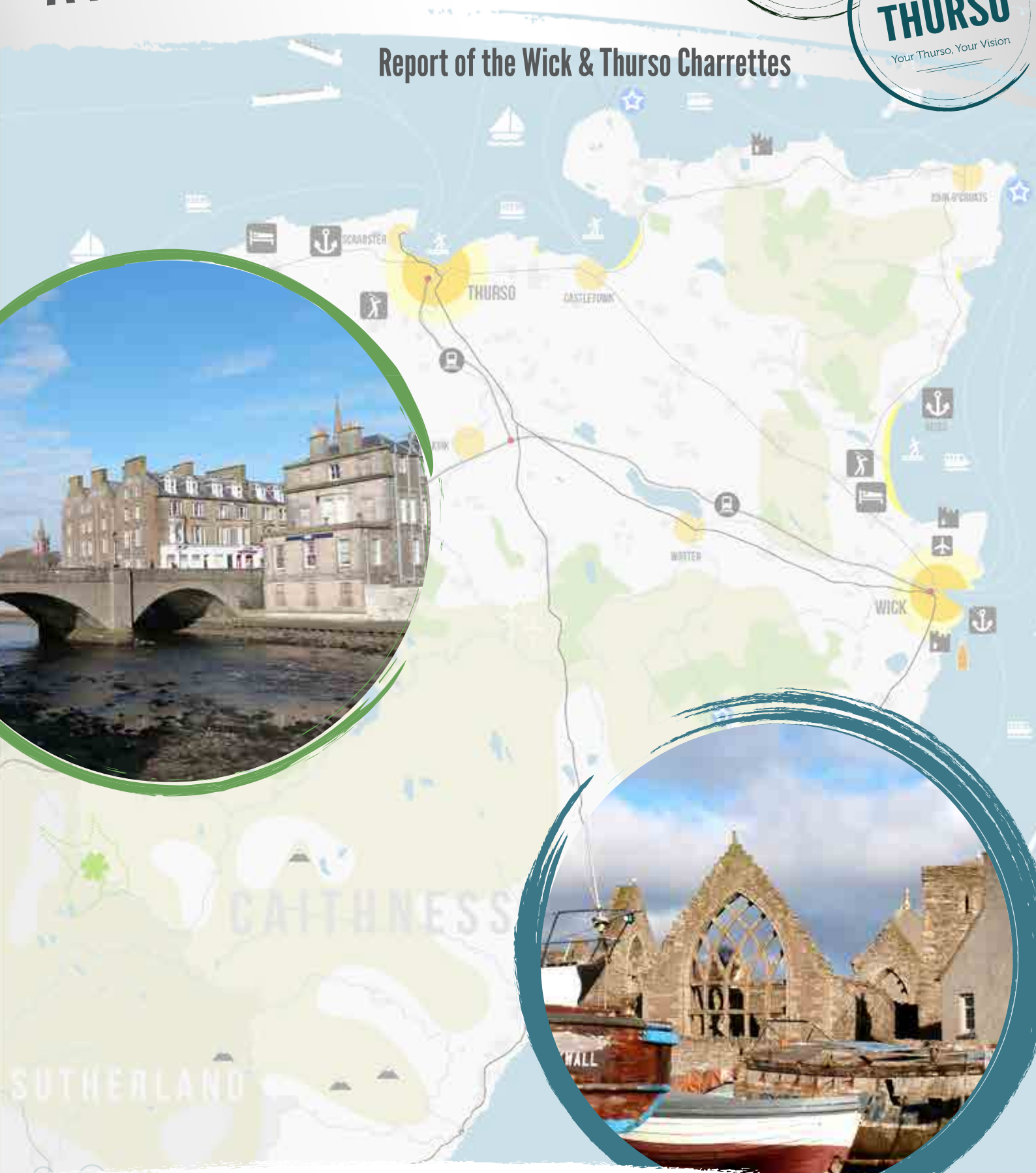


# A New Vision for Wick & Thurso



## Report of the Wick & Thurso Charrettes



GILLESPIES



May 2013



Detail of Caithness Stone Wall



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**Disclaimer:**

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**PROJECT CODE**  
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**ISSUE DATE**  
**MAY 2013**

# CAITHNESS AREA MAP





# Contacts

## Design Team

The Wick & Thurso Charrette process is part of the Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative Charrette Mainstreaming Programme. To facilitate the process a team led by John Thompson & Partners (JTP) were appointed. The aim of the Charrette was to review key issues facing the towns, explore options and alternatives for delivering development, propose actions for addressing these issues to deliver growth and formulating a land use strategy.

The JTP led multi-disciplinary team was made up of:



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# Charrette Process

## A new vision for Wick & Thurso



AERIAL PHOTO OF THURSO



AERIAL PHOTO OF WICK

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## Background

The Highland Council is working to enhance Wick's and Thurso's role, each as a main economic, cultural and service town for the wider Caithness & North Sutherland area. The aim of the Charrettes was to bring together local people to explore ideas and aspirations for the future of Wick and Thurso and create a new Vision for the future. The outcomes from both Charrettes will inform the Main Issues Report for the Caithness & Sutherland Local Development Plan and an Action Programme which will accompany it.

To facilitate this process a team led by architects and community planners John Thompson & Partners were appointed to run the Charrette process. This is part of a Scottish Government supported Charrette mainstreaming programme, designed to promote innovative ways of involving local people in designing sustainable communities. We acknowledge and thank the community members who participated in and those who helped deliver the Charrette processes.



## What is a Charrette?

A Charrette is an interactive design workshop where the public, local design professionals and project consultants work together to develop a Vision for a place. A key benefit of this approach is that local residents are involved at an early stage in the design process, heightening awareness of sustainable development issues and informing subsequent decisions on the future of their community.

The Charrette events in Thurso and Wick provided a chance for local people to shape the future of their towns and aimed to reach consensus over preferred and alternative land use strategies to feed into the the Caithness and Sutherland LDP (CaS Plan) Main Issues Report.



**“ We are here to hear from your suggestions. Every idea is very welcome! ”**

Councillor Gail Ross

**“ By taking part in these Charrettes the community and the Council are collaborating to help shape the future of their town and the wider area through the Local Development Plan. ”**

Scott Dalgarno, The Highland Council

# Charrette Process

## A new vision for Wick & Thurso

### Planning Context

The Wick and Thurso Charrettes were held to give the local community the opportunity to participate in creating new visions for their towns. This is a new approach to development planning, aimed at involving people at the start of the process and helping The Highland Council prepare the next Local Development Plan for Caithness and Sutherland (CaS Plan).

The Charrette were informed by a number of background documents, for example the existing Caithness Local Plan, produced in 2002, the Highland Local Transport Strategy and Greenspace Audit, both prepared in 2010.



