

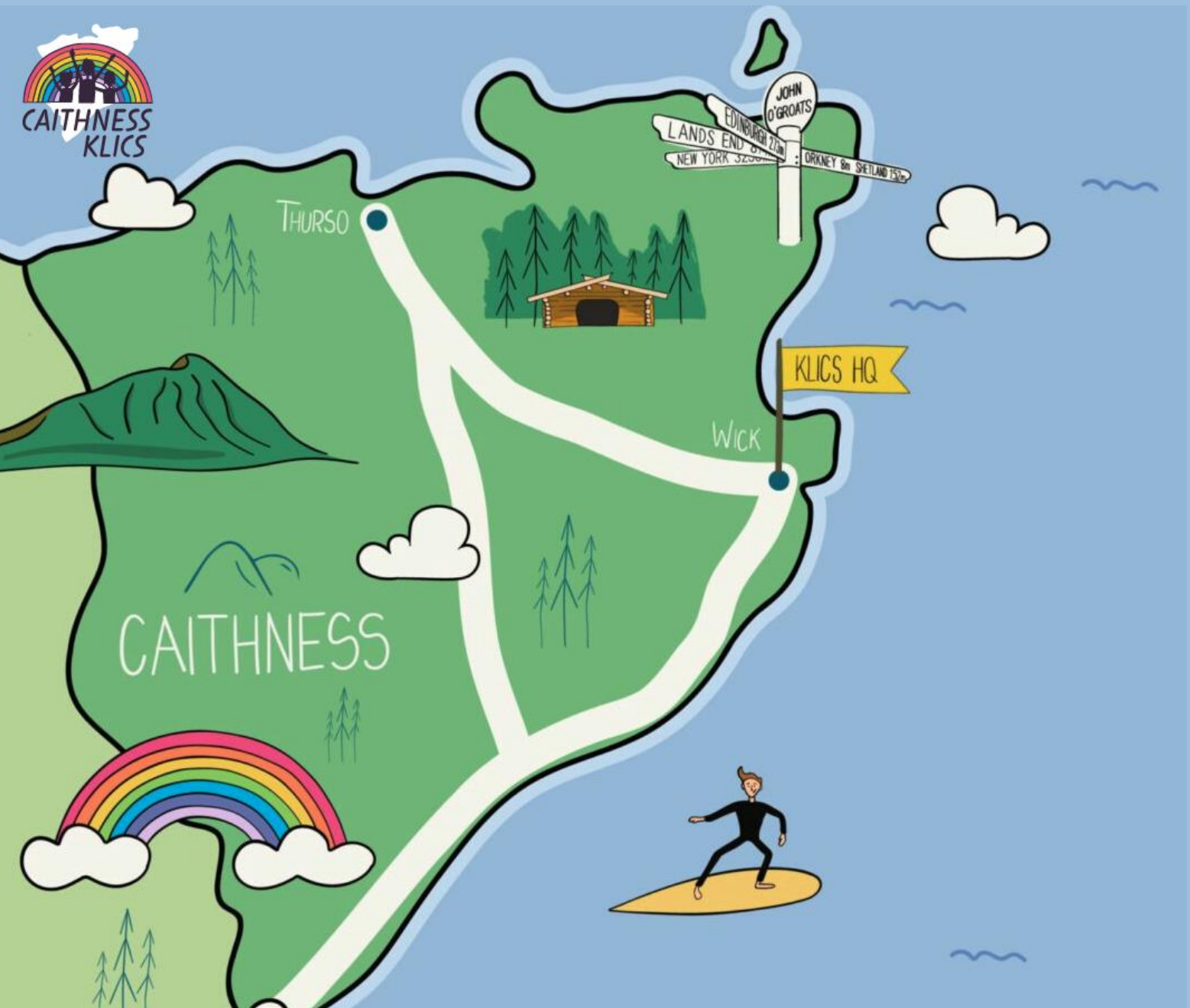
# Caithness KLICS

Five Year Business Plan

May 2025

Alan Jones Associates

Supported by RWE Camster Wind Farm Community Fund



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# 1 Executive Summary

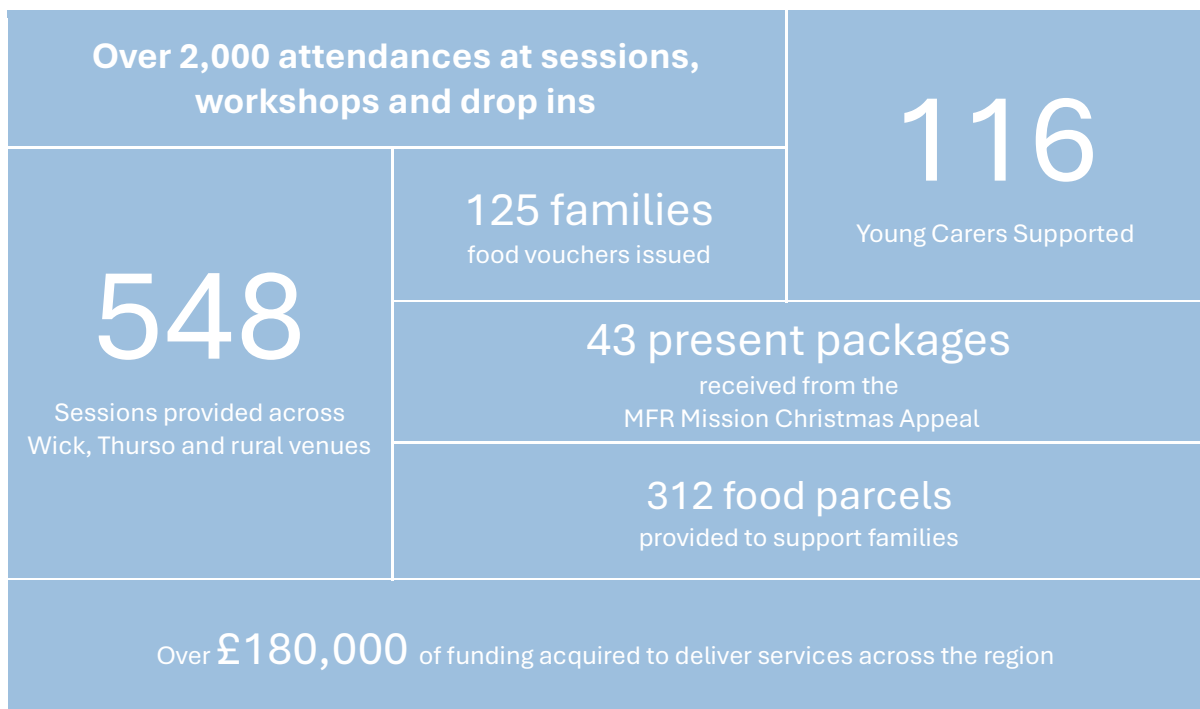
## 1.1 Executive Summary

Caithness KLICS was established in 2013 due to the demand for support for Young Carers in Caithness. A Young Carer is a young person who cares, unpaid, for a person who has any type of physical or mental illness, physical and/or mental disability or misuses substances such as alcohol or drugs. Caithness KLICS support Young Carers from age 5-18 years old.

A Young Carer has extra responsibilities and may do daily chores around the house, cook meals or go shopping, they could also pick up or administrate medication. They may also support a family member emotionally, if they suffer from ill mental health.

A Young Carer could even miss out on school or a social life due to the support they are giving a family member.

KLICS has a strong presence locally, working within the community and with local schools. The following highlights from the last annual report demonstrate their impact on the community.



This report summarises the Charity's existing operations, and ambitions, outlining a number of new revenue considerations in order to support the financial sustainability over the coming five years.

Further, this business case presents the associated projected finances, and outlines the risks and mitigations that should be considered,

This study considers a number of funders that may be appropriate to support the project, but notes that the Charity already receives the majority of its income from funding sources.

## 1.2 Recommendations

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This report concludes the following recommendations:

- It is recommended that KLICS approves the content of this business plan, outlining the feasible business model for the next five years, and the potential new sources of income.
- It is recommended that KLICS identify opportunities for further training or recruitment of additional trustees to address any relevant gaps in competencies as identified in the Skills Audit.
- It is recommended that KLICS work with The Highland Council to agree a Service Level Agreement committing funding for a period longer than 12 months.
- It is recommended that KLICS complete the process of taking ownership of the site and existing building to ensure long term security of tenure and to support access to a wider range of funding bodies.
- In line with the options in this business plan, it is recommended that KLICS diversify the income streams through the following key activities
  - Developing and delivering a programme of Wellness Workshops targeted at schools, workplaces, and the wider public.
  - Rental of the increased workspace at Macleod Road to kindred groups and organisations at a suitable rate comparable to other venues.
- It is recommended that KLICS seek to engage with the Local Chamber of Commerce to identify options for in-kind support and improved working relationships with the local business community.
- It is recommended that KLICS continue to actively apply for funding – both to those sources already working with the group, and to any additional sources as they become available.
- It is recommended that KLICS maintain a watching brief for any future building rental or acquisition opportunities that would facilitate the expansion or improvement of services in Thurso – undertaking further due diligence on the options available and feasibility at the appropriate time.

## 2 Introduction & Background

### 2.1 Introduction

Caithness KLICS was established in 2013 due to the demand for support for Young Carers in Caithness. The charity works across Caithness, to support the Young Carer, giving them the time to focus on them, so they can have FUN and be children again. A young carer is a young person who cares, unpaid, for a person who has any type of physical or mental illness, physical and/or mental disability or misuses substances such as alcohol or drugs. Caithness KLICS support Young Carers from age 5-18 years old.

Recognising the demand on the service, and the space available, KLICS have identified a need to expand their current premises in Wick as a priority and investigate options for further development in the medium to long term. KLICS has appointed Alan Jones Associates to support with the Feasibility and Business Case for expanding the facilities and services it offers. Further, the Charity has identified a potential long-term goal to improve the offering of services in Thurso and more widely through the acquisition or rental of additional space.

### 2.2 Structure

Caithness KLICS is a registered Scottish Charity (SC043820). Currently the charity operates with a Board of 8 trustees, 10 staff and 2 volunteers, providing support services, activities and outreach with Young Carers in the wider Caithness Area.

A significant amount of the work undertaken is delivered at their hub in Wick, where KLICS has operated for a number of years. Further work is also undertaken in Thurso, as well as outreach work in smaller rural primary schools.

### 2.3 Operational Overview

In reviewing the last operational year, the following figures highlight the strength of the work being undertaken by KLICS, and the positive impact on the Caithness community.

#### Young Carer Attendances

	Thurso				Wick			Rural	Total
	Primary	Teens	Rural	1 to 1	Primary	Teens	1 to 1		
Sessions	76	65	NA	25	72	114	15	23	548
Attendance	438	263	129	26	516	285	24	606	2,158
New Starts	4	0	2	1	11	1	1	3	21
Referrals	5	0	2	0	19	4	0	4	32

#### Key Statistics on Community Impact

The following support was also provided by KLICS over the last operational year:

- 116 Young Carers supported
- 125 food vouchers issued.
- 43 present packages received from MFR Mission Christmas Appeal distributed to Young Carers
- 312 food parcels provided to support families.
- Over £180,000 of funding acquired to deliver services across the region.

## 2.4 Financial Position

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In reviewing the last two full years accounts, the following summary of the Charity's finances is presented. This demonstrates the Charity's sustainable financial position and has been used as a starting point for all projections and financial assumptions within this report.

<b>Income</b>	
Highland Council	£57,977
Other Grants	£119,252
Donations / Fundraising	£10,449
Gift Aid	
	<b>£187,677</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Wages	£131,437
On Costs	£3,707
Provision of Activities & Outings	£7,339
Travel Costs	£2,861
Support / Donations	£10,150
Training Costs	£288
Rates, Rent & Insurance	£4,385
Energy Costs	£2,657
Telephone & Internet	£1,227
Repairs & Maintenance	£7,117
IT Expenses	£5,333
Other Costs	£1,636
Governance Costs	£1,200
Depreciation	£4,990
	<b>£184,323</b>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>£3,354</b>

KLICS is predominantly funded by third party grant funders, including the Local Authority. Currently KLICS is required to engage with the local authority on an annual basis to agree and confirm funding. As a result of this, the number of staff delivering services can fluctuate year on year, as all positions are funding dependant.

## 2.5 Project Vision

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Caithness KLICS seeks to ensure that every Young Carer in their community has access to the support, resources, and opportunities they deserve. Their ambition is to expand services to ensure that Young Carers are not only recognised for the incredible role they play but are also empowered to thrive. Through tailored programs, emotional support, and practical assistance, KLICS aim to alleviate the challenges they face, promote their well-being, and provide them with a pathway to a bright and fulfilling future. KLICS's vision is to create a network of care, understanding, and growth, where Young Carers feel valued, supported, and equipped to achieve their fullest potential.

As a constituted charity (charity number SC043820), KLICS list their constitutional aim as follows:

“To promote the benefit of Young Carers of Caithness and its environs and to provide recreational facilities, or organise recreational activities, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the persons for whom the facilities or activities are primarily intended. This includes:

- Building a network of support for Young Carers in Caithness by awareness of existence of Young Carers and their needs.
- Promoting the wellbeing of Young Carers by providing opportunities to raise confidence, self-esteem and to help identify the value of their role.
- Working with statutory and voluntary agencies to support and encourage Young Carer’s educational achievements and to help them access normal childhood activities.
- Providing opportunities for respite from their caring role.”

## 2.6 Site Expansion – Wick

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As the demand for support continues to grow, it became increasingly clear that extending the site in Wick was vital. KLICS have successfully applied for planning permission to expand the site with the addition of modular buildings. This project has been costed, and the preferred supplier identified. A significant proportion of the funding has been secured, with work underway to secure the rest. Once the full funding is in place, the extension will be delivered on site. It is anticipated that this will be complete in within the next 12-18 months.

By expanding their presence, KLICS will be able to offer an improved, dedicated space where Young Carers can access emotional support, practical assistance, and opportunities for social interaction. This expansion will also enable KLICS to enhance the visibility of Young Carers within the local community, fostering greater awareness and understanding of their unique needs.

Additionally, extending the site will allow KLICS to introduce a broader range of programmes and services tailored to the diverse experiences of Young Carers. With a larger, better-equipped space in Wick, KLICS can also strengthen partnerships with local schools, healthcare providers, and other organisations, creating a collaborative approach to supporting Young Carers.

A separate business case has been developed for the site expansion.



## 3 Market Assessment

### 3.1 Demographic Assessment – Caithness

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As of 2021, Caithness, located in the far north of Scotland, has a population of 25,347 people. The age distribution is as follows: 16.0% are children aged 0-15 years, 59.7% are aged 16-64 years, and 24.3% are aged 65 years and over. Over half of the population (54%) resides in the towns of Wick and Thurso, while the remaining 46% live in very remote rural areas. Between 2002 and 2021, the overall population of Caithness decreased by 0.7%. During this period, there was a 42% increase in the 65+ age group, a 7% reduction in the population aged 16-64 years, and a 17% reduction in those aged under 16 years.

The under-18 population in Caithness makes up approximately 16% of the total population of 25,347 people as of 2021. This translates to around 4,055 individuals. Over the years, this age group has seen a notable decline, reflecting a broader trend of population reduction in younger age demographics within the region.

