



# Annual Report

## July 2017 – March 2019

Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust is a Company Limited by Guarantee registered in Scotland: SC401019 and a registered Scottish Charity: SC042587.

Registered office: The Trust Office, Dornoch Road, Bonar Bridge, Sutherland, IV24 3EB

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**Mission Statement:**

Ensure that long-term, sustainable benefits are achieved throughout the community and the Kyle of Sutherland area.

**Primary Objectives:**

- a) To work with statutory and voluntary agencies to ensure the economic health and wellbeing of the community.
- b) Strengthen and unite the local community through a range of projects and activities.
- c) Develop a sustainable community development service in the Kyle of Sutherland.

**Board of Directors**

Peter Campbell (Chairperson)  
 Andrew Wright  
 Ronald Boothroyd  
 Jacqueline Knight  
 Peter Orrell  
 Prof. Neil Simco (Appointed 25 January 2018)  
 Peter Monahan (Appointed 25 January 2018)

**Company Secretary**

David Watson

<b>KoSDT Staff at 29/03/2019</b>			
<b>Team</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Funded until</b>
David Watson	KoSDT	Trust Manager	30/06/20
Audrey Denoon	KoSDT	Office Manager	30/06/19
Valerie Houston	KoSDT	Contracts Manager	10/07/19
Beth Simco	KoSDT	Contracts Officer	30/06/19
Beverley Hill	KAT/Community Food Stop	Project Officer	30/06/19
Irene Macnab	Keep Active Together	Project Assistant	30/06/19
Andrea Sperring	Community Food Stop	Project Assistant	30/06/19
Arabella Kennard	The Energy Advice Service	Project Officer	31/03/19
Pat Sproul	The Energy Advice Service	Project Assistant	31/03/19
Lynn Munro	The Energy Advice Service	Education Assistant	31/03/19
Dale Pryde Macdonald	Fall of Shin Community Project	Falls of Shin Experience Officer	30/06/19
Jodie Ross	Sutherland Community Engagement	Project Officer	10/12/19
Kirstin Langlois	KoSDT	Marketing Officer	10/07/19
Jemma Robertson	KoSDT	Domestic Operative	Ongoing
Hugh MacKenzie	Falls of Shin Community Project	Maintenance Operative	Ongoing

## **Report from the Chairman - by Pete Campbell**

For an overview of the year 1 July 2017 - 30 June 2018 please see the Annual Accounts for the year ending June 2018.

On behalf of the directors I wish to thank all of the staff for their passion and dedication towards the achievement of the Trust mission being to ensure that long-term, sustainable benefits are achieved throughout the community and the Kyle of Sutherland area.

### **Membership**

Trust Membership now stands at 244, thank you all for giving us your support.

### **Supporters:**

On behalf of the Board of Directors I would like to take this opportunity to thank:

- Big Lottery Scotland
- Scottish Government
- Highland Council
- Highland and Islands Enterprise
- Forestry Commission Scotland
- SSE Achany Community Windfarm Fund
- EON Rosehall Community Windfarm Fund
- Climate Challenge Fund
- Beinn Tharsuinn Windfarm
- SSE Regional Fund
- Energy Saving Trust
- Scottish Hydro-Electric Community Trust
- Development Trusts Association Scotland
- SSE Beatrice Fund

### **Change in leadership at the Trust**

In October 2018, the Trust's Manager Helen Houston retired. She was with KoSDT for five years. In short, in that time she transformed it from little more than a burgeoning concept to the vibrant and effective community organisation it now is. She led the Trust through about £5m of inward investment to the area, some notable and award-winning capital projects: Falls of Shin, The Barn and Drovers Square in Ardgay, the Bonar Bridge Post Office and the introduction of a Community Broadband Service. In addition to this she set up life changing social improvement activities assisting our communities with fuel and food poverty, programmes for physical wellbeing and designing a strategy for community self-improvement... We wish her the very best in her plans for the future.

The Directors appointed David Watson as the new Trust Manager and he comes with a lifetime of experience in the sector. His origins are from Altass and one of his driving forces in taking on the job is the fact that it is allowing him to return to his roots and fulfil his

ambition of giving something of value back to the community which he feels he belongs to. We wish him well in his new role. We are now looking forward to the start of a new era of leadership at the Trust.

It has been another very busy year for the Trust and thus the directors have been very engaged with projects either as project lead director or as line managers, my thanks to them for their very considerable input.

## **Trust Manager Statement – by David Watson**

In the short time that I have been with KoSDT I have been very impressed by Board and staff commitment to the Trust and the projects that we deliver. This is very encouraging as KoSDT is a small organisation and it is important that we all pull in the same direction. As resources are scarce, and valuable, we also need to work well with our partners in the public, private and third sector to avoid duplication of effort and to give them the confidence that it is safe to invest time and money into the Trust and the area it serves.

