

Minute

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee

Wednesday, 5 June 2024, 09:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Councillors Gwenda M Shearer, Graham A Bevan, Stephen G Clackson, Alexander G Cowie, David Dawson, Steven B Heddle, James R Moar, Janette A Park, John A R Scott, Jean E Stevenson, Ivan A Taylor and Heather N Woodbridge.

Religious Representatives:

Reverend Susan Kirkbride and Reverend Fraser Macnaughton.

Teacher Representatives:

Jo Hill and Mary Maley.

Present via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

Marie Locke, Religious Representative.

Clerk

- Sandra Craigie, Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- James Wylie, Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.
- Peter Diamond, Head of Education (for Items 1 to 6).
- Frances Troup, Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing.
- David Brown, Service Manager (Resources).
- Garry Burton, Service Manager (Leisure and Culture).
- Catherine Diamond, Service Manager (Early Learning and Childcare) (for Items 1 to 6).
- Hazel Flett, Service Manager (Governance) (for Items 1 to 6).
- Morag Miller, Service Manager (Primary Education) (for Items 1 to 6).
- Lesley Mulraine, Service Manager (Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation).
- Pat Robinson, Service Manager (Accounting).
- Craig Walker, Service Manager (Human Resources) (for Items 1 to 3).
- Georgette Herd, Solicitor.
- Cheryl Rafferty, Team Leader (Youth Services) (for Items 1 to 9).
- Rachel Scarth, Project Manager, DYP Orkney (for Items 2 to 7).

In Attendance via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

- Anna Evans, Director, Indigo House (for Item 4).

Observing

- Jane Partridge, Service Manager (Secondary and Tertiary Education) (for Items 1 to 7).
- Siobhan Wilks, Service Manager (Support for Learning and Inclusion).
- Nigel Fyffe, Senior Maintenance Surveyor.
- Vikki Kerr, Team Leader (Libraries and Archives) (for Items 8 and 9).
- Katell Roche, Team Manager (Sport and Leisure) (for Items 8 and 9).
- Maya Tams-Gray, Committees Officer.

Declarations of Interest

- No declarations of interest were intimated.

Chair

- Councillor Gwenda M Shearer.

1. Appointment of Vice Chair

The Chair called for nominations for the post of Vice Chair of the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee, and the Committee:

Resolved that Councillor Ivan A Taylor be appointed Vice Chair of the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee.

2. Appointments to Sub-Committees, Groups and Other Bodies

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Governance), the Committee:

Resolved:

2.1. That, unless determined otherwise, the undernoted appointments and/or nominations to the various Sub-committees, groups and other bodies falling within the remit of the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee should be for the remainder of the term of this Council, namely for three years to May 2027.

The Committee resolved to make the undernoted appointments.

2.2. St Magnus Cathedral Sub-committee

The Committee resolved, in terms of delegated powers, that the following members be appointed to serve on the St Magnus Cathedral Sub-committee for the period to May 2027:

- Convener – Councillor Graham A Bevan.
- Chair, Education, Leisure and Housing Committee – Councillor Gwenda M Shearer.
- Vice Chair, Education, Leisure and Housing Committee – Councillor Ivan A Taylor.
- Councillor Alexander G Cowie.
- Councillor David Dawson.
- Councillor Steven B Heddle.
- Councillor John A R Scott.

2.3. Cultural Services Review Short-Life Working Group

The Committee:

Noted:

2.3.1. That the Cultural Services Review Short-Life Working Group was established on 7 February 2024.

2.3.2. That, although the decision by Council to establish the working group, together with its membership, had been taken within the last 12 months, no suspension of Standing Orders was necessary, as there had been a material change of circumstances, namely a by election for the Stromness and South Isles ward, as well as the Council's mid-term review, whereby Committee membership, including the appointment of Vice Chair of the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee, was reviewed and amended.

The Committee thereafter resolved, in terms of delegated powers:

2.3.3. That the following members be appointed to serve on the Cultural Services Review Short-Life Working Group:

- Chair, Education, Leisure and Housing Committee – Councillor Gwenda M Shearer.
- Vice Chair, Education, Leisure and Housing Committee – Councillor Ivan A Taylor.
- Councillor Graham A Bevan.
- Councillor Janette A Park.
- Councillor John A R Scott.

The Committee resolved **to recommend to the Council:**

2.3.4. That Councillor Rachael A King, who was not a member of the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee, be reappointed to serve on the Cultural Services Review Short-Life Working Group.

2.4. Sport and Leisure Services Review Short-Life Working Group

The Committee resolved, in terms of delegated powers, that the following members be appointed to serve on the Sport and Leisure Services Short-Life Working Group:

- Chair, Education, Leisure and Housing Committee – Councillor Gwenda M Shearer.
- Vice Chair, Education, Leisure and Housing Committee – Councillor Ivan A Taylor.
- Councillor Graham A Bevan.
- Councillor Stephen G Clackson.
- Councillor John A R Scott.

2.5. Education Quality and Standards Consultative Group

The Committee resolved, in terms of delegated powers, that the Education Quality and Standards Consultative Group be disestablished.

2.6. Housing Strategies Consultative Group

After a secret ballot to appoint five members of the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee to the Housing Strategies Consultative Group, the result of which was as follows:

- Councillor Alexander G Cowie – 6 votes.
- Councillor Stephen G Clackson – 7 votes.
- Councillor James R Moar – 8 votes.
- Councillor Janette A Park – 6 votes.
- Councillor John A R Scott – 9 votes.
- Councillor Jean E Stevenson – 9 votes.
- Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson – 6 votes.

Councillors Stephen G Clackson, James R Moar, John A R Scott and Jean E Stevenson were duly appointed.

As the remaining three candidates had an equal number of votes, after a further secret ballot, the result of which was as follows:

- Councillor Alexander G Cowie – 2 votes.
- Councillor Janette A Park – 5 votes.
- Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson – 5 votes.

Councillor Alexander G Cowie, having received the fewest votes, was removed from the list of candidates.

After a further secret ballot, the result of which was as follows:

- Councillor Janette A Park – 6 votes.
- Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson – 6 votes.

In accordance with Standing Order 22.13.3, as the secret ballot produced an equality of votes, after the drawing of lots, Councillor Janette A Park was duly elected.

The Committee thereafter resolved, in terms of delegated powers, that the following members be appointed to serve on the Housing Strategies Consultative Group for the period to May 2027:

- Chair, Education, Leisure and Housing Committee – Councillor Gwenda M Shearer.
- Vice Chair, Education, Leisure and Housing Committee – Councillor Ivan A Taylor.
- Councillor Stephen G Clackson.
- Councillor James R Moar.
- Councillor Janette A Park.
- Councillor John A R Scott.
- Councillor Jean E Stevenson.

2.7. Orkney Childcare and Young People's Partnership

The Committee resolved, in terms of delegated powers, that Councillor Graham A Bevan appointed to represent the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee on the Orkney Childcare and Young People's Partnership for the period to May 2027.

2.8. UHI Orkney Stakeholder Group

The Committee noted:

2.8.1. That, on 7 June 2023, the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee recommended:

- Establishment of the UHI Orkney Stakeholder Group, with the existing members of the College Management Council Sub-committee, where currently in post, being appointed for the period up to July 2024.
- That the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions and the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing should submit a joint report, to the meeting of the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee to be held in June 2024, reviewing the Terms of Reference and operation of the Orkney College Stakeholder Group, together with proposals for the appointment of members and term of office.

2.8.2. That, as the review of the operation of the UHI Orkney Stakeholder Group was not yet complete, it was proposed that a report be submitted to the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee on 11 September 2024.

2.8.3. That the appointments outlined at paragraphs 2.8.4 and 2.8.5 below would, therefore, be subject to review at the meeting of the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee to be held on 11 September 2024.

The Committee thereafter resolved, in terms of delegated powers:

2.8.4. That the following members be appointed to serve on the UHI Stakeholder Group:

- Chair, Education, Leisure and Housing Committee – Councillor Gwenda M Shearer.
- Vice Chair, Education, Leisure and Housing Committee – Councillor Ivan A Taylor.
- Councillor Stephan G Clackson.
- Councillor John A R Scott.
- Councillor Jean E Stevenson.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

2.8.5. That the following individuals be appointed to serve on the UHI Stakeholder Group:

- Four Business Community representatives:
 - Rebecca May.
 - Tracey Phillips.
 - Steven Sinclair.
 - Liz Stevenson.
- Four Community/Third Sector representatives:
 - Gail Anderson.
 - Lorraine Bichan.
 - Harvey Johnston.
- Two Student representatives:
 - Francesca Meneghetti.
 - Gillian Morrison.
- Two Staff representatives:
 - Colin Risbridger.
 - Iain Wilkie.
- Two representatives from UHI:
 - Neil Simco.
 - Alison Wilson.

2.9. Orkney Strategic Community Learning Group

The Committee resolved, in terms of delegated powers, that Councillor Gwenda M Shearer be appointed to serve on the Orkney Strategic Community Learning Group for the period to May 2027.

2.10. Physical Activity and Wellbeing Group

The Committee resolved, in terms of delegated powers, that Councillor John A R Scott be appointed to serve on the Physical Activity and Wellbeing Group for the period to May 2027.

2.11. Highlands and Islands Science Skills Academy

The Committee resolved, in terms of delegated powers, that an appointment to the Leadership Board of the Highlands and Islands Science Skills Academy was no longer required.

2.12. UHI Foundation

The Committee noted:

2.12.1. That, following the review of governance arrangements in respect of Orkney College (now UHI Orkney) reported to the Council in June 2023, advice had been sought on the requirement for nominations of an elected member to serve on the UHI Foundation.

2.12.2. That UHI had clarified that membership of the Foundation was entirely voluntary and there was no requirement for the Council to nominate an elected member.

The Committee thereafter resolved, in terms of delegated powers:

2.12.3. That the Council should continue to nominate an elected member to the UHI Foundation.

2.12.4. That Councillor Stephen G Clackson be nominated to represent the Council on the UHI Foundation for the period to May 2027.

2.13. College's Scotland National Employers Association

The Committee resolved, in terms of delegated powers, that Councillor Gwenda M Shearer be appointed to serve on College's Scotland National Employers Association for the period to May 2027.

3. Performance Monitoring – Education, Leisure and Housing

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Scrutinised:

3.1. The performance of Education, Leisure and Housing for the reporting period 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024, in respect of performance indicators, as detailed in Annex 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance.

3.2. The complaints and compliments made to Education, Leisure and Housing in the six-month period 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024, and for the two preceding six-month periods, as detailed in section 5 of the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council**:

3.3. That the Education, Leisure and Housing Risk Register 2024/25, attached as Appendix 1 to this Minute, be approved.

4. Local Housing Strategy

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, together with an Equality Impact Assessment and an Island Communities Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing, the Committee:

Noted:

4.1. That approval of the Local Housing Strategy 2024-2029 did not confirm any right of access to Council funding, with any funding requests submitted on a case-by-case basis through the relevant routes defined in the Scheme of Administration and in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

4.2. That the Local Housing Strategy 2024-2029, attached as Appendix 2 to this Minute, be approved.

5. Anti-Bullying Policy – Update

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, together with an Equality Impact Assessment and an Island Communities Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Primary Education), Councillor Steven B Heddle, seconded by Councillor Gwenda M Shearer, moved that the Anti-Bullying Policy for Our Children and Young People, as presented, be approved.