Between 2002 and 2021, the population aged under 16 years decreased by 17%. This trend is indicative of declining birth rates, outward migration of younger families, or both. This demographic shift highlights challenges for the area, including potential impacts on school enrolment, youth services, and long-term community sustainability. Addressing these trends will require focused efforts to retain and attract young families to the region.

In terms of life expectancy, there are variations across different areas within Caithness. For instance, male life expectancy at birth in Wick South is 70.4 years, which is lower compared to other areas such as Caithness South, where it is 82.0 years. These disparities underscore the importance of targeted health and social care interventions in specific localities.

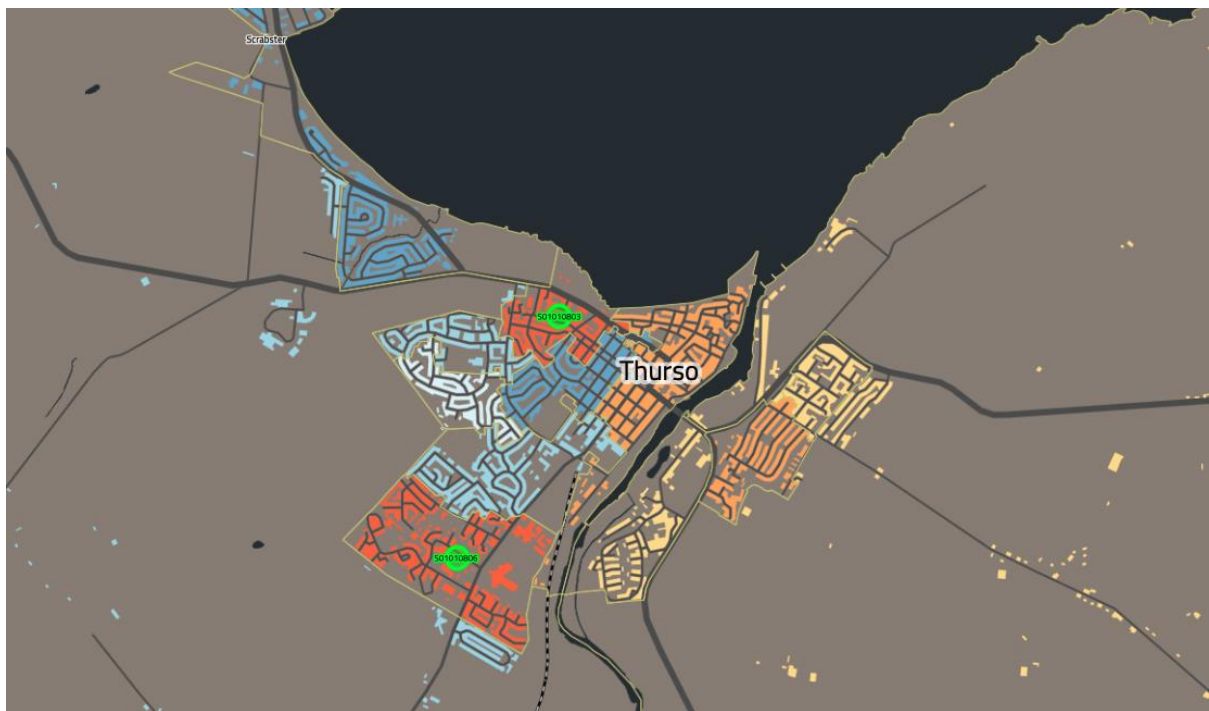
Looking ahead, population projections estimate that the overall population of Caithness will decrease between 2018 and 2030. The number and proportion of people in the 65-74, 75-84, and 85+ age groups are projected to increase, whereas the populations aged 0-15, 16-44, and 45-64 years are projected to decrease. These trends indicate an ageing population, which may have implications for service provision and community planning in the future.

### 3.2 SIMD Assessment

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Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) are Indices of multiple deprivation (IMD) which are widely used datasets within the UK to classify the relative deprivation (essentially a measure of poverty) of small areas. Multiple components of deprivation are weighted with different strengths and compiled into a single score of deprivation which is the indicator used to measure a range of deprivations.

For each ranking the data zone is ranked from 1 being the most deprived in Scotland to 6,976 being the least deprived. In relation to both Wick, and Thurso, 8 datazones that demonstrate a high level of deprivation are highlighted, and further detailed in the maps and table below:



Data Zone	S01010777	S01010778	S01010779	S01010782
	Wick South	Wick South	Wick South	Wick North
Total population	527	476	706	602
Working age population	301	323	436	349
Rank	912 2 <sup>nd</sup> Decile	215 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile	1,004 2 <sup>nd</sup> Decile	1,555 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile
Income Domain	1,270 2 <sup>nd</sup> Decile	417 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile	919 2 <sup>nd</sup> Decile	1,539 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile
Employment Domain	730 2 <sup>nd</sup> Decile	179 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile	1,116 2 <sup>nd</sup> Decile	1,952 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile

Health Domain	1,156 2 <sup>nd</sup> Decile	240 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile	1,743 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile	1,654 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile
Education Domain	524 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile	148 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile	692 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile	1,499 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile
Access Domain	6,073 9 <sup>th</sup> Decile	4,202 7 <sup>th</sup> Decile	4,468 7 <sup>th</sup> Decile	6,588 10 <sup>th</sup> Decile
Crime Domain	650 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile	446 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile	423 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile	94 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile
Housing Domain	3,800 6 <sup>th</sup> Decile	1,700 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile	3,520 6 <sup>th</sup> Decile	2,096 4 <sup>th</sup> Decile

Data Zone	S01010783	S01010784	S01010803	S01010806
	Wick North	Wick North	Thurso West	Thurso West
Total population	562	704	562	863
Working age population	360	418	319	557
Rank	1,976 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile	659 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile	1,439 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile	1,422 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile
Income Domain	1,679 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile	619 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile	1,478 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile	1,336 2 <sup>nd</sup> Decile
Employment Domain	1,870 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile	911 2 <sup>nd</sup> Decile	1,336 2 <sup>nd</sup> Decile	1,049 2 <sup>nd</sup> Decile
Health Domain	2,048 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile	645 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile	1,731 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile	1,601 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile
Education Domain	1,614 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile	393 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile	1,182 2 <sup>nd</sup> Decile	2,493 4 <sup>th</sup> Decile
Access Domain	5,992 9 <sup>th</sup> Decile	4,929 8 <sup>th</sup> Decile	5,836 9 <sup>th</sup> Decile	3,477 5 <sup>th</sup> Decile
Crime Domain	2,172 4 <sup>th</sup> Decile	1,165 2 <sup>nd</sup> Decile	658 1 <sup>st</sup> Decile	1,504 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile
Housing Domain	4,069 6 <sup>th</sup> Decile	1,492 3 <sup>rd</sup> Decile	3,588 6 <sup>th</sup> Decile	3,194 5 <sup>th</sup> Decile

### 3.3 Rural Deprivation

#### Rural Scotland in Focus: Challenges and Support for Young People in Caithness

The Scottish Rural Policy Centre (SRUC) published a report entitled *Rural Scotland in Focus*, which seeks to monitor how rural Scotland is evolving. The report examines population trends, the lives of young people, poverty and disadvantage, and the negotiation of rural land use through planning and other mechanisms. In considering challenges faced by rural communities, particularly in Caithness, it is essential to highlight rural inequalities that create unique difficulties not experienced by urban populations.

#### Employment Issues and Inequalities

The SRUC report identifies employment challenges in rural areas, including Caithness. A significant proportion of the workforce is engaged in part-time or seasonal work, often within industries such as agriculture, fishing, and tourism. These roles frequently offer lower pay and fewer benefits compared to full-time employment. This trend limits opportunities for young people to secure stable, long-term jobs, contributing to out-migration as they seek better prospects in urban centres.

#### Fuel Poverty

Rural residents often experience higher costs for goods and services, partly due to the logistical challenges of remote supply chains. Fuel poverty is particularly acute, with the reliance on private transportation

increasing household expenses. Young people in rural areas may face additional barriers, such as accessing education or training opportunities, due to the costs associated with travel.

### **Cost of Living**

Research from the *Minimum Income Standard for Remote Rural Scotland* highlights the elevated living costs in rural areas. Households in Caithness and similar communities need between 10-35% more income than those in urban areas to meet basic living standards. Young people often face difficulties affording housing, food, and other essentials, which can hinder their independence and career progression.

## **3.4 Young Carers in Scotland**

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The 2021 Census said there were approximately 120,000 Young Carers, aged between 5 and 17 years, in England and 8,200 in Wales. Scottish Government recognises that there were 42,050 unpaid carers identified in the Carers Census in 2021-22. This is more than a 30% increase from the 31,760 unique carers identified in 2020-21.

This is widely believed to be the tip of the iceberg because of a small number of Young Carers being identified. Some estimates suggesting that as many as one in five school children are Young Carers with this number increasing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Scotland, estimates of the number of Young Carers—individuals under 18 who provide care for family members or others vary. The Scottish Government's Carers Census for 2021-22 identified 42,050 unique carers, with Young Carers comprising 13% of this group, equating to approximately 5,466 individuals. However, this figure may be influenced by the number of organisations submitting data.

Other sources suggest higher numbers. For instance, the Carers Trust estimates there are around 30,000 Young Carers in Scotland. Similarly, the Scottish Government's 2024 update estimates approximately 28,000 Young Carers. These variations highlight the challenges in accurately quantifying Young Carers, as many may not self-identify or seek support.

Recognising the vital role Young Carers play, Scotland has implemented measures to support them. The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 grants Young Carers specific rights, including the entitlement to a Young Carer Statement, which assesses their needs and outlines support plans. Additionally, financial assistance is available through the Young Carer Grant, an annual payment for those aged 16 to 18 who meet certain criteria. These initiatives aim to alleviate the challenges Young Carers face and promote their well-being.

Being a Young Carer can significantly impact key aspects of growing up, often creating challenges that their peers may not face. Balancing schoolwork and caregiving responsibilities can lead to lower educational attainment, as Young Carers frequently miss classes, struggle to complete homework, or lack the focus needed to thrive academically. These pressures can hinder their ability to achieve their full potential in education, limiting their future opportunities and aspirations. With the disruptions caused by COVID-19, this gap has only widened, as Young Carers faced increased responsibilities at home alongside missed schooling and reduced access to support networks. As a result of the pandemic, there are also concerns more widely with young people, in particular around the development of social skills resulting from the disruption to education.

Caring for a family member can also be an isolating and emotionally taxing experience, but with the right support in place, Young Carers can thrive. Access to mental health resources, respite care, and social groups designed specifically for Young Carers can help them feel less alone and more empowered. These initiatives can create a more balanced life, where caregiving responsibilities are manageable, and personal growth is not hindered. By investing in comprehensive support systems, such as KLICS and other such non-statutory organisations, society can give Young Carers a fair chance to achieve their ambitions while continuing to provide for their loved ones.

## 4 Comparable Examples

### 4.1 National Examples

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In Scotland, several organisations are dedicated to supporting Young Carers, offering a range of services to assist them in their caring roles and personal development. The following examples demonstrate strong and sustainable organisations delivering or supporting a combination of paid and volunteer work across the care sector.

#### **Carers Trust Scotland**

Carers Trust Scotland is a leading charity that supports around 66,000 adult and Young Carers across the country through a network of local carer organisations. Their mission is to ensure unpaid carers are heard, valued, and have access to the right support, advice, and resources to lead fulfilling lives. They provide information, practical assistance, and care at home for unpaid carers of all ages. Many of their local partner organisations have specialist services for Young Carers and young adult carers, offering tailored support to help them reach their full potential.

One of Carers Trust Scotland's best practices is its comprehensive approach to support. This includes providing access to Young Carer Statements, short breaks or respite care, and guidance on education, training, and employment opportunities. They also ensure Young Carers receive help to maintain their physical and mental well-being, preventing them from feeling isolated. Their services focus on empowerment, helping Young Carers balance their responsibilities while enjoying a healthy, supported life.

#### **Scottish Young Carers Services Alliance (SYCSA)**

Hosted by Carers Trust Scotland and funded by the Scottish Government, the Scottish Young Carers Services Alliance is an informal network of 51 members who provide direct face-to-face support to Young Carers across Scotland. The Alliance meets regularly, both online and in person, to share good practice, discuss national initiatives, and contribute to policy development affecting Young Carers.

The SYCSA's best practice lies in its collaborative network model, which allows member organisations to share resources, strategies, and expertise. This collective approach ensures that Young Carers across Scotland receive consistent, high-quality support, tailored to their individual needs. By working together, the Alliance helps drive improvements in services, making sure that Young Carers are recognised and given the right support wherever they live.

### 4.2 Highland Examples

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The provision of services in the Highlands for Young Carers is limited. The following organisation have been identified as comparable examples:

#### **Connecting Carers**

Connecting Carers is an independent voluntary organisation that offers support, information, and advice to unpaid carers throughout the Highland region. Their mission is to ensure carers are acknowledged, supported, and have access to the necessary resources to carry out their caring roles effectively. They provide various services, including information and signposting, Carer Support Plans, drop-in groups, training, and advocacy. Their Young Carer team is committed to offering excellent services, helping Young Carers access the support and advice they need to balance their caring responsibilities with their personal lives.

A notable aspect of Connecting Carers' best practice is their comprehensive support system, which includes tailored services for Young Carers. They focus on raising the profile of Young Carers, advocating

for their rights, and providing access to resources that help them manage their caring roles while pursuing personal development. Their commitment to reaching out to carers, regardless of their location within the Highlands, ensures that support is accessible to all who need it.

### **Tykes**

TYKES Young Carers' Project, founded in 1997, is a charity supporting Young Carers aged 5 to 25 in Sutherland. It provides emotional and practical support, advocacy, and respite while raising awareness of Young Carers' challenges within the community and statutory agencies.

TYKES runs after-school and lunchtime drop-in sessions, offering Young Carers a safe space to socialise and receive support. When possible, it arranges day trips and extended breaks to give carers time away from their responsibilities.

The organisation also raises awareness among schools, health professionals, and the wider community. Beyond direct support, TYKES provides food parcels, parent drop-ins, and financial advice through a dedicated Welfare Worker.

### **Skye & Lochalsh Young Carers**

Skye & Lochalsh Young Carers (S&LYC) was established in 2000 by the Skye & Lochalsh Community Care Forum (SLCCF) to support Young Carers across the region. It was created in response to a lack of existing support, following research funded by the Princess Royal Trust for Carers.

S&LYC aims to reduce social isolation by providing after-school activities, trips, advocacy, and emotional support. A team of staff and volunteers delivers these services, relying on funding and donations to continue their work.

### **Orkney Young Carers**

Orkney Young Carers, part of Crossroads Orkney, provides confidential support, advice, and a listening ear to Young Carers and their families. The service offers free monthly activity sessions, giving Young Carers a chance to relax, socialise, and take a break from their responsibilities.

One-to-one support is available for those who need extra help or prefer individual sessions, with referrals to specialist counselling if needed. While primarily focused on Young Carers, the service also provides indirect respite for parents during sessions.

### **Summary of Provision**

As the list of providers above shows, there are no other relevant bodies that support Young Carers in Caithness, further highlighting the demand and need for the work undertaken by Caithness KLICS.

