

Minute

Development and Infrastructure Committee

Tuesday, 12 November 2024, 09:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Councillors Kristopher D Leask, Mellissa-Louise Thomson, Graham A Bevan, Alexander G Cowie, P Lindsay Hall, W Leslie Manson, Raymond S Peace, Gillian Skuse, Owen Tierney, Duncan A Tullock and Heather N Woodbridge.

Clerk

- Katy Russell-Duff, Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- Hayley Green, Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
- Gareth Waterson, Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.
- Sweyn Johnston, Head of Enterprise and Economic Growth (for Items 10 to 12).
- Roddy Mackay, Head of Planning and Community Protection (for Items 1 to 6).
- Lorna Richardson, Head of Neighbourhood Services (for Items 1 to 4).
- Stuart Allison, Service Manager (Enterprise) (for Items 6 to 12).
- Karen Bevilacqua, Service Manager (Legal Services).
- Laura Cromarty, Service Manager (Transportation) (for Items 6 to 13).
- Shonagh Merriman, Service Manager (Corporate Finance).
- Susan Shearer, Service Manager (Development and Marine Planning) (for Items 1 to 6).
- Gavin Barr, Economic Team Manager (for Items 6 to 12).
- James Green, Team Manager (Marine Planning) (for Items 1 to 6).
- Derek Manson, Team Manager (Development Planning) (for Items 1 to 6).

Observing

- Andrew Groundwater, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development (for Items 1 to 4).
- Thomas Richards, Senior Human Resources Advisor (for Items 1 to 4).

Apology

- Councillor Rachael A King.

Declarations of Interest

- No declarations of interest were intimated.

Chair

- Councillor Kristopher D Leask.

1. Revenue Expenditure Monitoring

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Corporate Finance), the Committee:

Noted:

1.1. The revenue financial summary statement in respect of service areas for which the Development and Infrastructure Committee was responsible, for the period 1 April to 30 September 2024, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, indicating a budget overspend position of £551,500.

1.2. The revenue financial detail by service area statement in respect of service areas for which the Development and Infrastructure Committee was responsible, for the period 1 April to 30 September, attached as Annex 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee scrutinised:

1.3. The explanations given and actions proposed in respect of significant budget variances, as outlined in the Budget Action Plan, attached as Annex 3 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that appropriate action was being taken with regard to significant budget variances.

Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson left the meeting during discussion of this item.

2. Road Asset Replacement Monitoring – Expenditure Monitoring

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Corporate Finance), the Committee:

Noted:

2.1. The summary position of expenditure incurred as at 30 September 2024, against the approved Road Asset Replacement Programme for financial year 2024/25, as detailed in section 1.4 of the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee scrutinised:

2.2. The detailed analysis of expenditure figures and programme updates, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance regarding significant budget variances and progress being made with delivery of the approved Road Asset Replacement Programme.

Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson rejoined the meeting during discussion of this item.

3. Performance Monitoring – Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Scrutinised:

3.1. The performance of Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure for the reporting period 1 April to 30 September 2024, in respect of directorate priorities and performance indicators, as set out in Annexes 1 and 2 respectively to the report by the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, and obtained assurance.

3.2. The complaints and compliments made to Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure in the six-month period 1 April to 30 September 2024, and for the two preceding six-month periods, as set out in section 5 of the report by the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, and obtained assurance.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council**:

3.3. That the following action, which had been progressed to completion, be removed from the Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure Directorate Delivery Plan:

- Plant and Vehicle Replacement Strategy – we will deliver a vehicle fleet that meets the needs of the communities and the Council while reflecting the aspirations of Net Zero and decarbonisation within available resources.

3.4. That the following actions be amended as indicated and thereafter incorporated within the Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure Directorate Delivery Plan:

- Local Resilience Plan – prepare a local resilience plan for each island – target date to be extended from 31 March to 30 September 2025.
- Marine Plan – prepare a plan for the Orkney Islands Marine Region – target date to be extended from 31 March to 31 December 2025.
- Local Place Plans – promote and support the production of plans – target date to be extended from 30 September 2024 to 31 March 2025.

3.5. The revised Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure Risk Register, attached as Appendix 1 to this Minute, be approved.

4. Performance Monitoring – Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Scrutinised:

4.1. The performance of Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration for the reporting period 1 April to 30 September 2024, in respect of directorate priorities and performance indicators, as set out in Annexes 1 and 2 respectively to the report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, and obtained assurance.

4.2. The complaints and compliments made to Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration in the six-month period 1 April to 30 September 2024 and for the two preceding six-month periods, as set out in section 4 of the report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, and obtained assurance.

5. Proposed Scapa Flow Historic Marine Protected Area

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, together with a partial Island Communities Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Team Manager (Marine Planning), the Committee:

Noted:

5.1. That the Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government, acting on advice from Historic Environment Scotland, intended to seek a Ministerial decision in 2025 on the designation of the proposed Scapa Flow Historic Marine Protected Area.

5.2. That the Marine Directorate of the Scottish Government was seeking clarification of the Council's current position regarding the proposed Scapa Flow Historic Marine Protected Area.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

5.3. That the Council decision taken in April 2019 to endorse the proposed Scapa Flow Historic Marine Protected Area be confirmed.

5.4. That the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure should inform the Marine Directorate of Scottish Government of the Council's decision to endorse the proposed Scapa Flow Historic Marine Protected Area.

6. Orkney Local Development Plan – Development Plan Scheme

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Development and Marine Planning), the Committee:

Noted:

6.1. Progress made over the last twelve months in developing the evidence base and undertaking community engagement on the review of the Local Development Plan.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

6.2. The Development Plan Scheme 2024 including the Participation Statement, attached as Appendix 2 to this Minute, be approved.

7. Inter-Island Air Services – Proposed Summer 2025 Timetable

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Transportation), the Committee:

Resolved, in terms of delegated powers:

7.1. That, subject to an adequate revenue budget for 2025/26 being established, the timetable in respect of inter-island air services during summer 2025, attached as Appendix 3 to this Minute, be approved.

The Committee noted:

7.2. That, should an enhanced inter-island air services be awarded from 1 April 2025, the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration would submit an amended timetable for consideration by the Development and Infrastructure Committee.

8. Inter-Island Ferry Services – Proposed Summer 2025 Timetable

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Transportation), the Committee:

Resolved, in terms of delegated powers, that, subject to an adequate service revenue budget for 2025/26 being established, the timetables in respect of inter-island ferry services, to be operated by Orkney Ferries Limited during summer 2025, attached as Appendix 4 to this Minute, be approved.

9. Harbour Authority Sub-committee

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the Harbour Authority Sub-committee held on 29 October 2024, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved, on the motion of Councillor Kristopher D Leask, seconded by Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the Harbour Authority Sub-committee held on 29 October 2024, attached as Appendix 5 to this Minute, as a true record.

10. Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership

Regional Economic Strategy

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Enterprise), on the motion of Councillor Kristopher D Leask, seconded by Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership's Regional Economic Strategy, attached as Appendix 6 to this Minute, be endorsed.

11. Economic Development Grants and Cost of Living Crisis Business Support Schemes

Budget Monitoring Statement and Delegated Approvals

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Economic Development Manager, the Committee:

Noted:

11.1. Spending to 30 September 2024, in relation to Economic Development Grants totalling £139,696, of which £79,571 related to grant commitments made in previous financial years and £59,945 to current year commitments.

11.2. Grant approvals made in the period 1 April to 30 September 2024 totalling £180,458, including grants approved under delegated schemes for the same period totalling £140,458, as detailed in Annex B to the report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.

11.3. Approvals made in the period 1 April to 30 September 2024, totalling £120,000, in respect of Cost of Living Crisis Business Support Schemes, as summarised in Annex C to the report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.

12. Exclusion of Public

On the motion of Councillor Kristopher D Leask, seconded by Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson, the Committee resolved that the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting, as the business to be discussed involved the disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.

13. Inter-Island Air Services – Public Service Obligation Contract

Under section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public had been excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 8 and 9 Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Transportation), the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** what action should be taken with regard to the Inter-Island Air Services Public Services Obligation Contract.

The above constitutes the summary of the Minute in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 section 50C(2) as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

14. Conclusion of Meeting

At 11:46 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: (Chair's signature).

Orkney Islands Council (OIC) Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure (NSI) Service Risk Register – October 2024

Risks by risk number

Cluster.	Risk number.	Risk.	Owner.
Financial.	1.	Waste.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.
Managerial/Professional.	2.	Workforce Planning.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Reputational.	3.	Major Capital Projects, delay or failure.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Financial.	4.	Financial pressures across the Directorate – Fuel and inflationary costs.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Financial.	5.	Quarries, reduced income.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.
Financial.	6.	Operational, insufficient funding.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Legislative/Regulatory.	7.	Health and Safety, accidents and incidents.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Financial.	8.	Residual liability, property not in use.	Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities.
Financial.	9.	Discretionary services and affordability.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.

Cluster.	Risk number.	Risk.	Owner.
Managerial/Professional.	10.	Failure to progress strategic objectives.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Legislative/Regulatory.	11.	Climate Change.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Legislative/Regulatory.	12.	The Effective Management of Trees and Woodlands.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.

Risks by cluster

Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.	Owner.
Legislative/Regulatory.	7.	Health and Safety, accidents and incidents.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Legislative/Regulatory.	11.	Climate Change.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Legislative/Regulatory.	12.	The Effective Management of Trees and Woodlands.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Financial.	1.	Waste.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.
Financial.	4.	Financial pressures across the Directorate - Fuel and inflationary costs.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Financial.	5.	Quarries, reduced income.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.
Financial.	6.	Operational, insufficient funding.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Financial.	8.	Residual liability, property not in use.	Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities.
Financial.	9.	Discretionary services and affordability.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Managerial/Professional.	2.	Workforce Planning.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.

Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.	Owner.
Managerial/Professional.	10.	Failure to progress strategic objectives.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
Reputational.	3.	Major Capital Projects.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.

Risks by Owner

Owner.	Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Financial.	6.	Operational, insufficient funding.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Financial.	9.	Discretionary services and affordability.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Legislative/Regulatory.	7.	Health and Safety, accidents and incidents.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Managerial/Professional.	10.	Failure to progress strategic objectives.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Financial.	4.	Financial pressures across the Directorate - Fuel and inflationary costs.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Managerial/Professional.	2.	Workforce Planning.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Reputational.	3.	Major Capital Projects, delay or failure.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Legislative/Regulatory.	11.	Climate Change.
Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Legislative/Regulatory.	12.	The Effective Management of Trees and Woodlands.
Head of Neighbourhood Services.	Financial.	1.	Waste.
Head of Neighbourhood Services.	Financial.	5.	Quarries, reduced income.

Owner.	Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.
Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities.	Financial.	8.	Residual liability, property not in use.

Risks by rating

Risk Rating.	Owner.	Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.
20.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.	Financial.	5.	Quarries, reduced income.
20.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Legislative/Regulatory	11.	Climate Change.
16.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Financial.	9.	Discretionary services and affordability.
15.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Financial.	6.	Operational, insufficient funding.
15.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Managerial/Professional.	10.	Failure to progress strategic objectives.
15.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Reputational.	3.	Major Capital Projects, delay or failure.
12.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Managerial/Professional.	2.	Workforce Planning.
12.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.	Financial.	1.	Waste.
12.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Legislative/Regulatory.	12.	The Effective Management of

Risk Rating.	Owner.	Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.
				Trees and Woodlands.
9.	Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities.	Financial.	8.	Residual liability, property not in use.
8.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Legislative/Regulatory.	7.	Health and Safety, accidents and incidents.
6.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.	Financial.	4.	Financial pressures across the Directorate - Fuel and inflationary costs.

Risk Prioritisation Matrix

			IMPACT				
			1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
			Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
LIKELIHOOD	5.	Almost Certain.	Medium	Medium	High	High	Extreme
	4.	Likely.	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme
	3.	Possible.	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
	2.	Unlikely.	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	1.	Rare.	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High

Risk Number.	Risk Title.				Cluster.	Owner.			
01.	Affordability of Waste collection and disposal.				Financial.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.			
Likelihood:	4.	Impact:	3.	RAG:	Yellow.	Current Risk Score:	12.	Target Risk Score:	4.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
Affordability of existing waste collection models.	The Council fails in the delivery of this service, waste is not collected.	<p>The Council will be unable to fulfil its regulatory obligations with regards to waste collection.</p> <p>The Council will not be able to close the gap towards meeting the Government targets for recycling.</p>	Treat.	<p>01.01 – Ongoing programme of review and service redesign.</p> <p>01.02 — Integrated Waste Strategy. Following the Council decision that this project is now unaffordable, work has started on developing a new waste strategy which would look to identify service improvements, efficiencies and opportunities for redesign. A tender has been issued, with an estimated award date of October 2024, with the final strategy expected in January 2025.</p> <p>01.03 – The Service continues to review best practice and looking at examples from other places, both within Scotland and beyond.</p>

Risk Number.	Risk Title.				Cluster.	Owner.			
02.	Workforce Planning.				Managerial/Professional.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.			
Likelihood:	5.	Impact:	3.	RAG:	Amber.	Current Risk Score:	12.	Target Risk Score:	6.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The Council may have insufficient training plans in place and Good Conversations (GCs) not being conducted regularly.</p> <p>Challenge of recruitment to key professional posts.</p> <p>Lack of proper training including career grade plans/apprenticeships will impact on the Service in the future.</p> <p>Workforce Plans were approved through Committee in March 2017, and further reviewed through the</p>	<p>The Council does not have fully trained staff, in the right place, at the right time, to deliver set priorities and/or statutory functions.</p> <p>Unable to recruit to key posts.</p>	<p>The Council cannot manage with an untrained workforce.</p> <p>Existing workforce becomes demoralised; service standards drop; an increased risk of non-compliance with changes in legislation, practices etc.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>02.01 – Appropriate systems in place to measure competency, ensure training, and people development is undertaken as required. With a particular focus on statutory services.</p> <p>02.02 – Workforce Plans implemented within teams. Noted that budget pressures will impact on plans, and that recruitment for some key posts remains very difficult. At every possible opportunity (such as a staff member leaving) the Service Manager and Head of Service will review their staffing profile and consider any reasonable changes.</p> <p>02.03 – A focus on Good Conversations for all staff from 2022/23 to date has significantly improved performance with feedback from staff who have conducted the Good Conversation framework that this is helpful for all involved.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
staffing re-structure in 2021/22.				02.04 Use of the Council's vacancy review process when a post becomes vacant. This can also provide internal opportunities and growth within existing employees.

Risk Number.	Risk Title.	Cluster.	Owner.						
03.	Major capital project delay or failure.	Reputational.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.						
Likelihood:	5.	Impact:	3.	RAG:	Amber.	Current Risk Score:	15.	Target Risk Score:	6.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The risk of insufficient financial and/or staff resources to meet current and future demand makes it difficult for the Council to realise its priorities e.g. Scale Wind, Islands Deal, Harbours Master Plan.</p> <p>Failure to spend grant funding.</p> <p>Reputational damage.</p>	<p>Strategic high-level project programme slippage or failure of being over budget.</p> <p>Scale of project management business requirements associated with key strategic projects over the next 5 to 10 years.</p>	<p>Failure to deliver major projects.</p> <p>Failure to deliver anticipated income or anticipated efficiency savings.</p> <p>Reputational harm.</p> <p>Impact on Service Delivery.</p>	Treat.	<p>03.01 – Ensuring appropriate consideration of pressures during capital and revenue budget setting and most efficient use of existing resources.</p> <p>03.02 – Establish additional project specific staff and budget resources to ensure new project delivery where required.</p> <p>03.03 – Complete the implementation of recommendations relevant to the capital programme arising from the external review of the Planning Service. Planning resource and planning agent role within the property</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Resources – financial and people, including loss of key staff and difficulty in recruiting new members of the team on a timely basis.</p>				<p>team has been established but there are challenges in progressing recruitment.</p> <p>03.04 – Seeking to conclude the planning for the next capital programme (period 2024 to 2029) by May 2025, and thereafter adjust resource levels to meet delivery demands. The switch in focus towards a Capital Investment Strategy (CIS) will provide a refreshed and streamlined framework within which decisions can be made.</p> <p>03.05 – Closer working with Elected Members around the prioritisation of the future Capital Programme, including an interactive seminar in Summer 2023, and follow up sessions scheduled for Winter 2023 and Spring 2024, before final consideration by Policy and Resources before the end of 2024.</p> <p>03.06 - New Capital Project Appraisal process is in development to streamline the consideration of recommended projects.</p> <p>03.07 - A number of projects were removed from the capital programme following a recommendation by the Policy and Resources Committee in June 2024.</p>

Risk Number.	Risk Title.				Cluster.	Owner.			
04.	Financial pressures across the Directorate - Fuel and inflationary costs.				Financial.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.			
Likelihood:	2.	Impact:	3.	RAG:	Yellow.	Current Risk Score:	6.	Target Risk Score:	6.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The Council faces challenges because of the volatility of fuel costs and the very high rate of inflation, which affects both materials and labour costs.</p> <p>The running costs for plant and vehicles are directly affected by the cost of fuel. This is particularly challenging for contracted services where the Council is obliged to honour contractual agreements.</p>	<p>The Council has a large increase in costs which impacts on the services that are delivered across this Directorate.</p>	<p>Running costs of Council premises and associated energy efficiency impacted.</p>	<p>Tolerate.</p>	<p>04.01 – Contingency planning where possible to account for current financial situation, including information to Members when appropriate around risks and consequences.</p> <p>04.02 – Continued very close working relationship with Finance colleagues to seek advice and support.</p> <p>04.03 – Procurement critical in terms of seeking best tenders and appropriate value for money solutions, including the use of nationally agreed frameworks where appropriate (for example, Energy costs).</p> <p>04.04 – Encourage lower fuel usage. Migration to low energy vehicles and other alternative fuels.</p> <p>04.05 – Capital project development of renewables to offset energy consumption</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
				(electricity rather than oil) through Council owned renewables project and properties.

Risk Number.	Risk Title.	Cluster.	Owner.						
05.	Reduced income from business activities from Quarries and associated budget overspend due to self-financed strategy which relies on income generation and continued supply.	Financial.	Head of Neighbourhood Services.						
Likelihood:	5.	Impact:	4.	RAG:	Amber.	Current Risk Score:	20.	Target Risk Score:	4.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The Council Quarry has been a significant income resource which has been applied to a self-financing budget approach within NSI.</p> <p>This is market dependent on the availability of infrastructure and ongoing supply. When sales fall (as in 2022/23) this anticipated income is not realised and there is then an associated burden on the NSI budget.</p>	<p>Change in local market for quarry goods.</p> <p>Extensive periods of plant breakdown/time to replace unplanned failure.</p>	<p>Lack of availability of quarry products for Council projects and local markets.</p> <p>NSI self-financed budget strategy leading to overspend.</p>	Treat.	<p>05.01 – The updated Business Plan covering the period 2024 – 2029 has been approved by Council. This Plan identifies opportunities around income generation and sets out the platform for the long term sustainability of the Quarry.</p> <p>05.02 – Closer working arrangements with the Roads Operations team to ensure that the Quarry team fully understands future demand and can supply the appropriate product.</p> <p>05.03 – The pricing strategy has been reviewed to ensure that it remains competitive within the market whilst covering costs. This remains under close</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
				<p>review given the dynamic conditions within the market.</p> <p>05.04 – The enabling works for the quarry expansion have been completed and work is underway to develop and implement the appropriate exploitation strategy.</p> <p>05.05 – Permanent Quarry Manager now in post following the retirement of the previous post holder in Spring 2022.</p> <p>05.06 – External support for blasting procured and implemented in March 2023. This enabled a significant amount of stone to be made available which supports current planned programmes.</p>

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Risk Number.	Risk Title.				Cluster.	Owner.			
06.	Insufficient Operational equipment and infrastructure funding, including support of the maintenance of current assets and infrastructure.				Financial.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.			
Likelihood:	5.	Impact:	3.	RAG:	Amber.	Current Risk Score:	15.	Target Risk Score:	9.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The Council may not have sufficient funds to sustain assets, replace ageing assets and develop key assets and infrastructure.</p> <p>Essential plant and equipment have to be maintained to ensure they can support the Council's services.</p> <p>Existing building assets must be maintained to agreed standards and, where possible, supported towards Net Zero targets.</p>	<p>The Council does not have sufficient budget to maintain or develop its essential assets or infrastructure to provide public services.</p> <p>The Council cannot implement an asset management strategy.</p> <p>The Council fails to meet statutory or regulatory requirements on maintenance.</p>	<p>Plant, equipment and infrastructure deteriorate; services are not delivered.</p> <p>Council's reputation at risk.</p> <p>Risk of accidents and potential claims.</p>	<p>Tolerate.</p>	<p>06.01 – Funded asset management plans are in place for annual programmes for repair and replacement across roads, fleet, property and IT. The funding allocated for these programmes has been increased from FY 25/26 which will ease some of the pressure.</p> <p>06.02 – Capital programme planning and prioritisation focusing on repairs, renewals and additions that mitigate rising costs through a revised business focussed Capital Project Appraisal process and linked to the Asset Management Plan.</p> <p>06.03 – Consideration of the priorities for the Capital Programme for 2024 to 2029, and development of a new Capital Investment Strategy to cover this period.</p> <p>06.04 – Cross working with the Estates team to reduce the size of the “estate” in the current Medium-Term Resource Strategy (MTRS) planning period to then see a fall in demand for maintenance (pressure on funding the asset replacement).</p> <p>06.05 – Through the budget process review the standards of service delivery to set a “lower bar” in terms of the</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
				performance target in areas such as roads and street cleansing. This then impacts on the volume of work and the plant and equipment/vehicles needed and would probably increase complaints and customer dis-satisfaction. All needs to be considered as part of the 2025/26 budget setting process.