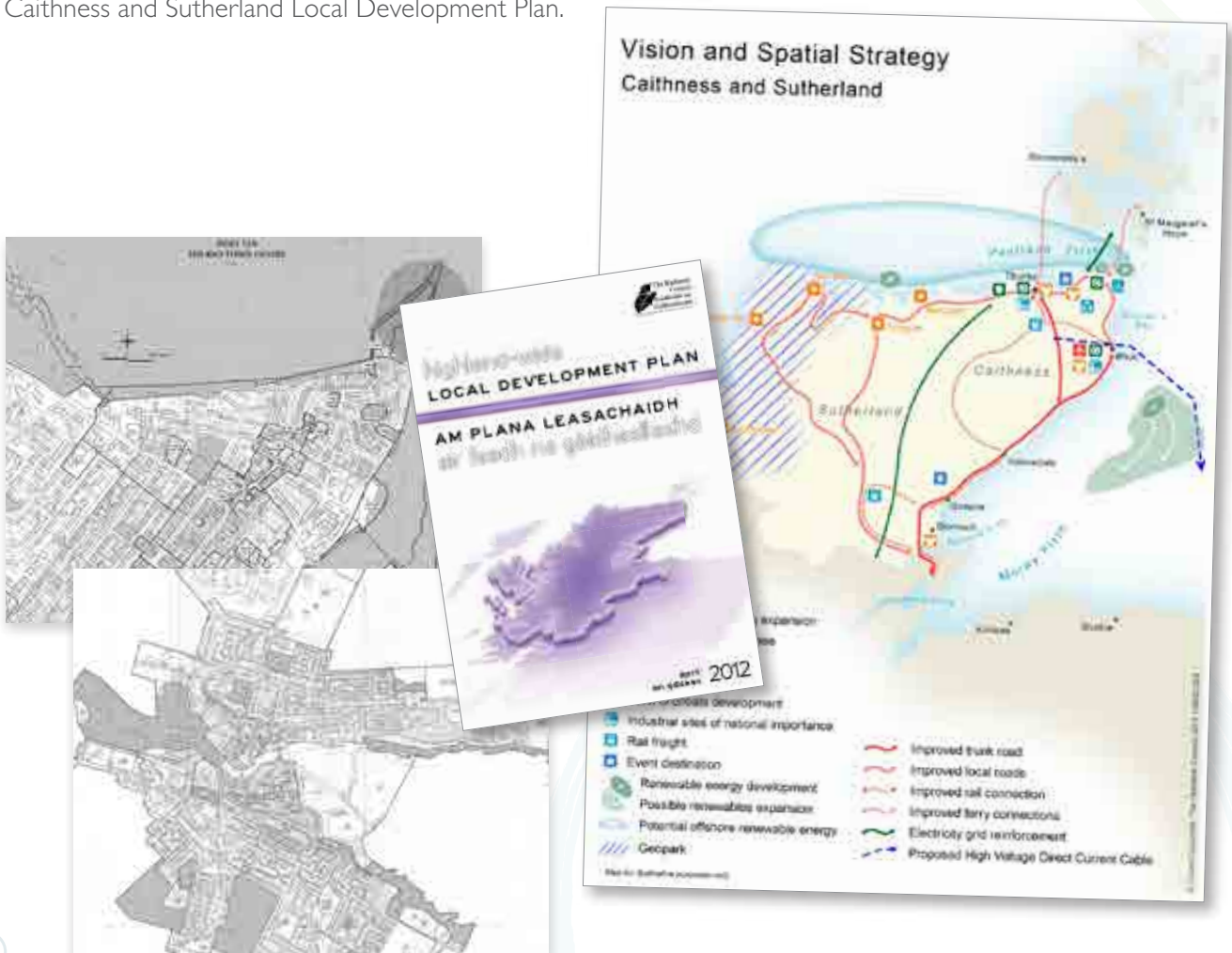


Moving forward, the Highland-wide Local Development Plan, adopted on 5 April 2012, sets out an overarching vision and spatial strategy for Caithness and Sutherland that seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- Be a regenerating place with a network of strong communities
- Be a competitive place connected to the global economy
- Be a connected and accessible place
- Be a place of outstanding heritage: safe in the custody of local people
- Be a centre of excellence for energy and engineering
- Have become an international centre of excellence for marine renewables
- Have a high quality tourist industry
- Have a more diverse economy

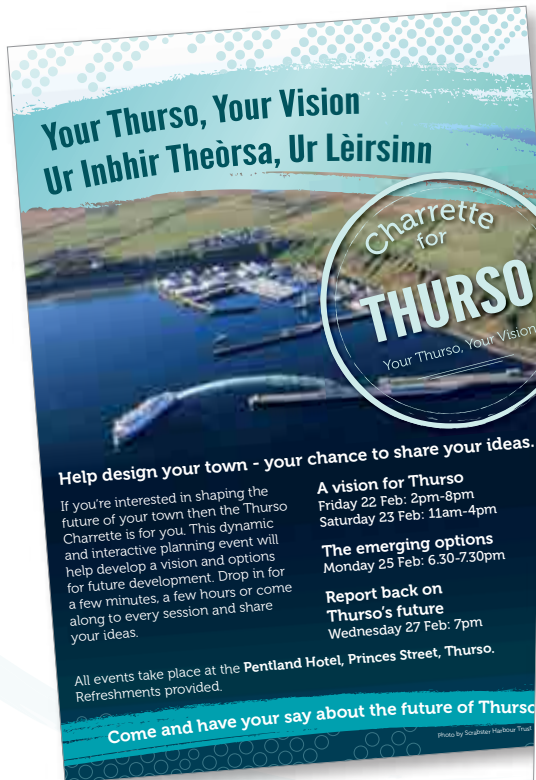


Many of these overarching objectives were raised during the Charrettes and provide a strong basis to develop the Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan.



# Charrette Process

## A new vision for Wick & Thurso



**Your Thurso, Your Vision**  
**Ur Inbhir Theòrsa, Ur Leirsinn**

**Charrette for THURSO**  
Your Thurso, Your Vision

**Help design your town - your chance to share your ideas.**

If you're interested in shaping the future of your town then the Thurso Charrette is for you. This dynamic and interactive planning event will help develop a vision and options for future development. Drop in for a few minutes, a few hours or come along to every session and share your ideas.

**A vision for Thurso**  
Friday 22 Feb: 2pm-8pm  
Saturday 23 Feb: 11am-4pm

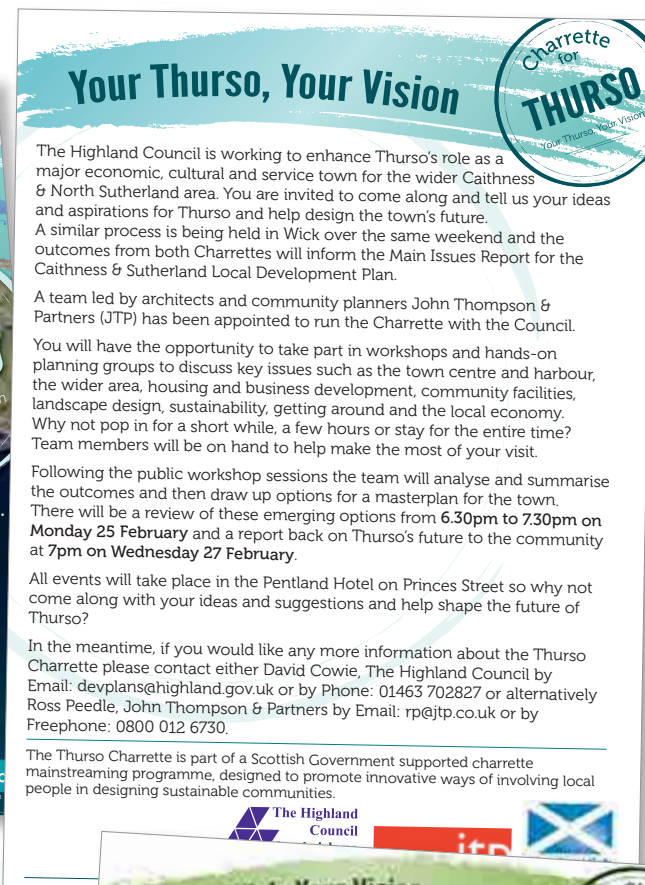
**The emerging options**  
Monday 25 Feb: 6.30-7.30pm

**Report back on Thurso's future**  
Wednesday 27 Feb: 7pm

All events take place at the Pentland Hotel, Princes Street, Thurso. Refreshments provided.

**Come and have your say about the future of Thurso**

Photo by Sogdabay Harbuzhina



**Your Thurso, Your Vision**

**Charrette for THURSO**  
Your Thurso, Your Vision

The Highland Council is working to enhance Thurso's role as a major economic, cultural and service town for the wider Caithness & North Sutherland area. You are invited to come along and tell us your ideas and aspirations for Thurso and help design the town's future. A similar process is being held in Wick over the same weekend and the outcomes from both Charrettes will inform the Main Issues Report for the Caithness & Sutherland Local Development Plan.

A team led by architects and community planners John Thompson & Partners (JTP) has been appointed to run the Charrette with the Council.


You will have the opportunity to take part in workshops and hands-on planning groups to discuss key issues such as the town centre and harbour, the wider area, housing and business development, community facilities, landscape design, sustainability, getting around and the local economy. Why not pop in for a short while, a few hours or stay for the entire time? Team members will be on hand to help make the most of your visit.

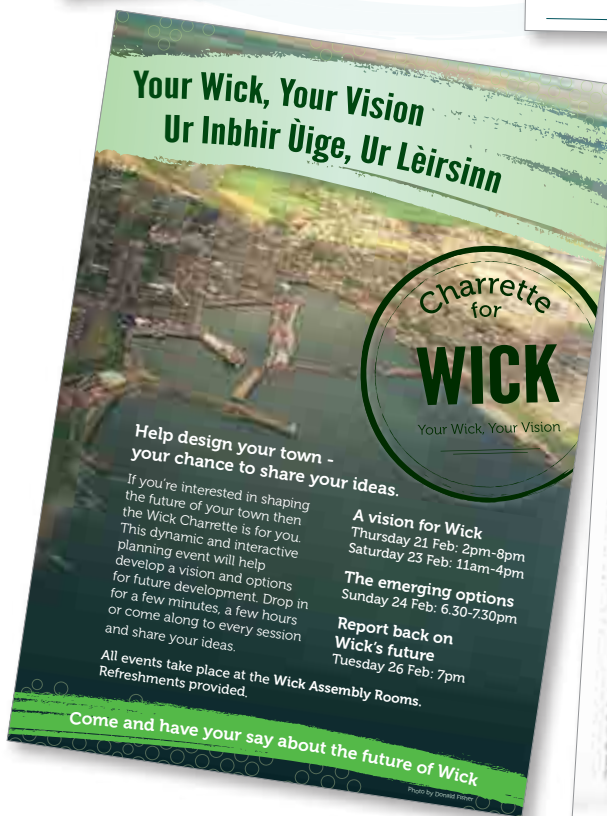
Following the public workshop sessions the team will analyse and summarise the outcomes and then draw up options for a masterplan for the town. There will be a review of these emerging options from 6.30pm to 7.30pm on Monday 25 February and a report back on Thurso's future to the community at 7pm on Wednesday 27 February.

All events will take place in the Pentland Hotel on Princes Street so why not come along with your ideas and suggestions and help shape the future of Thurso?

In the meantime, if you would like any more information about the Thurso Charrette please contact either David Cowie, The Highland Council by Email: devplans@highland.gov.uk or by Phone: 01463 702827 or alternatively Ross Peedle, John Thompson & Partners by Email: rp@jtp.co.uk or by Freephone: 0800 012 6730.

The Thurso Charrette is part of a Scottish Government supported charrette mainstreaming programme, designed to promote innovative ways of involving local people in designing sustainable communities.





**Your Wick, Your Vision**  
**Ur Inbhir Ùige, Ur Leirsinn**

**Charrette for WICK**  
Your Wick, Your Vision

**Help design your town - your chance to share your ideas.**

If you're interested in shaping the future of your town then the Wick Charrette is for you. This dynamic and interactive planning event will help develop a vision and options for future development. Drop in for a few minutes, a few hours or come along to every session and share your ideas.

**A vision for Wick**  
Thursday 21 Feb: 2pm-8pm  
Saturday 23 Feb: 11am-4pm

**The emerging options**  
Sunday 24 Feb: 6.30-7.30pm

**Report back on Wick's future**  
Tuesday 26 Feb: 7pm

All events take place at the Wick Assembly Rooms. Refreshments provided.

