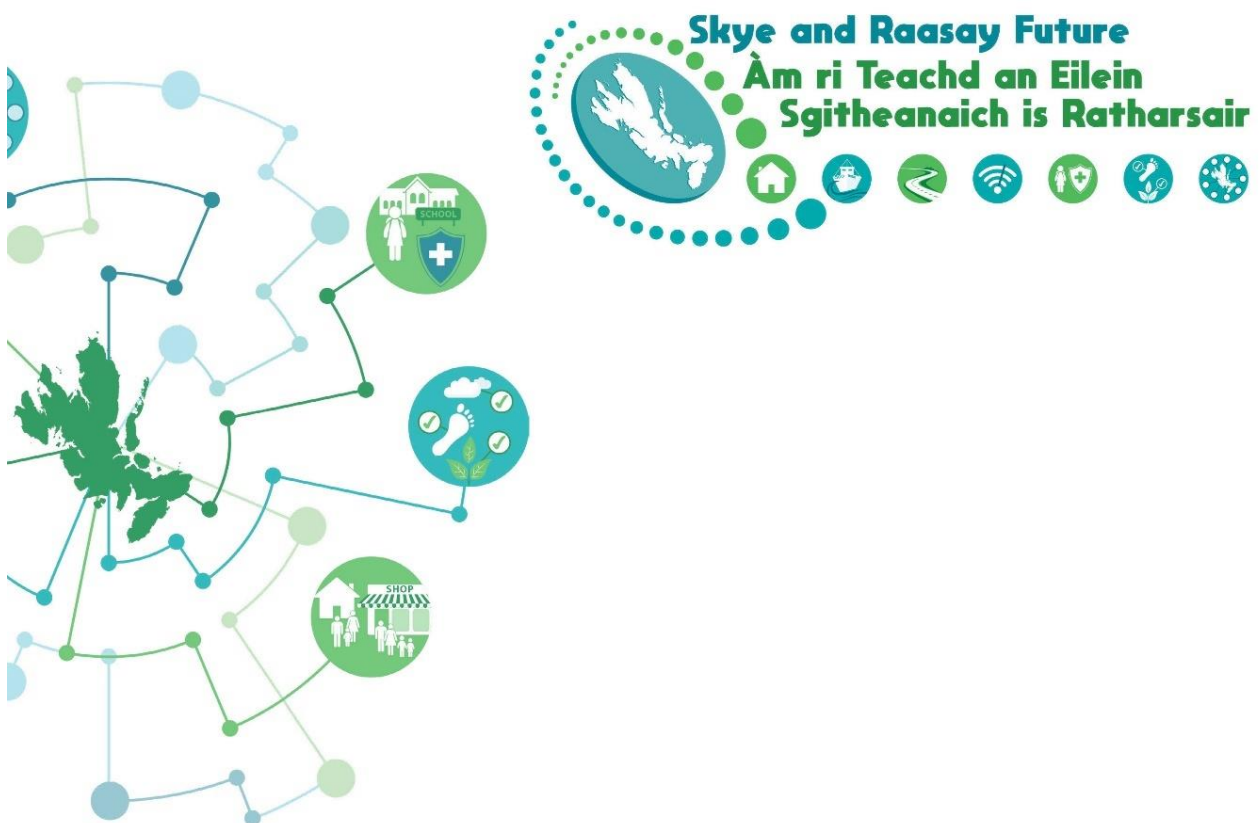


# Skye and Raasay Future

## August 2021

Final Draft for Committee



**2021**

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# 1. Purpose and Background

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**Skye and Raasay is one of the most distinct and well-loved parts of the UK. It's rich cultural heritage and outstanding landscape and natural environment are defining features and have helped the area become an increasingly popular place to live and visit. Whilst certain sectors of the economy have flourished in recent times, investment in infrastructure has struggled to keep pace and long-standing issues have been exacerbated. To help respond to the challenges of the pandemic, Brexit and climate change this document proposes a coordinated and dynamic approach from all stakeholders. This will ensure that Skye and Raasay receives the attention it deserves and supports communities across the region now and in the future.**

## 1.1. Purpose

Skye and Raasay Future (SARF) is a shared statement of the values, ambition and priorities for partners to work together to improve outcomes for everyone across the area. It also outlines how current and future actions and investments can help to address these priorities. It is intended to act as an investment portfolio for the future of Skye & Raasay and will create a credible and robust case for seeking future funding.

SARF is also a commitment to better organise ourselves through an ongoing process for monitoring and delivering change. To help address the needs of current and future communities it proposes a new re-energised relationship between public service partners and community representatives and a dynamic and coordinated approach to delivery.

## 1.2. The Story So Far

The presentation of SARF follows extensive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders carried out in the period from January to June 2021. The main online engagement workshops were independently led by representatives from Architecture & Design Scotland (A&DS) who formed part of the SARF Project Team alongside staff from the Highland Council and Highlands & Islands Enterprise.

A&DS have prepared a report which summarises the feedback received during this process. This feedback has informed the main elements of this SARF framework and the proposed ongoing process. This engagement has provided stakeholders with an opportunity to help refine the priorities and outcomes previously identified through the Local Committee and Recovery Board. Stakeholders have highlighted and, in some cases, reinforced the key issues affecting communities, and shone a light on the huge amount of activity underway from partners across Skye and Raasay.

Skye and Raasay Future also builds on and champions the work already undertaken both locally and regionally. It takes account of efforts across the area by communities and organisations and the input received throughout the engagement process on the priorities and required actions to deliver change. It also aligns with other regional and national priorities, such as those set in the National Islands Plan and the Government's national outcomes.

### 1.3. Structure

The document is best viewed in the Storymap format – available at [www.highland.gov.uk/skyeraasay](http://www.highland.gov.uk/skyeraasay) - but can also be downloaded as a PDF. It is structured around the following key components:

- **Section 2 – Strengths and Challenges**
- **Section 3 - Outcomes for People and Place** – The shared values and impacts that partners expect to be achieved
- **Sections 4 – 9** – For each outcome theme we consider:
  - i. What are the current issues?
  - ii. What's already being done?
  - iii. Future Priorities and Responsibilities
- **Section 10 – Organising Ourselves** – How we can work together to deliver change

The Plan connects the benefits of the collectively identified projects, with not only the agreed outcomes for the area, but those of the region and nation. It therefore positions Skye and Raasay in the best possible place to bounce back post-pandemic, adjust and benefit from Brexit whilst also addressing the Climate and Ecological Emergency.

## 2. Skye and Raasay – Strengths and Challenges

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### 2.1. Strengths

#### *Our People, Environment and Heritage*

The people of Skye and Raasay share a strong connection with each other and the rich natural and cultural heritage which surrounds them. The population of Skye and Raasay has seen a modest increase over the past 10 years - from 10,177 to 10,591 equating to 5.88 people per sq km.

Within Skye and Raasay's 1,798 sq km and 984km of coastline there are many beautiful and dramatic landscapes. This is reflected in 48% of the landmass being is covered by protected landscape designations. Crofting has shaped not only how and where people live but also contributed to this unique landscape. So too has the rich and varied natural heritage with areas of protection covering dinosaur footprints to white tailed eagles.

#### *Centre for Gaelic*

Gaelic language and culture is a defining part of the region and it makes substantial social, cultural and economic benefits to the Highlands and Scotland. Sabhal Mòr Ostaig in Sleat is Scotland's National Centre for Gaelic Language and Culture providing world-renowned short courses, further education, higher education and extensive research capacity and support. In 2019, it had almost 120 members of staff, around 430 student enrolments and an annual income of £6 million.

#### *Attractive Destination*

Tourism has been a key industry for Skye and Raasay for many decades but has grown dramatically in recent times. A recent [study](#) found that 650,000 visited the area in 2019<sup>1</sup> with the population increasing 6 fold, from 10,000 to 60,000, in the peak tourist season. It also found that pre-pandemic the industry supported 2,850 jobs was worth £211million a year to Skye alone.

#### *Strong economy*

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the unemployment rate was under 2%, lower than regionally (2.5%) and nationally (3%). Across Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross, SMEs account for a higher share of private sector employment at 74.% than regionally (67.7%) and nationally (50.6%).

ONS data shows that in 2018, 24% of employment in Skye and Raasay was within the accommodation and food services sector, which compares to 11% across Highland and 8% nationally. The area also has a higher share of employment in

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gcu.ac.uk/theuniversity/universitynews/2020-moffat-centre-skye-report-211million-covid19/>

arts, entertainment and recreation at 4.2%, compared to 2.9% regionally and 2.8% nationally. Other key industries include health (at 17%), education (9%), retail (6.8%), and construction (5.8%). <sup>2</sup>

### *Economic Prospects and Growth Potential*

With its world-renowned landscape and distinct culture, together with its land and marine assets and high quality of life, Skye and Raasay is ideally placed to grow and continue to make a positive impact on the national stage. Significant investments are already planned which will provide better connections and strengthen the communities.

## **2.2. Challenges**

### *Climate Change*

The Scottish Government pledge to end Scotland's contribution to climate change no later than 2045. The Highland Council declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019 and recommitted to achieving a carbon neutral Highland by 2025.

Residential heating is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions, and in Skye and Raasay, oil central heating is the most common at 34% of households followed by electric central heating at 28%.

<b>Method of Domestic Heating</b>	<b>Skye and Raasay % of households</b>	<b>Highland Council Area % of households</b>
No central heating	7	3
Mains gas central heating	0	34
Electric central heating	28	24
Oil central heating	34	24
Solid fuel central heating (wood & coal)	11	5
Other central heating	11	1
Two or more types of central heating	10	5

To support the net zero transition for the region upgrades to the electricity grid are required. The existing 132kV overhead line running from Fort Augustus to Ardmore in North Skye is essential to maintain security of supply to homes and businesses along its route, as well as to the Western Isles. It is programmed for replacement and SSEN has committed to future-proof the new line to accommodate future renewable energy generation and demand.

<sup>2</sup> Business Register and Employment Survey 2018 figures

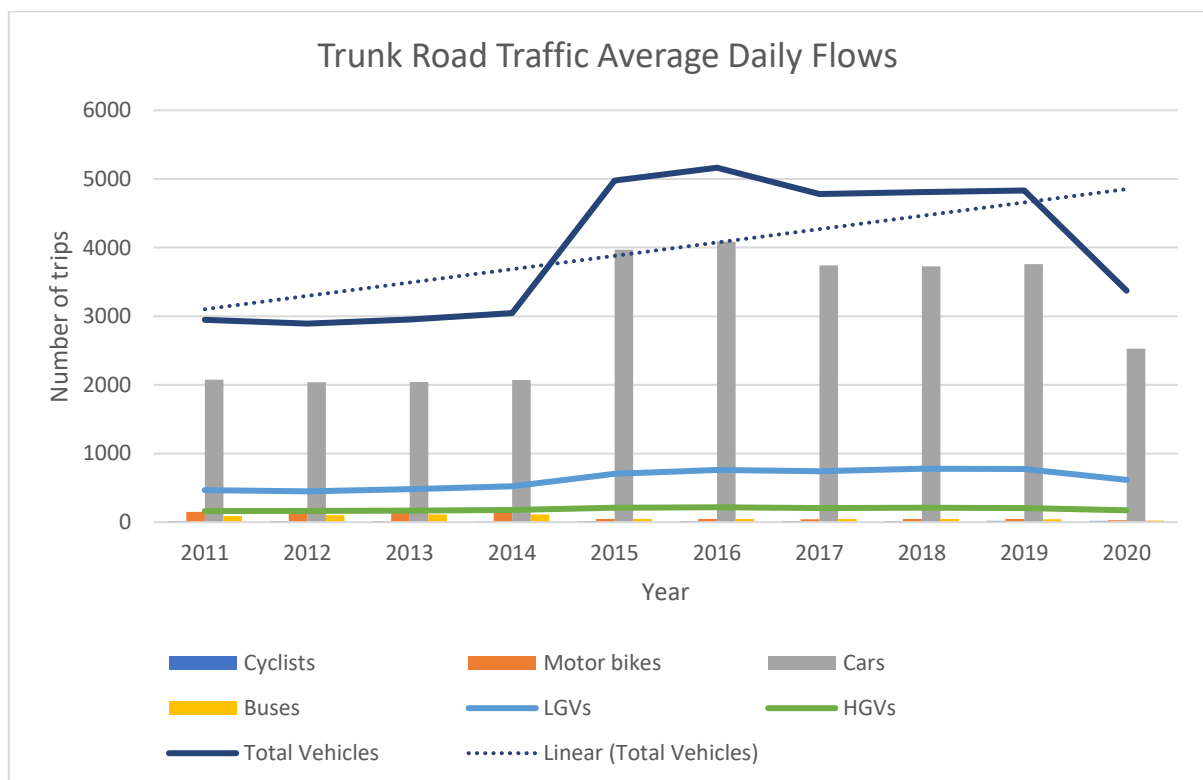
In addition, the changing climate is likely to result in various infrastructure challenges over the coming years, including increasingly extreme weather events which will potentially threaten local service delivery.