We are in a wonderful position due to the great success and deserved recognition that KoSDT has received in recent years. As we keep working to build on this, we cannot forget that the future sustainability of the Trust is inextricably linked to that of the communities within the Kyle of Sutherland area. To ensure real local buy-in the Trust has to be visible and open and must continue to involve the community. We all have to be able to answer the question ‘what are you doing for my community?’ with confidence and clarity. The communication, by the Trust, of *why* we do things is key to this.

### **Five areas of action:**

**Homes** – Through the re-development of Drovers Square KoSDT have enabled Albyn housing to build new affordable housing units in Ardgay, the first to be built in the area for nearly 30 years. KoSDT also aims to help develop more affordable homes in Bonar Bridge in the near future. Further research will be undertaken to identify any other areas of need.

**Careers** - KoSDT currently employs 15 staff, many of whom are local to the area and are in a position to utilise qualifications that were previously difficult to deploy in a traditional land-based economy. We lease accommodation to 3 local businesses (CH Architecture, Highland Wireless, and Hair at The Barn) who between them employ 8 people. The Barn has also provided a great working space for Business Gateway (2 employees) who support many small businesses across Sutherland and Ross-Shire. We lease the Falls of Shin to an operator who provides 15 jobs during the tourist season. We will continue to work with our operator to develop career paths in hospitality so that local youngsters can see the industry as a viable career choice. KoSDT have also intervened to ensure that the Post Office in Bonar is still able to operate, this has retained 2 jobs (there are 4 additional postal delivery jobs retained in the area). KoSDT also believe in local procurement and use local contractors wherever possible. In the future we will be actively working to promote sustainable tourism in the area as we see this as a key way to stimulate the economy and give businesses an opportunity to thrive. The Trust Manager has just been invited to join the North Highland Initiative Tourism Board.

**Digital Connectivity** - KoSDT have made a significant investment in equipment that is allowing Highland Wireless to roll out superfast broadband in the area. There are already 85 properties signed up to receive the service. However, there is still some demand stimulation work to undertake to make people fully aware of the benefits of superfast connectivity. KoSDT will work with Highland Wireless to produce a series of appropriate case studies to

help with this. Given this and the roll out of 4G mobile broadband we feel that great strides have been taken to overcome this difficulty.

**Childcare** - This is an area of priority as lack of affordable childcare can affect the ability of parents to get back into the workforce and can also lead to population drift to larger communities, this in turn negatively affects school roles and increases the age of the population. Therefore, KoSDT are having discussions with the Kyle of Sutherland Hub and CALA (Care and Learning Alliance) to see if we can improve provision in the area. The first step will be to explore providing a holiday scheme in the Easter and Summer holidays. We are also hopeful that the improvement in digital connectivity will enable home-working to be more viable.

**Transport** - Lack of sustainable transport provision in the area is something that KoSDT are keenly aware of. Therefore, we are looking to undertake some research into current provision (or lack thereof) and, look for ways in which innovative and sustainable interventions can be made in the future. KoSDT have already met with HITRANS and The Highland Council regarding current services and will develop proposals in the future.

**Sustainability:** All decisions that KoSDT make as a Trust must be in the best interests of the charity and be underpinned by questioning whether we are truly sustainable moving forwards. To do this we must understand the financial, social and environmental impacts of our decisions and interventions.

We look forward to keeping you updated about the projects in development and the opportunities that the Trust are pursuing to benefit the area.



Some of the KoSDT Team! – Nov 2019

## Project Reports

The following Project Reports cover the period from July 2018 – March 2019.

### Falls of Shin Visitor Attraction

By Dale Pryde MacDonald, Falls of Shin Experience Officer

2018 has been a period of transition at Falls of Shin. With Mac & Wild being appointed to take over the catering operation it has been an exciting but also challenging time.

It is testament to the hard work of Mac & Wild and their staff that they were able to open in time for the season and welcome a significant number of visitors to the Falls of Shin over summer 2018.



Mac & Wild, Calum MacKinnon & Andy Waugh

From May 2017 to September 2018, 181,859 people visited the salmon viewing platform. During the same period 135,076 visited the café. 2018 saw Falls of Shin host some fantastic events from Easter Egg Hunts and Family Fun Days, to Whisky and Gin tastings. The Christmas Fair in 2018 was well attended and saw very successful trading for local stall holders, despite the extremely windy conditions meaning that unfortunately the fireworks display had to be cut short!

Strengthened relationships with key partners such as the North Coast 500, Visit Scotland, Cromarty Firth Port Authority and others, led to positive conversations that we will hopefully develop over the coming 12-24 months. Working alongside other local businesses has also been a pleasing factor, including Balblair and Glenwyvis Distilleries and other local producers and service providers.