Councillor David Dawson moved an amendment that section 3.2, entitled Labelling and Use of Language around Bullying, of the Anti-Bullying Policy for Our Children and Young People be deleted.

On receiving no seconder, his amendment fell, and the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the Anti-Bullying Policy for Our Children and Young People, attached as Appendix 3 to this Minute, be approved.

Councillor Graham A Bevan and Reverend Susan Kirkbride left the meeting during discussion of this item.

6. Orkney Schools Attainment

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Education, the Committee:

Scrutinised the Orkney Schools Attainment report for academic session 2022/23, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance with regard to the level of success and achievement of children and young people.

Councillor Graham A Bevan rejoined the meeting during discussion of this item.

Jo Hill, Reverend Fraser Macnaughton and Mary Maley left the meeting at this point.

7. Developing the Young Workforce

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Project Manager, DYW Orkney, the Committee:

Scrutinised the key activities of DYW Orkney during 2023, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance.

8. Inspection of Community Learning and Development in Orkney

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Team Leader (Youth Services), the Committee:

Scrutinised the Community Learning and Development Progress Visit Report, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, published by Education Scotland on 23 April 2024, and obtained assurance.

9. Leisure and Culture Annual Impact Reports

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Leisure and Culture), the Committee:

Scrutinised the performance and impact information, as detailed in Appendices 1 to 4 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance regarding the impact that the Council's Leisure and Culture Service had across Orkney.

10. Homelessness in Orkney

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation), the Committee:

Scrutinised the performance information, detailed in Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance that the Council's response to homelessness was operating satisfactorily.

Marie Locke left the meeting at this point.

11. Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Resources), the Committee:

Scrutinised the level of progress towards meeting the initial Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing target, as detailed in sections 3 and 4 of the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance that the Council's response to meeting and maintaining that standard was satisfactory.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

At 15:05 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: Gwenda M Shearer.

Education, Leisure and Housing Risk Register 2024/25

Strategic Risks

Cluster.	Risk Number.	Owner.
Financial.	1.	Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.
Staffing.	2.	Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.

Operational Risks

Cluster.	Risk Number.	Owner.
Financial.	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11	Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.
Staffing.	2, 3, 7.	Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.

Risk Matrix

			IMPACT				
			1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
			Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
LIKELIHOOD	5.	Almost Certain.	Medium	Medium	High	High	Extreme
	4.	Likely.	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme
	3.	Possible.	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
	2.	Unlikely.	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	1.	Rare.	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High

Risk Title: 01 – Financial Pressures.

Likelihood.	5	Impact.	4.	RAG.	Amber.	Current Risk Score.	20	Target Risk Score.	6.
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Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>It is predicted that ongoing savings will be required each year. The next three years require significant savings for E, L & H (£3.5m).</p> <p>Level of funding for the service is insufficient to maintain the existing standard and range of provision.</p> <p>Lateness of award and lack of certainty around some Scottish Government funding leads to additional pressure on services.</p> <p>Inflation and pay settlements, combined with a standstill budget and/or budget reduction further reduces the capacity to maintain a safe standard of provision.</p>	<p>Reduced resource base</p>	<p>Decrease in the quality and resilience of the services provided by ELH (as assessed by inspectors and regulators).</p> <p>Reduction in service offer.</p> <p>Disinvestment in professional learning offer for staff teams.</p> <p>Possible reduction to progress, achievement and attainment of learners.</p> <p>Spiral of decline as increasing time and resource spent on accounting for service failures and complaints, and on making cases for discrete resource allocations in-year.</p> <p>Additional strain placed on staff many of whom already work significant additional hours.</p> <p>Insufficient houses and higher levels of disrepair.</p>	<p>Ensure 'fair' distribution of available funding to mitigate differential impacts across the service.</p> <p>Increase budget management and scrutiny to identify both significant and marginal efficiencies.</p> <p>Manage ad-hoc grants to minimise unplanned commitments 'in kind'.</p> <p>Manage vacancies where possible to optimise in-year savings.</p> <p>Explore and exploit opportunities for sharing costs and/or community funding.</p> <p>Oversee budget management.</p> <p>Continue work to identify additional efficient/different ways of working/ service redesign to release budget savings and increase income generation.</p> <p>HRA Business Plan developed – close monitoring to continue.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Impact of Council's strategic financial plan exacerbates the vulnerability.</p> <p>Some aspects of service provision are reliant on income through income generation, donation or sales which cannot be entirely guaranteed.</p> <p>The funding regime for housing development in Scotland leads to difficulties in making development achievable, given the range of pressures on a small Housing Revenue Account. This, in turn, is impacting on affordable housing provision.</p> <p>The further rollout of Universal credit and existing impact of original roll out (from September 2018) plus COVID-19 legacy has resulted in increased rent arrears.</p> <p>Reduction or loss of key services.</p>		<p>Reputational impact; Community impact; Impact on staff morale; Increase in difficulty with recruitment and retention; Potential staff losses either through ill health or choosing to leave the Council; Economic impact if people leave the islands; potential limitations on housing development (unless additional provider(s) can be sourced); Increased homelessness; Additional housing pressure; Sustainability threatened in fragile communities; Increased rents; Failure to meet EESSH2; Reduced staff wellbeing and increased staff illness; Potential impact on vulnerable groups within society.</p> <p>Increased requests for additional funding from third sector agencies who receive funding and who deliver vitally important services for us at a cost below that of internal delivery.</p> <p>Reduction in income due to cost of living crisis.</p>	<p>Working with alternative housing providers who may be prepared to build in Orkney.</p> <p>Reduction of service provision in some areas / loss of services to maintain core activities.</p> <p>Work with Scottish Government to ensure more efficient and effective ways of working through multi-year funding.</p> <p>Request island impact assessment to ensure island circumstances are considered in funding allocations.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
Difficulty with covering costs of casual / relief staff. Difficulty with backfilling maternity leave etc.			

Risk Title: 02 – Recruitment / Retention Challenges.

Likelihood.	5.	Impact.	4.	RAG.	Amber.	Current Risk Score.	20.	Target Risk Score.	9.
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Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Some posts remain very difficult to fill. For example, Housing staff, Tenant Participation Staff, Sheltered Housing staff, Papdale Halls, School Catering Staff (particularly cooks), Admin staff, ELC practitioner, some teaching posts, Staff on insecure contracts eg employability staff and Management staff. Recruitment and retention failures result in un-filled posts.</p> <p>Some posts are subject to annual or specific funding from Scottish Government which are subject to a lack of certainty which limits post security and may potentially limit ability to be flexible with use of staffing resource (Employability, Cultural Services, Housing Support for Refugees etc).</p>	<p>Key posts still remain unfilled following another recruitment drive, casual and relief staff unavailable and often unaffordable.</p>	<p>Reduction in service offer, including not offering undersubscribed courses.</p> <p>Inability to meet the Safe Staffing Standard and / or operational standards.</p> <p>Capacity to deliver specific curriculum subjects compromised.</p> <p>Service failure with respect to progress, achievement, and attainment of learners.</p> <p>Lower quality of service as assessed by inspectors and regulators.</p> <p>Increase in workload and pressure on existing teams.</p> <p>Capacity to deliver specialist housing services is compromised.</p> <p>Capacity to deliver full school meals offering across all schools is compromised.</p> <p>Reduction in performance standards across all Services; Reputational impact; Community impact; Concern about closures;</p>	<p>Support access routes (initial training, career change programmes).</p> <p>Provide support to unqualified staff to gain relevant qualifications.</p> <p>Support for ‘grow your own’ staff / mentoring. This may include incentives to encourage staff retention. Alternatives including use of agency supply to be explored inside financial limitations.</p> <p>Use recruitment processes to ensure applicants are aware of opportunities and (if unsuccessful) are open to continue to seek employment with the Council.</p> <p>Continue to use appropriate alternatives including the use of agency staff (where affordable).</p> <p>Seek to challenge position with insecure Scottish Government funding.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Vacancies remain unfilled for an extended period.</p> <p>Limited access to appropriately qualified workforce, hampers recruitment, including the availability of casual and relief staff.</p> <p>Age profile of staffing in some areas leads to increasing risk of loss through retirement, sickness absence etc. Vulnerability due to certain health conditions including mental health. Difficulty with backfilling maternity and ensuring staffing levels required for services registered with Care Inspectorate / Safe Staffing / Operational Standards.</p> <p>Turnover rate rises to unsupportable levels.</p>		<p>Impact on staff morale; Economic impact if people leave the islands.</p> <p>Negative impact upon staff wellbeing and sickness rates.</p> <p>Increased challenge in recruiting quality candidates.</p>	<p>Essential workers housing strategy to assist with recruitment / retention of essential workers.</p>

Risk Title: 03 – Unmet Additional Support Needs.

Likelihood.	5	Impact.	4.	RAG.	Amber.	Current Risk Score.	20.	Target Risk Score.	16.
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Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Demand across service areas is outwith capacity to deliver.</p> <p>Impact of available additional support is limited as it is shared across too many needs.</p>	<p>Increased demand for additional support combined with an increase in the indicators of unmet need.</p>	<p>Appropriate additional support (approaches to learning and teaching, support from personnel, and provision of resources) to meet the needs of learners / residents is not available.</p> <p>Service fails to meet statutory duties.</p> <p>Facilities with or without support insufficient to meet needs and demands.</p> <p>Level of dissatisfaction increases.</p> <p>Number of complaints increases.</p> <p>Resources diverted to manage complaints and if necessary, legal challenge, which exacerbates the vulnerability.</p> <p>Increase in difficulty with recruitment and retention.</p>	<p>Improve and increase efficient and effective use of available resources.</p> <p>Improve and increase staff confidence and capability.</p> <p>Explore and exploit opportunities for collaborative work within and across service and agencies to deliver preventative and early intervention service models.</p> <p>Explore and exploit budget and funding options to increase sufficiency and capacity.</p> <p>Explore staffing needs on a regular basis.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
		Reduction in staff morale. Increase in staff sickness absence levels.	

Risk Title: 04 – IT Systems Capability.

Likelihood.	4.	Impact.	4.	RAG.	Amber.	Current Risk Score.	16.	Target Risk Score.	12.
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Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>IT systems insufficiently developed to meet contemporary needs within Service</p> <p>Insufficient wifi within Council buildings limits the flexible and efficient use of staff and buildings</p> <p>Access to modern apps, services etc limited can't access and communicate with service users in expected ways, future provision of AI (or risks of, not planned for)</p> <p>Manual systems required to be developed or maintained, resulting in unnecessary/inappropriate use of resources.</p> <p>Lack of dedicated resource (both staffing and financial)</p>	<p>The Council fails to develop information management systems that support the current and future needs of the Service appropriately.</p> <p>Education, Leisure and Housing management information systems fail to support the Service appropriately.</p>	<p>Inability to achieve an acceptable level of efficiency (as might be achievable in organisations with more appropriate IT systems).</p> <p>Needs of service users, children/young people/residents, parents/ carers, staff, other stakeholders are not efficiently met.</p> <p>Service ability to provide external bodies with the information they require is impaired.</p> <p>Manual/alternative approaches are costly (diverting resources and time away for core activity) and potentially less 'safe'.</p> <p>Long lead in times for implementing new IT packages means that efficiencies are not realised or become redundant.</p> <p>Inability to communicate with service users to meet expectations of modern service users.</p>	<p>Establish a systems review and forward plan.</p> <p>With colleagues across the Council, explore the possibility of taking a project development approach to improvement.</p> <p>Continue to review effectiveness of SEEMIS and Northgate undertake upgrades as a planned process (includes implementation of direct debit).</p> <p>Concerto continues to be expanded to include all asset management. Ensure provision for homelessness and advice monitoring is developed.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
for systems administration and development		<p>Limit ability for income generation eg through online shop provision etc (staffing is also a limitation).</p> <p>Inability to work with partner agencies in a modern manner eg online housing application / common housing register.</p>	

Risk Title: 05 – Expansion of Childcare Provision/Provision of Non-statutory Provision.