### *Transport Challenges*

Skye and Raasay is also characterised by a number of small population centres and a dispersed population throughout the area, creating a number of challenges for the transport network:

1. Cost effective delivery of public transport.
2. Long distances involved on minor and single-track roads.
3. The use of marine transport for commercial and domestic uses.

The Regional Transport Strategy has identified Skye and Lochalsh as the regional centre with the longest journey times to the central belt (majority of drive times are in excess of 5 hours and over 7 hours by public transport) and the only major population centre in the HITRANS area where a day trip to the central belt is not viable. North West Skye is also the farthest part of the Highland Council area from Inverness



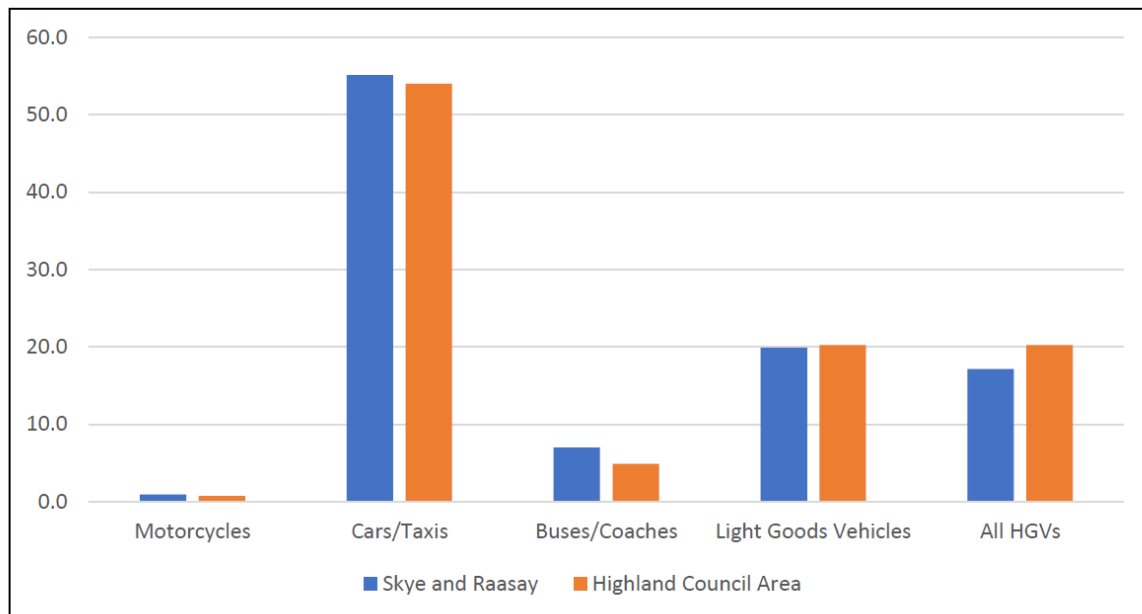
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<sup>3</sup> Trunk road flows based on data taken at Kyleakin Roundabout <https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/local-authorities/35>



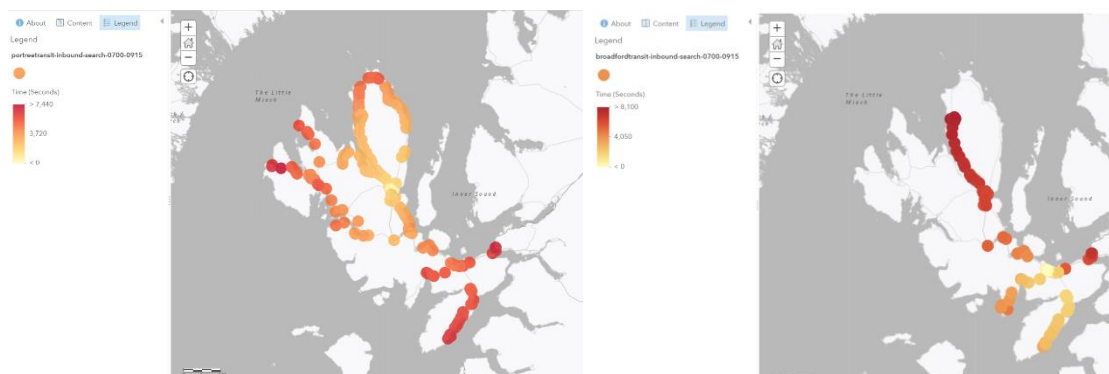
The area attracts a significant number of tourists and also coach tours which may help explain the slightly higher car and coach/bus emissions.

**Figure 2 - Percentage Distribution of Road Transport GHG Emissions; Skye and Raasay ECO area and the Wider Highland Council area**



Ferry traffic has increased steadily:

- 61% increase in passenger, car and coach traffic on the Mallaig to Armadale ferry 2007 to 2019
- 31% increase in passenger, car and coach traffic on the Uig to Tarbert ferry 2007 to 2019<sup>4</sup>



The graphics provide an illustration of the level of accessibility and journey time to Portree and Broadford from different parts of Skye and Raasay by 09.15 on a school weekday:

<sup>4</sup> Skye and Isle of Raasay Economic Impact Report (2020)

### *Declining working age population*

The composition of the population has changed significantly. The number of young people (0-15 years old) has steadily dropped from 1,666 to 1,533 (-8%) whereas the number of people at retirement age (65+ years old) has risen from 1,959 to 2,696 (+27%)<sup>5</sup>. These are significantly greater changes than the Highland average, which has experienced an overall reduction in young people (0-15 years old) by 5.5% and an increase in over 65 years olds by 15.6%. This trend is also highlighted by the steady decline in the Portree High School roll which has fallen from 723 pupils in 1993 to 475 in 2019, a drop of 34.3%.

### *Destination of pupils*

The table below shows that significantly fewer pupils from Portree High School went on to higher education (e.g. only 17% in 2017/18) when compared to Highland as a whole (35.5% in 2017/18) and Scotland (41.1% in 2017/18). Whereas, far higher numbers of pupils go straight into employment (with 59% on Skye in 2017/18 and only 22.7% nationally).

	Portree High School			HIGHLAND			SCOTLAND		
DESTINATION	16/17	17/18	18/19	16/17	17/18	18/19	16/17	17/18	18/19
Higher Education	26.21%	17.05%	23.30%	35.5	35.15	32.20	40.71	41.1	40.35
Further Education	16.50%	18.18%	27.18%	23.68	19.87	23.14	26.83	26.5	27.27
Training			1.94%	1.74	1.35	4.81	2.43	2.1	3.47
Employment	53.40%	59.09%	46.60%	31.31	36.62	33.88	21.97	22.7	22.92
Voluntary		1.14%		0.83	0.78	0.71	0.55	0.7	0.58
Activity Agreements				2.45	2.17		1.22	1.2	
Unemployed Seeking	0.97%			1.41	1.80	2.08	4.47	3.8	3.12
Unemployed Not Seeking	2.91%	4.55%	0.97%	1.45	1.15	1.46	1.45	1.3	1.41
Unknown				1.62	1.07	1.68	0.37	0.4	0.42

*Note: National averages have been calculated from the figures for all available local authority and grant-aided schools, whereas the local authority averages are based on local authority schools only.*

### *Deprivation*

Large areas of north and west Skye and the Isle of Raasay are identified as Fragile Areas. These are areas characterised by declining population, under-representation of young people within the population, lack of economic opportunities, below average income levels, problems with transport and other issues reflecting their geographic location.

<sup>5</sup> Mid Year Population Estimates for Eilean a Cheo Ward (S13002999) by specified age groupings



The areas of Skye and Raasay fall within the middle third datazones when measured against indicators of multiple deprivation. They range from most deprived in West Portree (32%) and least deprived (63%) in Minginish. The data shows that income levels, employment opportunities, health and accessibility are the main issues facing the area.

### *Fuel Poverty*

Households in the Skye and Lochalsh were found to pay around £1,000 a year more on energy bills than an average sized home in Scotland – a 76% premium.

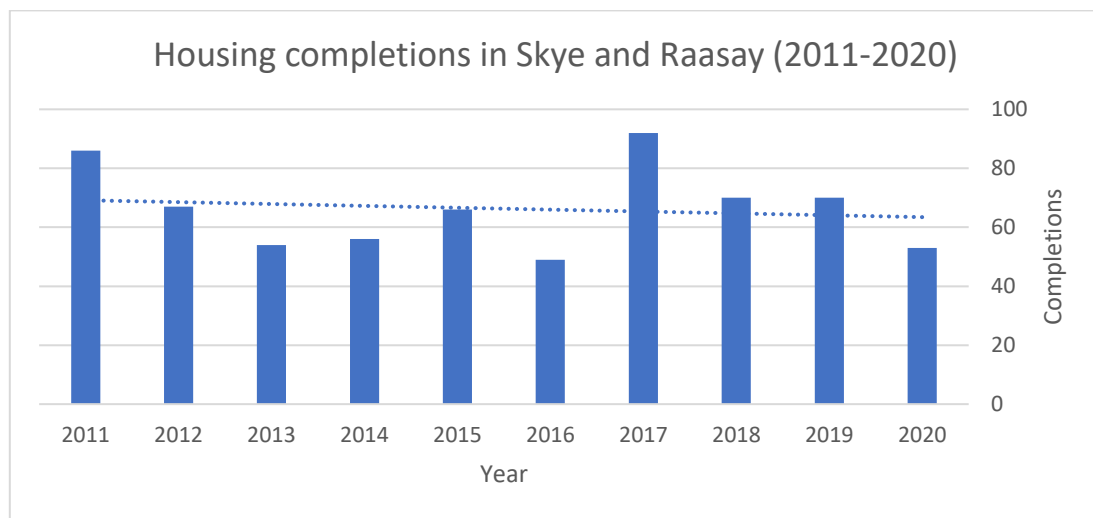
Primary Heating Type	Average Energy Bill*	Difference to Scottish Average
Electricity	£1,621	£363
Solid Fuel	£2,176	£918
LPG Gas	£2,357	£1,099
Oil	£2,519	£1,261
All heating types	£2,218	£960
Scottish average energy bill**	£1,258	

### *Difficulties Accessing Housing*

Skye and Raasay housing market has been popular with people from outside the area with only 47% of sales from the local area. 17.5% went to people from outside Highland but in the Rest of Scotland and 25% went to buyers from England. Of those, 4.3% were overseas buyers.

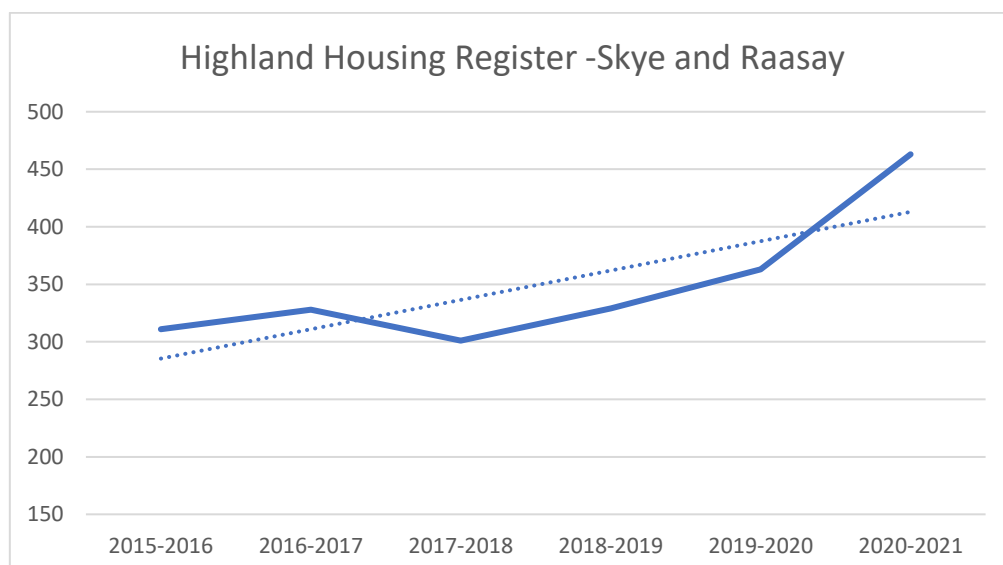
Average house prices in Skye and Lochalsh increased to £198,712 in 2018/19 (the median price in 2003 was £100,000). This compares with an average cost of £112,201 in Caithness, £167,245 in Sutherland and £181,990 across Highland. Sales to buyers from the local area averaged at £168,704 whereas to England it was

£208,840, the rest if Scotland is was £209,000 and for international buyers it was £238,998.



House completions have not increased to meet demand, with a declining trend over the past 10 years.

The affordability of housing and the lack of supply has become a main problem in recent years. The number of people on the Highland Housing Register has increased nearly 50% in 6 years between 2015/16 to 2020/21. Some of those places which have increased the most have been in Armadale (from 1 applicant in 2015/16 to 16 in 2020/21) and Kyelakin (from 13 applicants in 2015/16 to 37 in 2020/21). There is also potential hidden demand which cannot be collected by the HHR. The HHR only records demand in areas where there is current social housing. Therefore, in locations such as Torrin, Kirkbost or Eynort, there is no way of the HHR to record demand because it does not allow applicants to select these areas.



\* Across Highland, the total number of HHR applications greatly increased due to Covid-19. The HHR Partnership agreed to temporarily suspend re-registration and cancellation of incomplete application. The total number of applications increased by over 2000 across the whole Local Authority in 2020-2021.

Skye and Raasay has the highest one bedroom demand across of all Highland. 70% of all HHR applicants with Skye and Raasay as their first choice have a one bedroom need. This is 10% higher than the Highland average. The stock availability for one bedroom is 29% which means there is a supply shortage.

Across Skye and Raasay, there are areas where demand cannot be met because stock is not available. This is most pronounced in Armadale where there is one property but 16 applicants who have selected that area as their first choice. Furthermore, this one property is a three bedroom and therefore the 11 applicants who have a one bedroom need in Armadale will be unable to be housed there until suitable social housing is built.

### *Employment Exposure*

The COVID pandemic has highlighted the region's reliance on tourism. The unemployment rate in Portree increased from 0.9% to 7.2% (above the Scottish average of 6.5%) with youth employment in the wider area at 10.7%. The share of jobs in sectors most exposed to COVID-19 is higher in Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross (52% of jobs) than regionally (40%) and nationally (37%).

In Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross, 70% of communities at datazone level are within the 20% most vulnerable communities to Brexit in Scotland, higher than the proportion across Highland and regionally (both 43%)

### *Town centre Town and village centres*

Portree, with a population of 2,755, is the economic and social centre of the region but the town centre scored the lowest overall of all the town centres surveyed in The Highland Council's 2018 [Town Centre Health Check](#). Despite having the lowest retail unit vacancy rate of any town centre assessed and high levels of independent retailers, it scored the lowest of any against the more qualitative indicators (26/50), in particular its poor condition of the public realm, lack of greenery, lack of cycling facilities, sense of conflict between traffic and pedestrians, difficulty in moving through the town centre and its overcrowded bus station.

### 3. Outcomes for People and Place

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These outcomes are intended to capture the hopes and ambitions of all partners working for the future of Skye and Raasay. They describe the values and impacts that partners in Skye and Raasay expect to emerge from the actions, interventions and projects that are underway and planned for the future.

1. **Climate Action and Resilience** – A net zero emission place where actions have been taken to decarbonise all key sectors including buildings and transport, whilst communities and businesses have been prepared and are ready for the impacts of our changing climate.
2. **Strengthening Communities** – A resilient, inclusive and resourceful community network where everyone has access to good quality, affordable housing options, appropriate access to essential services, and where Gaelic and the area's unique culture and identity is celebrated.
3. **Diverse and Green Economy** – An economy which builds on the area's natural assets, delivers sustainable tourism, and embraces a range of employment opportunities to promote wellbeing, attract investment and supports a thriving population.
4. **Transport Infrastructure** – An integrated and well maintained network of high-quality sustainable transport options which support social inclusion, a competitive economy and deliver the wider ambitions for the area.
5. **Health and Education** – Modern health, care and education facilities and services that are appropriate for the area and which make it resilient and an attractive place to live.
6. **Digital Infrastructure** – Reliable, affordable and future proofed digital connections which are accessible for all and support the growth of the economy and the communities.
7. **Organising Ourselves** – A coordinated and inclusive partnership of groups and organisations which work collaboratively to deliver the agreed vision for Skye and Raasay and added value.

Tackling the climate and ecological emergency is at the heart of this framework. It is threaded through each of the Outcomes and has influenced the list of actions and projects required to deliver change.

It will be vital that any projects, developments or interventions planned now and in the future directly contribute to the Outcomes that people have identified for the area. This document highlights the projects that are most closely linked to a particular outcome. However, the benefits of projects are expected to cut across many of the outcome themes.

### 3.1. How these outcomes were identified

The following outcomes have been developed throughout the various consultation forums and events that have been held during the first half of 2021. This is summarised in the consultation report which is available on the SARF webpage. They originated from a set of outcomes that were derived from both community priorities and outcomes identified by the Skye and Raasay Committee and the Council's COVID-19 Recovery Board.

They also took account of an Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy that the Council had prepared in late 2020 and into early 2021 to demonstrate the contribution that Highland can make to national outcomes through the new National Planning Framework being developed by Scottish Government. Following its approval by elected Members and submission to Scottish Government, the relevant aspects that were considered to be of relevance to Skye were extracted and considered.

Finally, a range of other considerations have been taken into account including:

- National - National Transport Strategy 2, National Tourism Strategy, National Transport Delivery Plan and the emerging National Planning Framework 4.
- Regional – Highland Outcome Improvement Plan, WestPlan, Tourism Infra Audit. Climate and Ecological Emergency declared by THC.
- Cross cutting themes set out in HOIP (but these don't include outcomes like retaining young people)

The outcomes for Skye and Raasay were distilled from a wide range of considerations, including work already undertaken by groups in the area, and refined through extensive consultation. They align with:

- The [Highland Outcome Improvement Plan](#);
- Local community priorities outlined by local communities and the Community Partnership;
- The area priorities identified by the Skye and Raasay Local Committee;
- Priorities identified by the Highland Council Recovery Board;
- The [Highland indicative Regional Spatial Strategy](#) – collaborative strategy which represents the contributions that Highland will make on the national stage in the next 30 years;
- The adopted [West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan \(WestPlan\)](#).
- An extensive range of previous consultations and studies that have already taken place.

## **Storymap & Project List**

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The current and future projects that have been identified through this process will be identified on an interactive Storymap for the published version of this plan (link to online Storymap). This will provide further details of each project and help to understand where and when things are happening.

The Storymap and Project List will support the ongoing process of monitoring and delivery through the wider SARF through the new Board (see Section 10).



## 4. Climate Action & Resilience

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**Headline Outcome** – A net zero emission place where actions have been taken to decarbonise all key sectors including buildings and transport, whilst communities and businesses have been prepared and are ready for the impacts of our changing climate.

### 4.1. What are the current issues?

The Scottish Government has pledged to end Scotland's contribution to climate change no later than 2045, and at a meeting of The Highland Council on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2019, it was agreed that the Council declare a climate and ecological emergency, in the process recommitting to achieving a carbon neutral Highland by 2025. Whilst the Council has been working to reduce its climate change impact for several years, Elected Members recognised the urgency of the problem and that the organisation needs to work better with partners to reduce emissions as well as to adapt to the change which is already locked into the climate system.

To better understand the scale of the challenge in achieving a net zero Highland, the Council commissioned a study in 2020 to baseline emissions across the region, broken down into the areas of responsibility for the Council's Executive Chief Officers. This included a specific report for Skye and Raasay which assessed emissions arising from the following key sectors, which are priority areas if the islands are going to support this transition:

- Residential property energy use;
- Transportation;
- Agriculture, forestry and other land use (AFOLU)

The report highlighted the following as critical issues:

- Heat for Residential buildings – a much higher percentage of residential buildings on Skye and Raasay are heated by oil or solid fuel. To meet the national net zero target, by 2045 all buildings in Scotland must have significantly reduced their energy use, and almost all buildings must be using a zero-emissions heating system. This creates a significant challenge for many buildings on Skye, coupled with high levels of fuel poverty.
- Transportation – given the dispersed nature of the populations of Skye and Raasay, the cost effective delivery of public transport is an ongoing challenge which has and will likely continue to result in car ownership being seen as a necessity, rather than an option. Transition to low carbon transport modes such as electric vehicles, may be heavily influenced by cost and complexity of electricity supply - tailored solutions (e.g. battery storage, dynamic load management, renewable energy) may be required to overcome challenges in areas of future demand (e.g. electric vehicle charging points).

In addition, there is recognition through the community consultation process to date that actions to adapt to the changing climate need to be front and centre; climate

change and its potential impacts need to be considered throughout the development and delivery of all SRIP projects going forward. It is imperative that projects have a strong and proactive approach to ensure vital public assets, infrastructure and services are fit for current and future generations.

#### **4.2. What's already being done?**

Highland Adapts seeks to deliver a place-based, partnership approach to climate action across the region. Highland Adapts will work strategically to minimise risks and seize the opportunities climate change brings for the local economy, society and the environment. This initiative will deliver a place-based adaptation strategy for Highland and a suite of area and sectoral action plans, bringing together key decision makers to enable transformational climate action.

The Council's new primary schools for Dunvegan and Broadford (see section 8.2) are being designed according to ultra low energy demand and will meet both The Highland Council and Scottish Government energy targets. The Broadford school in particular forms part of the Scottish Government's new Net Zero Public Sector Buildings Standard Pathfinder, which will help to set new standards for the future.

#### **Case Study - Raasay Hydro**

Two hydro schemes are now fully funded through the Raasay Development Trust (RDT) community shares offer and grants from the SSE Sustainable Development Fund and the Scottish Hydro Electric Community Trust. Construction is now underway and to reach this point RDT have been supported by their contractor BluEnergy, CARES, Community Shares Scotland and HIE. RDT aim to have the construction completed by September 2022. The Hydro will bring a huge long-term benefit to Raasay through the income being used to create a community benefit fund to support community initiatives. The hydro will also generate clean renewable energy supporting the drive to net 0. An event to celebrate the start of construction is planned for the afternoon of the 31st August 2021.

#### **4.3. Future Priorities & responsibilities**

To fully address this outcome the priorities are to support strategies, choices, and actions that reduce climate change and its impacts on the economy, **communities and the natural environment**.

- Many homeowners are unaware of the impending impacts of incoming **regulation change** around heat and the negative impacts on air quality associated with the use wood burning stoves. In addition, the decarbonisation of homes and buildings is critical if Scotland is going to end its contribution to climate change by 2045 – this will impact almost every building in Skye and Raasay in some way, but has the potential to create warmer, greener and more efficient properties whilst tackling the blight of fuel poverty.

- The existing 132kV overhead line running from Fort Augustus to Ardmore in North Skye is essential to maintain security of supply to homes and businesses along its route, as well as to the Western Isles. Electricity grid infrastructure needs reinforced and future-proofed to unlock the area's renewable energy generation potential and support the decarbonisation of heat and transport.
- The emerging hydrogen economy could address some of the energy needs – by creating hydrogen from otherwise constrained renewable energy, both transport and buildings could be decarbonised across Skye and Raasay.
- **Electric vehicle infrastructure** for inhabitants and tourists is needed to incentivise use and avoid adverse impact on visitor choices
- **Crofting and agriculture** needs to remain at the heart of our rural and remote communities, as well as delivering policy priorities for climate change mitigation and biodiversity.

The scale of the challenge to address the climate and ecological emergency is stark. In effect, to meet national ambition to end Scotland's contribution to climate change by 2045, almost every sector across the country, including transport, housing, industry and agriculture, will have had to decarbonise entirely, whilst those emissions which cannot be realistically reduced any further will need to be "offset" by sequestering an equivalent amount of emissions through tree planting, peatland restoration or other land use practices which can lock carbon away.