Falls of Shin Visitor Attraction has been a finalist at the Scottish Rural Awards for two years running in the 'rural tourism' category; and the building has been critically acclaimed with CH Architecture being shortlisted for a Royal Incorporation of Architects Scotland Award, and winning an Inverness Architectural Association Award, and a Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Award.



RICS Awards  
**2018**  
Winner

As we head in to 2019 the future is bright. Mac & Wild have some exciting plans they wish to embark on at Falls of Shin, and we all look forward to seeing them develop over the coming months. Our key aim is to work with the operator to ensure that together, we fulfil our obligations of providing **sustainable employment** and a **quality eatery** for local people and visitors, which we will all work hard to try and achieve.



Family Fun day – Falls of Shin



Falls of Shin from the air: by Chris Houston



Christmas Fair - Falls of Shin

## Keep Active Together

By Beverley Hill, Project Officer

Since its inception in 2015, the Keep Active Together project led by Beverley Hill and Project Assistant Irene MacNab has continued to deliver a varied programme of activities and events to promote physical and mental health and well-being, as well as social inclusion, particularly amongst the more vulnerable in our community. Popular weekly activities include ballroom dancing, latin-cardio fit and yoga amongst others.

Many of the sessional staff employed have also managed to increase their business revenue as a direct result of working with Keep Active Together. Where possible, we strive to ensure activity includes a social element, so provide refreshments and time for chat. Many new friendships have been formed as a direct result of Keep Active Together's activities and events.



Ballroom Dancing Class - Rosehall



Children's Play Time – Ardgay Hall

Although the main focus of the project has been health promotion and social inclusion, we have also held events to address ways of tackling poverty, for example, working in partnership with the Community Food Stop. Activities we have run include:

- Running a weekly children's Play Time during the school summer holidays with a buffet style lunch for children and their guardians provided by the Community Food Stop, keeping children active and ensuring that they received a healthy meal as parents often struggle to provide this.
- During the February 2019 half term school holidays we worked alongside the Kyle of Sutherland Hub and the Community Food Stop, funding a free one hour soft play session. Twenty children attended this activity and the Community Food Stop funded provision of a nutritious snack box for them.
- Four workshops were held in November 2018 and again in March 2018. People from different backgrounds and different age groups attended our workshops, building new friendships and helping the younger generation to learn how to work together as a team.
- We worked in partnership with Kyle of Sutherland Gala committee to hold a well-attended 'Big Tea Party', complementing the Gala Week activities.
- A Family Ceilidh held in April 18 was our end of year project for 17/18. This promoted intergenerational activity via dance and socialising. Events of this type have been



shown to provide children with a more positive attitude to ageing and to give the elderly an increased sense of engagement within their community.

- Our Singing For Fun group were invited to sing at The British Legion's World War One 100 Commemoration Event, on 11 November.
- Our music practice group provided entertainment at the Community Food Stop Evening Café, in November 2018 and were very well received.
- We held a Relaxation week in January, involving 3 holistic therapists from the area. Many people, particularly parents can be left feeling stressed, anxious or deflated after the festive season. Every activity, during this week, was fully booked which showed that there was a real need for it. We received very positive feedback, from participants, who stated that they felt less stressed and more relaxed.
- We have worked in partnership with Home Energy Scotland to offer three day Ebike trials, to our community residents. All available slots were quickly booked and we hope to run further trials this year. Encouraging people to cycle not only has positive health benefits but also has an impact on reducing our carbon footprint. Due to the success of these trials Home Energy Scotland have asked to use our project as a case study.
- Two members of project staff, who are also local community residents, have taken up training and learning opportunities. The skills learned and certificates achieved will not only complement their work on this project but will also increase their employability options.

Our project funding was due to end in March 2019. The Scottish Government have, however, provided us with interim funding up until the end of June 2019.



Music Practice Group – Bonar Hall



Yoga - Ardgay Hall

## The Community Food Stop

Set up in 2016, the Community Food Stop café, is currently run by the Project Officer Beverley Hill and Project Assistant Andrea Sperring with the help of a dedicated group of volunteers. The café provides nutritious, healthy three course meals to the community, every Monday in Bonar Bridge Community Hall. We provide weekly food parcels to community residents who most require them and our main aims continue to be focused on tackling food poverty/insecurity and reducing social isolation. To encourage social interaction we welcome everyone to our café regardless of financial or social status, as we believe that every customer adds to the café atmosphere which makes it a warm, welcoming place that people can come together and share a meal. The average number attending is 55 people each week.



Christmas Lunch - Bonar Hall



Christmas Lunch helpers

We received some extra funding from the Scottish Government to support those in food poverty over Christmas and worked with The Care and Learning Alliance to support families in the area. The feedback we received from the families, which were catered for, was both heart-warming and heart-breaking. The small amount of surplus from this fund was used to provide twenty children with a nutritious lunch after a play session in the Hub during the February mid term holidays.