## 5 Community & Stakeholder Engagement

### 5.1 Overview

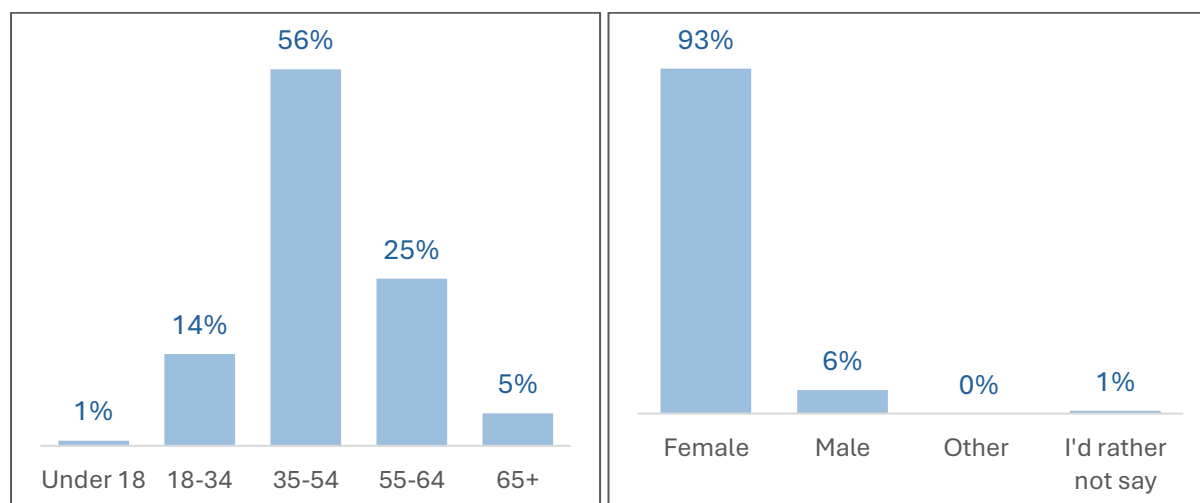
Caithness KLICS has always benefited for the support of the local community, schools, and other local organisations. As part of this work, a number of engagement activities were undertaken:

- A community survey was shared online, via email channels, and at local events. This survey sought feedback and levels of support for the expansion of facilities and services.
- The project was presented as part of a wider third sector event held at the Mackay’s hotel in Wick in November 2024.
- An overview of the Charity’s activities, the survey results, and the proposed project was provided to key stakeholders as an outline project summary, with a number of letters of support provided.

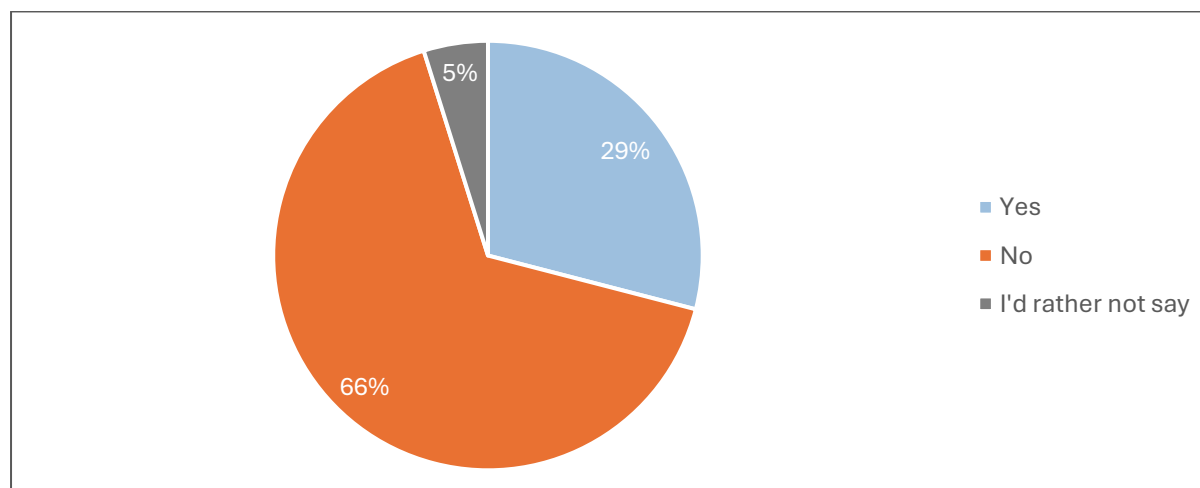
### 5.2 Community Survey

The community survey was completed by 125 respondents. The results of this survey are presented below:

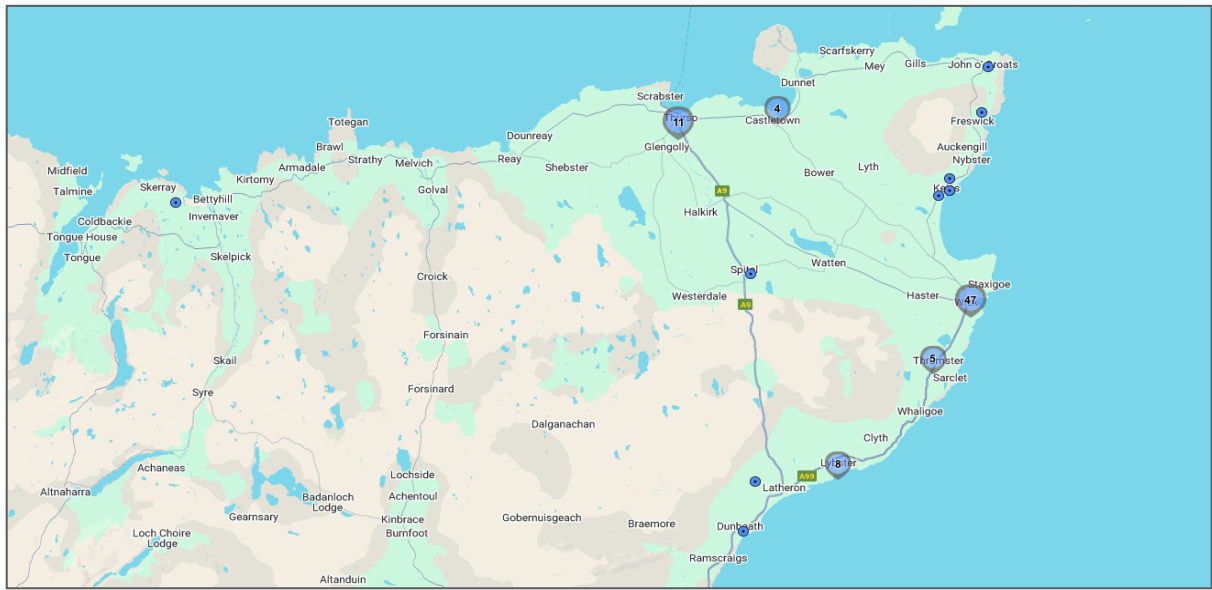
**Please indicate your age & gender.**



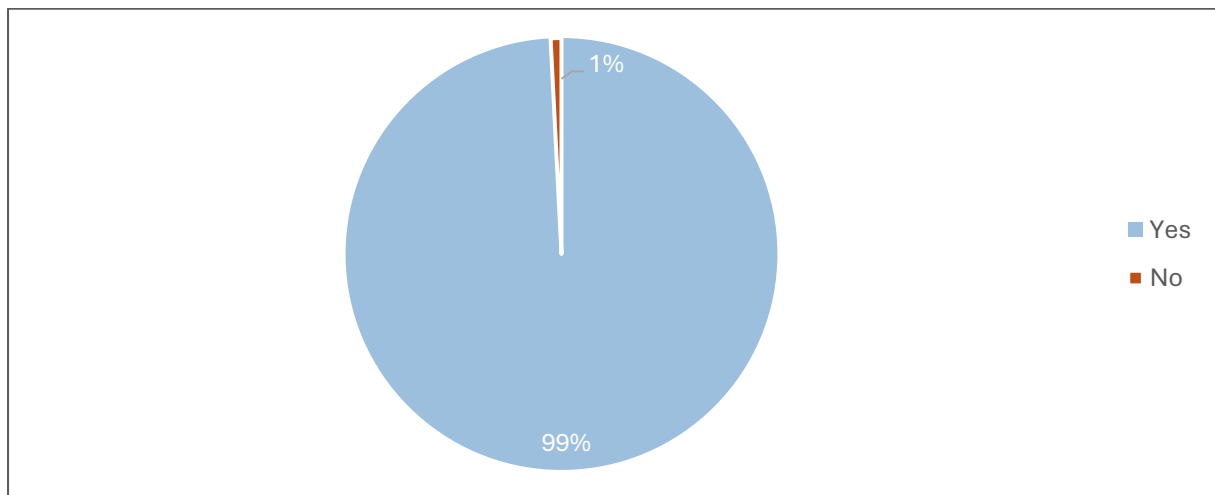
**Do you have a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?**



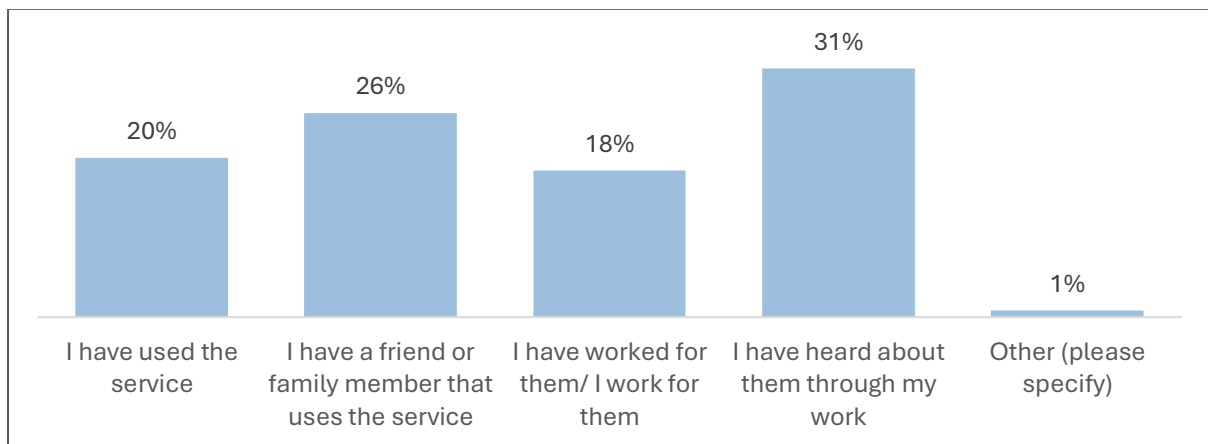
To help us understand the reach of this engagement, please indicate your post code.



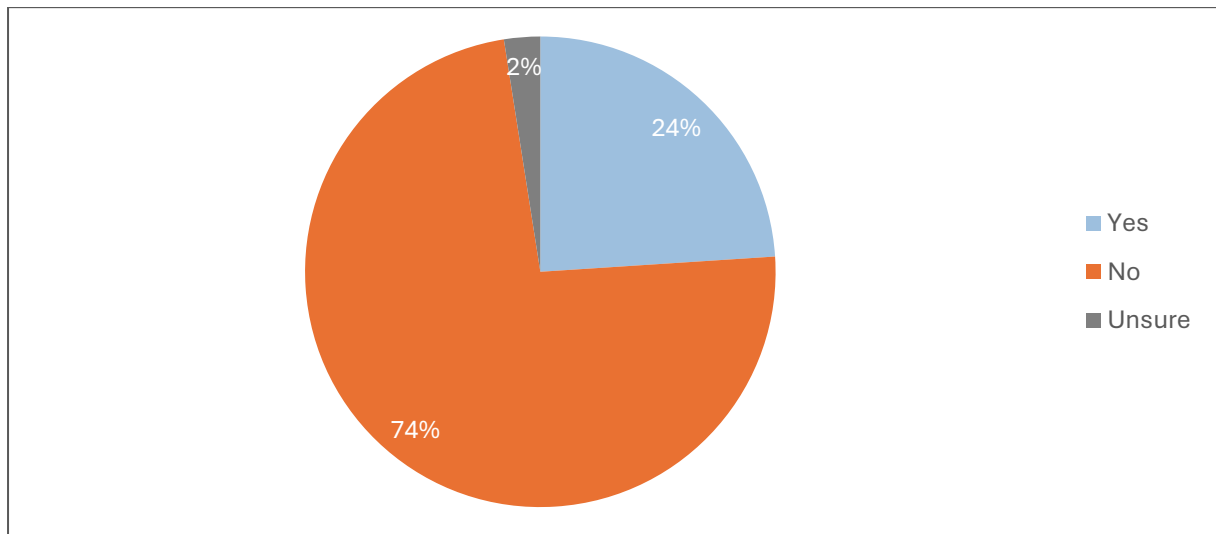
Are you aware of Caithness KLICS and the service they provide?



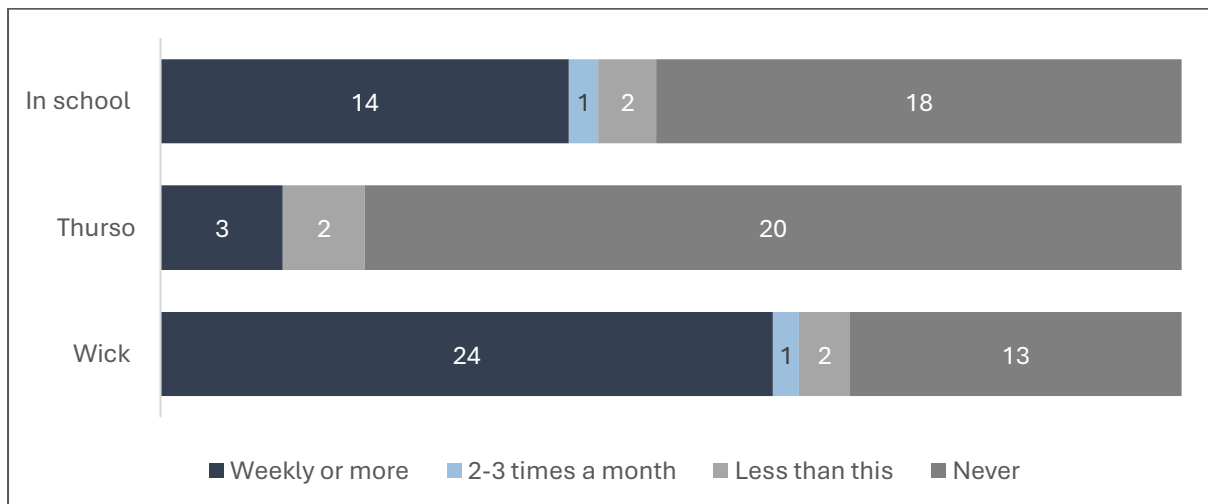
How have you heard about KLICS?



