

KINLOCHLEVEN LOCAL PLACE PLAN



OUR PAST,
OUR FUTURE

NOVEMBER 2024

This plan is available online at bit.ly/kinlochlevenLPP

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the many local people and organisations who created this Plan.

The Plan was submitted to the Highland Council for registration by Kinlochleven Community Council. Its preparation was supported by [Kinlochleven Community Action Group](#).

We are grateful to the Highland Council's Community Regeneration Fund for financial support to prepare this Plan, and to [Nick Wright Planning](#) for help with preparation of the Plan.

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Minor pre-registration updates 23 January 2025*

CONTENTS

	Foreword <i>by Kate Forbes, MSP</i>	p 4		Appendices <i>online at bit.ly/kinlochlevenLPPappendices</i>
1	Introduction	p 5	1	Village Ideas Day
	Map of Local Place Plan area	p 6	2	Village Solutions Day
	How this plan was prepared	p 7	3	High School students
	The bigger picture	p 9	4	Primary School pupils
2	Kinlochleven today	p 10	5	Draft Plan consultation
	Community life	p 10	6	Local Development Plan extracts
	Homes & population	p 11	7	Reasons to amend the Local Development Plan
	Getting about	p 12		
	Jobs & business	p 13		
	Landscape & climate change	p 14		
	Ownership & control	p 15		
3	Our vision for the future	p 16		
4	Actions to get there	p 17		
	Village map	p 18		
	Summary table	p 19		
	Action sheets	p 20		
5	Making it happen	p 36		
	Collaboration	p 36		
	Jahama, Highland Council & Community Planning Partners	p 36		
	Community capacity: A New Deal	p 37		
	Support from the public and private sectors	p 37		
	Planning policy and development management	p 39		

FOREWORD



Kate Forbes, MSP

Having served as the constituency MSP for Kinlochleven for almost a decade, it is an enormous privilege for me to be asked to write the foreword for your place plan. Over the years, many of you have approached me about various matters including housing, the 3-18 campus, energy, land reform - as well as the deer! I am not surprised to see these and other subjects being heavily discussed in the place plan recommendations. I am heartened by the level of interest in the development and regeneration of the heart of Kinlochleven, and I'm particularly pleased there is consensus about its untapped potential.

By way of background, the consultation is the most extensive survey I have come across regarding the village and our future aspirations. It doesn't come a moment too soon, with the recent census figures showing a 17 per cent decrease in the local population from 2003 to 2020. There is a clear need for action.

To that end, I am hugely grateful to everyone who has participated in the place plan discussions - if you haven't done so yet, there's still time for your voice to be heard. The organisers are acutely aware they have not reached everyone - so please come forward, engage and continue to do so as the various stages of the plan are implemented. The place plan will never be perfect - and my firm expectation is that it will be something that continues to evolve over time in line with local needs.

I am a staunch supporter of communities being in control of their own destinies, and Kinlochleven has some hugely talented as well as passionate people. You have every right to drive forward local initiatives, as well as have a significant say on land and other assets on your own doorstep. I sincerely hope the suggested interventions will help act as a

catalyst for a thriving population - land reform, housing, infrastructure and connectivity are all the building blocks of a sustainable community.

I count it an immense privilege to be your constituency MSP, and I look forward to seeing the plan being further developed, and different parts being progressed. As your elected representative, I will do everything I can to facilitate these discussions and help move things forward.

It is absolutely crucial that the place plan does not sit on a shelf, but rather it is extensively used by all stakeholder groups - especially the public sector - as we turn words into action.

*Kate Forbes
MSP for Skye, Lochaber & Badenoch*

1 INTRODUCTION

This community-led Plan is our shared agenda for the future, guiding what we do as a community, and influencing public services and private investment.

The Plan contains our ambitions for Kinlochleven, expressed in a vision for the future (chapter 3) and actions to get there (chapter 4). It was developed with extensive community engagement between late 2023 and summer 2024, as explained later in this chapter.

We want a bright future for our village. We want to make more of our history and heritage. We want our young people to find fulfilling opportunities here, and older people to be able to age healthily. We want to make it attractive and welcoming for working families. Ultimately, we want a thriving community where people can access the services, facilities and opportunities they need.

This Plan aims to:

- **Build consensus** - within the community and across the public and private sectors, to get things done rather than stuck in debate.
- **Support community action** - for example, helping community projects to get funding.
- **Improve public services** - including education, health, transport, employability and planning (and to complement the forthcoming Kinlochleven Locality Plan that will address inequalities).

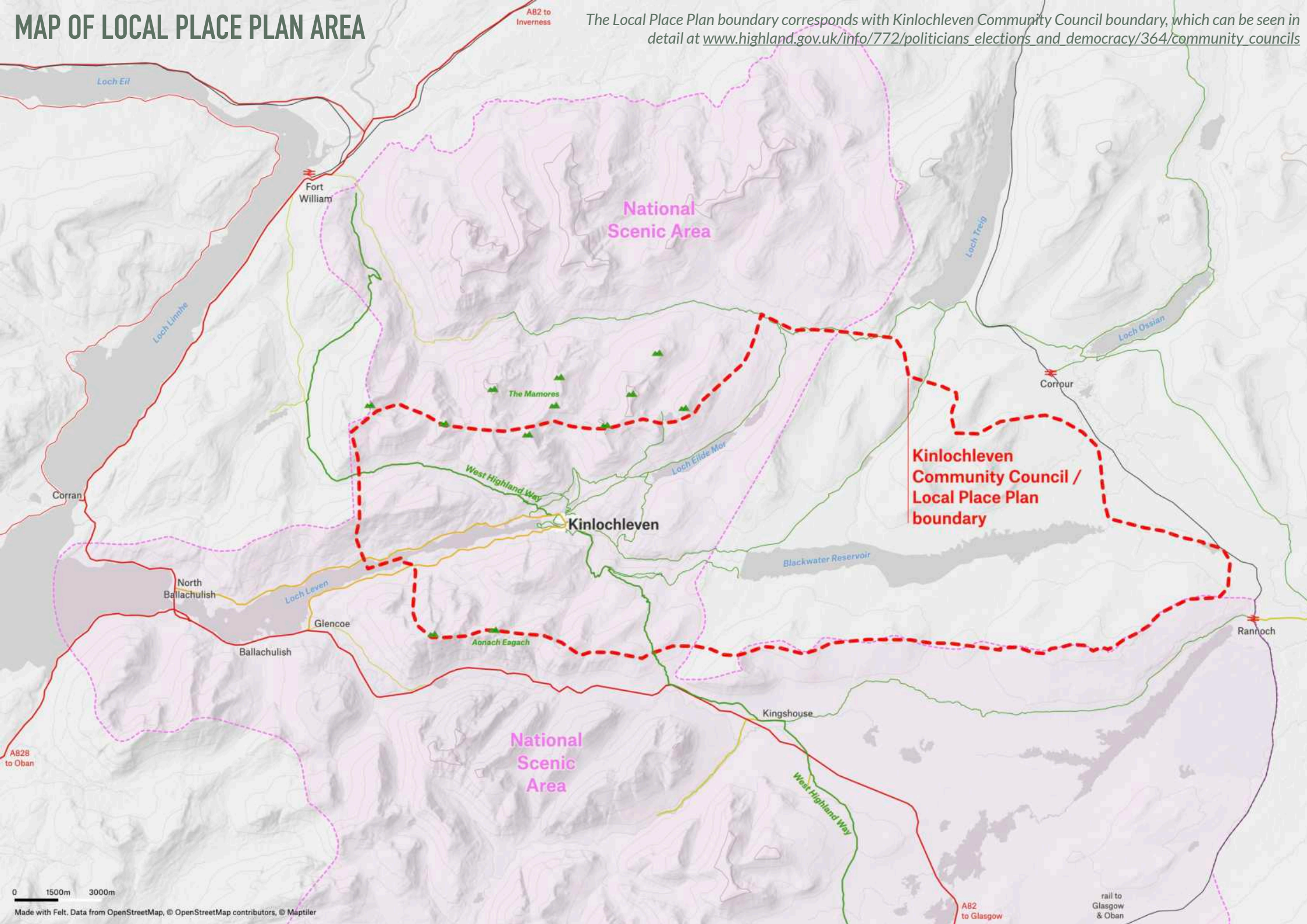
The Plan sets out our manifesto for the future. Delivering it will need collaboration and support from the Scottish Government, the Highland Council, Community Planning Partners and Jahama Highland Estates. We look forward to working with those and other partners to make it happen.



Image courtesy of [Andrew Bowden](#)

MAP OF LOCAL PLACE PLAN AREA

The Local Place Plan boundary corresponds with Kinlochleven Community Council boundary, which can be seen in detail at www.highland.gov.uk/info/772/politicians_elections_and_democracy/364/community_councils



HOW THIS PLAN WAS PREPARED

Kinlochleven Community Action Group was awarded funding from the Highland Council's Community Regeneration Fund in summer 2023 to prepare this Plan, which enabled commissioning of specialist support and expenses like community events and a dedicated website.

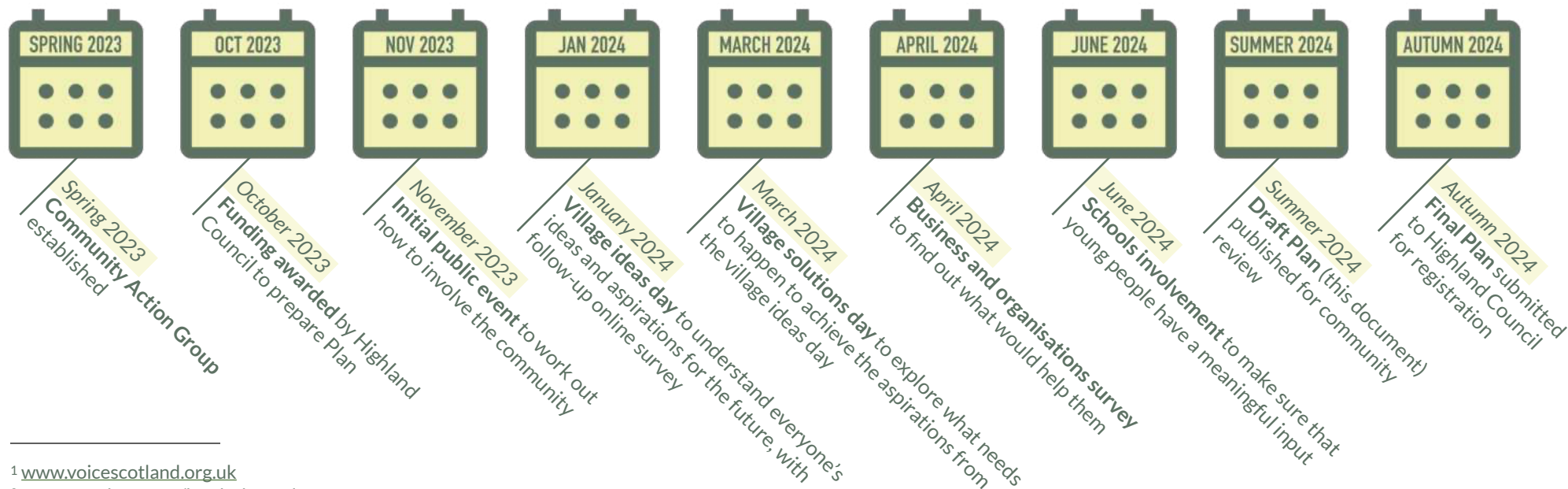
The first public step was an initial public event in November 2023 to discuss with the local community how they wished to be engaged. This led to a sequence of activities starting in January 2024 which included:

1. **Village ideas day** with a turnout of around 175 people, who were encouraged to say what they wanted for the future of the village. All information and questions were available online afterwards together with paper and online comments forms. For details, see www.kinlochlevenfutures.net/village-ideas or Appendix 1 (also online at bit.ly/3LXOJh6).