Whilst getting to net zero is a critical and important aim if we are to avoid the worst impacts of climate change for Skye and Raasay, it must also be recognised achieving net zero will not prevent the change which is already "locked in" to the climate system as a result of historical emissions. Our weather systems and patterns are already changing, and are being felt by communities through, for example, more extreme and frequent storms and flooding events, longer periods of drought, and record-breaking temperatures.

With this in mind, it is essential that all committed projects under the SRIP contribute positively to national climate change ambition, either by actively reducing the emissions generated by Skye and Raasay, or by helping to prepare the islands for the impacts of a changing climate. Taking cognisance of climate change in all project work will provide confidence to potential funders that Skye and Raasay are taking their climate commitments seriously, and will help to unlock investment routes which would otherwise be closed.

## 5. Strengthening Communities

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**Headline Outcome** – A resilient, inclusive and resourceful community network where everyone has access to good quality, affordable housing options, appropriate access to essential services, and where Gaelic and the area's unique culture and identity is celebrated.

### 5.1. What are the current issues?

Skye and Raasay is a unique community. This is in relation to its landscape, location and culture but also the strength and depth of the community itself where community bodies and organisations lead on many of the improvements and developments across the islands. These interlinking elements are all crucial to creating a strong, vibrant and sustainable community.

This section considers the focus on four key elements which have been identified as critical to supporting a sustainable community on Skye and Raasay:

- ***Homes and services for all – to sustain and retain a balanced population.***

The availability of suitable and affordable housing has been consistently raised throughout the engagement process by businesses, organisations and residents as the standout issue affecting the area. It is major barrier for retaining young people, especially in smaller communities, stopping businesses and services being able to attract staff, holding back the construction industry and increasing costs. This is exacerbated by the strong tourism sector and the demand for short-term let accommodation. There is also a strong link to supporting adult social care services and sustaining individuals in their own homes.

- ***Sustaining Gaelic culture and language – a key component in the identity of Skye and Raasay as a community.***

Throughout the engagement events held in 2021 community representatives expressed the central importance of Gaelic and Gaelic Medium education as an integral part of Skye and Raasay's language, culture and identity. The main challenges facing Gaelic are in many ways reflective of those which affect many communities across the Highlands and relate to rurality, lack of housing, lack of critical mass of Gaelic speakers and reducing number of senior Gaelic speakers, fewer 0-15 year olds and a shortage of Gaelic Teachers and Gaelic speaking support staff especially within the Early Years sector. Skye needs to be more than just a place to visit, needs to be a place to live and sustaining Gaelic language and culture, particularly through education, is critical.

- ***Strong and resilient communities – communities with the capacity to lead development and improvements within their community***

Many communities across Skye and Raasay already provide a valuable contribution to the development and improvement of new services, core infrastructure and realisation of local priorities. Building capacity and support communities to be able to develop and lead local improvements is crucial to delivering against all elements of the Skye and Raasay Future vision.

## **5.2. What's already being done?**

### **5.2.1 Homes and Services for All**

Partners are already looking at ways to address the housing challenges. Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association and the Highland Council, working in partnership with the Scottish Government, Communities Housing Trust and community led development organisations have been progressing affordable house building on Skye for many years. The formal lease arrangement between LSHA and NHS Highland to prioritise housing for NHS staff and LSHA's Energy Advice Service to tackle fuel poverty are examples of innovative approaches to supporting partners and communities.

As highlighted in the project list, there are currently a range of affordable housing projects across the region that are in the pipeline or in development. Some of the projects, as noted below in Staffin, are community led projects with communities taking a key lead in addressing the current housing challenge. However, although there are currently 463 housing applicants for Skye and Raasay on the Highland Housing Register, only 70 lets were made in the year 2020/21 and the challenge remains to meet the level of demand.



*The first affordable housing in Staffin in 30 years delivered by a partnership between Staffin Community Trust, the Communities Housing Trust and Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association.*

### **5.2.2 Sustaining Gaelic Language and Culture**

Gaelic language and culture is a core element of the identity of Skye and Raasay and sustaining this, and building on the opportunities this offers, has been identified as a core priority. There is already significant work being undertaken across the islands by partner organisations.

The Highland Council is currently implementing its third Gaelic Language Plan (GLP3) which is a statutory requirement in accordance with the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005. On the back of that, there has been a number of successes regarding Gaelic, especially the development of Gaelic Medium Education with three stand-alone Gaelic schools including Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Phort Rìgh (Portree Gaelic Primary School). Gaelic Medium education is described further in Section 8.

Education services are helping to ensure that Gaelic remains a core part of Skye and Raasay culture for future communities, and the case study below highlights the



particular role and contribution that Sabhal Mòr Ostaig plays in celebrating and strengthening the culture and identity of the area.

### **Case Study - Sabhal Mòr Ostaig & Kilbeg Village**

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (SMO) has grown from its roots as a niche local college to become the National Centre for Gaelic Language and Culture.

Its core purpose is the linguistic and cultural renaissance of Gaelic in Scotland. It delivers education across 27 countries through the medium of distance learning. Crucially for the future of the Gaelic language, SMO offers postgraduate qualifications to train teachers in Gaelic language at primary and secondary school levels.



Sitting alongside SMO is the planned 'new village' at Kilbeg which when complete will include around 100 homes, commercial development, enterprise units, conference/events facility, visitor accommodation sports facilities all of which are connected by active travel networks. It aims to deliver the highest environmental and architectural standards, becoming an exemplar of contemporary sustainable rural development.

Investment in SMO and Kilbeg villages brings together culture, education, economic development and housing to not only provide a sustainable community but is key for stimulating economic growth throughout Scotland.

### **5.2.3 Strong and Resilient Communities**

Communities across Skye and Raasay are already taking a lead role in the development of local projects to address local priorities and improvements. Many of the projects already identified, outlined in the Story-Map and referred to elsewhere within this document, are community led, or in partnership with agencies. In addition to extensive engagement with their local communities on development, a number of the projects have already carried out feasibility studies, detailed options appraisals, business plans and sought planning permission. Through these, community groups can evidence the capacity for them to deliver community led solutions that tackle priorities that matter most to communities and, if given the opportunity, develop local assets, services and projects that respond to the needs of their communities.

Whilst meeting the outcome of **Strengthening Communities**, community led projects will cut across several of the priority outcomes. The Bayfield Car Park, being one such project, which has supported resourceful community networks, access to essential services, tourism, employment, and transport:

### **Case Study - Bayfield Car Park**

Agencies and Community groups commissioned a Parking Options Appraisal for Portree that identified this project as the preferred option.

Working collaboratively the Council and Portree & Braes Community Trust (PBCT) were successful in securing funding for the project.

The PBCT have secured a long-term rental income from the lease of their land and a share of the car parking income, which they can reinvest in other projects identified as a priority for their community.

The Council will generate income that will support the management and maintenance of the site, local employment, and delivery of Council Services.

The public/visitors will benefit from increased long stay parking and safer access to Services in the Town Centre.



*Increased parking and motorhome waste facilities at Bayfield, Portree.*

### **Case Study - Developing Community Assets: Raasay Pontoon**

Raasay Development Trust (RDT) have been working with Wallace Stone and Duncan MacPherson Consultancy to develop the business case for a 12-berth pontoon at Clachan, on the Isle of Raasay. RDT have had support and funding through HIE, LEADER, RCGF, HCCF, SLF and THC. They have the Marine License for the pontoon and are working with the Crown Estate Scotland to secure a seabed lease that reflects the nature of the community owned asset with the CES executive reviewing their application for rent at less than market value. RDT have recently



tendered for project management support and have appointed Wallace Stone who will oversee the project which has a target installation timescale of April 2022.

They have applied to the Highland Council for a Community Asset Transfer of the Ferry Terminal Building to provide onshore facilities as a second phase of the project. The pontoon, and onshore facilities, will provide much needed visitor infrastructure to enable Raasay to welcome more visitors in a sustainable manner, generating income and employment in the process

### 5.3. Future Priorities & responsibilities

The Strengthening Communities outcome identified through engagement with communities focused on the importance of ensuring strong, capable, inclusive and resourceful communities in order to deliver social and economic growth for the area.

There are three key priorities for future development:

- Homes and Services for all
- Sustaining Gaelic Language and Culture
- Sustainable and Resilient Communities

#### 5.3.1 Homes and Services for All

Engagement has highlighted two key related priorities to pursue in relation to this core themes in order to strengthen the local Skye and Raasay community:

- Maintaining healthy **demographics**, particularly the retention of young people and families throughout the area, is needed to tackle imbalances in the community and support key services and facilities.
- **Accessibility to services** including care provision, accessible housing to support self-directed care within the community

From the engagement on this plan, the availability of quality, affordable housing was identified as the standout issue facing the area and intertwined with almost every other outcome. Crucially, in order to sustain and strengthen communities, there needs to be accessible and inclusive housing to:

- retain the younger population tackling population decline,
- boosting the economy and ensuring a vibrant and dynamic workforce
- addressing the adult social care challenging and enabling older people to remain in their own homes.

As outlined at 5.2.1, the delivery of affordable housing is doing much to address those most at need in Skye and Raasay. However, the problems on Skye extend much wider due to declining levels of private sector housing development, and a very small private rented market given the demands created by the buoyant tourism

industry. More needs to be done to explore the barriers and deliver necessary solutions.

Ensuring the provision of housing to support the current and future population is a major challenge for the area. The availability of or access to viable deliverable land can act as barriers. All efforts need to continue to be made to provide more affordable housing including:

- Initiatives that may free up land for housing development (e.g. better organisation of public sector offices)
- Securing strategic sites through partnership working
- Exploring flexible housing tenure models to tackle the housing pressures of local businesses
- Supporting community organisations who wish to take forward community owned housing projects (e.g. Staffin, Raasay)
- Lobbying decision makers to demonstrate the situation on Skye and Raasay
- A marketing campaign to highlight how to register on the HHR and promotion of the [HHR Guide](#).

### 5.3.2 Sustaining Gaelic Language and Culture

The **Gaelic** language and culture offers huge opportunities around wellbeing, education, and the economy to both the Highlands and Scotland. However, it is linked to other challenges such as the changing demographics, housing availability, education and employment opportunities. Key priority actions in relation to Gaelic Medium Education are outlined in section 8 below.

To ensure that **Gaelic** language and culture grows and continues to contribute to the identity and wellbeing of the Highlands and Scotland, key partners must work together with communities and national agencies in creating appropriate initiatives and programmes to address these challenges. Work will commence on the drafting of Highland Gaelic Language Plan 4 in the Spring of 2022 and will be set against the high level aims which Bòrd na Gàidhlig issue as part of the National Gaelic Language Plan. This will provide a strategic framework for identifying responsibilities and actions which deliver the actions required to ensure that the Gaelic language and its associated culture continues to increase its use, learning and generates a positive image for its future survival and growth

- Ensure Skye and Raasay Gaelic language priorities are reflected in the Highland Gaelic Language Plan 4.
- The opportunities for promoting and regenerating Gaelic language and culture should be integrated into appropriate developments and projects.

### 5.3.3 Sustainable and Resilient Communities

As outlined in section 5.2, many communities across the Isles of Skye and Raasay are already demonstrating their strength and resilience in leading and progressing community priorities and development. Moving forward it will be important to build on the existing successes of projects that have or are being delivered through collaborative working and learn from the feedback of the engagement process, including consideration and action around accessibility and inclusiveness for all, within the development of projects from the outset.

However, it is important that all communities are equally able to participate and contribute this way and a core role for the SARF partnership alongside the Community Partnership and Community Learning and Development Partnership, is to build capacity, resilience and support community development.

The engagement process has highlighted the pressure some Community Groups feel they are under to deliver projects with limited resources, particularly where funding opportunities are working to short time scales and it was noted that a mutual support network to assist communities and reduce barriers around project delivery would be beneficial.

To address the feedback on community delivery it should be a priority going forward to identify resource that can support projects to deliver on the outcomes of Skye & Raasay's Future.