Likelihood.	4	Impact.	3	RAG.	Amber	Current Risk Score.	12	Target Risk Score.	10
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Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Leadership capacity.</p> <p>Insufficient number of high quality and / or qualified practitioners.</p>	<p>Failure to recruit high quality candidates.</p> <p>Failure to recruit high quality candidates.</p>	<p>Lack of leadership in settings.</p> <p>Vacant posts and repeated recruitment.</p> <p>Impact on quality and outcomes for children.</p> <p>Failure to meet National Standard.</p>	<p>Refocus the Leadership pathway to develop leadership capacity within the workforce.</p> <p>Support practitioners to gain BA in Childhood Practice and establish requirement within job description.</p> <p>Implementation of head teacher training to support development of pedagogical leadership capacity.</p> <p>Work with the Orkney College UHI and the Scottish Government ELC Improvement team to plan alternative pathways.</p> <p>Work with Orkney College UHI to review the availability and quality of courses on offer.</p>
<p>Insufficient budget to meet emerging demands of Scottish Government.</p>	<p>New legislation/policy insufficiently funded for the local context (e.g. discretionary deferrals, nursery milk and snack).</p>	<p>Budget overspend.</p>	<p>Lobby Scottish Government so that they take account of the unique island challenges relating to new policies.</p> <p>Ensure Orkney attendance at national meetings / forums to ensure the remote and rural voice is heard.</p> <p>Ensure Elected Members and the Corporate Leadership Team are well briefed prior to national meetings.</p>
<p>Financial model for 0-3 service becomes unviable.</p>	<p>Inability to appoint adequate numbers of practitioners to ensure maximum ratio and maximum income.</p>	<p>Greater than acceptable losses.</p> <p>Service failure in workplaces due to lack of childcare available.</p>	<p>Review and revise parental service contract with consideration for advance payments.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
			Carefully monitor occupancy, staff ratios and fee payment to ensure the setting is running as efficiently as possible.

Risk Title: 06 – Cost of living crisis.

Likelihood.	4.	Impact.	3.	RAG.	Yellow.	Current Risk Score.	12.	Target Risk Score.	4.
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Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Cost of living crisis is likely to exacerbate inability to pay housing costs. Impact of welfare reform continues to impact on ability to pay rent and this has been exacerbated by the initial rollout of Universal Credit (2018/19), Tax Credit transition to Universal Credit (rollout to all remaining groups) during 2024 and the impact of COVID-19.</p> <p>Negative impact on those we work to support across E, L & H.</p> <p>Meal provision not chosen by particular groups such as Primary 6 and 7 and including S3 due to cost.</p>	<p>Reduced income for HRA, increased provision for bad debt, increased homelessness.</p> <p>Increased demand for service and inability to meet need.</p> <p>Meal of lower nutritional value chosen instead.</p>	<p>More rent arrears; Increased impact on HRA; Increased homelessness; Loss of staff; Failure to meet ESSH2; Damage to reputation re arrears figures (previously were very good); Negative impact on rural/isles area. Reduced Income levels from OIC (rents) and the general public. Rise in children living in poverty.</p> <p>Inability to meet the required needs of communities leading to increasing vulnerability and exacerbating future demand for services.</p> <p>Poor learning and poor school experience and need for additional services in future.</p>	<p>HRA Business Plan to continue to be monitored.</p> <p>Issues of affordability are considered in respect of potential impact of annual rental increase.</p> <p>Monitor situation and continue to pursue rent arrears and also to try and prevent other households from falling into arrears by encouraging payment in advance and seeking to identify vulnerable households at as early a stage as possible.</p> <p>Continue to work with the Cost of Living Taskforce and Strategic Childrens Services Planning Group.</p> <p>Issues of affordability are considered in respect of potential projects and costs.</p> <p>Continue to increase awareness of free school meal criteria and awareness of anonymity. New ordering system will ensure complete anonymity between those who pay and those who don't. Information re system being disseminated to all users through user</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
			groups etc. Includes provision of nutritional advice, recipes etc.

Risk Title: 07 – Tertiary Sector (UHI Orkney) Funding and Business Plan.

Likelihood.	4	Impact.	4	RAG.	Amber	Current Risk Score.	16	Target Risk Score.	9
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Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>UHI Orkney fails to achieve zero budget. UHI Orkney requires financial support from OIC to continue to operate in a sustainable manner Curriculum and/or staffing cuts are required to balance budget</p>	<p>Flat/capped funding from Scottish Funding Council in Further Education (FE) sector Challenges in recruiting sufficient Higher Education (HE) students and subsequent shortfall in activity-based funding Demand for student support services significantly above budgeted provision and rising. Signing up to the National Recognition and Procedure Agreement for Scotland's Colleges. Staff costs at 70% of budget; Distant Islands Allowance not funded by Scottish Funding Council; insufficient funds budgeted for pending pay increases. Rising costs (see Risk 2 which is particularly significant). Expenditure beyond budget on staff costs with limited</p>	<p>UHI Orkney cannot manage within its resources. Falling student satisfaction Student Support expenditure above budget and/or needs go unmet meaning vulnerable students are placed at risk, increased risk in course delivery and practice, additional pressure and strain on teaching staff or refusal/inability to accommodate some students. Reputational damage, increased complaints against the College and legal challenge. Staff exposed to unnecessary risk or harm. Increase in staff absence or sickness. Reduction in staff morale. Lack of skills, experience and capacity (see Risk 4 which is particularly significant). Growth potential lost. Reduced curriculum leads to skill shortages in the local economy</p>	<p>Improve and reinforce budget monitoring. Work with budget holders collaboratively to understand the budget as a whole and take collective responsibility for balancing income and expenditure across the college Ensure appropriate budget profiling and timely invoicing to support budget monitoring. Participation of budget holders in budget setting Ensure all grant and teaching income is claimed. Implement common course viability assessments ensuring all teaching staff resource is directed to income-generating activity, or less viable but locally significant delivery is offset by income elsewhere. Business planning undertaken with commercial/research areas of college. Restructure admissions staff team to ensure timely processing of applications to support student numbers. Appoint new Inclusion and Wellbeing Manager to focus on providing student support within budget. Increase corporate training via UHI Orkney for OIC staff training.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
	<p>scope to offset from other budget lines.</p> <p>Commercial income below budget, particularly in Orkney Research Centre for Archaeology (ORCA).</p> <p>Historical rolling forward of budgets without reference to actual costs/likely income</p> <p>Insufficient funding to sustain aging property assets, which are self-financed by UHI Orkney.</p>	<p>and restricts economic growth for Orkney.</p>	<p>Explore provision of student support via schools for Senior Phase.</p> <p>Work with College Employers Scotland to support new funding model for college partnerships with Senior Phase.</p> <p>Appoint Director of Agronomy Institute with a remit to expand research and commercial income.</p> <p>Work with Island Colleagues to request unions to push for Distant Islands Allowance to be incorporated into national pay bargaining for academic staff.</p> <p>Capitalise on the rebranding of the College and strongly promote the strengths of UHI Orkney.</p>

Risk Title: 08 – Significant demand for emergency accommodation and general needs housing.

Likelihood.	5.	Impact.	4.	RAG.	Amber.	Current Risk Score.	20.	Target Risk Score.	9.
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Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Inability to meet demand for emergency accommodation (double the number of households are in temporary accommodation than was the case pre-COVID).</p> <p>Increased housing pressure locally impacting on provision of housing irrespective of tenure.</p>	<p>Current lack of capacity and increased demands due to national policy of rapid rehousing, pressure for housing for essential workers etc.</p> <p>Housing pressures generally mean fewer people can meet their own housing need through private sector tenancies etc.</p>	<p>Significant level of homelessness; Increased risk of OIC being unable to meet its statutory requirements in respect of homelessness; Breaches of unsuitable accommodation order; Out of Orkney placement; Substantial unbudgeted increased financial pressure on OIC; Additional demands placed on smaller staffing base (sourcing accommodation and supporting households in transition); Bad publicity; Recruitment issues exacerbated by housing position.</p>	<p>Keep demand under review.</p> <p>Further review of Temporary Accommodation provision through the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. Likely to require additional temporary accommodation to be sourced which is contrary to the national policy position.</p> <p>Development and delivery of local housing strategy (including homelessness and essential workers) etc.</p>

Risk Title: 09 – Failure to meet Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing 2/ Net Zero.

Likelihood.	3.	Impact.	4.	RAG.	Amber.	Current Risk Score.	12.	Target Risk Score.	4.
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Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
Substantially reliant on external funding. Risk that funding is not available.	Some houses will be below the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing 2.	<p>Government criticism for failing the standard.</p> <p>Failure of Scottish Housing Quality Standard and failure to meet requirements of Scottish Housing Regulator.</p> <p>May have sanctions imposed; Negative impact on inspection results; Adverse effect on tenants; Potential for properties to be damaged as a result of damp, mould, inability to heat etc, Bad publicity leading to increased complaints. Increase in fuel poverty.</p>	<p>Review progress on a regular basis. Develop detailed plan to ensure properties meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing 2 / Net Zero within the designated timescale.</p> <p>Monitor through Annual Return against the Charter in line with requirements of Scottish Housing Regulator</p>

Risk Title: 10 –Buildings and Facilities.

Likelihood.	4.	Impact.	4.	RAG.	Amber.	Current Risk Score.	16.	Target Risk Score.	9.
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Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
Council's financial position leads to reduction of spend on repairs and improvements and gradual decline in quality of buildings	<p>Quality of buildings may decline.</p> <p>Quality of internal structures become unsuitable for current use eg food preparation.</p>	<p>Reduced spend on repairs and maintenance leading to poorer quality buildings; safety of buildings declines; historic buildings will be lost without investment; lack of investment in catering equipment will lead to failure to deliver / breach of legislative requirements; no maintenance provision will lead to loss of availability of play areas; impact on staffing requirements due to change to national practice by key agencies including Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.</p>	<p>Review progress on an annual basis.</p> <p>Work with partners in NSI to make best use of limited resources. Investigate options for additional income / funding to assist with preservation of some buildings / ensure risk assessments are regularly updated / PPE provided / training provided.</p>
Buildings will not meet future accessibility / equality requirements.	Buildings lack flexibility to meet future needs around accessibility and equality requirements.	Failure to meet legislative requirements / service user needs.	Consider suitability of existing buildings and ability to source additional funding.
Lack of office accommodation and service user space.	Insufficient desk and office space for employees and no space to undertake the statutory work of CLD.	<p>Poor working environment which debilitates the prospects and outcomes of staff.</p> <p>Not meeting the occupational standards and health and safety requirements for office space.</p>	<p>Identify additional office space within OIC building.</p> <p>Secure an external functional space for staff and service users to utilise, especially with the loss of The Learning Link building in 2025 due to financial reductions.</p>

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
		No space for working with user groups and vulnerable people keen to benefit from our services support.	