Risk Number.	Risk Title.	Cluster.	Owner.						
07.	Health and Safety; accidents and incidents.	Legislative/Regulatory.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.						
Likelihood:	2.	Impact:	4.	RAG:	Yellow.	Current Risk Score:	8.	Target Risk Score:	6.

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Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The risk of not managing accidents and health and safety incidents.</p> <p>Particular operational vulnerabilities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand and Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS), 	<p>The Council not supporting the wellbeing of staff.</p> <p>The Council fails to manage accidents and health and safety incidents appropriately.</p>	<p>An increase in the number of accidents/incidents; loss of productivity; loss of equipment; an increased risk of legal challenges; risk of financial claims and financial penalties.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>07.01 – Council Health and Safety Policy - due for review in March 2025.</p> <p>07.02 - Hand and Arm Vibration Syndrome Policy and training due by 31 March 2025.</p> <p>07.03 – Lone Working Policy and Guidance - due for review in 2025.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quarrying accident, • lifting injury, • machinery injury, • heavy vehicle – moving injury, • Waste related injury / contamination, • lone working, • working at height and up ladders. 				<p>07.04 - Fire Safety Policy – due for review in 2026.</p> <p>07.05 - Major Emergency Plan – due for review in June 2025.</p> <p>07.06 – Training programme(s), reporting, implementing improvements.</p> <p>07.07 – Work Methods Safety meetings and reviews. Safety Management Systems and Audit.</p> <p>07.08 – Maintaining a comprehensive schedule of staff and management meetings and culture in relation to Health and Safety matters e.g. quarterly cross service management health and safety meetings, tool box talks etc. Delivering the Safety Forums, including Member attendance.</p> <p>07.09 – Service Health and Safety Induction process and introduction of new Near Miss Process in Spring 2021.</p> <p>07.10 – Ongoing review of Health and Safety issues at various management forums including Heads of Service, works reps meetings and union meetings.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
				<p>07.11 – Access to People Safe MySOS devices (or equivalent devices) to services with a high level of lone working.</p> <p>07.12 – Use of Violence/Unacceptable Behaviour Flagging process to alert staff of potentially challenging service users.</p> <p>07.13 – Health and Safety continues to be a priority topic for operational services, including at toolbox talks.</p>

Risk Number.	Risk Title.	Cluster.	Owner.						
08.	Residual Liability for properties no longer in original use.	Financial.	Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities.						
Likelihood:	3.	Impact:	3.	RAG:	Yellow.	Current Risk Score:	9.	Target Risk Score:	6.

1303

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
The Council is exposed to significant expenditure to remediate sites to appropriate level.	Current liability (has been the case for many years).	Financial, staff resources for inspection, planning, penalties. Specialist studies are required.	Treat.	<p>08.01 – Asset Management planning and mitigation, including the disposal of assets which are no longer required.</p> <p>08.02 – Prioritise inspection and immediate remedial action through existing service</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
Public liability arising from the fact that sites are no longer in active use. Hence not necessarily secure or part of an inspection regime. The alternative is the Council does nothing and is at risk of claim arising from injury etc.		Public health and reputation.		budgets with corresponding risk of overspend. 08.03 – Additional budget pressures associated with any approval for the final works programme. 08.04 – Cross-Directorate work to support the Estates team on accelerating (if possible) disposal routes, including bringing in external support to deliver this project given current lack of staffing resources within the Estates Team.

1304

Risk Number.	Risk Title.	Cluster.	Owner.						
9.	Affordability of Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure Services and likelihood of reduction in spending on discretionary services.	Financial.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.						
Likelihood:	4.	Impact:	4.	RAG:	Amber.	Current Risk Score:	16.	Target Risk Score:	4.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
Political expectation that service levels will not change despite budget reductions.	Budget reductions below baseline service level requirement.	Budget overspends.	Treat.	09.01 – Ensure full awareness and understanding of consequences through the budget setting process.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
Discretionary services likely to be the focus for reductions in funding.				09.02 – Strong Corporate Leadership/ Improvement Support Team Board approach to budget setting. 09.03 – Follow through budget savings with service changes quickly and resolutely following decisions.

Risk Number.	Risk Title.	Cluster.	Owner.						
10.	Failure to progress strategic objectives due to the inevitable focus on day-to-day service delivery.	Managerial/Professional.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.						
Likelihood:	5.	Impact:	3.	RAG:	Amber.	Current Risk Score:	15.	Target Risk Score:	12.

1305

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
Lack of progress on strategic outcomes. Loss of opportunity. Medium to long term failure of service.	Volume of attention required on day-to-day activities and priorities that removes time, resource commitment and focus away from progressing strategic objectives, e.g. both operational such as responding to day-to-day questions and/or requests and also corporate processes, e.g. Freedom of	Strategies not delivered. Service failure. Negative impact on service delivery. Deterioration in long term performance of the service.	Treat.	10.01 – Seek to focus resources on delivery of the Council Plan’s approved strategic objectives/projects for the service. 10.02 – Managing expectations in regard to the responsiveness of day-to-day operational demands and also corporate demands. 10.03 – Re-calibration of service standards e.g. review service response

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
	Information (FOI), performance management etc.	Inefficiencies. Pressure on staff leading to poor health and wellbeing e.g. stress, sickness and/or a drop in morale.		standards/times for non-safety critical or strategic outcome items. 10.04 – Regular and open communication with Community Councils and Councillors, with visible senior leadership throughout.

Risk Number.	Risk Title.	Cluster.	Owner.
11.	Climate Change.	Physical.	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.

Likelihood:	4.	Impact:	5.	RAG:	Red.	Current Risk Score:	20.	Target Risk Score:	12.
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1306

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
Council infrastructure impacted by extreme and unpredictable weather, resulting in increased costs of maintenance and weakened or disrupted delivery of services including travel disruption. Communities facing increased frequency of coastal flooding and	Extreme and unpredictable sustained weather (lightning, winds, tides) causes increased damage or wear and tear to Council infrastructure. Increased severity of coastal flooding leads to damage to property in coastal communities, while surface water levels impact transport	Weakened or disrupted delivery of Council services including transport, roads maintenance, property access and digital services. Reduced economic output in Orkney requires increased Council interventions.	Treat	11.01 – Declaration of Climate Emergency. 11.02 – New Council Plan has specific climate related goals including baseline review and Net Zero targets and milestones. 11.03 – Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy.

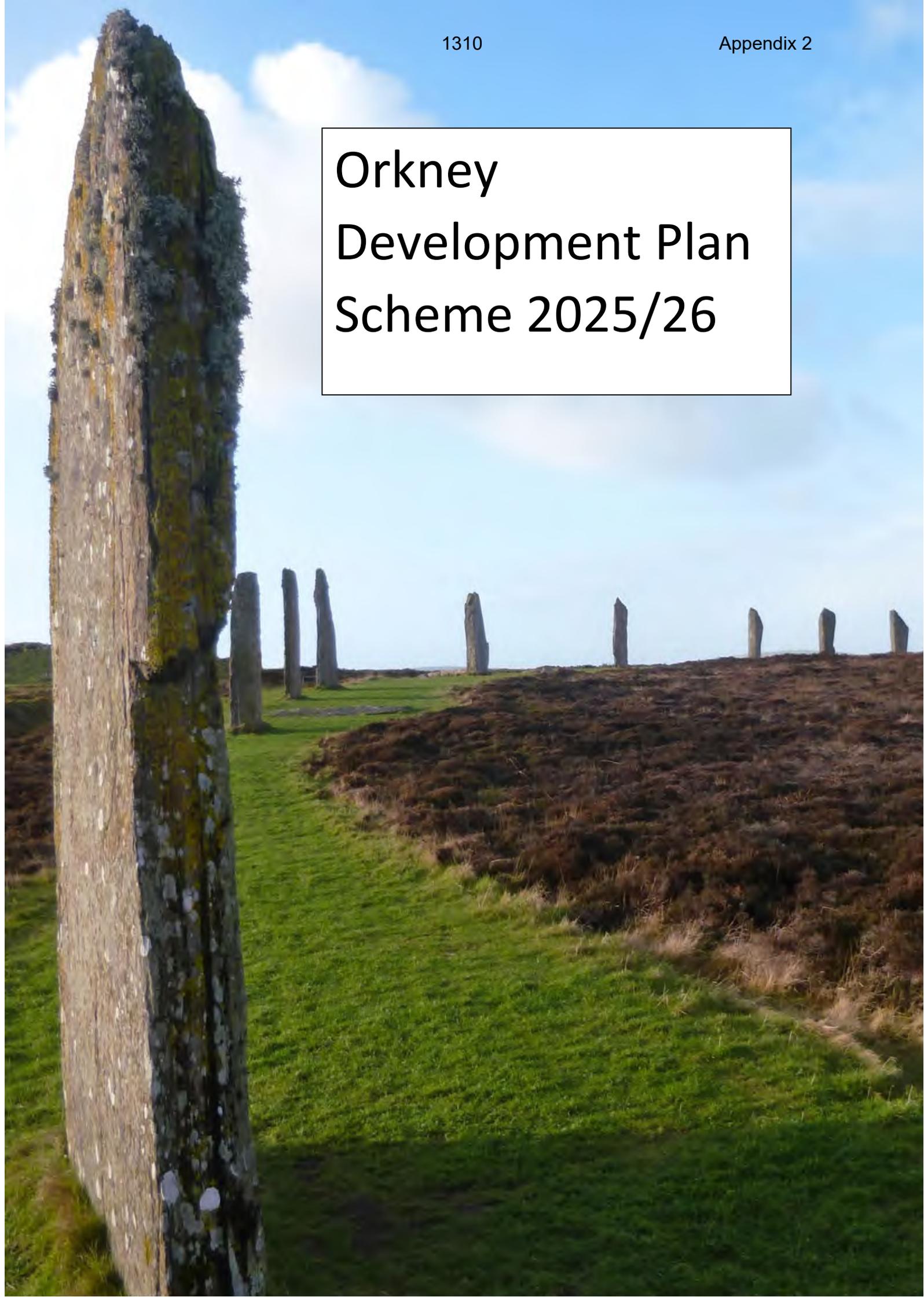
Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>increased volumes of surface water.</p> <p>Local economic production affected by climate impacts.</p> <p>Transition to support climate response initiatives require significant capital investment.</p>	<p>routes and agricultural activities in the community.</p> <p>Surface water and other climate impacts affect normal activity cycles impacting food production including agriculture.</p> <p>Move to Net Zero requires capital funding and resourcing beyond Council capacity.</p>	<p>Failure to meet targets or reductions in funding of other Council Priorities to support initiatives.</p>		<p>11.04 – Flood Risk Management Plan 2022 – 2028.</p> <p>11.05 – Resilience review and response to SEPA Flood Warnings as an Incident Management process.</p> <p>11.06 – Preparation of the Coastal Change Adaptation Plan.</p> <p>11.07 – Development of local resilience capabilities and the ongoing involvement in resilience planning and exercises.</p> <p>11.08 – Development of Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, with associated engagement events with Members and Officers.</p> <p>11.09 – Cross-Council officer working group established, recognising that Climate Change impacts all Directorates.</p> <p>11.10 – Contractors appointed to complete an independent study into indicative Council transition pathways towards net zero, work started Autumn 2024.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
				11.11 - Report, along with a proposed new Vision statement, presented to Policy and Resources in September 2024.

Risk Number.	Risk Title.	Cluster.	Owner.						
12.	The Effective Management of Trees and Woodlands on Land that is in the Ownership and Control of the Council.	Legislative/Regulatory	Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.						
Likelihood:	3.	Impact:	4.	RAG:	Amber.	Current Risk Score:	12.	Target Risk Score:	12.

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
The potential for falling trees or branches to cause injury to members of the public visiting the location or cause damage to neighbouring land / property.	Lack of regular inspection of all trees in the ownership and / or control of the Council. Disease such as Ash Dieback affecting the structural integrity of a tree(s).	Injury to visiting members of the public and/or damage to neighbouring land and/or property, and/or damage to vehicles. Financial claims from third party if they suffer accident, injury, loss or damage. Reputational damage to Council.	Treat.	12.01 – Include all trees in the ownership and control of the Council in the bi-annual tree survey and inspection that is completed on some of OIC trees as part of the ground maintenance work completed by Engineering Services. 12.02 – Establish a budget for the onwards maintenance and management of all trees in the ownership and control of the Council. 12.03 – Undertake any maintenance works e.g. felling trees/lopping

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
				<p>branches where there is an immediate risk to public safety.</p> <p>12.04 – Where a large number of trees require to be felled provide for compensatory replacement tree planting on-site or in general location.</p>



Orkney Development Plan Scheme 2025/26

Taking forward the Orkney Local Development Plan Development Plan Scheme 2025/2026

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Introduction

This is the second Local Development Plan newsletter providing an overview of the timetable and work programme for preparing the new Orkney Local Development Plan and sets out the work and engagement that has been completed over the last year. It also lets you know how and when you can get involved in the preparation of the Local Development Plan. This newsletter also acts as the Council's Development Plan Scheme (DPS) that we submit annually to Scottish Government.

By law the Council is required to prepare a Development Plan Scheme, that includes a participation statement. This Development Plan Scheme will be referred to as Development Plan Scheme 2025 (DPS2025) and will detail the work programme ahead. Through legislation it has to be reviewed yearly and reported to our Council.

Since 2016, the Scottish Government have been reviewing the national planning system and a new Planning Act was published in July 2019. In May 2023, the Development Planning Regulations and Guidance were published which has changed the way in which LDPs are produced, including more opportunities for community engagement in Planning. These documents can be found at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/local-development-planning-guidance/>

DPS2025 sets out the programme for preparing and reviewing our Local Development Plan and explains what is likely to be involved at each stage. This Development Plan Scheme will cover the following:

- Provide an update on the focus of our work over the coming year and highlights work which has been completed.
- Indication of timescales for preparing a new Local Development Plan.
- Participation statement outlining how and when we will engage with our communities and stakeholders.

What is a Local Development Plan (LDP)?

A LDP is a land use strategy document that details areas within a location that require to be protected for their value and areas for new development to meet the social, economic and housing needs of the location.

Under changes to the planning system the Scottish Government have adopted and published [National Planning Framework 4 \(NPF4\)](#) that now provides all of Scotland with spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments and national planning policies.

Under planning legislation, NPF4 now forms part of the Development Plan and will be used to assess planning applications alongside policies in our LDP. This will likely lead to a reduction in the number and range of policies that we require in our LDP.

The new Local Development Plan for Orkney

Under new legislation, our next LDP will aim to be more spatial in nature; meaning it will be more mapped based with many of the policies already detailed in NPF4. There is now a focus on place planning, an infrastructure first approach to

development, a focus on development delivery and a clear ambition that land use planning will assist in tackling the climate and nature crisis currently facing Scotland.

The Scottish Government now expects all planning authorities to have a new look LDP within the next 5 years of NPF4 being adopted; and this next Plan will be in place for a 10-year period.

Background to the new system

The reforms to Scotland's planning system are being brought about by implementation of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. Further information on how it was developed can be found at <https://www.transformingplanning.scot/planning-reform/how-we-got-here/>

New-style Local Development Plan

Scotland's reformed planning system includes changes to the key steps for preparing a LDP. Preparation of a new-style LDP will include:

- Evidence-gathering, including for example through a range of audits and community/ stakeholder engagement, leading to an Evidence Report.
- Submission of the Evidence Report to Scottish Ministers for an independent GateCheck.
- Plan preparation, leading to publication of the Proposed Plan for consultation.
- Submission of the Proposed Plan to Scottish Ministers for an independent examination of outstanding issues; and
- Adoption of the Plan.

Local Place Plans

The Scottish Government has also introduced Local Place Plans so that communities can have a more direct role in the decisions that influence their local community. Local Place Plans are a new requirement of the Planning Act, and the government has published a Circular ([Circular 1/2022: Local Place Plans](#)) which provides guidance for both communities and planning authorities on the preparation, submission and registration of Local Place Plans.

Once Local Place Plans have been registered by the planning authority, we have a legal responsibility to take them into account in the preparation of the LDP. We asked to have any Local Place Plans submitted to us by **March 2025** to ensure they are taken into account in the LDP preparation.

As part of the early engagement on the LDP during 2024 we held a number of community conversations and engagement events where we used the events to highlight to communities the opportunity to prepare a Local Place Plan. In addition to this, in January 2024 we formally invited communities the opportunity to prepare a Local Place Plan through advertising in the local press and writing to each Community Council. There have been a number of communities that have expressed an interest in developing a Local Place Plan. As part of the support for communities

we have developed guidance on our website where communities are signposted to relevant examples and useful advice.

Participation Statement

Consultation and Engagement

The Participation Statement sets out when, how and why you should get involved in the various stages of preparing the LDP. The experience of preparing previous LDPs has helped us learn how to improve the way we include the public and reach a wide range of people.

The Planning Act has set a clear direction to improve engagement and help people in communities find a way to influence how their community and the place they live will change for the better in the future. When preparing the LDP we will share information and focus on early and meaningful consultation. We want to do the best we can to encourage people to take part and have their opinions and ideas heard so we will use the methods that have been shown to work and are now considered best practice for engaging with people.

Everyone will have an opportunity to get involved and comment throughout the LDP at the various stages of its preparation, including having a say on how you would like to be involved.

When the proposed LDP has been published the opportunity for further engagement is a much more formal process, so we have been seeking to ensure everyone has had the opportunity to input at the earlier stages of the plan preparation process such as during the evidence base stage and before drafting of the proposed LDP has been started.

Ensuring the public and other key stakeholders are informed and made aware of when events are happening is crucial to this. This is done by publicising events and consultations on our website, through Council social media accounts, using email updates and using local media such as the Orcadian and Radio Orkney.

Throughout the preparation of LDP, we will consult and engage with the following groups:

- The general public.
- Within the Council it will be important to engage with relevant services, including economic development, housing, education, waste, transport, roads, environmental health and estates, from the outset.
- Elected Members will also be closely involved in process, informing and inputting during the Plan's preparation including consideration and approval of key stage documents such as the Evidence report and Proposed Plan.
- Community Planning Partnership.
- Under-represented groups such as disabled people, children and young people, gypsies and travellers (note: there are no gypsy or traveller sites within Orkney and the Housing Need and Demand Assessments have not identified any specific need, but we are still to consider if engagement is required).

- Community groups, organisations and their representatives, including Community Councils and Development Trusts.
- Interest groups such as the National Farmers Union (NFU).
- The third sector through Voluntary Action Orkney (VAO).
- Stakeholders and key agencies such as SEPA, Historic Environment Scotland and Nature Scot.
- Scottish Government and Marine Scotland.
- Our Neighbouring Authorities.
- Higher Education – UHI, Heriot Watt University and Robert Gordons University.
- Private sector such as business interests, landowners, and developers such as renewable energy, house builders and the aquaculture industry.
- Other groups with a wide interest such as Sustrans, tourism and nature conservation organisations.

Proposed methods for information sharing, engagement and consultation for the preparation of the LDP may include:

- Press releases.
- Social media alerts.
- Information and updates on Council webpage.
- Directly notifying people signed up to our news and updates mailing list.
- In person and digital meetings and discussions.
- Community Council meetings.
- Drop-in sessions and workshops in various locations across Orkney.
- Engaging with under-represented groups.
- Creative approaches to place making.
- Notifying neighbouring properties to sites that are being considered for inclusion within the plan.
- Online and printed questionnaire.