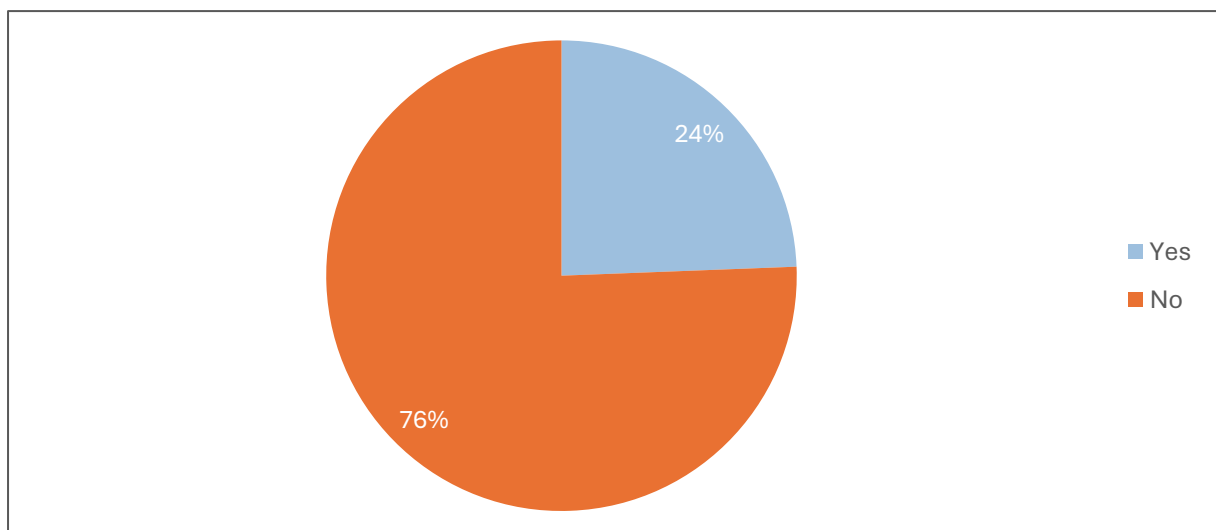
**Do you or anyone in your household currently make use of KLICS services?**



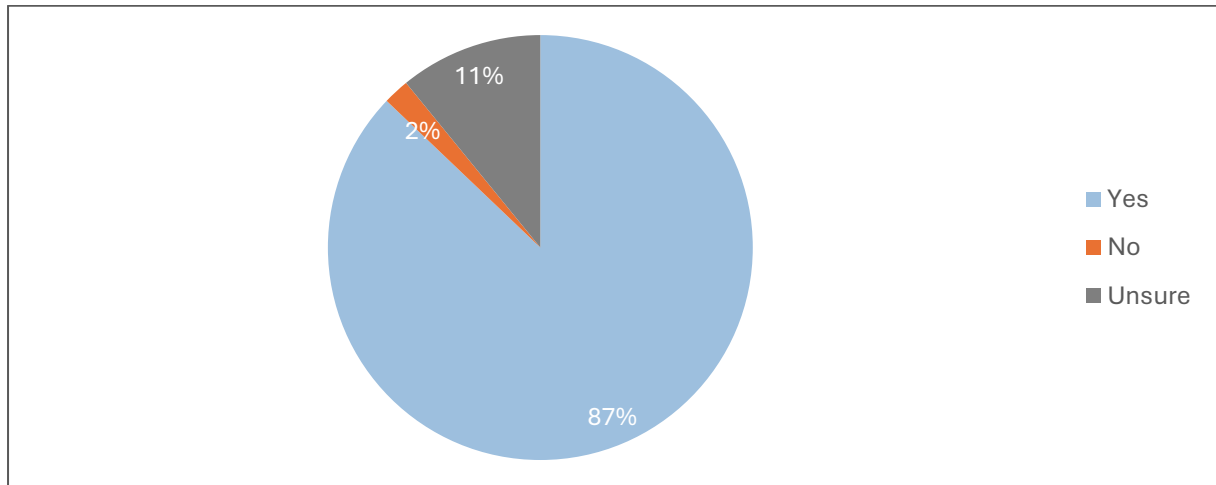
**If yes, please check how often you use these?**



**Understanding the above, do you or anyone in your household consider yourself / themselves to be a Young Carer?**



**KLICS currently provides a smaller service based in Thurso. Do you support the development of this service, including the lease or purchase of a local building to operate from?**



Throughout the survey, the opportunity was provided to include further comments, these have been included in Appendix One.

### 5.3 Community Event

A community event was attended on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at which a wide number of local and highland wide support organisations were represented. These included:

- Encompass Caithness
- Scottish Autism
- Highland Brokers
- Listening Ear
- Here for Caithness
- Highland Council Employability Team
- Citizen's Advice Bureau
- Thriving Families
- Connecting Carers
- Enable
- National Autistic Society Highland Branch
- Highland Advocacy
- NHS
- Home-Start Caithness
- Self-Directed Support (SDS)
- Supported Employment
- Key Housing
- Community Integrated Care (CIC)
- Thurso College



At this event, discussions were held with a number of the above organisations, and with members of the public who attended. The above survey was promoted, and hard copies were also completed on the day.

Through discussions with other kindred organisations, three were positive suggestions around developing the service(s) for children as they move into adulthood. Options for placement workers supported by the Highland Council were also presented.

## 5.4 Stakeholder Engagement & Letters of Support

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As part of this work, a summary of the survey results, along with an overview of the Charity's performance and ambition was shared directly with key local stakeholders including MPs, MSPs and NHS contacts.

As a result, letters of support were received from the following.

- Maree Todd MSP
- Ron Gunn Councillor for Thurso and Northwest Caithness
- Jamie Stone MP
- Janet McEwan MBE Provost of Wick & Councillor for Wick and East Caithness

These letters have been included in Appendix Two.

## 6 Strategic Context

### 6.1 Links to Policies & Strategies

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#### **Carers (Scotland) Act 2016**

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 is a landmark piece of legislation designed to improve the rights and support available to carers, including Young Carers. Central to this Act is the creation of the Young Carer Statement. This personalised document assesses the specific needs and circumstances of Young Carers, outlining their caring roles and the impact on their education, health, and well-being. The statement identifies the support required to alleviate the pressures of caring and enable Young Carers to pursue their aspirations. Local authorities have a legal obligation to provide this support, ensuring Young Carers have access to tailored services such as respite care, counselling, and educational support.

In addition, the Act mandates local authorities and health boards to involve carers in care planning and decision-making processes. This ensures that Young Carers are recognised as partners in care rather than simply dependents. The Act also emphasizes preventive measures, aiming to reduce the long-term negative impacts of caregiving on young individuals. By focusing on early intervention and collaboration between local services, the Act supports Young Carers in maintaining a healthy balance between their caregiving responsibilities and personal development.

#### **Highland Council's Young Carers Statement and Strategy (2023–2026)**

The Highland Council's Young Carers Statement and Strategy (2023–2026) is an integrated part of the council's broader Children's Services Plan, which focuses on the well-being of children and young people. This strategy outlines a holistic approach to supporting Young Carers, recognising the unique challenges they face. It includes targeted initiatives such as mentorship programs, flexible schooling arrangements, and access to extracurricular activities to help Young Carers maintain a balanced lifestyle.

The strategy also emphasises community engagement, ensuring that Young Carers and their families are actively involved in shaping the services that affect them. By working closely with schools, health services, and voluntary organisations, the council aims to create a cohesive network of support. Regular reviews of the Young Carer Statements are conducted to ensure the evolving needs of Young Carers are met, fostering an environment where they can thrive socially, academically, and emotionally.

### Highland Carers Strategy (2020–2023)

The Highland Carers Strategy, developed by NHS Highland, focuses on providing comprehensive support to carers of all ages, with specific provisions for Young Carers. It highlights the importance of early identification of Young Carers through partnerships with schools, social services, and health professionals.

Once identified it recommends that Young Carers are offered a range of services, including mental health support, peer groups, and training programs to build life skills.

One of the key objectives of the strategy is to improve the mental and physical health of Young Carers by providing opportunities for respite and access to leisure activities. The strategy also aims to reduce stigma associated with caregiving by promoting awareness campaigns within schools and communities. By fostering an inclusive and supportive environment, the Highland Carers Strategy seeks to empower Young Carers to balance their responsibilities with their personal goals.

### National Carers Strategy

The Scottish Government's National Carers Strategy provides a framework for improving the quality of life for carers, including Young Carers, across Scotland. It focuses on five key priorities: identifying carers, supporting their health and well-being, ensuring financial sustainability, improving recognition, and supporting transitions. For Young Carers, the strategy includes specific measures to help them balance their caregiving duties with education and social activities.

An important aspect of this strategy is the focus on collaborative working between national and local authorities, voluntary organisations, and communities. This ensures a consistent level of support for Young Carers, regardless of their location. The strategy also promotes the use of digital tools and technology to connect Young Carers with resources and peer support networks. By addressing systemic barriers and promoting inclusive practices, the National Carers Strategy aims to create a more equitable environment for Young Carers across Scotland.

## 7 Management & Operational Considerations

### 7.1 Governance

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Caithness KLICS is a registered Scottish Charity SCO43820. This model is appropriate for a third sector or community organisation, noting the following key benefits.

- **Limited Liability:** Members' liability is restricted to a nominal sum, protecting them from personal financial responsibility for the company's debts.
- **Mission-Driven Structure:** Profits can be reinvested into the organisation's goals, aligning with charitable, educational, or social purposes.

- **Separate Legal Identity:** The company can own property, enter contracts, and undertake legal actions independently of its members.
- **Enhanced Reputation:** Being a registered Company signals good governance and compliance, increasing trust among customers, funders, and partners.
- **Continuity:** The company's existence is independent of individual members, ensuring long-term stability.
- **Transparency & Accountability:** Governance and reporting requirements promote integrity and build stakeholder confidence.
- **Defined Roles:** Clear roles and responsibilities for members and directors reduce conflicts and improve oversight.

As part of this study, a Board Skills Audit has been undertaken, this audit looks to identify the skills present within the existing board and highlight any gaps or opportunities that can be addressed through training, recruitment or third-party support.

The results of this audit have been included in Appendix Three. The key findings are summarised below:

For all of the key overarching requirements of the Board and Organisation, the respondents rated each a 5 out of 5. These were:

- Has a strategic vision for the organisation that is articulated in a plan.
- Monitors financial performance and projections on a regular basis.
- Has a fundraising strategy in place to ensure adequate resources are generated.
- Ensures that there is adequate operational policies and procedures in place in relation to health and safety, volunteer support, child and vulnerable adults, and employment legislation.
- Deals with conflicts of interest on the committee that are consistent with current requirements and with those of your own constitution.
- Contains an appropriate range of experience, expertise and diversity that is required to make it an effective committee.

For a number of the wider skills assessed, people rated the charity's score higher than the average of their own individual scores. This suggests that these skills should be discussed in detail to determine the actual level of skills and experience within the group. This would reduce the risk of any unknown gaps in the board's competence. Whilst particularly relevant to the development of the imminent extension, some of the skills may be increasingly important as the service grows. These include

- Architectural design and planning
- Quantity surveying and civils
- Construction management
- Procurement and tendering
- Capital project management.
- Land management and maintenance.
- Property management
- Legal matters
- Financial management and reporting

## 8 New Income Streams

### 8.1 Overview

Currently, KLICS is predominantly sustained through external funding bodies. Whilst this has been consistent over the years, there is an increased risk to the business with any drop in available funds likely to result in a proportionate reduction in services.

As a result of the above, a number of diversified activities have been considered in this business plan to support the income for KLICS moving forward. Namely:

- The hire of space to third parties
- The development of promotion of Wellness Workshops
- Closer working with the local Business Community

### 8.2 Hire of Space – Third Parties

#### Overview & Consideration

Hiring out the expanded community space to third-parties in Wick can provide a valuable resource for local organisations and patrons while generating income to support KLICS' core activities.

Operationally, the following key aspects should be considered:

Affordability & Accessibility	Many third-sector groups operate on limited budgets, so pricing should reflect this while covering costs. KLICS may consider tiered pricing, offering discounts for charities or non-profits.
Facilities & Services	KLICS should determine what's included in the hire (e.g., Wi-Fi, kitchen access, AV equipment) and whether additional services (e.g., staffing, refreshments) should be chargeable.
Usage & Availability	KLICS must prioritise availability for your primary activities while ensuring fair access to community groups. They may wish to consider time slots or peak/off-peak pricing.
Insurance & Liability	KLICS should ensure groups have appropriate insurances and safeguarding policies, establishing clear terms around damage, cleaning, and responsibilities

#### Comparable Pricing

The following local pricing has been identified for comparison. Whilst KLICS should ensure pricing is comparable – they note that the funding of the extension with public money will require that rental prices are not overly competitive to distort other local providers:

- Pulteneytown People's Project charges around £10–£15 per hour for meeting spaces.
- Wick Assembly Rooms has larger spaces for events, ranging from £15–£25 per hour.

#### Possible Customers / Markets

Anecdotally, a number of local groups and services have indicated a desire to use the facilities, and KLICS should follow these up formally once the extension has been complete. In addition, the space should be promoted to key sectors and groups, including:

- Mental Health & Wellbeing Groups– Caithness Mental Health Support Group
- Young People’s Support
- Uniform Groups
- Social & Support Groups – Men’s Sheds, bereavement support groups
- Training & Education – Literacy groups, digital skills workshops

## Revenue Generation

This business plan assumes the following revenue generation from the rental of space at Macleod Road. Whilst conservative, there will be the capacity to grow this should the demand be higher.

Rental of Space	10 hours per month @ £10 average per hour	£1,200
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## 8.3 Wellness Workshops

### Overview & Considerations

Developing and providing wellbeing workshops in Caithness, particularly within schools and workplaces, will provide essential support for mental health, resilience, and overall wellbeing. Such workshops can address stress management, mindfulness, emotional resilience, and work-life balance, tailored to the needs of young people and employees.

By identifying an existing product or service, and undertaking the relevant training, KLICS staff members can offer these services to widen their positive impact locally and generate a modest additional income stream. Topics might include coping strategies for stress and anxiety, building confidence, and promoting positive relationships. Interactive activities, such as group discussions, mindfulness exercises, and creative expression, can enhance engagement.

### Comparable Examples

A number of organisations currently offer similar services in Scotland, these include:

- Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) - runs mental health programmes in schools and workplaces.
- Mindfulness Scotland - provides resilience training in schools and businesses.
- See Me Scotland - offers workplace wellbeing initiatives tackling mental health stigma.

### Possible Customers & Markets

Anecdotally, there is a gap in provision for school children, and KLICS may wish to consider this as a key target market, albeit with limitations on the budgets available. Workshops can be integrated into the curriculum or delivered as standalone sessions in collaboration with teachers and pastoral staff, and KLICS should work with existing partner schools to understand what would work best.

In local workplaces and businesses, sessions can focus on managing workplace stress, promoting healthy work environments, and improving employee wellbeing. Delivery methods could include lunch-and-learn sessions, half-day workshops, or ongoing wellbeing programmes. Delivery for businesses will also provide the opportunity to offer these sessions at a higher price point.

## Revenue Considerations

In delivering new workshops and activities, KLICS will require to consider how this impacts the available staff time. The following table of assumptions provides an income net of staff costs and expenses.

