

Welcome to Optimistic October



On tour in Thurso with our Suicide Prevention "Let's continue the conversation"

A community event to help conversations about suicide prevention in Highland.

We showed two short films and introduced a new pack to support people after a suicide. There was also an opportunity for us to talk about the impacts of suicide and discuss ways that we can build suicide-safer communities.

We were joined by Judy from Police Scotland a partner we have worked with for years, Emily from Mikeys Line, Pat from James Support group, Maggie from Nhs, Kieran from Change Mental Health.

Our very good friend Nancy joined us. Lots of open and honest conversations, listening deeply to the impact a Suicide has on us all.

Tea, Coffee and cakes were enjoyed with folks from Thurso whilst planning how we can all will work in collaboration.

Outcome 1: Young people build their health and wellbeing





Mental Health Assemblies

- As we approached World Mental Health day on Oct 10th , we delivered whole School assemblies so we could make sure that all young people know where to go for support if they are struggling , we spoke about Mental Health and Archie delivered a PowerPoint about good and poor Mental Health , about young people's rights UNCRC and about looking out for each other supported by Maisie (Friendships are very important)
- Huge thank you to Wanda & Orlagh for the creating the Impact of Suicide film that was shown to S4, 5 & 6.
- Biggest thanks to Alanna and Kirsty from Mikeysline for attending and explaining the background of Mikeysline Charity and all the support they have on offer . As well as sign posting to James Support Group.

Outcome 1: Young people build their health and wellbeing



Voice

Our Amazing Highland Youth Parliaments (HYP) Representatives who work hard to hear the voices of ALL young people to influence change .

These guys helped with the planning and delivery of the recent Argentina Trip

These guys have been working on the PAT document capturing Voice / Change / Places / Influence / Impact and any barriers

Collaboration is key

Don't they look great in their new Hoodies

Outcome 6: Young people grow as active citizens, expressing their voice and enabling change



'Our Freedom: Then and Now' project

- Great session at Cromarty Youth Cafe with Caroline working on words that she will then create a poem with for part of Eden Court's 'Our Freedom: Then and Now' project marking 80 years since the end of WWII.
- The poem aims to incorporate different Highland voices and groups, exploring how our basic freedoms are being upheld or threatened, sharing experiences from the past and the present day.
- The poem will be exploring “What does freedom mean to you?”, and consider as its basis the 1948 Charter of Human Rights, established to protect four essential freedoms:
 - Freedom of Speech
 - Freedom of Worship
 - Freedom from Want
 - Freedom from Fear.
- In what ways do our community stories and histories connect to these freedoms and themes?
- The poem will then premiere as a live reading at Eden Court, ahead of a specially curated film selected in collaboration with Eden Court's Programming team.



Emotional Check ins

Cooking Sessions with YP to help with decompression

Supporting Young Carers to access grants .

Just being a listening ear for young people and a support.



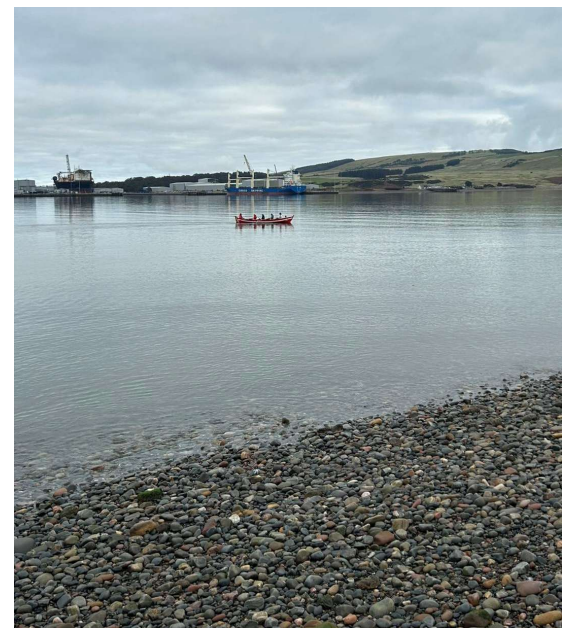
Outcome 1: Young people build their health and wellbeing