New Orkney Local Development Plan Process and what it involves

Evidence Report

Estimated Date June 2023 – March 2025

The Evidence Report is a new element to the process where we must gather evidence as to why we need a new LDP and show what evidence we have that supports the aims and aspirations for development planning in Orkney. Some information is required by law and is set out in the Planning Act, development planning regulations or development planning guidance.

Under the new plan-making system, the Evidence Report is intended to front load the work and use the evidence to clearly inform what to plan for, before the Proposed LDP looks at where development should take place. The Evidence Report will provide a summary of the evidence and analysis of what it means for the plan, informed by the views of those who are anticipated to be affected by the plan, and involved in its implementation.

From previous work there is already a wealth of baseline information, for example, for a number of years we have collected data and have been monitoring the present LDP and associated planning policy documents. We have also completed consultations with our communities to establish their aims and aspirations for their communities. This work was completed in 2020 / 2021 under the banner of Orkney Matters and there has been a further Orkney Matters round of engagement events in 2024 which brings an up-to-date picture of issues facing the different parishes and islands in Orkney.

Throughout 2024 we have been building on our existing information and focusing primarily on data collection and evidence-gathering for the new Orkney LDP and summarising the evidence into different Topic Papers.

Research has been commissioned where gaps in information have been identified in our evidence. For example, work is underway to prepare a surface water management study for Kirkwall and Sustrans are bringing extra capacity to the Council investigating how people move and travel in some of our settlements.

An important element of the evidence gathering work has been engaging with a wide range of communities and other stakeholders to understand their views of the baseline information across a range of topics including existing infrastructure, housing, and the existing natural and historic assets. We have also sought to understand their priorities for the future which we should plan for. All this information directly informs our evidence base.

As part of the community engagement, we undertook several community consultation events including meeting with a number of community councils and attending different stakeholder forums such as the business forum. We also undertook a “call for ideas” consultation which included the opportunity for landowners to submit their land for inclusion in the LDP with 230 sites submitted. These will now be analysed for suitability. A play sufficiency assessment is also being prepared. In order to undertake this assessment, there has been engagement

with over 340 young people or their carers. A detailed write up of the existing play and hang out provision will be developed and this will include details of the feedback we have heard on each of these outdoor play and hang out spaces.

Evidence that we will need to provide to the Scottish Government formally through a Gatecheck process will include:

- Geographical Demographics (school rolls, birth and death rates, healthcare statistics, inward migration).
- Housing Need and Demand Assessment.
- Economic Change (Agriculture, Energy, Tourism, Food and Drink, Retail).
- Digital Connectivity.
- Sustainable Transport Data.
- Environmental baseline and issues (Historical and Natural).
- Evidence of Community Engagement and Consultation (Local Place Plans).
- Open Space Strategy and Play Sufficiency Assessment.
- Self-Build Housing Demand Register.
- Evaluate whether the previous plan has delivered on its outcomes, and allocations and consider appropriateness of previous strategy.
- Infrastructure such as communications, transport, drainage systems, supply of water, energy, health care and education facilities of the county and how it is used.

Drafting of the Evidence Report is well underway with the next stage to share relevant topic papers with key interested parties and agencies to ensure the views of different key stakeholders are incorporated into the evidence papers and seek their agreement with its content. We then must report this final completed Evidence Report to the Council for approval and formally enter into the Gatecheck process with the Scottish Government. The product of this stage will be an Evidence Report which summarises the evidence and stakeholder views gathered during this period highlighting any areas of dispute, it will also highlight possible implications the evidence will have on the LDP.

During the evidence gathering stage, we have also commenced the process of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the new LDP – specifically, preparation of the Scoping Report, which will be submitted to the SEA Consultation Authorities for feedback. We have also begun looking out for potential broad considerations for the LDP, bearing in mind the need for a Public Sector Equality Duty Assessment, a Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment, an Island Communities Impact Assessment and a Habitats Regulations Appraisal – and we will develop work programmes for undertaking those impact assessments.

Gatecheck

Estimated Date March 2025 to May 2025

The Gatecheck will provide an independent assessment of whether the planning authority has sufficient information to prepare a LDP. It will be carried out by a person appointed by Scottish Ministers, usually a Reporter from the Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA). As this is an independent process we

are not in control of the timings. We have estimated this will take 3 months, but it could take longer depending on the number of issues that are disputed and the capacity of the DPEA.

Preparation and Publication of the Proposed Local Development Plan

Estimated Date May 2025 – June 2026

The proposed LDP will be a document that identifies where the planning system can have the greatest influence to achieve the objectives set out in the Evidence Report. The next LDP will place a greater focus on place-based planning, identifying areas where significant change is required that the planning system can support. It is anticipated that there will be an emphasis on maps and settlement statements within the document.

Sites specifically identified for development will have been assessed as being deliverable and free from major constraints as far as possible; where necessary there will be details on infrastructure requirements that a developer will be expected to deliver as part of any development.

The next plan is likely to have less policy wording to reflect the new role of National Planning Framework 4, and where bespoke tailored policies are required, this will only be for the purpose of adding value or filling gaps on the interpretation of national policies or where a specific tailored local policy approach is required.

Prior to drafting the proposed LDP there will be engagement with key stakeholders and communities identified in the Participation Statement and account will be taken of any Place Plans that have been submitted.

Once the proposed LDP has been drafted it must be approved by the Council before being published for public consultation. There will be a minimum 12 week consultation on the proposed LDP and the draft Delivery Programme.

Following the close of the consultation on the proposed LDP, the Plan may be modified to take account of any representations, consultation responses, minor drafting or technical issues. There will be a modification report produced that outlines the changes to the proposed LDP.

Submission and Examination of the Proposed Local Development Plan

Estimated Date July 2026 - February 2027

Following the consultation on the proposed LDP if there are still issues that have not been resolved through changes to the proposed LDP after consultation (unresolved representations) then these will be collated and a summary of unresolved issues produced. Scottish Ministers will then instruct the DPEA to conduct a Local Development Plan Examination into the modified proposed LDP.

This examination is likely to take between six and nine months to complete. Due to the new power to negotiate on representations received, it is anticipated that an examination will be smaller in scope than that seen in past LDPs given the weight of NPF4 and may take less time to complete.

Adopt Local Development and Publish Delivery Programme

Estimated Date March 2027

Once the examination report has been received by the Council it will need to make any modifications recommended by the appointed person to the LDP. That being the case the plan will be adopted to replace the existing Orkney Local Development Plan.

The Delivery Programme will be considered at the outset of plan preparation and run alongside it. It is instrumental to achieving an outcome focussed approach to development planning and will support delivery of the LDP. It will be developed to provide a clear route for delivery of sites and proposals in the adopted plan.

Key stages and Indicative Programme for Local Development Plan

Stage	When
Publish finalised Development Plan Scheme	November 2024
Evidence Report	
Gather evidence	Complete
Engage with public and groups on evidence and support communities prepare Local Place Plans. This will include a call for ideas as part of the community engagement	Complete
Finalise and publish Evidence Report and SEA Scoping Report	March 2025
Gatecheck	
Examination of the Evidence Report	March to May 2025*
Proposed Plan	
Plan Preparation	March – December 2025
Publish and consult on Proposed Plan and the Environmental Report	January – March 2026
Assess representations. Consider any changes and progress to examination stage.	April - June 2026
Examination	
Examination of Proposed LDP and Environmental Report	July – November 2026**
Consider Examination recommendations. Publish any changes. Resend modified Proposed LDP to Scottish Ministers	November 2026 - February 2027
Adoption	
Publish and Publicise Adopted LDP and Environmental Report	March 2027

* This date will depend on the complexity of issues in the Evidence Report.

** This date will depend on the number and complexity of representations received to the Proposed Plan.

The Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 state that Development Plan Schemes are to specify the Quarter (Q) in which the planning authority expects to publish certain elements of the Local Development Plan process.

This applies to the following stages:

- Publish Evidence Report Q1 2025 (March 2025)
- Publish Proposed Plan Q1 2026 (January – March 2026)
- Send Proposed Plan to Scottish Ministers Q3 and Q4 2026 (July– November 2026)
- Adopt LDP Q1 2027 (March 2027)

If you have any questions in respect of the Development Plan Scheme or would wish to be added to our content database, where we will regularly send email updates and notification of consultations then please contact us at devplan@orkney.gov.uk

Glossary

Call for ideas - Optional consultation phase to inform the proposed plan. It provides an opportunity for stakeholders including; landowners, developers and communities, to put forward ideas or sites they would like to be considered by the planning authority for inclusion in the LDP.

Development Plan - The statutory basis of planning decision making, comprising NPF4 and the LDP.

Evidence Report - A supporting document to the LDP. An Evidence Report summarises the evidence base for those proposals and policies set out in the development plan and demonstrates that appropriate consultation has been undertaken and regard given to the views of the community.

Examination - The Examination is the opportunity for independent consideration, by an appointed person, of any issues raised during the formal consultation on the Proposed Plan that have not been resolved through modifications.

Fairer Scotland Duty - The duty on public bodies in Scotland, including councils, to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions. It is a requirement of [the Equality Act 2010](#). The aim of the duty is to help the public sector make better policy decisions and deliver fairer outcomes. It should focus on socio-economic issues such as low income, low wealth and area deprivation.

Forestry and woodland strategy - A strategy prepared by a planning authority either singly or in collaboration with other planning authorities, which sets out policies and proposals for the development of forestry and woodlands in their area, according to [section A159 of the Town and Country Planning \(Scotland\) Act 1997](#).

Gatecheck - An assessment of the sufficiency of the evidence base on which the Proposed Plan will be developed.

Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) - Under the [Habitats Regulations](#), all competent authorities must consider whether any plan or project could affect a European site before it can be authorised or carried out. This includes considering whether it will have a 'likely significant effect' on a [European site](#), and if so, they must carry out an 'appropriate assessment' (AA). This process is known as Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA)

Housing Land Audit (HLA) - The annual HLA will monitor the delivery of housing land including past completions and future programming. It will inform the pipeline and actions to be taken in the Delivery Programme.

Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) – A HNDA estimates the number of additional housing units needed to meet existing and future housing need (social housing) and demand (market housing). It also captures information on the operation of the housing system to assist local authorities to develop policies on new housing supply, management of existing stock, specialist housing provision and the

provision of housing-related services. HNDAs are undertaken by local authorities or groups of authorities every five years.

Infrastructure first – Approach that puts infrastructure considerations at the heart of development planning.

Island Communities Impact Assessment – The Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 placed new duties on public authorities to consider the effect of their policies, strategies and services on an ‘island community’.

Local place plan (LPP) - A LPP is a community-led plan setting out proposals for the development and use of land and a community's aspirations for its future development. Once registered they are to be taken into account in the preparation of the relevant LDP.

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) - a long-term plan looking to 2045 that guides spatial development, sets out national planning policies, designates national developments and highlights regional spatial priorities. It is part of the development plan.

Open Space Strategy (OSS) - An open space strategy is to set out a strategic framework of the planning authority's policies and proposals as to the development, maintenance and use of green infrastructure in their district, including open spaces and green networks. It must contain; an audit of existing open space provision, an assessment of current and future requirements, and any other matter which the planning authority consider appropriate.

Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) - A play sufficiency assessment is the assessment of the sufficiency of play opportunities for children in their area, carried out by a planning authority under the duty as set out in [Section 16D\(1\) of the Town and Country Planning Scotland Act 1997, as amended](#), and must be done by the planning authority in preparing an Evidence Report.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) - Strategic Environmental Assessment is a procedure to assess the environmental impact and sustainability of a proposed or existing policy, plan, or programme.

Summer 2025 - Inter-Island Air Services Timetable. Monday 17 February - Saturday 25 October 2025 inclusive

		Monday							Tuesday							Wednesday												
	LM	700	702	703	704	705	706	707	701	708	709	719	710	711	707	C	700	713	714	715	A	716	710	711	A	707	B	707
Kirkwall	dep	07:35	08:40	09:40	10:50	15:30	16:30	17:30	07:35	08:30	09:30	10:30	15:30	16:30	17:30	07:35	08:40	09:40	13:35	14:45	15:30	16:30	17:30	17:30	17:30	17:30		
Eday	arr																			14:55							17:40	
Eday	dep																			15:02							17:47	
Stronsay	arr									08:39							08:49											
Stronsay	dep									08:46							08:56											
Sanday	arr			09:53			16:43			08:51			15:43				09:01					15:43						
Sanday	dep			10:00			16:50			08:58			15:50				09:08					15:50						
Westray	arr		08:55									09:45						09:55										
Westray	dep		09:02									09:52						10:02										
Papa Westray	arr		09:04			15:45				09:54	10:45		16:45				10:04						16:45					
Papa Westray	dep		09:11			15:52				10:01	10:52		16:52				10:11						16:52					
Westray	arr					15:54							16:54										16:54					
Westray	dep					16:01							17:01										17:01					
North Ronaldsay	arr	07:52			11:07			17:47	07:52			11:02		17:47	07:52			13:52						17:47	17:57			
North Ronaldsay	dep	07:59			11:14			17:54	07:59			11:09		17:54	07:59			13:59						17:54	18:04			
Papa Westray	arr				11:24													14:09										
Papa Westray	dep				11:31													14:16										
Eday	arr	08:09													08:09													
Eday	dep	08:16													08:16													
Stronsay	arr			10:05			16:55					15:55										15:55						
Stronsay	dep			10:12			17:02					16:02										16:02						
Kirkwall	arr	08:26	09:26	10:21	11:46	16:16	17:11	18:11	08:16	09:11	10:16	11:26	16:11	17:16	18:11	08:26	09:21	10:26	14:31	15:12	16:11	17:16	18:11	18:21				

		Thursday							Friday							Saturday							Saturday Refit 2025 dates TBC (24/02/2024 - 16/03/2024)							Sunday		
	LM	701	708	709	717	710	711	707	701	713	714	719	710	711	707	720	721	722	723	724	722	723	724	725	726	727	725	726	727			
Kirkwall	dep	07:35	08:30	09:30	14:20	15:30	16:30	17:30	07:35	08:40	09:40	14:20	15:30	16:30	17:30	08:30	09:30	10:30	15:00	16:00	08:00	09:10	10:20	14:00	15:00	16:10	10:30	16:00	17:30			
Stronsay	arr		08:39							08:49			15:39			09:39									15:09							
Stronsay	dep		08:46							08:56			15:46			09:46									15:16							
Sanday	arr		08:51			15:43				09:01			15:51			09:51									15:21							
Sanday	dep		08:58			15:50				09:08			15:58			09:58									15:28							
Papa Westray	arr											14:35														10:45						
Papa Westray	dep											14:42														10:52						
North Ronaldsay	arr	07:52			14:37			17:47	07:52			14:52		17:47			10:47	15:17	16:17	08:17						11:02	17:47					
North Ronaldsay	dep	07:59			14:44			17:54	07:59			14:59		17:54			10:54	15:24	16:24	08:24						11:09	17:54					
Eday	arr								08:09												08:34					16:20						
Eday	dep								08:16												08:41					16:27						
North Ronaldsay	arr																								16:37							
North Ronaldsay	dep																								16:44							
Sanday	arr																						10:33				18:00					
Sanday	dep																						10:40				18:07					
Westray	arr			09:45								09:55				08:45					09:25											
Westray	dep			09:52								10:02				08:52					09:32											
Papa Westray	arr			09:54	14:54		16:45					10:04		16:45		08:54			16:34		09:34			14:15			16:15					
Papa Westray	dep			10:01	15:01		16:52					10:11		16:52		09:01			16:41		09:41			14:22			16:22					
Westray	arr						16:54						16:54											14:24			16:24					
Westray	dep						17:01						17:01											14:31			16:31					
Stronsay	arr					15:55																	10:45				18:12					
Stronsay	dep					16:02																	10:52				18:19					
Kirkwall	arr	08:16	09:11	10:16	15:16	16:11	17:16	18:11	08:26	09:21	10:26	15:16	16:11	17:16	18:11	09:16	10:11	11:11	15:41	16:56	08:51	09:56	11:01	14:46	15:41	17:01	11:26	16:46	18:28			

Eday: Monday AM drop during school term only. Bookings on the Eday drop will be subject to availability from 12:00 the Friday before departure until 18:00 on Sunday.

A: Operates school term only. Wednesdays 19 Feb - 2 April; 23 April - 2 July; and 20 August - 8 October 2025.

B: Operates during school holidays. Wednesdays 9 & 16 April; 9 July - 13 August and 15 & 22 October 2025. The first four seats are prioritised for Eday passengers up to 24 hours before flight.

C: The first four seats are prioritised for Eday passengers up to 24 hours before flight.

Eday: Friday AM - does **NOT** operate during June, July & August. The first four seats are prioritised for North Ronaldsay passengers up to 24 hours before flight.

Saturday Refit: Additional frequency by air provided while the Orkney Ferries ONI vessels are on winter refit.

Sunday: Flight drop off/pick up on request. Bookings can be made on the Sanday flight, shared with North Ronaldsay, from 12:00 on Friday until 12:00 on Sunday.

PLEASE NOTE - The operation of the Stronsay Sunday service is subject to availability of ground crew on the island. Currently (Aug 2024) there are NO crew available.

Appendix 4.

Inter-Island Ferry Services

Summer 2025 Timetables

Page 1325 – Westray – Papa Westray Passenger Service

Page 1326 – Graemsay and Hoy (Moaness).

Page 1327 – South Isles.

Page 1328 – Shapinsay.

Page 1329 – Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre.

Page 1330 – Outer North Isles.

Pages 1331 to 1332 – North Ronaldsay.



**Westray - Papa Westray Passenger Service
Summer Timetable effective from 4 May until 28 September 2025**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Pierowall dep	0730	0700	0730	0730	0730	0730	
Papa Westray arr	0755	0725	0755	0755	0755	0755	
Papa Westray dep	0800	0730	0800	0800	0800	0800	
Pierowall arr	0825	0755	0825	0825	0825	0825	
Pierowall dep	0845A	0800A	0915	0915	0915	0915	0915
Papa Westray arr	0905	0820	0940	0940	0940	0940	0940
Papa Westray dep	0910A	0825A	0945	0945	0945	0945	0945
Pierowall arr	0930	0850	1010	1010	1010	1010	1010
Pierowall dep	0945	0855	1205				1115
Papa Westray arr	1010	0920	1230				1140
Papa Westray dep	1015	0925	1235				1145
Pierowall arr	1040	0950	1300				1210
Pierowall dep	1205	1305	1355	1305			1315
Papa Westray arr	1230	1330	1420	1330			1340
Papa Westray dep	1235	1335	1425	1335			1530
Pierowall arr	1300	1400	1450	1400			1555
Pierowall dep	1545B	1455C	1545B	1545B	1500D	1625	1630
Papa Westray arr	1610	1515	1610	1610	1525	1650	1655
Papa Westray dep	1655	1520C	1655	1655	1655	1655	1700
Pierowall arr	1720	1545	1720	1720	1720	1720	1725
Pierowall dep	1815	1550A	1815	1815	1815	1815	1815
Papa Westray arr	1840	1610	1840	1840	1840	1840	1840
Papa Westray dep	1845	1615A	1845	1845	1845	1845	1845
Pierowall arr	1910	1640	1910	1910	1910	1910	1910

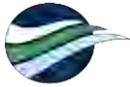
- A. Will not operate between 05 July to 18 August inclusive
- B. From 05 July to 18 August inclusive sailings will be replaced by **(dep Pierowall 1625 arr Papa Westray 1650)**
- C. Additional sailings from 05 July to 18 August inclusive
- D. From 05 July to 18 August inclusive sailings will be replaced by **(dep Pierowall 1625 arr Papa Westray 1650)**

ALL BOOKINGS (INCLUDING FOOT PASSENGERS) MUST BE MADE AT LEAST 1 HOUR BEFORE DEPARTURE EXCEPT OF THOSE MARKED A, B, C, D & E

Notes

All of these sailings with the exception of those marked **A/B/C/D/E** are scheduled and are timed to connect with the arrivals and departures of the ro-ro vessels at Rapness - normal fares will therefore apply. Any sailings outwith these times will be treated as hires and charged accordingly.

1. All enquires to the Company's main office, Telephone 01856 872044
2. Passengers must be available for boarding **10 minutes** before departure times.
3. **No Show Charges** - All cancellations must be made at least **24 hours** before the intended time of travel or full charges may apply.
4. For Conditions of Carriage of Passengers and Cargo see notices exhibited in the vessels, company premises and website.



**GRAEMSAY AND HOY (MOANESS)
EFFECTIVE FROM 04 MAY UNTIL 28 SEPTEMBER 2025**

Our service from Stromness to Hoy/Graemsay is a **PASSENGER ONLY** service. Vehicles can be carried by prior arrangement to Graemsay on the advertised cargo sailings.