School Workshops	40 workshops per year – Net income £20 each	£800
Workplace / Adult Workshops	40 workshops per year – Net income £40 each	£1600
Total Net Income		£2,400

## 8.4 Business Community Links

Building stronger ties between Caithness KLICS and the business community, particularly through the Chamber of Commerce, may unlock valuable in-kind support that helps sustain and expand services while reducing operating costs. Some possible benefits include the following:

Access to In-Kind Support	<p>Many businesses are willing to provide non-financial contributions that can significantly lower expenses. Potential areas of support include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Printing &amp; Marketing – Support with promotional materials, social media, or website maintenance can reduce marketing costs.</li> <li>• Professional Services – Legal, accounting, or HR advice from local firms can help with compliance and governance.</li> <li>• IT &amp; Equipment – Businesses may donate surplus technology or assist with software and IT support.</li> </ul>
Reducing Operating Costs	<p>By leveraging in-kind contributions, Caithness KLICS can reallocate resources to frontline services rather than administrative or operational costs. For example, a local catering company might provide refreshments for events at a reduced rate, or transport firms could help with travel for young carers.</p>
Strengthening Community Ties	<p>Engaging with the Chamber of Commerce enhances visibility, fosters corporate social responsibility partnerships, and creates opportunities for local sponsorships. Businesses benefit by demonstrating community investment, while Caithness KLICS gains long-term support networks.</p>

## 9 Community Benefit Assessment

### Social Benefits

Expanding Caithness KLICS' premises in Wick will strengthen its role as a hub for Young Carers, their families, and the wider community, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual support. By providing a welcoming and well-equipped space, KLICS can host more inclusive activities, workshops, and events that bring people together, enhancing social cohesion. This development will also create opportunities for local partnerships with schools, healthcare providers, and other organisations, further integrating KLICS into the wider network of community services in Caithness.

In addition to supporting Young Carers, the expanded facility will enable KLICS to introduce wellness workshops, offering valuable opportunities for individuals to focus on their mental and emotional well-being. These sessions

can benefit both carers and the broader community by providing practical tools for managing stress, building resilience, and improving overall well-being.

Furthermore, the upgraded space will be available for rental by other third-parties, fostering collaboration and resource-sharing among local organisations. By opening its doors to like-minded community initiatives, KLICS can strengthen partnerships and contribute to a more connected and supportive voluntary sector in Caithness.

The enhanced facility will serve as a visible and accessible point of contact for Young Carers and their families, ensuring that more individuals are aware of and can benefit from the support available. This increased presence in Wick will promote community engagement and help to break down the stigma often associated with caregiving, fostering a more inclusive and supportive local culture.

### **Educational Benefits**

An expanded KLICS premises will enable the organisation to provide additional support tailored to Young Carers, many of whom face challenges balancing their caregiving responsibilities with their studies.

KLICS will also have additional capacity to deliver awareness sessions to schools and educators, equipping them with the knowledge to identify and support Young Carers within the educational system.

This proactive approach will contribute to improved educational outcomes and help Young Carers reach their full potential.

### **Benefitting Young People**

Young Carers are a vital but often overlooked group within society. By expanding its premises, KLICS can enhance its capacity to offer tailored activities and respite opportunities, enabling Young Carers to enjoy their childhood and connect with peers who understand their unique challenges.

The new facilities will also allow KLICS to collaborate with additional providers to support the transition of older Young Carers into Young Adult Carers, increasing the diversity of its programming. With more space and resources, KLICS can introduce wellness workshops focused on mental and emotional well-being, equipping Young Carers with practical strategies to manage stress and build resilience.

Additionally, the upgraded premises will enable KLICS to rent space to other third-sector organisations, creating opportunities for Young Carers to access a wider range of services and support networks. This collaborative approach will help ensure that young people benefit from enriching experiences that build confidence, resilience, and a sense of identity beyond their caregiving roles.

### **Health & Wellbeing Benefits**

The mental and physical health challenges faced by Young Carers are well-documented, including stress, anxiety, and burnout. An expanded KLICS facility will enable the delivery of more targeted health and well-being initiatives, such as mindfulness sessions, and physical activity programmes.

Having a dedicated space where Young Carers can access support, unwind, and recharge is crucial for their overall well-being. By increasing its capacity, KLICS can also involve local health professionals to provide workshops on managing stress and maintaining a healthy lifestyle, ensuring that Young Carers are equipped with the tools they need to thrive.

Offering wellness workshops for schools and workplaces in Caithness can significantly enhance health and well-being by providing individuals with the tools and knowledge to manage stress, improve mental resilience, and foster a positive mindset. In schools, these workshops can help young people develop emotional intelligence, coping strategies, and self-care practices that support their mental health, ultimately improving concentration, engagement, and overall academic performance. By addressing issues such as anxiety, self-esteem, and mindfulness, students can build resilience that benefits them throughout their lives.

For workplaces, wellness workshops promote healthier work environments by reducing stress levels, enhancing productivity, and improving employee morale. Teaching stress management techniques, relaxation exercises, and strategies for maintaining a work-life balance can lead to reduced absenteeism and increased job satisfaction. In rural areas like Caithness, where access to mental health support may be limited, such initiatives can be particularly valuable in fostering a sense of well-being within the community.

By making wellness workshops accessible to schools and workplaces, organisations can contribute to a healthier, happier population. Encouraging proactive mental health care and well-being practices not only benefits individuals but also strengthens communities by promoting resilience, social connection, and a culture of support and self-care.

### **Deprivation & Poverty**

Caithness, particularly areas in Wick, faces significant socio-economic challenges, including high levels of deprivation. Many Young Carers in these areas lack access to resources and support networks, compounding the difficulties they already face. An expanded KLICS facility will directly address these inequalities by offering free services that are accessible to all Young Carers, regardless of financial circumstances.

By providing practical support, such as transport assistance and meals, KLICS can help alleviate the additional burdens that deprivation places on Young Carers. This expansion will ensure that more yet unidentified Young Carers in Wick and surrounding areas have the opportunity to thrive despite their circumstances by enhancing the provisions already provided.

### **Organisational Sustainability**

The expansion of KLICS' premises will strengthen the organisation's long-term sustainability by allowing it to diversify its offerings and reach a larger audience. A larger facility will attract additional funding opportunities, as it demonstrates KLICS' commitment to growth and its ability to deliver a broader range of impactful services.

Developing wellness workshops for schools and workplaces, alongside hiring out space to third parties, will enhance the charity's operational and financial sustainability. By generating additional revenue, KLICS can reduce reliance on external funding, ensuring long-term stability.

These income streams will support core services for Young Carers while expanding community impact. Offering wellness workshops strengthens partnerships with schools and businesses, increasing awareness of KLICS' work. Renting the space to third-sector organisations fosters collaboration and maximises resource use. This diversified funding approach enables KLICS to invest in staff, facilities, and programme development, securing its future and enhancing service delivery.

## 10 Social Value

In May 2025, The Highland Council undertook a Social Value report based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals list of proxies matched against KLICS outcomes and output figures given. This report identified the return on investment for KLICS. The results of this report are summarised below:

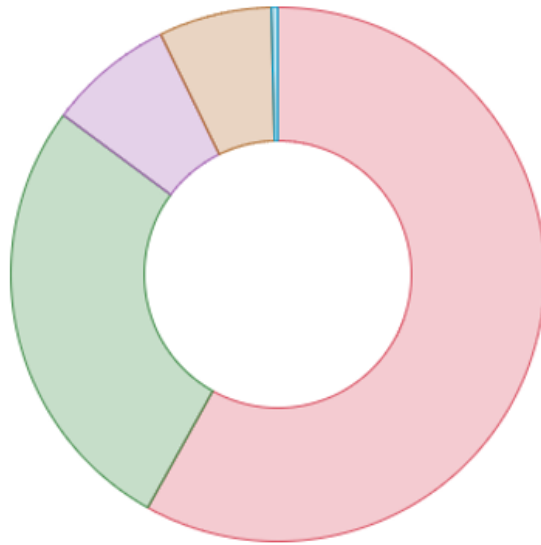
Social Return on Investment	
<b>£3.78</b>	
Net SRol: £2.78	
Impact	£608,295.80
-Discount	<u>£20,570.38</u>
= Present Value	£587,725.41
Present Value	£587,725.41
/ Input	<u>£1,55,399.00</u>
= SRol	£3.78
Present Value	£587,725.41
-Input	<u>£155,399.00</u>
= Net Present Value	£432,326.41
Net Present Value	£432,326.41
/Input	<u>£155,399.00</u>
= Net SRol	£2.78

Present Value	
<b>£587,725.41</b>	
Discount Rate 3.5%	
Year 1	£587,725.41

Impact	
<b>£608,295.80</b>	
Based on 1 Year	
Year 1	£608,295.80

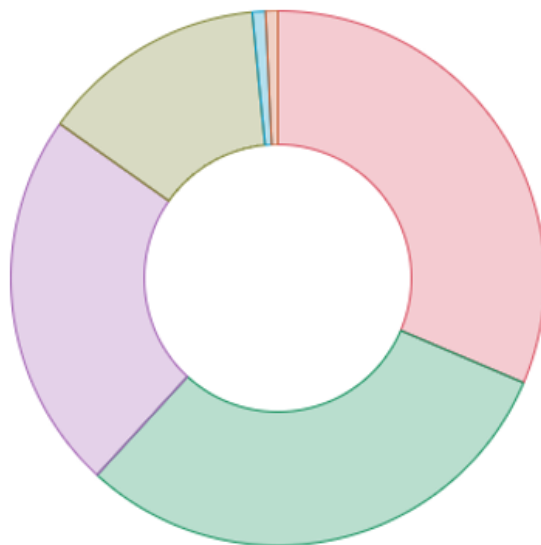
Unput	
<b>£155,399.00</b>	
Largest Category: Money	
Money	£155,399.00

### Present Value by Stakeholder



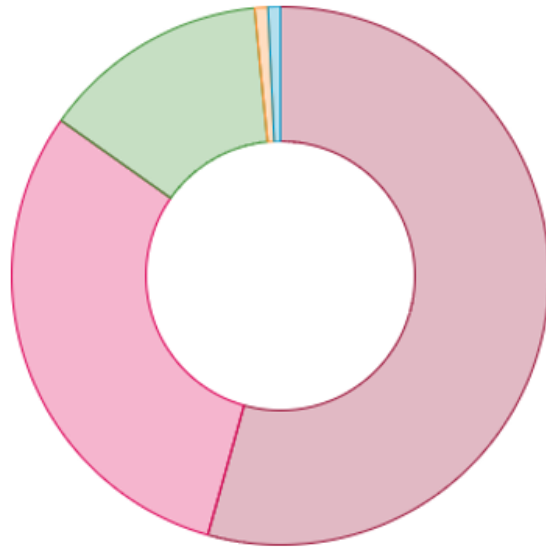
Young People: £341,445.65 (58.10%)    Community: £159,098.91 (27.07%)  
Organisation: £44,677.92 (7.60%)    Staff: £40,161.66 (6.83%)    Volunteers: £2,341.25 (0.40%)

### Present Value by Outcome



Feeling of Belonging to a Group: £184,521.73 (31.40%)  
Access to Support Services in a Rural Area: £178,891.30 (30.44%)  
Improved Emotional Wellbeing: £134,956.52 (22.96%)  
Meaningful Employment: £80,323.33 (13.67%)    Value of Volunteering: £4,682.51 (0.80%)  
Collaborative Working: £4,350.00 (0.74%)

### Present Value by Priority



Good Health and Well-Being: £319, 478.26 (54.36%)    Reduced Inequalities: £178, 891.30 (30.44%)  
Decent Work and Economic Growth: £80, 323.33 (13.67%)  
Sustainable Cities and Communities: £4, 682.51 (0.80%)    Unclassified: £4, 350.00 (0.74%)

## 11 Sources of Funding

### 11.1 Expansion of Facilities in Wick

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With the expansion project underway, the following funders have been engaged to meet the capital costs of the project (circa £120,000).

- The Caithness & North Sutherland Fund (awarded)
- Baxter's Community Fund (awarded)
- Highland Council (awarded)
- Highlands & Islands Enterprise (application in progress)
- The Clothworkers' Foundation (application in progress)

### 11.2 Existing Funders

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KLICS currently received funding from a number of key organisations and will continue to work with these for future funding opportunities as appropriate. These include:

- Big Lottery Fund
- Highland Council
- MFR -Cash for Kids
- Community Regeneration Fund
- Robertson's Trust
- Tesco Groundworks UK
- The Hugh Fraser Foundation
- Camster Windfarm
- The Duchess of Winchester Fund
- Bad ae Cheo Hakirk windfarm
- The Caithness North Sutherland Fund
- Bad ae Cheo Halkirk Windfarm
- The Hugh Fraser Foundation
- Stroupster Windfarm

### 11.3 Other Funding Opportunities

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#### **Scottish Landfill Community Funds**

The Scottish Landfill Communities Fund (SLCF) is a tax credit scheme, linked to Scottish Landfill Tax that encourages landfill site operators to provide contributions to Approved Bodies, who can then pass the funds onto community and environmental projects. The SLCF replaced the UK scheme in Scotland on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015.

Funding must be passed from a landfill operator via Approved Bodies to a project such as the proposed facilities at the Centre.

There are a number of approved bodies that have been identified as suitable and relevant for the project. These are listed below. It should be noted that as a general rule these funders look to fund a specific aspect of the project and not a proportion of the overall cost, additionally they will not be able to fund the same aspects of the project should applications to multiple bodies be considered.

Approved Body	Notes
<b>FCC Communities Ltd</b>	<p>The FCC Scottish Action Fund offers funding of between £2,000 and £40,000 to projects from FCC Environment through the Scottish Landfill Communities Fund.</p> <p>Further information is available at <a href="https://fcccommunitiesfoundation.org.uk">https://fcccommunitiesfoundation.org.uk</a></p>
<b>Suez Trust</b>	<p>SUEZ Communities Trust will consider projects which focus on physical improvement at an identified site. Funding is typically awarded for the purchase of materials/equipment and the appointment of a contractor to undertake the improvement work. A request for funding for multiple sites or for salaries, running costs, project management or design fees will not be considered.</p> <p>Funding up to £50,000 Further information is available at <a href="http://www.suezcommunitiestrust.org.uk/scotland">http://www.suezcommunitiestrust.org.uk/scotland</a></p>
<b>EB Scotland</b>	<p>EBS considers various criteria when deciding whether to fund a project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community Need:</b> It is important to demonstrate wide community support and appropriate consultation.</li> <li>• <b>Value for Money:</b> It is important to demonstrate anticipated costs are reasonable and represent good value, usually through a tender or quotation exercise.</li> <li>• <b>Viability:</b> EBS carefully vets all applicants as to their suitability to carry out proposed projects. This not only ensures compliance, but also that the necessary skills and experience are available to projects. It is also important that other funding, planning consents and any contingencies have been considered.</li> <li>• <b>Sustainability:</b> It is important that maintenance plans and budgets are demonstrated.</li> <li>• <b>Added Value:</b> It should be illustrated how SLCF funds lever in other sources of funding, utilise volunteers, enhance disabled access, meet biodiversity targets, and attract local authority support as appropriate.</li> </ul> <p>Funding £25,000 <a href="https://ebscotland.co.uk">https://ebscotland.co.uk</a></p>

When a Landfill Operator (LO) contributes to an Environmental Body (EB), it can only claim tax relief on 89% of the contribution it makes and is left with a 11% funding shortfall. Some LO's will absorb this cost, or a portion of it, themselves. Sometimes Los will require you to find a separate third party – a Contributing Third Party (CTP) to make the 11% payment or a portion of it.

Almost anyone can be a Contributing Third Party, providing they do not gain a unique benefit from the project put forward for funding. Below is a list of examples of organisations that may be Contributing Third Parties:

- Private Companies
- Public Sector organisations – Local Authorities, County Councils
- Charities
- Voluntary organisations
- Private donors
- Monies from fundraising

This funder would be appropriate for any small capital works on or within the building in Wick.

