

The Highbacks Trustee Report January-December 2025

It is with pride we write our year end report and be able to share/celebrate our successes throughout 2025. We are The Highbacks SCIO, registration number SCO53429 and have been in operation as a charity since June 2024.

We have 4 trustees – Kim Jackson, John MacLennan, Jan Taylor, Jane Horne who meet on a regular basis to ensure the aims and objectives of the charity are being met and to support/guide our Project Co-ordinator to develop and deliver activities, events, groups and training that are identified by local people.

Most groups are volunteer run and are supported by the Co-ordinator and her small team which enables local people to become more confident, learn new skills and ensure what is delivered is what local people wish to be involved in and can participate in, in ways that are suitable for them.

Our aims and objectives are:-

- Provide an extensive and comprehensive programme of activities which will be accessible to local people
- Build and strengthen local participation
- Provide support to local people to be part of the delivery programme, identifying relevant training
- Develop and deliver a programme of activities
- Consult with local people to identify issues
- Mobilise communities and partners to take action to make positive differences
- Improve community capacity and community cohesion
- Improve partnership and connections between local people and stakeholders
- Increase community influence in local priority setting and decision making

Throughout 2025 we hosted/facilitated over 150 groups, training, events, weekly activities, school visits etc. These included gardening sessions, knitting groups, mental health awareness sessions, family group time, seasonal events to name but a few. Thousands of attendances were recorded, and we estimate we have welcomed approximately 850 local people to our greenspace.

We have made excellent links with partners this year and they have supported the charity in a variety of ways from funding, in kind support, technical support, resources etc and we are extremely grateful for this support.

Priority for staff, volunteers and trustees will always be engaging and listening to local people. A community engagement programme will not succeed if you don't engage with the community and this is vital to evidence the positive impact we set out to achieve and are confident, we have achieved this over the years.

The greatest impact we have achieved is taking over the land via a lease, becoming a SCIO and having more influence developing the space that for almost 20 years has been a priority for local people. The space is now a vibrant, safe space for local people to use.

Successes have been many for us and we are proud to have gone from strength to strength in 2025. The innovative thinking of our Project Co-ordinator has allowed her to turn conversations with and ideas from local people into real activities, events, training etc.

We look forward to continuing to develop our programme in 2026.

The Board of Trustees