We continue to receive weekly food surplus donations from the Co-Op, which is available to customers of The Community Food Stop, at the café every Monday.

Other activities we have undertaken are:

- Evening Cafes in Bonar Bridge Community Hall. We serve a hot main course, with entertainment afterwards.
- During the last year we have hosted two 'Big Lunches' and a 'Big Brunch' at the weekend to bring the community together. These are free events but we accept donations.
- To promote growing home produce, we bought orchard packs consisting of eight fruit trees for our three local primary schools: Gledfield, Bonar Bridge and Rosehall.
- We continue to support our weekly Growing Group which meets once a month in Invershin Village Hall.

- A successful bid to Cairn Housing Association enabled us to take a group of their retirement home residents in May 2018, from their complex in Tain to the Falls of Shin Visitor centre for an outing and 3 course meal. This was much appreciated.
- Funding from NHS Community Food and Health Scotland enabled us to run 'Healthy Cooking On A Budget' cookery classes in Ardgay Public Hall in January 2019. At the end of the eight-week block, each participant was given a certificate, an Eatwell Plate (portion control) and a basic kitchen utensil pack. One of the project officers from Strathpeffer Community Centre attended one of the sessions as he will be hosting cookery classes in his community centre.
- We participated in Nourish Scotland's "Dignity in Practice" programme, funded by the Scottish Government, meeting other community food practitioners in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Elgin. Staff from Elgin Foodbank will be undertaking a reciprocal visit in the near future.
- We provided training for six of our volunteers, who successfully completed their Level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene Course (City and Guilds accredited).
- The Project Officer successfully completed a Level 3 Food Safety and Hygiene Course for Supervisors.
- The Project Assistant successfully completed Level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene and a Nutrition, Healthier Diets and Special Foods course.

Our project funding through the Fair Food Transformation Fund was due to end in March 2019. The Scottish Government have, however, provided us with interim funding up until the end of June 2019.



Cookery Class Group



Cairn Housing Outing – Falls of Shin

# Assets & Contracts Team Report

By Beth Simco, Contracts Officer

The Contracts Team - Valerie Houston (Assets & Contracts Manager) and Beth Simco (Contracts Officer) are responsible for managing the operations of KoSDT's owned assets including: Falls of Shin Visitor Attraction, The Barn, Bonar Bridge Post Office and Assynt House.

## The Ardgay Regeneration Project

The Trust's involvement in the Ardgay Regeneration project is complete. The renovation of Drovers Square and the Barn was finished in December 2017. The Barn now houses the Trust's office as well as Business Gateway, and three other businesses: CH Architecture, Hair at the Barn, and Highland Wireless. (Heaven Bikes, Kyle of Serenity and Tweed at Heart also rented the space for some time.)

Albyn Housing Association have nearly completed building a terrace of four two-bedroomed houses on the adjacent land for social rent. Highland Small Communities Housing Trust will at the end of the project market a self-build housing plot for sale. An Electrical Vehicle Charging Point is also located at Drovers Square and is regularly used by the local community.



The transformation of Drovers Square in Ardgay

## Bonar Bridge Post Office and Assynt House

In April 2018, Bonar Bridge Post Office saw a change in management from Abaigeal Milne to Chris Bowden. The Post Office now also houses Heaven Bikes – a bike shop also providing bike services and maintenance (run by Chris Bowden).

We continue to receive excellent feedback about the customer service at the Post Office. Another member of staff has now been employed.

Assynt House continues to be rented. KoSDT oversees the maintenance of the building. KoSDT's land situated next to Assynt has now been valued and will be sold with a Rural Housing Burden.



Chris Bowden – Bonar Bridge Post Office

## The Old School Embo

In July 2017 the Contracts Team took on their first project coordination role for an external organisation. By working on projects such as this, the Trust is earning income which contributes to the long-term sustainability of the organisation, and allows us to continue to develop activities in the Kyle of Sutherland area.



The Old School Embo – pre construction

KoSDT were contracted by The Embo Trust to carry out project coordination services for the £1.29-million-pound renovation of the vacant Embo Primary School into a new community hub. 'The Old School – Embo' hosts a community hall, Community Grocers, café, meeting room, part time Post Office and toilets; and can also facilitate large events outside.

KoSDT supported the competitive tendering process with Torrance Partnership (Quantity Surveyors). Morrison Construction Ltd were successful and won the tender working with the design team: Blueprint Architecture, RBYKA Electrical Engineers and S F Structures.