## Big Lottery - Community Action Scotland

The Big Lottery Community Action Fund looks to support community activities that bring communities together to improve wellbeing and develop positive relationships. Projects should help people connect with each other and/or the environment. The following key objectives of the fund are noted:

- help people come together. This could be through an activity or place, that's online or in person
- reach and support people who experience poverty, disadvantage or discrimination
- be led by your community. This means that people from your community lead on the project idea, planning and decisions
- build on the skills, experiences and strengths of your community
- understand the activities or services that are already available to your community. And show us how your work will fill a gap.

Caithness KLICS meets the requirements of an applicant and can apply for between £20,000 and £250,000 over five years.

## Big Lottery – Fairer Life Chances

The Fairer Life Changes Fund from the Big Lottery seeks to improve the health and wellbeing of disadvantaged communities. Funding of £20,000 - £500,000 over five years is available to organisations for projects that support children, young people and families. Or that help people to be healthier and have better access to support.

Projects should support people experiencing poverty, disadvantage or discrimination.

KLICS should demonstrate that their project is designed with the people they support. The project should:

- involve them in how it's developed, delivered and led
- make use of their existing skills and interests
- complement and make connections with other services that support them.

All eligible projects must meet one of these outcomes:

- Children, young people and families thrive.
- People have better relationships, connections, and physical or mental health.

## 12 Income & Expenditure Assessment

### Growth in Participation

The upcoming expansion to the site in Wick will allow KLICS to provide space for more Young Carers to attend, and for more specific sessions to be scheduled. The proposed growth in these numbers is presented below:

Young Carer Numbers	Current	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Projected Growth	--	20%	15%	10%	5%	5%
Sessions	213	256	294	323	340	356
Holiday Sessions	19	23	26	29	30	32
Attendances	1198	1438	1653	1819	1909	2005

## Financial Overview

The Charity's accounts demonstrate a sustainable financial model, albeit reliant on funding to cover the costs of operations. This funding reliance is commonplace for organisations delivering these types of services, and the income provided from The Highland Council, whilst reviewed regularly, provides a level of stability for the business model.

In determining the financial viability and the projections below, an average of the last two full years reported accounts has been set as the starting point.

The following assumptions outline the rationale behind the five-year projections, demonstrating how the business would continue to operate in a sustainable manner following the expansion of premises in Wick.

## Income Assumptions

The Charity's income is currently solely based on donations, funding, and grants, with no direct income per head for those using the service. KLICS has demonstrated the ability to successfully apply for, and obtain grants over a number of years, and it is assumed that this would continue.

**Highland Council Funding** – The Local Authority has been a key funding source for Caithness KLICS, and the charity will continue to seek support on an ongoing basis. It is hoped that the Highland Council and Caithness KLICS can agree a Service Level Agreement (SLA) that secures funding for a longer period. Currently this funding is applied for, and renewed annually. For this business case, the funding amount has been kept that same across the five-year projection.

**Other Grant Funders** – For all other grant funding, a year-on-year increase of 3% is assumed. This would be met through increased awareness, further grant applications.

**Donations and Fundraising** – For donations and fundraising, a year-on-year increase of 10% has been applied, and should be targeted by KLICS when planning and delivering fundraising activities.

## New Income Streams

**Gift Aid** – As a registered charity, KLICS can look at reclaiming gift aid on a proportion of its income. Whilst independent advice should be sought, this business plan assumes that a proportion of the donation and fundraising income could be considered. This plan assumes that the 25% could be reclaimed on half of the donation, fundraising and events income.

**Wellness Sessions** – Caithness KLICS, in discussion with the local schools has identified an opportunity to provide wellness coaching / wellbeing sessions for young people. This service would be provided at a fee. KLICS staff are undertaking the relevant training to deliver this, and so this has been included as an additional revenue stream in this report generating a net income of £200 per month. A 10% growth on this income has been considered year on year.

**Hire of Space** – In considering the extension, a number of third-party groups have expressed an interest in using the space, and a potential to pay for doing so. This report assumes that this will be provided at a fair and competitive costs and will generate £100 per month for the Charity. A 10% year on year growth has been applied in the five-year projection.

New Income Stream	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Wellness Sessions	£2,400	£2,640	£2,904	£3,194	£3,514
Hire of Space	£1,200	£1,320	£1,452	£1,597	£1,757
Gift Aid	£1,437	£1,580	£1,738	£1,912	£2,103

### In Kind Business Support

By working more closely with local business, KLICS may be able to access services and contributions to support their activities for a reduced, or no cost. The supply of the solar panel installations from a local business is a key example of how this can work.

KLICS should engage with the local chamber of commerce and other key networking organisations to promote and market their activities to the business community.

### Expenditure Assumptions

**Wages** – The wages at KLICS are directly related to the level of funding secured, and therefore the volume of sessions and support that can be offered. This report takes a base line from the most recent financial year, recognising that these are all funded posts. Noting the increases on the living wage, and inflation, this business plan applies a year-on-year increase of 3%.

**On Costs** – Current accounts show wages on costs of around 3%. Taking consideration of the increase in National Insurance employers' contribution, and the reduction of the National Insurance threshold, this has been increased to 4% of the total wages for each subsequent year.

**Provision of Activities & Outings** – The cost of delivering activities and outings has been increased in line with the number of attendances and sessions as previously outlined.

**Travel Costs** – The cost of travel has also been increased in line with the number of attendances and sessions as previously outlined.

**Support / Donations** – The cost of providing support for the community has been included recognising the benefit of the food packages and other additional support the KLICS manages throughout the year. In this business case, a year-on-year increase of 5% has been considered. It is noted, however, that this expenditure line is one that can be reduced should less grant funding be received.

**Training Costs** – In considering training costs, a year-on-year increase of 2% has been applied.

**Rates, Rent & Insurance** – Recognising the increase in the facility size and value, an increase of 20% has been applied in the first year, with a year-on-year increase of 5% thereafter.

**Energy Costs** – Caithness KLICS has recently accepted a donation of fully installed solar panels for the existing and new buildings. These will be provided based on an assessment of energy use, in order that 100% of electricity requirements can be met. As a result, this plan considers a negligible cost for energy from year 2 onwards.

**Telephone & Internet** – A year-on-year increase of 2% has been applied to account for inflation.

**Repairs & Maintenance** – Recognising the improved space following the expansion, a reduction of 50% in maintenance costs has been applied in year one. Thereafter a year-on-year increase of 10% has been applied.

**IT Expenses** – A year-on-year increase of 2% has been applied to account for inflation.

**Other Costs** – A year-on-year increase of 2% has been applied to account for inflation.

**Governance Costs** – A year-on-year increase of 2% has been applied to account for inflation.

**Depreciation** – The depreciation figure of circa £5,000 from existing accounts has been continued as a straight-line depreciation cost throughout.

### Five Year Financial Projections

	Current	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>Young Carer Numbers</b>						
Sessions	213	256	294	323	340	356
Holiday Sessions	19	23	26	29	30	32
Attendances	1,198	1,438	1,653	1,819	1,909	2,005
<b>Income</b>						
Highland Council	£57,977	£57,977	£57,977	£57,977	£57,977	£57,977
Other Grants	£119,252	£122,829	£126,514	£130,309	£134,219	£138,245
Donations / Fundraising	£10,449	£11,493	£12,643	£13,907	£15,298	£16,827
Wellness Sessions	£0	£2,400	£2,640	£2,904	£3,194	£3,514
Hire of Space	£0	£1,200	£1,320	£1,452	£1,597	£1,757
Gift Aid	--	£1,437	£1,580	£1,738	£1,912	£2,103
	<b>£187,677</b>	<b>£198,536</b>	<b>£203,994</b>	<b>£209,740</b>	<b>£215,794</b>	<b>£222,181</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>						
Wages	£131,437	£135,380	£139,442	£143,625	£147,934	£152,372
On Costs	£3,707	£5,415	£5,578	£5,745	£5,917	£6,095
Provision of Activities & Outings	£7,339	£8,806	£10,127	£11,140	£11,697	£12,282
Travel Costs	£2,861	£3,433	£3,948	£4,343	£4,560	£4,788
Support / Donations	£10,150	£10,657	£11,190	£11,749	£12,337	£12,954
Training Costs	£288	£293	£299	£305	£311	£317
Rates, Rent & Insurance	£4,385	£5,261	£5,524	£5,801	£6,091	£6,395
Energy Costs	£2,657	£3,453	£3,626	£3,807	£3,998	£4,198

Telephone & Internet	£1,227	£1,252	£1,277	£1,302	£1,328	£1,355
Repairs & Maintenance	£7,117	£3,558	£3,914	£4,305	£4,736	£5,210
IT Expenses	£5,333	£5,440	£5,548	£5,659	£5,773	£5,888
Other Costs	£1,636	£1,668	£1,702	£1,736	£1,770	£1,806
Governance Costs	£1,200	£1,224	£1,248	£1,273	£1,299	£1,325
Depreciation	£4,990	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
	<b>£184,323</b>	<b>£187,388</b>	<b>£194,797</b>	<b>£201,984</b>	<b>£208,753</b>	<b>£215,786</b>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>£3,354</b>	<b>£11,148</b>	<b>£9,197</b>	<b>£7,756</b>	<b>£7,042</b>	<b>£6,395</b>

## 13 Future Opportunities – Thurso Expansion

### 13.1 Overview

In addition to the expansion of facilities in Wick, KLICS recognises the challenges with delivery of its services for young people in Thurso. Currently a small space is rented when required, but the group have ambitions to develop a dedicated space, operating as a satellite location to their current Wick Hub.

Whilst a lease of space is the most likely option for developing a Thurso site, KLICS may wish to consider the possibility of other acquisitions options. In considering a new facility in Thurso, there are a number of options that may be considered. Each will depend on the availability of a premises, the relevant owner, and the appropriate assessments undertaken.

- Facility Lease
- Asset Transfer
- Negotiated Sale
- Commercial Purchase

Facility Lease	Leasing a premises will involve KLICS signing a formal agreement to occupy a dedicated space for a set period. This option provides the Charity with exclusive control over the premises during the lease term, allowing full control over the spaces, scheduling and use, as well as the opportunity to invest in furnishing and design – emulating the space in Wick.
Asset Transfer	<p>The Community Empowerment Act allows community organisations to take ownership of assets including local authority buildings, influence decisions, and participate in planning to ensure services meet local needs.</p> <p>An asset transfer would involve the local authority transferring ownership of a suitable building to KLICS. Processes exist within each Local Authority to investigate this; however, these are usually time consuming. The local authority may consider an interim lease, whilst this option is investigated.</p> <p>Often, the facilities that are available for transfer are those seen as liabilities, and as such may be poorly maintained and require some capital investment to ensure they are suitable.</p>

Negotiated Sale	<p>Similar to a Community Asset Transfer, a negotiated sale may permit KLICS to purchase a local authority building at a significantly reduced cost. Usually considered as part of the community asset process, the purchase price would be agreed by the Local Authority with reductions from the value made in direct relation to the community benefit offered by the group.</p> <p>This option has similar benefits to the Asset Transfer above, however, will require capital to meet the agreed purchase cost. At the time of writing this report, a challenging funding environment would limit the amount of capital funding available. The Scottish Land Fund may be a viable option to provide capital funding for up to 95% of the building's valuation.</p>
Purchase	<p>A commercial purchase involves buying a property outright for KLICS. This option provides complete ownership and control, allowing the Charity to develop a permanent base tailored specifically their needs, and guarantees longevity – making the project more attractive to funders.</p> <p>At this stage, the capital costs required to undertake a commercial purchase are not feasible.</p>

## 13.2 Key Considerations

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When considering a new or expanded facility in Thurso, Caithness KLICS must carefully evaluate several key factors to ensure the space meets the organisation's current and future needs. By thoroughly appraising these considerations, KLICS can ensure the building will effectively serve the Young Carers it supports, positively impact the community, and be a sound investment for the organisation's long-term success.

### Legal and Regulatory Considerations

#### Ownership or Lease

KLICS must decide whether to purchase or lease the facility. Ownership provides long-term stability and investment potential, while leasing offers flexibility and reduces initial costs. Any purchase or lease agreement must be thoroughly reviewed to confirm affordability, acceptable terms, and the absence of restrictions that could hinder operations or future plans.

#### Planning Permissions

It is essential to ensure the facility is either already suitable for its intended use or capable of undergoing a change of use application. Renovations or layout changes may require planning approval, and engaging with the local authority early, through a pre-application meeting, is recommended. Consideration must also be given to parking facilities to align with local planning policies.

#### Building Regulations

The facility must comply with all applicable building regulations, including those for fire safety, accessibility, and ventilation. The building must safely accommodate any planned activities, including safe flooring, sufficient space for group activities, and specialised facilities tailored to KLICS' requirements.

#### Insurance

Comprehensive insurance coverage is essential to protect both the facility and its users. This includes property insurance, public liability coverage for potential incidents, and specialised coverage for any public or community activities. KLICS should seek expert advice to ensure appropriate policies are in place.

## **Health and Safety Compliance**

The facility must adhere to health and safety regulations, including clear emergency exits, fire safety measures, and access to first aid. Regular risk assessments should be conducted to identify and mitigate potential hazards. These assessments should form part of the feasibility study for the facility.

## **Location and Accessibility**

### **Physical Accessibility**

The facility must comply with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Features such as ramps, lifts, accessible toilets, and clear signage are essential to make the building inclusive for all participants, staff, and visitors.

### **Location and Transport Links**

A convenient location is crucial for the success of the facility. Proximity to schools, residential areas, or community hubs can help KLICS reach more Young Carers and foster community engagement. The facility should also offer good public transport links and adequate parking to ensure it is accessible to all.

## **Space and Facilities**

### **Suitability for Activities**

The building must meet the specific needs of KLICS, offering sufficient space for group sessions, workshops, and individual activities. The layout should support multiple activities taking place simultaneously and provide flexibility for future growth.

### **Changing and Hygiene Facilities**

The facility should include appropriate changing rooms and hygiene facilities, including accessible options, to support participants' needs.

### **Storage**

Ample secure storage is vital for equipment and supplies, ensuring items are easily accessible while being protected from wear and tear.

### **Communal Areas**

Spaces for communal activities, such as waiting areas, meeting rooms, and breakout spaces, should be prioritised. These areas foster a welcoming environment and provide room for administrative tasks and social interaction.

## **Operating Costs**

### **Maintenance and Running Costs**

It is essential to account for ongoing operational expenses, including utilities, cleaning, and general maintenance. Understanding these costs ensures financial sustainability.

### **Upfront Capital Investment**

Renovation or adaptation costs must be identified early in the planning process. This includes modifications for accessibility, layout changes, or specialised installations needed to support KLICS' activities.

### **Financial Reserves**

KLICS must maintain sufficient financial reserves or secure funding to cover initial costs and unforeseen expenses, ensuring the facility's sustainability.

## Environmental Considerations

### Energy Efficiency

The energy efficiency of the facility should be assessed to manage running costs effectively. Upgrades, such as energy-efficient lighting, heating systems, or insulation, can reduce expenses while creating a comfortable environment for participants.

### Environmental Health

The building should offer good air quality, natural light, and adequate ventilation to support the well-being of Young Carers and staff. These elements are particularly important for spaces dedicated to activities and support sessions.

