THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: **Isle of Skye and Raasay**

Date: **30 August 2021**

Report Title: **Skye and Raasay Future**

Report By: **Executive Chief Officer – Infrastructure, Environment & Economy**

1.   Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1   This report seeks adoption by the Skye & Raasay Committee of a new place-based investment framework for the area known as "Skye & Raasay Future" (SARF). It also seeks approval for the next steps in securing its adoption through other partners and groups and confirming the ongoing collaborative approach to implementation and monitoring.

1.2   SARF is a bold proposition for transforming how partners collaborate on an ongoing basis to improve the lives of people and places across Skye & Raasay. The content of SARF outlined at Appendix 1 reflects the collective priorities and ambitions of communities and groups across the area taking account of consultation events undertaken since early 2021. Through this engagement stakeholders have highlighting a desire for all sectors of the community to work together in addressing future priorities and projects to deliver better outcomes for Skye & Raasay. To help achieve this, SARF is intended to act as a 'live' portfolio for the area that can evolve over time, and support an ongoing process for monitoring and delivering change.

1.3   Adoption by the Skye and Raasay Area Committee, together with approval of the next steps and approach to governance, would confirm SARF as the core framework and mechanism for partners working together for the future of the area. It is intended to shape service delivery, capital investment and asset management across all sectors and to coordinate the use of resources and finance, as well as providing a robust case for future funding bids.

2.   Recommendations

2.1   Members are asked to:

    i.   Consider the draft "Skye & Raasay Future" (SARF) at Appendix 1 and agree to its adoption by the Skye & Raasay Committee;

    ii.   Note the comments made during the engagement events and online consultations as set out in the Architecture & Design Scotland report enclosed at Appendix 2;

    iii.   Note that subject to its adoption by Committee the SARF will be prepared in an online 'Storymap' format a demo of which will be provided at Committee;

    iv.   Agree the next steps for securing adoption of SARF by partner groups and organisations, and the ongoing collaborative approach to governance, as set out in Section 6;

    v.   Note that the adoption process is proposed to include consideration of SARF by the Council's Economy and Infrastructure Committee; and

    vi.   Note that the implementation of SARF will rely on collective responsibility across all public sector partners and communities across Skye & Raasay. Internally, this will set the framework for Council services and budgets to be aligned with the outcomes and priorities where appropriate.

3.   Implications

3.1   Resource: The SARF document and ongoing process is intended to help coordinate how partners and communities work together and maximise resources to address the shared priorities for the area. Also, a paper is due to be reported to Council later in 2021 outlining the core components and aims for delivering a 'place-based' approach across the Highland region. This will also include the different options and approaches for preparing a place plan for each Council committee area.

3.2   Legal: None

3.3   Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island): The outcomes in the draft SARF reflect local priorities for the future which have been informed by the consultation and engagement undertaken. Adoption of SARF by a range of relevant partners and groups – such as the Community Partnership – will tailor how partners work together to address community priorities across the islands of Skye and Raasay. It is important that the SARF addresses the differing needs across Skye communities and particular groups. The draft plan acknowledges that going forward it will be important to learn from the feedback of the engagement process, including consideration and action around accessibility and inclusiveness for all, within the development of projects from the outset. An initial screening considering equality, poverty, rural and island impacts on the SARF has been prepared, and the SARF team will fully assess the impacts for the final plan.

3.4   Climate Change / Carbon Clever: Climate Change is a key cross-cutting priority outcome within the SARF. Given the clear importance being placed on climate change by the Council and Scottish Government, local priorities must align as closely as possible to the aspirations of both bodies, and should be embedded in the delivering .

3.5   Risk: There is a need for all partners and the Skye and Raasay community to adopt the vision and priorities and work to this in order to deliver against the outcomes identified.

3.6   Gaelic: Sustaining Gaelic language and culture is a key priority within the plan linked to to the outcome on Strengthening Communities.

4.   SARF as a place-based investment framework

4.1   The presentation of the Draft SARF - which can be found at Appendix 1 - follows extensive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders carried out in the period from January to June 2021. The main online engagement workshops were led by representatives from Architecture & Design Scotland (A&DS) who formed part of the SARF Project Team alongside staff from the Highland Council and Highlands & Islands Enterprise. A&DS staff acted as impartial facilitators in the process and took the lead in hosting the online workshops and summarising the feedback gathered. In addition, a two stage consultation hosted on the Skye & Raasay Future website allowed other interested parties to submit their views on the same questions posed through the workshops.

4.2   A&DS have prepared a report enclosed at Appendix 2 which summarises the feedback received during this process. This engagement has provided stakeholders with an opportunity to help refine the priorities and outcomes previously identified through the Local Committee and Recovery Board. It has also people to consider the informed the main elements of the SARF framework outlined below.

5.   Structure and Content

5.1   The document is structured around the following key components which are further explained below:

➔ **Section 2 – Strengths and Challenges**

➔ **Section 3 - Outcomes for People and Place** – The shared values and impacts that partners expect to be achieved

➔ **Sections 4 – 9** – For each outcome theme there is an overview of:
        i.   What are the current issues?
        ii.   What's already being done?
        iii. Future Priorities and Responsibilities

➔ **Section 10 – Organising Ourselves** – How we can work together to deliver change

5.2   The document has been designed to be best viewed in online **'Storymap'** format - a demo of which will be provided at Committee - but will also be made available as a PDF. The Storymap will bring the content of the document together in a map based format that allows users to view the current, emerging and future projects and the associated information and actions for delivering them. The online Storymap will ultimately act as the 'live' home of SARF and will support it's ongoing delivery as outlined in Section 6. It is envisaged that it will be updated on an ongoing basis to reflect changes and actions as they emerge.

Outcomes for People and Place

5.3   The outcomes outlined in Section 3 of SARF (and below) represent the qualities, values and benefits that are expected to be addressed through any investment, development or intervention:

1. **Climate Resilience** – Support strategies, choices, and actions that reduce climate change and its impacts on the economy, communities and the natural environment.

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

3. **Diverse and Green Economy** – A strong and sustainable economy which builds on the area's natural assets, delivers sustainable tourism, and embraces a range of employment opportunities to promote wellbeing, attract investment and supports a thriving population.

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

5. **Digital Infrastructure** – Reliable, affordable and future proofed digital connections which are accessible for all and support the growth of the economy and the communities.

6. **Health and Education** – Delivering modern health, care and education facilities and services that are appropriate for the area and which make it resilient and an attractive place to live.

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

5.4   These outcomes have been jointly developed with communities and partners and have been further refined since those agreed by the Skye & Raasay Committee in late 2020. They have been distilled from a wide range of considerations, including:

- The Highland Outcome Improvement Plan;
- Local community priorities outlined by local communities and the Community Partnership;
- The area priorities identified by the Skye & Raasay Local Committee;
- Priorities identified by the Highland Council Recovery Board;
- The Highland Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy - the Council's submission to Scottish Government which represents the contributions that Highland will make on the national stage in the next 30 years; and
- The adopted West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan (WestPlan).

5.5   Feedback received though the engagement sessions and online consultations has helped to develop and refine these outcomes. As such these are intended to act as shared outcomes that have some level of buy-in from cross-sector partners and can therefore shape how we coordinate our future investment.

Priorities for Addressing the Outcomes

5.6   Taking these shared outcomes as a lead Sections 4 to 9 provide further detail on the current issues related to each outcome theme, along with an overview of how these might be addressed through current and future partnerships, projects and investments. For each outcome theme there is a description of the following:

i.	What are the current issues?
ii.	What's already being done?
iii.	Future Priorities and Responsibilities

5.7 These sections provides a snapshot of the key issues highlighted by partners through the engagement events and a selection of the projects that relate closely to each outcome theme. It also outlines the options and priorities for future investment to ensure that the outcomes are fully addressed. A number of case studies are highlighted (as listed below) along with commentary on how they might start to address the SARF outcomes and what further action and investment is needed to full address these in the future. A key priority has been to illustrate the strong community contribution and lead across many of the case studies. The case studies are:

- Raasay Hydro
- Sabhal Mòr Ostaig & Kilbeg Village
- Bayfield Car Park
- Developing Community Assets: Raasay Pontoon
- Portree Harbour and Village Centre Regeneration
- Public Sector Co-location in Portree
- Skye Cycle Way: Bridge to Broadford section
- Sleat Community Trust – Electric Bus
- Portree Link Road
- Uig Harbour Redevelopment
- Dunvegan and Broadford Primary Schools
- Newton Room

6. Implementation and Governance

6.1 The SARF process has initiated a new way of working and an appetite amongst stakeholders for ongoing input and involvement in steering the delivery of both individual projects and, in turn, the wider vision and outcomes for the area. In order for SARF to fulfil its role as a cross-sector plan finalisation and adoption will be required from a range of bodies. To this end, the Project Team propose to engage the following organisations and partnerships in the process of finalising and adopting SARF:

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

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

6.3   To oversee the monitoring and coordination of the ongoing process it is proposed to create a multi-sector board, the membership and configuration of which should take account of existing groups in Skye & Raasay including those named above and, as noted at 6.2, representatives from the third and community sector. Membership of the group could vary according to the priorities and issues being handled at any point in time, but it is anticipated that a core Board be established. The SARF Board would be chaired initially by the Council's Executive Chief Officer for Skye & Raasay and regular reporting would be made to the Skye & Raasay Committee and other appropriate forums. The frequency and ongoing chairing of the Board would be discussed when setting the Terms of Reference for the group. As a general guide, the key duties of the Board could involve:

- Defining the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders.
- Monitoring and reviewing the Investment Plan – e.g. biannual review that reflects on the relevance of the detail.
- Monitoring and assessing interventions against impact – e.g. Climate-Change, Addressing Inequalities.

6.4   In the next stages of work to finalise and adopt the SARF it is proposed that partners are asked to confirm:
-    their role in delivering projects and priorities identified; and
-    how they wish to contribute to the ongoing process for delivery and
-    how to maintain a focus on the actions for delivering the projects and priorities.

6.5   It is also proposed for the SARF to be considered by a future meeting of the Economy and Infrastructure Committee.

6.6   This approach aims to ensure effective working between partners to help draw in investment in the area and secure the best possible outcomes for Skye & Raasay communities. It is hoped that it can support learning for how partners can coordinate their efforts across other parts of Highland.

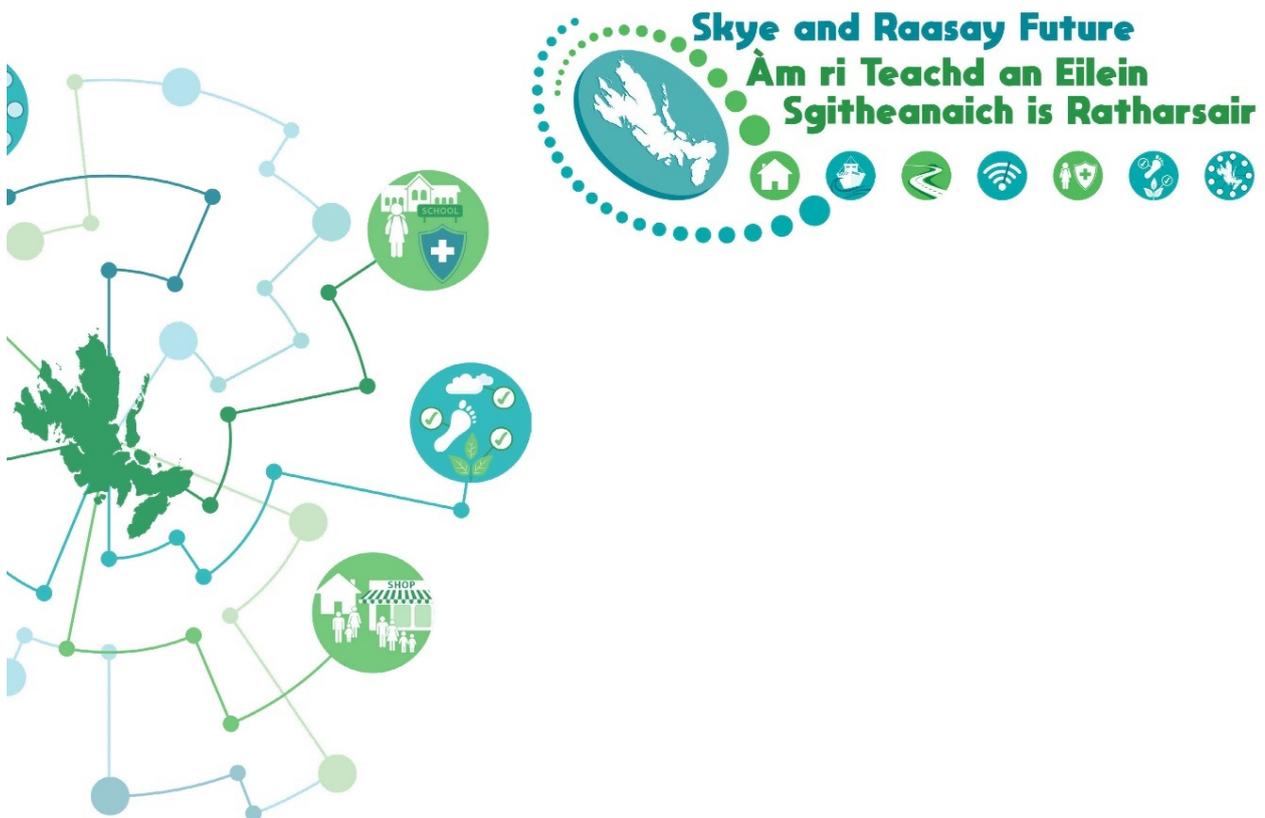Designation: Executive Chief Officer - Infrastructure & Environment