Renovation works on The Old School Embo began in March 2018 with a site programme of 25 weeks. The Old School was handed back to The Embo Trust in November 2018, and the doors were flung open to the public on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018 with an informal open afternoon which was attended by over 200 people. A café operator will be appointed later this year. The contract ended on February 2019.



The Old School Embo – post construction



The Old School Embo – Open day

## **Edderton Playpark**

KoS DT have recently been contracted to carry out project coordination for Edderton Village Hall Committee to update and regenerate the existing playpark in Edderton.

As project coordinators, KoS DT will work with The Highland Council to organise a lease. The vision is that Highland Council will carry out an Annual Inspection with Grass Cutting throughout the year.

## **Project Inspire**

### **By Kirstin Langlois, Marketing Officer**

From October 2017, funding from the Aspiring Communities Fund (Scottish Government and the European Social Fund) allowed the Trust to employ Valerie Houston as Assets & Contracts Manager to manage the Trust's own assets and capital projects; and Kirstin Langlois as Marketing Officer to raise the profile of and promote the Trust's projects, and to provide PR and marketing support for other local voluntary organisations including Heart of Sutherland Tourism, and Bonar Bridge Ardgay Golf Club amongst others.

The project also allowed the above team along with Helen Houston the Trust's Manager to work in partnership with CH Architecture to deliver early stage project development advice to around 20 community organisations in the Highlands from as far afield as Thurso Development Trust to more local organisations like Culrain Hall committee. This involved giving presentations to communities about what Development Trusts can achieve, providing mini architectural feasibility studies for organisations that had plans to develop or build; and/or providing funding advice where appropriate.

## The East Sutherland Energy Advice Service (ESEAS)

By Arabella Kennard

The Trust was awarded a grant from Keep Scotland Beautiful's Climate Challenge Fund to run the project from April 2017 to March 2018.

The ESEAS project led by Sarah Forrest aimed to provide householders across East Sutherland with practical and affordable home energy advice, leading to reduced carbon emissions and savings made on their fuel bills.

116 households engaged with the service and received a home energy visit, with data collected on 35 of these households. 17 tCO<sub>2</sub>e were saved as a result of improved home energy efficiency among the participating households. Partnering with Home Energy Scotland allowed 24 householders to benefit from a fabric or heating system upgrade.

Fuel poverty continued to be a main driver of the project's activities. Partnership work with Warmworks, CAB, and Dementia Link Workers provided specialist support to households in fuel poverty, particularly for more vulnerable individuals. Membership with Energy Action Scotland, Highlands Affordable Warmth Partners and Sutherland Community Partnership ensured staff were informed on current fuel poverty strategies. 66% of the participating households reduced the amount of their income spent on heating and electricity costs.

Community events were well attended with 715 individuals engaging with the project. Events were aimed at improving the carbon literacy of the community by highlighting ways to reduce their impact on climate change. Highlights included 25 children attending the project's Earth Hour at Lairg Library; Climate Week events featured film screenings, a workshop with Highland Council's Carbon Clever and an Energy Bingo evening.



Arabella Kennard – At the CCF Awards



Lynn Munro – On the library bus

## The Energy Advice Service (TEAS)

Following a number of enquiries from the wider Sutherland communities, the Trust successfully applied for CCF funding to expand the energy advice service to the whole of Sutherland for 2018-2019. ESEAS closed in March 2018, with The Energy Advice Service (TEAS) taking over in April 2018. The project aimed to reduce household carbon emissions across communities in Sutherland by offering practical and affordable solutions to saving energy in the home.



Arabella Kennard (Project Officer), Pat Sproul (Project Assistant) and Lynn Munro (Education Assistant) began working at KoSDT in April 2018 for a fixed term of 11 months.

### Home Energy Visits

TEAS aimed to offer energy advice to 100 households across all communities in Sutherland, saving 56tCO<sub>2</sub>e over the project's lifetime. 155 individuals across Sutherland made enquires with TEAS for energy advice. 117 households agreed to a home energy visit, where a TEAS energy advisor identified ways to assist the householder use energy more efficiently in their home. 55 TEAS clients reside in North and West Sutherland community council areas (with 27 in the Kyle area) and 75 in East Sutherland. The approach was holistic, from discussing energy saving practices and behaviours around the home, assisting with energy suppliers and tariffs and making referrals to partner organisations for energy efficiency measures. 26 households benefited from a fabric upgrade, including draught-proofing, installation of insulation and energy efficient upgrades including white goods and heating systems. An estimated carbon saving of 365 tCO<sub>2</sub>e has been achieved through the project's energy efficiency activities.

TEAS has built on established partnerships with local and national bodies with the aim to take action on fuel poverty, including Citizens Advice Bureau, Home Energy Scotland, Highland Council and Energy Action Scotland.