Core partnership priorities to address these areas have been identified as follows:

- Development of a **co-ordinated and inclusive partnership** of community organisations to enable effective collaboration and participation on delivering an agreed vision for Skye and Raasay.
- Targeting **capacity building** of community organisations to build resilience in the most vulnerable communities to promote inclusion.
- **Increase participation** in social, recreational and development services/activities within communities and from those facing barriers to inclusion.
- Development of strong **community networks** informing the design and delivery of services and priorities across the Highland
- Building on existing success and learning, develop a **partnership approach** to supporting communities to identify and develop local priorities, including enabling the use/ownership of assets.

## 6. Diverse and Green Economy

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**Headline Outcome** – An economy which builds on the area’s natural assets, delivers sustainable tourism, and embraces a range of employment opportunities to promote wellbeing, attract investment and supports a thriving population.

### 6.1. What are the current issues?

#### Economy

The Skye and Raasay economy has, like many parts of Highland, positively grown in recent years with high levels of employment. The COVID-19 pandemic and BREXIT has had a disproportionate impact when compared to Scotland and the UK as a whole. It has highlighted the exposure of the local economy with its high dependence on tourism related sectors and migrant labour. Prior to the pandemic and BREXIT, a large number of migrant workers made up the labour force and they are no longer resident here. Therefore jobs exist but there is a mismatch in the labour market and unemployment is comparatively high.

#### Visitor Management Facilities

Skye is one of Scotland’s iconic tourism destinations alongside the likes of Edinburgh and Loch Ness due to its dramatic landscapes, coastlines and wildlife, as well as its history & culture. Well promoted by social media channels, travel websites and the press, the island has seen an influx in visitors in recent years. This has generated significant economic benefits to the Island, highlighted earlier in this plan but it has also created a number of pressures.

Changing visitor patterns has seen an increase in the numbers coming by motorhome, more tour visits (including from visiting cruise ships) and a greater concentration of visitors at a number of well-known locations.

### 6.2. What’s already being done?

#### Economy

Public sector partners have worked with businesses and groups such as Skye Connect to support those most impacted by COVID-19 and Brexit, such as tourism and food and drink. The aim has been to retain and create jobs and bounce back stronger in more rural and disadvantaged communities.

The return of visitors in summer 2020 and subsequently since summer 2021 has provided a welcome boost for the tourism economy. However, as highlighted in the feedback in the engagement sessions there are concerns about the availability of

staff for key sectors and the and the longer term labour market (as covered in Section 5). Section 8 highlights some of the work underway to address issues around skills and employability but there is an appetite to look at ways to further diversify the economy.

Work also continues to support business growth and new employment opportunities in evolving sectors such as life sciences, energy, and the marine economy. Enabling community ownership and development of economic assets continues to be important, and progress on projects to provide business premises is critical.

Efforts are on-going to accelerate progress in the just transition to net zero that provides opportunities for communities and businesses to create green jobs. Diversifying the economy is critical and one particular project which has just been launched is the [Advancing Manufacturing Centre](#) in the West Highlands. Funded by ERDF, West Highland College, and HIE, it is a free service to SME's to experience Advanced Manufacturing equipment, and receive support to understand what the equipment can do for business growth, productivity and diversification. The Advanced Manufacturing Centre will be based in Fort William, however much of the equipment is mobile and the overall service and support will be available throughout Skye and Raasay.

### **Visitor Management Facilities**

Recent Council activity has been focussed on the provision of key tourism infrastructure and associated services (see section 7 Transport Infrastructure for more information). The Council is currently working on a Highland Tourism Infrastructure Plan that identifies the key tourism specific infrastructure such as public toilets, visitor parking, including overnight stopovers or motorhome waste facilities which are required to support tourism including on Skye and Raasay. This will complement more general infrastructure developments such as road improvements, EV charge points and footpaths that also benefit visitors. A number of projects are already complete, under way or being developed including: -

*The Old Man of Storr car park, toilets and footpath improvements:*





*Blà Bheinn car park and toilets in partnership with the John Muir Trust:*



To reduce congestion at scenic destinations, the Council has supported provision of shuttle buses from Portree during summer 2021, and is preparing a bid to the Rural Transport Infrastructure Fund to support development of local park & ride sites to enable expansion of such shuttle services.

Further plans currently at different stages of development will also see the provision of: -

- New public toilets in Broadford
- New public toilets and a motorhome waste facility at Elgol
- Car park expansion at Kilt Rock
- Bus stance and shelter provision at tourist car parks
- New park & ride site in Portree as a hub for tourist bus routes
- Overnight motorhome parking and waste facilities at Kilmuir, Flodigarry and in Sleat (Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and An Crubh)

In addition to projects involving Council facilities and assets, many developments are likely to be led by private sector facility operators, landowners or communities. The Council will also support these most notably through accessing funding opportunities.

### **Case Study - Portree Harbour and Village Centre Regeneration**

There is a long-established desire amongst local groups and businesses in Portree for improvements to be made to the design, layout and configuration of the village centre, and particularly Somerled Square and the Harbour area.

Portree benefits from having a town centre which retains core retail, civic and social functions and its built and natural environment make it a popular destination for visitors. It suffers, however, from being focused around vehicular movement with little provision for pedestrians, although the bus stances benefit from being in this central location. There are opportunities to greatly improve the public realm to make far more attractive and safer public spaces, create a more accessible environment including for disabled people and enhance economic activity through new commercial space and tourism facilities.

The Community Trust has been particularly proactive in promoting their ideas and more recently the Highland Council commissioned a study setting out scenarios for improving the harbour area. This has led to an opportunity that has arisen to develop a more detailed plan for how the improvement of the wider village centre could be realised.

HITRANS and The Highland Council will undertake feasibility studies for both enhancing the active travel routes to Portree High School and placemaking opportunities within the centre of Portree including active travel and public realm improvements in and around Somerled Square.

It is recognised that the harbour in Portree has suffered from a lack of investment has poor transport links, and has the opportunity to be transformed for the benefit of the local community and economy. The National Government, through the levelling up fund, has allowed Local Authorities the opportunity to bid into the fund, and Highland Council have identified Portree Harbour as such a funding bid opportunity. Work is currently ongoing to develop a master plan of development and regeneration opportunities that will form the basis of the levelling up fund bid that will be submitted in October 2021 – with a planned completion by April 2024. This is seen as an opportunity to enhance the mooring facilities and help to better accommodate the variety of uses and movements through the area.





*Image: Illustrations of the pier expansion and redevelopment of the harbour which aim to help visualise what the area could look like in the future.*





*Image: Illustration of Somerled Square which gives an idea of how it could be transformed in the future.*

### **Case Study - Public Sector Co-location in Portree**

Following discussion and agreement at a Community Planning Partnership Board to consider where partner organisations could better rationalise office and improve partnership working, a feasibility study is underway to look at the potential for public sector bodies/partners to co-locate their facilities and offices and help consolidate the space required and running costs. It is looking at what efficiencies could be made across facilities currently utilised by Highland Council, HIE, emergency services and third sector partners in Portree. It is hoped this can improve the quality of facilities and therefore the services provided, and importantly improve the accessibility of relevant services to the public. In turn, it is hoped that this can open up opportunities for any assets or facilities to be re-purposed for services that are in demand such as, for example, affordable housing.

### **6.3. Future Priorities & responsibilities**

To fully address this outcome the priorities are to:

- **Diversify the economy** to promote a flexible and dynamic business community which is resilient to change and less reliant on tourism.

- Creating a **cycle of economic activity** where businesses feed off one another will provide more employment options and support a strong community.
- A new approach is needed to ensure Skye and Raasay based businesses have the **skilled labour** they need to flourish – requiring training and reskilling investment in local residents as well as efforts to attract new and returning residents.
- **Climate change** is resulting in changes to the way people work, use the land and travel in the area. Transitioning to a green economy is vital.
- **Flexible working** has the potential to attract people to the area, but digital infrastructure and digital skills needs enhanced to support this.
- For Skye and Raasay to be internationally renowned as a **sustainable tourism destination** it needs to celebrate the area's cultural and environmental assets and maximise its contribution to our communities, including the need to provide all year tourism related jobs that allow people to remain resident on Skye and Raasay.
- There is potential for a new **tourism management** framework which better manages visitors and promotes/protects the existing natural and cultural assets of the area. This needs to involve both businesses and communities to ensure both see the benefits brought by sustainable tourism.

At the current time the key challenge facing the local economy is one of recovery and tourism related spend will aid and drive this forward. Longer term challenges of economic diversification remain and the pandemic indicates that further business development support and encouragement for this to happen is required and sits as equal priority to tourism related investment.

Allied to this, the current labour market issues indicate that a new approach is required if Skye and Raasay based businesses are to have the skilled labour they need to flourish. This requires greater investment and skills training in Skye and Raasay residents, improved linkages between education and business on the job opportunities available and opportunities for returners and those of working age to move to the islands to work or set-up their own businesses.

There needs to be a move away from the current levels of 'drive by tourism' through encouraging visitors to spend longer in the area. The current and proposed tourism infrastructure improvements and related improvements to the visitor experiences will assist this. Additional provision to attract higher value markets such as providing better access for marine tourism (yachts) or business diversification away from current levels of ad hoc short term lets to dedicated high quality tourist accommodation could also assist.

Going forward, Skye Connect should continue to be the key partner representing the tourism sector while also encouraging private sector solutions to challenges – e.g. provision of overnight stops for motorhomes can be a commercial opportunity for businesses rather than relying on public sector provision. Community Development Trusts can be key partners in providing facilities – notably visitor facilities such as parking, toilets, overnight stopovers that both address challenges but also raise income to support wider trust activities.

## 7. Transport Infrastructure

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**Headline Outcome** – An integrated and well maintained network of high-quality sustainable transport options which support social inclusion, a competitive economy and deliver the wider ambitions for the area

### 7.1. What are the current issues?

Throughout the engagements and consultations residents and businesses across Skye have highlighted the challenges in accessing everyday services and the over-reliance on private car ownership. The dispersal of communities and services across the area, and the limited availability of public transport and routes perceived as being safe for active travel, means that private car travel is inevitably the only choice for many. However, there are also concerns about road condition and available resources for maintenance.

At the national level transport policy and investment is prioritising a shift towards the most sustainable modes with the Scottish government setting a 20% reduction in car traffic by 2030. Whilst there is strong support for sustainable travel across stakeholders, there is a wish for rural and dispersed communities to not be adversely disadvantaged or impacted by this shift due to the lack of alternatives to private car travel. The increase in transport poverty needs to be anticipated and balanced by a 'just' transition approach to transport planning that reflects regional challenges including significantly longer distances to access key services.

Growth in tourism in recent years is welcome for the local economy but visitor numbers is straining infrastructure developed to support the needs of a relatively small island population, causing pressure on roads and transport. This is not unique to Skye and it reinforces the challenges of maintaining and improving the road network across a very large road network. This is discussed further in Section 6 Diverse and Green Economy.

Provision of active travel infrastructure has been highlighted as being very poor. Despite its visitor appeal Skye is one of the few areas of the UK without any National Cycle Network routes. Substantial improvement is needed along existing routes, along with a new standard for the provision of quality routes across the network. Initial analysis indicates that there are opportunities on particular sections of the network to better link communities to services through improved active travel routes.

Bus services on Skye are mostly operated under contract to the Council. Usage figures for the Skye bus network show a significant summer peak but even so figures show that only 6.5% of visitors utilise public transport. Current bus contracts are in place until Easter 2022; new tenders will be invited in autumn 2021. Cost challenges are anticipated, with new fleets being likely to be required, and the school transport needs continuing to determine the peak requirement.

## 7.2. What's already being done?

The Skye Cycle Way project would transform active travel connections along one of the busiest routes in Skye beginning with the section between Kyle and Broadford (see Case Study below). This could act as a catalyst for projects like the Skye Cycle Network which is developing proposals for an extensive island wide network. This will require cooperation across Transport Scotland, Highland Council and other major stakeholders for the transport network.

### Case Study - Skye Cycle Way: Bridge to Broadford section

A group of volunteers and representatives from local groups are working together to establish a safe path for all between Kyle of Lochalsh and Broadford. The path will provide a traffic-free route for walkers and wheelers away from the busy main road and will connect communities; encourage greener, active travel; provide leisure opportunities for local residents and visitors.



The route will re-use much of the old road running alongside the busy A87 and then pass through Breakish to link with future island- wide safe routes.

In January 2019 the group was awarded funding from Transport Scotland via sustainable transport charity Sustrans to undertake surveys and feasibility studies. Additional funding through Sustrans has enabled the group to employ a part time project officer, consult with residents and user groups, and develop designs. A Future Users Group has been set to ensure that the path meets the needs of everyone, including disabled users and young people.

Photo credit: [www.broadfordandstrath.org](http://www.broadfordandstrath.org)



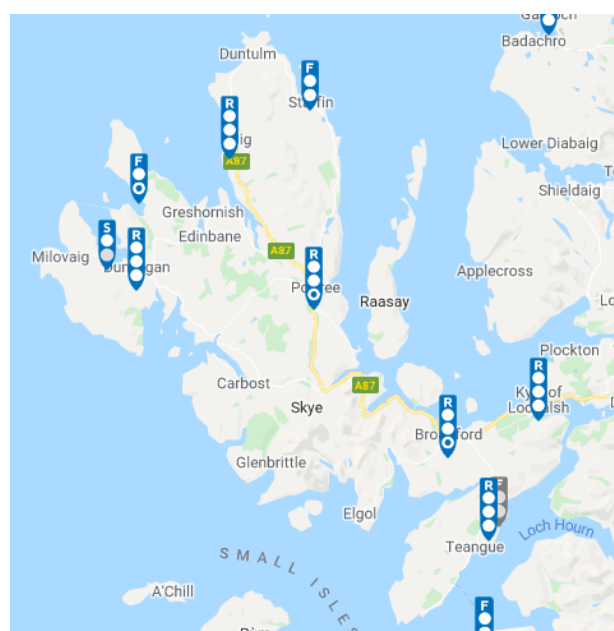
## Case Study – Sleat Community Trust – Electric Bus

In November 2020 Sleat Community Trust (SCT), in partnership with HITRANS and the Highland Council, introduced a new 7 seat 100% electric vehicle to deliver sustainable community transport throughout the Sleat peninsula of Skye. The vehicle provides access to shops, medical facilities, and onward travel connections for the local community. This replaces a subsidised taxi service funded through the Community Transport Grant scheme, which was expensive to operate and for users. This is considered to provide a good template for how similar services could be provided elsewhere.



A pilot free weekend shuttle bus service to the popular Skye destinations of the Fairy Pools and the Old Man of Storr has recently started via a partnership with a private firm funded through the areas Visitor Management Plan. This positive step forward could act as a template for more Park & Ride services being provided that enable visitors to access tourist attractions without their private car and minimise the impact on the fragile transport network.

A Highland-wide review of school transport is underway, including examination of the scope for alternative means of provision such as expansion of community transport, and in-house operation.



[Publicly available ChargePlace Scotland network charge points in Skye and Raasay](#)

In Skye and Raasay, there are currently 11 publicly accessible electric vehicle (EV) charge points on the ChargePlace Scotland network, 6 of which are operated by Highland Council. Network gaps remain within the area particularly on Raasay and there is a need to increase the number of public chargers facilities in the main settlements. This may not inhibit the range capabilities of vehicles or driver confidence but could impact user uptake of EVs in low provision areas as well as influencing route selection by visitors travelling by EV when planning their journey.

## Case Study - Portree Link Road

A transport infrastructure project that has the potential to both transform the way people move around Portree and unlock much needed housing development coupled with a range of regeneration opportunities across the town. This will address many of the outcomes identified in Section 3, particularly in relation to transport infrastructure and strengthening the community.



The Link Road, which will connect the A87 Dunvegan Road with the A855 Staffin Road, has formed an integral part of the long term and strategic expansion of Portree at Home Farm for over 20 years and the majority of the road link has been constructed in line with development. A project now exists to deliver the final stretch completing the link. This link offers alternative travel routes and also sustainable travel options which will better distribute traffic in the area, avoiding the need to travel through the town centre. This will help reduce congestion in the town centre and at the junction to the harbour, and will hopefully provide a trigger for other projects to come forward such as the public sector co-location programme. For example, emergency services require to be strategically located with direct access to the main arterial routes and without the Link Road options for this are limited. In turn, these changes offer a range of major regeneration opportunities for Portree town centre. The link will also provide active travel routes and options together with alternative routes for public transport – allowing people to make more sustainable travel options.

**Timescales:** within the next 5 years

**Costs/Funding:** Approx. £1.6M total cost with £1.4M expected from developer contributions and £200k committed in THC capital programme. Up front funding has been identified from the Infrastructure Loan Fund, to allow the construction of the link to precede any related development, which will then contribute through developer contribution to help recover the initial funding outlay.

**Lead organisations:** THC

**Actions/responsibilities:** Highland Council will progress discussions with landowners and developers to understand the access and servicing requirements for future development – which will influence the design, this will allow the submission of the planning application in Autumn of 2021. If planning permission is granted, then it will be necessary to conclude land access arrangements that will allow construction works to commence and be completed in 2022.

### Case Study - Uig Harbour Redevelopment

The investment by Transport Scotland in the Skye Triangle ferry service will see upgrades to Lochmaddy, Tarbert and Uig as well as the provision of a new dual fuel ferry vessel. The harbour at Uig is owned and operated by Highland Council and the ferry infrastructure works proposed at Uig will deliver major changes to both Uig Harbour and potentially the adjoining village centre. Alongside much needed upgrades to the pier, berthing structure and linkspan, an expanded carparking and marshalling area together with a modern, purpose built terminal building will be created on the seaward side of the A87. This will replace the dilapidated existing building and separate public toilet block – both of which will become redundant. The investment will also deliver an integrated transport network with a dedicated bus stop adjoining the terminal building, active travel connections (supported by a recent Active Travel Masterplan for Uig commissioned by HITRANS) within the expanded marshalling and car parking area. The visitor/passenger experience will be further enhanced with new outdoor waiting and public realm area.

With the designated construction compound adjoining the existing terminal building it will leave a large, shovel ready development site, free of many of the major constraints. This offers major opportunities for delivering the community aspirations for an attractive mixed use village centre as set out in the adopted [Uig Development Brief](#) (2018).



**Timescales:** within the next 5 years

**Costs/Funding:** £64.5M

**Lead organisations:** THC, Transport Scotland, CMAL, CalMac, Scottish Government, harbour users and the local community.

**Actions/responsibilities:** With the construction contract for the main civil infrastructure contract now awarded by Highland Council to R J McLeod, works will commence in Autumn of 2021, with works programmed to be complete in Summer of 2023, to coincide with the planned arrival of the new ferry vessel. The new terminal building contract will be tendered in Autumn of 2021 – and the construction will continue in parallel with the civils infrastructure works such that all works will be completed by the Summer 2023 planned completion date.

### 7.3. Future Priorities & responsibilities

To deliver this outcome the priorities are to:

- Create an overarching and integrated **strategy for transport** for Skye and Raasay, including options for making a 'just transition' for modal shift work to sustainable travel for all communities.



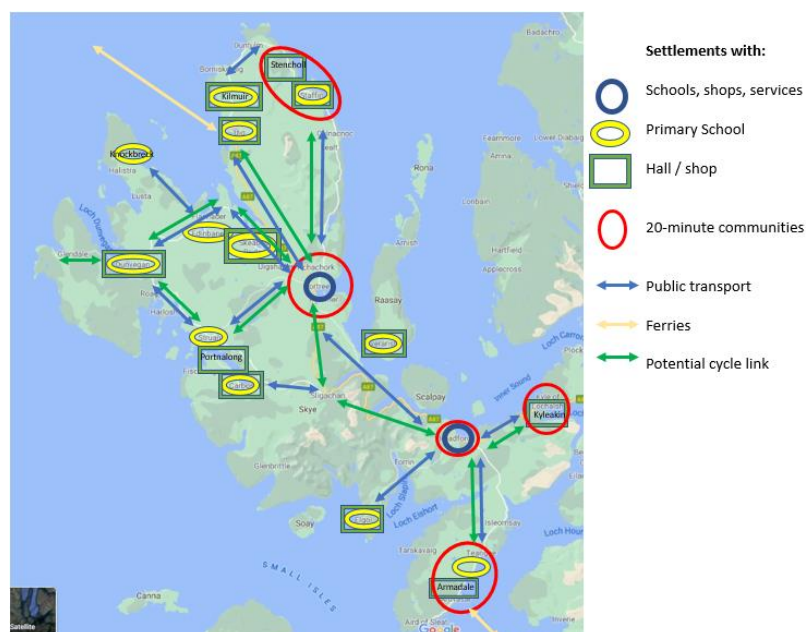
- Explore the option of providing dedicated **public transport** services to key tourism locations to reduce dependence on private cars and reduce the need for ever increasing levels of parking infrastructure.
- Develop **community transport** initiatives to cater for places and times which cannot be served effectively by conventional buses, including school transport provision at some of the smaller schools.
- Explore options for encouraging cycling and developing cycle infrastructure for access to schools, as an alternative to school transport over shorter distances, especially in the summer months.
- Support the delivery of **active travel infrastructure** and help set a new standard for the future.
- The need to manage the implications of **increased motorhome and other traffic** on roads that are not designed to take such vehicles/loads.
- Connectivity with the central belt is improved through **net-zero flights** that meet local needs.

### *Sustainable Transport Options*

There is a strong desire for future investment related to connectivity to help improve people's access to services by a wider range of transport modes, particularly for those without access to a car, and to improve the availability of safe and active travel routes on existing corridors.

Commitment to the delivery of a Sustainable Low Carbon Travel Plan will ensure the alignment of different modes of transport – active travel, road, public transport, ferries and air. This will be centred on improving the movement of both residents and visitors and identifying the necessary infrastructure to transition to a more sustainable future. The image below shows key active travel and public transport connections.

*Image: Initial assessment of key active travel and public transport connections*



Given the rural nature of the area, the use of private vehicle is likely to remain higher than other more urban areas. With the Government pledge to phase out new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030, to meet future demand, EV charging provision is must evolve into a combination of home, workplace, public and private network infrastructure. Future plans for Skye and Raasay could include options such as community car clubs which may be of particular interest and help to offer alternative low carbon transport arrangements for residents and visitors.

### *Shift in Mobility*

Community transport could have an increased role to play where demand is dispersed, especially for local journeys around villages and feeders to main bus routes, if voluntary sector interest can be stimulated. Transport hubs supported by more flexible demand responsive public transport services may help to address the balance between vehicle parking, car parking charging and road space to help ensure high quality alternatives to the private car can be sustained.

To improve accessibility and reduce reliance on the private car Skye needs a vision where people can readily access the transport options they need when they need. HITRANS have obtained funding from the Scottish Government to implement a pilot Mobility as a Service (MaaS) platform called Go-Hi which will enable locals and visitors across the Highlands to book multiple transport option on the one app including local buses ferries and car clubs and even bike hire.

### *Flight Connections*

As travel demand increases following the pandemic there is an opportunity for Skye to improve its connectivity with strategic centres in an environmentally and economically sustainable way by being at the forefront of new technologies in the aviation sector.

The Scottish Government has established a vision for the Highlands and Islands as the world's first net zero aviation group and trials using hydrogen and electric are already at an advanced stage with the type of aircraft which could be used an passenger service between Skye and the central belt.

Local partners have already undertaken detailed appraisal to establish the necessary infrastructure upgrades required at Ashaig in order to obtain the necessary operating licences for scheduled flights to be reintroduced for the first time since 1988.

## 8. Health and Education

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**Headline Outcome** – Modern health, care and education facilities and services that are appropriate for the area and which make it resilient and an attractive place to live.

### 8.1. What are the current issues?

Health and education have been highlighted as two particular services that are vital for people to be able to access reliably and efficiently.

#### 8.1.1 Healthcare

Feedback from participants in the engagement events has highlighted that access to healthcare and recruitment /retention of health professionals is a particular challenge. The implications of an ageing population will need to be planned carefully, coupled with the retention of young people and ensuring a suitable labour market. There were also questions about how particular parts of health services would be supported on an ongoing basis including addiction services and adult and social care.

The massive volunteer effort across the whole of Skye and Raasay, throughout the pandemic thus far, has helped so many in communities with so much support, such as prescription deliveries, food supplies, social and moral support. Hospital services have had to be very restricted and clearly the unbearable losses suffered by many, including at Home Farm, serve as a stark reminder of the severity of the pandemic.