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Stromness	dep	0730	0730	0730	0730	0730	0815C	
Hoy (Moaness)	dep	0755	0755	0755	0755	0755		
Graemsay	dep	0810	0810	0810	0810	0810	0845C	
Stromness	dep	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	0930	0930
Hoy (Moaness)	dep	1030	1030	1030	1030	1030	1000	1000
Graemsay	dep	1045	1045	1045	1045	1045	1015	1015
Stromness	dep	1200A		1200A	1200A			
Graemsay	dep	1230A		1230A	1230A			
Hoy (Moaness)	dep	1240A		1240A	1240A			
Stromness	dep	1600	1600	1600	1600	1600		
Graemsay	dep	1615	1615	1615	1615	1615		
Hoy (Moaness)	dep	1630	1630	1630	1630	1630		
Stromness	dep	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800
Graemsay	dep	1815	1815	1815	1815	1815	1815	1815
Hoy (Moaness)	dep	1830	1830	1830	1830	1830	1830	1830
Stromness	dep					2130B		
Graemsay	dep					2145B		
Hoy (Moaness)	dep					2200B		

ALL BOOKINGS MUST BE MADE AT LEAST 1 HOUR BEFORE DEPARTURE

- A** Cargo Sailings will have limitations on passenger numbers therefore booking is not guaranteed. These sailings may be delayed due to cargo operations.
- B** ON REQUEST to and from Hoy (Moaness) must be booked online or through the Kirkwall Office by 1600hrs on the day of sailing.
- C** ON REQUEST must be booked online or through the Kirkwall Office by 1600hrs on Friday.

Notes:

1. All enquires must be made through the Kirkwall Office. Telephone: 01856 872044.
2. Passengers are requested to be available for boarding **5 minutes** before departure.
3. Monday cargo to be booked by **1600hrs** on previous Friday otherwise all cargo must be booked before **1600hrs** the day before sailing. Cargo must be delivered to Stromness Pier no later than **1100hrs** on the day of sailing.
4. For Conditions of Carriage of Passengers and Cargo see notices exhibited in the vessels, company premises and website.
5. **No show charges** - All cancellations must be made by **1600hrs** Monday to Friday and **1400hrs** Saturday for Sunday and Monday Sailings or full charges may apply.

**For information on this service contact Orkney Ferries, Shore Street, Kirkwall.
Telephone: 01856 872044, Fax: 01856 872921, E-Mail: info@orkneyferries.co.uk**



SOUTH ISLES RO-RO SERVICE

SUMMER TIMETABLE FROM 04 MAY UNTIL 28 SEPTEMBER 2025

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
							1	2
Longhope dep	0625	0625	0625	0625	0625	0800	0800	0800
Lyness dep								
Flotta dep	0650	0650	0650	0650	0650	0830	0825	0825
Lyness dep	0710	0710	0710	0710	0710	0900	0845	0845
Houton arr	0745	0745	0745	0745	0745	0935	0920	0920
Houton dep	0800	0800	0800	0800	0800	0950	0930	0930
Lyness dep	0845				0845	1030		1015
Flotta dep	0910	0845	0845	0845	0910	1055		
Lyness dep		0910	0910	0910				
Houton arr	0945	0945	0945	0945	0945			1050
Houton dep	1015	1000	1015	1000	1015			1100
Lyness dep	1100	1040	1100	1040	1100			1135
Flotta arr							1005	1155
Flotta dep							1010	1220
Lyness arr							1025	1240
Houton arr	1135	1110	1135	1110	1135	1130		
Houton dep	1145	1120	1145	1120	1145			
Flotta dep		1200		1200				
Lyness dep	1230	1230	1230	1230	1230			
Houton arr	1305	1305	1305	1305	1305			
Houton dep	1315	1315	1315	1315	1315	1415		
Flotta dep					1400			
Lyness dep	1400	1400	1400	1400	1425	1500	1500	1630
Flotta dep	1425	1425	1425	1425		1610		
Houton arr	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500			1705
Houton dep	1515	1515	1515	1515	1515			1715
Flotta dep	1600	1600	1600	1600	1600		1530	1750
Lyness dep	1640	1640	1640	1640	1640	1640		1815
Houton arr	1715	1715	1715	1715	1715	1715	1605	1850
Houton dep	1730	1730	1730	1730	1730	1730	1615	1900
Lyness dep	1810	1810	1810	1810	1810	1810	1700	1935
Flotta dep	1830A	1830A	1830A	1830A	1830A	1830A	1720	
Longhope arr	1850	1850	1850	1850	1850	1850	1740	1955

A - ON REQUEST SAILING. Bookings for these services must be made up to 1 hour before departure from Houton.

Vehicle bookings must be made at least one hour before departure, either online or by telephone during office opening hours.

NOTES

1. Vehicles **must** be available for boarding **15 minutes** before departure, and passengers **5 minutes** before departure.
2. **No Show Charges** - Cancellations must be made at least **12 hours prior to the scheduled sailing time** either by phone or email or full charges may apply.
3. For Conditions of Carriage of Passengers and Cargo see notices exhibited in the vessels, company premises and website.

The Sunday runs are effective as follows:

Sunday 1 – 04/05/25 to 01/06/24 and 17/08/25 to 28/09/25 Sunday 2 – 08/06/25 to 10/08/25

For information on these services contact Ferry Services, Houton, Orphir. Telephone: 01856 811397,
Email: info@orkneyferries.co.uk



Shapinsay Ro-Ro Service

Summer Timetable Effective From 04 May until 28 September 2025

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Shapinsay dep	0730	0730	0730	0730	0730		
Kirkwall dep	0815	0815	0815	0815	0815		
Shapinsay dep	0900	0900	0900	0900	0900	0900	0900*
Kirkwall dep	0945	0945	0945	0945	0945	0945	0945
Shapinsay dep	1030	1030	1030	1030	1030	1030	1030
Kirkwall dep	1130	1130	1130	1130	1130	1130	1130
Shapinsay dep	1330	1330	1330	1330	1330	1330	1330
Kirkwall dep	1415	1415	1415	1415	1415	1415	1415
Shapinsay dep	1515	1515	1515	1515	1515	1515	
Kirkwall dep	1600	1600	1600	1600	1600	1600	
Shapinsay dep	1645	1645	1645	1645	1645	1645	
Kirkwall dep	1730	1730	1730	1730	1730	1730	
Shapinsay dep							1730*
Kirkwall dep							1815
Shapinsay dep						1900	1900
Kirkwall dep						1945	1945*

Vehicle bookings must be made at least one hour before departure, either online or by telephone during office opening hours.

* Slight alterations will be made to these sailings on a few Sundays in May June, July and August to allow connections with the other ships – details will be advertised by separate notices. Dates will be entered here once excursions are known.

Notes:

1. Vehicles **must** be available for boarding **15 minutes** before departure and passengers **5 minutes** before departure.
2. For Conditions of Carriage of Passengers and Cargo see notices exhibited in the vessels, company premises and website.
3. **No show charges** – Cancellations must be made **at least 12 hours prior to the scheduled sailing time** either by phone or email or fill charges may apply.

For information on this service contact Orkney Ferries, Shore Street, Kirkwall.

Telephone: 01856 872044, E-Mail: info@orkneyferries.co.uk



ROUSAY, EGILSAY AND WYRE RO-RO SERVICE

SUMMER TIMETABLE EFFECTIVE FROM 04 MAY UNTIL 28 SEPTEMBER 2025

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Rousay dep	0650	0650	0650	0650	0650	0650	
Egilsay dep	0710A	0710A	0710A	0710A	0710A	0710A	
Wyre dep	0730A	0730A	0730A	0730A	0730A	0730A	
Rousay dep	0745	0745	0745	0745	0745	0745	
Tingwall dep	0820	0820	0820	0820	0820	0840	
Rousay dep	0850	0850	0850	0850	0850		
Wyre dep	0900	0900	0900	0900	0900		
Rousay dep	0910	0910	0910	0910	0910	0910	0915
Egilsay dep	0930	0930	0930	0930	0930	0930B	0935A
Wyre dep	0950	0950	0950	0950	0950	0950	0955A
Rousay dep	1005	1005	1005	1005	1005	1005	1010
Tingwall dep	1040	1040	1040	1040	1040	1040	1045
Rousay dep	1115	1115	1115	1115	1115	1115	1120
Tingwall dep	1150	1150	1240	1150	1150	1150	1155
Rousay arr	1215	1215	1305	1215	1215	1215	1220
Rousay dep	1315B	1315B		1315B	1315B	1315B	1315B
Egilsay dep	1335B	1335B		1335B	1335B	1335B	1335B
Wyre dep	1355B	1355B		1355B	1355B	1355B	1355B
Rousay dep	1410	1410	1410	1410	1410	1410	1410
Tingwall dep	1445	1445	1445	1445	1445	1445	1445
Rousay dep	1520	1520	1520	1520	1520	1520	1520
Wyre dep	1530	1530	1530	1530	1530	1530	1530
Tingwall dep	1605	1605	1605	1605	1605	1605	1605
Rousay dep	1635	1635	1635	1635	1635	1705B	1635
Egilsay dep	1655	1655	1655	1655	1655		1655B
Wyre dep	1715	1715	1715	1715	1715	1715B	1715B
Rousay dep	1730	1730	1730	1730	1730	1730	1730
Tingwall dep	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800	1800
Rousay arr	1825	1825	1825	1825	1825	1825	1825
Rousay dep	1830B	1830B	1830B	1830B	1830B	1830B	
Wyre dep	1840B	1840B	1840B	1840B	1840B	1840B	
Egilsay dep	1900B	1900B	1900B	1900B	1900B	1900B	
Rousay arr	1915B	1915B	1915B	1915B	1915B	1915B	

- A** On request **TO and FROM** Egilsay and Wyre. Customers are requested to make advanced bookings by 1700 on the day before travel. For travel on Sunday this **must** be made by 1115 on Saturday.
- B** On request **TO and FROM** Egilsay and Wyre. Can be made up to one hour before the departure from Tingwall either by booking online or calling the Tingwall Office

In the event of an urgent need for “on request” sailings outside of the above please contact the Tingwall Office during normal office hours.

ALL BOOKINGS MUST BE MADE AT LEAST ONE HOUR BEFORE DEPARTURE FROM TINGWALL EXCEPT THOSE MARKED A.

NOTES

1. All bookings **MUST** be made through the Tingwall Office Telephone 01856 751360. Or online at www.orkneyferries.co.uk.
2. Vehicles **must** be available for boarding **15 Minutes** before departure and passengers **5 minutes** before departure times.
3. **No Show Charges** – Cancellations must be made **at least 12 hours prior to the scheduled sailing time** either by phone or email, or full charges may apply.
4. For Conditions of Carriage of Passengers and Cargo see notices exhibited in the vessels, company premises and website.

For information on these services contact Orkney Ferries, Tingwall, Evie.

Telephone 01856 751360, E-Mail: info@orkneyferries.co.uk, website www.orkneyferries.co.uk



Outer North Isles Ro-Ro Service
Effective from 04 May - 28 September 2025 Inclusive

Port		Sunday***			Monday			Tuesday			Wednesday			Thursday			Friday			Saturday			
Kirkwall	dep	0840	0920	0900	0700	0720	0740	0720	0700	0740	0700	0720	0740	0700	0720	0740	0720	0700	0740	0700	0720	North Ronaldsay	
Eday	arr	0955								0855													
Eday	dep	1005								0905													
Stronsay	arr	1040			0840			0855			0840			0840					0900				0840
Stronsay	dep	1050			0855			0910			0855			0855					0915				0850
Sanday	arr			1025			0905			0925			0905			0905			0905				0925
Sanday	dep			1035			0915			0935			0915			0915			0920				0935
Eday	arr				0930						0930			0930					0950				0955
Eday	dep				0945						0945			0945					1005				1005
Westray	arr		1045			0845			0825			0845			0845				0825				0845
Westray	dep		1055			0900			0840			0900			0900				0840				0900
Kirkwall	arr	1230	1220	1200	1100	1025	1040	1050	1005	1100	1100	1025	1040	1100	1025	1040	1100	1025	1040	1120	1005		1045
Kirkwall	dep				1115	1035	1055		1300	1030	1115	1035	1055		1300				1040				
Stronsay	arr				1250						1250												
Stronsay	dep				1300						1300												
Eday	arr												1210										
Eday	dep												1220										
Sanday	arr						1220						1240										
Sanday	dep						1230						1250										
Eday	arr						1250																
Eday	dep						1300																
Westray	arr					1200			1425			1200			1425				1205				
Westray	dep					1210			1435			1210			1435				1215*				
P. Westray	arr																		1255**				
P. Westray	dep																		1315**				
Kirkwall	arr				1440	1335	1415		1600		1440	1335	1415		1605				1505				
Kirkwall	dep	1545	1620	1600	1600	1620	1640	1620		1640	1600	1620	1640	1600	1620	1500	1600	1620	1640	1600	1620	1640	
Eday	arr				1715						1715			1715			1715						
Eday	dep				1730						1730			1730			1730						
Stronsay	arr	1725			1805			1800			1805			1805			1805					1740	
Stronsay	dep	1740			1815			1810			1815			1815			1815					1750	
Sanday	arr			1725			1805			1805			1805			1625			1805			1805	
Sanday	dep			1740			1815			1815			1815			1635			1815			1815	
Eday	arr	1815																				1825	
Eday	dep	1825																				1835	
Westray	arr		1745			1745						1745			1745				1745			1745	
Westray	dep		1800			1755						1755			1755				1755			1755	
Kirkwall	arr	1940	1925	1905	1955	1920	1940	1945	1715**	2005	1955	1920	1940	1955	1920	1800	1955	1920	1940	1955	1920	1940	

Vehicle bookings must be made one hour before the departure from Kirkwall either online, or by phone during office opening hours.

* This sailing is not available for vehicle bookings Westray to Kirkwall. ** These sailings may be delayed due to cargo operations.

RO-RO TIMETABLE 4 MAY – 28 SEPT 2025 INCLUSIVE, excluding the following dates for special excursions, posters are on display advertising local events: 14 & 15 June, 26 & 27 July, 02 August, 09 & 10 August and 16, 17 & 18 August 2024.

*** On the following SUNDAYS there will be special excursions (North Ronaldsay: 09 June, 14 July, 04 August, 08 September, Papa Westray: 30 June, 25 August). These excursions will not affect all Sunday sailings – please see excursion timetable.

1. Vehicles **must** be available for boarding **20 minutes** before departure, passengers **10 minutes** before departure.
2. For Conditions of Carriage of Passengers and Cargo see notices exhibited in the vessels, company premises and website.
3. **No Show Charges** – All cancellations must be made **at least 12 hours prior to the scheduled sailing time** either by phone or email, or full charges may apply.

For information on these services contact Orkney Ferries, Shore Street, Kirkwall, Orkney, KW15 1LG. Telephone: 01856 872044, E-Mail: info@orkneyferries.co.uk



Orkney Ferries

Telephone: 01856 872044 E-Mail: info@orkneyferries.co.uk

For conditions of carriage of passengers and cargo see notices exhibited in vessels, offices and premises.

NORTH RONALDSAY SAILINGS SUMMER 2025**Tuesday 06 May 2025**

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Saturday 10 May 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0915
North Ronaldsay	arr	1155
North Ronaldsay	dep	1225
Kirkwall	arr	1505

Tuesday 13 May 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1300
Papa Westray	arr	1450
Papa Westray	dep	1520
North Ronaldsay	arr	1635
North Ronaldsay	dep	1710
Kirkwall	arr	1950

Saturday 17 May 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0900
North Ronaldsay	arr	1140
North Ronaldsay	dep	1210
Kirkwall	arr	1450

Tuesday 20 May 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Saturday 24 May 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0830
North Ronaldsay	arr	1110
North Ronaldsay	dep	1140
Kirkwall	arr	1420

Tuesday 27 May 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1130
Papa Westray	arr	1320
Papa Westray	dep	1350
North Ronaldsay	arr	1505
North Ronaldsay	dep	1535
Kirkwall	arr	1815

Saturday 01 May 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0800
North Ronaldsay	arr	1040
North Ronaldsay	dep	1110
Kirkwall	arr	1350

Tuesday 03 June 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Saturday 07 June 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0830
North Ronaldsay	arr	1110
North Ronaldsay	dep	1140
Kirkwall	arr	1420

Tuesday 10 June 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1130
Papa Westray	arr	1320
Papa Westray	dep	1350
North Ronaldsay	arr	1505
North Ronaldsay	dep	1535
Kirkwall	arr	1815

Friday 13 June 2025***

Kirkwall	dep	0830
North Ronaldsay	arr	1110
North Ronaldsay	dep	1140
Kirkwall	arr	1420

Possible sports day on Sat**Tuesday 17 June 2025**

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Saturday 21 June 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0800
North Ronaldsay	arr	1040
North Ronaldsay	dep	1110
Kirkwall	arr	1350

**Possible sports day on Sat so
also fri times**

Tuesday 24 June 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Saturday 28 June 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0700
North Ronaldsay	arr	0940
North Ronaldsay	dep	1010
Kirkwall	arr	1250

Tuesday 01 July 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Saturday 05 July 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0730
North Ronaldsay	arr	1010
North Ronaldsay	dep	1040
Kirkwall	arr	1320

Tuesday 08 July 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Saturday 12 July 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0730
North Ronaldsay	arr	1010
North Ronaldsay	dep	1040
Kirkwall	arr	1320

Tuesday 15 July 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Saturday 19 July 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0700
North Ronaldsay	arr	0940
North Ronaldsay	dep	1010
Kirkwall	arr	1250

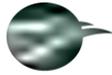
Tuesday 22 July 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Friday 25 July 2025 ***

Kirkwall	dep	0630
North Ronaldsay	arr	0910
North Ronaldsay	dep	0940
Kirkwall	arr	1220

Westray Regatta Sat



Orkney Ferries

Telephone: 01856 872044 E-Mail: info@orkneyferries.co.uk

For conditions of carriage of passengers and cargo see notices exhibited in vessels, offices and premises.

NORTH RONALDSAY SAILINGS SUMMER 2025

Tuesday 29 July 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Saturday 02 August 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0730
North Ronaldsay	arr	1010
North Ronaldsay	dep	1040
Kirkwall	arr	1320

Tuesday 05 August 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Friday 08 August 2025 ***

Kirkwall	dep	0630
North Ronaldsay	arr	0910
North Ronaldsay	dep	0940
Kirkwall	arr	1220

County Show on Sat

Tuesday 12 August 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Friday 15 August 2025***

Kirkwall	dep	0630
North Ronaldsay	arr	0910
North Ronaldsay	dep	0940
Kirkwall	arr	1220

Stronsay Massive Weekend

Tuesday 19 August 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Saturday 23 August 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0600
North Ronaldsay	arr	0840
North Ronaldsay	dep	0910
Kirkwall	arr	1150

Tuesday 26 August 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Saturday 30 August 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0600
North Ronaldsay	arr	0840
North Ronaldsay	dep	0910
Kirkwall	arr	1150

Tuesday 02 September 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Saturday 06 September 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0600
North Ronaldsay	arr	0840
North Ronaldsay	dep	0910
Kirkwall	arr	1150

Tuesday 09 September 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Saturday 14 September 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0530
North Ronaldsay	arr	0810
North Ronaldsay	dep	0840
Kirkwall	arr	1120

Tuesday 16 September 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Saturday 20 September 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0800
North Ronaldsay	arr	1040
North Ronaldsay	dep	1110
Kirkwall	arr	1350

Tuesday 23 September 2025

Kirkwall	dep	1030
North Ronaldsay	arr	1310
North Ronaldsay	dep	1340
Papa Westray	arr	1455
Papa Westray	dep	1525
Kirkwall	arr	1715

Saturday 27 September 2025

Kirkwall	dep	0800
North Ronaldsay	arr	1040
North Ronaldsay	dep	1110
Kirkwall	arr	1350

***** Sailings changed due to events the following day**

All North Ronaldsay and Papa Westray departure times are estimates and are subject to alteration due to cargo operations, weather and tide

All arrivals in Kirkwall subject to change due to cargo operations.

Sailings are all weather permitting and subject to confirmation the day before sailing.

Minute

Harbour Authority Sub-committee

Tuesday, 29 October 2024, 09:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Councillors Kristopher D Leask, Mellissa-Louise Thomson, Graham A Bevan, P Lindsay Hall, Ivan A Taylor and Heather N Woodbridge.

Clerk

- Katy Russell-Duff, Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- Gareth Waterson, Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.
- James Buck, Head of Marine Services, Transportation and Harbour Master.
- Karen Bevilacqua, Service Manager (Legal Services).
- Shonagh Merriman, Service Manager (Corporate Finance).

