



The Orkney Partnership



# Annual Report 2016



# The Orkney Partnership



Working together for a better Orkney



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## INTRODUCTION

The Orkney Partnership is pleased to present the Annual Report for 2016.

It's been an exciting year for us as a Partnership. We're starting to see results under our new streamlined structure. We have three Delivery Groups, each working hard to progress our strategic priorities of:

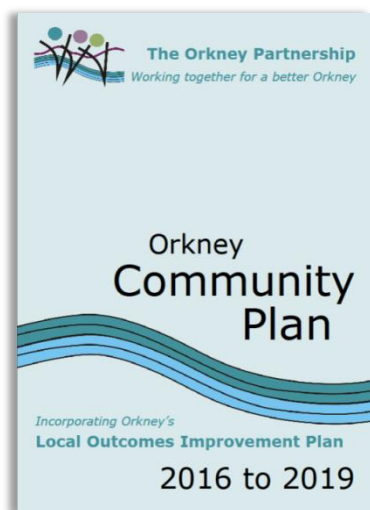
- Positive Ageing
- Vibrant Economic Environment
- Healthy and Sustainable Communities

We regularly report progress through the Partnership's quarterly newsletters.

We've made sure we meet the community planning requirements of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 - including working in partnership to carry out a major consultation and engagement exercise in the isles to help prepare a locality plan. We've published documents, held workshops and set indicators to measure our performance.

Last, but certainly not least, we've been involved in the Syrian Resettlement Programme. This is not one of the priorities contained in our Community Plan – assisting with a humanitarian crisis can't be planned for – but we consider it a privilege to be able to help.

## COMMUNITY PLAN 2016-19



The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 places a duty on community planning partnerships to prepare and publish a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP). This document sets out the local outcomes that The Orkney Partnership has prioritised for improvement.

Orkney's new Community Plan 2016-19 is now in use as a working document and incorporates Orkney's LOIP. It's a three-year rolling plan and is refreshed, updated and reissued every year. It describes what we aim to achieve by working together in partnership and can be found on our pages on the [Orkney Communities](#) platform.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

We're no strangers to partnership working in Orkney, we've been doing it for a long time and it would be illogical not to. We're working well together in many areas so, for that reason, The Orkney Partnership's priorities focus on problem areas which will take

imagination and innovation to resolve, and where our collective efforts and resources can add most value for our community, with particular emphasis on reducing inequalities.

In 2016 we reviewed our strategic priorities and cross-cutting challenges and agreed they were still a good reflection of the challenges and pressures being faced by The Orkney Partnership.

## POSITIVE AGEING

We want people to live independently in their own homes or a homely setting where possible.

Initial work around this theme included the establishment and promotion of a central point of information – a hub – with information on matters relating to older people and long term conditions. The hub is improving all the time and provides a really useful source of information for service users and deliverers from all sectors, while using existing networks, organisations and service staff. The Delivery Group also commissioned a research project around options for support for carers and the results will be used to make recommendations which we hope will help inform future services.

We want people to participate positively in their communities and the economy and be valued for their contribution.

The Delivery Group wants older people to play a positive part in their communities and



be valued for that. Part of the work around this theme was to implement a marketing strategy using positive images of local people. To help identify stereotypical impressions of older people by young people – and vice versa – the Delivery Group, along with Orkney Voices (an older people's forum) held a photo competition with the theme 'Unexpected Ageing – changing the view'. They asked for

photos of younger and older people taking part in activities together that showed something unexpected and positive about getting older. Shown here is 'Learning at the potter's wheel' by Jenny Hall.

We want people to be enabled to take responsibility for their long term health and wellbeing.