Date: 4 August 2021

Author: Scott Dalgarno, Development Plans Manager
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Background Papers:

Skye and Raasay Future
August 2021

Final Draft for Committee

Contents

1. Purpose and Background

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

1.1. Purpose

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

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

1.2. The Story So Far

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

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

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

1.3. Structure

The document is best viewed in the Storymap <LINK TO BE INCLUDED> (a new format which combines text, interactive maps, and other multimedia content) but can also be downloaded as a PDF. It is structured around the following key components:

- ➢ **Section 2 – Strengths and Challenges**

- ➢ **Section 3 - Outcomes for People and Place** – The shared values and impacts that partners expect to be achieved

- ➢ **Sections 4 – 9** – For each outcome theme we consider:
    - i. What are the current issues?
    - ii. What's already being done?
    - iii. Future Priorities and Responsibilities

- ➢ **Section 10 – Organising Ourselves** – How we can work together to deliver change

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

2. Skye and Raasay – Strengths and Challenges

2.1. Strengths

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

arts, entertainment and recreation at 4.2%, compared to 2.9% regionally and 2.8% nationally. Other key industries include heath (at 17%), education (9%), retail (6.8%), and construction (5.8%).   [2]

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

2.2. Challenges

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

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

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

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

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[2] Business Register and Employment Survey 2018 figures

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

Transport Challenges

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

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

The Regional Transport Strategy has identified Skye and Lochalsh as the regional centre with the longest journey times to the central belt (majority of drive times are in excess of 5 hours and over 7 hours by public transport) and the only major population centre in the HITRANS area where a day trip to the central belt is not viable. North West Skye is also the farthest part of the Highland Council area from Inverness
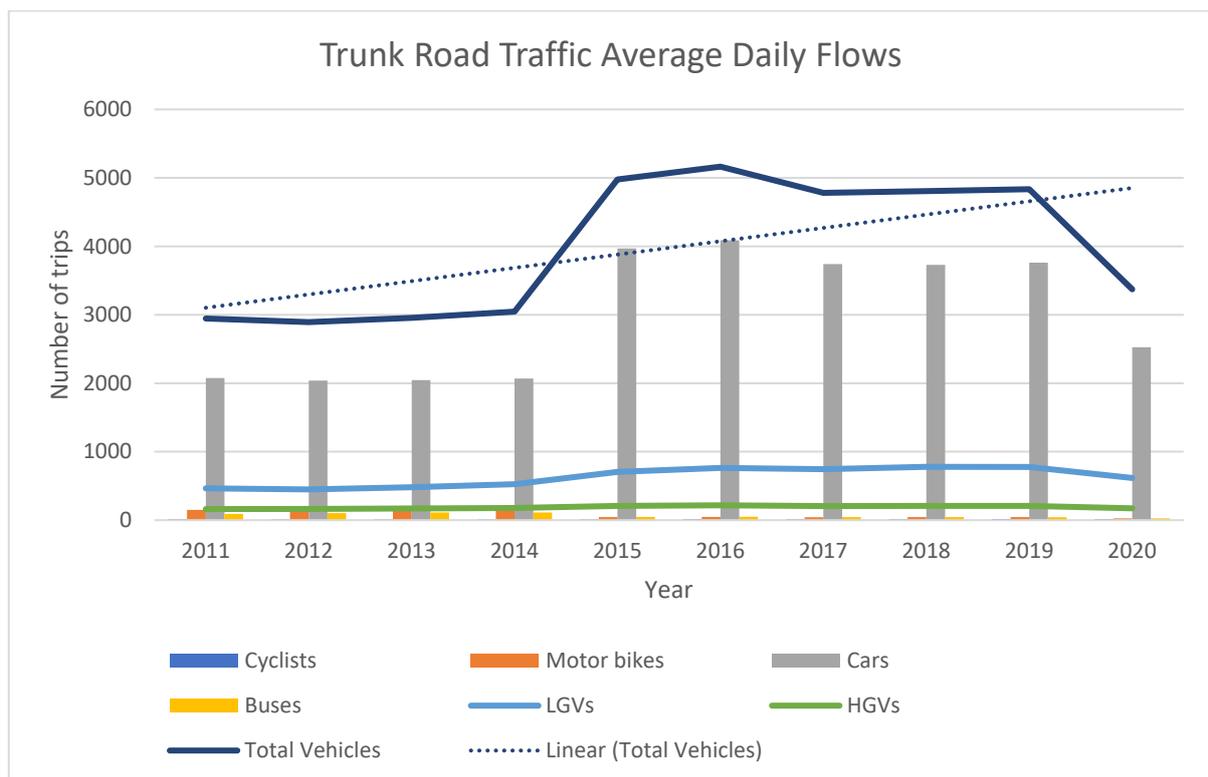
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3 Trunk road flows based on data taken at Kyleakin Roundabout https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/local-authorities/35

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

Figure 2 - Percentage Distribution of Road Transport GHG Emissions; Skye and Rasaay ECO area and the Wider Highland Council area
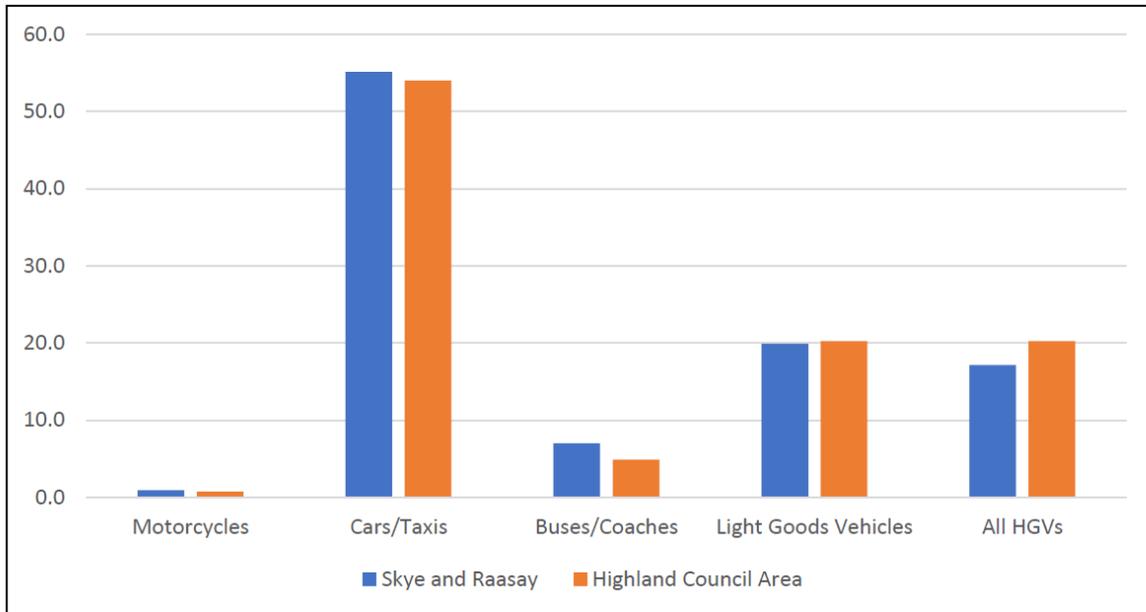
Ferry traffic has increased steadily:
- 61% increase in passenger, car and coach traffic on the Mallaig to Armadale ferry 2007 to 2019
- 31% increase in passenger, car and coach traffic on the Uig to Tarbert ferry 2007 to 2019[4]
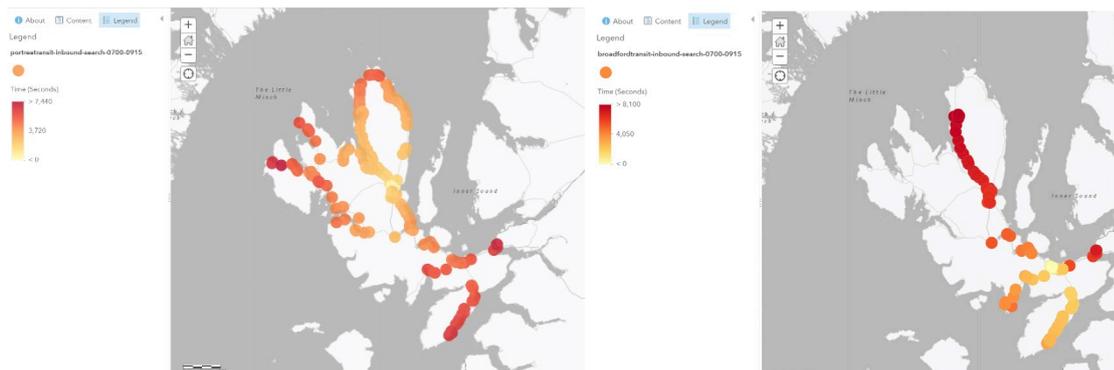
The graphics provide an illustration of the level of accessiblity and journey time to Portree and Broadford from different parts of Skye and Raasay by 09.15 on a school weekday:

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[4] Skye and Isle of Raasay Economic Impact Report (2020)

Declining working age population

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

Deprivation

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

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

Fuel Poverty

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

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[5] Mid Year Population Estimates for Eilean a Cheo Ward (S13002999) by specified age groupings

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

Difficulties Accessing Housing

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

Average house prices in Skye and Lochalsh increased to £198,712 in 2018/19 (the median price in 2003 was £100,000). This compares with an average cost of £112,201 in Caithness, £167,245 in Sutherland and £181,990 across Highland. Sales to buyers from the local area averaged at £168,704 whereas to England it was £208,840, the rest if Scotland is was £209,000 and for international buyers it was £238,998.
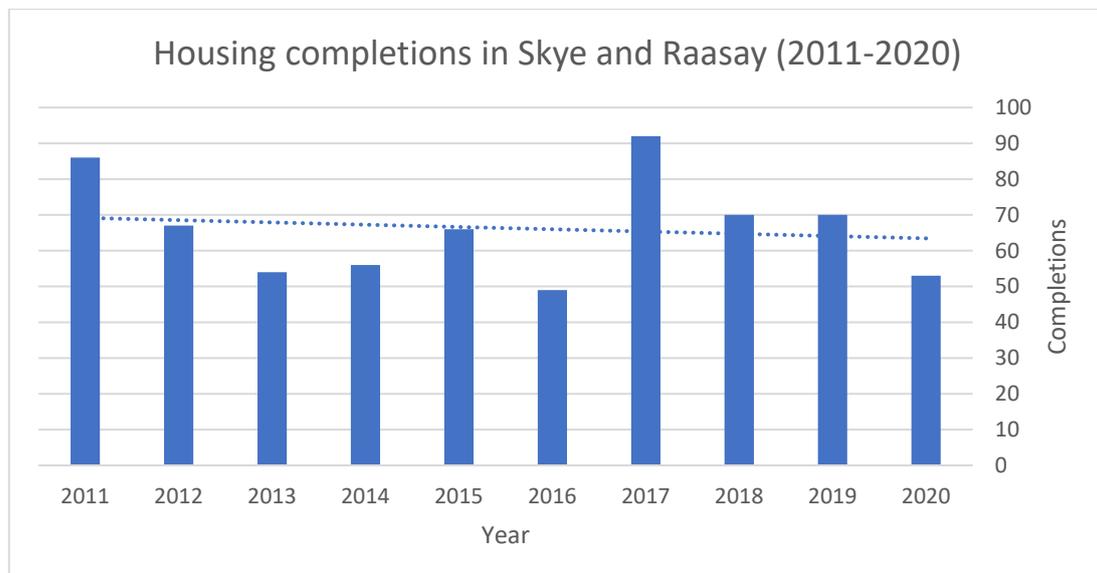
House completions have not increased to meet demand, with a declining trend over the past 10 years.

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

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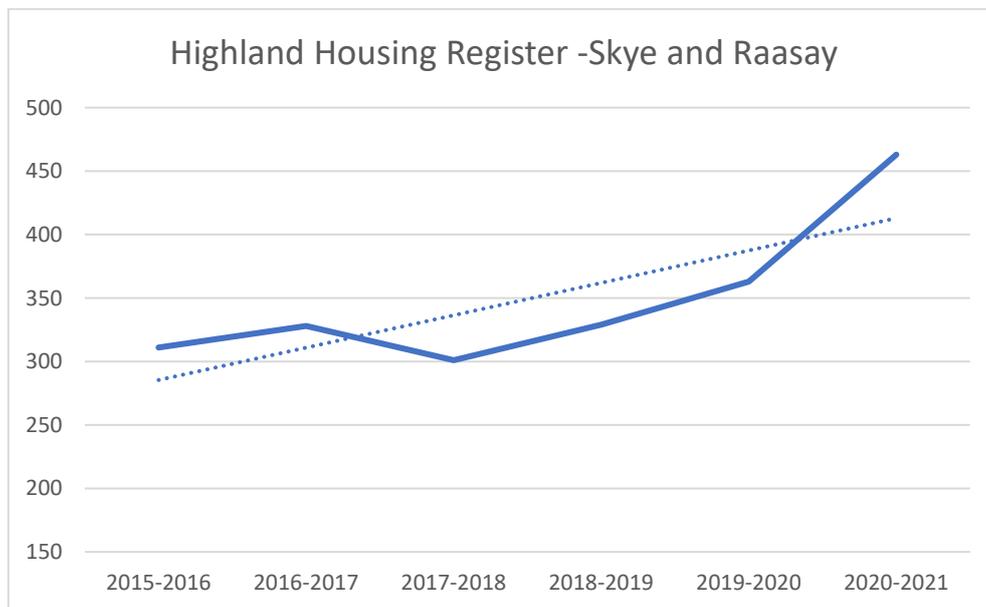
* Across Highland, the total number of HHR applications greatly increased due to Covid-19. The HHR Partnership agreed to temporarily suspend re-registration and cancellation of incomplete application. The total number of applications increased by over 2000 across the whole Local Authority in 2020-2021.

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

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

Employment Exposure

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

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

Town centre Town and village centres

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

3. Outcomes for People and Place

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

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

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

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

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

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

6. **Digital Infrastructure** – Reliable, affordable and future proofed digital connections which are accessible for all and support the growth of the economy and the communities.

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

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

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

3.1. How these outcomes were identified

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

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

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

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

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

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

Storymap & Project List

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

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

4. Climate Action & Resilience

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

4.1. What are the current issues?

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

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

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

The report highlighted the following as critical issues:

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

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

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

4.2. What's already being done?

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

The Council's new primary schools for Dunvegan and Broadford (see section 8.2) are being designed according to ultra low energy demand and will meet both The Highland Council and Scottish Government energy targets.

Case Study - Raasay Hydro

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

4.3. Future Priorities & responsibilities

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

- Many homeowners are unaware of the impending impacts of incoming **regulation change** around heat and the negative impacts on air quality associated with the use wood burning stoves. In addition, the decarbonisation of homes and buildings is critical if Scotland is going to end its contribution to climate change by 2045 – this will impact almost every building in Skye and Raasay in some way, but has the potential to create warmer, greener and more efficient properties whilst tackling the blight of fuel poverty.
- The existing 132kV overhead line running from Fort Augustus to Ardmore in North Skye is essential to maintain security of supply to homes and businesses along its route, as well as to the Western Isles. Electricity grid

infrastructure needs reinforced and future-proofed to unlock the area's renewable energy generation potential and support the decarbonisation of heat and transport.
- The emerging hydrogen economy could address some of the energy needs – by creating hydrogen from otherwise constrained renewable energy, both transport and buildings could be decarbonised across Skye and Raasay.
- **Electric vehicle infrastructure** for inhabitants and tourists is needed to incentivise use and avoid adverse impact on visitor choices
- **Crofting and agriculture** needs to remain at the heart of our rural and remote communities, as well as delivering policy priorities for climate change mitigation and biodiversity.

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

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

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

5. Strengthening Communities

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

5.1. What are the current issues?

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

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

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

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

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

5.2.   What's already being done?

5.2.1 Homes and Services for All

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

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

The first affordable housing in Staffin in 30 years delivered by a partnership between Staffin Community Trust and Community Housing Trust.

5.2.2 Sustaining Gaelic Language and Culture

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

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

Education services are helping to ensure that Gaelic remains a core part of Skye and Raasay culture for future communities, and the case study below highlights the particular role and contribution that Sabhal Mòr Ostaig plays in celebrating and strengthening the culture and identity of the area.

Case Study - Sabhal Mòr Ostaig & Kilbeg Village

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

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

Sketch view of village layout

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

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

5.2.3 Strong and Resilient Communities

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

Whilst meeting the outcome of **Strengthening Communities,** community led projects will cut across several of the priority outcomes. The Bayfield Car Park, being one such

project, which has supported resourceful community networks, access to essential services, tourism, employment, and transport:

Case Study - Bayfield Car Park

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

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

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

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

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

Increased parking and motorhome waste facilities at Bayfield, Portree.

Case Study - Developing Community Assets: Raasay Pontoon

Raasay Development Trust (RDT) have been working with Wallace Stone and Duncan MacPherson Consultancy to develop the business case for a 12-berth pontoon at Clachan, on the Isle of Raasay. RDT have had support and funding through HIE, LEADER, RCGF, HCCF, SLF and THC. They have the Marine License for the pontoon and are working with the Crown Estate Scotland to secure a seabed lease that reflects the nature of the community owned asset with the CES executive reviewing their application for rent at less than market value. RDT have recently tendered for project management support and have appointed Wallace Stone who will oversee the project which has a target installation timescale of April 2022.

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

5.3.   Future Priorities & responsibilities

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

There are three key priorities for future development:

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

5.3.1 Homes and Services for All

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Initiatives that may free up land for housing development (e.g. better organisation of public sector offices)

- Securing strategic sites through partnership working

- Exploring flexible housing tenure models to tackle the housing pressures of local businesses

- Supporting community organisations who wish to take forward community owned housing projects (e.g. Staffin, Raasay)

- Lobbying decision makers to demonstrate the situation on Skye and Raasay

- A marketing campaign to highlight how to register on the HHR and promotion of the HHR Guide.

5.3.2 Sustaining Gaelic Language and Culture

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

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

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

5.3.3 Sustainable and Resilient Communities

As outlined in section 5.2, many communities across the Isles of Skye and Raasay are already demonstrating their strength and resilience in leading and progressing

community priorities and development. Moving forward it will be important to build on the existing successes of projects that have or are being delivered through collaborative working and learn from the feedback of the engagement process, including consideration and action around accessibility and inclusiveness for all, within the development of projects from the outset.

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

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

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

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

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

6. Diverse and Green Economy

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

6.1. What are the current issues?

Economy

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

Visitor Management Facilities

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

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

6.2. What's already being done?

Economy

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

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

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

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

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

Visitor Management Facilities

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Case Study - Portree Harbour and Village Centre Regeneration

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Case Study - Public Sector Co-location in Portree

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

6.3.   Future Priorities & responsibilities

To fully address this outcome the priorities are to:

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

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

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

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

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

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

7. Transport Infrastructure

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

7.1. What are the current issues?

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

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

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

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

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

7.2. What's already being done?

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

Case Study - Skye Cycle Way: Bridge to Broadford section

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

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

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

Photo credit: www.broadfordandstrath.org

Case Study – Sleat Community Trust – Electric Bus

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

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

A Highland-wide review of school transport is underway, including examination of the scope for alternative means of provision such as expansion of community transport, and in-house operation.
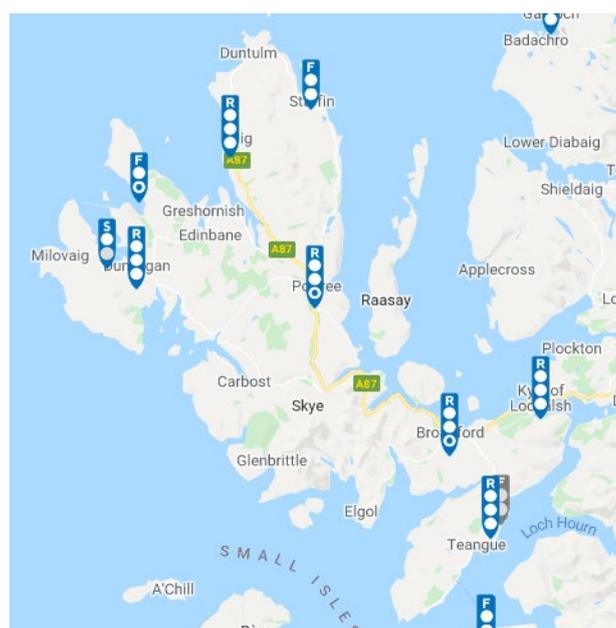
Publicly available ChargePlace Scotland network charge points in Skye and Raasay

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

Case Study - Portree Link Road

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

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

Timescales: within the next 5 years
Costs/Funding: Approx. £1.6M total cost with £1.4M expected from developer contributions and £200k committed in THC capital programme. Up front funding has been identified from the Infrastructure Loan Fund, to allow the construction of the link to precede any related development, which will then contribute through developer contribution to help recover the initial funding outlay.
Lead organisations: THC
Actions/responsibilities: Highland Counci will progress discussions with landowners and developers to understand the access and servicing requirements for future development – which will influence the design, this will allow the submission of the planning application in Autumn of 2021. If planning permission is granted, then it will be necessary to conclude land access arrangements that will allow construction works to commence and be completed in 2022.

Case Study - Uig Harbour Redevelopment

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

With the designated construction compound adjoining the existing terminal building it will leave a large, shovel ready development site, free of many of the major constraints. This offers major opportunities for delivering the community aspirations for an attractive mixed use village centre as set out in the adopted Uig Development Brief (2018).
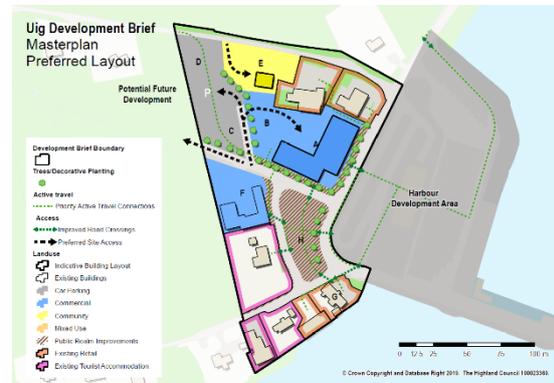
Timescales: within the next 5 years
Costs/Funding: £64.5M
Lead organisations: THC, Transport Scotland, CMAL, CalMac, Scottish Government, harbour users and the local community.

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

7.3. Future Priorities & responsibilities

To deliver this outcome the priorities are to:

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

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

Sustainable Transport Options

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

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

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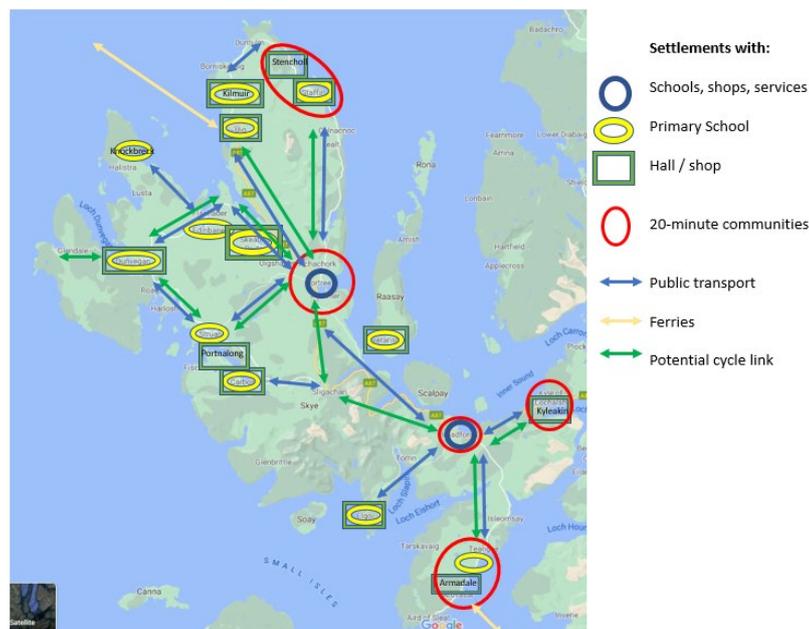
Given the rural nature of the area, the use of private vehicle is likely to remain higher than other more urban areas. With the Government pledge to phase out new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030, to meet future demand, EV charging provision is must evolve into a combination of home, workplace,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

Shift in Mobility

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

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

Flight Connections

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

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

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

8. Health and Education

8.1. What are the current issues?

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

8.1.1 Healthcare

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

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

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

8.1.2 Education

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

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

Particular challenges for delivering education services in the area include:

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

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

The following Senior Phase courses are delivered in partnership with the Highland Virtual Academy and West Highland College WHC/UHI: http://www.portreehigh.highland.sch.uk/S4-6%20options%202021%20April%202021.pdf

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

Gaelic Medium Education

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

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

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

8.2.   What's already being done?

Health

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

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

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

Visualisations of the new Broadford hospital

Education

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

School	Nursery	Primary
Broadford Primary	13	41
Bun-Sgoil Gàidhlig Phort Righ	41	156
Bun-Sgoil Shlèite	13	50
Bun-Sgoil Stafainn	5	30
Dunvegan Primary	8	20
Kilmuir Primary	6	16
Totals	**86**	**313**

Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Phort Rìgh opened in 2018 and is the area's Gaelic language primary school and nursery, with Cròileagan (photos taken from Facebook and WHFP).

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

Elgin Residence (credit: Archive Centre webpage)

Skye Dance at Portree Primary School

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

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

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

Case Study: Dunvegan Primary School and Nursery

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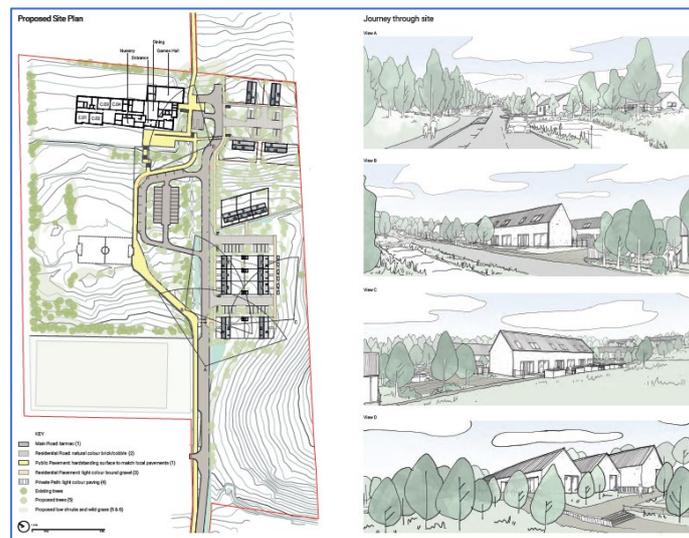

Image: Extracts from display boards used as part of a consultation on the proposals.

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Case Study: New Build Broadford Primary School and Community Hub

- New facility will include primary school and nursery wing, and a community hub wing, with an estimated opening of 2025.
- New school will provide English and Gaelic medium primary and nursery education.
- The community hub will include Community Group offices and facilities, replacing the functions of the locally owned and operated Broadford Village Hall which is no longer cost effective to maintain and will be dissolved. The community hub will also include the local Highland Council Service Point, and local Library (operated by High Life Highland).
- A local Working Group is coordinating with the many local groups associated with the Broadford Village Hall, or have expressed an interest in the community hub facilities.
- The Highland Council design team is working with Working Group members to refine the community hub key elements.
- As with Dunvegan Primary School above, the Broadford design and construction will be for an ultra low energy demand school and community hub facility.

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

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Case Study: Newton Room

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

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

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

8.3. Future Priorities & responsibilities

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

9. Digital Infrastructure

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

9.1. What are the current issues?

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

9.2. What's already being done?

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

9.3. Future Priorities & responsibilities

To fully address this outcome the priorities are:

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

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

10. Organising Ourselves

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

10.1. What are the current issues?

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

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

10.2. What is proposed?

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

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

- Local Community Partnership

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

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

10.3. Governance

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

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

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

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

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

10.4. Funding sources

The funding landscape is complex and continuously changing, particularly now as issues on replacement EU funds are still being resolved at a national level and as so

many short term funding opportunities have arisen due to the pandemic. Up to date and more detailed information on funding sources can be sought from Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations, or by contacting the managers of any Council funding streams which can be found on the Highland Council website. The following information is provided as a brief overview of funds currently available and is absolutely not an exhaustive list of funding sources.

Replacement EU funding

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

National Funding

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

Other funding sources

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

Appendix 1 – Summarised Project List as at July 2021

Link to Storymap

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

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

Safer Routes to Schools investment	Committed	Uig Community Trust Projects	Pipeline
Kilbeg Tourism Infrastructure	Pipeline	Trotternish Centre	Pipeline
Elgol Tourism Infrastructure	Pipeline	Portree Harbour Redevelopment	Pipeline
Raasay Tourism Infrastructure	Pipeline	Portree Hospital	Pipeline
Coral Beach Tourism Infrastructure	Pipeline	North Skye Care Provision	Pipeline
Kilt Rock Tourism Infrastructure	Pipeline	Somerled Square Redesign	Pipeline
Portree Link Road	Pipeline	Minginish Community Land Development	Pipeline
Uig Harbour Upgrade	Pipeline	Sports Health Fitness and Well-being Centre	Pipeline
Ashaig Aerodrome	Pipeline	New Library Development	Pipeline
Portree Partner Sector Hub	Pipeline	National Cultural Heritage Interpretive Centre	Pipeline
Kyleakin Connections	Pipeline	Neist Point Tourism Infrastructure	Pipeline
Broadford Toilets	Pipeline	New welcome signage at Skye Bridge	Pipeline
Uig Industrial Estate Redevelopment	Pipeline	Skye & Lochalsh Micro Abbatoir	Pipeline
Kilmuir Community Hub	Pipeline	Glendale Paths	Pipeline
King George V Playfield Community Transfer	Pipeline	ArtSquat	Pipeline
Broadford Primary School and Community Hub	Pipeline	Rubha Phoil Nature-Based Permaculture community, entreprise and Virtual Village	Pipeline
Dunvegan School, Housing and Sports Redevelopment	Pipeline	Guthan na Tire/Voices of the Land	Pipeline
Sleat Micro Hydro	Pipeline	Portnalong Pier Regeneration	Pipeline
An Crubh Motorhome Facilities	Pipeline	Digital Healthcare Innovation	Pipeline
Armadale Housing	Pipeline	Ionad Thròndairnis/Trotternish Centre	Pipeline
Skye Cycle Way	Pipeline	Skye & Raasay Paths & Trails	Aspirational
Edinbane Affordable Housing	Pipeline	Additional Parking Spaces on Raasay	Aspirational
Lynedale Multi-User Path	Pipeline	B884 Borrodale to Ramasaig road and signage maintenance	Aspirational
Edinbane to Flashader path	Pipeline	Skye Bus Shelter Improvement Plan	Aspirational
Internet of Things	Pipeline	Glendale community/shuttle bus service	Aspirational
Kyleakin Play Park	Pipeline	Explore National Park status	Aspirational

Skye and Raasay June '21 Collaborative Workshops and Online Survey Summary

Contents

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

HIE

Front Cover Illustration by Richard Carman
2050 Rural Community taken from the A&DS Designing for a Changing Climate: Carbon Conscious Places Report

Background

Skye and Raasay Future Plan

The Highland Council (THC), in partnership with Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) are leading on the preparation of a new place-based plan. The purpose of which is to establish and support a collaborative approach to the identification and coordination of investment opportunities across the islands between public sector agencies, community organisations, the third sector, private sector, and the wider community.

The Skye and Raasay Future Plan will seek to connect the benefits of the collectively identified projects, with not only the agreed priorities for the area, but those of the region and nation. This approach, aided by the support of Architecture and Design Scotland (A&DS), will contribute to a robust case for any future funding by demonstrating the Place Principle in practice.
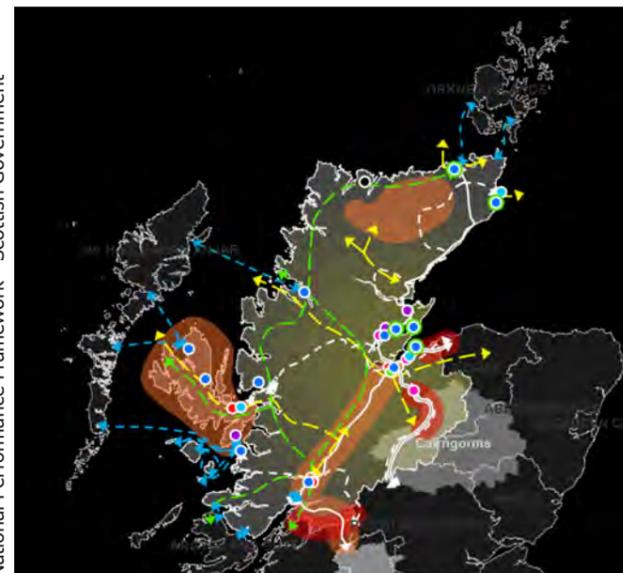
The initial online discussion at the end of January re-visited the previously identified priorities and continued with the identification of projects that will deliver the said priorities and would benefit through greater coordination. This series of workshops at the beginning of June continued the conversation between the project team and island stakeholders, which will influence and inform the draft plan, which is due to be completed by the end of the summer.

An online public survey was also open during this period. Participants were asked to reflect on what is important to them now and their anticipated priorities for their future. The results are included in Appendix III.

The Future Plan offers the opportunity to strengthen the partnership across the islands and to create a place-based approach that builds on and champions the work undertaken locally to date.

The purpose of this series of second workshops was to assemble partners, stakeholders, community groups, the private and third sector to continue the collective conversation on:

- **The Place**: Confirming the priorities that people wish to achieve for the area

- **The Parts**: Alignment of projects with the priorities and identification of opportunities to achieve a climate resilient and thriving Skye & Raasay

- **The Process**: Organising Ourselves - what is the plans governance, how to best work together, how to co-ordinate resources/assets/opportunities/funding?

A&DS Project

A&DS, Scotland's design champion, recognise that how we design, plan and deliver places has a significant impact on Scotland's ability to respond to the impacts of climate change, health inequalities, the Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit. In 2019, A&DS established a programme to assist public sector organisations to take a place-based approach to designing for the changing climate.

This programme is supported by the Place and Architecture and Energy and Climate Change Directorates at Scottish Government. Through this work, A&DS has been able to independently support The Highland Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise to champion a whole place approach to considering the net-zero carbon challenge and the implementation of the Place Principle.

National Performance Framework - Scottish Government

Regional Spatial Strategy - The Highland Council
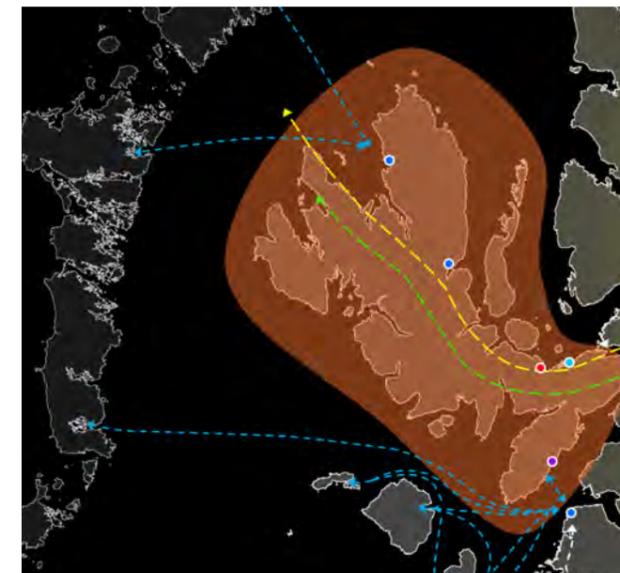
Regional Spatial Strategy - The Highland Council

Workshop Process

" One key benefit of participating in the workshop was becoming aware of the degree of consensus that exists around what is needed on Skye & Raasay"

Workshop Participant Feedback

The Purpose of the Future Plan

The workshops began with a welcome from the islands Councillors and a brief reminder of the purpose of the Investment Plan from Scott Dalgarno THC Development Plans Manager and Stuart MacPherson HIE Head of Strategic Projects.

Points used to illustrate the purpose included:

• The Future Plan will connect the intended outcomes of projects, both individually and collectively, with strategic outcomes for the area

• It will set out the outcomes for the future of Skye and Raasay and how everyone with an interest can work together to make it happen

• It is hoped that the plan will improve the prospects of securing future funding by demonstrating the value of partnership working

• It will not duplicate or replace consultations that have already taken place, or need to take place in communities
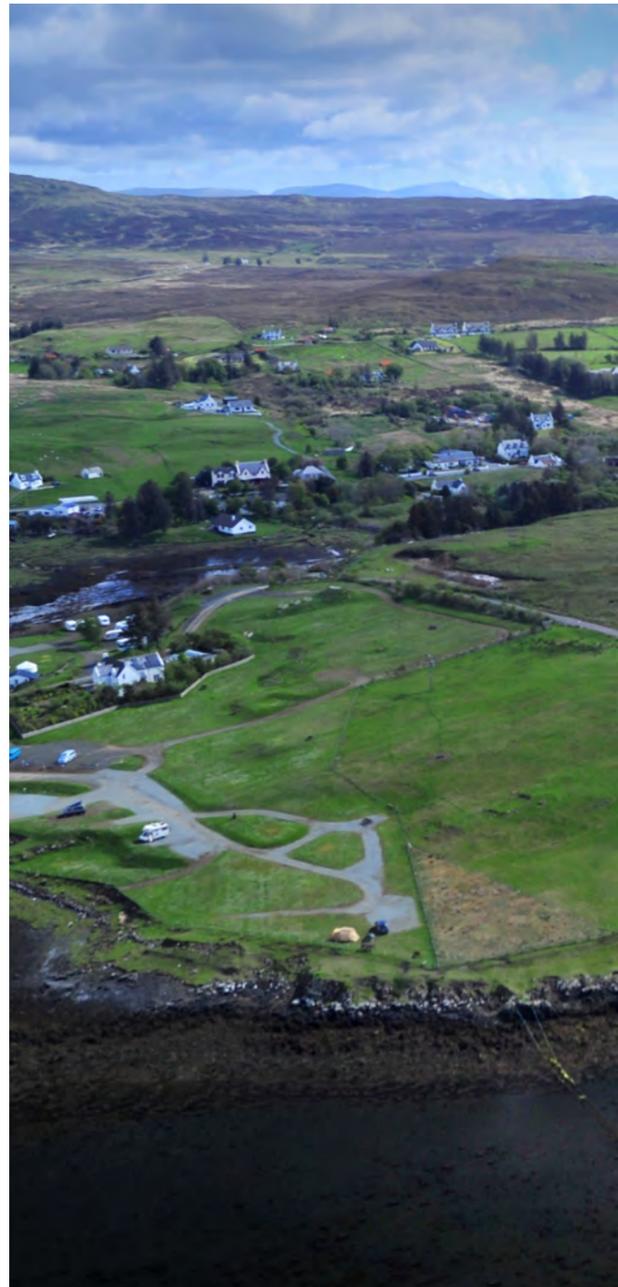
Skye & Raasay Aerial Photographs - Iain Smith of Skye Photo Centre

January 2021 Workshop Priorities

The qualities, values and benefits sought to be achieved that were agreed at The Highland Council Skye and Rasaay Area Committtee in late 2020 were shared as a reminder, these included:

Sustainable Tourism
For Skye and Raasay to retain their reputation as an internationally renowned sustainable tourism destination a co-ordinated approach is required to identify priorities and investment

Diverse and Green Economy
A strong and diverse economy with a range of employment opportunities will promote well-being and attract investment

Digital and Transport Infrastructure
Access to modern digital connections and the maintenance of a high quality transport network is vital for ensuring the area is competitive and supporting the wider ambitions for the area

Strengthening Communities
Strong, capable and resourceful communities which are properly housed is vital for the social and economic growth of the area

Health and Education
Delivering modern health and education facilities makes the area resilient and an attractive place to live

Skye & Raasay Aerial Photographs - Iain Smith of Skye Photo Centre

Workshop Process

The Place: Confirming Priorities

Reflecting on the feedback from the January workshop, THC provided a brief narrative illustrating how this has influenced a number of changes to the Place priorities:

- Priorities have increased from 5 to 7
- '**Organising Ourselves**' has been introduced in recognition that a coordinated and inclusive partnership of groups and organisations is required to deliver the agreed vision for Skye and Raasay
- '**Climate Resilience**' has been introduced in recognition that strategies, choices and actions that address the impacts of climate change on the local economy, communities and natural environment are key to a resilient Skye and Raasay.
- '**Digital and Transport Infrastructure**' has been seperated for clarity
- '**Sustainable Tourism**' has been subsumed within other priorities in recognition of the need for a strong and sustainable economy which that is not dependant on international tourism

Adjusted Place Priorities

Strengthening Communities
A strong, resilient and resourceful community network with sufficient quality, affordable housing, access to essential services, and where Gaelic and the areas unique culture is celebrated and central to local identity

Health and Education
Delivering modern health and education facilities that are appropriate for the area and which make it resilient and an attractive place to live

Diverse and Green Economy
A strong and sustainable economy which builds on the areas natural assets and embraces a range of employment opportunities to promote wellbeing, attract investment and supports a thriving population

Transport Infrastrucutre
An integrated and well maintained network of high quality sustainable transport options which support social inclusion, a competitive economy and deliver the wider ambitions for the area

Digital Infrastructure
Reliable, affordable and future proofed digital connections which are accessible for all and support the growth of the economy and the communties

Climate Resilience
Support strategies, choices, and actions that reduce climate change and its impacts on the economy, communities and the natural environment

Organising Ourselves
A co-ordinated and inclusive partnership of groups and organisations which deliver the agreed vision for Skye and Raasay

Participants Reflections on Updated Priorities:

- While the subsuming of '**Sustainable Tourism**' into '**Diverse and Green Econom**y' was agreeable and is reflective of inhabitants Covid-19 experience, the ommission of the term 'tourism' from the priority narrative of either the '**Diverse and Green Economy**' and/or '**Strengthening Communities**' is to be addressed as tourism has been the backbone of the islands economy for decades
- The terms inclusive, accessible and equitable do not feature in either list of priorities
- The updated priorities are better linked to the needs of *Skye & Raasay*
- The Plan and its priority to 'oragnise ourselves' has the potential to connect people and organisations to deliver better outcomes collaboratively
- Adult social care is not noted in the narrative for the 'Health & Education' priority, as it is a significant anticipated future need, a reference could be added

Skye & Raasay Aerial Photographs - Iain Smith of Skye Photo Centre

Workshop Process

The Parts: Alignment of Projects with Priorities

Prior to the workshops participants were issued with the updated priorities and project list to inform the workshop discussions.

Participants had an hour of facilitated discussion to investigate a couple of tasks in depth, each breakout room and workshops differed in the time split across the two tasks, but all provided informative reflections which are outlined in subsequent pages.

Breakout rooms of up to 8 participants facilitated by A&DS and/or THC using an interative whiteboard (Miro) to illustrate the discussionand record points raised.

Existing Projects

As an icebreaker, participants were asked to introduce themselves and the projects that they represent. With the seven priorities in mind, they were asked to consider which of these their project aligns. The colour of the project post-it denoting the project was then changed to reflect the most relevant priority.

It was noted following the sessions, that a number of projects align with several of the priorities, which reflects the complex system of interdependancies across the island.

Identifying Future Opportunities

Participants were then asked to consider the existing projects against the place priorities and a future Skye and Raasay that has adapted to the impacts of climate change. Are there any gaps or opportunities, what future projects are required to support that future for the islands?

The Process: Organising Ourselves

In response to feedback from the January session the priorities were amended and expanded to include 'Organising Ourselves'. This priority focuses on the desire and need to create a co-ordinated and inclusive partnership of groups and organsiations to deliver the agreed vision for Skye and Raasay.

Following a brief introduction by THC/HIE an opportunity to discuss any issues, concerns or challenges on project governance, ways of working togther and co-ordiantion was extended to all participants.

Skye & Raasay Projects
Task 1

Place Priorities

Strengthening Communities
A strong, resilient and resourceful community network with sufficient to quality, affordable housing, access to essential services, where Gaelic and the area's unique culture is celebrated and central to local identity

Diverse and Green Economy
A strong and sustainable economy which builds on the area's natural assets and embraces a range of employment opportunities to promote wellbeing, attract investment and supports a thriving population.

Transport Infrastructure
An integrated and well maintained network of high-quality sustainable transport options which support social inclusion, a competitive economy and deliver the wider ambitions for the area.

Digital Infrastructure
Reliable, affordable and future proofed digital connections which are accessible for all and support the growth of the economy and the communities.

Climate Resilience
Support strategies, choices, and actions that reduce climate change and its impacts on the economy, communities and the natural environment.

Health & Education
Delivering modern health and education facilities that are appropriate for the area and which make it resilient and an attractive place to live

Organising Ourselves
A coordinated and inclusive partnership of groups and organisations which deliver the agreed vision for Skye and Raasay

The Place: Project Alignment with Priorities

"For Skye (and Raasay) to be a good place to visit, it also needs to be a good place to live"

Workshop Participant Feedback

Each breakout room and workshop differed in the time dedicated to discussing this map-based task, however all participants offered feedback around the current priorities across the islands. Common and divergent themes were raised through each of the sessions. A brief summary building on issues discussed in January has been provided.

Transport Infrastructure, Housing and Community Delivery were noted as the focus of conversations across all sessions.

Healthcare Provision & Support

- Access to healthcare and recruitment /retention of health professionals a priority
- Addiction services are lacking, and those that are available are alcohol focused
- There are numerous issues around the impact of continuity of care
- The demographic shift across the islands is challenging for healthcare providers

Culture

- Culture and Gaelic should be as important as climate change and be just as cross cutting

Accessibility and Transport Infrastructure

- The lived experience of disabled people is essential and should inform all current and future plans to ensure Skye and Raasay are accessible to all inhabitants and visitors
- There are opportunities to further co-ordinate infrastructure projects to allow them to be used as match funding for proposed and future active travel projects
- Cars are always going to be on the island, however, longer term sustainable travel options need to be investigated opposed to immediate/simple solutions such as car parking
- Broadford Airfield/Ashaig Airstrip offers an opportunity to connect the island inhabitants, businesses, and services with the central belt and beyond. It would aid with the export of goods and potentially reduce pressure on the road network. It would also contribute to the development of Scotland's net zero flight commitment
- EV infrastructure and charging, inhabitants lack clarity on who is leading work to identify opportunities and is scoping out the requirements for delivery and maintenance. The current and future availability may start to impact visitor choices who may go elsewhere with better provision
- How to we ensure emergency vehicles can get to where they are needed through increased visitor traffic?

Housing

- Greater focus on the finer grain of housing need is required. Does the Housing Need and Demand Assessment highlight the current local demand? Is there a shared certainty of the current demand?
- Increased awareness of the housing register needed, do young people understand the process? The lack of people registered is a problem for quantifying need and the subsequnet application for suitable funds
- Tenure of plots/housing is an issue, there isn't really an affordable private market at the moment
- There is a potential and an appetite for more community owned housing
- Speed of delivery of homes is an issue, which is currently further exasperated by the availability of labour, skills and affordable materials
- Can developer contributions to be retained within the local community impacted be development-could participatory budgeting be used to determine its application?
- Is there an issue with the definition of affordable housing, what is 'affordable' on the islands? How could that be identified?
- Rules around shared equity are creating barriers on the island
- Distribution of funding needs to be more flexible to deliver innovative and appropriate housing options for island locations
- Housing is one of the main issues, is connected and influences many other. It is particularly important in relation to retaining/attracting young people and avoiding the island becoming a museum in 2 generations.
- Housing assocations are having to act as heating companies /energy advice service - not their specialism why should it be the case?

Skye & Raasay Aerial Photographs - Iain Smith of Skye Photo Centre

The Place: Project Alignment with Priorities cont.

Community Delivery

- A mutual support network to assist communities and reduce barriers around project delivery would be beneficial, especially in the context of the third sector being under resourced
- Community Trusts and Community Councils are under pressure to deliver with limited resources, they cannot take on any extra responsibilities
- Funding requirements are not helping with this issue, they do not register the lack of resources currently experience for the 3rd sector, communities, and service providers. Groups agility does not match the short times scales associated with some funding opportunities

National Government/Local Authority Delivery

- Clarity over national organisations roles/contribution to assisting with islands issues would be beneficial
- If projects weren't planned in silos they may better meet address the climate emergency and local need
- There are implications of funding decisions being based on the matrix for urban deprivation rather than rural disadvantage. The ranking of the islands following this shift has significant impact- is this being addressed/who is challenging the impact?
- Relevant resources and relevant policies that meet the needs of the area are needed - the lack of relevance is impacting the islands experts to deliver what is needed or what they want to deliver
- Deprivation is a significant issue at the moment but some areas are not classified due to problems with identifying rural socio economic issues

Heat and Energy

- A significant proportion of the island's population are experiencing fuel poverty or extreme fuel poverty
- There have been issues associated with the quality of workmanship associated with energy efficiency retrofits and renewable installation, this has impacted successful uptake and confidence in low carbon solutions
- Most private houses are unaware of the impending impacts of incoming regulation change around heat and the negative impacts on air quality associated with the use wood burning stoves
- While there are opportunities for the island to produce more renewable energy, there is a limiting factor of getting energy off the island

Tourism Infrastructure

- Management of tourist/visitors in an innovative way is required to avoid the continued influx of motorised vehicles and to encourage a dispersal of visitors across the islands
- Who has oversight to motorhome centric development? Is anyone co-ordinating it and considering its impact?
- Visitor and resident needs need to be balanced
- Unrestricted camping/parking is having unintended consequences, support to address those impacts on communities is requried

Skye & Raasay Aerial Photographs - Iain Smith of Skye Photo Centre

The project teams initial response to points raised at the June workshops:

The broad support for the updated outcomes was noted. Updates will be made to reflect the strong desire to ensure that Skye remains a high quality place for everyone including those with additional care or support needs. Consideration will be given to how to make appropriate reference to the importance of tourism to the economy and the identity of the place.

The Parts: The Future

When asked to consider projects that will support a future thriving Skye & Raasay that has adapted to the impacts of climate change, common and differing ideas were raised by each of the sessions. A brief summary of each is included below:

Heat/energy and (public) transport were noted as the focus of conversations across all sessions.

Electric Vehicles

- Electric vehicle infrastructure for inhabitants and tourist is provided to ensure adverse impact on visitor choices does not occur
- Skills are retained on the island that can support the increased uptake of electric vehicles/infrastructure
- Availability of electric hire (cars and bikes) across the islands
- Confirmation that the grid can cope with the anticipated increased demand in electric vehicles and electricity generally
- Electric vehicle use should be incentivised on the islands

Tourism

- There is no islands wide tourism/visitor strategy going forward this need to be addressed and focuses on visitor experience, that is not car centric

(Public) Transport

- There is a need to ensure that rural and dispersed communities are not adversely impacted by the shift in mobility require by national policy. The increase in transport poverty needs to be anticipated and balanced by a 'just' transition approach to transport planning
- A net-zero transport plan co-ordinating services and transport investment across the islands is required
- A Skye and Raasay wide Active Travel Masterplan to support all developments to integrated with the active travel network is required
- Ferry services move to utilise hydrogen
- EV bike hire availability across the islands to increase transport choices for residents and visitors
- Public transport links are co-ordinated across service providers. Regular communication across service providers ensures local delivery matches with the regional planning and the transport partnerships
- Balance between private and community owned services to ensure bus accessibility, sizes, and frequency of services match the demand and need of island inhabitants and visitors. Providing a reliable and affordable alternative to private cars
- Research and act on the impact of the increased motorhome and traffic on the roads that were not designed to take such vehicles/loads
- Availability and enforcement of use of accessible parking across the island is addressed
- Connectivity with the central belt is improved through net-zero flights that meet local needs

Energy/Heat

- Quality control of alternative heating systems/renewable energy/fabric renovations is monitored and the lack of choice and availability of providers is challenged
- Storage of energy and heat becomes viable, can the islands approach be informed by the lessons from Shetland/Orkney?
- The limitations of exporting energy off the island is addressed along with a challenge to the high tariffs applied to the islands
- Building fabric heat loss is systematically address and the best low impact heating solution/s for the island are identified which are informed by previous experience i.e. biomass imported from off island
- Natural resources are utilised across the island, increasing the local electricity production. Investigations into the viability of a local grid v the national grid may be an opportunity
- Confidence the grid can cope with a shift to renewables etc.
- Completion of a local energy study (this suggests that an increased visibility of the LHEES and the decarbonisation strategy may be beneficial)

Skye & Raasay Aerial Photographs - Iain Smith of Skye Photo Centre

The Parts: The Future cont.

Economy

- The islands approach to the circular economy needs strengthened, an overarching approach that encompasses the islands consumption and handling of waste locally is required
- The is an opportunity to greater support and promote the local supply chain and plan for the possible future production of materials/use of local resources
- Support is needed for island business to transition to a low carbon economy
- Greater availability of small-scale industrial space/workshops to meet the service/construction/craft skills etc needs of the community

Culture/Heritage

- There is an opportunity for all projects to focus on the regeneration of language and culture
- The value of investing in culture is seen as an opportunity
- Culture and Gaelic are considered as important and cross cutting as climate change

Digital Connectivity

- Balance achieved between digital connectivity enabling remote working but not adversely impacting on house prices

Housing

- Key worker residence - the current barriers are removed and the availability issue is resolved
- Affordable housing is available across tenures, including affordable rent properties
- Social housing is available across the island

Landscape

- Higher level policy framework on aquaculture would be useful
- Balance achieved between ecological and landscape management issues
- Aquaculture - balance achieved between jobs and environmental impact

It was noted that while discussed, the following was not a focus when considering the future:

Climate Change/Risk

- There is a need to consider rising sea levels. Short term pressures/opportunities need to be considered against long term risks

Food Resilience/Agriculture

- How would food shortages be managed in the future? Affordability may also be an increasing issue, there was a high demand for the foodbank during pandemic
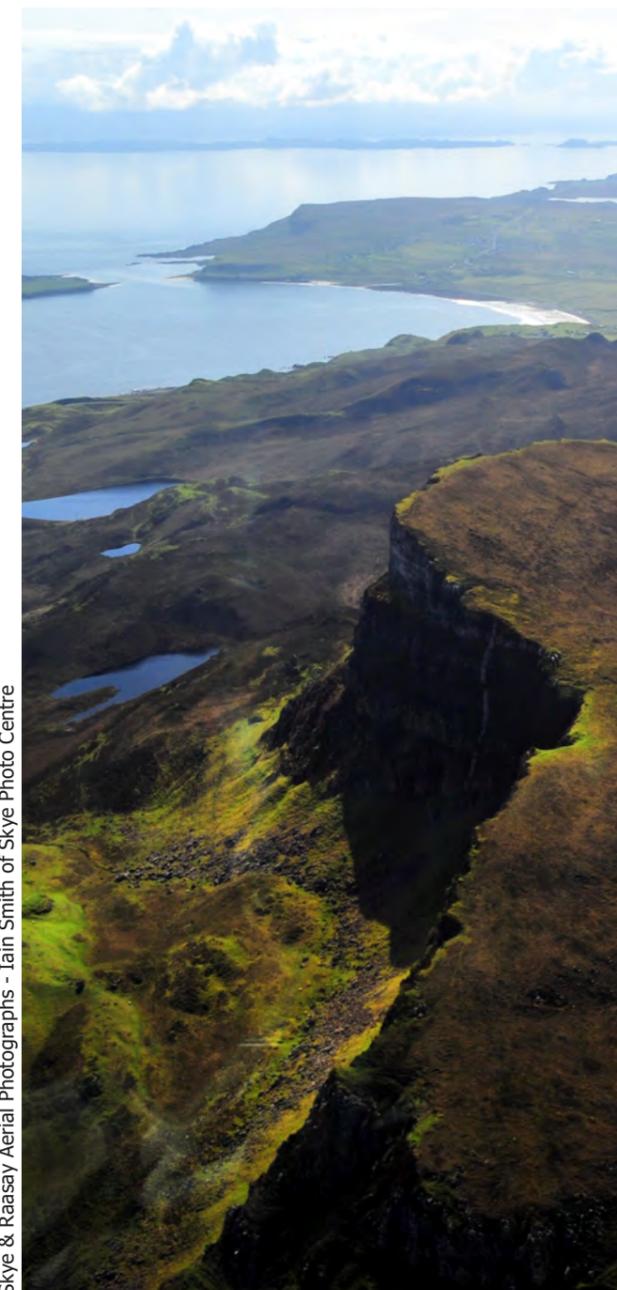
Skye & Raasay Aerial Photographs - Iain Smith of Skye Photo Centre

The project teams initial response to points raised at the June workshops:

The conversations held on 'The Parts' largely reaffirmed the established 'Outcomes and Priorities' but highlighted there is need for a better evidence base and strategy to deal with certain issues (e.g. housing and sustainable transport), greater support for community groups and consideration of vulnerable people. A range of ideas were put forward for how Skye and Raasay responds and adapts to climate change. Some of these already form part of established work (e.g. Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES), EV Charging Strategy) but many others require the identification of lead organisations to further investigate and develop them. We will highlight these ideas within the Investment Plan and flag up necessary actions.

The Process: Organising Ourselves

"The plan considers the area as a whole rather than small pockets of development, getting the pockets of development to work better together"

Workshop Participant Feedback

At the end of the group discussion THC highlighted the introduction of 'Organising Ourselves' priority, which has been added as a direct result of the feedback received from participants at the January workshop.

The intention is for the plan to be iterative, regularly reviewed and updated, to be owned by island stakeholders and to reflect the changing needs of the islands.

Each workshops raised common and divergent queries and challenges of the introduction of this new priority, a brief summary of each is included below:

Collaboration

- Collaboration = creation of more opportunities for good quality jobs
- Impact of collaboration cannot be overestimated
- The plan offers an opportunity to collaborate across projects for greater impact
- National organisations to be coordinated to better reflect the local projects. There could be more/ better alignment to achieve better outcomes for all (i.e., place principle in practice)
- The plan has great potential for collaboration and connections. Seeing everything written down is enabling and empowering
- This approach can enable change for the better

Membership of Project Board

- Project steering group needs to include community representation as this is not a plan for politicians or to tick boxes, it is for the community. The plan is to enable change for the better

Communication

- Ensure the plan enables better communication
- The project team have taken the right approach by getting input from people who deliver on the ground
- The best channels for communication are briefings, online announcements, newspaper articles, community council and social media
- Methods of interaction to be considered - online, papers , map, etc. Meet audience needs
- More explanation about what is going on already, an interactive map of projects and the signposting of funding will be beneficial
- A timeframe is important
- This offers an opportunity for people to see issues themselves and understand the context better
- A plan website to keep people up to date that community council and trust can 'own' or contribute
- Need to bring young people into the conversation
- There is a need to better understand the co-benefits that projects could deliver if increased collaboration
- What is/will be the mechanism for adding more projects? They will need to be clear if the plan is to be 'live'
- The plan needs to demonstrate success - to sell communities and stakeholders abilities to deliver
- Participants can see the benefit of this plan already, as a reference that allows people to seek info out themselves, it is an enabler/empowering
- Investment plan needs to show the important partnership working already taking place
- The plan should be bilingual
- Look at ways for people to feedback and input to the report as it comes together
- The plan should recognise that Skye and Raasay are not only recognised locally, but nationally, internationally, and globally

Purpose of the Plan and Role & Responsibility of the Project Board

- What are the assessment criteria for the projects that would be reviewed by the steering group? How would is ensure that there is a focus on both stakeholder and community needs being met?
- Ensure inclusion of disabled people and access panel at all stages of a projects, including early stages
- More action and less talk, outcomes that can be achieved are needed
- Strong community leadership is needed for the future, people who instigate change between locals and larger organisations
- Enable decision making to be open to people who have a voice and the local knowledge
- Honesty and transparency are critical
- Real action - how do we achieve this? Prioritising what happens/what does not?
- Use the plan for consultation for wider influence nationally to encourage change
- Support more community activism/social action
- Need to highlight the reasons why we are prioritising investment - there will always be winners and losers. Focus needs to be on what we are trying to achieve for the wider place, i.e. the islands of Skye & Raasay
- We need the plan to be a single voice, to lobby government and others to highlight the issues for our fair share of funding

Plan Review Period

- Review of the plan should be reactionary, dependent on work done/needed
- A year is too long for first review - the work is dynamic 3 or 4 months would be better
- First review within a year
- The plan needs to be iterative/reactionary to national priorities it also needs to establish timelines for delivery

The project teams initial response to points raised at the June workshops:

The initial engagements held in 2021 have triggered a new way of working across the people and groups and organisations working for Skye and Raasay. The success of the plan will rely on an effective ongoing process for delivery, and so the respective role and relationships between partners will be vital. Establishing a Board that comprises the partners involved will be an early action, and identifying Place Champions across all sectors that can act as immediate point could support day to day implementation. In addition, the plan can raise awareness of some of the funding opportunities that might benefit people and projects across the area.

SLCVO facilitated Third Sector Session

It was recognised as part of the development of an engagement plan that the project should invovle as wide a demographic on Skye and Raasay as possible, including typical hard to reach groups. Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations (SLCVO) agreed to act as a conduit for this process. In preparation SLCVO provided the third sector groups with a copy of the prioritisation exercise that forms part of the wider public survey which was available online.

Workshop

On 10th June A&DS, HIE and SLCVO convened a short workshop to enable the third sector group to feed back on their service users survey responses.

The organisations in attendance included:
Kyleakin Connections
Skye for All
Skye and Lochalsh Access Panel
Skye and Lochalsh Mental Health Association
Viewfield Garden Collective

Further representations were made through SCVLO from Highlife Youth Development and Skye Old Peoples Welfare.

Issues raised in the feedback are summarised on the following pages:

Housing

Comments noted that accessing social housing is tricky with people often on the emergency housing list or homeless for 6 months or more. Once housing is accessed if it is new build the quality is good and the heating costs economical. It was noted that in older properties heating was an issue and an area that would need to be addressed.

Accessibility and inclusion

Accessibility was the main focus of discussion with participants noting that those making and influencing change need to understand they could have mobility challenges in the future and should design for equality. It was noted that it is hard to access community and sports facilities and wheelchair users are unable to access swimming pools. There was a discussion on accessible parking spaces and that these are often in the wrong places and limited in number, and that short stay parking near shops is needed. In terms of sustainable development it was noted that accessibility of electric charging points should be considered moving forward as well as allowing people with mobility challenges access to free recycling uplifts.

A key piece of learning for the plan moving forward was that accessibility should be considered from the outset of a project to ensure nothing new is built that can not cater for all of Skye and Raasay's residents and visitors alike. It was reflected as a whole that the words accessible, equal and inclusive are currently missing from the list of priorities.

Local and National Objectives

A disconnect between national objectives/ delivery and local needs was considered with a recognition that national agencies need to acknowledge individual place based needs. Decision making should be made by people with the knowledge and not just those with a voice. Strong community leadership is needed for the future – people delivering change on the ground and not necessarily identified through an elective process. An example was cited that the new community hospital has been designed without an ensuite room that would accommodate a motorised wheelchair, and note that new facilities should be designed with the needs of all local people in mind.

Local shops and Economy

Accessible local shops and village centres are important, with the spending ability of people with disabilities often limited as they are unable access certain shops and services. Outlying villages should have better small shops, such as the Edinbane Community Shop and there should be more pop-up services like the pop-up Post Office, enabling people to access services locally.

Funding and Delivery

All participants to the workshop noted frustration at the limitations of year to year funding for continuing and effective services. It was also noted that funding amounts often don't allow for an increase for wage rises or inflation and so services are limited as a result. It was also noted that when a national issue is identified, new national initiatives are created rather than trusting and funding existing services to address that issue locally.