2. **Village solutions day**, two months later, to explore how the priority aspirations expressed at the village ideas day could be tackled. For details, see Appendix 2 (also online at bit.ly/4dDWyFn).
3. **School pupils**: at the village ideas day, young people emerged as a priority. With that in mind, engagement was organised with the primary and secondary schools to ensure that every pupil had the opportunity to input to the plan. See Appendices 3 and 4 or www.kinlochlevenfutures.net for details.
4. **Review of the Draft Plan**: this draft Plan is the subject of consultation in summer 2024 involving face-to-face and online engagement.
5. **Registration of the Plan**: Kinlochleven Community Council submitted the Plan to the Highland Council for registration in November 2024.

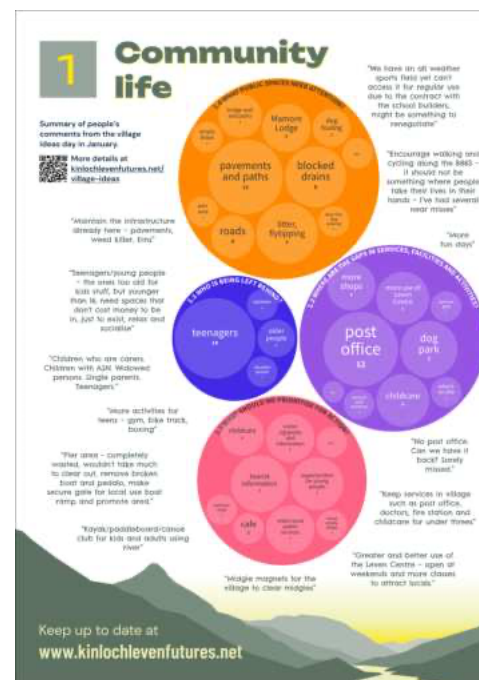
All community engagement activity was undertaken in line with the National Standards for Community Engagement¹ and the Scottish Government's draft How To Guide on Local Place Plans².

Timeline for preparing the Local Place Plan



¹ www.voicescotland.org.uk

² www.ourplace.scot/local-place-plans



COME & PLAN THE FUTURE OF THE VILLAGE

Saturday 27th January
The Leven Centre
11am-3pm Drop in any time

The **Village Ideas Day** is the first step in producing a community-led Local Place Plan.

Your **ideas** will be the building blocks of creating a bright plan for the future!

www.kinlochlevenfutures.net

**OUR PAST,
OUR FUTURE**

FAMILY FUN

GOOD FOOD

FREE

LOTS OF ACTIVITIES



THE BIGGER PICTURE

Whilst this Plan is rooted in our community aspirations, it also reflects planning policy aims of creating sustainable, liveable and productive places as expressed in the two parts of the ‘statutory development plan’:

- [National Planning Framework 4 \(NPF4, 2023\)](#)³
- [Highland-wide Local Development Plan \(2012\)](#)⁴ and [West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan \(2019\)](#)⁵

This Local Place Plan reflects the policy agendas contained in the statutory development plan, particularly **NPF4** and the **West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan** as the statutory development plan’s most recent components.

NPF4’s spatial principles are:

- Just transition
- Conserving and recycling assets
- ‘Local living’
- Compact urban growth
- Rebalanced development
- Rural revitalisation

Key extracts of the West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan are summarised in Appendix 5.

The Local Place Plan also takes account of other relevant policy documents:

- [National Performance Framework](#)⁶
- [National Strategy For Economic Transformation \(2022\)](#)⁷
- [Highland Outcome Improvement Plan 2017-2027](#)⁸
- [Highland Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy](#)⁹
- [Highlands and Islands Enterprise Strategy 2023-28](#)¹⁰

Those documents share overarching objectives relating to **climate change, health and wellbeing** and **sustainable & resilient communities**.

This Plan seeks to deliver on those overarching policy objectives, plus their subsidiary agendas including active travel, community wealth-building, community empowerment, local living, rural revitalisation, a more balanced population and a growing skilled workforce.

Suggestions for the next reviews of local and national planning policy are summarised in the final chapter. We hope these will be taken into account by national and local governments. For the Local Development Plan, that next review will be taking place in the near future.

³ www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/

⁴ www.highland.gov.uk/info/178/local_and_statutory_development_plans/199/highland-wide_local_development_plan

⁵ www.highland.gov.uk/info/178/local_and_statutory_development_plans/582/west_highlands_and_islands_local_development_plan

⁶ nationalperformance.gov.scot

⁷ www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-national-strategy-economic-transformation/

⁸ highlandcpp.org.uk/about-us/highland-outcome-improvement-plan/

⁹ www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/22899/highland_indicative_regional_spatial_strategy_to_2050.pdf

¹⁰ www.hie.co.uk/about-us/policies-and-publications/strategy-and-operating-plan/

COMMUNITY LIFE

We pack a big punch for a small village, but we could do a lot more with stronger community spirit and more volunteers.

Services & facilities

We have a high school & a primary school, the Leven Centre, surgery, sports pitches, library, fire station, pubs, churches, toilets & UHI. Our Post Office & bank have shut in recent years, shopping choice is limited, and too many of few shop units are empty. The pressure on our facilities will only increase as population declines. Lack of childcare prevents people returning to work and deters new families from moving here.

Community activities

The cost of hiring community spaces, the theatre & football pitch can be prohibitively expensive - which stops things from happening. We have a fair few active groups, but it can be difficult to find out what's on. There isn't much for teenagers & young people. Finding volunteers and money to organise clubs, gigs & other activities can be difficult.

Heritage & identity

We're proud of our history, not least the aluminium story that led to the creation of the village. The village has changed a lot since the smelter closed over 20 years ago, but we don't make the most of our heritage.

Challenges we face

- Who is being left behind?
- Where are the gaps in services, facilities & activities?

What's on in the village?

MON

Dodgeball Primary School 3:30-4:15pm For P1-P7, free
Lochaber Youth Theatre St Paul's 5-6:15pm For P7, S1-S6, £5 per week, free places available
Playgroup St Paul's 9:30-11:30am For parents & carers with tots, suggested donation £1.50
Salvation Army Charity shop & cafe 10:30am-12:30pm

TUE

Adult Drama St Paul's 7-9pm 18+ and 16+ doing Highers/Adv. Highers. £5/week, free places available
Badminton The Leven Centre 3:15-4pm P4-P7, free 4-4:45pm S1-S6, free
Craft Group The Leven Centre 6:30-8:30pm £3 per session
Cafe Kinloch St Paul's 12-2pm Warm space & food, all ages. Free, donations welcome
Men's Shed 10am-1pm
South Lochaber Bowmen The Leven Centre 7-9pm Age 9+, joining fee then £5 per week
Story Time St Paul's 3:15-4:15pm All ages, young ones must be with adult. Free, donations welcome

WED

Bookbug Library 11-11:30am
Kinlochlovin' Art Leven Centre 2:45-4pm & 4:15-5:30pm Any age
Kinlochlovin' Pottery Kinlochlovin' Workshop 7-9pm Adults, £5.
Knit and Natter Parish Church 2-4pm Any age, £2 donation if possible
Men's Shed 10am
Salvation Army Charity shop & cafe 10:30am-12:30pm

THU

Men's Shed 10am-1pm

FRI

Open Doors with Ewen's Room Library 10:30-12:30pm
 Coffee and chat for wellbeing. Aimed at adults. Free but donations welcome.
Open Mic Nights Tailrace Inn 9pm-close 18+. Buy a drink!

+

Bright Productions & Dramafish Kinloch Fringe Festival, theatre, etc
Churches all four churches have services & programmes of events
Ewen's Room doors open sessions for mental health & wellbeing
High Life Highland Youth & Active Schools events for children & teenagers
Island Park regeneration events e.g. Guy Fox Fireworks, Gala, Football
Kinlochleven Bowling Club (seasonal)
Kinlochleven District Angling Club (seasonal)
Kinlochleven High School programme of lunchtime clubs
Kinlochlovin' play & creative child therapy, pottery wheels etc
Leven Centre for sports, gym, classes, parties
Library open Mon to Sat various times, with Book Bug & Lego sessions
Loch Leven Wild Swimming meet several times per week
Mountain Yoga Classes with Penny, online and one to one
Outdoor adventure companies
Pre-65's Bike Trials in May
Sharon The PT Nut 1-to-1 & group classes, e.g. kettlebells, boxercise & cycling
The Getaway, Tailrace & MacDonald Hotel events like tribute bands

January 2024

HOMES & POPULATION

Our population is dropping sharply - but increasing housing costs makes it difficult for younger people to stay or move here, and the quality of some older housing is poor.

Population

The village population dropped by 16% between 2011 and 2020. Not only is the population decreasing, but the number of children dropped by over a quarter and there is a lower ratio of those of working age compared to over 65's. Our schools are at less than half capacity. These trends have worrying implications for our services and our community.

Housing

Homes may be cheaper to buy or rent here than Ballachulish or Glencoe, but they are still prohibitively expensive for young people starting out or people in less well-paid jobs. Many available homes are bought for holiday rentals and lie empty through the winter. The lack of housing makes it difficult for people to stay in the village & to fill job vacancies.

Health

Public health data shows overall life expectancy on a par with the rest of Highland, but lower for males than North and West Lochaber. The leading cause of death is heart disease, though it has been declining over the past 20 years. Drug related hospital admissions from Lochaber as a whole have increased since 2010, as have prescriptions for anxiety and depression. Alcohol related hospital admissions in the South Fort William area (including Kinlochleven) are above the Highland average.

Challenges we face

- How should we respond to having more older people & fewer younger people?
- How can we ease the housing situation so people are no longer turned away or forced to leave?