Cromarty Fourways 50th Anniversary Celebration

- What a Fantastic Celebration for the 50th Birthday of the Cromarty 4ways Club : a beautiful day to make precious memories and to reflect the great work done by an army of volunteers both past and present.
- Biggest thanks to Irene and Team Cromarty 4ways for a wonderful day of celebrations
- thanks to Ramsay our MC for the day , a wonderful afternoon of music.
- We had songs of the 70s from Margo Fraser ,
- Scottish folk songs from Cromarty's own Jonathan Hill and Scottish Dance music from Margaret Thomson, Fiona Boyd and Charlie Masson.
- The birthday cake was cut by Daphne Campbell, daughter in law of founder member Isobel Campbell. Our Favourite friend and Lord Lieutenant of Ross and Cromarty Joanie read out a message of best wishes for the clubs on 50 years from His Majesty The King.
- So great to join and feel part of the Love kindness, care that was in clear abundance today , happiness , joy and smiles all around .
- [#50yearbirthday](#)
- [#cromartyfourways](#)
- [#IntergenerationalConnections](#)

Outcome 4: Young people participate safely and effectively in groups and teams



Outdoor Coastal Rowing

- Monday Motivation on the Flat Calm Cromarty Firth
A stunning morning out on the water with the girls — perfect conditions to kick off the week with some strong strokes and good vibes.
- A warm welcome to Amelie on her first row with the crew
Big thanks to Rogey for coxing and coaching

Outcome 4: Young people participate safely and effectively in groups and teams



Trip to the Ledge

- Great session with our young team at The Ledge Climbing wall, Inverness thank you to Murdo our Asc and the staff at the ledge the young people gained confidence stepped out of their comfort zone and had great fun climbing and Bouldering giving great encouragement to each other

Outcome 7: Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

Indoor Archery

Huge thank you to Willie & Murdo
from HLH active Schools for
delivering a Fun Indoor Soft Archery
Session

Fun Arts were enjoyed with our
young leader Loreta

Outcome 7: Young people broaden their
perspectives through new experiences and thinking





Trip to the Courthouse

We had a great day at the Creative Cromarty Courthouse with Eilidh and was very nice to have the company of Arthur and Liz.

Our young people made their very own Shark she is called Wanda Gerald Mcksharky

We think you will like her, alongside Fraser the Lobster (gotta love them)

A range of fish were hand decorated and lots of Halloween crafts getting ready for Spooky season that will be celebrated at the Courthouse Oct 31st

So much to do and enjoy at the courthouse,

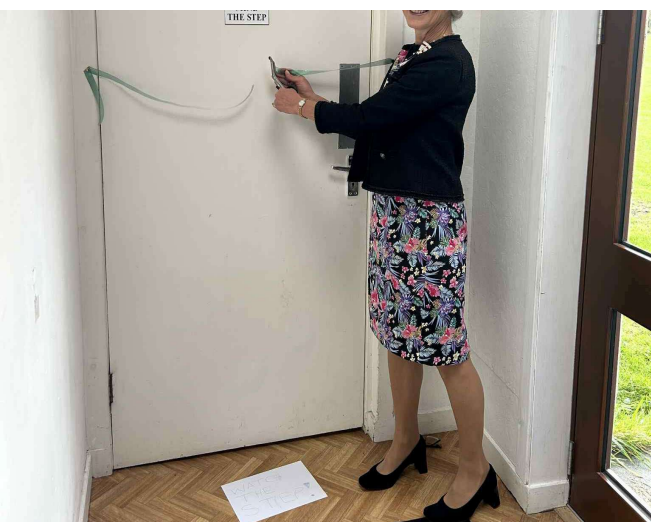
Outcome 4: Young people participate safely and effectively in groups and teams