Risk Title: 11 – Island Games.

Likelihood.	4.	Impact.	4.	RAG.	Amber.	Current Risk Score.	16.	Target Risk Score.	9.
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Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Mitigating Actions.
Significant additional challenges of delivering International Island Games during July 2025.	Risks of insufficient accommodation being available; risks of financial calculations being insufficient leading to significant budgetary impact; risk of insufficient suitably trained staffing to deliver requirements; difficulties in ensuring sufficient resources to feed a substantially increased population; difficulties in ensuring sufficient facilities (toilets, showers, temporary furnishings); challenges with staffing provision (also of day to day service provision on top of island games).	Reputational damage; Significant financial impact on existing budgets intended for general service delivery; Inability to provide for basic needs of incoming population; Potentially increased costs; Hygiene etc challenges; Bad publicity leading to increased complaints.	Continue to plan, in partnership with the lead officer for delivering the International Island Games, to progress and review actions, attend meetings of operational group to deliver and seek to deliver responsibilities for this service in accordance with wider Council responsibilities and 2025 Organising Company.



Local Housing Strategy

2024-2029

June 2024

Version Control

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HD STRAT 148	Consultative draft	15/01//2024	Consultative Draft	Anna Evans /Frances Troup
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This document can be made available on request in a range of formats and languages.

1. Purpose of the Local Housing Strategy

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory duty on local authorities to assess the housing needs of all persons in the area, across all housing tenures, and to develop strategies to meet those needs. This requires the production of the Housing Need and Demand Assessment, and Local Housing Strategy (LHS). The Strategy sets out the priorities and actions required for housing supply, housing quality, and access to housing. The Strategy covers the period 2024-2029.

The Orkney Housing Market Partnership encompasses the Council's Member Officer Working Group. It has responsibility for developing and monitoring the LHS implementation on behalf of Orkney Islands Council.

Fundamental to the development of the Local Housing Strategy is the [Orkney Housing Needs and Demand Assessment](#). This was undertaken with oversight from the Housing Market Partnership and was assessed as 'robust and credible' by the Scottish Government's Centre for Housing Market Analysis in October 2023.

Orkney Islands Council as the Strategic Housing Authority

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (Section 5) sets out the specific role of the strategic housing authority. This outlines the strategic housing function of the local authority to ensure that the actions required for housing supply, quality and access to housing are actually delivered. The role set out in the 2001 Act is summarised below:

- Carry out a Housing Needs and Demand Assessment
- Prepare and submit to Scottish Ministers a Local Housing Strategy
- Have regard to the long-term supply of trained construction and maintenance labour in the area
- Set out the authority's policy for exercising its functions and co-ordinating the activities of registered social landlords and others concerned with housing provision and the provision of related services.

Orkney Islands Council approach to fulfilling its housing strategic and enabling role

The Council's policy to fulfil its housing strategic and enabling housing role is:

- Leading and co-ordinating all activity relevant to implementation of the Local Housing Strategy
- Establishing and servicing the Orkney Housing Market Partnership to understand the function of the housing markets across the islands and develop and monitor policies and strategies to meet those needs
- Co-ordinate action across public and private sectors to ensure the strategies and actions plans are completed
- Report to the Housing Market Partnership quarterly and the Council and Scottish Minister annually on progress with the action plans
- Develop a Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) annually for the development of new affordable housing supply through a range of partners
- Ensure implementation of the SHIP programme by working in partnership with Scottish Government More Homes and internal Council services, and co-ordinating the activity of RSLs and Development Trusts, private developers and others involved in new housing supply.

2. The Housing Market Partnership and wider community consultation

The Housing Market Partnership comprises the following partners:

- Orkney Islands Council Elected Members
- Orkney Islands Council - Education, Leisure & Housing; Neighbourhood Services & Infrastructure; Enterprise & Sustainable Regeneration; Strategy, Performance & Business Solutions; Orkney Health & Care.
- Orkney Housing Association (OHAL)
- Orkney College UHI
- The Development Trusts' housing consultant
- Highland & Islands Enterprise (HIE)
- Housebuilders

- NHS Orkney
- Scottish Government More Homes Division
- Scottish Water

The Partnership held 8 meetings between January and December 2023 to oversee production of the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment, and then to develop the Local Housing Strategy. This process involved:

- Consideration of Housing Strategy topic papers and presentations
- Workshops on each topic with a total of 20 break out groups over the development period including a total of 45 stakeholders. Most Partnership members attended multiple workshops.

The Housing Market Partnership's work built on wider community consultation led by the Council in late 2021 and early 2022 – 'Orkney Matters', with findings feeding into the Housing Need and Demand Assessment, and the Local Housing Strategy development. The focus was on community and place with questions asked on what's working, what's not working so well, and what the community would like to improve. The engagement was through survey, online consultation, and art workshops for harder to reach groups. This project involved all Council teams including the Housing Service and partner agencies from Orkney's Community Planning Partnership.

The Local Housing Strategy consultative draft was issued for public consultation with a questionnaire to ask for feedback on the housing vision, priorities, outcomes and actions. The draft was disseminated through proactive media engagement with the established network of organisations and community groups including Community Councils and the Development Trusts. Separate consultation took place with the 10 Development Trusts during the production of the Housing Needs Assessment. The Development Trusts' housing consultant is

also a member of the Housing Market Partnership and there was a presentation to the Development Trusts on the draft Housing Strategy. Findings from the consultation were reported separately (this can be found on the Council's website) and findings have been integrated into this final strategy. A total of 62 responses were received to the consultation, with the main themes from these consultees being:

- The need to reduce empty homes, second and holiday homes – this was the most common theme expressed across all responses.
- Increasing housing supply – including the need for different types and sizes of housing to meet a range of housing needs for individuals, families and starter homes.
- Quality of existing homes – highlighting the need for maintenance, and the need for focus on energy efficiency/fuel poverty especially in Council housing, and the lack of access to tradespeople for people who want to make repairs to their own home.
- Location – consultees argued that housing was needed across different locations/communities with some also noting that new development should be sustainable – in the right place for amenities, travel, and within communities.
- Key workers and local households – many noted the need for housing for key workers (including incoming workers), but with a similar strength of opinion around ensuring local resident's housing needs are met.

The Council has a statutory duty to assess the impact of the Strategy in relation to equalities, environmental impact and islands communities impact. Summaries of the draft impact assessments and screening are provided in Section 10. These impact assessments were finalised following consultation on the Strategy.

3. Orkney's profile and housing context

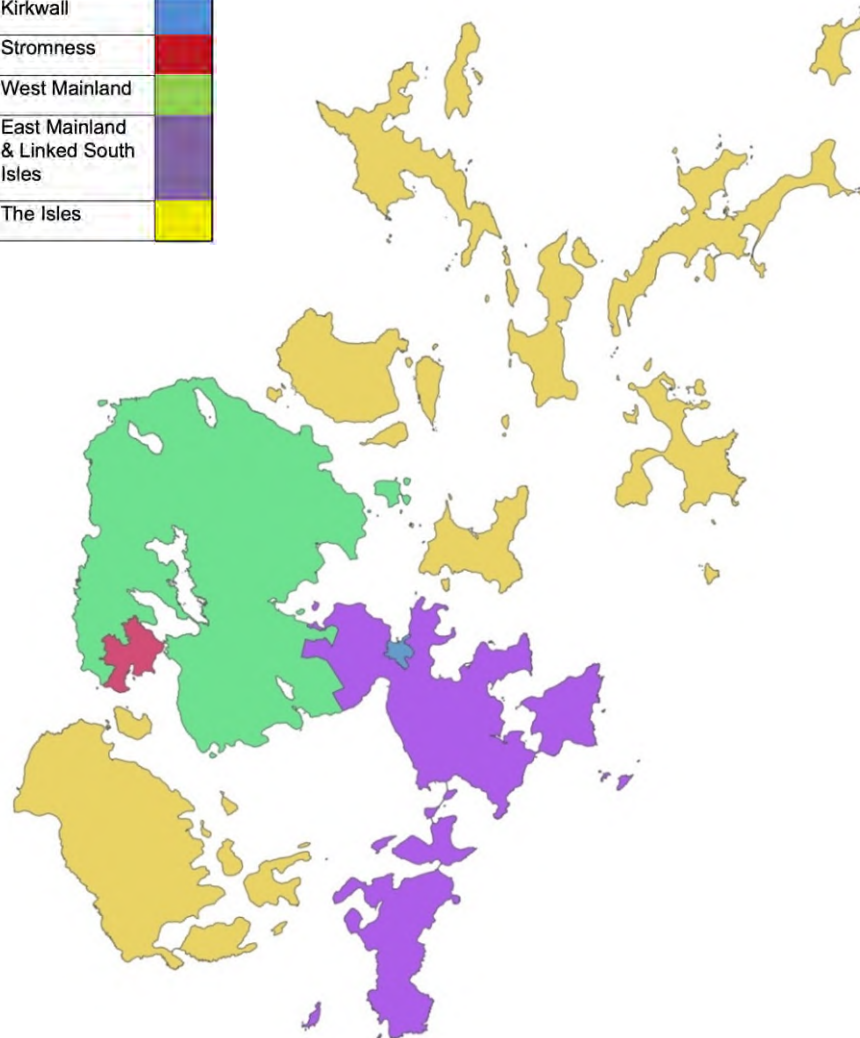
Housing Market Areas

Orkney's housing system comprises five Housing Market Areas which represent reasonably self-contained areas in which people move and purchase housing. The area with the highest population, and the highest need and demand is Kirkwall followed West Mainland, Stromness, East Mainland and the Linked South Isles, and Isles and the Isles.

Kirkwall	Blue
Stromness	Red
West Mainland	Green
East Mainland & Linked South Isles	Purple
The Isles	Yellow

Housing affordability

Average house prices in the Orkney Islands have increased over time with [Orkney's mean house price](#) of £216,638 now slightly higher than the Scottish average of £216,333 (2022/23). Orkney's mean household income is £42,239 (CACI 2022) which is slightly higher than the Scottish average of £41,878. Lower quartile incomes in Orkney are £19,646 (Scotland £18,225) but there is considerable disparity between Housing Market Area with a mean household income of £34,622 on the Isles and lower quartile income of £15,512 per annum – 21% lower than the Orkney average. Lower quartile house prices are generally not affordable at lower quartile incomes while median house prices are more affordable for people on median incomes. Private renting is more affordable than purchasing, but not for lower wage occupations. There is also lack of privately rented property and increased pressure on private rents.



Orkney's housing market drivers

Orkney has had higher than average population growth - since 2001, the population in [Orkney has increased by 17%](#), compared with 8% across Scotland, the second highest growth area in Scotland after Midlothian. This has been driven by high net migration.

There has been almost double the rate of [household growth in Orkney at 29.5%](#) over the last 20 years compared to Scotland's 16%. Orkney's growth is the highest in Scotland over the same period.

It is predicted that population and household growth will continue. Kirkwall and East Mainland is projected to see growth while the North Isles are projected to see a decline in population.