Digital Infrastructure

Availability of digital infrastructure is not seen as the key issue, or access to technology for appointments, it was noted that a number of service users did not have the capability to access services using these mediums and still need face to face support.

Healthcare Provision

Participants noted three main issues to overcome in the delivery of adequate health services - moving online, accessing services locally, and consistency in the professionals delivering the service . There was concern about the loss of face-to-face services and that a number of the participating organisations noted their service users struggled to access online healthcare appointments and that personal contact is needed for a number of reasons, often finding service users would come in for assistance to access the online appointment. It was suggested there needs to be face-to-face services particularly in the case of mental health support and older peoples care. It was noted that assisted technologies may also need to be made available if everything is moving online.

Waiting lists for health services are long with people then having to travel considerable distances for appointments - participants noted that centralised catchment areas are so wide that individual cultures of an area are lost. It was pointed out that once people do get an appointment continuation of care is tricky, with healthcare professionals often changing and locums being used, people have to explain their issues each time which can be tiring and leads to disengagement. Attracting and retaining healthcare professionals to Skye and Raasay was seen as important.

The project teams initial response to points raised at the June workshops:

The call to ensure that the outcomes and investment priorities reflect on the challenges of accessibility and inclusivity faced by certain parts of the population need to be very carefully considered on an ongoing basis and from the inception stage of a project or service enhancement. Following consultation feedback the 'Strengthen Communities' outcome has been updated to include the term 'inclusive'. Alongside the drive to enhance access to services by digital means, physical access to provision of services remains essential. The Future Plan will continue to work with the NHS, mental health support services and third sector social enterprise health providers, to help identify improvements in the provision of health care services that strike a careful balance between digital and face to face.

Online Consultation Responses

An online consultation based on questions rasied in both the January and June online stakeholder sessions, hosted by The Highland Councils website, was open to the general public between May and June 30th.

Participants were asked to respond to two questions.

Fifteen options were provided for participants to sort into order of prioritisation. The options provided were informed by participant contributions and feedback from and on the January workshop.

The full detail of the responses is noted in the graphs on page 25. The top 5 priorities from each question are listed below.

Thinking about your daily life, what is most important today?

1. Housing is hard to to find, rarely affordable and expensive to heat

2. Tourism is badly managed, the benefits of tourism are not balanced with local needs

3. The public transport system is poor and disconnected, locals and tourists have to rely on private car

4. Our economy is not diverse enough – there are only jobs in certain sectors and not enough good opportunities for young people

5. We are unable to recruit enough health and education professionals

Thinking about the future, what change would you like to see?

1. Availability of affordable and accessible homes, that are energy efficient and not expensive to heat

2. Policies manage tourism and protect our natural and cultural assets, as a result Skye benefits economically from responsible tourism

3. A comprehensive and connected public transport system get locals and tourists to where they want to be

4. The economy is diverse with jobs in a number of sectors, there are good employment opportunities for young people and they remain on Skye and Raasay

5. I can access good healthcare digitally and locally as required, the older people in our community are valued and supported when needed

Thinking about your daily life, what is most important 'today'?

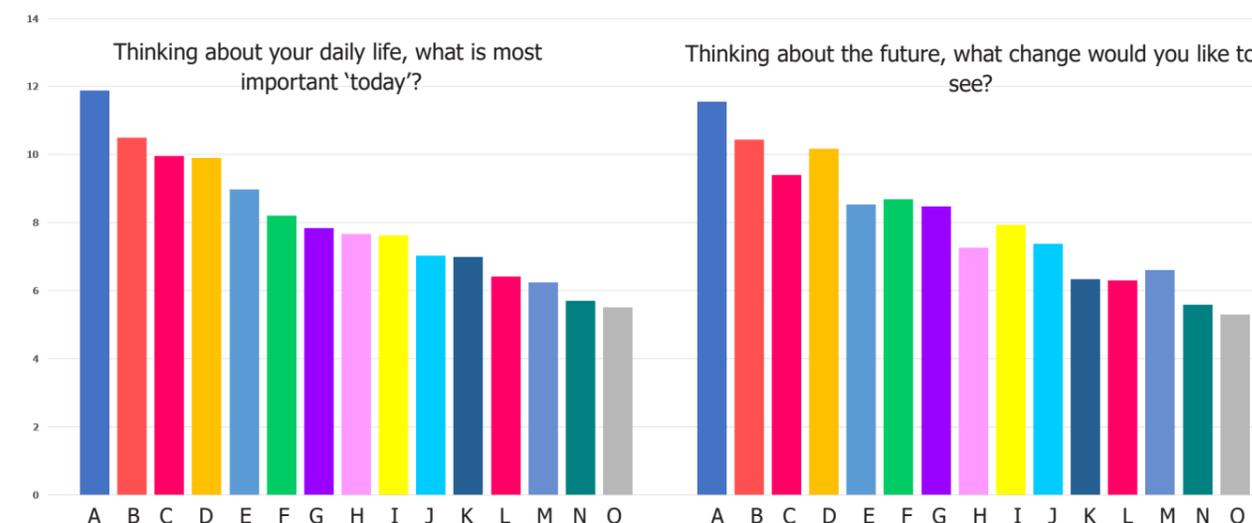Thinking about the future, what change would you like to see?

A - Housing is hard to to find, rarely affordable and expensive to heat

B - Tourism is badly managed, the benefits of tourism are not balanced with local needs

C - The public transport system is poor and disconnected, locals and tourists have to rely on private car

D - Our economy is not diverse enough – there are only jobs in certain sectors and not enough good opportunities for young people

E - We are unable to recruit enough health and education professionals

F- It is hard to access healthcare and older people are not supported well enough

G - Digital infrastructure (internet and wifi) is poor

H - We are not addressing Climate Change well enough or benefiting from opportunities to use renewable energy

I - We are not organised well enough and are too slow to innovate and implement good ideas

J - There are not enough dedicated cycling and walking routes

K - We are not producing enough food locally

L - Waste management and recycling are an issue

M - Village centres are poor and I can't access the essentials there

N - It is hard to access community and sports facilities

O - There is not enough support for Gaelic/Crofting Cultures

A - Availability of affordable and accessible homes, that are energy efficient and not expensive to heat

B - Policies manage tourism and protect our natural and cultural assets, as a result Skye benefits economically from responsible tourism

C - A comprehensive and connected public transport system get locals and tourists to where they want to be

D - The economy is diverse with jobs in a number of sectors, there are good employment opportunities for young people and they remain on Skye and Raasay

E - It is easy to recruit professional to health and education roles in Skye and Raasay

F - I can access good healthcare digitally and locally as required, the older people in our community are valued and supported when needed

G - Digital infrastructure is excellent and remote working is popular

H - Skye reacted well to the Climate Change challenge and we generate enough renewable energy to be self sufficient

I - Good organisation enables the right new initiatives to develop quickly and efficiently to support our population

J - A network of dedicated active travel routes in the right places makes walking and cycling easy for locals and tourists

K - We produce healthy staple foods close to home

L - Waste and recycling are managed well and the place is clean and attractive

M - Village Centres are well organised and accessible and I can get the essentials there

N - Community and sports facilities are accessible and adequate

O - Gaelic and Crofting cultures are both thriving and well supported

Online Consultation Responses

The online survey offered the opportunity for participants to raise points for consideration. The following are a summary of the contributions, which are in addition to those previously raised by the January and June workshop attendees.

Skye and Raasay Future Plan

- Ensure core priorities are central to the plan and there is recognition that this a plan for and by our communities
- An investment plan for the future is a moving feast and the project teams should amend priorities over time
- We need to understand who will make decisions and how will plans become actions
- Communication could improve, in future send briefings to development trusts, community councils, churches, businesses and voluntary organisations
- The plan is a very comprehensive list of aims
- The plan could offer an opportunity for The Highland Council to ensure investment is spread across the region
- This agenda will need to protect itself from being side-tracked by false economies, and external agendas
- There should be representation of people and organisations who have lived experience of disabilities

Organising Ourselves

- The plan should be led by the community not businesses
- There needs to be on the ground development where community can see change
- There should be regular consultation with the wider public on future developments on Skye and Raasay
- If communities are expected to lead, more resources must be made available to community groups
- An overall plan is needed for each village and township
- Communities should be fully consulted on these plans
- THC and HIE have the officer resource to keep momentum, so should continue to facilitate
- A local board should be established to help steer decisions and direction linking directly with community
- Wide consultation is required, especially if community resilience is part of the goal

Sport and Recreation

- Look at sports provision as facilities offer added benefits
- Some sporting facility upgrades such as a grandstand at Pairc nan Laoch to allow the island to host shinty finals
- An all weather, community-run pitch in the south of Skye
- A viewing gallery at the Fingal Centre sports hall

Housing

- The plan should include infrastructure to accommodate new housing
- Housing is too expensive for young locals, as a result businesses cannot recruit staff
- Second homes and Air BnB are at odds with sustaining a residential population
- Housing, access to land and the fair distribution of wealth should be top of the agenda
- There are no rental properties, the housing register is full and with low availability and locals can't afford the housing market here - even with government support

Diverse Local Economy

- Skye should develop a strategy that looks beyond tourism and creates a culture of innovation. A plan that offers diverse career choices for young people through a diversification of the economy
- Local businesses should be supported and Skye should avoid introducing large supermarket shops
- There should be a diverse choice of supermarkets

Accessibility and inclusion

- Delivering projects that are inclusive and accessible for disabled people also makes it easier for others
- If facilities are inaccessible they are missing out on revenue from disabled customers and visitors
- Get the correct advice to make everything inclusive and accessible, from the concept of provision of any services

Digital Infrastructure

- Good broadband and mobile telephone signal across the whole island is vital for living and work opportunities

Transport and Infrastructure

- The roads need to be fixed and maintained
- There should be fairer parking charges for locals
- The airstrip should not be a priority investment, as it will bring more tourists and infrastructure is stuggling to cope
- Development of the harbour i.e the installation of local and visitor pontoons would be a sensible move
- Some participants noted Portree Harbour and Pier should be improved - others argue there should be no change
- Electric vehicle charging provision needs to be improved

Gaelic

- Gaelic should be at the forefront of the investment plan
- Gaelic language, culture, and crofting, are important. Proper support for these will lead to meeting all the issues for the benefit of the community
- There is currently too much emphasis on Gaelic signage

Climate Change

- Developing renewable resources will diversify economies and produce skilled employment for young islanders
- Nature and biodiversity must play a vital part and this must be protected and cared for. Climate change, waste, and habitat destruction must be addressed
- The Skye and Raasay Investment Plan must be aligned with Scottish Government targets on climate change. All developments should be audited against climate impact

Landscape, productivity and biodiversity

- Invest in farming, much of the good quality land on for food production seems under utilised - there needs to be a fresh look at the crofting and grazings model
- Much of Skye lacks biodiversity, there are few remnants of native woodland any investment should be looking at how it can make biodiversity improvements
- The landscape as a working environment is ignored by most visitors. We risk losing Skye's unique landscape
- Local food and produce is available but producers need the means to make this sustainable.
- The environment should be represented in this plan

Children, Families and Young People

- A good playpark in Portree is needed
- A focus on children is important, there should be indoor activities for them
- Everything is geared towards tourism, it leaves nothing for people to do during the winter, for our young adults
- For families, Skye is becoming a less attractive place, it is expensive, with no childcare - limiting work opportunities

Balancing Visitors and Residents needs

- Investment should benefit residents before tourists. Parking benefits locals and tourists alike but we need better healthcare, housing and amenities to benefit all
- Tourism activities need to be made sustainable but ensuring a stable, young and healthy population with affordable residential opportunities is vital
- Skye should not just be seen as a resource or asset, it is a place for living. Investments should prioritise this
- If tourism is to be sustainable then investment is required in facilities, improved public toilets, campervan parks with electricity and waste disposal facilities
- A tourist tax is required, plus an education programme

National/ Regional and Local focus

- The ward, community companies and trusts, need better access to expertise and funding to implement projects
- The business of going to Inverness, Edinburgh and London to get support is inefficient. Central government needs to act as facilitator, local empowerment is needed
- We have the capacity to deliver better value solutions locally. All we need is resources and the permission
- The priorities should include localising decision making, to act on issues such as the falling school roll
- Ensure that any investment is spread equally geographically
- Recently there is a lower level of middle and senior management voice in Highland Council with a Skye voice
- Tolls reinstated on the bridge, with exemption for locals funds could be used for toilets, local services etc.

A&DS Analysis and Conclusions

The Breakout Room discussions and survey responses offered further insight into the current issues on the islands and their alignment with the plan's priorities but also insight into current thinking around possible collaborative projects that could enable a thriving and deliver a climate adapted Skye & Raasay.

Several insights emerged from this series of workshops which could be used to inform the draft plan and the project teams next steps.

Inclusivity as a Driver

Accessibility and inclusivity do not feature in the narrative for the island priorities. We would recommend that is addressed and the feedback from workshop participants in relation to their experience is acknowledged by the plan.

