Section 1:	Neil Henning
Your personal and contact details	
1.1 Name *	
Select a topic to comment on	Tell us your vision for the area

4.1 How do you want the West Highland and Islands area to change over the next 10-20 years?

First off – my background. I'm a recent immigrant to the Isle of Skye, having spent 5 years working for a software company based out of Edinburgh (Codeplay Software Ltd.). As part of my relocation, I was allowed to look into having a local office, based in Portree, where I could work out of and also have the ability to hire people who also want to take in the amazing lifestyle you get from living on an Island like Skye. The problem was, there isn't any good office space that we could use! Our requirements are good internet, near to the town centre, have enough space to have client meetings, but we just couldn't find any space.

I've taken to working at home, and am now planning my work life as a home worker. I think that Portree is a goldmine of opportunity in this regard though. You've got Sitekit who are running most of the NHS's computer systems based here, and I've been snooping around and there are plenty of other self employed or home working employees working in IT in and around Portree.

My vision is that we create a tech-village in Portree, a place where 4-6 companies can rent office space at an affordable rate, that has shared meeting rooms, mini-conference space, and maybe even a communal working place (these are growing massively in popularity around the world) whereby people can rent a desk on a per-monthly basis.

This would be great because;
– It would give local professionals a place to meet.
– It would boost the reputation of Portree, and the entire region.
– It would allow companies to host more events here (Sitekit host an annual conference here but its not in an actual conference hall).
– It would create a space whereby new companies could come into the area too.

– We could allow for more educational links with the local high school (which at present has no computing course to offer that does programming!).

– Home working/remote working employees are on the rise, why not make Portree the place to go?

4.2 What do you think are the best, existing assets and characteristics of the area? Think of your favourite landscapes, settlements, journeys, events and meeting places.	Portree is great. It has a good population, lots of housing, lots of surrounding areas that are close by, and lots of local services. I think if you gave the town street a face lift (a lick of paint would do) that is all it needs.
4.4 How can these assets and characteristics best be safeguarded, improved or used to provide economic or community growth?	I think by getting more high earning professionals into the local economy can never hurt, and being able to provide links to some of the bigger companies would be great to.