

## Royal visit

## All smiles at hospice unit's formal opening



The Earl of Inverness meets Alan Savage of Orion Group.

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COMFORTING words and a joke or two were shared by The Earl of Inverness as he formally opened the new multimillion-pound inpatient unit at Highland Hospice.

Prince Andrew met patients and their relatives, staff and officials at the riverside facility during a 75-minute tour this week.

The charity also used the event as an opportunity to thank everyone involved in raising £4.5 million through the Project Build Appeal, which was established to raise the money needed for the work in addition to an initial investment of £3 million from hospice reserves.



Day patient Agnes 'Nan' Oliver from Nairn participates in some physiotherapy during the royal visit.



The Earl of Inverness comforts Mimi Greenfield, a relative of a patient being looked after in the hospice.



Words can't capture the level of gratitude we feel

Andrew Leaver

Andrew Leaver, heads of the hospice's fundraising and communications department, was delighted that the appeal hit its target after around three-and-a-half years of fundraising.

"From the first donation of £50 from Betty Pengelley, to the largest donation of £1.25 million from Orion Group to the latest donation of £12,000 raised from the Highland Society of London to allow us to include

art and design features in the new building, the support for the hospice has been overwhelming," he said.

"Words can't capture the level of gratitude we feel but thank you to everyone who supports Highland Hospice."

The new unit has nine single en suite rooms and one three-bed room, offering greater choice and vastly improved privacy and dignity for patients. It has replaced the former unit that had just four single rooms and two three-bed room - all that were smaller than current guidelines recommend. Space for families and staff was also restricted.

The Earl was shown the new inpatient unit as well as the fully renovated day therapies

centre after being welcomed to the facility by hospice chairman Norman MacDonald.

Among those at the event were Alan Savage from Orion Group which donated £1.25 million, Sandy Cumming from the Robertson Trust which donated £500,000, and Tony Story from the Kingmills Hotel which raised £114,000.

Some 4000 other donations helped the appeal reach its target.

"With the support of the Highland public we have achieved our £4.5 million fundraising target and delivered a building offering a welcoming and calming environment with all the features a modern care facility needs," Mr MacDonald said. "We are proud of what

we have been able to provide for the people of the Highlands and I am delighted that the Earl was also impressed."

While in the Highland capital, the Earl also visited Inverness Castle to view the River Ness flood alleviation scheme from the top of the North Tower, which is being developed as part of transforming the venue into a tourist attraction the public can use, to get an eagle's eye view of the award winning flood scheme and the city of Inverness.

The scheme offers a one-in-100-year level of protection and alleviates flooding to some 800 houses and 200 businesses.

The Earl unveiled plaques at the hospice at the flood scheme.

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