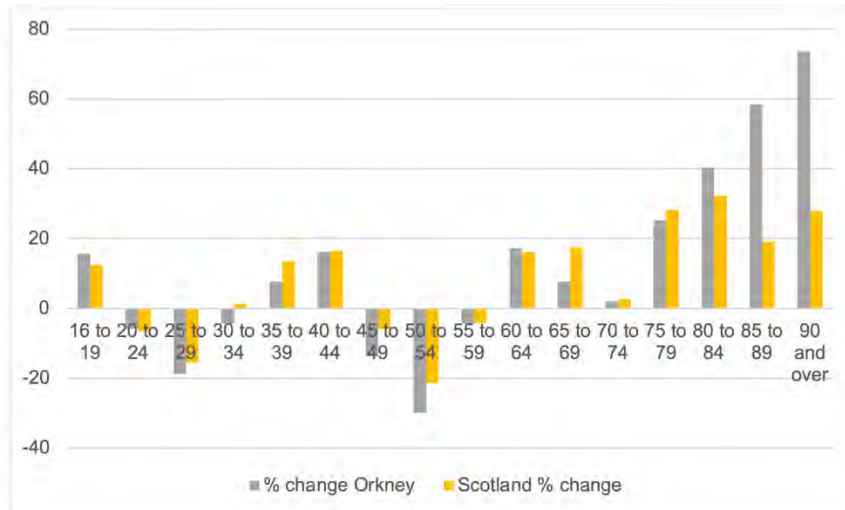
There is evidence of a higher level of net migration in recent years and in addition, significant temporary migration among the 'supplementary' workforce who live on Orkney on a rotational, agency and interim basis. This population is unlikely to be captured in official projections and this temporary population adds further housing pressure. There is evidence of migration being constrained due to the lack of housing for incoming essential permanent workers.

Pressure is evidenced by increasing house prices, and rental prices, and lack of availability of private rented and social rented housing for residents and essential incoming workers. Most recent data from [Registers of Scotland](#) shows Orkney house price growth being double the Scottish average (2021/22 and 2022/23).

Orkney has high levels of employment and low unemployment. There is potential for significant economic growth in Orkney as part of The Islands Growth Deal and from the renewables industry. This has impacts on short-term and longer-term housing needs.

For further information go to the [Orkney Housing Needs and Demand Assessment](#)

Although the Orkney population has increased significantly since 2001, this has been disproportionately greatest among older groups. The figure below shows the projected change in the profile of households by age of reference group between 2018 and 2028, with the greatest expected proportionate growth in the older households. There is also some growth projected in the 16-19 age group and 35-44 years age groups, but a drop in the proportion aged 20-34 years and 50-60 years.



Source: [2018-based Household Projections](#) (Council area profiles)

In future, a significant increase in single and two-person households is projected alongside a reduction in the number of families over time, with the greatest expected proportionate growth in older households.

Housing stock characteristics

Orkney housing stock is predominantly houses, although more flats have been built in recent years in the social sector. Smaller properties are needed to accommodate newly emerging households and 60% of the social rented waiting list needs a 1-bedroom property. The private stock (owned and rented) is significantly larger compared with the social rented stock. The predominance of larger houses has continued recently in new build housing - between 2016 and 2022 while more than half of the properties built in the social rented sector were 1 or 2-

bedroom properties, private sector new-build properties have tended to be larger, with around three-quarters having 3 or more bedrooms and a third having 4 or more bedrooms.

The need for accommodation of all sizes and types (including smaller starter homes and 1- and 2-bedroom flats) has been identified in recent primary research through the Essential Workers Housing Strategy which surveyed essential workers and students.

Stock pressures

There is a low turnover in social renting and high demand in Kirkwall and Stromness in particular, with lower demand on the Isles, but there is a need to sustain these communities by enabling targeted new housing supply. Over Orkney as a whole, the social housing waiting list is more than five times the number of lets available in a year.

Although the population has increased, the number of private rented properties available has not. There is evidence of pressure in private renting and owner occupation through rising prices, with not enough lets available and difficulty accessing ownership.

Empty homes are a significant issue for Orkney - unoccupied exemptions, long-term empty properties and second homes now account for over 1,200 properties (10% of dwellings). This is far higher than Scotland (4%) while rates of properties empty for 12 months+ are more similar to Scotland, at around 1% of the stock. Over the last 7 years 70 empty homes have been brought back into use.

Short-term lets are clustered on the mainland while second homes and long-term empty properties make up a larger proportion of properties on the Isles. Addressing the impact of short-term lets is challenging, with several hundred properties making the short-term let market almost a third of the size of the private rented sector. These lets also contribute to the local economy and individual household income. Home shares (part of the property rather than whole property being let) contribute to the local economy but do not take units out of the residential housing stock.

The high demand for social renting and constrained supply of private rented properties indicates the need for more below-market options.

Estimates of housing need and demand

The [Orkney Housing Need and Demand Assessment](#) (HNDA) shows the quantification of new housing supply requirements over the next 20 years in Orkney. The estimates take into consideration existing need and projections on new household formation under three different scenarios. The resulting estimated requirement for new housing supply over 20 years is:

- Principal scenario (with +0.5% population growth to take account of current levels of net migration) – an estimate of 1,837 additional units required across the whole HNDA period of 20 years, an average of 92 units per year.
- High migration scenario (with +1% additional population growth to support net migration for workforce pressures and potential economic growth) - an estimate of 3,214 additional units required over the 20-year period – 161 units a year.
- Low migration scenario estimates additional need for 562 units – 28 units a year across the whole HNDA period.

The table below sets out the housing estimates by 5 years tranches, and by type of housing required for the principal estimate. This shows that over the whole HNDA period, the split between private housing

and affordable housing is broadly 50:50. The estimates also show that a proportionally higher requirement is needed in the first 5 years to address the current backlog of existing housing need.

Looking at the principal estimates by Housing Market Area this shows:

- In **Kirkwall**, 35 additional units a year on average are needed over 20 years, but with 59 a year in the first 5 years.
- In the **West Mainland**, 26 additional units a year on average are needed over 20 years, but with 22 a year in the first 5 years.
- In **Stromness**, 10 additional units a year on average are needed over 20 years, but with 15 a year in the first 5 years.
- In the **East Mainland**, 19 additional units a year on average are needed over 20 years, but with 23 a year in the first 5 years.
- In **the Isles** – 5 additional units a year on average are needed over 20 years, but with 8 a year in the first 5 years.

It is emphasised that these are estimates. The Housing Market Partnership has considered these estimates and has developed a 10-year Housing Supply Target – a target for new housing supply which can be realistically delivered in practice. This is set at 1,035 homes over 10 years, or 103 per annum. The rationale for the target is discussed in detail in the More Homes section below.

Principal housing estimates (+0.5% population growth)

	Annual 2023 - 2027	Annual 2028 - 2032	Annual 2033 - 2037	Annual 2038 - 2042	Total whole period	Annual whole period
Total	131	76	85	75	1,837	92
Social rent	59	14	17	15	525	26
Below Market	18	16	18	16	346	17
PRS	23	20	22	19	425	21
Buyers	30	26	28	24	541	27

Source: Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2023

4. The strategic context

The Local Housing Strategy must be set within the context of wider relevant national and local priorities which, along with stakeholder consultation, has helped to shape the housing outcomes to be achieved across Orkney's communities over the next 5 years.

National housing strategies and priorities

Housing to 2040

Housing to 2040 is Scotland's long-term national housing strategy which aims to deliver the ambition for everyone to have a safe, good quality and affordable home that meets their needs in the place they want to be. The strategy is set around four key themes:

- More Homes
- Affordability and choice
- Affordable warmth and zero emissions
- Improving the quality of all homes

Housing to 2040 makes a commitment by Scottish Government to increase housing supply by 100,000 affordable homes by 2031/32. At least 70% of these homes will be social rented homes.

New Housing Bill

A new Housing Bill is due to be introduced by the end of the parliamentary year 2023/24 to begin to deliver the actions set out in the consultation a [New Deal for Tenants](#) and some other aspects of Housing to 2040.

Net Zero and Fuel Poverty

To meet Scotland's target date for net zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045 a range of climate change legislation and regulations have been introduced by the Scottish Parliament. The most relevant for housing is the [Heat in Buildings Strategy 2021](#) with the associated consultations issued in November 2023 on Heat in Buildings and the new Social Housing Net Zero Standard. The Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019 set statutory targets for reducing fuel poverty, and introduced a [new definition of fuel poverty](#).

National Planning Framework 4

[National Planning Framework 4 \(NPF4\)](#) sets out Scottish Government's national spatial strategy. It outlines spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments, and national planning policy. NPF4 identifies Orkney Islands as one of six Sustainable Places National developments. These are significant developments of national importance, with Orkney identified as one of the Energy Innovation Developments for renewable energy generation, renewable hydrogen production, infrastructure and shipping, and associated opportunities in the supply chain for fabrication, research and development.

Local strategies and plans

There are Orkney local strategies and plans which underpin and support the development and implementation of the Local Housing Strategy.

The [Orkney Community Plan 2023-2030](#) incorporates the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan. The Plan describes what the members of the [Orkney Partnership](#) aim to achieve by working together to improve outcomes for individuals, families, and communities, and especially to combat inequality and prevent disadvantage. The current Community Plan is looking further ahead than the usual 5-year Plan as the Partnership's ambition is to see Orkney reach net zero by 2030, fifteen years ahead of the national 2045 target for Scotland. Orkney has a unique opportunity to capitalise on the rapid expansion of the green and blue economies, but to do so will require significant new infrastructure and especially more housing. The Community Plan strategic priorities are listed below, with outcomes highlighted that relate directly to housing:

- Cost of Living – co-ordinating an agile response to the cost of living. Outcomes relate to addressing child poverty, food dignity and fuel poverty.
- Sustainable Development – exploiting the synergy between two linked themes: development of a wellbeing economy and combatting the climate emergency. Outcomes include those relating to climate action and achieving net-zero emissions in Orkney by 2030.

- Local Equality – improving the viability of Orkney’s most disadvantaged communities by levelling up the availability of services, facilities and opportunities. Outcomes include improvement of population and demographic balance, and improvement in the outcomes for Orkney’s most disadvantaged communities.

The [Council Plan 2023-28](#) and the accompanying Delivery Plan describes the Council’s overarching projects, services and policies that will help the Council deliver its priorities and achieve positive outcomes for Orkney. The Council Plan has an overall theme – ‘Transforming our Council’ – to provide the foundations for staff to deliver outstanding customer service and performance.



The Council Plan three key priority themes are: Growing our Economy; Strengthening our communities; and Developing our Infrastructure.

These priorities are underpinned by the following core principles:

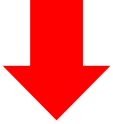




- Protecting our environment and combating climate change.
- Equality, fairness, and inclusion, particularly for vulnerable and remote communities like the ferry-linked isles
- Sustainable and accessible services for all.
- Community wellbeing and mental health.
- Community wealth building for future generations.



There are other local strategies and plans of relevance to the Local Housing Strategy. Implementation of the LHS will ensure there is connection across different workstreams, partner organisations and services to ensure outcomes are achieved. The key local strategies and plans relevant to the implementation of the Local Housing Strategy are:

- [Council Plan 2023-28](#)
- [Council Delivery Plan 2023-2028](#)
- Orkney Essential Workers Housing Strategy 2023
- [Orkney Community Plan 2023-2030](#)
- [Orkney Child Poverty Strategy 2022-2026](#)
- [Orkney Local Development Plan 2017-2022](#) (under review)
- Orkney Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2023-2028
- [Orkney Islands Council Empty Homes Strategy 2018-2023](#)
- [Orkney Islands Council Carbon Management Programme 2016-2026](#)
- [Orkney Sustainable Energy Strategy 2017-2025](#)
- [Strategic Commissioning Implementation Plan](#)
- [Orkney Islands Council Homelessness Strategy](#)
- Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan

What has been achieved since the last Local Housing Strategy?

