire’s thoughts about the benefits of a local gathering:

Janice: “The local community mini-bus with a volunteer driver can collect the less mobile, or those no longer able to drive. My husband, Charles, certainly falls into that group. We have met new people who have made their home in Minginish. For me, the lunch club provides a very sociable group (Charles hadn’t been out in company since before lockdown). Also, for me, it means a day off from the kitchen! We had a 3-course lunch for only £5.00. A lovely day!”

Jess: “As you can see from the photograph, we have a very happy group of senior citizens glad to be meeting up once more. We share time with old friends, new friends, and thoughts of those gone now, while enjoying a lovely, home-made meal together. How rewarding it is to hear their laughter and enjoyment in spite of the times of the Pandemic and that a young member of our community has taken on organising it, raising morale to the benefit of this group.”

Would you like a free hot meal and some company?

Come along and join us at
Hilton Community Centre
for a **free lunch**; a warming bowl of soup, a hot main course, a cup of tea or coffee and a chance to have a chat

Every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday
from 11th January until Easter 2023
12.00 – 14.00

All welcome

If you have a good idea that’s working in your community, please continue to share it with us! We can then share it with others.

This poster from Hilton is just one of many initiatives aimed at keeping people warm and connected over the winter period.

The Rotary Club of Inverness Riverside has produced two information posters for the Inverness area: –

Sources of free emergency food
Sources of Help and Advice
These can be found on their Facebook page

Again, if you are not online and need this information, please feel free to contact Anne or Jo.

Warming the pot for 2023



Our Online Tea-breaks on Thursdays at 11 a.m. have become a firm fixture by popular demand. We welcome regular and new attendees. Contact Anne for the link: anne-hscn@outlook.com

We're taking a break now until 12th January 2023. From January, we will be looking at staying safe and well, avoiding scams and fraud, keeping moving and keeping warm. We have guests from Victim Support, Police Scotland and others to be confirmed.

We're looking for new guests and topics to discuss – all suggestions welcome.

Thanks to Norma for this fabulous Tea-break poster!

Thursday 12th January: Tea-break starts 11 a.m. Scams Workshop from 11.30

Thursday 19th January: Eden Court Film-Making Project

Thursday 26th January: NHS Highland Older Adults Mental Health

Warm Congratulations to Black Isle Cares on their Queen's Award!



The lovely crew at **Black Isle Cares** have been awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. The award is the group equivalent of an MBE and is an honour given for **outstanding** achievement by groups of volunteers.

BIC Chair, Anne McDonald, is seen here accepting the award from Lord Lieutenant of Ross & Cromarty, Mrs Joanie Whiteford, at a celebration and awards ceremony held during their intergenerational board games session on Thursday 8th December.

This well-deserved award recognises the sterling work done by the BIC Team in *"promoting wellbeing and reducing loneliness and isolation in the Black Isle"*.

Congratulations to all involved, and a special "shout-out" to Anne and Joanie for such fantastic smiles!

Warm Congratulations too to Pat Ross of Great Wilderness Challenge (GWC) on her well-deserved British Empire Medal (BEM) for services to charity. Highland Senior Citizens Network is extremely grateful to be one of the local charities supported by GWC. We received the fantastic sum of **£4400** this year.

NHS DEAF SERVICES DROP IN CENTRES



INVERNESS

The Mac Café, The Mackenzie Centre,
23A Culduthel Road,
Inverness
Monday and Friday - 10am - 12pm
Wednesday - 2.30pm – 4.30pm

INVERNESS

NHS Vaccination Centre,
1st Floor, Eastgate Shopping Centre,
Inverness
Tuesday - 10am – 12pm
Thursday - 2pm – 4pm

AVIEMORE

The Glen Centre
17 Kinveachy Gardens, Aviemore
The last Tuesday every month
10am – 1pm

DORNIE

Airdferry Resource Centre,
12 Aitemore Road, Dornie, By Kyle
The 3rd Wednesday every month
12pm – 3pm

ULLAPOOL

The MacPhail Centre,
5 Mill Street, Ullapool
Every 2nd Tuesday, every 2 months
10am – 1pm
(Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec)

BRORA

Brora Village Hub,
Muirfield Road, Brora
The 3rd Friday of every 2 months
10am – 12pm
(Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sept, Nov)

DINGWALL

Deaf Services, 4 Fodderty Way,
Dingwall Business Park, Dingwall
The 3rd Tuesday every month
10am – 1pm