Highland Council data	Estimated population in 2020	Population change 2011-2020
Age 0-15	115 people	-27%
Age 16-64	451 people	-20%
Age 65+	203 people	+5%
All residents	769 people	-16%

BBC
NEWS
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Scotland | Scotland Politics | Scotland Business | Edinburgh, Fife & East | Glasgow & West | Highlands & Islands
Alba | Local News

Warning parts of Highlands being 'drained' of people

GETTY IMAGES

Kinlochleven is one of the Highland communities where population has been falling

Steven McKenzie
BBC Scotland News

10 December 2023

Highland Council has warned there is a "significant risk" parts of its region are being "drained" of people.

It said latest population trends suggested growth around the Inner Moray Firth, but people "drifting away" from Caithness and the west Highlands.

The figures show that between 2003 and 2020 populations increased by 22% in Fortrose and Rosemarkie and 19% in Inverness, but fell by 18% in Mallaig and 17% in Kinlochleven.

SCHOOL ROLL FORECASTS		
	Primary School (capacity 100)	High School (capacity 288)
2022-23	53	138
2023-24	51	132
2024-25	48	125
2025-26	50	114
2026-27	51	104
2027-28	52	93
2028-29	49	99
2029-30	48	99
2030-31	48	102
2031-32	48	109
2032-33	49	106
2033-34	49	108
2034-35	49	106
2035-36	49	107
2036-37	49	106
2037-38	49	106

GETTING ABOUT

All of us need to get to Fort William & other places for work, study, leisure, shopping or the hospital. Good transport is vital, and not all of us can drive or have access to a car. As a community, we are very reliant on public transport.

Public transport

The buses to Glencoe, Fort William and Glasgow are a lifeline for the village, especially for people without access to a car. But the local bus service runs only every 2-3 hours in the day, even less in the evenings, and the Sunday service is very limiting. Connections with the Citylink bus to Glasgow in Glencoe are terrible.

Community transport

The South Lochaber community minibus is old and needs replacing. Could a new vehicle be part of the solution, filling the gaps in public transport for residents and visitors?

On foot and by bike

Do we need to make it easier and safer for people to walk and cycle around the village, particularly children and people who are less mobile? Our path network could be more useable for locals and visitors, with better surfaces, signposting, benches and so on - especially for people who are less mobile. Once out of the village, cycling on the B863 can feel unsafe.

Challenges we face

- What should better public and community transport look like?
- Where & how can we make walking & cycling safer?
- How can we get about in more climate-friendly ways?

CAR / VAN AVAILABILITY	2011 Census data	
no car or van	147 households	32% of households
1 car or van	210 households	46% of households
2+ cars or vans	98 households	22% of households



JOBS & BUSINESS

All communities need people working to keep the wheels turning. We're a small village, some distance away from major employers. Over the last 20 years, we've found new sources of work and income, particularly tourism.

Latest census statistics¹¹ from 2011 show that 40% of us worked from home or in the village, and nearly 40% travelled to work in Glencoe, Fort William or places on the way. But things may have changed with the COVID-19 pandemic and more working from home.



The West Highland Way is ever more popular. 40,000 people finish it each year, contributing £12m to the economy along the route.

Outdoor adventure sports are growing too, and we are part of Lochaber Outdoor Capital of the UK.

But tourism, though welcome, is seasonal. The West Highland Way brings visitors but there isn't corresponding investment in infrastructure, for example in the route itself. Year-round jobs in tourism are scarce, and much of the economic benefit from tourism accrues to property owners outwith the village.

Challenges we face

- How can we make tourism and the West Highland Way a more sustainable source of income for the village, with higher quality year-round jobs?
- Where might our future job and business opportunities lie? ... outdoor adventure, land management, green energy or other things?
- What support is needed for people to work and for businesses to thrive?

¹¹ www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/about/2011-census/

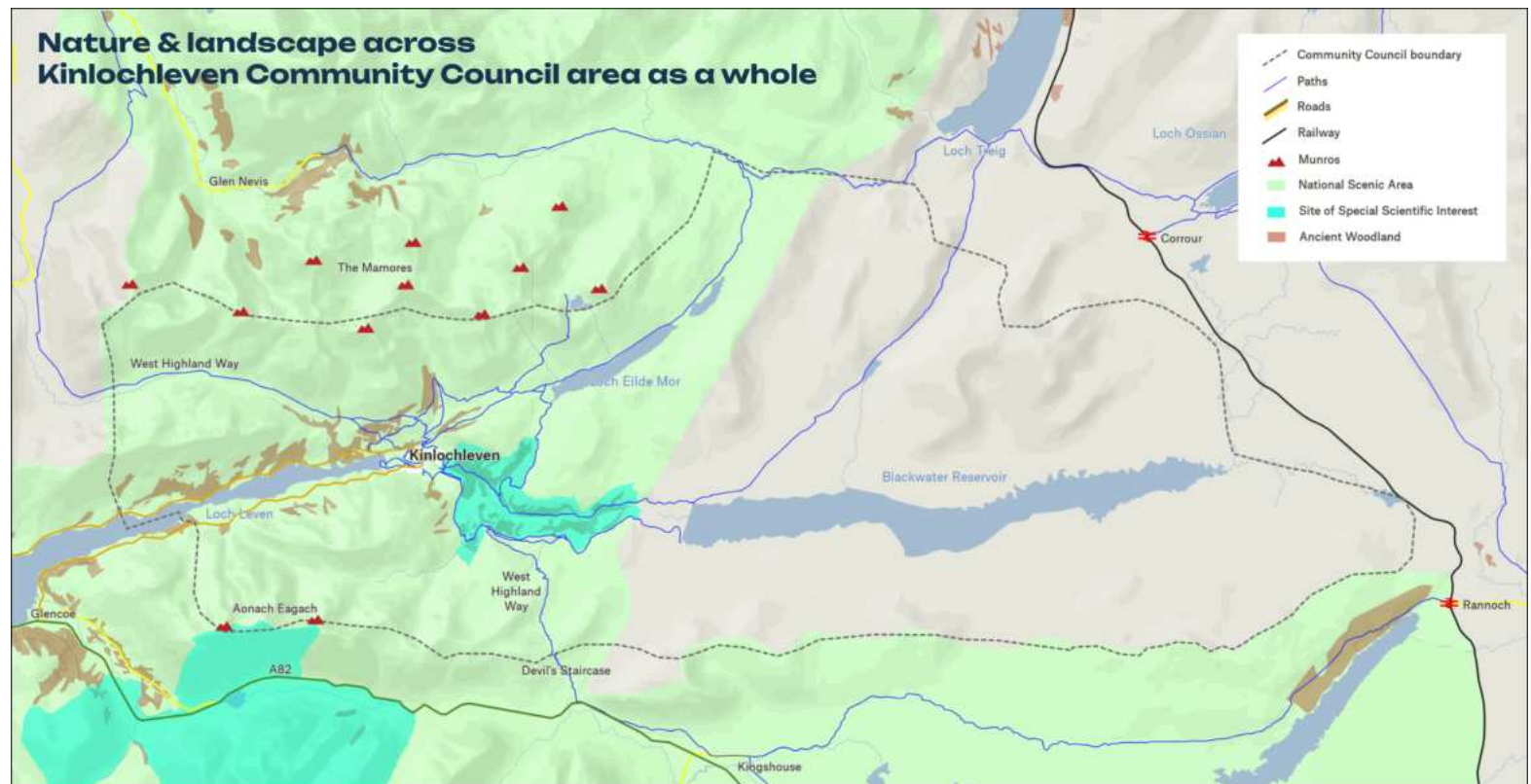
DISTANCE TO WORK in a straight line	2011 Census data all residents aged 16-74 in employment: 409 people in total	
work mainly from home	61 residents	15% of residents
less than 2km (i.e. in Kinlochleven)	99 residents	24% of residents
2-5km	1 resident	<1% of residents
5-10km (includes Glencoe)	13 residents	3% of residents
10-20km (includes Fort William, Ballachulish, Onich & ski centres)	142 residents	35% of residents
20-60km (includes Oban)	8 residents	2% of residents
more than 60km	26 residents	6% of residents
offshore, abroad, or no fixed place of work	59 residents	14% of residents

LANDSCAPE & CLIMATE CHANGE

We live in a spectacular landscape, with mountains, red squirrels, ancient woodland and much more. It might seem timeless, but warmer and wetter weather are having impacts. And the landscape might seem wild, but the reality is that it is managed - which brings both challenges and opportunities.

Invasive species like rhododendrons & bracken choke out native habitats. Warmer summers increase fire risk as peat dries out. More rain & storms bring trees down and increase flooding, causing erosion and damage to property & infrastructure. Milder winters mean less snow & less employment in winter sports.

Sometimes it can seem like tackling climate change is beyond a small community like ours. But groups like [Lochaber Environmental Group](#), [Highlands and Islands Climate Hub](#) and others are making a difference.



Challenges we face

- What action should we take locally to tackle climate change?
- Should we be exploring different ways of managing our hills and woodlands?

OWNERSHIP & CHANGE

Kinlochleven barely existed before the British Aluminium Company arrived to build the aluminium smelter and Blackwater dam in 1904.

The carefully planned 'electric village', one of the earliest to have electric street and house lighting in the UK, grew rapidly with housing, shops, leisure facilities and churches. But conditions were often poor on the village's older south side.

The company and its works were at the heart of the village throughout the 20th century. Kinlochleven Village Improvement Society, which owned and managed the village, was founded by the company and underwritten by it until the 1960s.

Company employment was already dropping by the 1950s (nearly halving between 1939 and 1973) and the village population shrank by around 18% between 1961 and 1966 alone. The company gradually disappeared from life in the village from the 1960s onwards as aluminium production declined, houses were sold and the Village Improvement Society had a less active role. When tourist traffic diverted away after the Ballachulish Bridge was open in the mid 1970s, the sense of isolation increased.

By the time British Aluminium's successor company, Alcan, closed the smelter in 2000, the company had long ceased to be "the provider" for the community. Social and

economic changes were already well underway. The opening of the West Highland Way in 1980 signalled the start of a gradual increase in visitor numbers. It was followed by the Ice Factor - the world's biggest indoor ice climbing wall - in part of the old aluminium works in 2003, together with the business park. In 2008, after the smelter had closed, there was major investment in the new school campus, library and leisure centre.

Jahama Highland Estates now own the huge upland estates which were originally purchased by the British Aluminium Company 120 years ago. They also own the site of the main aluminium works building, demolished 20 years ago, which remains undeveloped.

Since the new campus in 2008, there has been little major investment. As Jahama has taken over from British Aluminium and Alcan, Kinlochleven Community Trust is in some ways the successor to the Village Improvement Society that was established by British Aluminium in the 1920s. But, like the local Community Council, it lacks financial resources and capacity to fulfil that role.

Challenges we face

- **Whose role is it to manage British Aluminium's legacy?**
- **How can we collaborate better with the current landowner, Jahama?**



3

VISION

We want a bright future for our village. We want our young people to find fulfilling opportunities here. We want to make it attractive and welcoming for working families to move here. Ultimately, we want a thriving community where people can lead healthy and rewarding lives, with access to the homes, facilities and opportunities they need.

