

Annual Review 2025-26



Introduction

SWRCCS has continued to provide runs for people with no access to public or private transport to enable them to get to appointments, to meet up with friends, to attend local community events and so much more. As the statistics below show, our volunteers have continued to be busy! With the increased demand through getting people to lunchclub and activities at the Lochcarron Centre for example, we are constantly looking at ways in which we can improve and ensure that we can provide as reliable a service as possible. But as always, we rely on both driver and telephone volunteers giving their time and efforts to ensure that people stay healthy, independent and connected.

The 8 seater vehicle leased by the Highland Council for us and based in Torridon, has been seen out and about getting small groups to swimming lessons, outdoor activities, whist drives, Gaelic lunches, after school dance and drama sessions, Wester Ross Youth football, NTS Wellbeing Walks and all manner of other activities and events. The vehicle together with the Transport Access Grants has made SWRCCS relevant to parents and young people, especially in the Shieldaig / Torridon area but throughout the whole of SW Ross. From the initial review of these pilot projects, there have already been calls to continue and develop these approaches.

As with all small local organisations, we are always on the look out for new members on our board, a great way to be more involved and to influence the development and direction of the service we give. We welcomed Claire Munday as a new board members this year and look forward to working further with her over the coming months.

Also, at our AGM in October, we said farewell to Richard Munday who stood down as chair after 6 years. Richard saw SWRCCS through a change of coordinator, the Covid pandemic and the development of the service to include the pilot projects. He continues to deliver prescriptions on behalf of SWRCCS so remains a part of the organisation. Mary Peart was elected as Chair and will ably take up the reins.

**Our records show that SWRCCS drivers have travelled a huge 46,675 miles during this year of which 37,103 miles were travelled with a passenger getting them to wherever they needed to be. 147 different people used the car scheme and 85 of these people used it more than once!
1,746 deliveries have been made to doorsteps, including prescriptions and lunches throughout our area.
The social value of the work of the scheme is calculated to be £142,748!
A massive achievement.**

Volunteers

People volunteer for many different reasons. Recently talking to volunteers that have been involved in the car scheme since 2003, they have all said how they enjoy meeting people that they may never have met and hearing all manner of stories from the fantastical to the exotic, real stories from local people who have all led extraordinary and varied lives. Driving someone to Inverness for a hospital appointment always gives ample opportunities for a chat! We are lucky to currently have 48 volunteer drivers who choose whether they do delivery runs, short local runs or longer runs and when they do it depending on their availability.

However, more volunteers are always needed and welcome, so do consider the role if you are not already. Spread the word... it's a great way to be involved in the local community doing something very tangible to help.

The telephonists continue to clock on at 09:30 taking calls and arranging runs until their duty ends at about 14:00. It's a chance to talk to users about what they need and where they need to be, and to catch up with drivers to see if they are available for a specific run. Most telephonists do about 2 or 3 duties per month, and their commitment and dedication is always great to see, particularly in the creative ways they deal with issues that arise and find solutions! If you have a couple of days per month to spare then do consider the role for you too!

All in all, the volunteers often get out as much as they put in – win / win.

Different people have said:

"SWRCCS is a fantastic service and we are very grateful"

"Really impressed with the great service provided"

"Everything worked really well (with the TAG Grant) as a joint venture between SWRCCS and Applecross Community Company"

"At Parent council meetings we regularly discuss how grateful we have =been for the community vehicle and the grants received"

"Thank you for the car scheme, we are all so fortunate"

"I don't know what the school would do without SWRCCS!"

Users

Living in a remote and rural area has its challenges, and for those without access to private transport, the thought of getting to an appointment miles away can be stressful. This is why so many people locally can continue to live independently in their own homes, often the places where they have lived for many many years. Having the car scheme pick them up to take them shopping, to the doctors, to the hospital or simply to see friends means a great deal to them and enables the communities to survive.

Car Runs

SWRCCS drivers have continued to deliver prescriptions and get people to social events, community get togethers, medical appointments at local medical practices, hospitals, opticians, dentists, audiologists and the list goes on. Although some are relatively local (about a 15 mile round trip), many involve journeys of 120 plus miles to get to hospital appointments and to access other services. All this and the additional access to the community vehicle and transport access grants.

The car runs table shows that our volunteers have delivered 818 journeys and our telephonists have organised 888 – an average of nearly 74 every month.