Through the work of this Delivery Group, we're able to provide 'start up' funds and/or support to set up new community activities. The purpose is preventative: to help older people to maintain their health and independence for longer. The activities all help reduce social isolation which research shows has the potential to negatively affect people's wellbeing, quality of life and health. To be awarded funds, groups must be able to demonstrate that they can sustain themselves afterwards and we monitor that. Examples of the activities funded include:

- The Papay Lunchtime Club is aimed at social inclusion for older people, but a mix of age groups attends and it has become very popular. Fourteen older people who had previously not engaged with any group on the island have come along fortnightly for a soup and sandwich lunch - and learned to use tablet computers.
- Sandwick Over 70s Club has only recently been established but already has 40 members. This improves social inclusion for this age group in a rural parish.
- St Andrews Community Association is running weekly classes offering 'Gentle Exercise for the Elderly' to enable older people to maintain or improve mobility, balance and wellbeing as well as meet with local people, thereby improving social inclusion. Pictured below, the class is attended by around 20 women every week and they're all really enjoying it. The organiser says many of them have told her they feel so much better due to the exercise – and, of course, the 'tea and blether' afterwards.



This Delivery Group has supported the establishment and launch of other activities as well. Men's Sheds is now an independent organisation with charitable status. This project provides a community venue for men to get out of the house and do something useful in

good company. It improves social inclusion and wellbeing. Members of the Shed may well find themselves becoming more interested in life as well as being healthier.

Walking Football, now well established locally and being run by a partner organisation, is growing in popularity. It is aimed at improving health and wellbeing in older people by improving their fitness levels in an enjoyable way. If you're over 50 and you thought your football career was over, think again. Who knows, we may yet have a walking football parish cup

During 2016 The Orkney Partnership Board agreed the following indicators as a measure of performance around the Positive Ageing strategic priority:

- Emergency Hospital admissions per 100,000 population for people aged 65 and over. The figure for 2015-16 was 959 and we want to maintain that figure or improve on it.
- The percentage of residents aged 60 and over with a very or fairly strong feeling of belonging to a community. The figure is already very high at 96% but think it can still be improved and hope to see it reach 98% by 2018-19.
- Mortality rates per 100,000 for people aged under 75. The figure for 2015-16 was 378.5 and we'd like to see that either maintained at that level or improved.

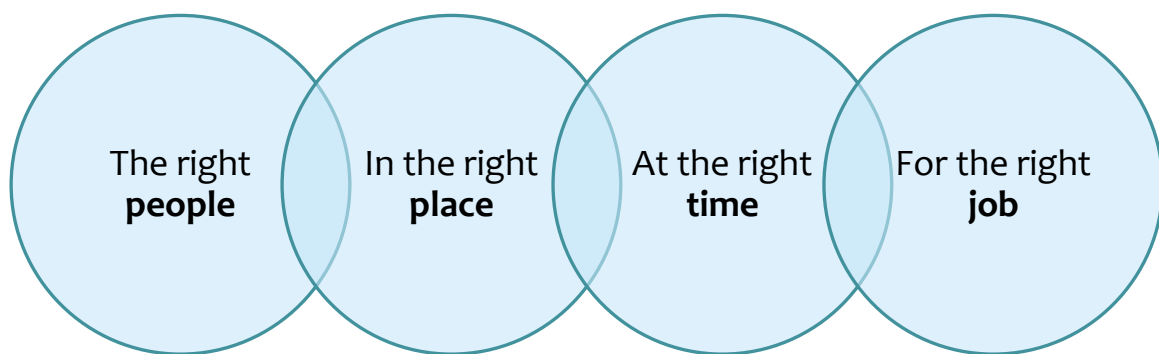
## VIBRANT ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

We want Orkney to be an attractive location for young people to live, work and study.

As part of this work Skills Development Scotland commissioned a research project to see what skills Orkney's employers need in future. The resulting Orkney Skills Investment Plan will help us make sure the right blend of academic and vocational opportunities are developed. The aim is that Orkney has the right workforce and that our young people

have the tools and skills they need to be part of that workforce. This Delivery Group will manage the Plan and, through a sub-group, will align its delivery with work to roll out the 'Orkney Offer', Developing the Young Workforce activities and the development of foundation apprenticeships (in Business, Care and Engineering) to be delivered locally from 2017. All of this work is key in tackling inequalities in employment.