Cromarty Youth Café 20th Anniversary

Cromarty Youth Café – Grand Opening & Wellbeing Focus

- As part of the Grand Opening of the Cromarty Youth Café, we chose *Mocha Mousse* as the wall colour—a warm, earthy tone symbolising **hope and optimism**. This intentional design choice reflects our commitment to creating a welcoming and uplifting space for young people.
- In line with this theme, I'd like to encourage us all to take a moment to reflect and respond constructively to challenges we may be facing.
- "Do something constructive to improve a difficult situation. What's something positive you can do today to make things better?"
- This simple yet powerful approach helps build optimism through small, meaningful daily actions. It's a reminder that even in tough times, we can choose to act in ways that foster hope and resilience.
- **Today I will... if you manage send us a wee email**
Cromarty.youthcafe@hotmail.com



"The Place We Grow"

In a corner of the Highland throng
Laughter rings out loud and strong,
A Youth Cafe stands, a steady flame,
Where every face has found a name.
Here, hope is built with steady hands,
In games, in talks, in future plans
A place where dreams are passed around,
And food is shared — good times abound.
We've faced the storms, we've felt the strain,
But from the struggle, strength we gain.
In every game, in every cheer,
We learn that courage conquers fear.
A ball, a meal, a friendly smile —
They carry hearts another mile.
For every moment spent in play,
We build tomorrow, day by day.
Here's to our youth — unbroken, true,
To helping hands, to me and you.
This club's not walls, or roof above
Its built on resilience, hope, and love.





John Munro

Diamond Hoody

- In March 2015 I was a shy, non confident person who never had a clue how to teach 20-30 young people different sports when I first started volunteering at Cromarty Youth Cafe, I thought to myself I must be mad to do this.
- But then weeks turned into months and months turned into years and before I knew it my confidence grew, and I became less shy, and I grew leaps and bounds and that is all thanks to Wanda and Fraser.
- And within the first 2 years I was awarded the Lord Lieutenant Award in Volunteering and was also awarded the Summit Award. In 2019 I was awarded the HLH Exceptional Contribution to Volunteering Award. And finally in 2020 I was a runner up in the Young Scot Awards for the whole of Scotland. During that time, I also got 4 HLH hoodies and was the first person in the Black Isle to get the Gold Hoodie.
- I also got to do a residential in Nairn to launch the Gold Hoodie and was invited to go to Inverness Airport and was able to fly a light aircraft, and that is thanks to Wanda and Fraser and of course Clair Bale, who gave me all these opportunities I am forever grateful!
- Volunteering has also helped me during my time at Fortrose Academy, as it helped me with my application form to go on the 2018 Malawi Trip - a once in a lifetime opportunity.
- I have always sat and asked myself what if I never met Wanda all those years ago, what if I never did any volunteering, what if I never annoyed Fraser the first day I met him? The answer is I would have never got the chance to do all the things I did. It even helped me get a part time job at CYC, I think that's the reason why Fraser's hair is even whiter now! I still can't believe I left school with over 1,000 hours of volunteering.
- Even after leaving school, I am still volunteering from a Scout Leader to a RNLI Volunteer, and that's thanks to CYC!
- So, if you're thinking about volunteering, I say go for it you just don't know where it's going to take you! If in doubt, speak to Wanda and like she says, "happy days!"

• **Outcome 3:** Young people create and apply their learning and describe their skills and achievements