We would also recommend that the findings of the Just Transition Commission are noted and area used inform future approaches to inclusivity, especially when establishing pathways to tackle the impacts of climate change.

https://www.gov.scot/publications/transition-commission-national-mission-fairer-greener-scotland/

Positive Momentum

This second series of workshops has enabled links and witnessed collaborative working within a number of the sessions. The work undertaken by the project team to understand the projects, stakeholders and potential synergies to inform the workshop design, has already been beneficial. It is important to maintain this positive momentum.

The plan and the methods selected to communicate its content, the review frequency and approach to

project governance should enable the continuation of this positive partnership approach. It would also be beneficial to outline the intended use for the plan in the near future. This would compound the intention shared at the workshops by THC/HIE that the plans future is 'not on a shelf'.

Enabling Interaction

It is clear that availability of resources is having an impact. National organisations, local authorities, local services, the third sector and volunteer organisations are negotiating the impacts of the pandemic and reducing budgets. One of the plans purposes is to improve the prospects of securing funding by demonstrating the value of partnership working. Collaboration is not always straightforward or without challenge, however, to enable organisations such as the third sector, private businesses, and community groups to contribute the following would be beneficial:

- Clear signposting to funding opportunities, built on the work already delivered by the Ward Manager
- Enable a mutual support network the potential of which was witnessed throughout the sessions
- Clarity – a clear purpose, mechanism for engagement with and ability to contribute easily to, the update of the plan, would be beneficial. Tailoring of communications to suit the intended audience would support continued engagement.
- Keep the plan content and language as clear and accessible as possible. Clarity of message will benefit project stakeholders, but also the intended audience

Project Governance

Clarity of the roles, responsibilities and membership of the Project Board is required. As the plan is not only owned by THC and HIE, there is a need to identify and establish the role of the community membership

of the Board. Workshop discussions highlighted that this could not only by community council and trust members, but community representatives. It may be beneficial to ensure that the islands youth are represented as the island's future, is their future.

The frequency of plan updates and/or reviews would benefit from being established when the plan is launched to ensure the positive momentum achieved to date continues. The mechanisms for engaging with the plan and review need to be as simple and clear as possible to ensure the reach into the communities is maintained and extended.

Additional Plan Content

The plan offers the opportunity to champion the positive work undertaken by stakeholders and communities to date, highlighting their capabilities and capacity to deliver. In addition, a number of workshop discussions have highlighted the desire to including a couple of short case studies to provide insight into curent challenges being experience and innovation being delivered by the islands.

- Could work undertaken to date across the island, especially throughout the pandemic demonstrate the island community's resilience, but also their emerging needs?
- There are a number of exciting projects being delivered across the islands, the stacking of project programmes is having an impact on volunteer capacity, this could demonstrate the need for assistance with co-ordination. There is also the opportunity to highlight the impact on community projects following the increase in costs (but not funding increases) caused by the pandemic, Brexit and the Suez Canal blockage.

Planning for the Impacts of Climate Change

Facilitators noted the lack of discussion on climate risk and climate change mitigation and/or adaptation that may be required on the islands and to its systems in the near- and longer-term future within the workshops. It was however, observed that the impacts of climate change were raised by a greater number of participants in the online survey. There are number of pieces of work being undertaken by The Highland Council around heat and energy (LHEES) and adaption (Highland Adapts). Increased awareness of the purpose of this work amongst island inhabitants may lead to an increased urgency to focus on this issue.

Children and Young People

Contributions to the workshops and online consultation from, and representing, the needs of children and young people were minimal. We would encourage the plan to reference the cross generational needs of the islands.

Next Steps

The findings from the workshop discussions will help guide the Skye and Raasy Future Plan team with the preprations for the next steps of the process:

- Completion of the collaborativley drafted plan
- Draft plan shared at the 2nd August Ward Business Meeting and 30th August THC Committee Meeting
- Stakeholder input on draft plan post 30th August

Taking account of the feedback and lessons learned from the Skye & Raasay work, a report is expected to be reported to Council in late 2021 outlining how similar place plans for the future might be developed with communities across Highland and how different sectors might work better together.

Appendix I Workshop Participants and Agenda

Participants:

Marion Anderson	Ionad Throndairnis
Sharon Campbell	An Crubh
Sarah Cardino	Viewfield Garden Collective
Simon Clayton	Staffin Community Council
Mark Crowe	Skye Cycle Project
Alistair Danter	Skye Connect
Cllr John Finlayson	
Jo-Anne Ford	Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations
Hamish Fraser	Broadford & Strath Community Council
Iain Galbraith	Rural Design
Jeff Geary	Broadaford & Strath Community Company
Cllr John Gordon	
Caroline Gould	Skye & Lochalsh Access Panel
Claire Gray	Glendale Community Trust
Mark Harvey	Planning Team Leader
Alex Jones	Skye & Lochalsh Mental Health Association
Suzy Lee	Radio Skye
Sarah Lister	Skye for All
John McHardy	THC Housing Development Manager
Iain McIvor	Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association
Catriona MacDonald	Ritchie Report Steering Group
Martin MacGillivray	Sleat Community Trust
Andrew MacIver	THC Principal Engineer
Ross MacKenzie	NHSH
Cllr Calum MacLeod	
Charlene MacLeod	Kyleakin Connections
Elizabeth MacLeod	Raasay Development Trust
Neil MacRae	Hi-Trans
Ronnie MacRae	Community Housing Trust
Henrik Micski	Minginish Community Hall Association
Richie Morgan	Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd

Norma Morrison	Broadford & Strath Community Council
Cllr Calum Munro	
Donnie Munro	Sabhal Mor Ostaig
Andrew Prendegast	Edinbane Community Company
Hugh Ross	Staffin Community Trust
Peggy Semler	Struan Community Development Group
Tim Shone	Sleat Community Council
Bryan Stout	THC Principal Engineer
Murray Swapp	Skye Iconic Sites
Dave Till	Skye Connect
Fay Thomson	Portree & Braes Coummunity Council
Fiona Thomson	Portree & Braes Community Trust
Alex Turner	NatureScot
Rob Ware	Sleat Community Trust
Ally Young	Staffin Campsite
Neil Young	THC Principal Traffic Officer

Skye and Raasay Investment Plan Team:

|	
Scott Dalgarno	THC Development Plans Manager
Stuart MacPherson	HIE Head of Strategic Projects
Willie MacKinnon	THC Ward Manager
Douglas Chisolm	THC Planner
Pablo Mascarenhas	THC Community & Democratic Engagement Manager

Facilitators:

Karen Ridgewell	A&DS
Laura Hainey	A&DS

Miro Aides

David Fletcher	A&DS
Alex Laurenson	A&DS

Attendance

Over 100 representatives from 80 local organisations which included housing, educational and national bodies, community councils, community and development trusts, The Highland Council and private businesses, were invited to attend the workshop sessions. Despite the current situation surrounding Covid-19 and the limitations of online consultation sessions, an attendance rate of 46% was achieved.

54% Unable to attend

46% Able to attend
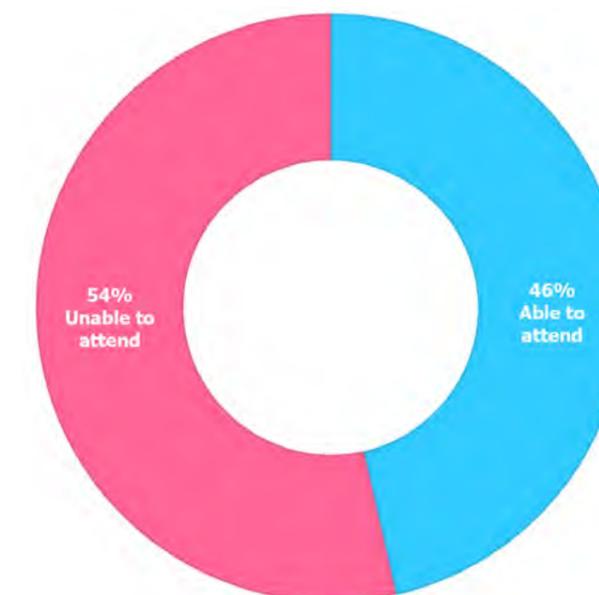
Agenda:

- Welcome — THC/HIE
- Reminder of the Purpose of the Plan — THC
- Session Format — A&DS

The Place
- Updated Priorities — THC

The Parts
- Break Out Rooms — A&DS
    Project/Priority Alignments
    Identification of opportunities/omissions - thinking of the future Skye & Raasay that is thriving and climate resilient

The Process
- Organising Ourseleves — THC

- Marketing - plan title — A&DS
- Summary and Next steps — THC
- Evaluation — A&DS

Appendix II
Workshop Feedback

THC and HIE identified and invited workshop participants from 84 local Housing, Educational and National Organisations, Community Councils, Community and Development Trusts, The Highland Council and private business. The following diagrams demonstrate the proportionality of invitees and attendees.


% of Sector Workshop Invitees - by A&DS
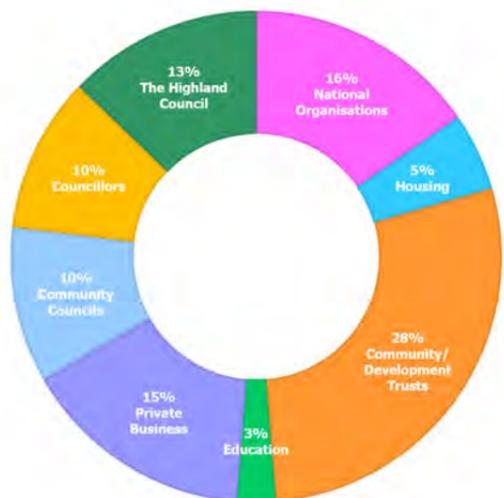
% of Sector Workshop Attendees - by A&DS

Feedback was received from workshop's participants through an online form. The following is a summary of responses:

1. How effective was the workshop in reflecting on and analysing the projects as part of the Skye and Raasay Investment Plan

On a scale of 0 -10 where 10 is highly effective

Average Score 8
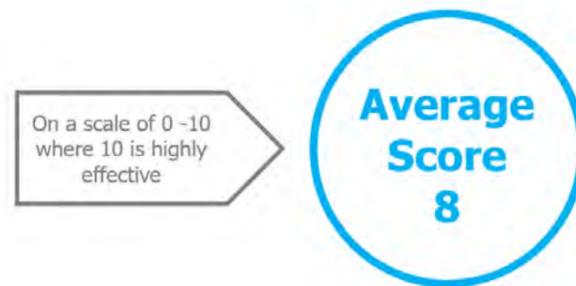
2. One key benefit of participating in the workshop was...
• Encouraging all communities and organisations to look ahead at what their needs for funding are, and ensuring that THC knows what the spend requests are in advance and can allocate the funds fairly. In the past, I perceive that money has been allocated at the start of the 5 years and then there is nothing left for projects which come live later. But 5 years is a long time, I hope there will also be finance set aside for smaller essential work which might crop up.
• Becoming aware of the degree of consensus that exists around what is needed on Skye & Raasay
• Gaining a sense of coherence
• The opportunity to find out about all the proposals being developed in the area
• Hearing of the issues in other locations and hearing the views of other participants. Highlight other key areas not mentioned
• Finding out about other areas priorities

3. One thing I know now that I didn't know before is...

• How to use technology for meetings! A small thing, but it's useful for communities too, to be able to meet and discuss business without being physically present.
• As SkyeConnect is quite an encompassing organisation at the heart of Tourism I was aware of the majority of issues
• Some useful information on energy funding
• The innovative work going on in Raasay
• About the group, the participants and the project listed
• Highland Council are now charging at electric charging points

4. What change(s) would have improved your experience of the workshop

• I was stuck in the meeting room after the first meeting because I didn't know how to rejoin the main group. Scott sorted that this time, but it might be helpful to let people like me know what to do at the start.
• face to face ....
• I wasn't clear if we were only to discuss Portree and Raasay or did we get stuck and not have time to hear about the other areas i.e. were the workshops decided on a geographic or topic basis?
• No I think it was well organised and well put together considering the IT functions used in current Covid conditions
• More advice beforehand on what we would be asked to contribute.

5. How likely is it that you will work more collaboratively with other projects in Skye and Raasay following this worksho

On a scale of 0 -10 where 10 is highly effective

Average Score 8.5

6. How likely are you to recommend Architecture and Design Scotland to a friend or colleague?

On a scale of 0 -10 where 10 is highly effective

Average Score 8

Appendix III
Plan Title

The name of the plan is important, the project team want to ensure collective ownership is reflected in its title. During the workshop and online consultation participants were invited to contribute to word cloud generators, listing the words they would both like and NOT like to see included within the title of the plan.

Please note, the larger the size of the text, the greater number of people included the word within their response.

Wordclouds generated by the Online Survey participants

Which words would you like to see included in the title of the plan?

Which words would you NOT like to see included in the title of the plan?

Wordclouds generated by the June Workshop attendees

Which words would you like to see included in the title of the plan?

Which words would you NOT like to see included in the title of the plan?

Architecture &
Design Scotland

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