Work is also continuing with a broad range of partners around the 'Orkney Offer' – the opportunities offered to young people reaching the senior phase of their education. A key part of this will be to raise awareness of young people and their parents of the employment opportunities on Orkney. This in turn will help meet the skills needs of local employers. The Orkney Offer commits partners to ensuring:



Members of the Delivery Group have also met with representatives from Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, to help in identifying local priority themes for a broad-based interdisciplinary programme of research, helping them establish a physical presence in Orkney. This is part of a growing interest from higher education institutions in opportunities for research, innovation and teaching in Orkney, also including Heriot-Watt University and University of Highlands and Islands.

We want Orkney to be widely recognised as a location for innovation and the application of experimental thinking in sustainable development in an island context.

Plans to develop a modern knowledge-based campus in Stromness took a major step forward when partners agreed a joint funding package totalling £6.65M for the project. The Orkney Research and Innovation Campus will support the growth of existing research and innovation activity and the expansion of companies in Orkney's world-leading marine renewables, energy and low carbon sector. While the





impacts of this joint venture will be felt across Orkney it will be transformational for Stromness leading to new jobs and activity.

Progress on Hydrogen projects in Orkney is ongoing, with the hydrogen generation facility on Eday due to be completed early in 2017 after which the Surf n Turf project will prepare to accept the Eday hydrogen for use at Kirkwall harbour.

We want Orkney's economy to offer a broad range of community-based employment opportunities.

The Islands Deal is a partnership initiative led by the three islands councils in collaboration with the Scottish and UK governments. Work around the Deal is made up of two interlinked strands of activity. Strand 1 is about enhanced local democracy and autonomy and Strand 2 is about investment and development that will enable the three island groups to achieve their economic potential. As the Deal progresses the Vibrant Economic Environment Delivery Group will play a leading role in the workstream relating to the second strand. An ongoing task during 2017 will be the development of detailed proposals for the local portfolio of projects which contribute to Strand 2 of the Deal.

During 2016 The Orkney Partnership Board agreed the following indicators as a measure of performance around the Vibrant Economic Environment strategic priority:

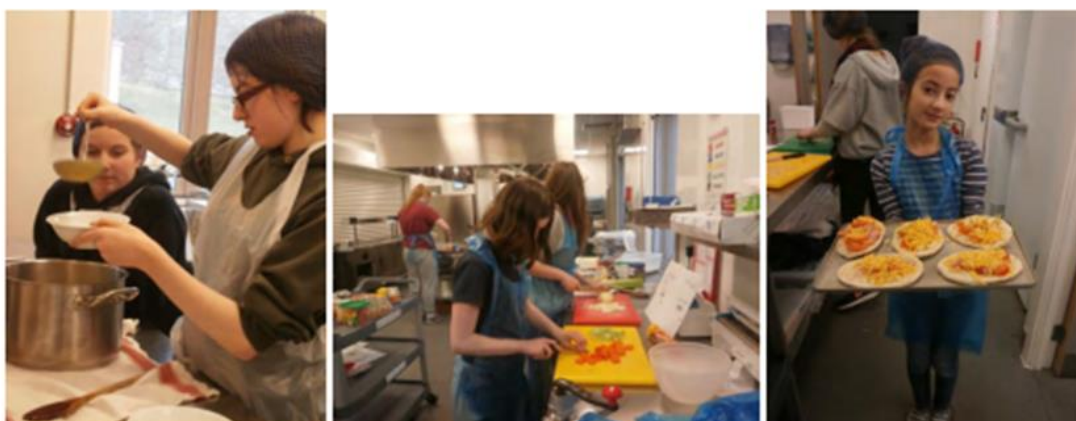
- The employment rate of 16 to 64 year olds. The figure for 2015-16 was 86.8% and we want to maintain that figure or improve on it.
- The percentage of 16 to 19 year olds participating in education, employment and other training and development activities. The figure for 2015-16 was 94.1% and we want to maintain that figure or improve on it.
- The percentage of 16 to 19 year olds with an unconfirmed status. The figure for 2015-16 was 3.6% and we'd like to improve by decreasing the figure.

## HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

We want people in Orkney to be encouraged and supported to adopt healthy lifestyles.