We have wonderful assets to help achieve those aspirations and tackle the challenge of depopulation that we face:

- Spectacular mountains and lochs
- 40,000 visitors walking the West Highland Way every year
- Fascinating history and heritage that tells the story of the 20th century
- Huge amount of hydro-electric power
- Extensive brownfield land & buildings in the heart of the village
- Modern facilities: schools, nursery, health centre, recreation centre, sports facilities, theatre, library and much more
- And last but not least, us - the community!

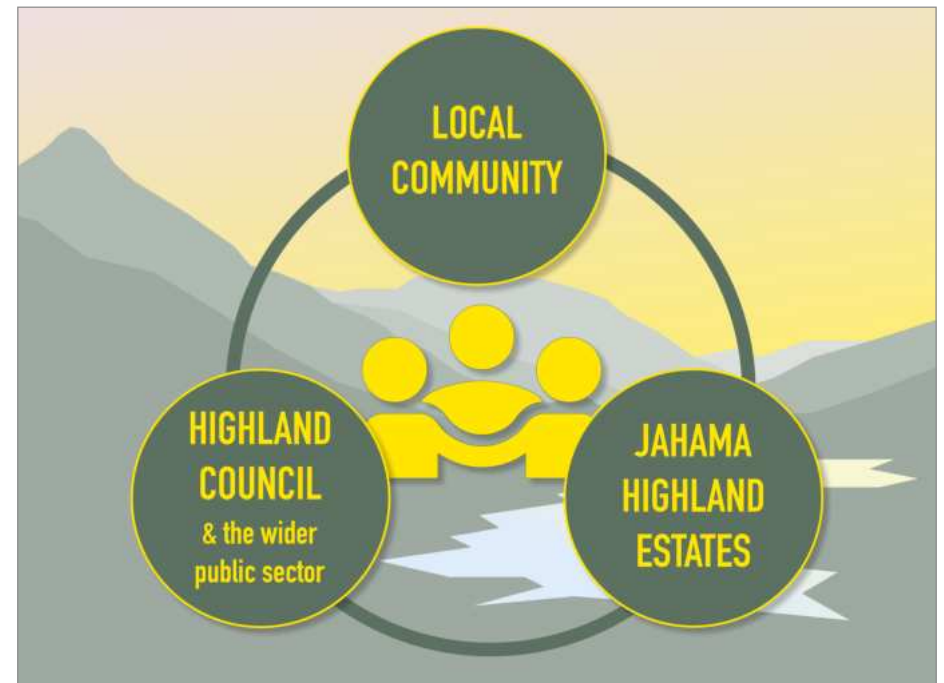
To achieve our vision, we need to work together with those who have supported us before and can support us again, including:

- The Highland Council, other Community Planning Partners such as Highlands and Islands Enterprise, and the Scottish Government and its agencies.
- Jahama Highland Estates as the key landowner in and around the village.

Crucially, we want to **reset the relationship** with those partners, to secure their support for community-led action and empowerment to deliver this plan - as explained in chapter 5.

But this plan is not just about us as a community and what we want. It is also about **delivering national agendas at the local level**, as promoted through National Planning Framework 4 and the [Place Principle](#):

- Community wealth building
- Health and wellbeing
- Local living
- Rural re-population
- Zero carbon



4 ACTIONS

The **map** on the next page summarises all of the actions in this Local Place Plan.

All of the actions are also listed in the **table** on page 18, together with an indication of which are potential ‘quick wins’ and which key government outcomes each action will contribute to.

More **details about each action** can be found on page 19 onwards. Where ‘key partners’ are listed, they refer mainly to external partners. Kinlochleven Community Council, Community Trust and Community Benefit Fund are likely to be involved in co-ordinating and delivery roles across many of the actions, although they will need support and resources to do so (see chapter 5).



TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS	Where info	COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING	HEALTH & WELLBEING	LOCAL LIVING	RURAL RE-POPULATION	ZERO CARBON
Redevelop old power site	page 19	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rebuild school campus & Lanes Centre	page 20	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Redevelop Island Park & old pier	page 21	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reinvigorate the village centre	page 22	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
OTHER PROJECTS ON THE MAP						
Build affordable homes	page 23	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Re-use the Alumnium Storey	page 23	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reopen Ice Factor & revitalize business park	page 24	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rebuild GP surgery & pharmacy	page 24	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Improve/create playparks	page 25	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Grow the community garden	page 25	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fix community composting site	page 26	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Upgrade path network	page 26	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Better & safer cycling connections	page 27	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Restore Mammie's Lodge	page 28	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Install community energy	page 28	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
OTHER WIDER ACTIONS						
Upgrade older homes	page 29	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Improve public/community transport	page 29	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Create village maintenance squad	page 29	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Extend affordable local childcare	page 30	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
More job opportunities for young people	page 30	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
What's on info	page 30	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year-round events programme	page 31	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
More art and culture	page 31	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Create youth space	page 31	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Open community cafe	page 32	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Re-open Post Office (location to be agreed)	page 32	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Support mental health and wellbeing	page 32	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Manage deer in the village	page 33	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Manage visitor parking	page 33	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Manage wild camping & motorhomes	page 33	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Restore & enhance natural habitats	page 34	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Assess land ownership & contamination	page 34	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Develop community resilience plan	page 34	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS

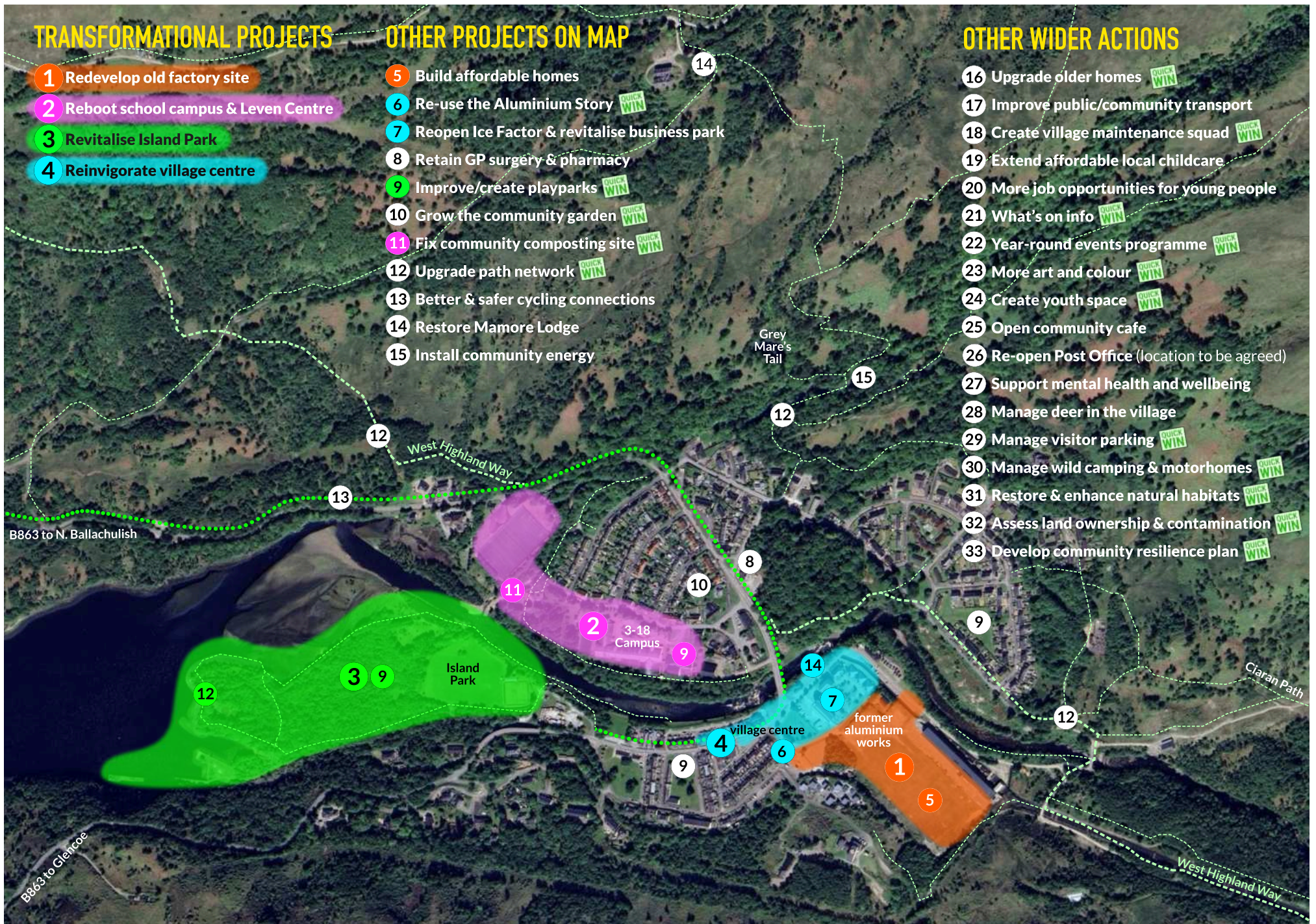
- 1 Redevelop old factory site
- 2 Reboot school campus & Leven Centre
- 3 Revitalise Island Park
- 4 Reinvigorate village centre
















OTHER PROJECTS ON MAP

- 5 Build affordable homes
- 6 Re-use the Aluminium Story
- 7 Reopen Ice Factor & revitalise business park
- 8 Retain GP surgery & pharmacy
- 9 Improve/create playparks
- 10 Grow the community garden
- 11 Fix community composting site
- 12 Upgrade path network
- 13 Better & safer cycling connections
- 14 Restore Mamore Lodge
- 15 Install community energy

OTHER WIDER ACTIONS

- 16 Upgrade older homes
- 17 Improve public/community transport
- 18 Create village maintenance squad
- 19 Extend affordable local childcare
- 20 More job opportunities for young people
- 21 What's on info
- 22 Year-round events programme
- 23 More art and colour
- 24 Create youth space
- 25 Open community cafe
- 26 Re-open Post Office (location to be agreed)
- 27 Support mental health and wellbeing
- 28 Manage deer in the village
- 29 Manage visitor parking
- 30 Manage wild camping & motorhomes
- 31 Restore & enhance natural habitats
- 32 Assess land ownership & contamination
- 33 Develop community resilience plan



	TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS	More info	COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING	HEALTH & WELLBEING	LOCAL LIVING	RURAL RE-POPULATION	ZERO CARBON
1	Redevelop old smelter site	page 20	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
2	Reboot school campus & Leven Centre	page 21	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
3	Revitalise Island Park & old pier	page 22	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
4	Reinvigorate the village centre	page 23	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
	OTHER PROJECTS ON THE MAP						
5	Build affordable homes	page 24	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
6	Re-use the Aluminium Storey 	page 24	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓
7	Reopen Ice Factor & revitalise business park	page 25	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
8	Retain GP surgery & pharmacy	page 26	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
9	Improve/create playparks 	page 26	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓
10	Grow the community garden 	page 26	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
11	Fix community composting site 	page 27	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
12	Upgrade path network 	page 27	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
13	Better & safer cycling connections	page 28	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
14	Restore Mamore Lodge	page 28	✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
15	Install community energy	page 29	✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓
	OTHER WIDER ACTIONS						
16	Upgrade older homes 	page 30	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
17	Improve public/community transport	page 30	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
18	Create village maintenance squad 	page 30	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
19	Extend affordable local childcare	page 31	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
20	More job opportunities for young people	page 31	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
21	What's on info 	page 31	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
22	Year-round events programme 	page 32	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
23	More art and colour 	page 32	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
24	Create youth space 	page 32	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
25	Open community cafe	page 33	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
26	Re-open Post Office (location to be agreed)	page 33	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
27	Support mental health and wellbeing	page 33	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓
28	Manage deer in the village	page 34	✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓
29	Manage visitor parking 	page 34	✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓
30	Manage wild camping & motorhomes 	page 34	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
31	Restore & enhance natural habitats 	page 35	✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓
32	Assess land ownership & contamination 	page 35	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
33	Develop community resilience plan 	page 35	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓

1 Redevelop old smelter site

The derelict site of the former aluminium smelter is simultaneously a problem and an opportunity. It is no exaggeration to say that its redevelopment is essential for the future of the village.

The *problem* is that the site is a large and perpetual blight in the heart of the community. The aluminium smelter which used to occupy the site closed in 2000, and was demolished. With public sector support, plans were put in place to decontaminate and redevelop the site. Ownership passed to Jahama Highland Estates.

The vacant site lies next to the centre of the village, and prominently visible to local residents and visitors to the Ice Factor and on the West Highland Way. The negative impacts for the local community of such a large vacant site are well documented in the Scottish Government's [Vacant and Derelict Land Taskforce report](#) from 2020. That report also highlights the massive potential of such sites.

The *opportunity* is that the site is prime real estate in a community which needs development but has nowhere else to put it. Despite the site being promoted for mixed use development in the Council's 2012 and 2019 Local Development Plans, no progress has been made - even though the 2019 Plan identified it as the top placemaking priority for the village. It is not even clear whether the vacant site has been decontaminated since the smelter was demolished over 20 years ago.

The village is crying out for development for:

- New homes (see action 5 on page 24).
- Commercial premises for cafes, restaurants, other businesses and a larger supermarket (the Co-op cannot expand on their existing site but a larger site would be of interest to them).
- Recreational/leisure uses for locals and visitors (see suggestions on page 22), making the village more attractive for new residents and year-round tourism).

Yet there is simply nowhere for this development to go. Undeveloped land around the village is steeply sloping. The only developable land in within the village is the smelter site, which is 'brownfield' and therefore prioritised for development in [National Planning Framework 4](#) (Policy 9).

[This recent Scottish Enterprise study](#) on the design and delivery of public-private mixed use regeneration contains up-to-date information and examples on how to progress redevelopment of this type of site in line with NPF4. Another example is the [Eden Campus](#) at Guardbridge in Fife, a former industrial site being jointly redeveloped by the public and private sectors.



KEY PARTNERS

- Jahama Highland Estates
- The Highland Council
- Highlands & Islands Enterprise
- Kinlochleven Community Council
- Kinlochleven Community Trust

FIRST STEPS

1. Key players commit to partnership approach
2. Prepare costed masterplan & delivery programme for the site, including remediation & co-design with local community

2 Reboot the school campus and Leven Centre

The 3-18 Campus and Leven Centre are great assets for the local community, offering a combination of schools, library, theatre, leisure centre and an all-weather sports pitch. But use of their facilities is artificially restricted and the school in particular is struggling to fulfil its educational and community role.

The school regularly suffers from a lack of teaching / pupil support staff and the challenge of recruiting and retaining teachers (due for example to a lack of housing and childcare options). The impact of this is that the school is unable to ensure continuity for pupils and teaching team, despite the best efforts of staff. This contributes to families leaving the village and acts as a deterrent to new families. With the village population already in severe decline, the situation needs to be rectified urgently: the combined primary and secondary school rolls in 2023-24 were 185, less than half their official capacity of 388.

The Council, as education authority, needs to put in place a plan of action to rectify this situation - covering recruitment & housing.

In terms of facilities in both the school and the Leven Centre, the community gets a raw deal, despite staff doing everything they can within the constraints under which they operate. The Leven Centre is closed at weekends. The costs of hiring the school's all-weather sports pitch, theatre and meeting rooms are prohibitively expensive for community organisations and visiting arts groups, meaning that these spaces lie unused and the community is deprived of cultural activities. Everyone would benefit from greater animation of these excellent facilities, especially young people & families. And they form part of the bigger aim of increasing population and so increasing the school roll.

Specific suggestions in relation to facilities:

- The Leven Centre should be resourced to open at weekends, be spruced up, and have dedicated youth and intergenerational spaces.

- Other initiatives should be considered, including 24 hour gym (requested by young people), outdoor play (see page 26) and seating at the front of the building, shared use of UHI space for community use, social space for teens, a community cafe and community involvement in operations to ease the burden on staff.
- Review pricing for the theatre, meeting rooms and all-weather pitch with the aim of increasing use. This should take place in consultation with potential users.
- A programme of events should be arranged in the theatre, for example cinema nights, visiting bands and drama.
- The library could be enhanced with a [workspace hub](#) providing meeting space and IT facilities for home-based workers

KEY PARTNERS

- The Highland Council
- High Life Highland
- [Leven Centre board](#)
- Kinlochleven Community Trust
- UHI

FIRST STEPS

A plan should be put in place to replace and retain school staff.

Facilities should be reviewed and actions put in place to to increase access and use, including pricing, activities, management and future investment requirements.



- * Spruce up Leven Centre
- * Dedicated youth space
- * Weekend access to all-weather pitch
- * Seasonal programme of events in the theatre

3 Revitalise Island Park and old pier

Kinlochleven doesn't have a park, but this is where it would be if we had the capacity and resources to develop it. To complement the bowling club, grass pitch and riverside walk there is huge potential for residents and visitors alike: history, watersports, nature, and better recreational facilities - especially for young people.

Our initial focus is to make more of Island Park as a community space, with more community events and activities. To enable that to happen, the site needs water and electricity supplies. In the medium term, toilets, changing and washing facilities would make it easier to host events and activities.

With investment and support from the local community, Island Park could also include any of these ideas which have been suggested (NB: ideally some of these could be located on the old smelter site):

- Improved sports pitch and event facilities
- All-weather social space for teens
- Fenced dog park
- Improving/extending the riverside path loop for wheelchair/buggy access, with seating and signage
- Skatepark/pump track (see page 26)
- Access to the loch for swimming and water activities
- Nature/heritage information, including the old pier, railway & wildlife
- Seasonal cafe

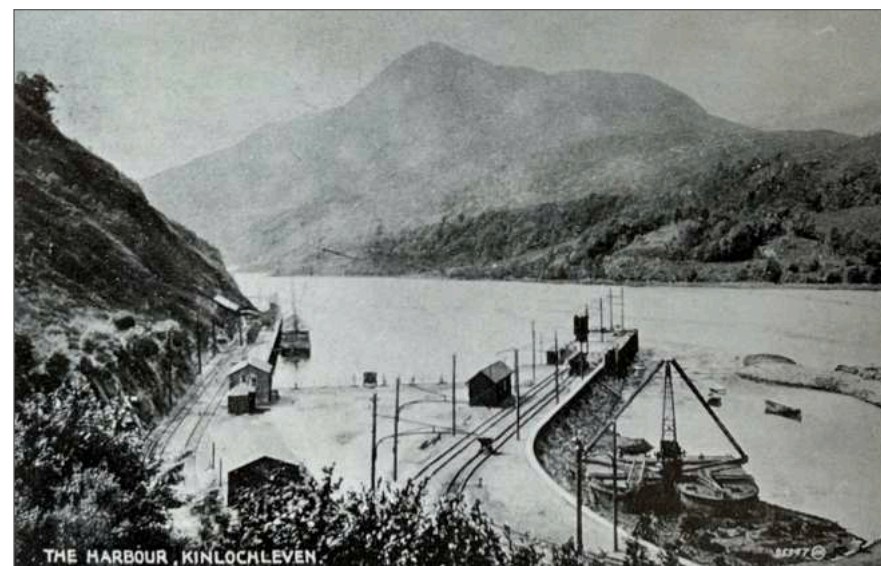


KEY PARTNERS

- Island Park Community Field SCIO
- Jahama Highland Estates (owner)
- High Life Highland
- The Highland Council

FIRST STEPS

Water and electrical supplies
Community support for events



4 Reininvigorate the village centre

Our village centre is dragged down with too many premises lying vacant and derelict. Yet at the same time we don't have enough space for businesses in the village. This is bad for business, bad for the community, and for visitors.

We need more shops (especially for fresh produce), more cafes (young people are crying out for a Greggs!) and more premises for other small businesses.

Empty shops and the former Aluminium Story building (see page 24) need to be brought back into active use. If this is not commercially viable because of the condition of the properties, the public sector may be able to help bring in additional resources ([as has happened in Campbeltown](#), for example).

Support could include small grants, shopfront improvements, rehabilitation of older buildings where more major works are required, and improvements to the public realm. Apprenticeships, training and jobs for local young people could be part of the package.

More could be made of the public space between the Ice Factor and the shops, for example additional food options such as popup food trucks and kiosks, and more activities.

KEY PARTNERS

- Owners
- The Highland Council
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise

FIRST STEP

Liaison between Council planners and owners of empty properties to bring it back into use



- * Drop kerb at the disabled parking bay by the Co-op
- * Popup food businesses



5 Build affordable homes

Our population is dropping partly because there aren't enough homes for people to live in. Houses that do come on the market usually get snapped up for rented holiday accommodation, and then lie empty for half the year when the West Highland Way is quiet. According to [AirDNA](#), 37 properties in the village were advertised on AirBNB alone in Spring 2024.

The supply of housing for locals and workers is ever diminishing, yet very few new homes are built - only 13 in the last 10 years according to [Council data](#). This is due not least to the lack of progress in developing the village's only real developable land, the old smelter site (see page 20).

To tackle this, we need:

- New affordable houses for younger people, workers and families (private and social rented, shared equity, community owned etc).
- More Council buyback of homes from the open market, to let to the Highland Housing Register ('Open Market Purchase Scheme').
- Short Term Let Control for holiday lets etc.
- Prioritise local need/work on the housing waiting list, and new social rented homes to be for Local Letting (as in Upper Achintore).
- Encourage downsizing & sale to locals such as something similar to [the Welsh Government's voluntary Fair Chance scheme](#).
- Explore conversion of existing underused property as temporary staff accommodation, for example for teachers and care staff.
- Every resident looking for a house should join the waiting list.