PORTREE

Tigh Na Drochaid Centre,
Bayfield, Portree
The 1st Thursday every month
12pm – 3pm

TAIN

Tain Health Centre,
Craighill Terrace, Tain
The 2nd Thursday every month
10am – 1pm

FORT AUGUSTUS

The Telford Centre,
Abertarff Place, Fort Augustus
The 3rd Thursday every month
11am – 2pm

NHS Deaf Services, 4 Fodderty Way, Dingwall Business Park, Dingwall, IV15 9XB
Tel: 01349 868711 Mob: 07887 833889
Email: highland.deafservice@nhs.scot

Carers' Corner

NHS Highland Showcasing the Work of Carer Organisations in Highlands Event on Carers' Rights Day – 24th November – Inshes Church.

This was an excellent event: the carers' organisations gave short video presentations outlining their services, and attendees had plenty of time to chat with representatives at their information stalls. We'll be asking each of the organisations to provide an article for the news-sheet in the New Year – but, in the meantime, here are contacts for each of them if you want to be in touch.

Organisation	Web-link	Phone Contact
Alzheimer Scotland	To find support near you https://www.alzscot.org/findsupport Support and activities for carers of people living with dementia	Inverness Dementia Resource Centre 01463 711707 24-hour Helpline 0808 808 3000
Befrienders Highland	https://www.befriendershighland.org.uk/ Offer befriending services for carers	01463 712 791
Carr Gomm	https://www.carrgomm.org/help-support/innovation-and-development/community-contacts Community Contacts Project	01546 886285 07766 925388
Creativity In Care	https://creativityincare.org/ Creative projects supporting carers	07716 111 585
Connecting Carers	https://connectingcarers.org.uk/ Carers Centre for the Highlands – offering information, support and activities for unpaid carers and representing carers' interests	Carer Support Line 01463 723560 Office 01463 723575
Connecting Communities	Caring for the Carer Project https://connectingcommunities.co.uk/caring-for-the-carer/ (East Sutherland-based)	07394 965 042
Mobilise	https://www.mobiliseonline.co.uk/highland Online service for carer support	No phone no. Online service
Partners in Advocacy	https://www.partnersinadvocacy.org.uk/what-we-do/carers/ Carers Advocacy Service in Highland	01463 513633
Support in Mind (now Change Mental Health)	https://www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk/ Carer support for those caring for someone with mental health problems	0131 662 4359
Thriving Families	https://www.thrivingfamilies.org.uk/ Support for those caring for children and young people	07514 120288

A Warm Welcome Back



IT revisited.

Since his last appearance in print, IT's life has been pretty mundane – to the relief of his so-called master whom he has now got wrapped round all four paws. In support of a charity called the 'Highland Senior Citizens Network,' IT led a motley crew on a seven-mile sponsored hike in the wilds south of his home turf. At an appropriate juncture he left

his calling card to confirm he had completed the course.

Recently his master noticed his rudder was at half-mast and tending to droop between his legs. IT was not quite his usual boisterous self. Eventually the master decided to seek help. On phoning the vet the receptionist asked what the problem was. This was duly explained to which came the reply. 'I know what he's got – he's got swimmers tail.' Confused, the master wondered if he had heard right. 'Has he been swimming recently?'

'Yes,' was the reply – the day before he had spent most of his canal walk more in the freezing canal than out of it. 'That's it,' said my new friend. 'Don't worry – it will get better by itself.' It did. After a few days the rudder was horizontal again. Search Engine confirmed everything – the posh name is Caudal Myopathy. Common in his tribe – why it happens is a mystery.



Armed with this new knowledge, IT's master was keen to share it with other masters of IT's tribe that he meets regularly in the park. 'Oh yes we've all had that – just ignore it.' We live and learn.

IT's master is so ancient that every year a human nurse invites him for a check to see if it is worth renewing his TV Licence. 'You've lost a bit of weight,' said the concerned nurse. 'True,' said the master, 'I'm in a new relationship and my new partner is a lot younger and keeps me very active.' The nurse was rendered speechless. 'Don't worry,' replied the master- 'IT has four legs.'

The accompanying photograph of IT, sitting on a knee, watching The Simpsons would not happen on his master's watch. Real dogs don't do that.



Ùisdean, Head Gardener, here again with a small selection of gardening advice for the month. The advice this month comes from one of our young apprentices – Mr David Douglas.