Realistic medicine (putting the person receiving health and care at the centre of decision-making) and encouraging people to make informed lifestyle choices is a key feature of our activities.

Confidence to Cook courses (pictured) are being offered widely. The two day course looks at practical cooking skills as well as options for cooking with food on a low budget or food provided by the Foodbank. This is going to be broadened further with youth groups. We'd also like to develop this to reach and engage with the more vulnerable people in our communities and we're actively working on a plan to do just that.



A toolkit/resource re diet/nutrition and physical activity in later life is also being developed. The training pack has been completed and arrangements are being made for training delivery in early 2017.

Ahead of its launch in January 2017, the Delivery Group spent time considering how to promote the ActiveLife Card. A joint initiative between partners, it offers unlimited access to 12 different sports and leisure venues across Orkney. Members can tap into a host of facilities, activities and fitness classes available at the Pickaquoy Centre, OIC's seven Healthy Living Centres, Stromness Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre, KGS Sports Centre, Stromness Squash Courts and the Dounby Centre all under one card. Card holders can take part in lots of activities covering a wide range of age groups and fitness



levels - from Jungle World soft play to gyms, health suites and exercise classes.

Given the links between poor health and income inequalities, and the fact that lack of exercise can widen health inequalities, we're particularly pleased that there are three affordable membership options – being more active, more often is now more affordable.

We want people in Orkney to be supported to plan and develop sustainable living and participate in community activities that improve access, build inclusiveness and reduce inequalities.

Social enterprises are well placed to promote inclusion and tackle inequalities. The [Highlands and Islands Social Enterprise Zone](#) delivered a workshop on social enterprise for us. This allowed us to start planning ahead and consider what opportunities there might be to encourage social enterprise development linked to the new hospital. Work is ongoing and it is hoped to take advantage of the NHS Orkney's Community Benefit Clause.

We want Orkney to have a sustainable workforce.

Childcare provision plays a large part in having a sustainable workforce. Work has started to look at what childcare provision is available and explore solutions to support parents in the workplace.

During 2016 The Orkney Partnership Board agreed the following indicators as a measure of performance around the Healthy and Sustainable Communities strategic priority:

- The number of adults participating in some form of sport or exercise, including walking, in the previous four weeks. The figure for 2015-16 was 83% and we would like to improve that figure by increasing it to reach 87% in 2018-19.
- The percentage of households in Orkney with a Universal Leisure Membership Card. The baseline figure we used to measure this indicator is 14%, based on Orkney Islands Council and Pickaquoy Centre membership in 2015-16. Our aim is to see 19% of households with an ActiveLife card by 2016-17.

## CHALLENGES

In addressing our priorities of keeping Orkney 's economy vibrant, supporting healthy and sustainable communities and ensuring positive ageing, we are conscious that there are a number of cross-cutting challenges which need to be addressed to help us achieve our three priorities. These are transport, digital connectivity, housing and fuel poverty and they impact on everything we do. It's important that we keep an oversight on these challenges as, whilst they are already being addressed by partner organisations, it is essential that they are addressed. In that way we can focus our collective efforts on our biggest problem areas where our combined thinking and resources can add most value for our community.

## TRANSPORT

If you live in Orkney, particularly in the isles, you can't have failed to notice the number of consultations that have been held around transport.

### You've been asked about

- Internal ferry services
- Internal air services
- Northern isles ferry services
- Inter-island ferry timetables
- Inter-island air timetables
- Freight services
- And ...

... there was more - you were asked questions about transport in the OIC budget simulator ...

... and questions around transport were asked as part of the Your Island Your Choice project ...

... and there was a review of community transport provision, revisited following the establishment of Orkney's Integrated Joint Board, Orkney Health and Care. There will be more to report next year, including joint work around care transport – our aim is joint community and care transport





All these consultations and studies meant a lot of busy people spent valuable time attending meetings and answering surveys. The fact that so many people took the time to participate highlights the importance of transport. The feedback helped provide the

evidence that's needed for negotiations with the Scottish Government – and enormous strides have been made. For example, the Scottish Government's Plan for Scotland 2016-17 included a commitment to reduce ferry fares to the Northern Isles, a positive indication that some of Orkney's 'asks' are coming through.

As transport is one of Orkney's big challenges it is regularly discussed at Orkney Partnership Board meetings. These discussions and updates help to share understanding of transport issues and ensure all partners are on the same page. The Chair of HiTRANS is a Board member and HiTRANS values the interest of the Partnership and the opportunity to address transport issues collectively. We've been kept up to date to inform our discussions around strategic matters relating to transport. Our aim is always to find out what's being done to

address any areas of concern, and then see if there are any gaps where a partnership approach might help to overcome barriers.



## HOUSING AND FUEL POVERTY



The Orkney Partnership Board regularly discusses these two big topics. The main issues around **housing** are build costs and funding regulations that sometimes don't suit the islands. However, we are hopeful that the Scottish Government's new Rural Housing Fund will provide some much needed housing

in Orkney's communities. While Government unit funding for social housing has increased, it's difficult to deliver properties in Orkney within the funding limits due to higher costs, particularly when developing houses in the isles.

**Fuel poverty** is a real issue in Orkney and worse in the isles. The main reasons for this are the high cost of fuel, relatively low incomes and the quality and age of some of our housing. Orkney produces more than 100% of the electrical energy it uses, yet electricity still costs more than in Inverness and most of the rest of the United Kingdom. There is a wide range of fuel poverty and energy efficiency initiatives but the sheer number of these and the complexity of some of the schemes themselves can be very confusing. Grants are often designed for urban housing and don't take account of the fact that rural detached properties cost much more to insulate. Partner agencies encourage frontline staff such as home carers and GPs to identify some of Orkney's vulnerable households so that they can be offered help and advice.



The Orkney Partnership Board wrote to the Scottish Minister for Local Government and Housing, Kevin Stewart MSP, to lobby for assistance. We explained the 'one size fits all' national approach to fuel poverty and housing provision rarely works in Orkney and a more flexible approach, like that demonstrated through the Rural Housing Fund, would assist Orkney to meet housing need and combat fuel poverty. It does seem that positive progress is being made. The Minister has assured the Board he will keep the issues raised under review. In return, the Board offered the services of officers from OIC to feed into the development of the Warm Homes Bill and assist with island proofing any proposals. The Board also extended an open invitation to Mr Stewart to visit Orkney - to see the challenges faced by island areas and to look at some of the innovative ways that these challenges are being overcome.

## DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

Digital connectivity has been a regular item of discussion at meetings of the Orkney Partnership Board and the Vibrant Economic Environment Delivery Group during 2016. Stuart Robertson, HIE's Director of Digital Highlands & Islands, visited Orkney in August 2016 and gave us a briefing on progress and future plans for the rollout of digital and mobile coverage in Orkney. 4G mobile coverage continues to expand across the county and more than 7,000 homes and businesses have been drawn into a new fibre optic broadband network as a result of the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband project. The £146 million investment for the Highlands and Islands brought high-speed services to



Orkney for the first time, and was expected to reach 75% of premises with the current project by the end of 2016. Services are mostly delivered by fibre cabinets and BT engineer Steven Cursiter and HIE's Stuart Robertson are pictured with one of the cabinets in Burray.

Despite progress there is still a way to go – on the right is a recurring comment during our Your Island Your Choice locality planning consultation in the isles. The Scottish Government's aim is that **everyone** will have access to superfast speeds of at least 30Mbps by 2021.

*Excellent, reliable connections are crucial for remote island communications and our internet connection is neither...*

## WHAT ELSE HAVE WE BEEN DOING?

As well as the work done to meet our priorities, we have been doing lots of other things. Read on to find out more.

### SYRIAN RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME



During 2016 plans were made for the help and support to be offered when two young families arrived in Orkney. They were living in refugee camps in the Middle East after being forced to flee their own homes because of the fighting in Syria. The move to Orkney was done through the Syrian Resettlement Programme.

This programme prioritises people in greatest need, including those who need urgent medical attention, people who have survived torture and violence, and women and children at risk. People often live in

refugee camps for years and many children have lived their entire lives in such precarious circumstances.