The **first step should be to undertake a housing needs survey** to establish exact demand: how many homes; what sizes, tenures and price points; and mechanisms for building new homes especially on the old smelter site. The aim should be to reverse depopulation and attract more working families.

Key partners: *The Highland Council, Lochaber Housing Association, Communities Housing Trust, Jahama Highland Estates, Scottish Government*

6 Re-use the Aluminium Story



The Aluminium Story visitor and heritage centre was built after the smelter closed in 2000, and has also been used as the Post Office, but is now disused. The building is on a prominent site in the centre of the village (see page 23) and is owned by Kinlochleven Community Trust.

Being centrally located, in community ownership and in generally good order, the building offers an excellent opportunity for use as a hub for community arts, crafts, heritage and visitor information.

Key players: *Kinlochleven Community Trust, local community organisations, The Highland Council, High Life Highland*



7 Reopen Ice Factor & revitalise business park

Reopening the Ice Factor or bringing the building back into reuse is a community priority. Similarly, managing and retaining the business park at full occupancy is essential to maximise local employment opportunities.

The Ice Factor building is B-Listed and is part of the smelter's former carbon factory. It was converted to the Ice Factor, Scotland's national ice climbing centre, opening in 2003. It boasted the biggest indoor ice climbing wall in the world; an outdoor aerial adventure course was added in 2010. Closure of the climbing centre and adventure course in 2023 marked the demise of the village's only year-round visitor attraction.

The building is leased by Kinlochleven Community Trust from Jahama Highland Estates. Lying empty, it is both a missed opportunity for the village and a drain on the Community Trust's finances. It is in everyone's interest to see this historic building brought back into reuse for the benefit of residents and visitors alike.

The adjoining business park was constructed on land cleared after the factory was demolished in 2000. It comprises six business units, plus the micro-brewery in part of the carbon factory building.

Key partners: Kinlochleven Community Trust, Jahama Highland Estates, The Highland Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise



8 Retain GP surgery & pharmacy



The Medical Practice and associated pharmacy is an essential service for the local community, especially for those without access to a car given the village's poor public transport (see page 30).

Although there is no threat of closure, we believe it is important for the Plan for NHS Highland to commit to keeping the surgery open and staffed full-time. Retaining the surgery will play a fundamental part in attracting working families to the village and reversing our declining population.

We would also encourage the GP practice to engage in more community-based activities such as green health and social prescribing.

Key partner: NHS Highland



We have two small playparks, one either side of the river: Park Road to the south, and Lovat Road to the north. Both are in need of further investment. They would benefit from a rolling 5 year investment programme to replace equipment and ensure that there are play opportunities for all ages (possibly also include outdoor gym equipment).

There is also scope for new play equipment outside the Leven Centre (see page 21) and at Island Park (see page 22). The available space and location of Island Park mean that it could be home to a skatepark or pump track.

Key partners: The Highland Council, Kinlochleven Play Parks Group, High Life Highland, Island Park Community Field SCIO



Our spacious community garden is much loved, but we could open it up to a bigger range of people - making more of an impact on health and wellbeing, climate change and food resilience - if a number of issues are tackled:

- Volunteer and staff capacity: any growth in the garden's operation will need more volunteer/staff time - we need more people to be involved.
- Deer fencing: we need to keep deer out, as explained on page 34.
- Land security: we need greater security over access to the garden, a matter currently being negotiated between the Highland Council and Kinlochleven Community Trust.

Tackling those issues would enable us to create a sheltered cooking space for produce grown in the garden; organise more events and activities (e.g. kids' activities such as a mud kitchen to increase family/schools access); satisfy demand for allotments and raised growing areas for people who are older or have less mobility; and much more besides..

Key partners: The Highland Council, Kinlochleven Community Trust, High Life Highland, Kinlochleven Play Parks Group, Island Park Community Field SCIO



11 Fix community composting site



The disused community composting site by the Mens Shed, near the end of Riverside Road, is unusable for community composting due to invasive flatworms.

The site needs to be cleared before it can be used again for community composting or other purposes (suggestions include allotments, forest school and tree nursery). Making the site useable will need resources and careful planning, and before that can happen a survey and mitigation plan will be needed for native slow worms and any other protected species which might exist on the site. Funding will be needed to pay for this work.

In addition, Japanese Knotweed - another invasive species - is present at various locations around the village owned by different landowners. These require appropriate treatment.

Key partners: Kinlochleven Community Trust, Lochaber Environmental Group, NatureScot, SEPA, The Highland Council



12 Upgrade path network



One of our greatest assets is the natural environment. Although we are at the hub of miles of rough tracks for serious hiking and mountain biking, there are limited options for short walks in and around the village.

Making more of our village path network would provide greater opportunities for residents to get out for their own health and wellbeing, and for visitors to spend more time enjoying what the village has to offer. This should include improving accessibility for disabled users (such as the loch shore path and to the Grey Mares Tail), seating and signage.

Initial routes could include continuing to improve the paths on either side of the river through the village. Later phases could include opening up the route of the former railway line between the smelter site and the old pier.

Information for visitors should also explain [wild camping rights and responsibilities](#), not least to reduce that happening in the village itself.

More details and an action plan can be found in [Kinlochleven Green Pathways to Health](#) (2024).

Key partners: Kinlochleven Community Trust, NHS Scotland, Highlands and Islands Climate Hub, Paths for All, NatureScot, Jahama, Lochaber Disability Access Panel, Lochaber Environmental Group



13 Better & safer cycling connections

As soon as cyclists leave the village, the B863 can be an uncomfortable and intimidating experience. In fact that applies to whether people are walking cycling or wheeling in other ways. The 'low road' to North Ballachulish is flatter but narrow; the 'high road' to Glencoe is hilly and is the bus route. Both have fast moving traffic.

We need proper cycle paths that run along both sides of the loch to Glencoe and North and South Ballachulish, like the route alongside the A828 between Ballachulish and Connel. Those paths should connect into safer cycling routes to Onich and Fort William; the A82 is extremely dangerous for cyclists, and the official National Cycle route which crosses the Corran and Camusnagaul ferries is inconvenient.

To help remove disincentives such as the hilliness of our roads and lack of confidence for cycling, a community ebike scheme and initiatives like bike maintenance would be useful.

Key partners: *The Highland Council, Sustrans, SportScotland, Hitrans, Lochaber Environmental Group*



14 Restore Mamore Lodge

Mamore Lodge was built around 1900 as a shooting lodge for wealthy visitors, perched 200 metres above the village with tremendous views down the loch down to the Pap of Glencoe. It latterly became a hotel, but this closed over a decade ago.

The building is now a boarded-up eyesore overlooking the village.

What better place to restore former glories as a hotel, spa or retreat? This would attract more people to stay in the area, greatly enhance the visitor offer, and create new training and employment opportunities for the local community.

Key partners: *Jahama Highland Estates, Historic Environment Scotland, Highland Historic Buildings Trust, The Highland Council*



15 Install community energy

Kinlochleven has generated hydro-electric power for well over a century, since the construction of the Blackwater dam and Kinlochleven power station. Since the closure of the aluminium smelter in 2000, the power station (rated at 20-30mw) feeds into the National Grid. Other smaller hydro-electric schemes on Loch Eilde More and the River Leven have been constructed in the last few years.

Despite the wealth of hydroelectric potential in the area, high energy costs for residents, and heavy reliance on CO₂-intense and polluting fuels such as coal, wood and oil, the local community see little benefit other than limited community benefit funding.

The obvious potential is for the local community to generate its own hydroelectric power, generating cheaper energy (so tackling fuel poverty, CO₂ emissions and air pollution) and/or financial income for the community (from the sale of power to the National Grid).

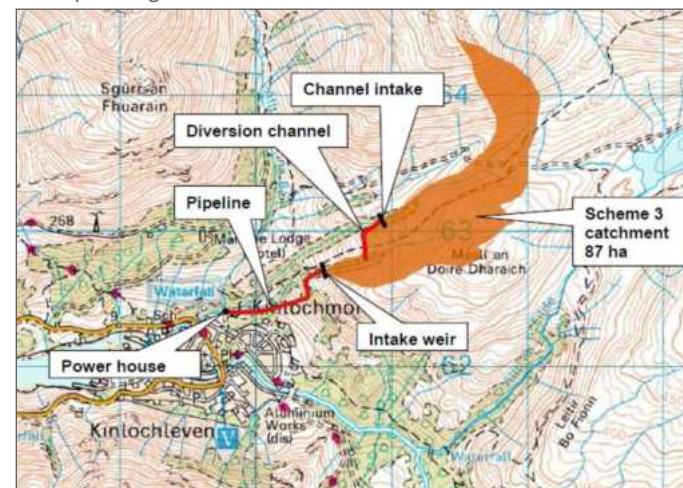
Planning consent was granted for a community micro-hydro scheme near Wades Road in 2016 (see adjacent images). The consent needs to be renewed and implemented by Kinlochleven Community Trust and Jahama Highland Estates (the landowners).

The University of Strathclyde has undertaken research on community heat and power in Kinlochleven in recent years, and is a potential partner in creating a community heat and power scheme to serve the village.

The first step is discussion and a joint feasibility study involving the three partners to consider potential models, establish viability and agree the actions/investment needed to progress the scheme.

Key partners: Jahama Highland Estates, Kinlochleven Community Trust, University of Strathclyde (also Local Energy Scotland, The Highland Council and Registered Social Landlords)

2016 planning consent



Example of similar intake



16

Upgrade older homes



Some residents still live in poor housing conditions, particularly in the rented sector. Concerns include building condition, energy/power efficiency and fuel poverty.

Actions should include:

- Providing advice on simple home energy improvements to tackle fuel poverty.
- Continue to upgrade existing homes on lower Council tax bands, whether rented or owner-occupied.
- Promote information and grants related to energy/heat grant schemes and advice to enable upgrading to higher EPC ratings.
- A Tenants' Association should be established for smoother liaison with Registered Scotland Landlords and to help access additional funding.
- Where appropriate, older flats should be redeveloped and with houses. The starting point would be an asset review of existing Council / Housing Association properties.
- Promote Local Lettings Initiative for social housing (like the new build at Achintore in Fort William that prioritises key workers).
- Community heating and power should be explored for all existing homes (see page 28).

Key partners: Highland Council, Allenergy, Home Energy Scotland, Registered Social Landlords, private landlords

17

Improve public / community transport

Convenient and affordable access to services, jobs, services, leisure opportunities and friends & family in Glencoe, Ballachulish, Fort William, Oban and south to Glasgow and the Central Belt are essential - particularly for the 30% of households without a car (see page 12).

