

MEDIA RELEASE

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New model of care to bring flexible, community-led support to Ardnamurchan

The Highland Health and Social Care Partnership are working with local charity Urram to develop a new, flexible model of care for people living on the Ardnamurchan peninsula, West Lochaber.

The approach marks a significant shift in how social care is delivered in the area. Rather than a fixed residential respite model, partners will explore what support services can best meet the social and personal care needs of people in the community.

This work will be shaped by extensive engagement already carried out with local residents, Urram, and statutory partners through In Control Scotland, and will continue to be co-produced with the community.

The change also offers other opportunities for the Dail Mhor building in Strontian, which has been temporarily closed since 2022. NHS Highland will now relinquish its lease and terminate its registered services with the building, enabling The Highland Council to make the facility available to community organisations including Urram.

The building's accessible facilities, including its kitchen and laundry, will support local activities and events for adults in need across the peninsula.

The emerging model aims to reduce social isolation, increase access to personal care, provide short breaks for unpaid carers, and support people to take part in community life, in a way that is sustainable and tailored to the needs of Ardnamurchan.

Arlene Johnstone, Chief Officer for the Highland Health and Social Care Partnership, said: "Working with Urram and the community gives us a real opportunity to do things differently and to meet the needs of people in a way that is genuinely sustainable. We want this to be grounded in the experience of local people and staff, and I am excited by what we can achieve together."

James Hilder, Chair of Urram, said: "Urram has always believed in the potential of this community to find new ways of supporting people, and we are genuinely hopeful for what this partnership makes possible."

"While disappointing that we have lost a residential respite service this side of the ferry, it has been evident for many years now that residential care in remote locations is not possible using existing approaches. Therefore, having access to the Dail Mhor building on appropriate terms could open up alternative sources of support for local people."

“Working alongside the Partnership to explore a flexible, community-led approach to care offers the most pragmatic way to try to deliver care services that fit the varied needs of the residents of Ardnamurchan.”

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