**Come and have your say about the future of Wick**

Photo by David Fisher



**Your Wick, Your Vision**  
**Ur Inbhir Ùige, Ur Leirsinn**

**Charrette for WICK**  
Your Wick, Your Vision

**Come and help design your town**

The Highland Council is working to enhance Wick's role as a major economic, cultural and service town for the wider Caithness & North Sutherland area. You are invited to come along and tell us your ideas and aspirations for Wick and help design the town's future. A similar process is being held in Thurso over the same weekend and the outcomes from both Charrettes will inform the Main Issues Report for the Caithness & Sutherland Local Development Plan.

A team led by architects and community planners John Thompson & Partners (JTP) has been appointed to run the Charrette with the Council.

You will have the opportunity to take part in workshops and hands-on planning groups to discuss key issues such as the town centre and harbour, the wider area, housing and business development, community facilities, landscape design, sustainability, getting around and the local economy. Why not pop in for a short while, a few hours or stay for the entire time? Team members will be on hand to help make the most of your visit.

Following the public workshop sessions the team will analyse and summarise the outcomes and then draw up options for a masterplan for the town. There will be a review of these emerging options from 6.30pm to 7.30pm on Sunday 24 February and a report back on Wick's future to the community at 7pm on Tuesday 26 February.

All events will take place in the Assembly Rooms on Dundas Terrace so why not come along with your ideas and suggestions and help shape the future of Wick?

In the meantime, if you would like any more information about the Wick Charrette please contact either David Cowie, The Highland Council by Email: devplans@highland.gov.uk or by Phone: 01463 702827 or alternatively Ross Peedle, John Thompson & Partners by Email: rp@jtp.co.uk or by Freephone: 0800 012 6730.



**Thursday 21 February 2013**

- 1.45pm Arrival and sign in
- 2pm Welcome and Introduction
- 2.15pm Session 1 - Wick Today
- 2.45pm Session 2 - Young People's session
- 3.45pm Hands-on Planning and Walkabouts
- 4.15pm Feedback from the Hands-on Planning Groups
- 6pm Workshop - Local Economy
- 7.30pm Revitalising a Sea-side Town Through Public Involvement by Nick Taylor of Scarborough Harbour.

**Saturday 23 February 2013**

- 11.40am Arrival and sign in
- 11am Introduction
- 11.15am Session 3 - Wick Tomorrow
- 11.45am Session 4 - Young People's session
- 1.15pm Hands-on Planning and Walkabouts
- 1.45pm Transformation in small coastal towns by Professor Tavis of Glasgow
- 2pm Hands-on Planning and Walkabouts
- 3.30pm Feedback from the Hands-on Planning Groups
- 3.45pm Workshop 5 - The Way Forward

**Sunday 24 February**

- 6.30pm The Emerging Options

**Tuesday 26 February**

- 7pm Report Back on Wick's Future

Extracts from the Wick & Thurso Charrette event invitation leaflets and posters

## The Launch

Key stakeholders in the future of Thurso and/or Wick, were invited to join for a briefing at the Launch events for the forthcoming Town Charrettes.

The Thurso Charrette was launched on 23 January 2013 while the Wick Charrette was launched on the 24 January 2013, both with an introduction by The Highland Council and with the Project Team in attendance.

These activities served to publicise the events, as many of those who met with the team agreed to pass on information to colleagues, neighbours and friends.

## Publicity

To advertise the Charrettes, event invitations were distributed to households and shops in and around Wick and Thurso. The events were advertised in local newspapers and banners, posters and leaflets were also displayed at key locations within the towns.

Meetings were held with members of the local community and key stakeholders.



## Community Animation

To ensure as wide as possible representation from the local community and key stakeholders at the Charrettes, a structured programme of engagement (community animation) with local groups and key stakeholders was undertaken prior to the events.

