

Skye and Lochalsh

Support for communities was a particularly strong feature of Skye and Lochalsh Enterprise's work throughout 2005-06.

SALE helped 18 groups acquire and manage important community facilities, including village shops and transport services.

With low unemployment in our area, our work under the theme of improving people's skills focused on workforce development and improving access to high-quality training and education.

Over 2,000 people were registered with Skye's network of five local learning centres, while plans were developed to improve access to higher and further education.

Thirty new business start-ups ranged from a ghillie to a sports coach. Just as importantly, the new business survival rate was encouragingly high at 81%. We also successfully ran a pilot scheme to increase the growth potential of small businesses.

All the area's telephone exchanges were broadband-enabled and demand for e-business development was high. We provided 35 e-business advisory sessions.

Skye Linen Services became the first business established at the newly serviced Portree Industrial Estate.

We met all our business targets.

Colleagues from Careers Scotland and from training organisation Springboard Scotland moved into our expanded offices – opened in July – enabling us to offer a one-stop shop for guidance and skills development, particularly in the important hospitality and catering sectors.

2005-06 highlights

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig UHI was highly commended for community development at Scotland's Dynamic Place Awards.

The Storr visual arts project won the entertainment lighting category of the national Lighting Design Awards and a Dynamic Place team award.

Following the HIE network's organisational review we changed our name to HIE Skye and Wester Ross.

We assisted the Plockton Harbour Association with the cost of building a much-needed pontoon.

Skye and Lochalsh food producers showed off the quality of their produce to an international audience when Sabhal Mòr Ostaig UHI hosted the UK Founding.

Congress of the international Slow Food movement in August.

Salmon were netted and their eggs harvested in a project aimed at restocking the River Snizort, once renowned as Skye's prime salmon river.

Area profile



Population: 12,000
Area: 250,000 hectares
Key sectors: primary industries, construction and tourism
Emerging sectors: creative industries

2005-06 targets and out-turns

	Target	Out-turn	Performance %	Target 2006-07 for HIE Skye and Wester Ross
Strengthening communities				
New/enhanced community assets	20	24	120	25
Community groups with increased capacity	5	18	360	5
Developing skills and learning				
People supported to move towards and into sustainable work	63	63	100	73
Businesses supported to engage in developing the skills of those in work	40	48	120	40
Growing businesses				
New business starts	30	30	100	25
Business growth projects	25	25	100	20
Making global connections				
Private sector earnings index* (%)	108	127	111	109
Businesses engaging in international business development	5	5	100	10

* This expresses wages in assisted projects relative to average wages in the local area. A value of over 100 indicates higher than average wages.
 From April 2006, Wester Ross was linked with Skye and Lochalsh to form the new local enterprise company HIE Skye and Wester Ross.

Priorities for 2006-07

- Work with partner organisations to help school-leavers into jobs.
- Improve access to higher education and lifelong learning in Skye and Wester Ross.
- Help ensure industry support and training ahead of housing and school-building programmes in Portree.
- Develop plans to reintroduce air services to Skye.
- Work with the private sector to attract businesses to Portree and Broadford industrial estates.
- Build on the success of our small business growth scheme.
- Encourage local businesses to exploit the opportunities of broadband internet access.
- Work with Sabhal Mòr Ostaig UHI and other partners to develop FAS, the new centre for cultural and creative industries.



Muriel Jones, chairman



Robert Muir, chief executive

HIE Skye and Wester Ross
 King's House, The Green, Portree,
 Isle of Skye, IV51 9BS
 Tel: 01478 612841 Fax: 01478 612164
 Email: sale@hient.co.uk

Case studies



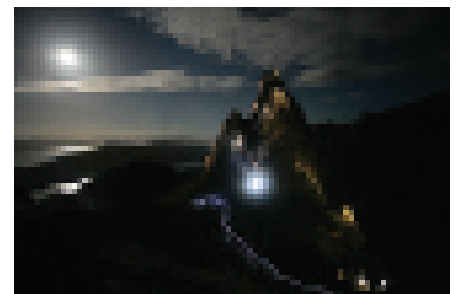
Isle of Skye Yachts

We helped Isle of Skye Yachts to expand their fleet and invest in training to become a Royal Yachting Association-approved training centre. The fleet has doubled in size over the last eight years, with turnover increasing by 250 per cent.



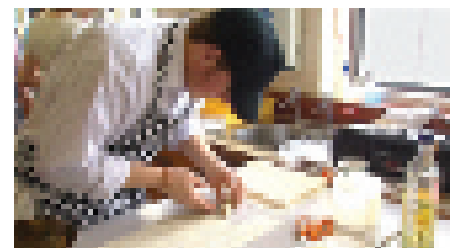
Slow Food congress

Skye hosted the UK founding congress of the international Slow Food movement (it uses high-quality, local produce to create the opposite of fast food). Twelve delegates from across the UK joined the Italian founder of Slow Food, Carlo Petrini, at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig UHI in August 2005.



The Storr - unfolding landscape

In August, with SALE assistance, arts organisation NVA produced the largest visual arts display in Europe. They lit up the Old Man of Storr and surrounding mountains during evening walks in which participants were accompanied by Gaelic song and poetry.



Vocational training

Schools and businesses worked together in vocational learning academy workshops, with an emphasis on the building, catering and hospitality sectors. Pupils of Plockton High produced a DVD, 'In Our View' giving their own perspective of the hospitality business.