

Highland Alcohol and Drug Partnership

‘TOGETHER WE CAN’

Project Report - Easy Read Summary

What’s this about?

This report shares what people in Highland said about drug and alcohol support. It looks at what’s working, what’s missing, and what needs to change. It’s based on meetings, events, and conversations with people who use services, as well as families and professionals.

Why is recovery significant?

Recovery means more than stopping drug or alcohol use. It’s about:

- Feeling better
- Rebuilding relationships
- Being part of your community

Recovery helps reduce harm and saves lives. It works best when people are treated with kindness and respect.

What happened?

- 4 community events were held in **Thurso, Inverness, Fort William, and Milton**
- Over **160 people** took part
- People answered three key questions:
 1. What should harm reduction look like?
 2. What support services are available?
 3. What does your community need?

What people said and the themes that emerged

1. Harm Reduction

- People want to be treated with kindness.
- Services should be easy to find and use.
- Naloxone (a life-saving medicine) should be available in more places.
- Education in schools is essential.
- More support is needed for young people and families.

2. Support Services

- AA, NA and CA are active in many areas.
- There are good community cafés and support groups.
- But many areas don’t have enough services, especially for young people and families.

3. Community Needs

- People want safe places to meet and talk.
- More help is needed for families.
- Services should be open evenings and weekends.
- Better transport is needed to reach services.
- More support after rehab is needed.

Big Themes

- **Relationships:** Trust and kindness matter.
- **Access:** Services should be easy to find and use.
- **Stigma:** People shouldn't feel judged.
- **Peer Support:** People with lived experience help others.
- **Women:** Need safe, women-only spaces.
- **Funding:** Services need long-term money to keep going.

What's next?

A plan has been put in place to improve things. It includes:

- Creating a **service directory** so people know what's available.
- Starting **community hubs** in places like Nairn and Alness.
- Training staff in **trauma-informed care** and **naloxone use**.
- Expanding **peer support** and lived experience roles.
- Making services better for **women**.
- Running a **campaign** to raise awareness and reduce stigma.
- Setting up a **steering group** to keep things on track.

Final Message

People in Highland want better support, more kindness, and services that work for everyone. This report outlines what needs to change—and how we can collaborate to make it happen.

