**Overview**

1. This plan provides the direction from the Board to the Executive Director on the objectives to be achieved with the allocated resources and finances during Financial Year (FY) 25/26. The objectives set out in this plan are in line with the overall Articles of Befrienders Highland (BH) and the Befrienders Highland Strategic Plan. This plan reflects the number of friendships we can manage within the current financial resources; however, if additional resources become available our intent is to quickly expand the number of friendships.

**Vision and Mission**

1. Our Vision is of a world where we all use our naturalcapacity for friendship to break down barriers which isolate and limit us.
2. Our Mission is to make befriending an indispensable and growing part of health care in the Highlands and adjacent areas, supporting and improving mental wellbeing through:
   1. Providing and developing a range of befriending services
   2. Raising awareness of the power of supported friendships

**Strategic Plan**

1. The longer-term objectives within the Strategic Plan are.
2. Increase the number of friendships both mental health and memory loss / carers within available resources.
3. Increase the awareness and access to our befriending services across Highland in order to ensure we meet the needs of all communities.
4. Increase the geographical spread and widen our demographics of our F2F and Memory Loss Services across Highland in the areas of most need / demand.
5. Increase participation of our friends and volunteers in our group befriending activities.

**Key25/26 Befriending Service Delivery Objectives**

1. Manage 75[[1]](#footnote-1) (+/-10%) mental health friendship throughout the year. At least 50% of these MH friends will self-report an improvement in mental health wellbeing (Inspire scores) or the achievement of personal recovery goals. (NHSH / Community Fund / Bank of Scotland/ Peoples Lottery)
2. Manage up to 15 dementia friendships (+/- 10%) throughout the FY. (Age Scotland)
3. Introduce befriending services within 2 new Highland Council areas / communities.

1. Recruit, train and maintain a pool of up to 120 befriending volunteers. (NHSH / Community Fund / Bank of Scotland / Peoples Lottery)
2. Continue to collaborate with other organisations to increase the opportunities for group activities for our friends and volunteers. A target of greater than 50 friends / volunteers participating in group activities over the FY.
3. Increase the awareness of mental health issues, to influencers and the general public, by increasing BH’s own communications activities and by supporting wider mental health activities, events and initiatives. (*BH*)
   1. Produce an BH article on mental health dementia friendships for the local press or participate in a mental health /memory loss / carers media event once every 3 months.
   2. Increase the number of followers on BH social media platforms from the end of FY 25/26 total by 10%. (As at 31 Mar 25 baseline – 1522 Facebook followers).
   3. Ensure BHL maintains its attendance at identified key befriending, mental health, dementia and third sector forums.

1. Manage 15 (+/-1) friendships for the Sutherland Friends Call service in the course of the year.[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Key 2025/26 Supporting Objectives – In priority order**

1. Develop a BH engagement strategy for implementation in FY 25/26.
2. Review BH funding strategy / plan and implement any recommendations to meet the current funding gap for the following 2 financial years.
3. Update the BH Website.
4. Maintain BH’s Excellence in Befriending Award.
5. Recruit additional Board Directors including a Convenor with the aim of maintaining a Board of 6-8 Directors.

**Key Identified Risks and Assumptions**

1. Key risk details for FY 25/26 are:
   1. Lack of future funding long term funding – Medium
   2. Loss of key personnel – Medium
2. This plan is based on the following assumptions:
   1. That all of the above risks are effectively mitigated.
   2. The fundraising target of £28 K as part of the budget for 25/26 is achieved.

**Budget**

1. The budget allocation for FY 25/26 is £211,282.
2. Successfully raise £28K from fundraising / donations, in line with the 25/26 budget.
3. Budget Objectives – Maintaining a set Budgetary Reserve of between 4 and 6 months of operational costs, in line with the Reserves Policy.

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Jane Soden, Convener

1. 90 mental health friendships are based upon 2 FTE of coordinators managing up to 70 friendships. The Senior Coordinator (1 FTE) managing up to 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 10 matches in place. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)