By addressing these considerations, Caithness KLICS can ensure that the new or expanded facility in Wick will be fit for purpose, sustainable, and a valuable asset to the community it serves.

## 14 Project Risk Assessment

### 14.1 SWOT Analysis

This SWOT analysis highlights the potential for Caithness KLICS to significantly enhance its impact through the expansion of its premises, while also recognising the challenges that need to be strategically addressed for the project to succeed.

Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Established Reputation:</b> KLICS has a proven track record of providing vital support to Young Carers in Caithness, earning trust and recognition within the community.</li><li>• <b>Dedicated Team:</b> The organisation is supported by skilled staff and volunteers passionate about improving the lives of Young Carers.</li><li>• <b>Increased Capacity:</b> Expanding the premises will allow for more services and activities, directly benefiting a larger number of Young Carers and their families.</li><li>• <b>Community-Centric Focus:</b> KLICS is deeply embedded in the local community, making it well-positioned to understand and address the unique challenges faced by Young Carers in Caithness.</li></ul>
Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Initial Financial Outlay:</b> The expansion project will require significant upfront funding, which may strain resources in the short term.</li><li>• <b>Reliance on External Funding:</b> As a third-sector organisation, KLICS is dependent on grants, donations, and other external funding, which can be unpredictable.</li><li>• <b>Limited Awareness:</b> Despite its reputation, some Young Carers and families may remain unaware of KLICS and its offerings, limiting reach and impact.</li><li>• <b>Staffing Pressure:</b> Expansion may necessitate additional staff and volunteers, creating potential challenges in recruitment and training.</li></ul>
Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Enhanced Partnerships:</b> The expanded premises can foster collaborations with schools, healthcare providers, and other local organisations, broadening the scope of support for Young Carers.</li><li>• <b>New Activities</b> – The proposed new wellness activities, and the rental of space provides an opportunity for KLICS to increase the annual revenue and support the running costs.</li></ul>

- **New Funding Streams:** Improved facilities can attract additional grants, sponsorships, and community donations, ensuring long-term financial sustainability.
- **Increased Visibility:** A larger, well-equipped space in Wick will enhance KLICS' visibility and accessibility, raising awareness of its mission and services.
- **Broader Programming:** The expansion allows for new initiatives, such as life skills workshops, mental health services, and intergenerational activities, to better address the needs of Young Carers.

#### Threats

- **Economic Uncertainty:** Fluctuations in the economy could impact the availability of funding and donations, posing risks to the project's financial viability.
- **Competition for Resources:** Other organisations in the area may be vying for similar funding, creating challenges in securing necessary support.
- **Community Expectations:** An expanded facility could raise expectations for additional services, creating pressure on KLICS to deliver beyond its current capacity.

## 14.2 Risk Register

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The following risk register outlines the key risks associated with the delivery of this business plan, provides recommendations on how to mitigate these, and suggested delegation of responsibility. Further risk assessments will require to be should plans for any new venue be developed. These risks are listed under key headings:

- Strategic Risks
- People Risks
- Operational Risks
- Business & Financial Risks
- Political & Reputational Risks

This risk register table should be reviewed periodically by the Board of Caithness KLICS, who should continuously look to reduce the impact or likelihood of those risks categorised as medium or high.

Risk Rating	Low Risk (1-8)	Medium Risk (9-16)	High Risk (17-25)
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Risk	Likelihood (/5)	Impact (/5)	Risk Score (/25)	Mitigation	Responsibility
Strategic Risks					
Lack of sufficient Board Members to deliver the Club's strategic objectives.	2	3	6	This business plan has outlined the skills set that should be reviewed and the gaps within the current board. These are limited and should also be viewed within the context that KLICS currently operates facilities and services successfully.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS
Lack of Vision and Robust Business Plan	1	5	5	This report demonstrates a clear and well thought out vision for the project, highlighting the viability, and assessing the operational considerations and risks. In addition to demonstrating a viable model, this business plan can stand as a target for growth and financial performance.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS
No long-term Development Strategy	1	4	4	In addition to this business case, Caithness KLICS have also commissioned a 5-year business plan that provided strategy and direction for the Charity, ensuring sustainability and long-term growth.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS
Lack of Continuity Plan / Exit Strategy.	2	5	10	This business plan includes an exit strategy should the growth and development fail to be achieved or should funding sources be significantly reduced. This strategy outlines how best to manage the impact on the staff, volunteers, and services users.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS

Convincing partners that you have a robust business case for securing their support and investment.	3	5	15	The development of this report presents a viable business model for KLICS within the expanded Wick site. Further, this report will provide a strong business case for approaching any funder or partner in the future in relation to further development across Caithness.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS
People Risks					
Risk relating to the employment of staff and employment legislation.	2	3	6	Currently KLICS has a number of established and experienced staff and volunteers. As such there is less risk around employment legislation. The Board should ensure it understands the risks around employment, taking advice where appropriate. The Board will continue to be responsible for ensuring compliance with all up-to-date employment regulations.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS
Risks relating to the recruitment and management of staff and volunteers.	3	4	12	Regardless of employment status, or agreed compensation, KLICS require to have structures in place to manage its workforce. This includes recruitment, scheduling, development, feedback and administration, as well as resolving conflict, performance issues and grievances. These are already present within the organisation but should be continuously reviewed as the provision of service grows.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS
Loss of key volunteers and staff.	4	5	20	The capacity of any service is directly dependant on the number of staff and volunteers available. For KLICS this is also directly related the funding available to support them.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS

				The Board and staff should continue to seek funding, working with existing and new funding partners to secure the longevity of staff roles. In particular, KLICS should continue discussions with the Highland Council to seek a commitment of funding greater than 12 months.	
Operational Risks					
Property management risks.	4	4	16	KLICS will require to identify all risks associated with the expanded premises, and any future spaces in Thurso or elsewhere. This report outlines key areas to consider, but it is recommended that a full liability assessment, and management plan is updated or undertaken to represent the larger space.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS
Health and Safety and Regulatory issues	4	4	16	KLICS must continue to be aware of their Health and Safety obligations throughout the planning and delivery of all aspects of this project, in particular when expanding or undertaking new premises.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS
Data Protection Policies	3	2	6	Strict adherence to Data Protection legislation and enforcement of relevant Data Protection Policies will be required, in particular taking account of GDPR regulation. This is likely already a consideration of KLICS but should be reviewed as the service grows.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS
Business / Financial Risks					
Loss of Board Members and Staff	4	4	16	KLICS will require to ensure adequate number of board members and staff to	To be determined by the Board of KLICS

				deliver the services effectively. The Board and management should actively identify succession within the board, recruiting new members as required. Additionally increasing the number of volunteers will provide a pool of potential employees where vacancies arise.	
Rising operational costs (e.g., utilities, rent, insurance).	4	4	16	As with any other organisation, the charity faces increase in costs – including the living wage, energy costs, and the costs of travel, expenses and general miscellaneous items. This business plan takes account of this within the growth projections, but the Board should ensure this is monitored in line with the financial audit and management processes.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS
Financial controls, forecasting and budgeting.	3	5	15	KLICS will need to continue maintaining accurate and strict control of the funds and expenditure, revisiting the forecasts on a quarterly basis, and taking actions to ensure financial sustainability where required.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS
<b>Political / Reputational Risks</b>					
Relationships with the local community.	3	3	9	KLICS should continue to develop a positive relationship with the local community, highlighting the services successes and impact where appropriate.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS
Relationship with Highland Council.	3	4	12	The work delivered to date on this business plan has demonstrated a positive working relationship with the local authority. KLICS should ensure that ongoing discussions and partnership working strengthens and protects this important relationship.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS

Relationships with local elected members	2	3	6	KLICS should develop strong relationship with local elected members, ensuring their support for the charity, lining up advocacy and support where required for future funding bids.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS
Branding and Public Profile	2	3	6	KLICS should continue to use all platforms to promote their work and celebrate their impact on the local community. Following expansion of the site at Wick, the charity should contact the local press to highlight the project.	To be determined by the Board of KLICS

## 14.3 Exit Strategy

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### Overview

While the focus is on achieving successful growth, it is essential for KLICS to have a robust exit strategy to ensure sustainability and ongoing support for local Young Carers in case of unforeseen circumstances.

The primary objective of this strategy is to ensure the seamless continuation of services for Young Carers. It also aims to safeguard the organisation's assets and resources while maintaining the trust and support of stakeholders, including beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, funders, and the wider community.

### Potential Scenarios

The key considerations below will allow KLICS to be prepared for a number of scenarios. These include:

- Shortfall in funding impacting staff numbers and service capacity.
- Shortage of staff and volunteers
- Shortfall in funding impacting the operating costs of the site.
- Significant maintenance requirements

### Consideration & Mitigation

<b>Financial Management</b>	An asset inventory will be compiled to maintain a comprehensive record of all property, equipment, and intellectual property. Financial reserves will be established and maintained to cover costs associated with winding down operations, if necessary. Debt obligations will be identified and addressed, with plans developed for their settlement.
<b>Stakeholder Communication</b>	Beneficiaries, including Young Carers and their families, will receive timely and transparent information about any changes to services. Staff and volunteers will be supported throughout the transition with clear and consistent communication. Funders and partners will be informed of developments to ensure compliance with any contractual obligations and to maintain trust.
<b>Service Continuity</b>	To ensure continuity of care, partnerships will be identified with local organisations that can assume responsibility for ongoing services. Protocols will be developed for the transfer of resources, including client records, with appropriate consent, to these organisations.
<b>Legal and Regulatory Compliance</b>	The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) will be notified of any significant changes to ensure compliance with legal requirements. All contracts and agreements will be reviewed to identify obligations and manage them appropriately.

## 15 Recommendations

This report concludes the following recommendations:

- It is recommended that KLICS approves the content of this business plan, outlining the feasible business model for the next five years, and the potential new sources of income.
- It is recommended that KLICS identify opportunities for further training or recruitment of additional trustees to address any relevant gaps in competencies as identified in the Skills Audit.
- It is recommended that KLICS work with The Highland Council to agree a Service Level Agreement committing funding for a period longer than 12 months.
- It is recommended that KLICS complete the process of taking ownership of the site and existing building to ensure long term security of tenure and to support access to a wider range of funding bodies.
- In line with the options in this business plan, it is recommended that KLICS diversify the income streams through the following key activities
  - Developing and delivering a programme of Wellness Workshops targeted at schools, workplaces, and the wider public.
  - Rental of the increased workspace at Macleod Road to kindred groups and organisations at a suitable rate comparable to other venues.
- It is recommended that KLICS seek to engage with the Local Chamber of Commerce to identify options for in-kind support and improved working relationships with the local business community,
- It is recommended that KLICS continue to actively apply for funding – both to those sources already working with the group, and to any additional sources listed in this report.
- It is recommended that KLICS maintain a watching brief for any future building rental or acquisition opportunities that would facilitate the expansion or improvement of services in Thurso – undertaking further due diligence on the options available and feasibility at the appropriate time.

## 16 Appendices

### 16.1 Appendix One: Community Survey Comments

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#### Comments on Developing the Thurso Site

##### Supportive

- Absolutely, again they provide an invaluable service and having their own premises would enable them to grow and offer more.
- All areas should have this type of support for Young Carers. As well as morally being the right thing to do, the right support could have huge benefits to individuals in the long run, reducing support they need in later life and improving outcomes for young people.
- As before, it is a much-needed service in the county.
- As previous - if there are young people needing the support then the service must be put in place.
- As was mentioned there are more and more young people needing support so a dedicated building will help provide this.
- Do not know anything about the space in Thurso
- Having their own premises in Thurso would benefit the service, and help them expand, helping more Young Carers and families.
- I am sure they are also growing in numbers so need a larger building.
- I feel Thurso has little support, there is no hub based in Thurso whereas I feel there is a need for one.
- If the numbers keep going up and for stability if have their own premises
- If there is demand in Thurso, then expansion is vital to these kids also.
- It would be good to have in all areas.
- It would be great to have a base for KLICS in Thurso
- It's much needed.
- Reaching + supporting all Young Carers is vital & providing essential facilities is crucial.
- So young cares can get a break.
- There are 21 miles between Thurso and Wick. Each town should be able to have their own service. The numbers of people in the area with LD, ASD, dementia, mental health issues etc are growing so more is needed for Young Carers and someone may be able to access Thurso from somewhere like Reay or Bettyhill but would be unable to trek through to Wick, just for a bit of respite, so definitely one for each town.
- There are more recognised Young Carers now than pre-Covid.
- There is an increase in the number of Young Carers in Thurso requiring more support than can currently be provided.
- This would provide an equal space for the young people ... staff space could be utilised in Wick.
- Thurso is also a large area and is also clearly experiencing deprivation.
- Thurso Young Carers deserve the same benefits and opportunities as other carers. Having their own place will give them a feeling of belonging and staff will be able to provide a wider variety of activities.
- Transport is a real issue in Caithness so having a facility at both main towns only benefits more young people's accessibility to those services.
- Unfortunately, this support is required across all areas, Thurso could benefit also.
- Working in the third sector with groups in both Wick and Thurso I know first-hand of the feelings between the two towns. If one had something the other has not, it breeds a negative perception amongst the public of the service / organisation.

##### Unsupportive

No Comments

##### Unsure

- Again, as someone who does not have details it is difficult to comment. Possible expansion could be realised by working collaboratively with another like-minded community group to locate services from a hub rather than stand alone. This would reduce costs and provide a more cost-effective sustainable solution.
- In order to provide an opinion, I'd need to understand the implications, particularly on costs and sustainability.

### Further Comments / Suggestions

- Any expansion needs to be sustainable and well thought out including how this can be afforded in the future.
- Expansion of the facilities and services in Wick and Thurso could mean more Young Carers can get support.
- Great service, wish you all the best.
- I think you do an amazing job at giving children a much-needed break from their daily reality. I hope you find new premises quickly to continue your great work. Isn't worth contacting any MSPs, council officials about empty building in the town.
- I wish KLICS every success in going from strength to strength in their service delivery.
- It is a well needed service in Caithness.
- Keep doing what you are doing it helps so many children.
- KLICS has only been in its current premises a few years, it was fitted out as desired at the time with funding provided. What will the building be used for otherwise? Or will it become another abandoned building in Wick? Will funding be available to fund the same upgrades elsewhere?
- Need better finances.
- This can only be a great support to provide, it's a no brainer, young people need this more than ever.
- This is a local charity giving a local service and therefore should be supported in everything they endeavour to achieve.
- This organisation does great work, and expansion would benefit lots of Young Carers and families in the county, they have great connections with communities on both sides of the county and open up opportunities for the Young Carers who attend.
- Totally support the project expansion. Well done Caithness KLICS 👍
- Wonderful service

## 16.2 Appendix Two: Letters of Support

Caithness KLICS  
Macleod Road  
Wick  
Caithness  
KW1 5JQ

Case ref: MT16740  
Date: 23/01/2025



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

**Maree Todd MSP**  
**Caithness, Sutherland & Ross**

### **Letter of Support**

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you in my capacity as MSP for Caithness, Sutherland, and Ross on behalf of Caithness KLICS.

Last year, I visited Caithness KLICS and was able to see, first-hand, the invaluable service provided by a dedicated and compassionate team of staff.