The Syrian Resettlement Programme Working Group, formed in 2015 by the Partnership, had a very busy year ensuring that co-ordinated and effective resettlement plans were in place. A range of support measures were developed for implementation by public agencies and the voluntary sector in Orkney. This was all focused on supporting positive outcomes for two Syrian families who were expected to make their homes in Orkney. This is an excellent example of partnership working as, without the commitment of the partners and the community, Orkney would not have been able to participate in the Programme.

## LOCALITY PLANNING

Locality planning is another new duty for us introduced by Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Locality plans help us tackle inequalities. They make sure our planning is done at a local level for areas experiencing particular disadvantage. We chose the non-linked isles for our first locality plan – it will supplement the LOIP and be published later in the year along with our updated LOIP.

Step 1: Survey

Step 2: Follow-up visits to Isles

Step 3:

TOP and IJB use the information to help develop their locality plans. VAO continue the YIYC project - by the end of March 2017, £36k will have been given to the isles for projects they have voted for.

To help us develop our locality plan and find out what the priorities are for people living in the isles we used the place standard model survey alongside a pilot participatory budgeting project called **Your Island Your Choice**. YIYC was run on behalf of the Partnership by Voluntary Action Orkney, with the support of the Partnership and Orkney Health and Care (who also have to carry out locality planning work). Because we all know how much consultation and engagement work is carried out, we did this work together rather than doing it separately - an approach that was appreciated and we received some great

feedback. We're delighted so many people took the time to respond to the survey and came to speak to us - we found it a very valuable experience. It also offered island



communities the opportunity to access funding to progress small projects that might not otherwise have progressed.

Full results weren't available during 2016 and will be reported in next year's report. One example of a successful project is the provision of running water at the community hall in Graemsay and a games table for the children and young people. This is a very small community of less than 30 people. The hall is used as a gathering place and all island events and activities take place there. The Graemsay residents tell us this has given them a surge of enthusiasm and they are now planning to raise funds to redo the kitchen. They also predict the children and young people will not be the only ones using the games table.

## SCOTTISH INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION

We were concerned that first impressions of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016 (SIMD) suggest that Orkney might have become less equal. In December 2016 Scottish Government analysts visited Orkney to present workshops on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and its use in rural areas, and we're currently carrying out more analysis which will include a seminar on demographics later in 2017. This is the sort of work we do regularly to make sure our priorities are still relevant to our changing population.

## PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT

Thanks to a proposal by Cathie Cowan, who is Chair of the Healthy and Sustainable Communities Delivery Group, a Property Asset Management and Use Short Life Working Group is being established to help us develop a partnership approach to property asset management. Our target outcome is the improved use of properties. This can only be achieved by working together and taking an innovative and creative approach to use, disposal and development of our properties.

Assets may also be of use to local communities, and the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 introduced new ways for community groups to register an interest in acquiring an asset. We will report further on the activity of this new group in our 2017 report.

## WANT TO KNOW MORE?



Are you interested in community planning but don't completely understand the 'whys and wherefores' and your place in the process? Whether it's a subject that is completely new to you or if you simply want to check up on one thing, you can find answers in our new [FAQs](#).

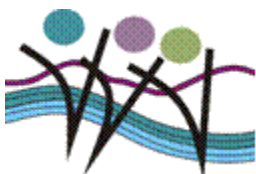
You might also be interested in our [Terms of Reference](#). These were updated during 2016 and, as well as details of our groups, roles and responsibilities, you can find everything from the key principles of community planning to how to contact us.

We give regular updates on what we're doing. We want anyone who's interested to be able to find out more. For that reason we publish newsletters after every Board meeting so that anyone who wants to can read what we've been doing.



All of this information and more can be found on our web pages on the Orkney Communities platform: [www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/COMMUNITYPLANNING/](http://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/COMMUNITYPLANNING/)

If you can't find what you're looking for there, or if you want more information, please do get in touch as we'd love to hear from you. Contact us by email on [corporateservices@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:corporateservices@orkney.gov.uk) or telephone 01856 873535 extension 2153.



**Working together for a better Orkney**