The previous Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022 set out 7 different priorities. The table below shows these priorities, and the overall progress made against key targets within that plan. The table includes red, amber and green arrows with red denoting lack of progress or deterioration of the position since the last strategy, amber means no change, and green shows positive progress. The detailed sections in this new Housing Strategy including More Homes; Quality Warm Homes; and Access and Choice of Housing for All set out the current position in relation to meeting the statutory requirements, and the work that is now required to make further progress.

Priority	Key targets and what has been delivered	Progress
Ensuring adequate supply of houses	<p>All new build target 5-year requirement – 583 Actual all new supply built 2018/19-2022/23 – 428 Affordable homes projected 5-year requirement – 448 Actual affordable homes delivered 2018/19-2022/23 – 110 The new Local Housing Strategy has placed a renewed emphasis on increasing housing supply, including provision for a range of demand groups and all Orkney communities.</p>	
Preventing and alleviating homelessness	<p>Number of homeless applications 2018/19 – 134 Number of homeless applications 2022/23 – 135 Number of people living in temporary accommodation March 2018 – 28 households Number of people living in temporary accommodation March 2023 – 72 households It is expected that with the increased focus on new supply in the new strategy should help decrease the number of households living in temporary accommodation.</p>	 
Older People	<p>Orkney Housing Association has continued to build amenity housing and now has a total of 200 amenity standard homes. Age Scotland was commissioned in 2019 to capture information on the housing aspirations and preferences of older people in Orkney. Different models of providing housing and related services for older people have been examined including for ‘Care for Sanday’ by the Stronsay Development Trust, and Hope Co-housing cohousing project for older people within St Margaret’s Hope. More work is required to implement these projects. There has been lack of progress on pursuing technological solutions and improved care and support options for people with dementia and older people living on the Isles.</p>	 

Priority	Key targets and what has been delivered	Progress
<p>Housing and support for people with particular needs</p>	<p>The core and cluster new housing development at Carness was completed in 2023 which is now home for 4 people with learning disabilities.</p> <p>The housing and support needs of young people who have left care are considered through regular joint meetings between housing and social work teams.</p> <p>Information and advice about the Care and Repair scheme for disabled adaptations is widely disseminated.</p> <p>A restructure has been implemented to provide generic housing support, support for refugee resettlement and sheltered housing including two registered care inspectorate support services.</p> <p>The Council's housing letting policy for people with particular needs to ensure appropriate joint working is in place.</p> <p>The need for supported accommodation for people with mental health problems is still unmet need and is a continued requirement in the new housing strategy.</p> <p>The possibility of implementing a housing first model for young people has been considered and rejected due to lack of resources.</p>	
<p>Improving standards in the private sector</p>	<p>The Scheme of Assistance through Orkney Care and Repair service has been funded over the strategy period and the contract is under review in 2023/24.</p> <p>The action to undertake a local house condition survey was not undertaken with Scottish House Condition survey identified as a statistically robust published alternative.</p> <p>70 empty homes have been brought back into use over the last 7 years.</p> <p>Funding has increased through Energy Efficient Scotland: Area-based scheme (EES:ABS) from £785,102 in 2015 to over £1.7million claimed in 2022/23 to install energy efficiency improvements in private sector housing. Since 2015 a total 1292 energy improvements have been completed across 1012 households.</p> <p>Action required to advise, support and ensure enforcement in the private rented sector landlords have not been implemented to the extent required and are included in this new strategy as an action to review the approach and resources available for this statutory function.</p>	

Priority	Key targets and what has been delivered	Progress
Reducing fuel poverty and increasing energy efficiency	<p>Council stock meeting current Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing Standard - 96%</p> <p>Housing association stock meeting current Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing – 98.5%.</p> <p>Both social landlords are now taking a fabric first approach and are implementing improvements to move to the new Social Housing Net Zero approach in the context of Orkney Net Zero 2030 policy target.</p> <p>Energy efficiency in the private sector has improved through EES:ABS scheme (as above).</p> <p>Orkney Fuel Poverty Strategy was put in place in 2017 but actions required to eliminate fuel poverty, prioritising the most vulnerable households have not been fully progressed. Renewed focus and action is included in this new strategy.</p>	
Sustaining Orkney's communities	<p>The Islands Development Trusts have been funded through the Rural and Islands Housing Fund to develop new housing. Over the last 5 years 9 homes have been completed, 5 are under development and 13 are at feasibility stage.</p> <p>The Essential Workers research and housing strategy which includes the housing needs of students has been completed for approval in February 2024 for implementation during the new Strategy period.</p> <p>Discussions commenced in 2023 with infrastructure developers on their temporary accommodation requirements and to develop plans which minimise risks for the existing housing system and to maximise the housing legacy for the long term.</p>	

5. Orkney's housing vision, housing priorities and outcomes

Vision

The Housing Market Partnership decided on the following vision for the housing strategy:

Orkney has a wide range of good quality, sustainable homes that are affordable and meet the current and future needs of individuals, families and local communities across the Orkney Islands.

Strategic housing priorities

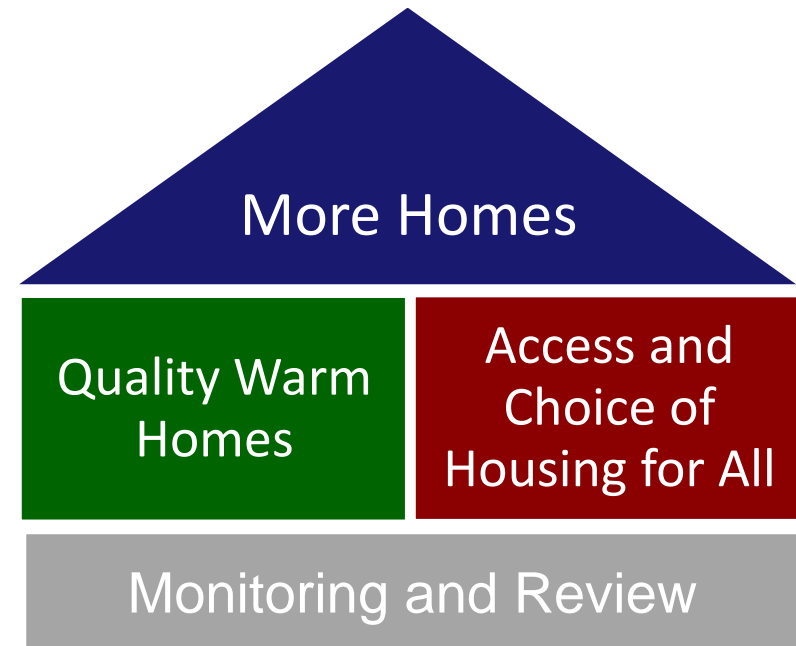
Orkney's three housing priorities over the next five years are:

- More Homes
- Quality Warm Homes
- Access and Choice of Housing for all.

These housing priorities all interlink with the Orkney Community Plan priorities of Cost of Living, Sustainable Development and Local Equality, and the Council Plan's priorities of Growing our economy; Strengthening our communities; and Developing our infrastructure.

The Local Housing Strategy implementation is underpinned by Orkney Islands Council's values of: People, Unity, Trust, Ownership and Creativity.

In addition, the Housing Market Partnership discussions showed that implementing this ambitious housing strategy needs commitment to the principles of enabling; partnership working and being driven by results.



Outcomes

The outcomes to be achieved under each housing priority are listed below.

Housing priorities and outcomes

Priority	Outcomes
More Homes	More homes are supplied for rent or to buy across Orkney Islands communities.
	The capacity to deliver more affordable homes is increased by attracting new housing providers to Orkney, and/or by creating new supply mechanisms.
	Housing supply processes are more efficient within the Council, and across partners to enable more supply.
	Empty homes are brought back into use for Orkney residents and essential incoming workers.
	The number of Short-Term lets (STLs) and second homes are monitored to understand the impact on Orkney's housing system, and where necessary the number of STLs are controlled.
Quality, Warm Homes	The quality and energy efficiency of social housing is improved through the use of up-to-date technology, and construction methods.
	The quality and energy efficiency of existing private housing is improved through information, advice and grant support.
	Carbon emissions across all the housing stock are reduced under a just transition to net zero.
	Fuel poverty in Orkney is reduced.
	The design of new homes optimises the principles of good placemaking and sustainability.
Access and Choice of Housing for All	Homelessness is prevented as far as possible, and when it does occur, the time spent homeless is kept to a minimum.
	Access to housing and choice of housing is improved for all.
	People live independently and safely at home or in a homely setting in their own community, with access to support when they need it.
Monitoring and review	The local Housing Strategy implementation is monitored, and changing drivers in the housing system (demographic, economic and housing market factors) are understood.

6. More Homes

The Local Housing Strategy outlines how current and future housing need and demand is to be met across all housing tenures by building more homes. The Strategy is underpinned by the principles of good placemaking so that mixed communities are created that provide housing choice, high quality and sustainable homes that are in the right location, and are of the right tenure, type and size.

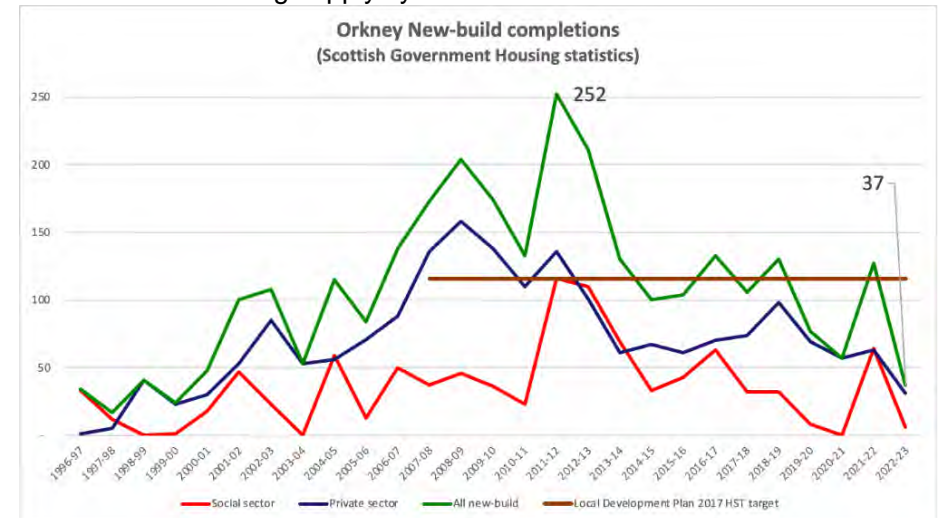
Strategic priority and outcomes

More Homes
More homes are supplied for rent or to buy across Orkney Islands' communities.
The capacity to deliver more affordable homes is increased by attracting new housing providers to Orkney, and/or by creating new supply mechanisms.
Housing supply processes are more efficient within the Council, and across partners to enable more supply.
Empty homes are brought back into use for Orkney residents and essential incoming workers.
The number of Short-Term lets (STLs) and second homes are monitored to understand the impact on Orkney's housing system, and where necessary the number of STLs are controlled.

Housing Supply Target

The Housing Supply Target (HST) is the short and medium-term target for new housing supply across tenure. The Housing Market Partnership (HMP) considered this at its August 2023 meeting, underpinned by the evidence in the [Housing Need and Demand Assessment](#) (HNDA). While the HNDA sets out the estimated needs, the HST sets a target of what is likely to be delivered in practice. The HMP is aware of the following constraints and opportunities for new housing supply in Orkney:

- Socio-economic factors – high population growth driven by net migration, and the need to attract additional workforce to supplement the existing resident ageing workforce in the private and public sectors. There is likely to be significant local economic growth driven by the renewables sector over the next 10 years.
- New housing completion rates – over the last 10 years there has been an average of 100 new build completions in Orkney, but rates have recently fallen to a 20-year low of 37 total new build in 2022/23. At the same time there has been an underspend of the available Affordable Housing Supply resources. The causes include the economic environment and local housing supply system barriers.
- Capacity within the construction sector - this is currently constrained but local contractors argue that a longer-term affordable housing pipeline is required so that they can have confidence to build up their businesses and workforce to respond to requirements.
- Availability of financial and human resources – the Council and Orkney Housing Association are constrained in the amount of new social housing they can supply – less than 35 per annum in total across both providers. There is no current Mid-Market rent supplier on mainland Orkney, although the outer islands Development Trusts supply affordable rented housing. There is also workforce constraint across the housing supply system.



- Other constraints – National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) has introduced a change in policy which strengthens the previous approach to flood risk and now requires an allowance for the effects of climate change and sea level rise. The Orkney Flood Authority are in discussions with SEPA about this new requirement, and there is cautious optimism that agreement can be reached between partners that existing modelling data incorporating climate change uplifts can be used for determining development consents in the short term, with new modelling data used to inform decisions as it becomes available.
- Housing land supply – there is a good supply of housing land. The Minimum All-Tenure Housing Land Requirement (MATHLR) is sufficient for 1,600 homes and is broadly in line with the HNDA High scenario estimate for 10 years of 1,645 homes. The review of the Local Development Plan will ensure there is appropriate level of housing land allocated overall, and by Housing Market Area.
- Considering all these factors the Housing Market Partnership recommended the Orkney Housing Supply Target of:
 - 10 years - 1,035
 - 5 years - 518
 - Annually - 103 new homes

Tenure, house size and type

Based on current supply conditions, it is likely that achievement of the new housing supply target will be skewed towards years 4-10 of the next 10-year period from 2024. This is due to the lack of current pipeline but plans and systems will be put in place to ensure a longer-term programme and pipeline is achieved through a More Homes Programme delivery approach.

The HNDA showed that housing need and demand was broadly split 50:50 affordable and private housing. Some of the private demand was shown for private rented housing but the current housing development cost to value ratio on Orkney means that new build for unsubsidised private rent is unlikely to happen. More supply for Mid-Market (MMR) rented housing will be needed to meet demand, making the balance of supply broadly 60:40 affordable to private housing. Affordable housing includes social rent, MMR and low-cost home ownership. The split of

new housing supply by tenure is shown below, with private rented housing new supply coming through empty homes being brought back into use for private let.

Housing Supply Target by tenure

	% split	5-year provision	10-year provision
Social rent	35%	183	365
Below Market (Mid Market Rent)	21%	110	220
Private rented housing	3%	15	30
Buyers	41%	210	420
Total		518	1035

The HNDA showed that the majority of housing demand is focused on Kirkwall, followed by Stromness, the West mainland, the East mainland and the Isles. The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) includes a range of short, medium and long term projects to meet need and demand across these different Housing Market Areas. The SHIP is reviewed annually.

The projected housing estimates include the need and demand from current residents and people moving into Orkney, based on recent migration trends. The Essential Workers Strategy showed strong demand from households that have recently moved to Orkney for work or study (keyworkers, other essential workers across the private and public sectors, and students). They mainly demand private, or MMR rented housing, with demand also for home ownership. Orkney's housing supply is currently dominated by 3-bedroom houses, with a lack of supply of smaller houses, flats, starter homes, and rented housing which can be used as permanent or 'transitory' shorter-term housing (say 6-12 months). The need for transitory and short-term housing is due to the increasing use of interim and agency staff across the public sector due to workforce pressure. The availability of housing for essential incoming workers will be increased by leasing from the existing private rented sector, acquiring homes from developers off the shelf, and where feasible re-purposing existing non-housing property.

The strategy will also ensure that all new homes will be built with a mix of housing type, size, and tenure, an objective that will be reinforced through the new Local Development Plan.

The Essential Workers Housing Strategy outlines the requirement for temporary accommodation for construction workers involved in the infrastructure developments planned over the next decade in Orkney. It is estimated that approximately 1,500 construction workers will be working on Orkney over that period, starting with the SSEN electricity interconnector in 2024 (with planning consent), then the Harbour Masterplan developments and West and East of Orkney offshore windfarms (all still to obtain planning consent). The accommodation requirements for these developments will be provided by the private developers, but the Council will work with these developers to ensure the impact on the existing pressured housing market is minimised, and the legacy for permanent new housing supply is maximised. This legacy will include unlocking and servicing sites for new housing development, bringing empty homes back into use, and contributing to the provision of additional permanent homes.

Requirement for more affordable housing suppliers

The HST sets out the requirement for 365 new social rent and 220 MMR properties over the next ten years. Following a recent independent review of the Council's Housing Revenue Account, this showed constrained financial capacity for new build social housing to be around 14-15 per annum. OHAL's Business Plan capacity is for 20 new build per annum leaving a combined capacity of 35 social housing per annum against the requirement of 365 over 10 years. This leaves no room for slippage or challenge to the respective Business Plans and means there is a requirement for more capacity through additional suppliers for new social housing provision, and MMR housing in Orkney. During this strategy period existing affordable housing suppliers working in Scotland with a strong track record and financial capacity will be invited to start developing in Orkney.

Efficiency and effectiveness in the new housing supply system

The work of the Housing Market Partnership has identified challenges in the local organisational and regulatory landscape which can make the approval and procurement of new affordable housing supply inefficient. The Partnership discussed the need to cut down bureaucracy through introducing streamlined processes, designing out cost, and building workforce capacity. A range of solutions were identified which are embedded in the Housing Strategy action plan:

- Creating a more certain and longer-term pipeline of projects by developing the Council's strategic and enabling role through a proactive More Homes Programme – overall co-ordination to enable strategic housing site development including land assembly, infrastructure first, and placemaking approaches.
- Taking a partnership and scale approach to commissioning and procuring mixed tenure housing sites to ensure greater efficiency, with one partner leading and transferring ownership to different landlords/owners at completion.
- Having design led solutions to maximise the potential of land in terms of density and infrastructure; and where possible to design out costs.
- For the review of the Local Development Plan to consider increased development density within urban location and to provide infrastructure and design information in the new Local Development Plan. This is in line with National Planning Framework 4.
- Adopting a housing programme approach for governance for the Council's Capital Project Appraisal process – starting with the Strategic Housing Investment Plan forming the Capital Planning and Asset Management Approval Stage.
- Where there is lack of capacity and relevant skills locally due to workforce constraint, draw more widely from the supply chain across Scotland, including design teams, contractors and exploring the potential for modular build.

Placemaking

The More Homes priority is underpinned by the principles of good placemaking to create sustainable new communities.

Within the Council's Planning Service, the Place principle is a key element in review of the Local Development Plan.

Examples of embedding the Place principle include the development of two community local place plans in Kirkwall and Stromness. More recently there has been work supporting the community of Dounby to develop a Local Place Plan which is currently in draft form. The result of the place-based work is that it has resulted in attracting external funding to develop enhanced facilities that will benefit the community and tourists. In addition, in order to ensure development delivers good places there have been a number of development briefs prepared for allocated sites in the [Local Development Plan](#). These seek to take a place-based approach engaging with a variety of agencies and bodies in their preparation and provide a clear guide to developers and the community on the expectations and requirements that should be delivered as part of any development coming forward on that site.

In late 2021 and early 2022, the Council undertook a community consultation 'Orkney Matters' with the focus on community and place; questions asked what's working, what's not working so well and what would the community like to improve. The engagement was through survey, online consultation and art workshops for harder to reach groups. This project involved all Council teams including the Housing Service and partner agencies from Orkney's Community Planning Partnership.

In spring /summer 2024, the Council will hold further community consultation under the banner of "Call for Ideas" where the Service will also be inviting communities to complete Local Place Plans.

The current Local Development Plan embeds the Town Centre First principle into the spatial strategy with town centre areas identified within Kirkwall and Stromness. Development will be supported within Kirkwall and Stromness town centres to support their vibrancy, vitality and viability including residential uses. For retail, commercial, leisure, office, community, and cultural facilities that attract significant footfall, a

town centre first principle applies, with the order of preference for potential alternative sites established through a sequential approach: 1 - Town Centres 2 - Edge of Town Centres 3 – Within Settlement Boundaries 4 – Outwith Settlement Boundaries. There is a degree of flexibility allowed to ensure that community, education and healthcare uses are located where they are easily accessible to the communities that they are intended to serve. The existing town centres are mixed use locations with significant residential development in flats and houses in and around retail and services. Through the review of the Local Development Plan, the Council is investigating the Scottish Government's principles in terms of Local Living for a rural island authority.

Placemaking is a key element of the national planning system and will be taken forward in the review of the Local Development Plan. In addition and with the Housing Service; the Planning Service will investigate how to ensure new homes are primary residents only.

Empty Homes and Short-term lets

This Housing Strategy places equal priority on action relating to empty homes and STLs, as it does ensuring the delivery of new housing supply.

The [Housing Need and Demand Assessment](#) sets out the position in relation to empty homes and Short-term lets in Orkney. Orkney has a very high number of empty properties (10% of all dwellings, although a much lower proportion - 1.3% - have been long term empty homes for more than 12 months).

The Council employs an Empty Homes Officer with a specific remit to implement the Council's [Empty Homes Strategy](#) and to work with the owners of empty properties to assist through advice and information. This has been instrumental in bringing 70 homes back into use since 2016/17 (around 10 per annum). The Essential Workers Housing Strategy proposes the creation of an Empty Homes Local Authority Grant through the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 to encourage more homes to be brought back into use, with these homes to be focused on letting for essential workers through statutory and additional local conditions. The Council will consider the options for introducing Compulsory Purchase Orders, once the Scottish Government has

concluded steps for reform to make the system fairer, clearer and faster for all parties. Council tax proceeds from empty homes will continue to be used to fund Empty Homes Strategy implementation.

Research undertaken for the HNDA showed there were 409 Short-term lets (STLs) in Orkney in May 2023. Of these, it was estimated that there were 298 properties that were entire homes and had the potential to contribute to the stock of residential homes if they were not STLs. As of September 2023 the Council's licensing scheme had received 300 applications from STLs and the Council was checking these. STLs present considerable risk to pressured housing systems, and consultation through Orkney Matters, and through the consultation undertaken for this housing strategy shows that reducing the number of empty homes and Short-term lets in Orkney is a priority for Orkney residents. STLs also present opportunities for the tourism industry which is important for the Orkney Islands economy. Data from Airdna shows rental revenue from STLs in Orkney of over £450,000 in August 2019 for entire home rentals and over £120,000 for private room home-shares. This excludes the associated revenue for the tourism industry from people staying the STLs. However, the Orkney economy has reduced since 2012 when measured by Gross Value Added per head, although there has been a slight increase since 2017 ([ONS, see HNDA 2023](#)).