Apology

- Councillor Duncan A Tullock.

Declarations of Interest

- No declarations of interest were intimated.

Chair

- Councillor Kristopher D Leask.

1. Revenue Expenditure Monitoring

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Corporate Finance), the Sub-committee:

Noted:

1.1. The revenue financial statement in respect of the Scapa Flow Oil Port and Miscellaneous Piers and Harbours for the period 1 April to 30 September 2024, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, indicating a budget surplus position of £2,307,500.

1.2. The revenue financial detail by service area statements in respect of the Scapa Flow Oil Port and Miscellaneous Piers and Harbours for the period 1 April to 30 September 2024, attached as Annex 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Sub-committee scrutinised:

1.3. The explanations given and actions proposed in respect of significant budget variances, as outlined in the Budget Action Plan, attached as Annex 3 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that appropriate action was being taken with regard to significant budget variances.

2. Miscellaneous Piers and Harbours

Revenue Maintenance Programme – Expenditure Monitoring

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Corporate Finance), the Sub-committee:

Noted:

2.1. The summary position of expenditure incurred as at 30 September 2024, against the approved Miscellaneous Piers and Harbours revenue maintenance programme for 2024/25, as detailed in section 1.4 of the report by the Head of Finance.

The Sub-committee scrutinised:

2.2. The detailed analysis of expenditure figures and programme updates, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance regarding significant budget variances and progress made with delivery of the approved Miscellaneous Piers and Harbours revenue maintenance programme.

3. Miscellaneous Piers and Harbours and Scapa Flow Oil Port

Minor Capital Improvement Programmes – Expenditure Monitoring

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Corporate Finance), the Sub-committee:

Noted:

3.1. The summary position of expenditure incurred as at 30 September 2024, against the approved Miscellaneous Piers and Harbours and Scapa Flow Oil Port minor capital improvement programmes for 2024/25, as detailed in section 1.4 of the report by the Head of Finance.

The Sub-committee scrutinised:

3.2. The detailed analysis of expenditure figures and programme updates, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance regarding significant budget variances and progress being made with delivery of the approved Miscellaneous Piers and Harbours and Scapa Flow Oil Port minor capital improvement programmes.

4. Conclusion of Meeting

At 09:52 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: Kristopher D Leask.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY 2025 - 2035

DRAFT October 2024

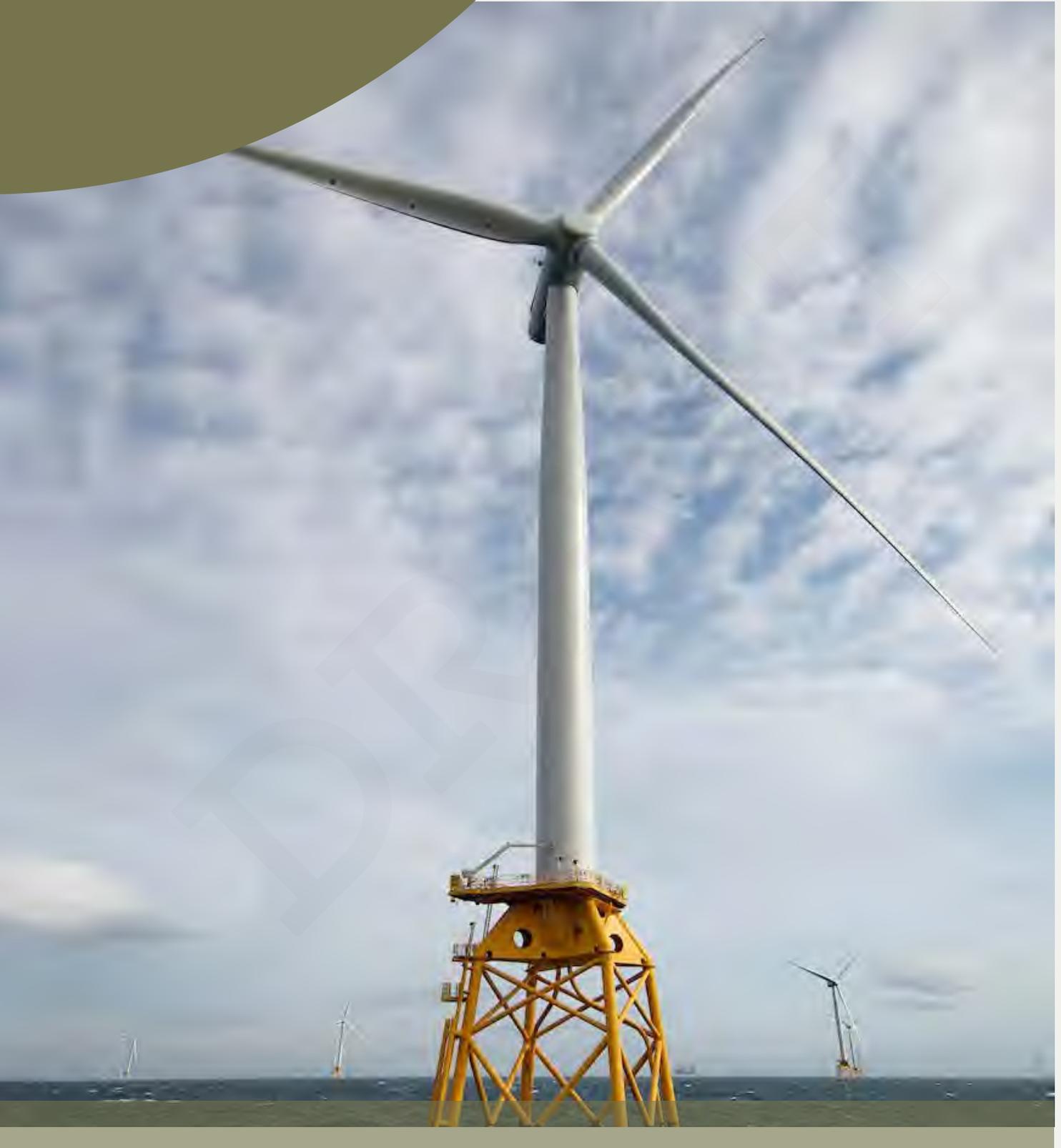


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1. Introduction



The Highlands and Islands is on the cusp of unprecedented opportunity. Scottish and UK Governments acknowledge that the region is pivotal in terms of meeting climate change targets and supporting the shift to clean, green sources of energy. This will require transformational change, and action to ensure that economic and social benefits are captured for people, communities and businesses in all parts of the region.

The Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Strategy sets out where regional scale collaborative actions by HIREP partners will be crucial for realising the once-in-a-generation opportunities present across the Highlands and Islands and addressing the development challenges facing the region.

The strategy recognises that HIREP partners will continue to work to their own plans and strategies, delivering at regional or sub regional level. This document recognises the value of that work and enhances and builds on partners' actions and responsibilities. It is not an aggregation of the vital actions delivering local economic development across the region.

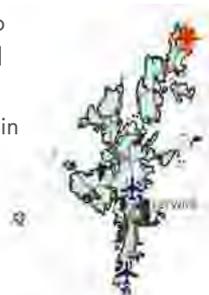
In articulating the need for collaborative regional action, the strategy focuses on areas where working together is the most effective and efficient means to generate maximum impact and benefit.

An Overview of the Highlands and Islands Region*

The Highlands and Islands is unique within Scotland and the UK, being a large, sparsely populated region, similar in size to Denmark, with dispersed settlements and all of Scotland's inhabited offshore islands. Over a fifth of residents live on islands and almost two-fifths in remote rural areas. The region's complex mountain and coastal geography provides challenges for connectivity and access to services, markets and employment. An extensive transport infrastructure including over a quarter of Scotland's road network, 60 ferry routes, 10 regional and 10 local authority airports attempts to mitigate these challenges of rurality and peripherality. Conversely, our extensive land and marine assets have, over decades, been powerful drivers of our primary sectors, food and drink and tourism successes and are now shaping the region's leading role in renewable energy generation and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

40,793 sq km

52% of Scotland's land mass



Orkney

Population: 22,000
22.2 people per sq km

Shetland

Population: 23,000
15.7 people per sq km

Na h-Eileanan Siar

Population: 26,100
8.5 people per sq km

Highland

Population: 235,400
9.2 people per sq km

Moray

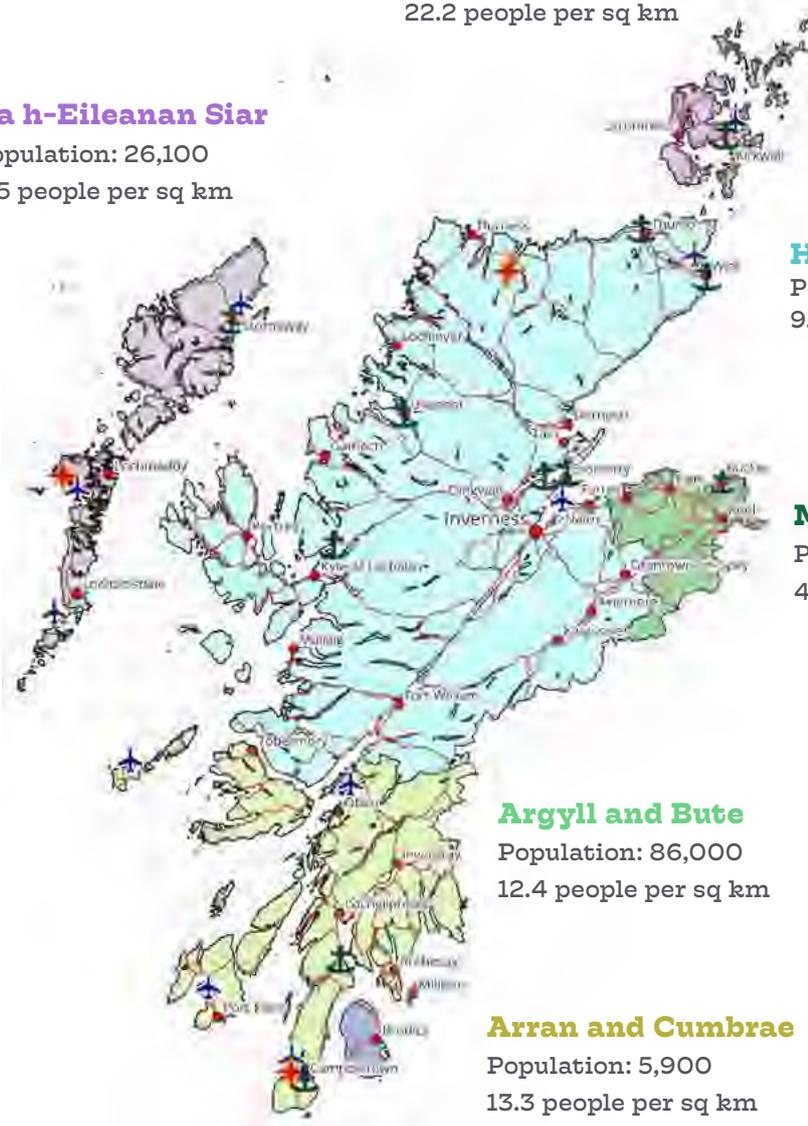
Population: 93,300
41.7 people per sq km

Argyll and Bute

Population: 86,000
12.4 people per sq km

Arran and Cumbrae

Population: 5,900
13.3 people per sq km



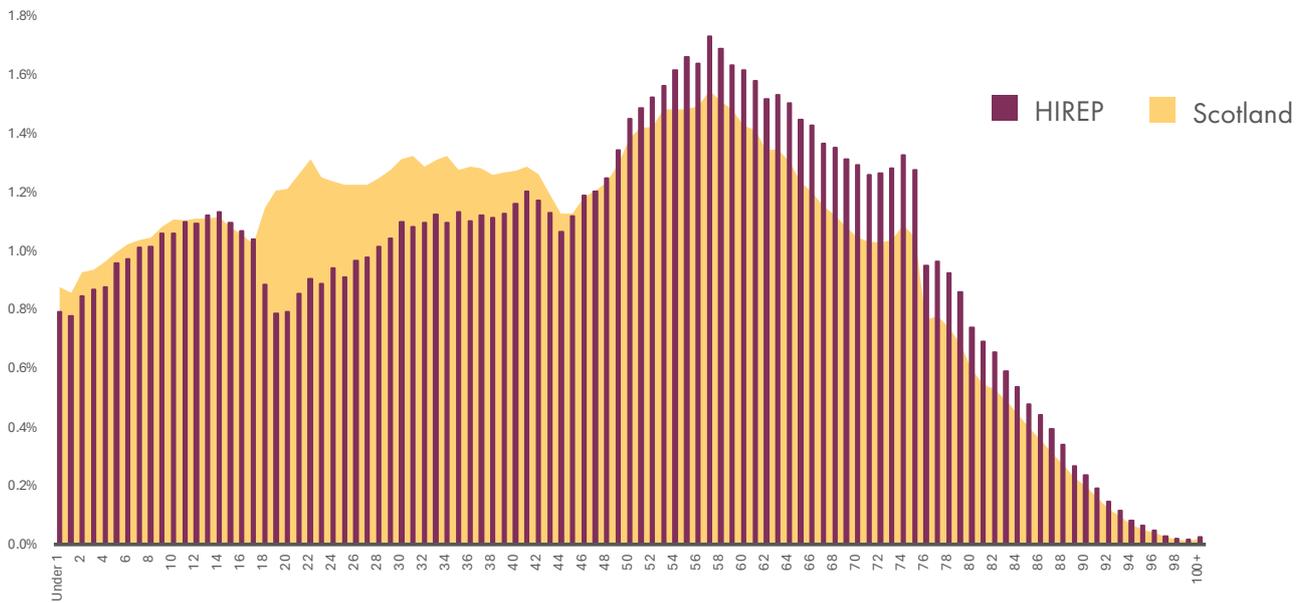
* As far as possible, analysis in this section is based on the HIREP geography. Where data is not available at this level, the regional figure is based on local authority data (so excludes Arran and Cumbrae), or the Highlands and Islands International Territorial Level (ITL) geographic classification (excludes Helensburgh and Lomond).

POPULATION

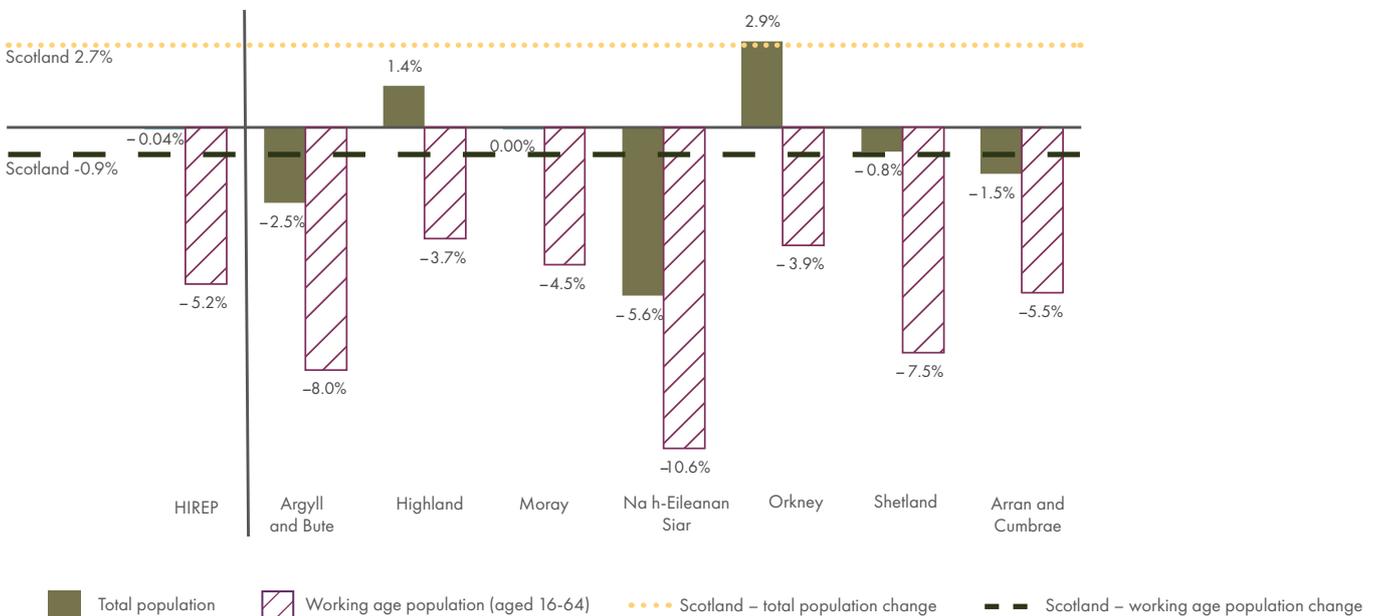
Within the context of national growth, the region's population remained relatively stable between 2011 and 2022. However, this masks considerable sub-regional variation. As with Scotland overall, there is an ageing population with low birth rates and levels of in-migration, although this can be more acute in our region. The working age population is lower than nationally in all areas (ranging from 54% in Arran and Cumbrae to 60% in Highland, Moray and Shetland, compared with 64% nationally) and declining, even where there is overall growth, resulting in higher dependency ratios. With fewer people than jobs, this highlights the importance of population attraction and retention for the Highlands and Islands.

491,600
people
9% of
Scotland's
population

Population share by age 2022, HIREP and Scotland



Percentage change in population, 2011 to 2022

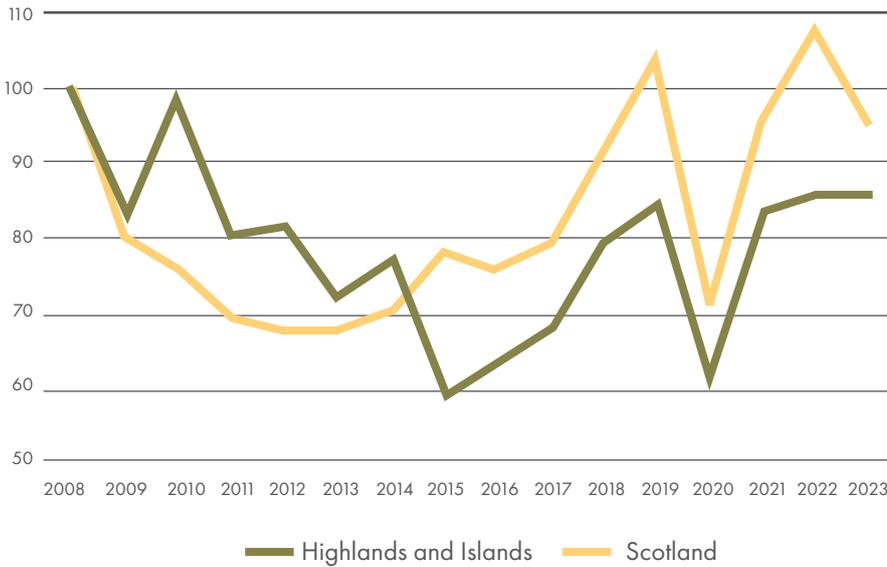


COMMUNITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Community, culture and a sense of belonging are powerful assets in the Highlands and Islands. They are evident in extensive community asset ownership and management, strong levels of affinity and pride, and high levels of social capital. However, those living in the region face poorer access to services, higher costs of living, and greater exposure to fuel poverty, along with lower levels of pay than nationally. Transport poverty is evident, and levels of housebuilding lag Scotland, with this most acute in remote rural and islands areas. Realisation of the region's opportunities is predicated on investment in enabling infrastructure including digital and mobile connectivity, transport, housing, and service provision, to remove barriers to development.

