

<p>2<sup>nd</sup> June 2010 Ref: DSG(2010)C053</p> <p>Dr David Alston, Highland Council, c/o Buzancy, 51 Church Street, Cromarty, IV11 8XA.</p>	<p><b>Please respond to:</b></p> <p><b>June Love</b> <b>DSG Secretariat</b> <b>Dounreay.com</b> <b>Traill House</b> <b>7 Olrig Street</b> <b>Thurso, Caithness, KW14 7BJ</b></p> <p><b>Tel: 01847 806082</b> <b>Fax: 01847 804615</b> <b>Email: <a href="mailto:june.love@dounreay.com">june.love@dounreay.com</a></b></p>
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Dear Councillor Alston

I am writing on behalf of the Dounreay Stakeholder Group (DSG) which represents over 20 community organisations to offer our support for the work of Caithness Horizons in Thurso.

We understand that Highland Council are considering cuts in museum services and we are writing to you to urge that the nature of these budget reductions does not severely impact on Caithness Horizons.

Caithness Horizons opened to the public on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008 and welcomes 80,000 visitors in its first year of operation. It cares for and makes accessible to the public the regional important museum collections and also houses a national important collection that relates to the nuclear research facility at Dounreay.

At a time when Caithness & North Sutherland is trying to diversify away from the activities of Dounreay which contributes a significant economic benefit to the county it is even more important to sustain facilities such as Caithness Horizons which will play a vital role to the regional tourist economy both directly, by creating employment and indirectly by attracting visitors to the area.

Caithness Horizons has a varied programme of lifelong learning activities, temporary exhibitions and special events that benefit the local communities that the Museum serves and visitors to the area. Caithness Horizons provides an education service for local schools that supports the curriculum and it runs a varied programme of activities that provide informal learning opportunities for children, families and adults. Caithness Horizons also delivers lifelong learning activities and projects aimed at people with special needs in partnership with local community groups such as Key Housing and Health and Happiness.

Caithness Horizons contributes to tackling social inclusion by using its Collections as a basis on which to run outreach activities that improve physical and intellectual

access to the heritage of the North Highlands. It also runs a wide range of family friendly events and develops and maintains links with schools and community organisations such as Brownies, local history groups and societies.

Caithness Horizons provides space in its building for groups such as the Caithness Family History Society and the Reminiscence Group. This contributes to getting elderly people out of the house and providing them with exercise, mental stimulation and social interaction. It also enables them to meet people with similar interests.

The DSG sincerely hope that The Highland Council's budget consultation in regards to proposed cuts in Museums services does not have a detrimental effect on this fine Museum and the services that it provides.

Yours faithfully,

**Bob Earnshaw**  
**DSG Chairman**

Copied to:

DSG members  
Cllr David Bremner  
Cllr Robert Coghill  
Cllr Bill Fernie  
Cllr Willie Mackay  
Cllr Marion Thurso  
Cllr John Rosie  
Cllr Graeme Smith  
Cllr Katrina McNab  
Cllr Donnie Mackay  
Cllr David Flear