



Advocacy Highland Newsletter

February 2026

Welcome to the winter edition of our newsletter!

Independent Advocacy for Young People: On Your Side

We are delighted to have secured funding from the Highland Whole Family Wellbeing Programme to enable us to run a project providing independent advocacy for young people.

This is a pilot project lasting one year to gather information as well as provide a much needed advocacy service.

The project was launched on 1st December 2025, and we have already had lots of enquiries and referrals.

The project provides one-to-one independent advocacy to young people aged 12 – 18, in Caithness, Sutherland, Mid & East Ross and Inverness areas.

Get in touch for more info or see our website:

[» On Your Side – Independent Advocacy for Young People](#)



Highland
Community
Planning
Partnership

Com-pàirteachas
Dealbhadh
Coimhearsnachd
na Gàidheala

Highland Whole Family Wellbeing Programme



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Makaton Training

In July, our team took part in a full day of Makaton training, building both skills and confidence in inclusive communication.

Under the expert guidance of official Makaton Tutor Maria Palletta, everyone successfully achieved Level 1 and Level 2 certification.

This training has already strengthened our ability to support the people we work with, and the team left the session feeling motivated and empowered to put their new skills into practice.



SCQF Level 7 Advocacy Practice Award

In October, Joanne and Allison successfully achieved their SCQF Level 7 Advocacy Award with Reach Advocacy.

They are both thrilled with their accomplishment and shared that, although the course was demanding, the hard work was worth it. Their new skills and increased confidence are already strengthening their day-to-day practice.

A huge well done to them!

We look forward to supporting more staff to complete this award in the coming months.



Meet the Board Day

In July, our staff, volunteers, and Board members came together for a 'Meet and Greet' event, creating space for open conversation and connection across the whole organisation. It was a genuinely enjoyable day, offering the chance not only for everyone to get to know one another but also to collaborate on our Team Charter, strengthening our shared vision and values.

We're already looking forward to hosting future team-wide gatherings where everyone can reconnect and continue building a strong, supportive community.

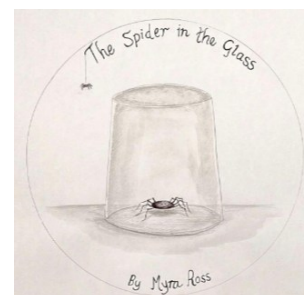
IT Funding

In December, we were delighted to receive funding from Highland Cross, enabling us to purchase new laptops for our team. With staff working locally across the Highland area, having reliable equipment and strong connectivity is essential to the work we do. We are extremely grateful to Highland Cross for their generous support. And hope to be replacing team laptops very soon.



Spider in the Glass Training

Several team members have recently completed the Spider in the Glass training, delivered by Myra Ross in partnership with NHS Highland. This training focuses on developing a trauma-informed response to domestic abuse and has been described by participants as highly impactful and valuable. A range of webinars is available, and we encourage everyone to explore these sessions.



Team News

We said farewell to our Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey (INBS) Advocacy Worker, Natasha, in August as she moved on to a new career path. She is greatly missed.

Melanie, who joined us in April with extensive experience in the social care system, quickly proved herself to be a highly capable and skilled advocate. In August, she was promoted to the role of Area Co-ordinator for INBS, where she continues to excel. A fantastic achievement—well done, Melanie!

Our Lochaber volunteer advocate, Penny, recently took part in the Lochaber Experience Matters event in Fort William organised by Spirit Advocacy. The event highlighted how collective advocacy can drive improvements in local social care services. Thank you for representing us, Penny!

Melanie, Joanne and Clare attended an advocacy event in Glasgow hosted by SIAA and Dr Mo Yan. Mo is conducting research into Scottish Independent Advocacy, aiming to build a detailed picture of the challenges facing the sector at national, organisational and individual advocate levels, supported by funding from The Carnegie Trust. It was an excellent event and a valuable opportunity to connect with others in the advocacy community face to face again. Thank you to Melanie, Joanne and Clare for making the journey to Glasgow and attending the event.



Team Charter

With collaborative input from the whole team, we have now finalised our Team Values which will form the foundation of our Team Charter.

Having clearly defined values is important because it gives us a shared understanding of what we stand for. It helps guide our decisions, shape our culture, and ensure we stay consistent and connected as a team. These values will support us in delivering the best possible service and creating a positive, respectful environment for everyone involved with Advocacy Highland.

Our new Team Values are **HEART**:-
Honesty, Empathy, Accountability, Respect and Trust.



Team Vacancy

Our CEO, Maya Uddin is stepping aside after 5 years of sterling leadership. We are now seeking a new CEO to lead us into our next chapter. This is a planned transition, supported by a strong team, as we continue to strengthen our organisation and look forward to the possibilities ahead.

Philippa Cliff, Chairperson of Advocacy Highland commented:

“Advocacy Highland is entering an exciting new chapter as we begin the process of appointing a new CEO.

While change can sometimes feel challenging, we see this moment as a valuable opportunity to welcome fresh perspectives and renewed energy into the organisation.”



JOB VACANCY!

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

- 25 HOURS PER WEEK (FLEXIBLE)
- £20.50 PER HOUR (PAY REVIEW PENDING)
- BASED IN OUR INVERNESS OFFICE
- FLEXIBLE WORKING

We are looking for a dynamic and inspirational leader who shares our values and commitment to independent advocacy, to drive our organisation forward with energy, creativity and compassion.

This post is regulated work and a PVG check through Disclosure Scotland is required.

For more info see our [website](https://www.advocacy-highland.org.uk), email or call us:

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**ADVOCACY
HIGHLAND**
on your side

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Area Co-ordinators

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Joanne:	(Ross & Cromarty)	Tel: 07717 704640
Vicky:	(Lochaber, Skye & Lochalsh)	Tel: 07717 704635

Advocacy Workers

Vacancy:	(Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey)	Tel:
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INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Gold



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