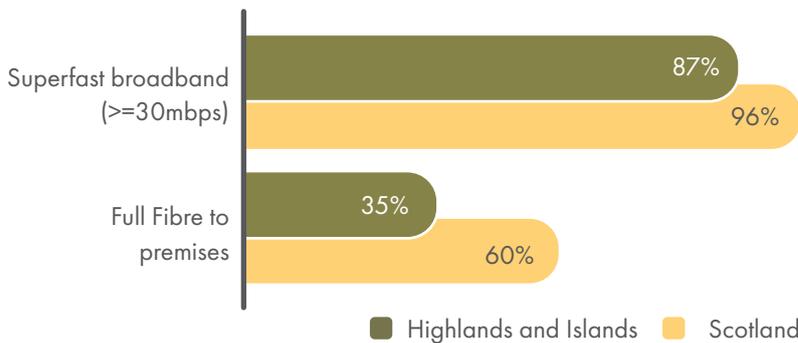
All sectors new build house completions index

(base year = 2008)



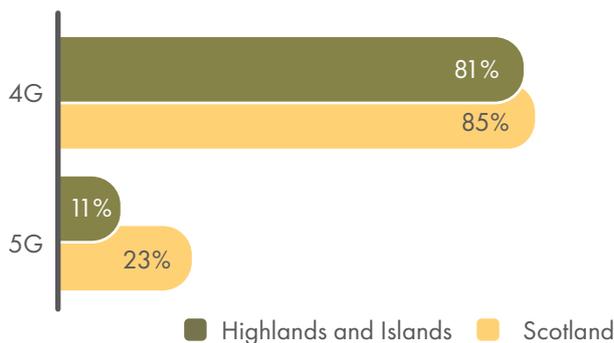
Broadband connectivity

May 2024: Proportion of premises with access to:



Mobile connectivity

Spring 2024: Proportion of landmass predicted to have good outdoor coverage from at least one mobile network:



5.2% of land is in community ownership

99% of the Scottish total

Rises to 50.3% of land in Na h-Eileanan Siar

Median (gross) annual pay of £27,079 in 2023

91% of the Scottish level

19% of children aged under 16 are living in relative low-income families

21% nationally

Over 10,300 second homes and 12,600 vacant properties

(43% and 14% of the Scottish totals)

Around half of residents live in the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland in terms of access to services

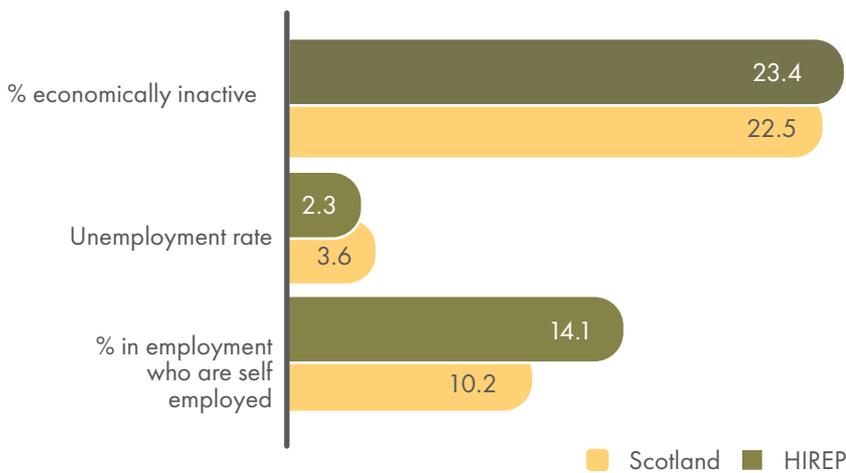
People living in rural parts of Scotland spend £50 more per week on transport than those living in urban areas

LABOUR MARKET AND SKILLS

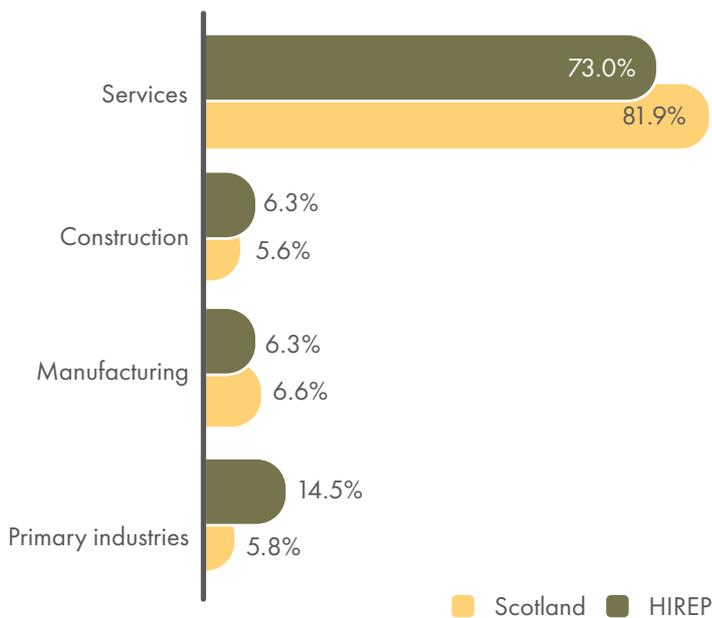
The region has a tight labour market with consistently high levels of participation and low unemployment. The employment rate and economic inactivity levels are similar to nationally, though levels of self-employment are higher. Almost all school leavers enter positive destinations, with a higher proportion than nationally going directly into employment or training. Though public sector and services still dominate, employment in construction and primary industries is higher than nationally, and the employment base is diversifying. Labour and skills shortages persist, but opportunities are increasing to reskill/upskill to meet the needs of new and expanding sectors.

Key labour market indicators

(of those aged 16-64)



Share of employment by industry 2022*



*Within services, the most dominant sectors are: education, human health and social work (21.5% of regional employment), wholesale and retail (12.9%) and accommodation and food services (10.9%)

Total employment of 256,000

9.8% of the Scottish total

SKILLS

48% of those aged 16-64 have a qualification equivalent to SCQF level 7 or above

55% nationally

39% of school leavers went directly into employment or training

28% nationally

4,273 modern apprentices in training at the end of March 2024

11% of the Scottish total

GROWING OPPORTUNITY

Replacement demand (2026-2033) of 53,200 jobs

(openings created by people leaving the labour market)

42,000+ unique job postings (August 2023 to July 2024)

8% of all job postings in Scotland

BUSINESSES AND ENTERPRISES

As with Scotland overall, the region’s economy is dominated by small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) although this accounts for a higher share of employment than nationally. The business base is diversifying, spanning a broad range of sectors including food and drink, sustainable tourism, renewable energy, life sciences (including marine biotechnology), creative industries, and space. In terms of economic contribution, manufacturing and primary industries are regionally significant. Businesses are resilient and innovative, underpinned by a strong entrepreneurial culture. Social enterprises are more prevalent than elsewhere in Scotland, playing an important role in realising local opportunity and supporting service delivery.

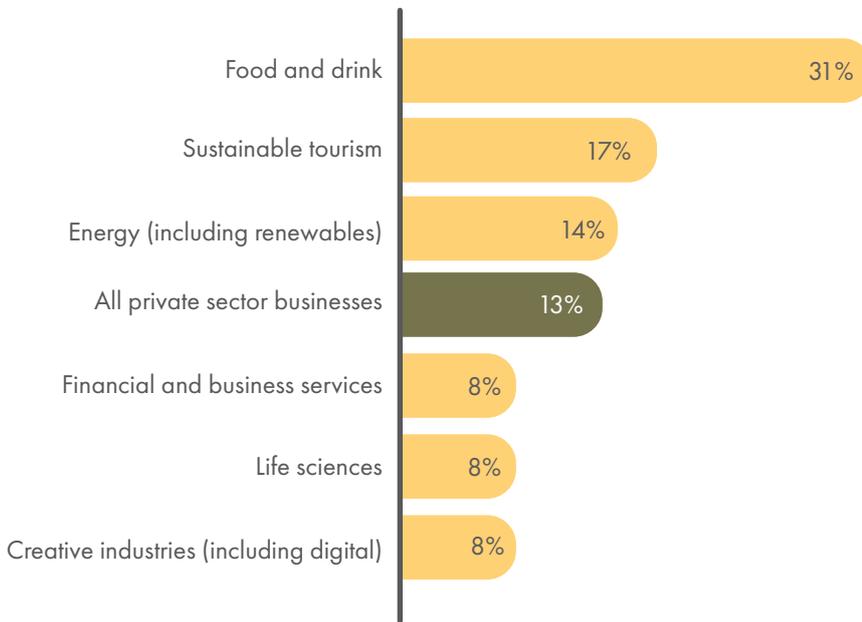
23,095 registered private sector businesses

13% of the Scottish total

1,273 social enterprises

21% of the Scottish total

Share of Scotland’s private sector business base by growth sector



*The growth sectors shown in the chart account for just under half (49%) of the region’s business base, 42% nationally.

GVA of £13.3 billion

8% of the Scottish total

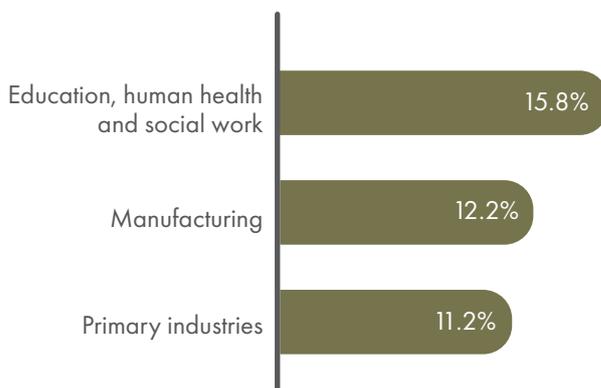
33% of businesses are innovation active (2020-2022)

(32% nationally)

Business start-up rate of 8.3% in 2022

10.8% nationally

Share of regional GVA (top three contributors)



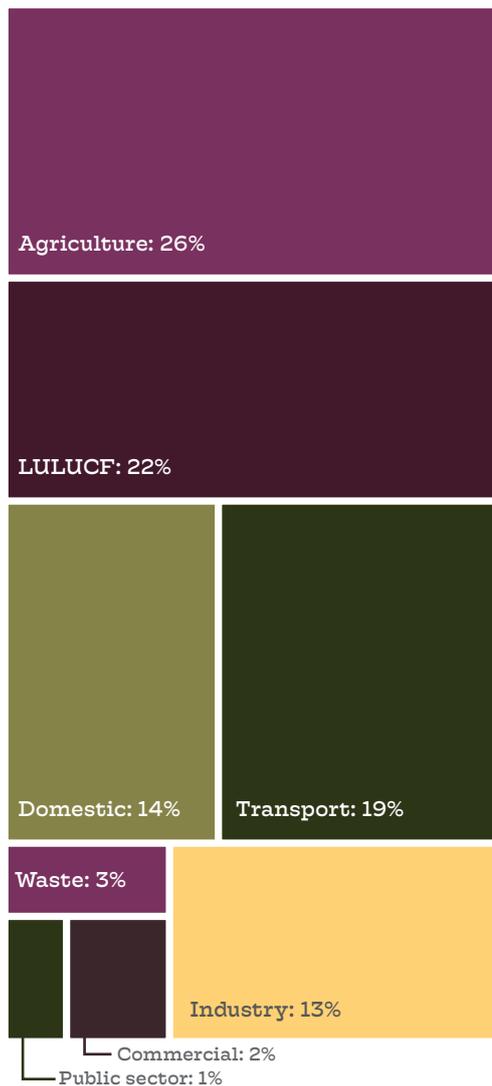
3-year survival rate for businesses of 64% (for those born in 2019)

57% nationally

NET ZERO AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION

The region is making progress in reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions although the pace of this does lag Scotland overall. Agriculture and Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) account for a significantly higher share of emissions in the region than nationally and addressing this is critical for both regional and national ambitions around net zero. Energy transition will be core to lowering transport, domestic and industry emissions, and the scale of retrofit required to bring commercial and domestic properties up to appropriate energy efficiency standards presents both a challenge and an opportunity. The region's capacity for renewable energy generation, extensive and growing, and the carbon sequestration potential of our natural capital, is pivotal to meeting climate change targets for Scotland and the UK.

Share of territorial GHG emissions by source, 2019



6,236 ktCO₂e in 2019

15% of the Scottish total

12.7 tCO₂e per capita

7.8 tCO₂e nationally

27% of domestic dwellings have an Environmental Impact Rating of C or above

41% nationally



The region accounts for 52% of Scotland's current installed renewable energy



Potential to increase the region's renewable energy capacity from 6,513MW to 33,205MW



THE ROLE OF HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS REGIONAL ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

The Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership (HIREP) was established in 2022. It enables inclusive and sustainable economic growth and builds resilience throughout the region, by identifying and focussing on areas of joint strategic purpose. It focuses on co-ordinated action in pursuit of regional growth opportunities and to address shared challenges. HIREP is a partnership of public, private, third sector and academic organisations, working together to realise the region's economic potential in a sustainable and inclusive way.

HIREP fulfils its purpose through:

- Identifying opportunities for collaborative and co-ordinated action in pursuit of agreed regional priorities, ensuring, where appropriate, that stakeholders plans are aligned, and resources are deployed efficiently and effectively.
- Advocating on agreed regional economic opportunities and challenges and, where appropriate, leading in discussions with Scottish Government, UK Government and other organisations.
- Being future focused in looking ahead to identify emerging regional opportunities and challenges where collaborative action can maximise outcomes and impact.
- Working to understand evolving approaches to external funding and reacting to maximise impact across all parts of the region.
- Understanding sub-regional economic dynamics and, where appropriate, formulating solidarity actions to ensure that no part of the Highlands and Islands is left behind.

Membership of the HIREP includes local authorities, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Funding Council, University of the Highlands and Islands, Naturescot, Visit Scotland, Bord na Gaidhlig, HITRANS, Cairngorm National Park Authority, The Crofting Commission, business representatives and third sector organisations.

OVERVIEW OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY AND ITS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Regional Economic Strategy galvanises collaborative partner action in pursuit of shared ambitions, goals and actions to deliver on the region's potential. It builds on the Scottish Government's Regional Economic Policy review and is informed by the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET). It brings a regional focus and coherence to a strategic landscape informed by a range of national strategies and plans. These include strategies and plans relating to energy, climate change and just transition, population, housing, digital, innovation, community wealth building, rural and island development, agriculture, land use and biodiversity.

This regional strategy also aligns with the strategies of member organisations, focusing where collaborative action will yield the best outcomes.

It charts how the region can capitalise on key opportunities and assets to sustainably and inclusively grow the region to reach its economic potential. It has been informed by diverse research, analysis and discussion that has included:

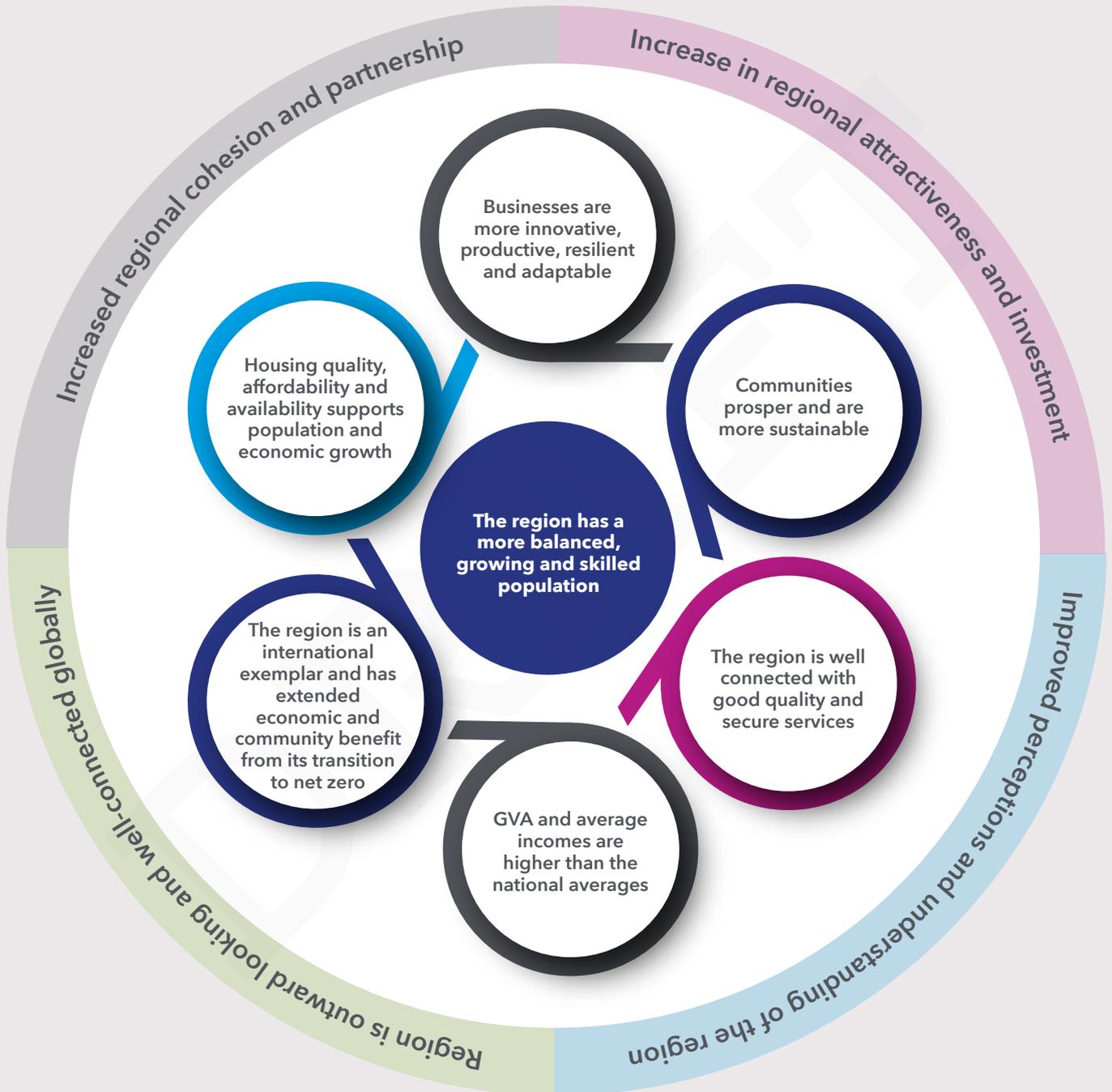
- a review of the existing research and strategies produced by Highlands and Islands REP members, as well as other relevant external research;
- workshops involving HIREP members;
- HIREP sub-groups on population, skills, housing, tourism, childcare and community wealth building;
- an online survey of stakeholders across the region in November & December 2023 ensuring good level of representation of business owners and private industry leads, public agencies (at both regional and sub-regional level) and community representatives.
- Online consultation on a draft strategy document, during July and August 2024.

2. Our vision for the region in 2035

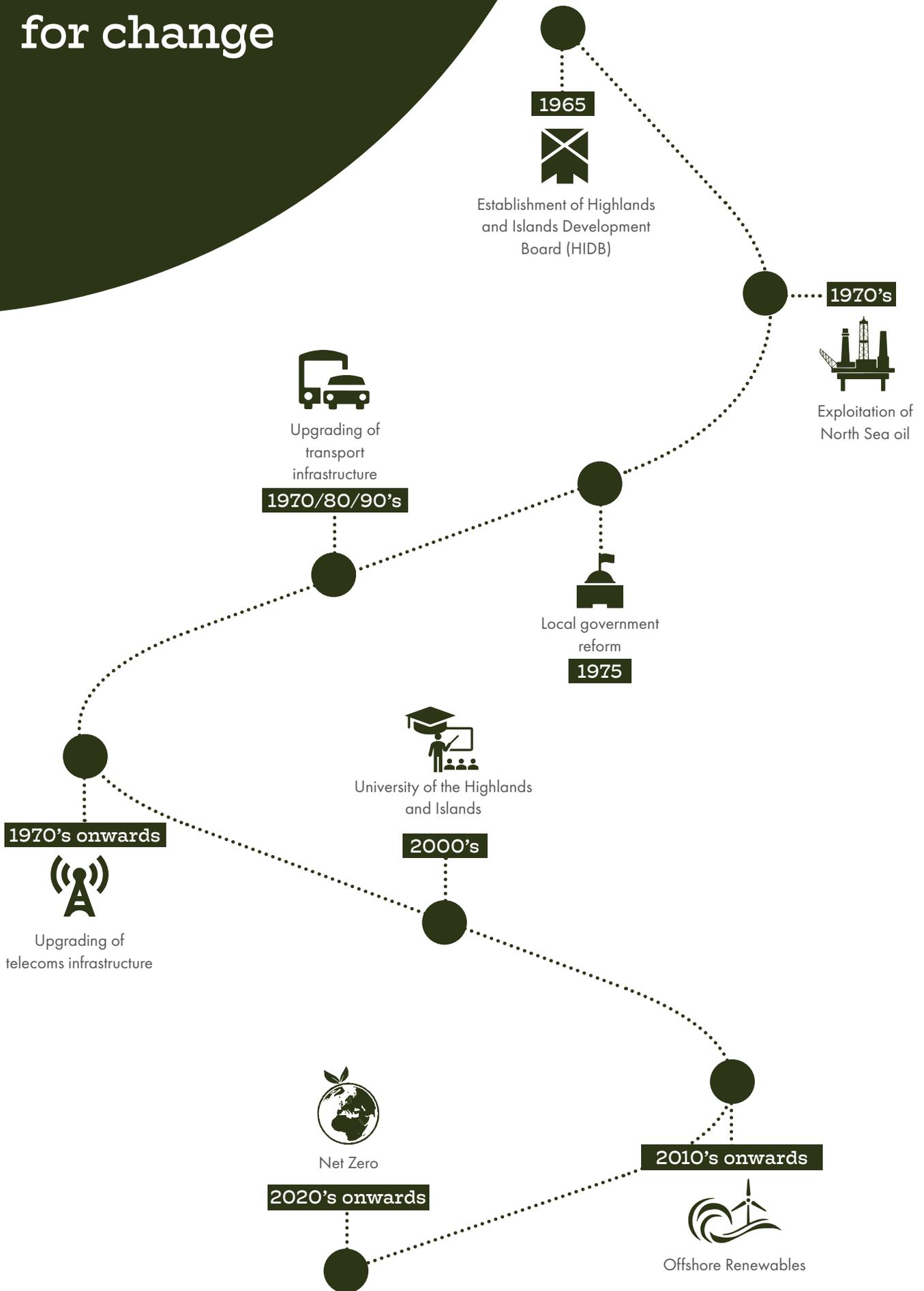
VISION STATEMENT

The Highlands and Islands is a dynamic, connected, resilient and prosperous region with a balanced and growing population and a vibrant economy, embedding community wealth building, leading Scotland's transition to net zero, and enhancing our natural environment.