	Organised Regular	Organised Hospital	Exceptional Runs	Delivery Runs	Total	Cancelled Journeys (nda)	Completed journeys	Community Car use	%age increase organised runs	No of deliveries	Delivery Miles	Driver Miles	Passenger miles	Public Transport link	Shared Journeys
April	15	18	8	33	74	8 (4)	66	15 (8)	-11.9%	270	897	384	2071	11	0
May	22	10	9	32	73	9 (4)	64	18 (4)	-12.0%	164	582	511	2031	12	5
Jun	28	15	7	29	79	8 (1)	71	18 (4)	0.0%	163	367	544	2405	12	3
July	26	16	6	31	79	8 (0)	71	3 (2)	-3.7%	114	375	530	2232	12	2
August	26	15	6	31	78	12 (3)	66	8 (1)	-7.1%	127	495	454	2873	12	0
September	20	20	5	30	75	6 (2)	69	9 (2)	13.6%	115	421	443	2117	10	4
October	26	14	9	33	82	10 (4)	72	13 (10)	26.2%	152	447	770	2085	11	2
November	27	13	4	28	72	3 (2)	69	10 (1)	-2.7%	93	298	380	2399	11	1
December	29	11	0	25	65	4 (0)	61	9 (2)	27.5%	153	477	439	1441	9	7
January	25	13	5	28	71	6 (0)	65	9 (0)	16.4%	115	323	392	2087	9	5
February	34	19	9	28	90	9 (1)	81	13 (1)	20.0%	85	263	369	2767	11	7
March	43	14	8	30	95	15 (0)	80	12 (1)	13.1%	195	617	451	2116	11	6
Year to date	321	178	76	358	933	74 (20)	835	112 (33)	6.6%	1746	5562	5667	26624	131	42
Number of passengers over the year															
Single use	62 Multiple user		85												
TOTAL	147														
Number of Volunteers:															
Drivers	48 Telephonists		8												
TOTAL	54														

Staff

Peter and Caty continue to keep the car scheme going. From doing the daily tasks of updating the daily runs, paying the expenses and keeping a track of the budgets, all the efforts of the staff keep the volunteers and the community vehicle on the road, getting people to where they need to go.

Governance

The Board has said farewell to Richard Munday, chair for the past 6 years and we have welcomed Mary Peart as our new chair. The Board have completed their work in reviewing policies and procedures which are now all active and in place. The challenge this year will be to put together a new funding bid for the Highland Council and review the pilot projects to see how successful they have been and if there is a willingness and desire to continue the work they have started.

If you are interested in becoming a Trustee we are always on the lookout for new people with new skills and ideas that could contribute. Again, do get in touch.

Funding

As always we are hugely grateful to both the Highland Council and NHS Highland for the funding they provide enabling the volunteers, board and staff to focus on delivering the service that is needed.

We have been blown away by the generosity of our passengers, drivers and others in the increase in donations. Thanks to all those concerned.

Linking in with other organisations

SWRCCS continues to value working closely with other organisations; sharing good practice, sharing responses and solutions to different scenarios, and listening to people about their needs and ways in which we can support our communities. We are being asked to share what we do and how we do it with community partnerships and other organisations as they see us as an example of good practice when considering how to develop community transport groups in different areas. This year we have worked with a number of different organisations including:-

- Community Transport Association (Scotland)
- Highland Third Sector Interface
- Volunteer Scotland
- Shieldaig Parents Group
- Skye & Lochaber Council for Voluntary Organisations
- Applecross Community Company
- Highland Council Community Transport Organisations
- Highland Hospice
- HiTrans
- Adult Mental Health & Wellbeing panel
- Kinlochewe Gaelic Group
- Applecross Parents Group
- Skye & Lochalsh Community Partnership
- NTS Scotland

We have also been fortunate to have strong and growing relationships with local community councils, medical practices, Torridon & District Community Association, the Lochcarron Centre and other local organisations. Our strong relationships have meant that we can be more responsive and meet the needs of our local communities appropriately, and respond quickly to local needs.

Challenges

The challenges remain – how to support local people get to the places they need to be with a finite number of volunteers and funding. We do our best, but can't always deliver what we want, so please help us face these challenges by volunteering as a driver or telephonist, becoming involved in the Board and supporting local people in this remote area.

Finally, as always, the challenge to support both volunteers and users to access the services they need remains at the heart of what we do, long may that continue and improve.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT