# VENTUREN SUTHERLAND

# **2025 Tourism Gathering Pressing Pause in the**











# NORTH HIGHLAN INITIATIVE NORTH HIGHLAND

## **North Highlands Initiative**



- Based in Wick Works across the whole of the North and North West Highlands
- 3 Employees + Voluntary Board of Directors
- Empowering Communities, and supporting Tourism, Farming, and Sustainability

## **NHI - Support History**



- COVID Support
- ESP Energy Support
- CRF Community Resilience Fund
- CISP Community Infrastructure Support
- Other support Countryside Learning Scotland / Jo'G Trail / Peatland Restoration / Jo'G Mill

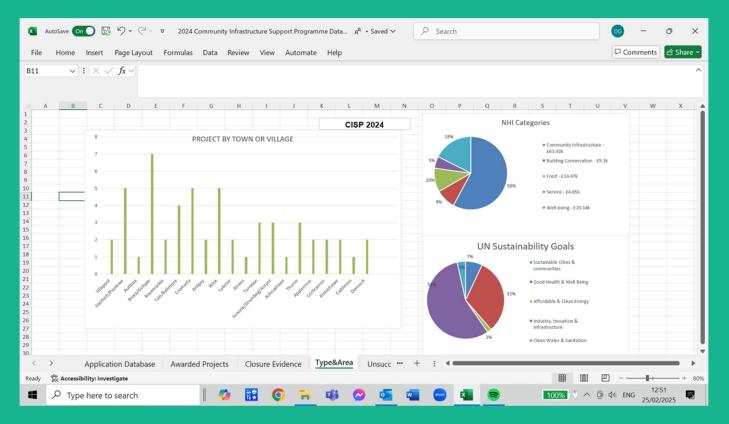
## CISP / CRF / ESP At a glance

Nii

- 300 + Projects assisted
- Total project awards £600,000 over 4 years
- Average award value £1770

 Village halls, paths, community gardens, toilets, events, tourism projects (Press Pause), leaflets and signage, childcare groups, waste facilities, well– being projects

## Spread and Type of project



## 2025 - And beyond!

- Continuation of CISP, staying focused on small scale funds that support the many rather than the few
- Tourism & Press Pause
- Youth Development

• What else.....You tell us!





### **Scottish Community Tourism**

### What is Community Led Tourism?



More and more geographic communities are opting to be directly involved in delivering and managing tourism in their area and ensuring tourism derives added value for their people and aces.

SCOTC

SCOTO has categorised two types of community led tourism in Scotland:

- 1. Community Led Visitor Services & Experiences
- 2. Community Led Destination Development, Management & Promotion

### Introducing SCOTO CIC

A rapidly growing network seeking to grow, develop and promote community led tourism across Scotland.

#### Launched on 25 April 2022

8 Board Members

450 + Networkers

www.scoto.co.uk www.belocal.scot





### **SCOTO's Vision**

is for every community in Scotland to have the opportunity to develop community led tourism as a force for good which enables their community to be an even better place to live, work and visit.

### SCOTO's Mission

is to build the **skills, connections and confidence** of everyone involved in community led tourism.

### **SCOTO's Ambition**

Is to **recalibrate tourism** in Scotland to **deliver for our communities and environment first** 



#### SCOTO's Purpose

- to provide a forum for peer to peer networking
- 2. to provide an **online** learning and development resource
- 3. to provide **programmes of support** including grants
- 4. to provide **leadership and representation** to influence strategy, policy and delivery
- 5. to provide a visitor facing **promotional platform**
- 6. to gather **data and** intelligence
- 7. to undertake **contracts and services** to grow community led tourism





### **SCOTO & NHI**





### Community Led Tourism on the NC500

### NORTH HIGHLAND INITIATIVE

### **NHI & SCOTO PRESS PAUSE** PRESS PAUSE Communities

#### **PHASE 1 PILOTS**

#### LOCHCARRON

• Large village on west coast

#### THURSO

• Major town on north coast

#### PHASE 2A

#### BRORA

• Former largely industrial village on east coast

#### WICK

• Former significant fishing port on east coast

#### PLOCKTON

Crofting village and sailing destination on west coast



#### PHASE 2B DURNESS & LOCH ERIBOLL

Crofting village on the north west coast

#### **TONGUE & MELNESS**

Two adjacent crofting villages on the northwest coast

#### PHASE 3

With Highland Council Community Regeneration Funding via Wester Ross Biosphere:

#### ULLAPOOL

 Major town and ferry port on west coast

#### **KYLE OF LOCHALSH**

• Coastal village next to the Skye Bridge

#### DORNIE

Small former fishing village next to Eilean Donan Castle





## SCOTD PRESS PAUSE

By the end of March 2025 SCOTO has delivered

- 44 Press Pause workshops
- supporting over 59 individual communities, and
- a population base exceeding 105,000





#### NHI COMMUNITIES

- Thurso
- Lochcarron
- Brora
- Plockton
- Wick
- Durness , Eriboll & Tongue

#### WESTER ROSS BIOSPHERE / NHI

- Ullapool
- Kyle of Lochalsh
- Dornie

#### SEA INFT COMMUNITIES

- Glen Urquhart
- Girvan
- Langholm
- Selkirk & The Valleys
- Colmonell

#### **KINTYRE WAY SCIO**

9 communities

#### ARIA VALLEYS

- SAC Stinchar Valley x 3 communities
- EAC Loudoun Valley x 3 communities
- NAC Garnock Valley x 3 communities
- Muirkirk, Dalmellington, Cumbrae, Whiting Bay
- North Carrick x 5 communities

#### INDEPENDENT COMMUNITIES

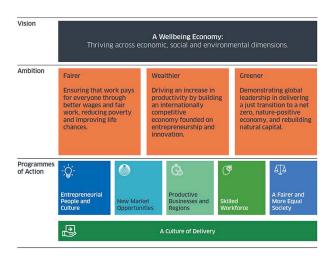
- Upper Nithsdale (3 communities)
- Braemar
- Gorebridge
- Callander
- Strathard (Aberfoyle, Kinlochard, Stronachlacher and Inversnaid)

### Why Press Pause? Strategic Context

The National Framework for Economic Transformation (NSET) has a vision **"to create a wellbeing economy: a society that is thriving across economic, social and environmental dimensions, and that delivers prosperity for all Scotland's people and places."** 

Scotland Outlook 2030 – the national tourism strategy – is seeking **"responsible tourism for a sustainable future"**. Responsible tourism considers four themes – reducing carbon, inclusion, biodiversity and communities.







### Why Press Pause? Local Context

Over SCOTO's 27 venue roadshow in January to March 2023, an overriding observation was the sense that tourism happens to communities ....







## SCOTO PRESS PAUSE

### The Approach

Mystery shopper appraisal of the community as a visitor destination – online and in person Face to Face facilitated workshop

- Facilitated conversations between business and community interests
- Consideration of destination competence and current place branding
- Collective conversations and critical appraisal of what is and isn't working
- Reflections on what could **make a difference**
- Insights on what is happening elsewhere
  Feedback and Recommendations Report
  Recalibrated community perspective on tourism
  Impacts and Benefits





## **SCOTO PRESS PAUSE** THE STARTING POINT What's working in tourism? What's not working in tourism? What could be done better or differently?

## SCOTO PRESS PAUSE DESTINATION COMPETENCE



## **SCOTO PRESS PAUSE** PLACE BRANDING







## SCOTO PRESS PAUSE MEASURING IMPACT & BENEFITS



## Footfall, bednights and spend?

Or

### Living wage jobs created, cultural assets retained, local makers supported ...

"what we measure affects what we do. If we measure the wrong thing, we will do the wrong thing. If we don't measure something, it becomes neglected, as if the problem didn't exist".

Carnegie UK



## SCOTO PRESS PAUSE DESTINATION COMPETENCE



A community led approach to destination development, management and promotion which defines and responds to each individual community's needs and desires ...

... with business and community interests at the same table



# SCOTD PRESS PAUSE