FULFILLING OUR VISION – A SNAPSHOT OF THE REGION IN 2035



3. The rationale for change



KEY DRIVERS OF CHANGE

The Highlands and Islands is an adaptable and resilient region. It has a long history of leading and responding to change, characterised by partnership working to grasp regional opportunities and secure investment in much needed regional infrastructure and services. The next decade and beyond will be no different, with change being a constant. The HIREP strategy and its delivery is informed and guided by an understanding of the drivers of change and their specific, and sometimes unique, impact on the region.

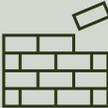




ANALYSIS OF THE REGION'S STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

An honest and timely assessment of **the region** provides the basis for a clear rationale for change. This is framed by our understanding of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) that **shapes the goals and actions of the Strategy**. HIREP members have drawn on their collective experience to understand the forthcoming decade of change across the whole region and sought to identify the most significant economic opportunities together with enabling infrastructure and services that will realise the region's potential. This has been tested in consultation with wider stakeholders to ensure that HIREP's collaborative action is focused where it is most required and will make the most impact.

Opportunities

 <p>Regional Distinctiveness (Cultural and Heritage assets)</p>	 <p>Community lead development</p>	 <p>Scotland's National Population strategy</p>	 <p>Natural capital</p>	 <p>Just transition to net zero</p>
 <p>Growth sectors</p>	 <p>Existing green and blue economy</p>	 <p>Supply chain opportunities</p>	 <p>Work anywhere</p>	
 <p>Importance of place</p>	 <p>Regional transformational opportunities</p>	 <p>Growth Deals and Other External Funding</p>	 <p>Existing entrepreneurship</p>	

“Much of Scotland’s renewable energy resource is in this region or its coastal waters. Collective action is required to secure, through influence, a favourable policy and regulatory regime; a strategic approach to infrastructure investments; regional level skills development and region wide community benefits.”

“Renewable energy and infrastructure provides a fantastic opportunity for jobs and sustainability, but there is a risk that the local benefit is not maximised and the socio economic potential is not maximised”

The Highlands and Islands is at the forefront of Scotland’s economic transformation and transition to a net zero nation. The mix of natural resources, established and emerging sectors, culture, heritage, social capital and business know how combine, to make a lasting impact on the region’s economic performance, the lives of its people and communities, and the natural environment.

Sense of place is strong in the Highlands and Islands, with the region’s unique culture, environment and people shaping future opportunities. These manifest themselves in exciting prospects for our key sectors and for community wealth building. Opportunities have been tested through consultation with stakeholders and are those where a collaborative regional approach can deliver the best outcomes.

Working together, the combined expertise, resources and ambition within public, private, academic and third sector partners, can be a catalyst for regional transformation. Through collaboration, our leverage in securing external public and private investment can support development throughout the whole region.

Renewable energy and Energy transition

The region currently accounts for over half of Scotland's installed renewable energy capacity and this capacity could increase four-fold if all pipeline activity is realised, further still if proposed developments progress.

Reflecting this, HIREP members, and the broader consultation process, recognised renewable energy as the primary opportunity for the region. This includes capitalising on renewable energy generation as a means for the region to maximise its future potential, creating highly-skilled and high-paying jobs in a rapidly growing sector. It also means supporting evolution of the sector through technological innovation, and ensuring the infrastructure exists in terms of transport, ports and harbours, housing, academic expertise and supply chain requirements, so that benefits can be retained in the region.

Central to this opportunity is not only the expansion of the renewable energy sector but also ensuring that local communities benefit from its growth. Without specific action, there is a risk that local benefits may not be maximised, despite the region being a significant contributor to Scotland and the wider UK's renewable energy production. Local communities should derive tangible benefits from the renewable energy assets in the region, contributing to more equitable growth and community wealth building, addressing local needs and enhancing community wellbeing.

Sustainable tourism and hospitality

Sustainable tourism is a key opportunity that could benefit the region across its varied geographies. While the visitor economy is well-established in the region, sustainable tourism has emerged as an opportunity for further growth, bringing potential to support vibrant rural areas, employment creation in rural communities and is key to the region's just transition to net zero. Visitor demand for the Highlands & Islands is consistently strong, especially in international markets, and is reinforced by a strong brand based on our unique culture, heritage and landscape.

Future success will depend on our ability to achieve balanced, sustainable growth of the visitor economy, creating opportunities for communities and businesses to realise benefits, while seeking to protect and enhance the environment on which tourism depends.

Food and Drink, and Primary Sectors including Aquaculture

The region's food and drink sector, built on our primary industries, is well-established and has a unique reputation with high value which is associated with our environment, people, culture and provenance. It is rooted in the region's extensive land and marine assets and the work of farmers, crofters and fishermen. A significant economic contributor, employment stretches across the region. There are, however, location specific clusters. Areas such as Islay and Speyside are renowned for their whisky production, our islands and west coast for aquaculture, while Moray is recognised for its crop and animal production, and fish landings take place around our extensive coastline.

To ensure a prosperous future for the sector and maximise benefit to local communities, enterprises will have to adopt new technologies, create higher value jobs and develop sustainable products and business models. Market insights indicate that both future employees and customers will be concerned about the low carbon footprint of food and drink products and enterprises' efforts to reduce their emissions. As producers of high value products, businesses have the potential to be a forerunner in this. Regional greenhouse gas baselining highlights the scale of opportunity in addressing emissions from agriculture, land use and industry.

Life, Marine and Health Industries

The Highlands and Islands has multiple niche strengths in life, marine and health sciences, built on unique natural resources, growing academic expertise and innovative businesses. We have anchor life science assets across the region in UHI Shetland, the European Marine Science Park and Inverness Campus, the latter included in the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport area. Collaboration between stakeholders and within clusters will be key to creating the conditions for long term high value growth, for enterprises that are focused on a range of markets, overseas and domestically, and tend to pay above average salaries. The Highlands and Islands has advantages in areas including biotechnology, using the regions natural resources, such as seaweed and timber, to create high value products for the food, pharmaceutical and packaging industries; as testbed for remote and sustainable healthcare that delivers for sparse and dispersed population; and leading animal health, aquaculture and agritech research, development and innovation that ensures the sustainable future for the region's extensive marine and land based farming sectors.

2.86 million hectares of utilised agricultural land, 54% of Scotland's total

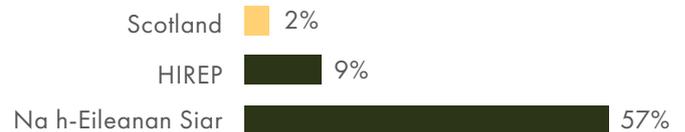


Heritage and Creative Industries

With well-established international brand recognition, our region has strengths in heritage, provenance and storytelling, creativity, Gaelic and other languages, and green credentials. The creative industries is the world's fastest growing sector, largely driven by transformational adoption of technology. In the Highlands and Islands, it spans commercially successful businesses as well community-based organisations, and is buoyant across the whole geography, with clusters in many of our islands. It is often strongly linked to distinctive local culture e.g. Gaelic culture in Innse Gall and visual arts and crafts, textiles and jewellery in Orkney and Shetland.

The region has a major opportunity to build on its international reputation and many assets, with strengths in areas of largest growth such as digital content, authentic traditional crafts, digital heritage, environment and sustainability.

Proportion of people aged 3+ with at least some Gaelic Skills (2022)



Enablers and Challenges

Realising our regional opportunities requires effective policy, investment and service delivery across the region and requires a sharp focus, given the challenges of geography, demography, infrastructure deficiencies and cost of service provision. Each of the enablers, identified by HIREP members and through consultation, is a fundamental requirement for development and presents challenges best addressed through collaborative action.

 <p>Current factors impacting on cost of living and doing business</p>	 <p>High rates of domestic and business fuel poverty</p>	 <p>Transport and digital infrastructure</p>	 <p>youth outmigration</p>
 <p>Lack of economic diversity/sensitivity to economic shocks</p>	 <p>Extreme weather</p>	 <p>Housing affordability and availability</p>	 <p>Declining public sector resources</p>
 <p>Declining town and village centres</p>	 <p>Perception on compromise to be in the region</p>	 <p>Rurality/remoteness</p>	 <p>Ageing population - risk of demographic crunch</p>

Housing

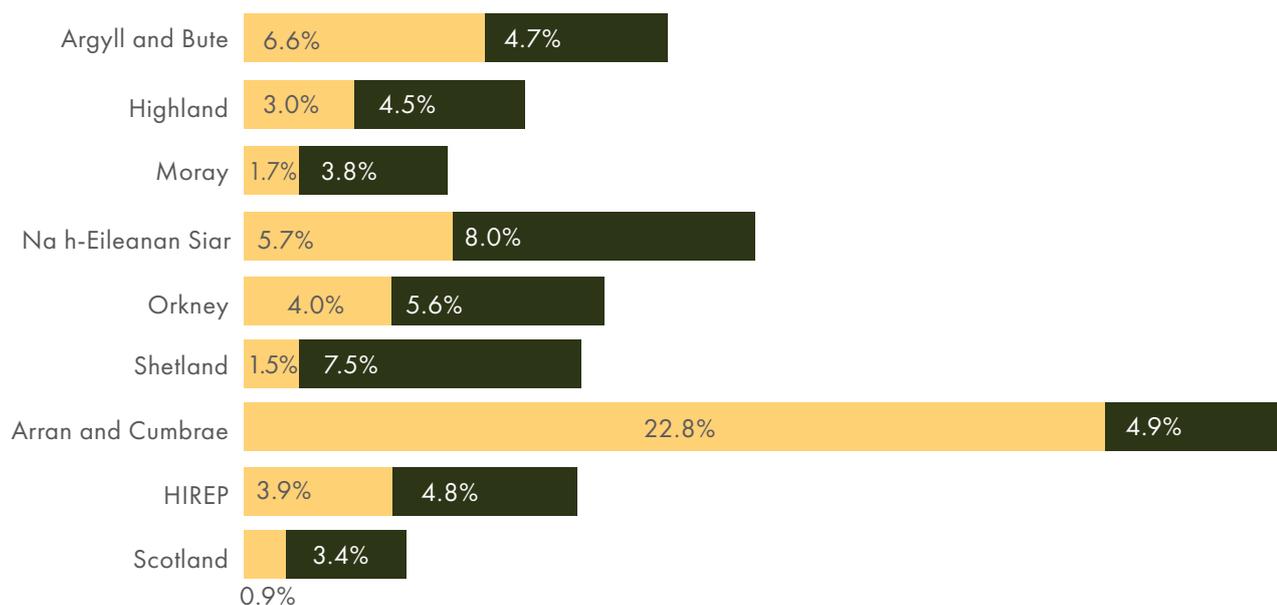
Housing provision and availability across the region is a fundamental enabler of development, and the current housing system is not operating in a way that supports economic development, community resilience or population attraction and retention.

Fit for purpose and affordable housing, across all types and tenures, in the right locations, underpins realisation of the region's transformational economic opportunities by ensuring that worker accommodation is available. It supports growth of the region's SME base through provision of housing in proximity to employment. It is also critical to community cohesion and resilience, given the importance of housing availability for all residents and those providing key services.

The need for new housing investment across the region is matched by the need to invest in existing housing stock to improve energy efficiency, address fuel poverty and contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

The region's housing challenge is multifaceted. Collaborative action by HIREP seeks to understand and address barriers in the housing system, leading to investment in housing stock that meets the needs of all parts of the region.

Proportion of dwellings that are vacant or second homes (2023)





Transport services and infrastructure

Effective transport infrastructure and services are critical to connecting our businesses, communities and people with each other and with the wider world. There are numerous transport challenges across the region which can result in journeys with low average speeds, low frequency and reliability issues. Transport services are expensive to deliver over a large geography and, in many parts of the region, reliance on private cars exacerbates transport poverty. Specific challenges include poor road networks, including trunk roads and other main routes, limited electric vehicle charging infrastructure requiring public investment to expand; limited public transport options across much of the region including low frequency rail services, infrequent and costly flights from the region's airports and ferry service challenged by reliability and resilience.

These challenges have multiple impacts. They can hamper access to employment and public services, particularly amongst low-income groups and they are a barrier to businesses accessing supplies and markets.

Sustained investment in transport infrastructure and connected services is required, not only to enable efficient, timely and resilient services, but also to support the decarbonisation of transport.

Digital Connectivity

Digitalisation is a proven driver of development, with equity of access, at affordable cost, to high-speed connectivity being a pre-requisite to delivering the ambition in this plan. Such access is not yet universal throughout the region, leading to a geographic digital divide and stifling the realisation of opportunities in some, often remote or island communities. As investment continues nationwide to deliver ever faster broadband speeds, there is a need for continued public investment to ensure that the region keeps pace with other locations. Across a region with dispersed population and lengthy travel times between settlements, mobile connectivity is equally important, while being challenging to deliver effectively. Continued investment is required to deliver 4G and 5G connectivity outwith main settlements.

Improving digital access across the region is of paramount importance to businesses, being a strong driver of innovation and productivity. It is also fundamental to delivery of public services, including education and health services which are, increasingly, implementing digital service delivery models to address the challenge of distance.

Alongside investment in physical infrastructure, there is a continuing need to maximise the economic and social benefits of digital through supporting business and social innovation.

53% of premises are able to get a 5G signal outdoor from at least one mobile network operator, lower than the share at the Scottish (87%) and UK (92%) levels

Population and Shortage of labour

Stable or growing population, particularly of working age is a prerequisite to realising our economic ambitions and sustaining vibrant communities. Depopulation is a significant regional challenge, with decline in working age population exacerbated by outmigration and the impact of Brexit. Population of working age has decreased more rapidly between 2011 and 2022 in the Highlands and Islands than Scotland and almost a quarter of the population in the region are of retirement age. There is also unevenness of population distribution across the region. The opportunity afforded by digital connectivity to “work anywhere” in certain jobs is potentially an opportunity for the region but is heavily dependent on addressing the issues that determine regional attractiveness.

Population challenges are acknowledged as cross-cutting and complex, impacted by interlinked factors such as access to affordable housing, available public transport options, effective digital connectivity, access to core services such as health, social care and childcare, education and training options and long term employment and career opportunities

Labour shortages have become more prevalent in the past few years, impacted by Brexit and the pandemic, and have been more acute in sectors such as tourism and hospitality, food and drink, construction and health and social care. Challenges are also more persistent in more rural and island areas. Lower wages are an inhibitor to attracting population so increasing fair work and wage rates are key.

There is an overriding need to reverse depopulation and thereby increase access to labour, through systemically addressing its causal factors to make the region a more attractive place to live, complemented by a regional effort to support talent attraction, upskilling and reskilling, and reducing economic inactivity.

Skills shortages

Labour and skill shortages are interlinked but come with their own unique challenges. While labour shortage makes it harder to find people to hire, skills shortage makes it harder to find the right people.

The region has long-standing skills gaps and skills shortages which will continue, partly driven by the changing nature of skills in workplace such as digitisation. For our future and current workforce, the skills required to enter and progress in work are also changing. Alongside the possibilities for skills and labour attraction to the region through various sectoral opportunities, for example renewable energy, life sciences and aquaculture, change will be required within the skills system to deliver sufficient numbers of skilled people, not only to realise our economic opportunities but to ensure that service delivery in the foundational economy, for example health and social care, is supported.

“Depopulation is often linked to the other challenges listed in this consultation, such as housing, cost of living and employment opportunities. Many younger people, those most likely to be economically active, leave the island for better housing and employment prospects. Reversing the trend of depopulation should be a central focus of any Highlands and Islands Economic Strategy.”

The gender pay gap was 4.5% in 2023, compared to 1.7% nationally and 7.7% across the UK

Energy

While the regional opportunities from energy transition are evident, there are also challenges. The transition to net zero will require a mix of public and private investment in enabling infrastructure. The scale of such investment is beyond the capacity of the REP and its members. There is, however, a crucial role to play in identifying and evidencing the need for infrastructure, working collectively to aggregate data, and advocating for investment. Such investments have the potential to generate considerable community benefit, the challenge being to secure benefits of appropriate scale and maximise resulting community and regional impacts.

Furthermore, the cost of energy presents a substantial issue for both local communities and private businesses, especially for those without access to mains gas. Consequently, these individuals and businesses are often reliant on more expensive energy sources for heat, such as oil and electricity. High energy costs are a particular issue for business. While the cost of energy is outwith its direct control, there is a potential advocacy role for the REP.



Natural habitat and climate change

The Highlands and Islands faces substantial challenges as a result of climate change, and the potential impact on the natural environment, local communities, transport and infrastructure and local businesses. Key risks as a result of climate change include loss of coastal communities and natural resources as a result of rising sea levels and coastal erosion; increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events; and loss of biodiversity and habitat degradation, with impact on fragile ecosystems such as peatlands and marine environments

We need to take action to reduce the region's carbon footprint. Research details the scale of emissions from land use and agriculture. It points to the need for changing agricultural practices and investment in restoration of natural habitats (particularly peatlands and native woodlands). Whilst clearly a challenge, carbon reduction also presents opportunity in the form of environmental enhancement and nature-based business and job opportunities. There is also potential for significant community benefit to be derived from natural capital investment at regional scale over the long term.

Even if the region can collectively deliver net zero, our climate is likely to continue to change with warmer drier summers, warmer wetter winters, and more extreme weather events – storms, floods, droughts. A risk-based approach to climate change adaptation will be essential.

This is a cross-cutting challenge which not only has potential consequences for the opportunities identified such as for sustainable tourism and life, marine and health sciences, but also the potential to exacerbate other challenges including disrupting transport and infrastructure and contributing to further depopulation.

**The Highlands and Islands
has 86% of Scotland's
coastline, 61% of the UK's**



Accessible public and private services across the region

The availability of services across all parts of the region is central to the ability to retain and attract population. Delivering such services across the Highlands and Islands is logistically challenging and costly. The need to deliver over distance and the lack of scale economies, given small and dispersed populations, requires innovation, partnership and significant resources.

Services include childcare, social care, cultural and leisure services, along with education and health services. While these are often the responsibility of individual HIREP partners, there is merit in regional learning and potential collaboration to develop and deliver services using new and innovative models.

We need to build on our improving connectivity and recognised expertise in partnership delivery of services. The OECD in its rural innovation work has recognised the healthy state of social innovation and role of social enterprises in service provision, especially across remote mainland and island communities. Such partnerships should be enhanced, with HIREP having a role in building partnerships and sharing good practice across the region. A collective regional voice articulating what works most effectively in service delivery across the HIREP geography and the investment required to deliver is needed.

‘It is important to maintain, and preferably expand on, the current provision of services which are viewed as key to sustaining a viable community. If the island’s population falls further it could jeopardise key services and further accelerate the process of depopulation, with the school, GP surgery, shops and businesses potentially shutting as a result.’

CONCLUSION

Focusing on these opportunities and enablers is key to achieving our vision, alongside a need to ensure these are clearly understood by governments and investors. Infrastructure investment is fundamental, requiring a long-term approach and innovation, especially to be appropriate for our geography and dispersed populations and businesses.

Whilst our goals and actions are shaped around where we can combine our efforts to do more and achieve more for the region, there is an overarching requirement for collective and consistent promotion of the benefits and evidence of the needs of the region to help secure its vital continued contribution to the sustainable and inclusive growth of Scotland and the UK.

