



CELEBRATING GALE

**A COMMUNITY-LED SOCIAL ENTERPRISE
MAKING A MEANINGFUL DIFFERENCE**

In 2023, GALE, our community-led social enterprise, has received notable recognition for its outstanding contributions to our community. Through our collective efforts, GALE has been awarded prestigious accolades, acknowledged in the Scottish Parliament, and received heartfelt appreciation from visitors and esteemed individuals. We are proud to share the remarkable achievements and impact we have made throughout the year.

GALE
Newsletter

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RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

OUR COMMUNITY'S DEDICATION

During 2023, GALE's exceptional work has garnered significant recognition, underscoring the collective efforts of our community. The prestigious awards and acknowledgments received by GALE are a testament to the unwavering commitment of our local staff, volunteers, and members who selflessly contribute their skills and time. Together, we have created a community-led social enterprise that embodies the values of collaboration and inclusivity, making a lasting impact on our community's wellbeing and prosperity.

GALE's achievements have been celebrated through several prestigious accolades, including the Celebrating Thriving Communities category at the Highlands and Islands Thistle Awards and the Scotland Loves Local Enterprising Communities Award. Furthermore, GALE was shortlisted in the Community Led Regeneration category at the national SURF Awards. These honours not only recognise GALE's initiatives but also reflect the dedication and passion of our entire community.

The awards are as much yours as they are GALE's. Perhaps it can be summed up best by recalling the words of the judging panel at SURF who said, **"The judges saw this as an outstanding example of a project which has been developed and delivered by the community for the community. It has empowered local people to own and control local assets important to the area's economy and take an active role in local decision making. The judges liked that the purpose-built facility creates and sustains employment for a large number of local people throughout the year in an economy which is impacted by seasonality, whilst providing access to additional support services. It was evident that the project plays a pivotal role in improving social cohesion for the area."**



At the SURF Awards

SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT

SURF's recognition of the importance of sustainable employment was echoed in our recent Community Action Plan, in which the need to employ and develop opportunities for local jobs for local people emerged as a high priority. The creation and enhancement of employment opportunities are key to community growth, and it's an objective we've been passionate about at GALE for many years.

Despite the challenges faced by the hospitality industry in 2023, GALE has much of which to feel proud. With an annual turnover of approximately £400K, GALE has kept £350K circulating in the local economy through a local-first approach. By employing locals, sourcing services from local businesses and producers, and partnering with charities and community groups, GALE ensures that the wealth generated by its activities remains within the community.

In 2023, GALE employed 33 locals, engaged over 39 local businesses and producers, utilised the services of 27 community bakers, and partnered with 6 charities or community groups. These actions contribute to the overall wellbeing and prosperity of our community.

By leveraging its economic and social strength, GALE functions as an anchor institution, driving the creation of wealth that remains local. As we continue to grow, we remain committed to our social mission, prioritising our local community's wellbeing and contributing to the wider goal of a wellbeing economy.

Parliamentary Praise

GALE's remarkable achievement in being shortlisted at the SURF Awards led to special recognition in the Scottish Parliament. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to MSP Arianne Burgess for initiating this motion, which facilitated the acknowledgment of GALE's exceptional contributions to our communities. This recognition serves as a testament to our community's ceaseless hard work and forward-thinking vision.

On a recent visit to GALE, Maree Todd, MSP for Caithness, Sutherland & Ross, expressed her admiration for GALE's work with vulnerable individuals, providing the self-directed support they require. She commended GALE's dedication and commitment to empowering individuals and ensuring their wellbeing and independence. ***"I am incredibly impressed by GALE's dedication and commitment to providing self-directed support for vulnerable individuals,"*** she said. ***"Their work is not only empowering, but also essential in ensuring the wellbeing and independence of those who need it most."***



MSP visits The GALE Centre

"I encourage anyone in need of these services to take advantage of GALE's capacity and seize this opportunity. Let's work together to ensure that these valuable places are filled swiftly, enabling individuals to thrive and lead fulfilling lives."

Maree Todd extended her congratulations to GALE for their recent win at the Highlands and Islands Thistle Awards: ***"It's wonderful to see this recognition for GALE and a community which consistently demonstrates its kindness."***

Temporary Locals

In August, The GALE Centre received the TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice Award. This is an accolade bestowed upon establishments that consistently receive exceptional reviews and ratings from visitors. At GALE, we believe our success is in fostering a deeper connection between visitors and our community by encouraging them to become "temporary locals." ***continued....***



Awarded for Exceptional Reviews & Ratings

We recognise that true immersion in a place goes beyond mere sightseeing; it involves embracing the local culture, getting involved in community events, engaging with local groups, and supporting local businesses. We invite visitors to slow down, take the time to explore beyond the surface, and truly understand the heartbeat of our community

By embracing the role of a "temporary local," visitors can truly experience the essence of our community, fostering a sense of belonging and leaving with a deeper understanding and appreciation for our way of life.

Recent feedback on the GALE Centre suggests we are making an impact: **"It's a wonderful, special place. We both loved the ethos and that the whole place revolves around the local community and indeed the community around it. All the staff were lovely, the cake and food collection is wonderful and so many different unique bits available from the shop. I don't think I've ever been anywhere quite like it - and we wish we lived nearer. Well worth popping in here to have a look and support the local community."**

Community Recognition

GALE's recognition and accomplishments in 2023 highlight the power and effectiveness of a community-led social enterprise. These recognitions and accolades are not just for GALE, but for every member of our community who has contributed to our mission. As we look back at the challenges and triumphs of the past year, we are reminded of the power that lies within our community. We are grateful for the recognition bestowed upon GALE and, by extension, our community.

We will continue to strive for excellence, leveraging the strength of our community to drive forward our initiatives. We are committed to improving social cohesion, empowering local people, and ensuring the wellbeing and independence of those who need it most.

The journey so far has been rewarding, and we are excited about what the future holds for GALE and our community. Together, we will continue to make a significant difference, fostering an environment where every individual thrives. Here's to many more years of successful community-led social enterprise!