In light of the issues raised around inclusivity and accessibility for certain parts of the population - in an area where the dispersal of communities and services and the reliance on private car travel is a key issue - the outcome theme for Strengthening Communities has been amended to reflect these needs through the delivery of the SARF and from the inception stage of any projects or proposals.

#### 8.1.2 Education

Providing high quality education is a key driver for socio-economic development. Portree High provides both English and Gaelic Medium Education delivered across the Broad General Education (BGE) and Senior Phase. Gaelic Medium education is also delivered across a number of the primary schools, including the recently built Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Phort Rìgh. Gaelic Learner Education is also delivered in the High School and across a range of primary schools.

West Highland College (WHC), Portree offer a wide range of courses for young people from Portree High School and adults to choose from without having to commute or relocate. From distance learning degrees through UHI to part-time courses taught locally, training for businesses and leisure classes.

Particular challenges for delivering education services in the area include:

- Travel distances between the high school and some of the more remote areas, including travelling from Raasay. Some young people require overnight accommodation at Portree High School Residence.
- Continuing to develop the senior phase curriculum in partnership with West Highland College and other providers, e.g. e-Sgoil, which has progression pathways informed by local and national skills needs, including a balance of vocational skills, e.g. Foundation Apprenticeship. There is a particular challenge in developing awareness and uptake in vocational pathways to support local social care needs.
- Ongoing recruitment, including of Gaelic Medium staff which is closely related with national staffing shortages. The lack of availability of affordable housing is also a major contributory factor.

Portree High School is the sole secondary school serving the Isle of Skye and Raasay. The High School has 14 associated primary schools, including Raasay Primary School.

The following Senior Phase courses are delivered in partnership with the Highland Virtual Academy and West Highland College WHC/UHI:

<http://www.portreehigh.hIGHLAND.sch.uk/S4-6%20options%202021%20April%202021.pdf>

[Why choose a School College Partnership course? - Virtual School \(uhi.ac.uk\)](#)



## Gaelic Medium Education

Through the engagement events held in 2021 community representatives expressed the central importance of Gaelic and Gaelic Medium education as an integral part of Skye and Raasay's language, culture and identity. Particular challenges for delivering and supporting Gaelic Medium education services in the local area include:

- Continuing to promote the principles of immersion learning and the benefits of bilingualism.
- Promoting and implementing the [National Gaelic Language Plan](#) and the Highland Council [Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23](#)
- Reviewing and utilising the benefits of online digital learning opportunities to maximise the benefits of supporting and promoting Gaelic language, culture and arts.

- Ongoing national and local recruitment shortages of Gaelic Medium teachers and early years staff. e.g. secondary subject specialist to support the development of the Senior Phase Gaelic Medium curriculum.
- Continuing to work effectively with external partners to support funding, resources and a range of activities, e.g. Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Comunn na Gàidhlig, FilmG and Fèisean nan Gàidheal to further enhance available programmes and provision.
- Continuing to develop access to Further and Higher Gaelic Medium education options throughout life, irrespective of age.

## **8.2. What's already being done?**

### **Health**

NHS Highland are actively looking at ways in which health services can be accessed digitally. The Community led Skye Lab initiative is also enabling digital access for vulnerable individuals and this is helping to remove barriers to access. It is hoped this can inform how every day health services might be provided digitally. However, alongside the drive to enhance access to services by digital means, physical access to provision of services remain essential for many people and for many types of healthcare services.

The new £15m replacement Hospital in Broadford will have 24 inpatient beds and an emergency department, and will be called, Broadford Hospital: Ospadal An Àth Leathainn. NHS Highland anticipate at this stage that the hospital will be open for patients early next year, 2022.

A Transport and Access to Healthcare Action Plan has been prepared identifies 20 actions for improving how people access healthcare services including the new hospital. It is hoped that this can inform and improve how people access these services on an ongoing basis.



*Visualisations of the new Broadford hospital*

## Education

Investment in education by The Highland Council over the last five years has seen provision of a range of new education facilities in the area. There has been particular successes regarding Gaelic, especially the development of Gaelic Medium Education with three stand-alone Gaelic schools including the new Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Phort Rìgh (Portree Gaelic Primary School). The number of young Gaelic speakers has grown in recent times with 86 children in Gaelic nursery and 313 pupils in Gaelic primaries:

School	Gaelic speakers at Nursery	Gaelic speakers at Primary	Total School Roll
Broadford Primary	13	41	91
Bun-Sgoil Gàidhlig Phort Rìgh	41	156	156
Bun-Sgoil Shlèite	13	50	63
Bun-Sgoil Stafainn	5	30	37
Dunvegan Primary	8	20	43
Kilmuir Primary	6	16	27
Carbost Primary	-	-	27
Edinbane Primary	-	-	6



Elgol Primary	-	-	6
Knockbreck Primary	-	-	8
Macdiarmid Primary	-	-	25
Portree Primary	-	-	158
Raasay Primary	-	-	6
Struan Primary	-	-	5
<b>Total Gaelic Speakers</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Portree High School</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>490</b>



Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Phort Rìgh opened in 2018 and is the Portree catchment's Gaelic language primary school and nursery, with Cròileagan (photos taken from Facebook and WHFP). This complements the education services provided in other schools many of whom also provide a successful Gaelic programme.

Other investments include the Elgin Residence which opened in 2016 and provides hostel accommodation for Portree High School and local, respite care. The Skye and Lochalsh Archive Centre operated by High Life Highland is co-located in a wing at the Elgin Residence.



Elgin Residence  
(credit: Archive Centre webpage)



Skye Dance at Portree Primary School

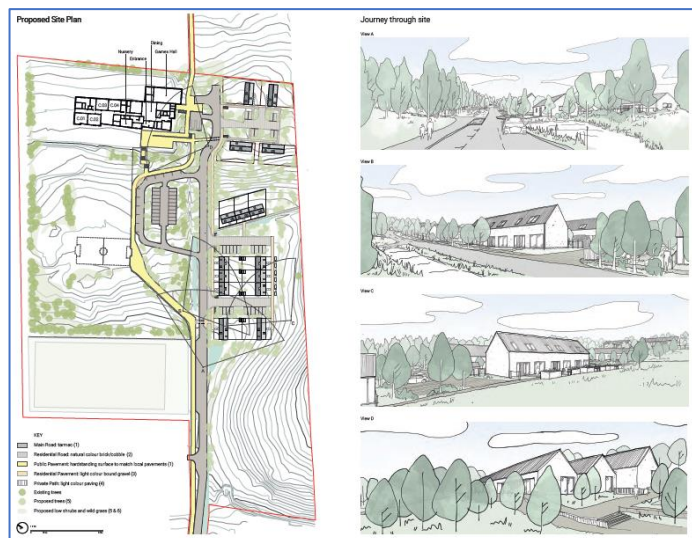
Major refurbishment of Portree Primary School was completed in 2019 and included new and refurbished teaching, resource and life skills areas. In partnership with The Highland Council, Portree Nursery Limited operates pre-school education in the school's new nursery wing, and Skye Dance operates classes and workshops from the new dance studio which is available to the school during school hours.

- A new teaching facility is scheduled to open at Bun-sgoil Shlèite in 2021 providing Gaelic and English medium nurseries including outdoor play areas.

New primary school builds have been approved for Dunvegan and Broadford communities and the wider project masterplans will include additional community facilities and housing elements. These are currently in early design stages, and capital review and assessment of other education resources in the region/area is ongoing, focusing on building condition and suitability, school role projections with input from teaching staff and parent councils.

### Case Study: Dunvegan Primary School and Nursery

- Part of a local masterplan area that includes new school, community football pitch, and housing by Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association
- New school will provide Gaelic and English medium primary and nursery education, with opening projected for August 2024
- Building design and construction will be ultra low energy demand, and will include 4 classrooms, 2 nursery rooms, and supporting areas including a production kitchen.
- Dunvegan Primary School will operate from the existing facilities and relocate to the new facility when ready. The old school building will then be demolished to make way for the MUGA (multi-use games area) and play areas.
- Coordination with local community groups has been ongoing for several years, continuing now through the Stakeholder Group meetings



### **Case Study: New Build Broadford Primary School and Community Hub**

- New facility will include primary school and nursery wing, and a community hub wing, with an estimated opening of 2025.
- Forms part of the Scottish Government's new [Net Zero Public Sector Building Standard](#), setting new standards for ultra-low energy demand and for the future.
- New school will provide English and Gaelic medium primary and nursery education.
- The community hub will include Community Group offices and facilities, replacing the functions of the locally owned and operated Broadford Village Hall which is no longer cost effective to maintain and will be dissolved. The community hub will also include the local Highland Council Service Point, and local Library (operated by High Life Highland).
- A local Working Group is coordinating with the many local groups associated with the Broadford Village Hall, or have expressed an interest in the community hub facilities.
- The Highland Council design team is working with Working Group members to refine the community hub key elements.



*Image: Aerial image showing the location of the proposed new Broadford Primary School and Community Hub*

### **Case Study: Newton Room**

The Newton rooms are run by the Highland Science Skills Academy, an organisation supported by Highland Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, University of the Highlands and Islands and NHS Highland.

The key aim is to engage more young people in STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and to make them more aware of the STEM career opportunities in Highland. Every pupil from P6 to S2 should be able to experience one of the Newton modules over an academic year.

Plans are underway for the location of a possible host site(s) or Pop-Up Newton Room for Skye and Lochalsh, using local spaces such as community halls or other venues for a week or more at a time. The idea is to cover the schools on Skye and Raasay by area so that schools and the general public do not have to travel too far. Details to be confirmed in due course.



### 8.3. Future Priorities & responsibilities

To fully deliver this outcome the priorities in relation to the provision of healthcare services are:

- Need for high quality provision of remote and rural **health, and social care**, with some services available online and an enhanced transport system that gets people to services across the island and beyond, as required.
- Improved **digital connectivity** is required for education and healthcare services to be modern and fit for purpose.
- Investment in suitable facilities and services to accommodate the projected **ageing population**.

Over recent years there has been a renewed emphasis on the community working in partnership with NHS Highland to consider how future healthcare services operate in the area. There is an opportunity to use the ongoing SARF process to support this approach and improve communication on any updates to health care services and improvements.

The website [www.healthandwellnessskye.com](http://www.healthandwellnessskye.com) will be useful ongoing resource for Skye communities to access information on a number of important developments and future priorities. It also updates people on the following key issues:

- Urgent Care at Portree Hospital  
<https://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/services/pages/portreecommunityhospital.aspx>
- Ritchie Report implementation and Options Appraisal Update
- Ritchie Report Transport and Access Report
- Palliative Care Beds
- Near Me
- NHS Scotland – ‘Getting the Right Care in the right place’
- Centre for Excellence
- Skye and Lochalsh Mental Health Association
- The Rape and Sexual Abuse Service
- Scottish Ambulance Service new recruits

The priorities in relation to improving education and learning for all throughout life are to:

1. Continue to support and work in partnership with Portree High School, The Highland Council, the Highland Virtual Academy, West Highland College/UHI, SDS, DYW, HIE and other education providers to promote learner pathways, innovation and industry/employer engagement to ensure that a broad range of course options are available to young people and adults across Skye and Raasay.
2. Work with employers, partners, and young people to deliver the newly announced Young Person's Guarantee with the opportunity of a job, placement, training or volunteering for all of our young people.

3. Continue to ensure that young people are given the same opportunities to access education as young people on mainland Scotland.
4. Work with children and young people across Skye and Raasay to ensure that they are able to contribute to the implementation of the Plan from an education perspective and to ensure that their voices are present.
5. Continue to support and promote Gaelic Medium education from early years through to adult learning across Skye and Raasay in alignment with the National Gaelic Language Plan working in partnership with our Primary Schools, Portree High school, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and other Gaelic partners.
6. Continue to work in partnership with the Highland Council and the Scottish Government to scope potential projects that could benefit from successive phases of Learning Estate Investment Programme which runs until 2026.
7. Continue to work to improve the educational outcomes of children living in poverty by national, authority and school plans to raise attainment through programmes such as Pupil Equity Funding.
8. Continue to investigate and develop with partner providers the needs of adult to develop an adult learning strategy.

## 9. Digital Infrastructure

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**Headline Outcome** – Reliable, affordable and future-proof digital connections which are accessible for all and support the growth of the economy and the communities.