Aspirations from young people and adults alike include more evening/weekend services, better connections with Citylink long distance services at Glencoe, cheaper for those on low incomes and good local community transport.

Actions should include:

- Extend bus timetable to/from Fort William and investigate discounted fares.
- Amend timetables to improve Glasgow connections at Glencoe and links to Oban.
- Space or racks on buses for cycles.
- Upgrading Lochabus community transport (e.g. replacing the ageing diesel minibus with 2 x 9 seater electric minibuses, parking spaces with charging points, a paid driver).
- Shuttle service linking Kinlochleven and Glencoe for residents and visitors (could be provided by upgraded Lochabus).
- Community car sharing.

Key partners: The Highland Council, HITRANS, Shiel Buses, Scottish Citylink, Lochabus, National Trust for Scotland / tourism businesses

18

Create village maintenance squad



Keeping the village clean and tidy emerged as a priority for many residents (see appendices).

We can start to improve things by setting up a community-run village squad, with starting small with a group of volunteers like the [Fort William Town Team](#). In the future it could potentially graduate to a team of paid [Community Caretakers](#) as in Fort Augustus, which was set up with Council support.

Starting points could be green spaces, colourful flower planting, deer/dog dirt and litter.

Key partners: The Highland Council, Keep Scotland Beautiful, Voluntary Action Lochaber



Extend affordable local childcare

We are fortunate to have a Council-run nursery for ages 3+, but it no longer offers care after school hours. The village has no provision at all for children aged below 3. This prevents parents from working, deprives them of income and acts as a brake on the local economy.

What the village needs is affordable, local, wrap-around childcare, before and after school hours, up to around 12 years of age. This would complement the Council nursery.

Other places in the Highlands such as Kinlochbervie are currently in discussion with the Council and [Care and Learning Alliance \(CALA\)](#) to develop new models of care (e.g. [intergenerational](#) for children and older people), using community or Council premises and a combination of paid/volunteer staff.

The first step is to initiate discussions with the Council and CALA to establish a potential model, likely costs and sources of funding.

Key partners: The Highland Council, CALA



More job opportunities for young people

As this plan was prepared, the local community's consistent message was that we need to make sure there is more for our young people. So, making sure that there are opportunities for young people flows throughout almost in this Plan.

Not all young people will want to stay in the village: some may want to move elsewhere to study or work, although we hope that they will choose to return. But we should make sure that those who want to stay and work in the village are able to. Having opportunities to gain work experience, apprenticeships or earn money are vital.

The high school is looking to expand into more outdoor-related vocational education, in outdoor careers such as nature conservation, land management, outdoor education and recreation, tourism and adventure sports.

Every employer or volunteer group can play its part, too, by offering opportunities to young people: work experience, apprenticeships and of course jobs will all help.

Key partners: local businesses, employers and volunteer groups, Chamber of Commerce, the high school, UHI, The Highland Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland

What's on information



Although there are lots of activities in the village, many residents don't know what's going on. And we know that some people are struggling with loneliness, mental health and wellbeing.

We need to make it easier for everyone to know what's going on in the village, but setting up a "what's on" calendar, ideally both online and using one of the village noticeboards. For community groups, a monthly informal chitchat to share news and information works well in other communities - feeding into a shared community calendar, and sharing information about funding, support and shared interests.

Key partners:
community groups,
High Life Highland

What's on in the village?	
WED	Dodgeball Primary School 3:30-4:15pm. See 19.01.2024. Lochaber Youth Theatre St Paul's 5-6:15pm May 01 to 06. 45 per week. Free places available. Playgroup St Paul's 9:30-11:30am. For parents & carers only. Suggested donation £1.50. Salvation Army Charity shop & cafe 10:30am-12:30pm.
THU	Adult Drama St Paul's 7-9pm (in and out going regulars/observers). £5/week. Free places available. Badminton The Leven Centre 3:15-4pm (adults) & 4-4:45pm (14 & over). Craft Group The Leven Centre 6:30-8:30pm (14 & over). Cafe Kinloch St Paul's 12-2pm. Open space & food. All ages. Free donations welcome. Men's Shed 10am-1pm. South Lochaber Bowmen The Leven Centre 7-9pm (ages 16+). Joining fee then £2 per week. Story Time St Paul's 3:15-4:15pm. All ages. Story time for the whole family. Free donations welcome.
FRI	Bookbug Library 11-11:30am. Kinlochlovin' Art Leven Centre 2:45-4pm & 4:15-5:30pm. All ages. Kinlochlovin' Pottery Kinlochlovin' Workshop 7-9pm. Adults only. Knit and Natter Parish Church 2-4pm. All ages. £2 donation if possible. Men's Shed 10am. Salvation Army Charity shop & cafe 10:30am-12:30pm.
SAT	Men's Shed 10am-1pm. Open Doors with Ewen's Room Library 10:30-12:30pm. Coffee and chat for wellbeing. Joining fee. Free for 1st & 2nd. 3rd £2.00. Open Mic Nights Tailrace Inn 9pm-10:55pm. See 19.01.2024.
SUN	Bright Productions & Dramafish Kinloch Fringe Festival, theatre, etc. Churches all four churches have services & programmes of events. Ewen's Room doors open sessions for mental health & wellbeing. High Life Highland Youth & Active Schools events for children & teenagers. Island Park regeneration events e.g. Cup Fox Fireworks, Gala, Football. Kinlochleven Bowling Club (seasonal). Kinlochleven District Angling Club (seasonal). Kinlochleven High School programme of lunchtime clubs. Kinlochlovin' play & creative child therapy, pottery wheels etc. Leven Centre for sports, gym, classes, parties. Library open Mon to Sat various times, with Book Bug & Lego sessions. Loch Leven Wild Swimming meet several times per week. Mountain Yoga Classes with Penny, online and one to one. Outdoor adventure companies. Pre-65's Bike Trials in May. Sharon The PT Nut 1-4:15 & group classes, e.g. kettlebells, borescience & cycling. The Getaway, Tailrace & MacDonald Hotel events like tribute bands.

22

Year-round events programme



The village is some distance away from activities and facilities in Fort William and elsewhere. More things going on in the village, as in other Highland communities, will make us a happier, healthier community, help to reverse depopulation and improve the tourism offer.

Our ideal is to build on the events we already have to create a year-long programme of community events, from Christmas cheer to the summer gala day. The focus should be events that bring the community together and are good for families - which will ultimately be good for visitors too.

This goes hand in hand with increasing use of the theatre and other spaces in the Leven Centre and 3-18 Campus, for example for music and drama performances (see page 21) and sharing more what's-on information (see page 31).

Key partners: businesses, community groups, High Life Highland, 3-18 Campus, The Highland Council, UHI

23

More art and colour



Some of our most popular community activities revolve around art: for example, Knit and Natter, Kinlochlovin' and the many artists and crafters in the village. Arts and crafts are hugely engaging for many people as a means of expression, learning skills and socialising.

This local talent should be harnessed to introduce more colour and art into the village. We already do things like colourful knitted bollard covers: why not expand into murals on buildings or public art in and around the village like [Calgary Art in Nature](#). We could organise a competition to brighten up the open space between the Co-op and the Ice Factor.

Key partners: Kinlochlovin', Knit and Natter, other groups, owners, Highland Council, High Life Highland, UHI



24

Create youth space



We all agree that young people are our future; they suggested many of the actions in this plan.

One popular request is a free indoor space that they can spend time in out of school hours. Somewhere that they can call their own. This might simply be a room in an existing building, like the Leven Centre (UHI have expressed an interest in looking at different uses for the room that they use).

Young people themselves should work out what to do with the space - what it should be used for, how to decorate and equip it, how to develop it in the future, how to run it, what support they would need, etc.

A good starting point would be the Pupil Council at the 3-18 Campus, who organised engagement with young people for this Plan.

Key partners: schools, High Life Highland, UHI



25

Open community cafe

We have a couple of takeaways and bars, but the village lacks a cafe where folk can meet and sit for a cuppa or lunch - a place to socialise for all ages and to enjoy good quality, affordable food and drink.

This was a big ask from young people. Visitors would welcome somewhere to go too.

There are plenty of potential spaces: for example, the Leven Centre (see page 21), empty units in the village centre (see pages 23 and 24), Island Park (see page 22) or the Ice Factor (see page 25).

We are not too concerned with where it happens, just that it does happen!

Key partners: building owners, Highlands and Islands Enterprise



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26

Re-open Post Office

Our village Post Office closed in 2023. It was an essential facility for the community.

We need it to reopen. That could be located in a number of premises: for example, the Leven Centre (see page 21) or empty units in the village centre (see pages 23 and 24).

The existing Co-op building is likely to be too small, and a new store would need to be in larger premises (probably on the former smelter site, see page 20, which will take a number of years to develop).

The first step is to contact the Post Office Area Manager to discuss the potential for re-establishing a local Post Office.

Key partners: Post Office, businesses, building owners



27

Support mental health & wellbeing

The evidence from public health data (see page 11) and the community engagement for this plan (see appendices) tells us that mental health and wellbeing are challenges for many people in the community.

Many of the actions in this plan are specifically designed to tackle those challenges, for example:

- Reducing the amount of derelict land in the village (see pages 20 and 23)
- Making more of our greenspaces and natural environment (see pages 14, 26, 27 and 28)
- Having more community activities and events (see pages 21-22, 26 and 31-33)

Many other things are happening already as well, led by the voluntary and public sectors.

Effectively tackling mental health and wellbeing needs co-ordinated action beyond the scope of a physical or spatial plan like this.

The Highland Council and its Community Planning Partners are therefore leading the preparation of Kinlochleven Locality Plan, which will complement this Local Place Plan by focussing specifically on inequalities - including issues like mental health and wellbeing.

Key partners: Voluntary Action Lochaber, NHS Highland, Lochaber Community Planning Partnership

28

Manage deer in the village

Deer are a common sight in the village, [as reported in the national press](#). This causes real health and safety issues:

- Unknown behaviour from large wild animals alongside children, dogs and traffic.
- Deer poo contaminating public spaces, play parks, the community garden, and food growing areas in people's private gardens.

Experience elsewhere suggests that effective deer-control plans focus on reducing potential food sources in residential areas and modifying habitats in riverside / wildlife corridors.

A co-ordinated programme of action is needed, along the lines suggested [here](#), including strict wildlife-feeding prohibitions to avoid attracting deer into the village.

(Installing deer fencing and cattle grids to keep deer out would be very expensive, and culling in the village is unacceptable.)

Key partners: residents, Jahama Highland Estates, Kinlochleven Community Trust, NatureScot



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29

Manage visitor parking



The village is the centre of a number of an extensive path network, and hillwalkers often park for a day or more.

Although the village has a number of car parks, visitor parking on narrow residential streets for long periods disrupts residents, especially in the summer season. We would like to work with the Council's roads and parking officers to create a co-ordinated plan to tackle the issues.