Bonar Bridge Primary School – Eco Action Day

### Carbon Literacy Events

The creation of a dedicated Education Assistant role has improved the project's capacity and opportunity to offer carbon literacy training and events to Sutherland communities. 950 people have been actively involved in the project, attending events and participating in workshops aimed at enabling and empowering individuals to reduce their impact on climate change. The project has hosted 18 events and participated in an additional 30 events held by partner organisations. Highlights include:

- Participation in Scottish Climate Week: TEAS delivered a 'Human Timeline' workshop in collaboration with Brora Heritage Society for Brora Primary School, to explore human impact on climate change in the past, present and future

- Film Screening: 'In Our Hands' was screened at Bonar Bridge Community Food Stop and Durness Halloween Festival, followed by a group discussion around low carbon food choices
- Drop-in energy advice sessions: hosted at North Coast Connections, Tongue; Kinlochbervie Village Hall; Brora Village Hub; SWRI Ardgay and District; CAB Energy Saving Week events.
- Climate Change Library: TEAS have created a collection of 43 books for all ages featuring titles which focus in some way on climate change. The books have been available to borrow from the Highlife Highland Mobile Library Bus service.
- School engagement: TEAS have been involved with 6 schools through participation in climate change workshops, attendance at Eco Committee meetings and organising a 'Sutherland 2050' competition, where pupils were invited to submit their response to: 'How can we have an impact against climate change in Sutherland by 2050'. TEAS facilitated Bonar Bridge Primary School's Eco Day of Action. All pupils, staff, community members and tutors enjoyed a day in the school garden learning about growing local, seasonal produce and how this impacts on our local community, environment and climate change.
- Carbon Literacy training: TEAS are one of few CCF projects able to deliver the mandatory Carbon Literacy training to other CCF project members, as well as to members of the public. 4 training courses have been delivered by TEAS to local CCF projects at Lairg Learning Centre, Strathpeffer Saves and Muir of Ord as well as to students at the North Highland College. 42 people are now trained as Carbon Literate.

Despite winning the Climate Challenge Fund award for best project in the 'Energy' category in December 2018 and being featured in a CCF film as an example of best practice, unfortunately the project did not receive funding to continue in 2019/20 so the service closed on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019.



Sutherland 2050 postcard responses

## Sutherland Community Engagement 2018/19

by Martin Norup Thomsen, Community Engagement Officer

Due to a change in a staffing structure at Helmsdale & District Development Trust, KoSDT inherited funding from the Aspiring Communities Fund (Scottish Government and the European Social Fund) to employ 2.5 staff members to carry out a Sutherland-wide community engagement project in collaboration with the Sutherland Community Partnership (SCP). The Community Engagement Team commenced in December 2017 and has since produced Community Plans for most community council areas in Sutherland. Five of the Community Plans (Brora, Golspie, Helmsdale, Creich and Kinlochbervie) will directly inform SCP's Locality Plans for these areas. All Community Plans will, in addition to informing the Sutherland-wide work of the SCP, also support local communities in identifying development projects, evidencing funding proposals and informing further engagement activities.



Examples of completed Community Plans



Workshop in Lochinver, September 2018

At the time of writing, final versions of Community Plans have been published for Ardgay & District, Assynt, Brora, Edderton, Golspie, Helmsdale, and Kinlochbervie, while various draft stages exist for Creich, Durness, Melness-Tongue-Skerray, and Scourie. Each Community Plan is subject to an intensive period of community feedback, where participants, local groups and community members are invited to provide comment and suggested amendments to their Plan. This means that a Plan does not always get published right away after the first version has been produced, but it ensures that each community approve of the Plan's contents and – hopefully – are more likely to take ownership of it once KoSDT's involvement has finalised.

Some of the Plans are currently being used by development groups across Sutherland to identify and evidence project needs (e.g. transport in Golspie, community land development in Tongue and new housing in Assynt, Edderton and Helmsdale), while others are using them to inform a more long-term strategic vision for their organisation (e.g. Scourie).

KoSDT has also had an impact on the structure and way of approaching community planning among the statutory agencies in the SCP. In comparison to the engagement work of community planning partnerships across Scotland, the support from KoSDT is viewed as having been immense and resulted in work which has been recognised nationally as being best practise.

*“The work helped to highlight the issues arising from inadequate transport links and provided support and useful data to facilitate the funding and purchase of a new community bus for Golspie. Go Golspie is optimistic about the further opportunities that the SCP and local groups can provide for their communities.”* Valerie Gale, Chairperson of Go Golspie Development Trust.

*“BaDAG are pleased to have been involved in the development of the Brora Locality Plan. The information gathered and action points agreed will be invaluable in helping BaDAG and other local groups to plan and prioritise ongoing and future projects to meet the stated needs*

*and preferences of the local community.*" Ellen Lindsay, Treasurer of Brora and District Action Group.

