



## Update of NW2045 activity

January 2026

This update is taken primarily from the notes from the fortnightly NW2045 Catch Up meetings, since the [previous update in November 2025](#). Please feel free to share it with all those who may be interested.

### Funding progress

- **‘Pride in Place’ funding** has been awarded from UK government:
  - Announced in the media on 12.12.25 ([see here](#), for example)
  - £20m over 10 years for North, West and East Sutherland
  - Supporting *‘long term community renewal, (...) invest in services, facilities, housing, economic opportunity and local spaces that improve everyday life.’*
  - A Neighbourhood Board will be established to design and deliver the work. More [info and key dates here](#).
  - The HC team confirmed the NW2045 work – our existing partnership working; the known priorities; the Vision, RLUP, SCCAN, Resilience Initiative - all contributed to strong proposal. NW2045 thank HC for their hard work to apply for this funding.

### Housing & Infrastructure

- NW2045 representatives attended the first **HIE Caithness & Sutherland housing stakeholder group** in November – seeking synergies and solutions to housing related matters.
  - **A proposal has been submitted for funding for housing consultants** to develop a NW2045 housing strategy to support NW2045-wide housing development.
- **Wildland Ltd** have started building 8 new houses in Tongue and have offered to engage with discussions to share learning with others across the area, as above.
- [Martin Johnson - HIE director of strategy and regional economy](#) - and HIE colleagues are visiting KLB and Tongue to discuss various matters including housing, childcare and entrepreneurial opportunities including natural capital opportunities.
- Patchy **three-phase power** provision in West Coast communities hinders business growth; discussions are underway with SSE to resolve.

## Enterprise

- Sutherland Community Seaweed CIC is registered and up and running.
  - Scourie Community Development Trust, Assynt Development Trust and Kinlochbervie Community Company have been heavily involved in getting to this point and other areas across NW2045 have indicated interest in getting involved.
  - Inaugural directors are Sara Harkins (KLB) and James Armes-Harris (KLB).
- NC500 is [establishing an ESG Framework](#) and (with BiGGAR Economics) has conducted a ‘warts and all’ consultation, with surveys for residents, businesses and visitors. Results will be shared widely.

## Meetings & Representation

- NW2045 Steering Group meetings have been held and included a helpful presentation [Highland Council Social Value Charter](#) from Luci Ireland Community Support Officer. Their primary focus is to provide impartial advice, support, signposting, and guidance to community councils, community groups, and wider communities in response to the growing volume of renewable development activity across the region.
- [Highland Council committee agendas, reports etc are available to see here](#). Various important issues for NW2045 highlighted:
  - Sutherland Access Panel
  - Short-term let control
  - Visitor Levy is going to Council for consideration.
  - Adult social care recruitment challenges.
- ‘Highland CIC’ held a [Highland Sustainable Development Summit](#) in Inverness. Funded by SSEN, in collaboration with tourism enterprises. Representatives from NW2045 attended and useful links made, including Martin Johnson HIE (visiting KLB - see above).

## Youth, Education & Apprenticeships

- Ongoing youth engagement through **Ullapool Youth Network** activities.
- **Tanera** are working on potential areas for increased engagement/work experience opportunities for children and youth on Tanera.

## Land and Sea

- A new **Community Deer Management Initiative is underway in Coigach** with Scottish Wildlife Trust, Coigach Community Development Trust and Tanera; with strong community engagement.

- The **Regional Land Use Partnership team** will soon embark on work with communities across the area to further explore land issues. This is currently delayed by ScotGov procurement; hope to get underway as soon as possible. This work will involve short-term contracts for Community Co-Leads, and will culminate in a Land-focused gathering in late March, to identify areas of focus for the following year.
- [Common Ground Forum](#) held a successful deer stalkers' event at Achafarry; RLUP team intend to follow up with local stalkers.



## Funding opportunities and other resources / updates

- **Ward Discretionary Funding** increased by £12.5k. [Contact Fiona](#) for more info.
- [Highland Reuse & Repair Fund](#) may be of use.
- **Business Gateway** support available for procurement capacity-building.
- [Cooperative Development Scotland \(CDS\)](#) is a department within Scottish Enterprise which helps small businesses come together to bid for contracts; support for liability. See [this presentation about CDS for more details](#).
- Boyd shared the [Highland Fragile Communities map](#): fascinating and useful for highlighting our situation. Contact Boyd with any questions.
- NW2045 has requested **HC to help clarify roles and responsibilities** and identify synergies/avoid duplication between different organisations in the **'Community Benefits from Renewables'** sector.
- The RLUP team are working to develop a **'Resource Bank'** for more effective sharing of information about various resources that can support our communities.
- Work is ongoing to **overhaul the NW2045 website and communications** – we will be seeking you input imminently!

## Other updates and next meetings

- NW2045 Chair **Frances Gunn has been awarded an MBE** for services to Heritage and Community. Congratulations Frances!
- The next written update will be late-Feb.
- The next NW2045 Catch Up meeting will be Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> Feb. All welcome.