Orlagh Speech

- Good morning everyone!
- First of all — twenty years! Twenty years of laughter, music, games, car keys in the fridge, and enough cake to feed the entire Black Isle twice over. That's something to celebrate!
- Today isn't just about marking two decades of Cromarty Youth Café — it's about celebrating everything it has brought to Cromarty and the wider Black Isle. It's about community — about the connections, the friendships, and the sense of belonging that have grown here over the years.
- The Youth Café might have started as a place for young people, but it's become so much more than that. It's a space that brings everyone together — from children just finding their feet, to teenagers discovering who they are, to parents, grandparents, and volunteers who all lend a hand and share a laugh. It's a hub where generations meet, stories are shared, and where everyone feels welcome.
- Whether it's cultural visits, a community meal, a sports session, or one of those brilliant intergenerational projects, the Youth Café reminds us that community isn't just about living in the same place — it's about belonging together, about caring for one another, and about having somewhere that feels like home.
- And of course, we all know who we have to thank for that...don't we? Wanda.
- Wanda, you've been the heart and soul of this café. You've welcomed every young person who's walked through those doors — whether they were shy, loud, lost, or just hungry — and made them feel like they belonged. You've poured your time, your heart, and almost your whole life into making this space what it is today. You've built bridges between generations, pulled off incredible intergenerational projects, and somehow managed to make everyone — from teens to grannies — feel part of something special.
- And let's not forget our Fraser — your partner in snacks, in silliness, and in all things "Youth Café." You've brought your energy, your humour, and your can-do attitude to everything you do, whether it's helping with the Youth Café, the wider Black Isle youth projects, or just keeping the place running smoothly (and very occasionally under control!).
- Together, you've created a space that's about more than just food and fun — though there is always so much food! It's about belonging. It's about giving young people — and the whole community — a place to grow, to laugh, to be heard, and to make memories that last a lifetime.
- Because really, Cromarty Youth Café isn't just a youth café — it's a reflection of everything great about this community. It's proof that when people care, when they give their time and energy, something truly special happens.
- So from all of us — the young people, the slightly older people, and everyone who's ever been part of this amazing journey — thank you.
- Thank you for twenty years of care, chaos, compassion, and community.
- Thank you for believing in the youth — and the heart — of the Black Isle.
- And thank you for doing it all with heart, humour, and probably a tray of sausage rolls in the oven.
- Here's to Wanda and Fraser, to Cromarty Youth Café, and to the next 20 years of laughter, connection, and very full bellies.

Coming up.....

- Arts in Nature Project
- Jnr Xmas Party at Innoflate
- Snr Xmas Trip to the Pantomime
- Xmas Parties
- Christmas Tree Lights Switch on Christmas Carols around the tree in Cromarty
- Resilient Kids Delivery in Culbokie & North Kessock
- Supporting Mental Health – Thinking about our Teenagers - Training

MID ROSS COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP



COMMUNITY NETWORKING EVENT

Fortrose Community Library
Thursday 6th November
10.00 - 12.00

An opportunity for community members, groups and organisations, practitioners and partners to learn, network and connect with each other.

Everyone is Welcome

Come along to showcase your organisation or community group with the potential to discuss and explore partnership opportunities.

Discover what services are available in Mid Ross

To book a table for your organisation or community group please contact Lynn on the email address below:

lynn.mcneil@highland.gov.uk

NEW Arts & Crafts Sessions!

with Cromarty Youth Café & Arts in Nature

This is your space to get creative!

- **Wednesdays:** 5th & 26th Nov; 3rd Dec; 21st Jan; 4th Feb
- **Time:** 3.15 - 4.45pm • **Location:** Victoria Hall, Cromarty

Plus Monday 16th Feb (in-service day) 12 noon - 1.30pm

For more info and to book contact Fraser on 07470 522172

ALIENERGY

Work.Life.
Highland

The Highland
Council
Comhairle na
Gàidhealtachd

Join us for a relaxed and family friendly drop-in
with something for everyone!

Cromarty Youth Café
Wednesday 19th November 3pm to 6pm
Victoria Hall, High Street, Cromarty

Get advice, support, and answers to your
questions – all in one place!

- Welfare Support Team - benefit entitlement
- Housing Team – Tenant Participation
- Employability Team
- Alienergy - energy advice

Refreshments and
fun activities for children

No need to book – just drop in!



- Thank you for Reading, This is just a snapshot of what we have been up to in October –
- Please check out our Facebook page to find out more.
- [Facebook](#)