### 9.1. What are the current issues?

Digital connectivity in Skye has improved but with some 72% of premises with superfast broadband (>30Mbps) the island is below Highland (82%) and Scotland (95%). Too many homes and business still have poor fixed broadband speeds with 15% premises getting less than 10Mbps. 4G mobile coverage has improved recently but “not spots” remain.

### 9.2. What’s already being done?

The Scottish Government’s R100 programme is bringing 30Mbps to every premises in Scotland. This is being delivered locally through a contract with BT and the Scottish Broadband Voucher Scheme (SBVS). For mobile the Scottish 4G Infill project and the UK Shared Rural Network project are expected to deliver new mast sites and better coverage. In time coverage is expected to be upgraded to 5G.

### 9.3. Future Priorities & responsibilities

To fully address this outcome the priorities are:

- Access to reliable, affordable and future proofed **communication services** is essential for the participation in modern life, particularly in rural areas where services are further away.
- **Digital connectivity** can be an opportunity to boost the productivity of the economy and encourage people to live and visit. However, the lack of reliable and affordable services can present major constraints to these, holding the economy back and leading to digital exclusion.
- Schools across Skye and Raasay utilised the benefits of online digital learning through Covid and periods of lockdown. These digital learning opportunities require to be reviewed to maximise the benefits of supporting and promoting education and learning, Gaelic language, culture and arts holistically.

The next generation of services will be gigabit (1000Mbps), which is already available to a few premises in Skye, and more will be delivered by R100. The UK Government committed £1.2bn to increase national coverage of gigabit broadband to 85% by 2025. Most connections will come from private investment – Portree is part of Openreach’s commercial rollout. HIE and Highland Council are discussing with UKG and SG use of funding in the Inverness and Highland City-Region Deal to deliver more gigabit coverage in Highland.



## 10. Organising Ourselves

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**Headline Outcome** – A coordinated and inclusive partnership of groups and organisations which work collaboratively to deliver the agreed vision for Skye and Raasay and added value.

### 10.1. What are the current issues?

The engagement process for SARF has initiated an appetite for modernising how partners work together in delivering ongoing change for Skye & Raasay. In particular:

- The plan offers an opportunity to **collaborate** across projects for greater impact
- The plan needs to be iterative, **regularly reviewed** and updated, to be owned by island stakeholders and to reflect the changing needs of the islands.
- Creation of an effective **ongoing process** for delivery is necessary to maintain momentum and deliver change, and so the respective role and relationships between partners will be vital.
- **Community representation**, alongside other partners, in the governance of Skye and Raasay Future will establish a unified voice, strong and open communication and ensure a focus on delivering noticeable change.
- Identifying **Place Champions** across all sectors that can act as immediate point could support day to day implementation.
- The plan can raise awareness of some of the funding opportunities that might benefit people and projects across the area.

### 10.2. What is proposed?

In order for SARF to fulfil its role as a cross-sector plan finalisation and adoption will be required from a range of bodies, who also need to be involved in the ongoing process of implementation. The strong message from stakeholders that have been involved in the SARF process so far is for ongoing input and involvement in steering the delivery of both individual projects and, in turn, the wider vision and outcomes for the area.

To support this the SARF partnership is looking at options for how best it can guide and enable the delivery of the framework alongside these existing groups and fora. In order for this to act as the framework that guides investment and prioritisation across S&R it is proposed that finalisation and adoption is sought from the following organisations and partnerships:

- Local Community Partnership

- Community Partnership Board
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- Community Trust network
- Federation of Small Businesses
- MSPs and MPs
- Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspectorate Directorate
- Registered Social Landlords / Housing Associations / Communities Housing Trust
- Third Sector Interface
- Skye Connect

It is also proposed that the Council's Economy & Infrastructure is asked to adopt SARF to confirm its corporate status across the Council.

### **10.3. Governance**

To ensure there is an ongoing process for delivery and monitoring for this plan a body is required to oversee and coordinate delivery by constituent partners and to monitor and where necessary update/refresh the Framework. For Skye and Raasay Future a separate Board is proposed to be chaired initially by the Council's Executive Chief Officer for Skye and Raasay.

It will be vital to ensure that the third and community sector are part of the ongoing core group that are monitoring and coordinating the delivery of the SARF. Further engagement with the Skye and Raasay third and community sector is required to determine the most appropriate approach.

There is considered to be a good opportunity for the new SARF Board to be cross-sector, with the membership and configuration to include existing groups in Skye and Raasay, including those named above. In the next stages of work to finalise and adopt the SARF it is proposed that each group is asked how they wish to contribute. As a general guide, the key duties of the Board could involve:

- Defining the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders to ensure an ongoing focus on delivery of the projects and priorities;
- Monitoring and reviewing the Investment Plan – e.g. biannual review that reflects on the relevance of the detail.
- Monitoring and assessing interventions against impact – e.g. Climate-Change, Addressing Inequalities

Membership of the group could vary according to the priorities and issues being handled at any point in time, but it is anticipated that a core Board be established.

### **10.4. Funding sources**

The funding landscape is complex and continuously changing, particularly now as issues on replacement EU funds are still being resolved at a national level and as so many short term funding opportunities have arisen due to the pandemic. Up to date and more detailed information on funding sources can be sought from Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations, or by contacting the managers of any Council funding streams which can be found on the Highland Council website. The following information is provided as a brief overview of funds currently available and is absolutely not an exhaustive list of funding sources.

#### *Replacement EU funding*

- UK Government have committed to introducing a *Shared Prosperity Fund in April 2022 which replaces EU structural funds*, Community Renewal Fund in 2021/2022 to support local areas to pilot imaginative new approaches that help realise their potential, and Levelling Up Fund which focuses on improving infrastructure.
- The Scottish Government are also piloting initiatives during 2021 to inform the development of a replacement LEADER programme. It is unclear at this stage what format this will take but again intended that the government will make funding available to communities from March 2022.

#### *National Funding*

- Funding is available to directly communities for regeneration projects as part of their [Empowering Communities Programme](#). Many funds are in abeyance due to the Coronavirus Pandemic and expected to restart early in 2022.
- [Rural Tourism and Infrastructure Fund](#) – Funding for tourism infrastructure and administered by Visit Scotland but applications must be made through the Local authority.
- [Regeneration Capital Grant Fund \(RCGF\)](#) - National challenge fund administered by the Council on a rolling annual basis
- [Place-Based Investment Programme](#) – Government fund to support place-based investments to accelerate ambitions for place, 20-minute neighbourhoods, town centre action, community led regeneration and community wealth building.

#### *Other funding sources*

- [Highland Coastal Communities Fund](#) – Derived from Scottish Crown Estate and awarded to Local Authorities annually. In Highland this is then devolved to Local Area Committee's to disburse within their area. It is expected that the next round of funding will commence after the national award of funding is made around October 2021.  
[Highland Council Ward Discretionary Fund](#) – generally available for smaller community based projects.
- In addition to central and local government funding sources, there are a vast array of other funding opportunities open to communities and distributed through third parties, such as Visit Scotland, Nature Scot, and Highlands and Islands Enterprise - more information can be found on individual

organisation's websites. The Scotland's Town Partnership's [Funding Finder](#) is also a valuable resource that is updated monthly.

## Appendix 1 – Summarised Project List as at July 2021

Link to Storymap

Project	Status
Quiraing Tourism Infrastructure	Committed
Staffin Housing & Business Units	Committed
Bayfield Car Park	Committed
Kyleakin Housing	Committed
Kilbeg Village Masterplan	Committed
Broadford Housing	Committed
Portree Housing	Committed
Carbost Community Shop	Committed
Edinbane Community Shop	Committed
Broadford Industrial Estate	Committed
Raasay Micro Hydro	Committed
Raasay Housing	Committed
Borrodale School	Committed
Broadford Hospital	Committed
Sleat Nursery	Committed
Ranger service for Visitor Management	Committed
Advancing Manufacturing in West Highland	Committed
Tourism Infrastructure Plan	Committed
Food Growing Strategy for Highland 'Growing Our Future'	Committed
Old Man of Storr Tourism Infrastructure	Committed

Project	Status
Edinbane - Old Road Renovation	Pipeline
Edinbane Primary School Project	Pipeline
Edinbane village centre improvements	Pipeline
Portree allotments with associated infrastructure	Pipeline
Radio Skye Signal Expansion Project	Pipeline
Caisteal Maol improved access paths	Pipeline
Geary Crofting Township Regeneration	Pipeline
Camanachd Square Feasibility Study	Pipeline
Safety Boat Renewal	Pipeline
Toremore Forest	Pipeline
Corry Capers	Pipeline
Climavore Builds	Pipeline
Coastal Defence Adjacent to Stein Jetty	Pipeline
Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES)	Pipeline
Portree waste transfer station access road improvement	Pipeline
Skye Electricity Reinforcement Project	Pipeline
Skye Cycle Path Network	Pipeline
Broadband	Pipeline
Armadale Ferry Terminal	Pipeline
Staffin slipway redevelopment	Pipeline

<b>Skye Iconic Sites Tourism</b>	<b>Committed</b>
<b>Safer Routes to Schools investment</b>	<b>Committed</b>
<b>Kilbeg Tourism Infrastructure</b>	Pipeline
<b>Elgol Tourism Infrastructure</b>	Pipeline
<b>Raasay Tourism Infrastructure</b>	Pipeline
<b>Coral Beach Tourism Infrastructure</b>	Pipeline
<b>Kilt Rock Tourism Infrastructure</b>	Pipeline
<b>Portree Link Road</b>	Pipeline
<b>Uig Harbour Upgrade</b>	Pipeline
<b>Ashaig Aerodrome</b>	Pipeline
<b>Portree Partner Sector Hub</b>	Pipeline
<b>Kyleakin Connections</b>	Pipeline
<b>Broadford Toilets</b>	Pipeline
<b>Uig Industrial Estate Redevelopment</b>	Pipeline
<b>Kilmuir Community Hub</b>	Pipeline
<b>King George V Playfield Community Transfer</b>	Pipeline
<b>Broadford Primary School and Community Hub</b>	Pipeline
<b>Dunvegan School, Housing and Sports Redevelopment</b>	Pipeline
<b>Sleat Micro Hydro</b>	Pipeline
<b>An Crubh Motorhome Facilities</b>	Pipeline
<b>Armada Housing</b>	Pipeline
<b>Skye Cycle Way</b>	Pipeline
<b>Edinbane Affordable Housing</b>	Pipeline
<b>Lynedale Multi-User Path</b>	Pipeline
<b>Edinbane to Flashader path</b>	Pipeline
<b>Internet of Things</b>	Pipeline
<b>Kyleakin Play Park</b>	Pipeline

<b>"Dun Beag @ Struan" - Community and Visitor Centre</b>	Pipeline
<b>Uig Community Trust Projects</b>	Pipeline
<b>Trotternish Centre</b>	Pipeline
<b>Portree Harbour Redevelopment</b>	Pipeline
<b>Portree Hospital</b>	Pipeline
<b>North Skye Care Provision</b>	Pipeline
<b>Somerled Square Redesign</b>	Pipeline
<b>Minginish Community Land Development</b>	Pipeline
<b>Sports Health Fitness and Well-being Centre</b>	Pipeline
<b>New Library Development</b>	Pipeline
<b>National Cultural Heritage Interpretive Centre</b>	Pipeline
<b>Neist Point Tourism Infrastructure</b>	Pipeline
<b>New welcome signage at Skye Bridge</b>	Pipeline
<b>Skye &amp; Lochalsh Micro Abattoir</b>	Pipeline
<b>Glendale Paths</b>	Pipeline
<b>ArtSquat</b>	Pipeline
<b>Rubha Phoil Nature-Based Permaculture community, enterprise and Virtual Village</b>	Pipeline
<b>Guthan na Tire/Voices of the Land</b>	Pipeline
<b>Portnalong Pier Regeneration</b>	Pipeline
<b>Digital Healthcare Innovation</b>	Pipeline
<b>Ionad Thròndairnis/Trotternish Centre</b>	Pipeline
<b>Skye &amp; Raasay Paths &amp; Trails</b>	Aspirational
<b>Additional Parking Spaces on Raasay</b>	Aspirational
<b>B884 Borrodale to Ramasaig road and signage maintenance</b>	Aspirational
<b>Skye Bus Shelter Improvement Plan</b>	Aspirational
<b>Glendale community/shuttle bus service</b>	Aspirational
<b>Explore National Park status</b>	Aspirational