*"It will be great to see everyone working together to get things happening in our local community, thanks to the KoSDT team for their support in pulling it together."* Alison Cowie, Chairperson of Helmsdale Community Council.

## Superfast Broadband

Thanks to a grant from the SSE Beatrice Fund, the Trust purchased equipment which it is leasing to Highland Wireless who is delivering and managing a superfast broadband service (up to 50 mbs), across the Kyle of Sutherland area. The first phase of the project was launched in April 2018. The second phase of the service, 'went live' in November and extends to Rosehall, Altass and Kyle of Sutherland. Highland Wireless will continue to expand their coverage into Strathcarron and other areas over the coming months.

We would like to thank the Forestry Commission, Balnagown Estates and local landowners who have been very cooperative in helping us secure transmission sites. Residents in the coverage areas will now be able to enjoy superfast reliable broadband. This will ensure that people are able to make the most of online services whether this be for business or residential use. To date over 80 properties have benefited from a new broadband service throughout the area, with many more to benefit over the next few months.



Superfast Broadband Project



UHI Stem Hub workshops – Digital Kyle

## #DigitalKyle

Inspired by Safer Internet Day 2019 on the 5 Feb 2019, KoSDT teamed up with several organisations including Highlands & Islands Enterprise, SCVO One Digital, Police Scotland, University of the Highlands and Islands STEM Hub, Mhor Collective, Highland Wireless, Brora Rangers Youth Initiative, Google and Business Gateway to curate a series of free digital themed events that took place in February and March at the Kyle of Sutherland Hub in Bonar Bridge.

Over 80 people engaged with the programme, with the events being targeted at different groups, with the aim of raising awareness about cyber security risks for both families and businesses – but also to help increase digital participation so that people of all ages could enhance their digital skills, use online resources to support and market their businesses and to have fun!

## Highlights of the year

In addition to the awards received by Falls of Shin and the Energy Advice Service – KoSDT staff received a number of other awards in 2018:

Beth Simco won 'Highland Young Apprentice of The Year' nominated by Virtual Learning Academy at the Highland Business Awards.

Helen Houston won Social Enterprise Champion (over 26) at the Social Enterprise Scotland Awards for her work with the Trust and other Highland organisations over the years.

Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust won 'Third Sector Organisation of the Year Award' and Trust Director Ron Boothroyd received the 'Volunteer of the Year' award at the Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI) Awards.



Beth Simco at the Highland Business Awards



KoSDT Team at the HTSI Awards

## Staff Training

KoSDT are committed to supporting the professional development of staff and we actively encourage both employees and volunteers to take part in appropriate training to allow them to gain new skills which can be used in their roles at the Trust but also to progress their career development.

Please see Appendix 1 for the staff training record.

## Appendix 1

## Staff Training Record

### Valerie Houston

Date	Course	Description
October 2018- Ongoing	HNC Construction Management (University of the Highlands and Islands)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 -year course in Construction Management</li> </ul>
October 2018- Ongoing	On -the-Job Experience with Morrison Construction Ltd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience to complement theory taught in Construction Management Course</li> </ul>
November 2018	Property Condition and Property Management (LAS (Landlord Accreditation Scotland))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum property condition</li> <li>• The Repairing standard</li> <li>• The Housing and Property Chamber – First-tier Tribunal</li> <li>• Repairs and maintenance</li> <li>• Health and safety legislation in privately rented property</li> </ul>
November 2018	Microsoft Project 2016 Introduction (Synergy Training)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Management training</li> </ul>

### Beth Simco

Date	Course	Description
September 2017 – June 2018	EAL Diploma in Project Management (Level 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of Project Management</li> </ul>
September 2017 – June 2018	SQA Diploma in Digital Marketing (Level 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Marketing training</li> </ul>
September 2017	Digital Trends (#hellodigital Highland and Islands Enterprise)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Google Digital Garage: Social Media Strategy</li> </ul>
November 2017	Introduction to Tendering (Just Enterprise)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding Terminology</li> <li>• Top tips for writing a tender</li> </ul>
February 2018	Excel for Beginners (Lairg Learning Centre)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Microsoft Excel training</li> </ul>
March 2018	Harnessing Tomorrows Talent: (Project Scotland/ Developing the Young Workforce)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on intergeneration working.</li> </ul>
March 2018	DataFest18 (#hellodigital Highlands and Islands Enterprise)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where to find high quality, relevant data</li> </ul>
April 2018	What does a good tender look like? (Highland Council)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to write a good tender?</li> </ul>