Our expectation is that a solution can be found by signposting visitors to places that they can park without causing disruption, such as the car parks at the Grey Mares Tail, the Ice Factor, opposite the Post Office, opposite the Blackwater Hostel and the school at weekends and holidays. Signposting would be needed at the entrances to the village and to reach the parking locations themselves.

Key partner: The Highland Council, Kinlochleven Community Trust (as an owner of car parks)



30

Manage wild camping & motorhomes



We welcome visitors. The vast majority behave responsibly, but a very small minority do not:

- Some motorhome overnighers dispose of polluting 'grey waste' inappropriately in lay-bys and public places along the B863.
- Some informal campers believe it is acceptable to "wild camp" within the village. It is not. The [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#) states that wild camping should be "well away from buildings, roads and historic structures" and states that wild campers should "leave no trace" (see [page 115](#)).

The National Access Forum Scotland has published [guidance on managing informal camping](#) (see page 6 onwards).

Relevant management actions for Kinlochleven should include:

- Increase use of the newly opened motorhome *aire* site by the Ice Factor.
- Signage to encourage positive behaviours and remind of the Access Code.
- Reinstate Ranger services for face to face liaison with visitors.
- Stronger local guidance (as in [Cairngorm National Park](#)) and/or bye-laws (as in [Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park](#)).

Key partners: Kinlochleven Community Trust, The Highland Council, NatureScot, Lochaber Access Forum, Police, landowners

31

Restore & enhance natural habitats



We are fortunate to be surrounded by wonderful nature and scenery, as explained on page 13. Conserving and enhancing those natural habitats is a positive way of tackling the impacts of climate change and creating job & training opportunities (see page 30) - not only in and around the village, but across our extensive Community Council (see page 5).

Potential actions include:

- Increasing native tree cover to reduce flooding and improve natural habitats.
- Reducing upland grazing to enable woodland cover and native habitats to become more established.
- Removing invasive species like *rhododendron ponticum* & bracken which choke native habitats.

A starting point - and quick win - would be for Kinlochleven Community Trust to be resourced to continue its current 3 year tree planting programme around the village, focussing on areas like behind the 3-18 Campus, Eakie Hill, the wooded slopes above Garbhein Crescent and Foyers Road, and the extensive areas of Ancient Woodland around the village and in surrounding glens.

Key partners: Jahama Highland Estates, Kinlochleven Community Trust, NatureScot, Highlands and Islands Climate Hub, The Highland Council, others

32

Assess land ownership & contamination



Many of the actions in this Plan require better understanding of who owns land and its condition. Up-to-date information is difficult to obtain, particularly for former industrial land which may be contaminated.

A detailed study would inform deliverability of the Plan as a whole. It could include:

- Ownership of unused land, open space, woodland and non-residential premises in the village.
- Extent of industrial contamination, management/monitoring of contaminated land, and any additional remediation requirements.
- Potential mechanisms for the community to acquire or lease land or buildings.
- Potential sources of funding for land acquisition and remediation.

Key partners: Jahama Highland Estates, The Highland Council, other landowners



33

Develop community resilience plan



Events of recent years like flood damage on the B863 'high road', COVID and the cost of living crisis emphasise the need for communities to be resilient - which means being able to sustain themselves and bounce back after emergencies or challenges.

Kinlochleven is perhaps more vulnerable than many communities in Scotland because of its isolated location.

The established way of making sure we are resilient is to develop a community resilience plan, in line with [Scottish Government guidance](#) on community resilience planning.

We would like to work with our partners in the public sector to prepare a community resilience plan for the village. It is not something that we can do alone, but we are happy to provide support.

Key partners: The Highland Council, Community Planning Partners (see page 36), Scottish Government

5 MAKING IT HAPPEN

This plan is ambitious. It will need support from outwith the community, it will need resources, and it will take time.

Although there are lots of potential quick wins - some of which need little or no funding - the community does not yet have the power or resources to make them all happen. The plan should help secure that power and those resources, by showing how the individual actions contribute to strategic change and how they are rooted in community aspirations.

Even with resources, some of the actions in the plan are complicated and will take 5-10 years to come to fruition.

Everything depends on support, resources and collaboration.

Collaboration

Delivery of this plan will only be successful if the local community, public bodies, funders, businesses and landowners work together for common purpose. Collaboration will be key and support from a wide range of other players will be essential.

For example, increasing the supply of affordable homes will need support from the Scottish Government, government agencies, Highland Council's planning and housing departments, and specialist developers.

There are three key messages about delivery. It must be:

- **Collaborative:** the community alone cannot deliver the plan. Most of the initiatives require co-ordinated action by a number of partners.
- **Supported:** delivery will not happen on its own, nor can it rely purely on volunteers. The local community will need dedicated paid capacity to support volunteer action, to champion the plan and manage its

delivery, if success is to be achieved. [Kinlochleven Community Trust](#) forms a ready-made body to undertake this role, working in conjunction with the Community Council and other community organisations. But it will need additional resource to fulfil this role.

- **Joined-up:** picking off individual actions in the plan will not bear fruit - action needs to be joined up. For example, organising more activities in community centres needs paid support, investment in the fabric of the halls, and better public/community transport and safer walking/cycling to get to the community centres without a car.

Jahama, Highland Council and Community Planning Partners

In Kinlochleven, the community's perception of Jahama is that they do not work constructively with the community even when we approach them to do so. We want to have a more positive and productive working relationship, where the community and Jahama collaborate as partners to deliver both the social and economic aspects of this Plan.

Jahama - we cannot deliver this Plan without your active participation and support!

We also need the Council and its Community Planning Partners to work with us as partners. Their support has enabled preparation of this Plan, by establishing and facilitating Kinlochleven Community Action Group. We now need broader support to deliver this Plan, which includes building the community's capacity and resources (such as volunteer recruitment, support and funding) as well as delivering specific actions in the Plan.

Highland Council and Community Planning Partners - we need your continuing support!

Community capacity: a New Deal

Many of the actions in this plan rely on community action. But we are a small community with extremely limited staff time, and our volunteers and financial resources are already over stretched. We need help to build our capacity and resources.

When the smelter closed in 2000, the structure that was put in place to look after the community's assets was not sustainable. We have never been equipped with the resources to manage the responsibilities and risks that we were endowed with. There has always been a mismatch between resources, risk, capacity and funding. We need a New Deal which is sustainable.

That new deal needs to enable Kinlochleven Community Trust to continue to manage the land and property that it holds in trust for the community, including the Ice Factor, business park and woodlands. And it needs to ensure that funding through Kinlochleven Community Benefit Trust is increased and supports delivery of this Plan.

Support from the public and private sectors

The table on page 38 identifies specific parts of the plan that we hope each external organisation will support.

The Highland Council and Community Planning Partners have a fundamental role in delivering public services elements of the plan like planning, health and social care, transport, education and housing:

- **Highland Council**
- **Highland Third Sector Interface**
- **Highlands and Islands Enterprise**
- **Highlife Highland**
- **NatureScot**
- **NHS Highland**
- **Police Scotland**
- **Scottish Fire and Rescue Service**
- **Skills Development Scotland**

- **UHI**
- **Voluntary Action Lochaber**

Other public and private sector organisations have important roles in enabling specific elements of the plan. These include:

- **Jahama Highland Estates** in relation to land and operations in their ownership, including the hydroelectric power station and most land outwith the village.
- **Scottish Government** for planning, housing and infrastructure.
- **UK government** for non-devolved matters.
- **Crown Estate Scotland** and the **Scottish Land Fund** for community acquisition of land or buildings.
- **Voluntary Action Lochaber** to support community capacity & action.
- **Hitrans, Scottish Citylink** and **Shiel Buses** for public and community transport.
- **Sustrans** and **Paths for All** in relation to sustainable travel, including walking, cycling, wheeling and local path networks.
- **Lochaber Environmental Group** in relation to community composting, waste reduction and active travel.
- **Highlands and Islands Climate Hub** in relation to climate change.
- **Home Energy Scotland** and **ALLenergy** in relation to heating, energy efficiency and fuel poverty.
- **Keep Scotland Beautiful** in relation to village maintenance.
- **Highland Care and Learning Alliance** for childcare and early learning.
- **Communities Housing Trust, Lochaber Housing Association** and **Rural Housing Scotland** for housing.
- **Historic Environment Scotland** and **Highland Historic Buildings Trust** for restoration of historic buildings.
- **Key agencies** such as **SEPA, Scottish Futures Trust** and **SportScotland** in relation to relevant infrastructure and investment.
- **The Post Office** in relation to the Post Office.
- **NatureScot** for habitat protection/enhancement and outdoor access.
- **Other funders** for resources to make things happen.

EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS	PROJECTS THEY CAN EACH HELP TO DELIVER																																	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	
Allenergy																X																		
Bus operators (Scottish Citylink, Shiel Buses)																	X																	X
Communities Housing Trust					X																													
Crown Estate Scotland			X																															
Highland Care and Learning Alliance																			X															
Highland Council	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Highland Historic Buildings Trust														X																				
Highland Third Sector Interface																		X									X							X
Highlands and Islands Climate Hub												X																			X			
Highlands and Islands Enterprise	X			X			X													X						X								X
Highlife Highland		X	X			X			X	X											X	X	X	X										X
Historic Environment Scotland														X																				
Hitrans													X				X																	
Home Energy Scotland																X																		X
Jahama Highland Estates	X		X		X		X					X		X	X					X								X		X	X	X	X	X
Keep Scotland Beautiful																		X																
Lochaber Environmental Group												X	X																					
Lochaber Housing Association					X											X																		
NatureScot											X	X																X		X	X			X
NHS Highland								X				X															X							X
Paths for All												X																						
Police Scotland																														X				X
Post Office																										X								
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service																																		X
Scottish Futures Trust																																		
Scottish Government		X		X	X		X					X		X	X	X		X	X							X	X							X
Scottish Land Fund					X																													
SEPA											X																							
Skills Development Scotland																				X							X							
SportScotland													X								X													
Sustrans												X																						
UHI		X																		X		X	X			X								X
UK Government																				X														X
Voluntary Action Lochaber																		X								X								X

We hope that all of the organisations mentioned above will use the aggregated evidence from this and other Local Place Plans not only to influence their own spending and service delivery, but also to lobby for support with other partners - especially the Scottish and UK Governments. This should include cross-cutting issues such as housing, transport, infrastructure, community empowerment, jobs and business, and culture and heritage.

Planning policy and development management

This Plan is not solely focussed on statutory land-use planning, and we hope that the bodies referred to on this and the previous page will take account of in their decision making.

The Plan does, however, contain a number of planning-related actions which we trust the Council will support in the next Local Development Plan, and also through their Development Management and other regulatory planning powers, and through the planning department's professional expertise.

As required by [Schedule 19 of the Planning \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#), actions that relate to land-use planning are summarised in Appendix 7, with reasons why the Local Development Plan should be amended.



**OUR PAST,
OUR FUTURE**