4. Goals and actions



Introduction

The Strategy sets out clear goals and associated actions requiring regional collaboration to deliver our Vision. Actions considered best delivered at a local level are not incorporated but HIREP will remain agile and consider additional actions if required as part of biennial delivery plans.

HIREP Vision Statement

The Highlands and Islands is a dynamic, connected, resilient and prosperous region with a balanced and growing population and a vibrant economy, embedding community wealth building, leading Scotland's transition to net zero, and enhancing our natural environment.

Our Goals		Cross Cutting Themes			
Increase the profile and understanding of the Highlands and Islands to support effective policy and unlock regional investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the regional evidence base to support advocacy and business case development Bolster advocacy efforts with national government to better highlight the region's unique needs Identify new ways to deliver public services across the region, including through use of technology and innovative partnership delivery models 	Community Wealth Building / Benefit	Innovation and Entrepreneurship	Population	Just Transition
Become a region which delivers high quality and affordable housing for residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the functioning and responsiveness of the housing "system" to emerging needs in the Highlands and Islands Support the revitalisation of rural areas by increasing access to high-quality housing across the entire region 				
Enhance the region's transport and digital infrastructure to become an exemplar of efficient rural connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve transport connectivity for local residents, businesses and visitors by increasing the availability, reliability and affordability of public transport Pursue innovation in technology and service provision to deliver enhanced and more resilient and sustainable transport connectivity across the region Increase the level of access to high-speed connectivity across the region 				
Build resilience and competitiveness through place-based opportunities and stimulating an active culture of entrepreneurship and innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stimulate an entrepreneurial and innovation-active culture within the region Support new opportunities to enable growth and resilience in our priority sectors 				
Maximise the economic and community benefits from renewable energy investments and drive the region's move to net zero and climate resilience/adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximising the economic and community benefits from renewable energy development Actively work towards safeguarding and enhancing the region's natural capital 				
Develop a coordinated response to skills and labour requirements across the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a shared understanding of labour and skills needs Protect and build on the best of provision Workforce Attraction and Retention 				



To deliver these goals, HIREP will put appropriate governance arrangements in place, including the alignment of some existing regional specific groups, to provide clear ownership of both development and delivery of agreed actions.

CROSS CUTTING THEMES

The Strategy has identified four cross-cutting themes considered fundamental to meeting our goals and adding value to our actions:

Community Wealth Building and Benefit

- The region has a strong and proud history of extensive community-led development and action. Community Wealth Building (CWB) is pivotal to a successful place-based approach to socio-economic development and actions will be woven into HIREP's response to regional opportunities and will contribute to addressing, in part, key enablers. It is recognised that community-led development is a powerful mechanism for population retention.
- The understanding of CWB principles differs within HIREP partners and implementation across the region is at different stages. Building on development of a common understanding, HIREP's focus will be on the identification of CWB actions that are most effectively delivered at regional scale, for example community benefit from energy and other investments, natural capital benefits, and procurement approaches.
- Sharing strategic community benefits is a core component of CWB. The potential scale of community benefits arising from major investments, including onshore and offshore wind developments, transmission infrastructure investments, and, in the longer term, natural capital, could yield considerable sums across the region. Considering common objectives and guiding principles in securing, managing and investing strategic community benefit funds, at the local authority level, can support long lasting and sustainable impact.



Innovation and Entrepreneurship

- The region has embraced innovation and championed entrepreneurship over decades, wielding it to respond to both the challenges and the distinct opportunities created by our geography and natural and cultural assets.
- Extensive social innovation, aided by the region's high levels of social capital and number of inclusive, democratic business models, has been impactful in finding novel ways of delivering community services and benefits. The OECD, in its recent work on innovation in rural areas, highlighted the powerful impact of social innovation on development in the Highlands and Islands and recognised the solid foundation on which to build.
- Innovation is key to improving productivity, competitiveness, profitability and entrepreneurship. The drivers of change will require the region to adopt and exploit technology, data, artificial intelligence and advanced innovation. Embedding these across the strategy, diversifying, and developing entrepreneurial skills and knowledge will increase resilience and broaden the economic base.

**550 businesses and 31 social enterprises per
10,000 resident adults (380 and 13 nationally)**

Population

- The Highlands and Islands has experienced periods of significant population decline throughout its history which have resulted in successive governments and the European Union recognising the need for strategic support. With the 2022 Census indicating that every part of the region has experienced a decline in working age population, although more keenly felt in the islands and the North mainland, the strategy recognises the core need for significant investment in people, infrastructure, businesses to tackle this challenge. The region's greatest asset is its people. They are intrinsic to realising our ambitions and creating the conditions for population growth requires actions across all the goals in the strategy.

Just Transition

- Scotland's ambition to achieve net zero emissions by 2045 has far reaching implications for the Highlands and Islands and its people, communities and businesses. The positives include the renewable energy opportunities that are evident in the region are critical to achieving national ambition, and the extent and capacity of our natural capital both to sequester carbon whilst generating economic opportunity and good biodiversity outcomes.
- The challenges are illustrated by the need to reduce the emissions impact of agriculture and land use, and the scale of work required to decarbonise domestic and commercial heating.
- The change required will require good data, collaboration, careful planning and delivery to ensure that benefits are shared across all geographic areas and interest groups and that costs do not fall disproportionately on particular areas or groups. Each of the regional opportunities and enablers / challenges includes a net zero component to be addressed in a "just" way.



31% of domestic properties are reliant on high carbon fuels for heating, 8% nationally

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Increase the profile and understanding of the Highlands and Islands to support effective policy and unlock regional investment

A powerful regional voice, supported by robust evidence detailing the opportunities and challenges in all parts of the region, is needed to exert effective policy influence and secure external public and private funding to further our regional ambitions. Using our collective knowledge and resources to shape innovative solutions, responding to unique situations across the region will demonstrate the value of place-based approaches.

Sub-goal 1.a: Enhance the regional evidence base to support advocacy and business case development

Actions

- Progress a regional economic intelligence hub to increase access to, and use of, regional data and intelligence.
- Collectively strengthen the evidence base through research, analysis and evaluation, to support and inform action across all strategic goals, with initial focus on housing, transport and transition to net zero.
- Develop a new regional approach to attracting investment through promotion of the region's assets and opportunities, working collaboratively to identify and progress inward investment opportunities.

Sub-goal 1.b: Bolster advocacy efforts with national government to better highlight the region's unique needs

Actions

- Advocate for and develop alternative ways of funding and providing key public and private services in the region (e.g. childcare)
- Develop and communicate a clear HIREP position in regional, rural and island policy and funding discussions with governments, to secure effective policy and maximise resources to realise regional opportunities
- Advocate for the region on key issues impacting on realisation of our regional vision and achievement of strategic goals, strengthening and ensuring a common and consistent voice for the region.

Sub-goal 1.c: Identify new ways to deliver public services across the region, including through use of technology and innovative partnership delivery models

Actions

- Reflect on existing national systems and policies which impact on the implementation of the strategy and identify those which are not currently delivering for the region, developing alternative proposals for wider consideration.
- Design and implement innovative service delivery models, building on the region's high levels of social capital, expertise in social innovation and existing public / private delivery model collaborations
- Recognising the creation of a new national Planning Hub, identify where regional partner collaboration can further support HIREP Planning Authorities in making timely decisions that support key economic drivers such as housing, transport and renewable energy.

Goal 2: Become a region which delivers high quality and affordable housing for residents

Enhancing local housing options is crucial for community sustainability and resilience. Providing residents with a quality home creates a foundation for long-term wellbeing, fosters stronger communities and is critical for attracting population.

Sub-goal 2.a: Improve the functioning and responsiveness of the housing “system” to emerging needs in the Highlands and Islands

Actions

- Working with Local Authorities and Housing Associations, empower and support community housing trusts to build capacity to take forward feasibility work and develop propositions for community led housing developments.
- Explore the establishment of a regional demonstration project to test new approaches to addressing housing in rural locations, governed by a committed partnership of public, private and community representatives. Use the learning to inform region-wide solutions
- Consider and raise awareness on where housing policy and regulation could usefully be rural proofed and adjusted to allow local authorities to more flexibly use their funding to respond to island and rural needs.

Sub-goal 2.b: Support the revitalisation of rural areas by increasing access to high-quality housing across the entire region

Actions:

- Increase the construction of more affordable housing of all tenures, ensuring dispersal of provision across rural areas, and consider how publicly owned and crofting land can contribute to this.
- Repurpose vacant homes and holiday rentals by encouraging occupancy / utilisation as permanent primary homes and exploring different mechanisms, including new tax models, to promote change.
- Champion energy-efficiency by encouraging the construction of energy efficient housing as well as upgrading the existing housing stock.
- Recognising the challenges faced by SMEs in the construction sector operating in rural areas, work with the sector to build its resilience, aided by a more certain pipeline of proven housing developments.
- Consider the need to pilot short-term accommodation solutions to alleviate pressures in key locations.



Goal 3: Enhance the region's transport and digital infrastructure to become an exemplar of efficient rural connectivity

Connecting people, communities and businesses to employment, services and markets, physically and virtually, is a prerequisite for development. Transport that is reliable, resilient and affordable, provides effective connections across the region and connects the region to the wider world. Digital connectivity is a gamechanger, for access to services and markets. Both open up business opportunities and makes the region an attractive place to live, work and visit.

Sub-goal 3.a: Improve transport connectivity for local residents, businesses and visitors by increasing the availability, reliability and affordability of public transport across the region.

Action(s):

- Work with HITRANS, ZetTrans and SPT to support the development and delivery of their RTS Action/Delivery Plans, which include road, rail and ferry infrastructure and service enhancements, improved integration across travel modes and exploration of fixed link options
- Revitalise efforts to deliver against commitments made regarding strategic road enhancements, including A9 and A96 dualling and A82, A83 and A85, and to improve road quality and safety, unlocking regional economic potential.
- Support the case for improvements to air and ferry services to meet the needs of communities and businesses, considering new and enhanced services and future infrastructure investment requirements.

Sub-goal 3.b: Pursue innovation in technology and service provision to deliver enhanced and more resilient and sustainable transport connectivity across the region.

Actions:

- Future-proof regional car infrastructure by developing electric and low carbon opportunities, ensuring that funding and delivery models are reflective of the challenges in rural parts of the Highlands and Islands. Ensure that the necessary skills are in place within the local supply chain to deliver and maintain infrastructure.

- Build on the success of the Sustainable Aviation Test Environment (SATE) project, to capitalise on emerging decarbonisation opportunities in the aviation sector positioning the region as an early adopter of new technologies for the movement of people and goods. Consider how the specification of PSOs can be critical in the transition to the Highlands and Islands becoming a net zero aviation region.
- Widen the use and awareness of Demand Responsive Transport (DRT), particularly for rural communities which currently have limited or no regular scheduled bus services, taking learning from projects such as Moray Council's m.connect DRT service using an app-based booking system.
- Widen understanding and application of hybrid and electric ferry operation within the region, building on existing and emerging investments.

Sub-goal 3.c: Increase the level of access to high-speed connectivity across the region

Actions:

- Maximise delivery of Scottish Government (R100) and UK Government (Project Gigabit) programmes to increase availability of high-speed connectivity to all parts of the region
- Proactively encourage more private and public sector collaboration to develop better digital infrastructure across the region.
- Identify ways of facilitating access to affordable and fast internet connectivity in communities that are not in current rollout plans and enact these within a reasonable time frame.

Goal 4: Build resilience and competitiveness through place-based opportunities and stimulating an active culture of entrepreneurship and innovation

A place-based approach focusing on areas of opportunity and supporting clusters, recognises and builds on our regional competitive advantage. Enhancing entrepreneurship and encouraging business innovation builds resilience, increases productivity and results in more competitive businesses able to offer higher paying jobs. There are benefits from focusing on the untapped potential of under-represented groups such as women and young people.

Sub-goal 4.a: Stimulate an entrepreneurial and innovation-active culture within the region

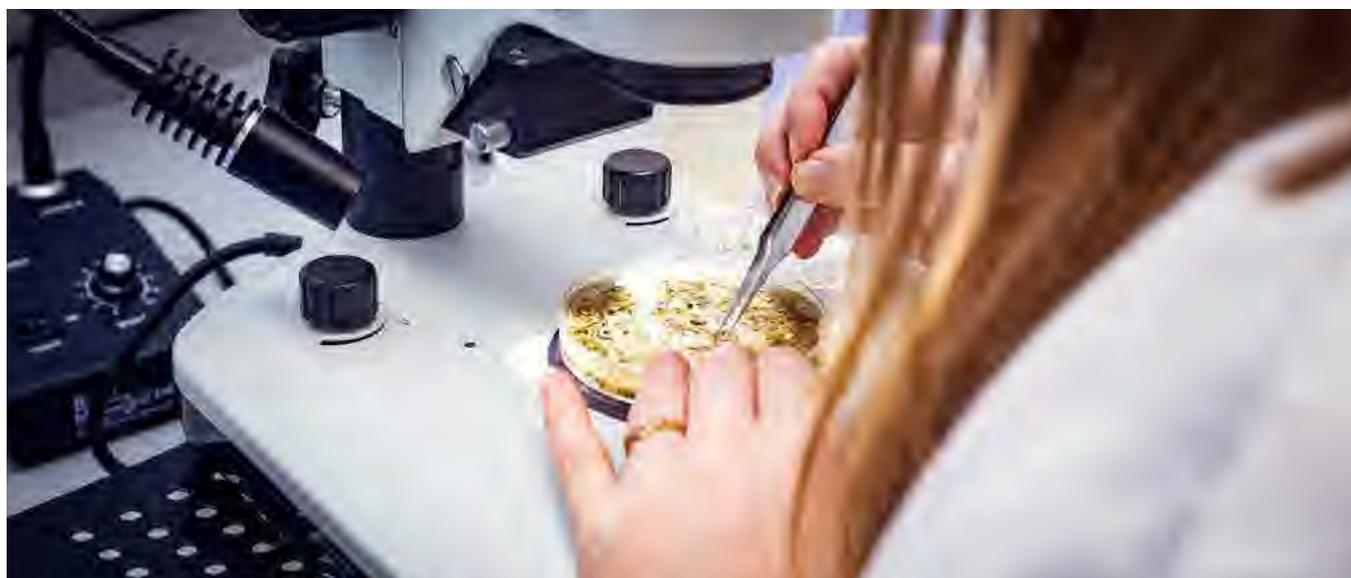
Actions:

- Develop and facilitate new opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and networking across the region, and nationally/internationally through learning journeys, to support entrepreneurs in all stages of their journey.
- Consider regional campaigns and programmes to promote entrepreneurship in education.
- Increase regional alignment from external funding to increase effectiveness and efficiency of enterprise support and innovation.
- Build on the national innovation strategy to support opportunities where the region has a distinctive competitive advantage, increasing the number of spin outs, and extending the adoption and diffusion of innovation
- Maximise the regional benefit of national innovation projects such as NMIS, enhancing their visibility, reach and impact across the region

Sub-goal 4.b: Support new opportunities to enable growth and resilience in our priority sectors

Actions:

- Enable enterprises to capitalise on opportunities, especially from digital technology, international markets, and supporting the transition to Net Zero.
- Explore the benefits and delivery models for regional cluster approaches which are appropriate for the region's unique geography and can stimulate innovation to support our regional transformational opportunities,
- Ensure delivery of wider economic and community benefits to the visitor economy around the investment in growth deals. Seek to identify a pipeline of potential future strategic investments.
- Support key Gaelic speaking communities with interventions to promote socio-economic opportunities and enhance resilience.



Goal 5: Maximise the economic and community benefits from renewable energy investments and drive the region's move to net zero and climate resilience/adaptation

The region is at the forefront of Scotland's transition to net zero, being home to much of Scotland's renewable energy resource and natural capital. Safeguarding and strategic use of this natural resource will generate long-term value, retained in the region, with actions to ensure that businesses, communities and individuals across the whole region benefit.

Sub-goal 5.a: Maximising the economic and community benefits from renewable energy development

Actions:

- Develop and implement common regional objectives and guiding principles to securing and distributing strategic community benefit funds at a local authority level. Support the scaling and growth of local supply chains through the aggregation of place-based demand/sharing of data, to ensure that existing businesses can pivot positively whilst also attracting new entrants to the market.
- Identify and fill capacity and capability gaps through targeted inward investment and diversification to capture benefits within the region
- Secure investment in our ports and harbours and advocate for investment in other enabling infrastructure ensuring that the region can fully and robustly contribute to decarbonisation targets and maximise the regional benefit of doing so. Ensure that all investments are proactively screened for climate risks, both current and future.
- Support innovation and the development of new technologies such as marine energy technology and floating offshore wind, where the area has a natural advantage and opportunity to take a leading role.
- Seek to influence a regulatory, market and consenting framework that recognises the strategic importance of our region, supports all renewable energy sectors, reduces project delivery risks and increases private sector finance.

Sub-goal 5.b: Actively work towards safeguarding and enhancing the region's natural capital

Actions:

- Incorporating a natural capital approach to regional and local decision making by enhancing public awareness of its natural resources and understanding the risks and benefits of nature-based solutions e.g. flood management, coastal and marine management, naturalising watercourses, peatland restoration, native woodland protection and enhancement.
- Increase awareness of the existing natural capital of the region as a source of growth and build on existing work to identify ways in which local communities benefit from this investment,
- Place special emphasis on the restoration and conservation of local peatlands, and protecting, enhancing and creating extensive native woodlands. Championing this proactively enables the safeguarding the region's natural habitat and makes a major contribution to delivering our net zero ambition.
- Proactively anticipate and strategically plan for the possible impact on communities of flooding and rising sea levels. Where feasible, the use of innovative adaptation solutions which preserve communities and services should be prioritised.

Goal 6: Develop a coordinated response to skills and labour requirements across the region

Our region requires people with the right skills to realise regional opportunities and support the foundational economy. Understanding and responding to future skills and labour needs gives businesses confidence they can access the skills they need, enables effective provision of services and provides individuals with pathways to well-paid work and career fulfilment in the region.

Sub Goal 6.a: Develop a shared understanding of labour and skills needs

Actions

- Develop and communicate a greater understanding of need and emerging economic opportunities through a shared evidence base developed to inform regional / local provision.
- Develop proposals to align Investment in skills with socio economic need, prioritising agreed economic and foundational economy requirements, working with the skills system to respond. Our combined investment in post school skills should focus on both supporting skills development and economic growth.

Sub-goal 6.b: Protect and build on the best of provision

Actions

- Maintain and expand the best of provision capitalising on growing the workforce in response to short and medium term employment opportunities and supporting workforce development.
- Support and grow the best of our Academic Pathways, reflecting regional/local strengths and opportunities.
- A greater commitment to Work Based Learning in response to employer needs, resulting in greater access locally.
- Develop the current workforce through upskilling and reskilling, ensuring our people and businesses thrive.
- In response to the working age population challenge, changing nature of work and business models, focus our efforts in addressing need through work-based learning in a number of agreed priority sectors, important to the regional economy.

Sub-goal 6.c: Workforce Attraction and Retention

Actions

- Commitment of regional partners commit to adopting work-based learning into workforce planning, providing a step change in opportunities across the region with the public sector to earn and learn.
- Develop proposals to build on existing strengths of partners, including FE/HE alumni, Graduate Apprenticeships and co-delivery of provision with industry to promote regional opportunities and attract talent.
- Work with UHI to ensure they are ably resourced to support the regional skills and education requirements (e.g. of the generational opportunities presented by the Green Freeport, offshore wind, and wider infrastructure investments, as well the potential development of a gateway programme to support recruitment in medical professions in remote and rural areas of the Highlands and Islands).

5. Delivering Our Strategy

DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN FOR DELIVERY

Our regional strategy will guide the collaborative work of HIREP, working to a ten year timeframe with wider partners and stakeholders. Sitting alongside this strategy, a detailed delivery plan, refreshed every two years, sets out the key steps and the milestones to progress our goals and associated actions. It includes:

- › Roles and responsibilities for the HIREP, officers' group and HIREP subgroups, aligned to the Strategy's goals.
- › The role of the regional intelligence hub in providing research, analysis and evaluation support to evidence the case for action and "measure" progress.
- › The potential role that external investment may play in realising our collective goals.
- › The role that advocacy will play – the HIREP as a powerful voice for the region, in discussion with governments and others.

MONITORING PERFORMANCE

We have identified a number of high-level indicators which, taken together, will demonstrate progress over the long term. These have been chosen to help support monitoring of our goals and actions and progress towards realising our vision. They will assist HIREP in understanding the region's progress in relation to the [National Performance Framework](#). Complementing these will be further milestones and measures detailed in the two-year delivery plan.

HIREP Members