David Douglas Author Unknown Image courtesy Wikipedia

David writes: “Ùisdean is a man of taste and it honours me to write this piece – I hope I do him justice.

November is the time for planning and if the weather is clement making improvements. Here are a few tasks you may feel obliged to carry out:

- *If you have a greenhouse observe closely the night-time temperature and ventilate during the day if it is warm. Also reduce the application of moisture to a minimum.*
- *This may be the final time you have to venture forth to cut your lawn area for the year*
- *If required open up and till new borders but avoid working if there is an abundance of moisture in the soil.*
- *Prune soft fruits – I cannot reconcile myself to the vast ocean of knowledge that is the Internet, but the considerable botanist Garden Ninja has some useful videos on the maritime location YouTube -*
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuhMHRXyf2bvga2Mq0DJvwQ>
- *Increase your plant stock by taking hardwood cuttings of plants such as buddleia, forsythia and spiraea.*
- *For early vitamin B next year sow broad beans under cloches.*
- *Plants which look at their best in November include pampas grass, holly and winter jasmine.*



Having completed the piece, I now feel a little more at ease, and with the nights getting longer and the cold increasing I look forward to spending time at the fireside.”



Notes from Ùisdean – David (1799-1834) hailed from Scone and became one of the great Scottish plant explorers and has the Douglas Fir tree named after him. Our local area contains four specimens of this tree some of which are the tallest trees in the UK. These are at Reelig Wood – <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-26729935>.

A grove has also been planted near Scone in his honour -

<https://www.visitscotland.com/info/see-do/the-david-douglas-grove-p2376231>

David explored in North America and Hawaii – where he died in mysterious circumstances aged only 35 years old. There is a fascinating film about his life and work at - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1I8zfxLXt_8



His journals are also worth reading and some can be found at -

<https://archive.org/details/journalkeptbydav00dougiala>

With this seasonal image, Ùisdean and his team wish all readers a very Happy Christmas and best wishes for 2023. Join us for more gardening tips in the New Year!

The Board and Staff of Highland Senior Citizens Network send our warm wishes to you all. We offer thanks for the many acts of support and collaboration that allow us to do what we do. Special thanks to older people across Highland, and to those supporting them, for sharing their experiences, and for taking time to add their voices so that there is “nothing about us without us”.

Our festive wish is that Highland Senior Citizens Network’s activities have made positive change toward our aims this year and will continue to do so in 2023:

Our Aims are for all older people living In Highland to

- **stay healthy** and safe, enjoying good quality of life and good mental health
- **live life** as independently as we can
- **be fully involved** in decisions affecting us and have some control of our care
- **access care and support** services when needed which are fit for purpose
- **have opportunities to participate** in, and **contribute** to, community activities, personal relationships and social interaction
- **feel valued and recognised** for our contribution and experience
- **have our human rights respected**

Mental Health – A Continuing Hot Topic and Priority

Finally, we want to draw your attention to the publication of the final report of the Scottish Mental Health Law Review. The implementation of its recommended actions will be a hot topic for some years to come. Here's what the Review Team have to say about the process and recommendations:

Scottish Mental Health Law Review Final Report - now published

[The final report of the Scottish Mental Health Law Review](#) represents the product of over three years work in the first major review of mental health and capacity law in Scotland in over 20 years. It includes direct quotes from many of the voices of lived experience (including unpaid carers) as well as practitioners and relevant groups and organisations.

Contributors have helped us to develop a new, positive vision of our mental health law with three key aspects:

- strengthening the voice of people who use services
- reducing the need for coercion in the system
- giving effect to all people's rights, including economic and social rights

Our recommendations will bring Scotland in line with thinking and practice internationally as assessed against developing human rights standards, like the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

It will take some time to fully implement our recommendations. We have therefore separated them into short, medium and long term.

There are excellent practitioners and good practice in some areas already. This can be expanded. Addressing stigma and culture change can also begin at once.

Some recommendations will depend on greater resources and an increase in the number of mental health practitioners.

Co-ordination will be required within government to address some areas that cut across different departments. This will not be easy but is consistent with the developing picture in Scotland of human rights for everyone which should be clarified in the Scottish Government's forthcoming Human Rights Bill.

John Scott (Chair), Karen Martin and Graham Morgan (Vice-Chairs), Alison Rankin, Jill Stavert and Colin McKay

The report, a summary report and recommendations, an easy-read version and implementation plans can all be found on the Review website –

<https://www.mentalhealthlawreview.scot/>