### Our Strategy:

- Include as many local people and young people as possible
- Reach those who would not normally attend
- Use social media – Twitter & Facebook
- Posters, banners and leaflet distribution
- News stories and features in local press

### We targeted:

- Local schools and students including North Highland College (UHI)
- Community Councils, Ward Members and groups
- Service providers from THC Services and Highland Highlife
- Members of Highland Youth Voice and Scottish Youth Parliament
- Key agencies and service institutions



# Charrette Process

A new vision for Wick & Thurso



“ Don't be afraid of change -  
change can be good! ”

Councillor Gail Ross

PUBLIC WORKSHOP EVENT IN WICK



PUBLIC WORKSHOP EVENT IN THURSO



## Charrette Programme

Both the Wick and the Thurso Charrettes were held over six days each with the team arriving a day prior to the opening event in Wick for a team briefing and site visits. The complete programme for the events was as follows:

### WEDNESDAY 20TH FEBRUARY TEAM BRIEFING

Morning: Team arrival  
Afternoon: Minibus tour of greater area and briefing

### THURSDAY 21ST FEBRUARY

#### DAY ONE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, WICK

Morning: Venue set up and local minibus tour with briefing  
Afternoon: **Workshop 1 - 'Wick Today'**  
**Workshop 2 - Young People's Session**  
**Hands-on Planning** and town centre walkabout groups  
**Workshop 3 - Local Economy** with a presentation by Eann Sinclair, Programme Manager Caithness & North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership  
Evening: 'Revitalising a Seaside Town Through Public Involvement' by Nick Taylor of Scarborough's Renaissance

### FRIDAY 22ND FEBRUARY

#### DAY ONE PENTLAND HOTEL, THURSO

Morning: Venue set up and local minibus tour with briefing  
Afternoon: **Workshop 1 - 'Thurso Today'**  
**Workshop 2 - Young People's Session**  
**Hands-on Planning** and town centre walkabout groups  
**Workshop 3 - Local Economy** with a presentation by Eann Sinclair, Programme Manager Caithness & North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership  
Evening: 'Transformation in small towns' by Professor Brian Evans of Gillespies

### SATURDAY 23RD FEBRUARY

#### DAY TWO AT ASSEMBLY ROOMS, WICK

Morning: Venue set up  
**Workshop 4 - 'Wick Tomorrow'**  
Lunchtime: 'Transformation in small towns' by Professor Brian Evans of Gillespies  
Afternoon: **Hands-on Planning** group  
**Workshop 5 - The Way Forward**

#### DAY TWO AT PENTLAND HOTEL, THURSO

Morning: Venue set up  
**Workshop 4 - 'Thurso Tomorrow'**  
Lunchtime: 'Revitalising a seaside town through public involvement' by Nick Taylor of Scarborough's Renaissance  
Afternoon: **Hands-on Planning** groups and minibus tour of Western Expansion Area  
**Workshop 5 - The Way Forward**  
Evening: Team working dinner

### SUNDAY 24TH FEBRUARY

#### DAY THREE

Afternoon: Team working  
Evening: Interim review '**The Emerging Options' Wick**

### MONDAY 25TH FEBRUARY

#### DAY FOUR

Morning and afternoon: Team working  
Evening: Interim review '**The Emerging Options' Thurso**

### TUESDAY 26TH FEBRUARY

#### DAY FIVE

Morning and afternoon: Team working  
Evening: **Report Back on Wick's Future**

### WEDNESDAY 27TH FEBRUARY

#### DAY SIX

Morning and afternoon: Team working  
Evening: **Report Back on Thurso's Future**

The results of the workshops have been summarised in an issue and actions plan for each town and are outlined in the appendix of this report followed by a chronological résumé of all Charrette workshops and Hands-on Planning group.

At all public sessions, as well as taking part in workshops and hands-on planning groups, participants were invited to make comments on comment sheets. Some members of the community also sent in emails with comments. These comments are available on line at:

#### Wick Charrette

[www.highland.gov.uk/wickcharrette.htm](http://www.highland.gov.uk/wickcharrette.htm)

#### Thurso Charrette

[www.highland.gov.uk/thursocharrette.htm](http://www.highland.gov.uk/thursocharrette.htm)