

Item	Rural Centres
Committee	Learning Teaching and Research Committee
Date paper prepared	24/02/2026
Date of committee meeting	11/03/2026
Subject	Smaller Rural Centres
Author	Choose an item. Susan Maclean
Action requested	☐ For Information ☒ For Discussion ☐ For recommendation ☐ For Endorsement ☐ For Approval
Purpose of the paper	To identify the activity in the smaller rural centres.
Brief summary of the paper	The FE / HE student numbers, short course delivery numbers and enrolments, school link work, room bookings and other activities, demonstrate the level of activity in each of our smaller rural centres. All are very different, but all contribute to the life of the wider college.
Consultation How has consultation with partners been conducted?	Engagement Leads have fed into the spreadsheet.
Resource implications What are the risks with this proposal?	If applicable, discussed within paper.
Risk implications	If applicable, discussed within paper.
Link with strategy	Tertiary Curriculum Strategy and Student Experience Strategy.

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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Summarise how any actual or potential (positive or negative) equality, diversity, and inclusion implications have been considered in the development of the paper. Please refer to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy for more information.
Island Community Impact	Has an Equalities and impact assessment been undertaken i.e.: It has been assessed that this policy will have no direct equalities impact."
Paper status	Highlight the paper status in the list below: ☒ Open – the paper may be circulated to non-members of the committee and published online without restriction. ☐ Restricted – the paper must not be circulated to non-members or published online until after the committee meeting. ☐ Confidential - the paper must not be circulated beyond the committee members and should not be published online. [Please note papers may still be subject to Freedom of Information requests, as specified in the next section].
Freedom of information (FOI)	Highlight the FOI status in the list below. Refer to NWH Freedom of Information Site for more information: ☒ Open ☐ Closed – disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research. ☐ Closed – disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs. ☐ Closed - Disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation. ☐ Closed - Disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court. ☐ Closed - Disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act. ☐ Closed - Other, please specify.
Freedom of information (FOI) disclosure date	If closed/ withheld is selected above, enter the date when this will become 'open': Click or tap to enter a date.

Rural Centre Summary

The information contained within this report is a flavour of the activity within each of the smaller rural centres. While some students opt to study mainly from home, all students come to their nearest centre for their closed book assessments, which are invigilated mainly by the Engagement team.

Also not reflected within the report is the level of call handling through the mainline telephone number. While 3 of these centres are currently involved in that, it is being rolled out to all centres.

With the use of credits, we are hoping to deliver different first aid courses across all our centres until the end of the academic year. This will increase our footfall and also our income.

The income target for the Engagement team is £38,000. As of the end of January, we have £18,924 outstanding income to achieve from room bookings, events and short courses.

The Engagement team are key contacts for their schools and spend time out at school events and highlighting school link courses and post school delivery options.

The Engagement team also attend various events in their community to recruit onto our full and part time delivery.

Strontian has no Engagement staff on site, but is managed from Fort William and meetings are being attended to find out what the local community would like. School sessions are being attended by us.

Following the Engagement Lead face to face meeting in February, there was some future planning discussed - please see below.

Although figures for Stornoway, Thurso or Fort William are not included in this, there is a lot of cross working between all of our centres.

Forward Planning – Outputs from the Engagement Conference

To look at how we can do more effective engagement with our schools.

Proforma has been prepared for us to use with our local businesses.

Arrange sessions with the Enterprise Manager and Work based Learning Managers to learn more about Employability and Work based learning opportunities.

Roll out good practice in individual centres e.g. Short course programme, CITB project, Residencies, funding opportunities.

Raising awareness on the website of our capacity for room bookings.

Centre	Number of FE / HE Students	Number of FE / HE courses delivered on campus	Short courses delivered 25/26	Enrolments short courses to date	Short courses planned rest of 25/26	Number of room bookings to date	Number of events on campus to date	Schools	Any other information
Barra	35		0 Ulpan		3 Photography	61		0 School pupils on campus	Student numbers include 5 senior phase who use Barra Centre also horticulture students.
N. Uist	15		2 Figure & Life drawing		5 No	0		0 Managed from Benbecula	
Benbecula	19		0 Speak Gaelic, Sea survival,		34 Sea survival, VHF, Stability	0		0 Careers event, parents evening next week	Same Lead for 3 x Uist centres. No Engagement assistant. Awaiting MCA accreditation.
Cnoc Soilleir	16		2 Supernatural history of H&I, Gaelic song as an Intro to Gaelic music		17 Uist Music Residency	0		0 Managed from Benbecula	
Dornoch	152	5	0	0	0 First aid	2		5 School pupils on campus weekly.	Managed via Thurso
Alness	164	9	0	0	0 First aid	0		3 School pupils on campus weekly.	Managed via Thurso
Gairloch	7		0 1 x Emergency First aid		9 1 x Emergency First aid	0		3 Regular communication with DHT @ GHS, attended senior parents night. Shared info with GHS re: senior phase options. Planning to attend Jobs fair in March.	No Engagement Lead or Assistant on campus. Let via Ullapool
Portree	60		8 Emergency First Aid, Food Hygiene, Speak Gaelic A1, Speak Gaelic A2		33 3 day FA,PLH, Makaton,	154		13 School pupils on campus weekly. Taster day coming up, Choices session coming up, Parents evenings	EDPR funding to support courses
Auchtertyre	10	1	0	0	0 EFT Tapping Techniques, Watercolour Painting, Sourdough Breadmaking.	4		3 Regular communication with Plockton High School, also a Parents' Evening coming up	
Broadford	19	1	0	0	0 Dry Stone Walling, Beekeeping, Shore exploration art project with Broadford Primary School.	10		2 No High school near Broadford.	EDPR funding to support courses
Ullapool	12		1 2 x Emergency First aid, 5 x RYA Powerboat level 2, 1 x RYA VHF Radio, 1 x MCA EFA, 1 x Dementia Friends training		55 1 x Personal Licence Holder, 2 x Emergency first aid, 4 x RYA Powerboat L2, 1 x RYA VHF Radio, 1 x Gaelic conversation - online, 1 x 5 day Chainsaw course	0		2 Regular communication with DHT @ UHS, attended 2 DYW Careers fayres, met DHT to discuss courses, visited seniors to discuss senior phase course options. Attending senior phase application day and senior parents night in March.	RYA Centre Awaiting MCA accreditation
Mallaig	15		1 STCW PSSR EFA PST (3) VHF radio (x1), RYA Powerboat 3		19 First Aid, Pediatric First Aid, Reiki, Level 2 Powerboat, Advanced Powerboat, RYA VHF Radio, Essential Navigation, STCW PSSR, STCW PST, STCW EFA, RYA Radar	0		0 Regular contact with school, SDS and DYW. Had a centre visit from the school.	RYA and MCA centre
	524	30	30	175	Approx 35	231	31		