	Aberdeen City Council)	
September 2018	Commercial Awareness (Synergy Training)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commercial Management</li> </ul>
October 2018 – Ongoing	BA Hons Graduate Apprenticeship Degree Business Management (University of Strathclyde)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4-year degree in Business Management</li> </ul>
November 2018	Property Condition and Property Management (LAS (Landlord Accreditation Scotland))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health and safety legislation in privately rented property</li> </ul>
November 2018	Microsoft Project 2016 Introduction (Synergy Training)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Management training</li> </ul>
November 2018	Prestart Leadership Workshop (Social Enterprise Academy/Just Enterprise)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand what is meant by leadership and the key responsibilities of a leader</li> </ul>
February 2019	Digital Champion Training SCVO One Digital/Mhor Collective)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding essential digital skills and identifying skills gaps</li> </ul>
February 2019	Cyber Sense on Tour Highlands and Islands Enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key Cyber Security Concepts</li> </ul>
March 2019	E-Safety Workshop	

### Jemma Robertson

Date	Course	Description
November 2018	Prestart Leadership Workshop (Social Enterprise Academy/Just Enterprise)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand what is meant by leadership and the key responsibilities of a leader</li> </ul>

### Dale Pryde MacDonald

Date	Course	Description
November 2018	Instagram for Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social media training</li> </ul>
November 2018	Prestart Leadership Workshop (Social Enterprise Academy/Just Enterprise)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand what is meant by leadership and the key responsibilities of a leader</li> </ul>
January 2019	NHS Mental Health First Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental Health Awareness</li> </ul>

### Kirstin Langlois

Date	Course	Description
Jan 2018	Advanced Blogging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social media strategy</li> </ul>

March 2018	Business Gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital Marketing Strategy/ Online content</li> </ul>
March 2018	HTSI and Impact Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to GDPR</li> </ul>
March 2018	Business Gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business Record Keeping</li> </ul>
May 2018	HIE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Engagement &amp; Fundraising online</li> </ul>
October 2018	Business Gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Twitter &amp; Hootsuite training</li> </ul>
February 2019	SCVO One Digital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital Champion Training</li> </ul>
February 2019	Lairg Learning Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marketing Strategy</li> </ul>
February 2019	HIE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cyber Sense On Tour</li> </ul>
February 2019	Lairg Learning Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Web design for business</li> </ul>
March 2019	Google	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Google resources</li> </ul>
March 2019	Synergie Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Management Fundamentals</li> </ul>

### Jodie Ross

Date	Course	Description
March 2018	HIE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Engagement &amp; Fundraising online</li> </ul>
November 2019	Synergie Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Management Fundamentals</li> </ul>
February 2019	Business Gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start your own business</li> </ul>
February 2019	HIE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cyber Sense On Tour</li> </ul>
March 2019	SCVO One Digital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital Champion Training</li> </ul>

### Martin Norup Thomsen

Date	Course	Description
February 2019	Business Gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start your own business</li> </ul>
February 2019	HIE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cyber Sense On Tour</li> </ul>

### James Turner

Date	Course	Description
March 2018	HIE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Engagement &amp; Fundraising online</li> </ul>
July 2018	NHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suicide Prevention Training</li> </ul>
November 2019	Synergie Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Management Fundamentals</li> </ul>
February 2019	HIE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cyber Sense On Tour</li> </ul>

### Beverley Hill

Date	Course	Description
March 2018	High Speed Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diet and Nutrition</li> </ul>
March 2018	High Speed Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nutrition for Elderly</li> </ul>



June 2018	Virtual College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 3 Food Safety and Hygiene for supervisors</li> </ul>
January 2019	BACPR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• British Association Cardiac Rehab.</li> </ul>

### Andrea Sperring

Date	Course	Description
November 2018	Excel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excel Training</li> </ul>
November 2018	High Speed Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diet &amp; Nutrition</li> </ul>
November 2018	High Speed Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nutrition for Elderly</li> </ul>

### Irene Macnab

Date	Course	Description
April 2018	Food & Hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 2</li> </ul>
October 2018	Excel training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excel training</li> </ul>

### Pat Sproul

Date	Course	Description
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May 2018	City and Guilds Energy Awareness	Energy Action Scotland
July 2018	Carbon Literacy for Communities	Keep Scotland Beautiful
Feb 2019	Digital Champion Training	SCVO One Digital

### Arabella Kennard

Date	Course	Description
May 2018	City and Guilds Energy Awareness	Energy Action Scotland
July 2018	Become a Carbon Literacy Trainer	Keep Scotland Beautiful
Nov 2018	Fundamentals of Project Management	Synergie Training
Feb 2019	Digital Champion Training	SCVO One Digital

### Lynn Munro

Date	Course	Description
May 2018	City and Guilds Energy Awareness	Energy Action Scotland
June 2018	Carbon Literacy for Communities	Keep Scotland Beautiful
Oct 2018	Digital Training	Business Gateway
Feb 2019	Food Safety and Hygiene Course	KoSDT Community Food Stop