Carers make an immense contribution to our society by caring for family, friends and neighbours who are disabled or in poor health, but due to the weight of their responsibilities, they can often experience social isolation and physical and mental exhaustion.

Caithness KLICS provide a safe environment where young carers can take a break from their responsibilities, have fun and be kids. The facility has supported over 110 young carers since their opening in 2013 and have held 548 sessions.

The demand for their services is only growing and I would like to express my wholehearted support for the work carried out by Caithness KLICS and for their plans to expand their site in Wick.

I would be grateful if you could consider this letter of support in advance of upcoming funding opportunities.

Best wishes,

Maree Todd MSP

Caithness, Sutherland & Ross

31 High Street  
AIness  
IV17 0PT

Tel: 01349 888281

[maree.todd.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:maree.todd.msp@parliament.scot)

Ron Gunn  
Councillor for Thurso and Northwest Caithness  
07760634742  
January 2025

Dear Wendy

**RE: Caithness KLICS**

KLICS Caithness provide an absolutely vital service in supporting young carers across our area, as no other organisation supports these carers in the way they do.

It's a testament to the work they do that a very large percentage of the local population are aware of their support and it is recognised that they need to expand their service as more support is needed across our area.

I am fully supportive of their plans to expand and would support any application for funding.

Ron Gunn  
Councillor for Thurso and Northwest Caithness  
Chair of Caithness Area Committee

**Jamie Stone MP**  
Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

4 November 2024

Caithness Klics  
Macleod Road  
Wick  
Caithness  
KW1 4JQ

Our Ref: JS20287

4 November 2024

**To whom it may concern**

It is my pleasure to write this letter of support for Caithness KLICS, not only for their existing project and the work that they do, but also for their plans for expansion.

KLICS has a brilliant record for helping Young Carers in Caithness and have identified the need for the service to be expanded so that they can fully support the needs of existing service users and to those of the future, by developing the project further and into a greatly needed larger space.

With there being to statutory service solely for Young Carers, this much needed service plays a vital role in the county, making sure that Young Carers in Caithness get the help and support that they need to ensure their health and wellbeing and, ensuring that they are allowed time away from their caring roles and a chance to just be children, which is a right that all young people should have.

In conclusion, I fully support Caithness KLICS and their vision for expansion which is needed to continue to be able to meet the needs of its service users and the community.

Yours faithfully

Jamie Stone MP

Constituency Office  
Hillview, Market Street, Tain IV19 1AR  
Email: [jamie.stone.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:jamie.stone.mp@parliament.uk)



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**Klics Support**

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**From** Janet McEwan (Councillor) <Jan.McEwan.cllr@highland.gov.uk>  
via outlook.com

**Date** Tue 28/01/2025 11:10

**To** Caithness KLICS <caithnessklics@outlook.com>

To whom it may concern

Klics Caithness

I have no hesitation in supporting Klics, Klics give practical and emotional support to over 120 young people between the ages of 5 – 18 within the Caithness area. Young cares can discuss issues with their support worker regarding their extra responsibilities in caring for a member of their family be it shopping, cooking cleaning etc as well as perhaps looking after siblings quite often to the detriment of their own education. Klics is what I would call a "God send" to these kids, who help them make sense of their day to day lives and make them better.

Klics presently supports over 120 young persons and their families in Wick, Thurso and remote areas and are hoping to expand their services in Wick and develop further in Thurso of course this all requires funding, which I fully support and hope you will do so too.

**Cllr. Janet McEwan MBE and Provost of Wick**  
Ward 3 – Wick and East Caithness  
The Highland Council  
Glenurquhart Road  
Inverness

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Mura h-eil na beachdan a tha air an cur an cèill sa phost-d seo a' buntainn ri gnòthachas Chomhairle na Gàidhealtachd, 's ann leis an neach fhèin a chuir air falbh e a tha iad, is chan eil iad an-còmhnaidh a' riochdachadh beachdan na Comhairle, no buidhnean buntainneach, agus chan eil am post-d seo na phàirt de chunnradh sam bith mura h-eil sin air innse.

### 16.3 Appendix Three: Organisational Skills Audit

<b>Q1</b>	<b>How confident are you that the organisation (and the Board):</b>					
	Has a strategic vision for the organisation that is articulated in a plan?	Monitors financial performance and projections on a regular basis?	Has a fundraising strategy in place to ensure adequate resources are generated?	Ensures that there is adequate operational policies and procedures in places in relation to health and safety, volunteer support, child and vulnerable adults, and employment legislation?	Deals with conflicts of interest on the committee that are consistent with current requirements and with those of your own constitution?	Contains an appropriate range of experience, expertise and diversity that is required to make it an effective committee?
Respondent 1	5	5	5	5	5	5
Respondent 2	5	5	5	5	5	5
Respondent 3	5	5	5	5	5	5
Respondent 4	5	5	5	5	5	5
Respondent 5	5	5	5	5	5	5
<b>Average</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>

**Q2 & 3** For each of the following skills, please rank how competent you feel you are as an individual (5 is highly competent, 1 is not competent at all), and subsequently how you rate the board overall.

	Chairing and facilitating meetings	Planning and communicating agendas	Minute taking	Strategic thinking / planning	Written communication	Digital and social media use	Community engagement	Conflict resolution and complaints management
Respondent 1	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3
Respondent 2	5	5	3	4	5	5	5	4

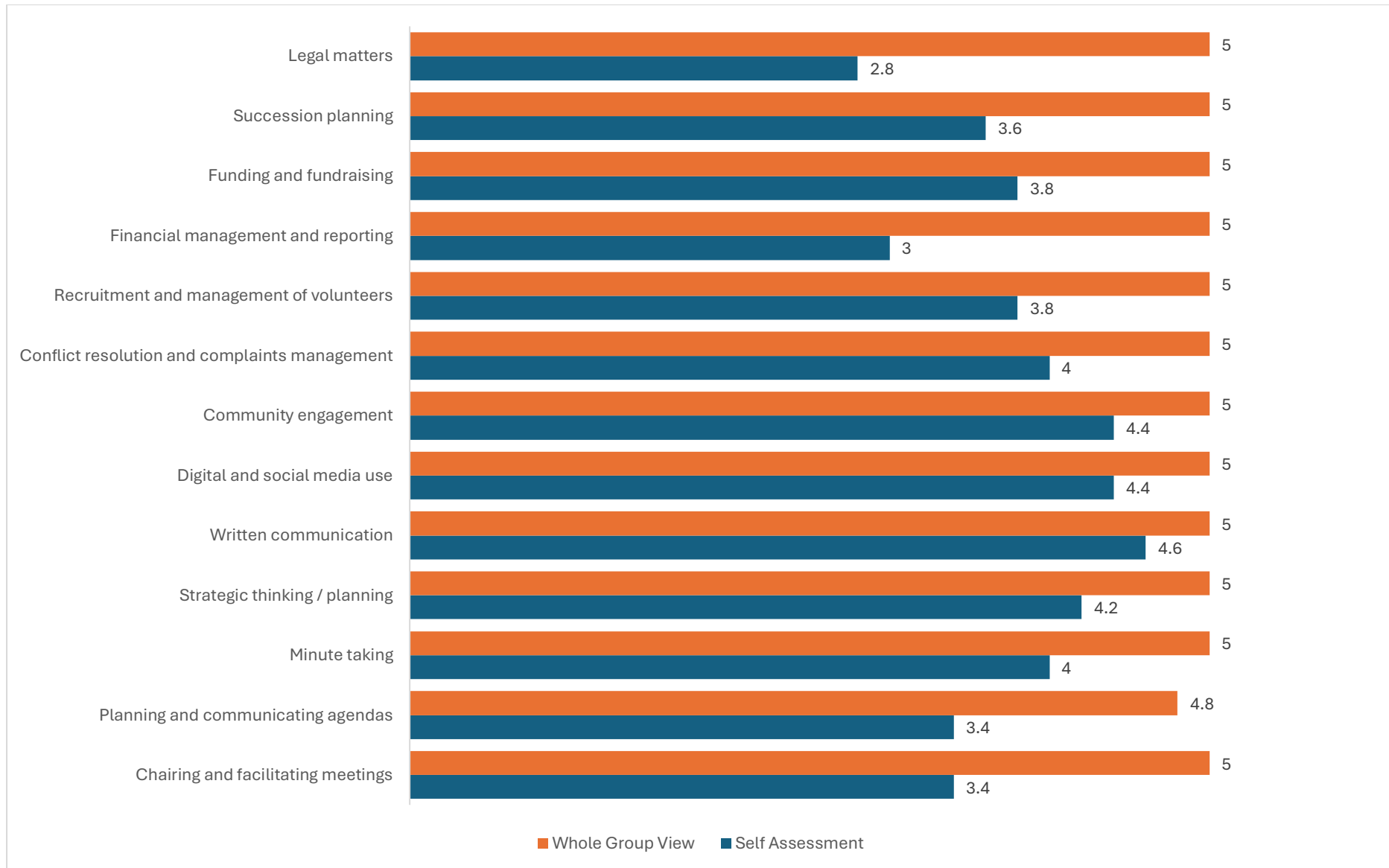
Respondent 3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	3
Respondent 4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5
Respondent 5	2	2	5	5	5	5	5	5
<b>Self-Assessment Average</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4</b>
Respondent 1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Respondent 2	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5
Respondent 3	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Respondent 4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Respondent 5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
<b>Whole Group View Average</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>No. of Individuals self-assessing as 5/5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Perception Gap</b>	<b>-1.6</b>	<b>-1.4</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	<b>-1</b>

	Recruitment and management of volunteers	Financial management and reporting	Funding and fundraising	Succession planning	Legal matters	Architectural design and planning	Quantity surveying and civils	Capital project management
Respondent 1	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3
Respondent 2	5	2	5	4	2	1	1	2
Respondent 3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2
Respondent 4	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5
Respondent 5	3	1	3	2	1	1	1	1
<b>Self-Assessment Average</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2.6</b>
Respondent 1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Respondent 2	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Respondent 3	5	5	5	5	5			
Respondent 4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

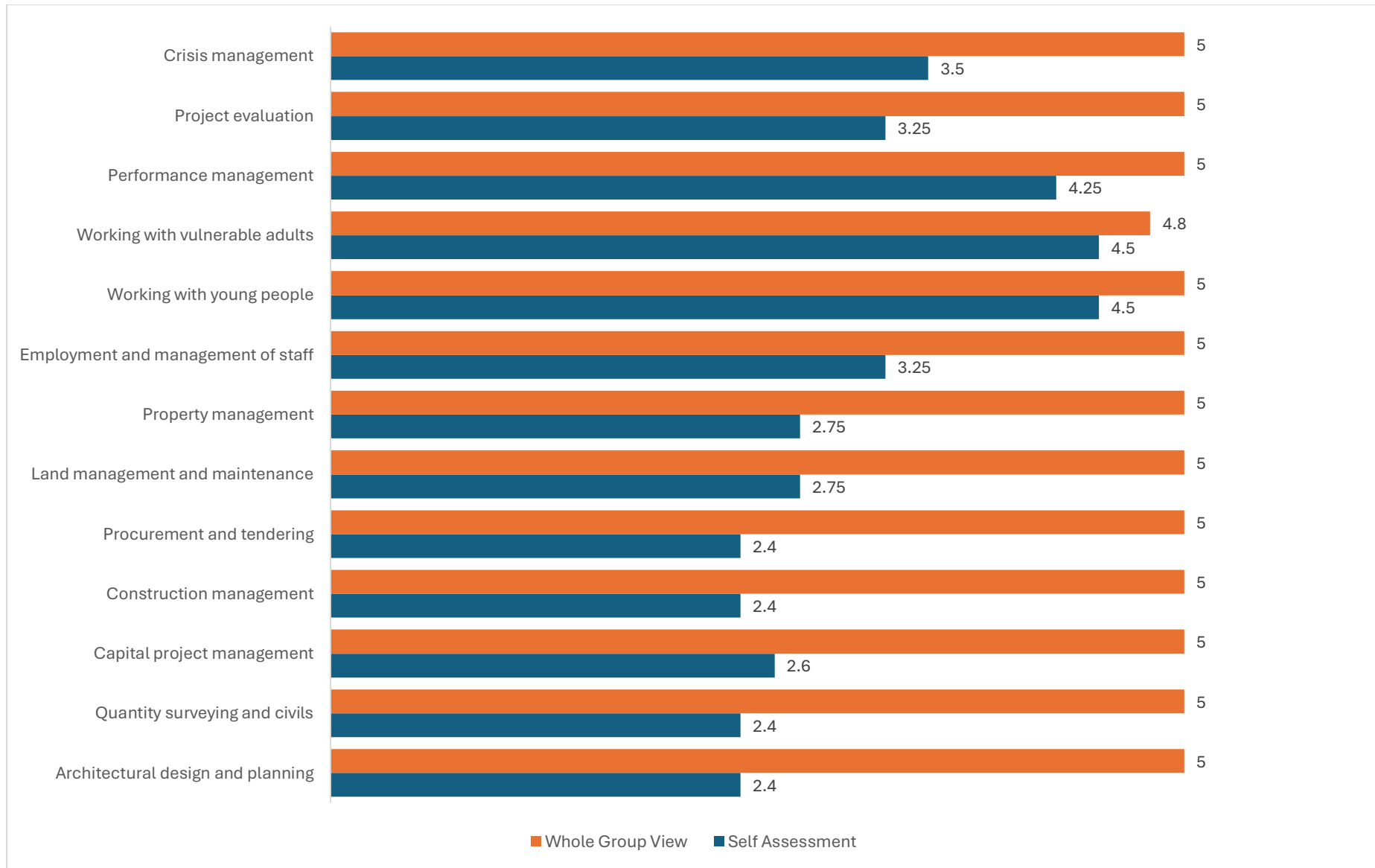
Respondent 5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
<b>Whole Group View Average</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>No. of Individuals self-assessing as 5/5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Perception Gap</b>	<b>-1.2</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1.2</b>	<b>-1.4</b>	<b>-2.2</b>	<b>-2.6</b>	<b>-2.6</b>	<b>-2.4</b>

	Construction management	Procurement and tendering	Land management and maintenance	Property management	Employment and management of staff	Working with young people	Working with vulnerable adults	Performance management
Respondent 1	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
Respondent 2	1	1	1	1	2	5	5	5
Respondent 3	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	3
Respondent 4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Respondent 5	1	1						
<b>Self-Assessment Average</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2.75</b>	<b>2.75</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4.25</b>
Respondent 1	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5
Respondent 2	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Respondent 3					5	5	5	
Respondent 4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Respondent 5	5		5	5	5	5	5	5
<b>Whole Group View Average</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>No. of Individuals self-assessing as 5/5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Perception Gap</b>	<b>-2.6</b>	<b>-2.6</b>	<b>-2.25</b>	<b>-2.25</b>	<b>-1.75</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>-0.75</b>

	Project evaluation	Crisis management
Respondent 1	3	4
Respondent 2	3	3
Respondent 3	2	2
Respondent 4	5	5
Respondent 5		
<b>Self-Assessment Average</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>3.5</b>
Respondent 1	5	5
Respondent 2	5	5
Respondent 3		
Respondent 4	5	5
Respondent 5	5	5
<b>Whole Group View Average</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>No. of Individuals self-assessing as 5/5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Perception Gap</b>	<b>-1.75</b>	<b>-1.5</b>



Likert rating out of 5.



Likert rating out of 5.