Over the Local Housing Strategy period the Council will monitor the number of STLs in the area, and consider the costs and benefits of STLs to the local economy and sustainability of Orkney's different communities. It will also consider how STLs Control Areas are being implemented across other areas in Scotland and consider the introduction of STLs control in areas where there needs to be a rebalancing of housing for residents and accommodation for tourists. This process will be managed through the Local Development Plan review.

Apart from STLs Control Areas there are other mechanisms to safeguard residential property for primary residency. These include:

- Use of Scottish Government Housing Grant for housing for sale e.g. through Partnership Regeneration Support grant which includes a title burden for primary residency – this is currently used in Orkney.

- Proactively using the Council's existing [Rural Housing Body](#) status so that any residential property built on Council land (including converted property), regardless of the final owner of the property, includes a title burden for primary residency – this is not currently used and will be more proactively used for this purpose during this Strategy period.
- Housing policies in the Local Development Plan which is currently under review – this will be explored through the LDP review process.

Acquisitions

The Scottish Government has reaffirmed its commitment to fund acquisitions through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme set out in the [National Acquisitions Programme](#). The type acquisitions that can be funded are:

- Open market purchases with vacant possession
- Off market purchases with vacant possession
- Purchases where an owner occupier cannot afford the required maintenance or refurbishment of their home and therefore wishes to sell and remain in the home as a tenant in the social rented sector
- 'Off the shelf' purchases from developers.

The Council has bought 7 properties for social rent in this way over the last 5 years and has improved them to the relevant social housing condition standards. The Orkney Strategic Housing Investment Plan includes resources to enable such acquisitions to happen, whether for social rent or Mid-Market Rent.

Self-Build

Self-build and custom build housing is defined as homes built or commissioned by individuals or groups of individuals for their own use. Orkney Council's Building Control figures show that since 2016, 50% of new supply has been one property developments, many of which will be commissioned by the individual owner.

Much of the focus of the Housing Strategy More Homes programme will be focused on providing new supply by creating a longer pipeline of

volume housing developments, and opportunities will be created for serviced sites within some of these developments.

The Council currently offers information online about self build housing including how to get details included on the self build register online [Self-Build List \(orkney.gov.uk\)](https://www.orkney.gov.uk/self-build-list) and asking people to submit their details if they wish to be added to the self build list. The Council will use the evidence from the self build register and publish it when the Council produces its Evidence Base report for the review of the Local Development Plan. The Council will also use the self build register as a source of evidence to inform our proposals and policies as part of the review of the Local Development Plan and promote the opportunity for households to put their name on the self build register as part of the early engagement with the public and stakeholders on the local development plan review.

Delivery action plan

The action plan below sets out the specific actions and targets for the More Homes priority. The key actions outlined in the action plan are around the following key areas:

- Enabling the delivery of more homes.
- Attracting new affordable housing suppliers to Orkney.
- Implementing the Essential Workers Housing Strategy.
- Working with infrastructure developers to develop construction worker accommodation strategies which minimise impact on the current pressured system and maximise legacy for Orkney's long term housing situation.
- Making housing supply processes in Orkney more efficient.
- Ensuring empty homes are brought back into use.
- Monitor the number and impact of Short-term lets on the housing system and explore and implement mechanisms to safeguard residential property for primary residency.

7. Quality, Warm Homes

The Local Housing Strategy must set out the current condition of Orkney’s housing stock, and plans and policies on how improvements in housing condition and energy efficiency will be achieved. It also sets out Orkney’s fuel poverty strategy – providing evidence in relation to fuel poverty and how this is to be addressed, and the housing contribution to achieve Orkney’s ambitious net zero target by 2030.

Strategic priority and outcomes

Quality, Warm Homes
The quality and energy efficiency of existing social housing is improved.
The quality and energy efficiency of existing private housing is improved.
Carbon emissions across all the housing stock are reduced.
Fuel poverty in Orkney is reduced.
The design of new homes optimises the principles of good placemaking and sustainability.

Condition standards and policy context

The standards for house condition, energy efficiency and fuel poverty in Scotland are as follows:

[Building Regulations](#) – new and refurbished domestic dwellings, and currently affordable housing funded through Scottish Government must meet Housing for Varying Needs standard. This is changing, and government recently consulted on the new [Scottish Accessible Homes Standard](#).

[National Planning Framework 4 \(NPF4\)](#) – set out planning policy and forms part of Orkney’s Local Development Plan.

[Tolerable Standard](#) – basic level of repair for all housing and the Council can enforce owners to bring property up to this Standard.

[Scottish Housing Quality Standard](#) – SHQS is used to measure quality of the social rented housing but is also used as a quality measure across housing tenure in the Scottish House Condition Survey.

[Repairing Standard](#) – the minimum standard for private rented housing, recently amended with new measures to be in place by 1st March 2024.

[Climate Change \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#) – the statutory framework to meet net zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045.

[New Build Heat Standard](#) – From 1st April 2024 building regulations will change to prevent the use of direct emission heating systems in new buildings, and some conversions.

[Energy Efficiency Standard in Social Housing](#) – EESSH sets out energy efficiency requirements for the social rented sector.

[Heat in Buildings Strategy 2021](#) – the Scottish Government’s vision for achieving net zero in Scotland’s building.

[Heat in Buildings Bill 2023: consultation](#) – this sets out the government’s proposals to make new laws around the energy efficiency of homes and buildings and the way these buildings are heated. The draft Heat in Buildings Bill and Standard will:

- Prohibit the use of polluting heating from 2045 in all buildings.
- In owner occupied homes: require homes to meet a minimum energy efficiency standard by the end of 2033.
- In private rented homes: require landlords to meet a minimum energy efficiency standard by the end of 2028. The proposal for landlords to meet the standard earlier is to protect tenants against fuel poverty.

The proposed energy efficiency standard is a list of measures comprising:

- 270 mm loft insulation;
- cavity wall insulation (CWI);
- draught-proofing;
- heating controls;
- 80 mm hot water cylinder insulation;
- Suspended floor insulation.

At the same time the [Social Housing Net Zero Standard](#) (SHNZ) was proposed with consultation for both between November 2023 to March 2024, to be implemented from 2025.

[Heat Networks](#) – all local authorities are required to develop their own Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) including the identification of zones for Heat Networks. More proposals are put forward in the Heat in Building 2023 consultation.

[Fuel Poverty](#) – the Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019 sets statutory targets for reducing fuel poverty, introduces a [new definition of fuel poverty](#) which aligns fuel poverty more closely with relative income poverty. It requires local authorities to identify how fuel poverty will be tackled at a local level and set out the nature and scale of fuel poverty in their area, and the particular causes of this fuel poverty within their Local Housing Strategy.

Orkney's local plans in relation to Climate Change and energy efficiency are:

The [Orkney Partnership](#) has set an ambitious policy target of Net Zero emissions in Orkney by 2030. The aim is to exploit the synergy between two linked priorities: developing an economy that serves the needs of Orkney's population and combatting the climate emergency.

[Orkney's Sustainable Energy Strategy](#) and [Orkney's Carbon Management Plan](#) are both currently under review as set out in the [Orkney Island Council Delivery Plan](#) with these new strategies to be approved in 2023/24 and 2024/25. These will include the Council's Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy. These plans will reflect the power in Orkney's natural resources and how the islands have pioneered the development of renewable energy. By 2013, Orkney became a net exporter of electricity, producing 103% of its total electrical needs from renewable sources, and in 2020 this rose to 128%. Dramatic expansion in Orkney's renewable energy landscape is predicted over the next 10 years through the significant infrastructure development including a new electricity interconnector with construction starting in 2024 which will increase Orkney's export capacity, and the Harbour Masterplan which will unlock the development of the East and West Orkney offshore windfarms. At the same time, Orkney has one of the highest rates of fuel poverty in

Scotland and one of the key actions for this Housing Strategy is to ensure just transition to make sure Orkney residents benefit from its renewable production, to reduce fuel poverty and to move to net zero by 2030.

[Orkney's Child Poverty Strategy](#) - provides a framework for joint planning and action to meet immediate need and to address the longer-term prevention of child poverty in Orkney. The Child Poverty includes an action in relation to energy efficiency of new and existing housing, and the [Cost of Living Task Force](#) has actions to mitigate the impact of energy price rises.

House condition in Orkney

The [Orkney Housing Need and Demand Assessment](#) sets out analysis of house condition in Orkney, based on the Scottish House Condition Survey local authority analysis (SHCS 2017-2019):

- 2% of properties in Orkney are Below Tolerable Standard (BTS, the same as Scotland overall). 3% owner-occupied dwellings are BTS, while there are no social rented dwellings which are BTS.
- 5% of dwellings show extensive disrepair to critical elements compared with 1% of dwellings across Scotland. None of these properties were social rented dwellings.
- 52% of all dwellings in Orkney are estimated to fail the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) - 55% of owner-occupied dwellings and 30% of social rented dwellings. This is a higher rate than in Scotland overall where 41% of dwellings are estimated to fail the standard.
- Findings in the SCHS for the private rented sector (PRS) are suppressed due to low numbers. Across Scotland, 3% of the PRS is BTS, 52% shows extensive disrepair and 52% fails the SHQS. So if Orkney is consistent with Scotland overall on housing quality, we would expect a greater proportion of the PRS to fail these standards compared to social rented and owner occupied housing.

Social housing

Orkney Islands Council housing

The latest published Annual Return on the Charter 2022/23 showed achievement of SHQS and EESSH in the social rented stock in

Orkney. 53% of Orkney Islands Council housing stock did not meet SHQS compared with 79% of the social rented stock across Scotland. This drop to 53% from 82% the previous year was due to missing Electrical Installation Condition Reports. Remedial works were quickly instigated, and it is anticipated that performance will be improved for 2023/24.

96% of the Council stock met the current EESSH energy efficiency standard. There were 20 council properties failing EESSH:

- 9 properties required an update of their EPC following works to improve insulation and heating systems.
- 11 had works scheduled year or had works in progress, ranging from loft to underfloor insulation and new heating systems, and some of these properties came out of abeyance during 2022/23.

Meeting the enhanced [Social Housing Net Zero Standard](#) in the council housing stock will be much more challenging. The Scottish Government consultation seeks views on various options to achieve a fabric efficiency rating, equivalent to energy efficiency EPC C to be achieved by 2033, and equivalent EPC B to be achieved by a backstop date of 2040. For this housing strategy, the Orkney Partnership's goal to achieve net zero in Orkney by 2030 is of direct relevance to meeting net zero in the housing stock (for council housing and across all housing tenure).

Analysis undertaken by the Council in 2022 showed that under 200 council houses meets the EPC B standard. The Council has been trialling approaches to meet the higher energy efficiency standard, undertaking an individual assessment when a property becomes void and taking a Fabric First approach, coupled with fitting mechanical heat recovery ventilation systems to help maintain air quality alongside ensuring the provision of an efficient heating system. If this approach was to be undertaken for all council stock that does not meet a standard broadly equivalent to SHNZ then the estimated cost would be a total of £25.2m, or £21,348 per unit (in addition to the normal major component replacement).

An independent review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) in 2023 shows the cost of investment in the stock has increased significantly because of rising costs and the requirement to make

council homes more energy efficient. The HRA is therefore under significant pressure and will continue to require careful planning and monitoring. The Council will commission a comprehensive independent council house condition survey to establish the up-to-date costs of major component replacement including net zero/energy efficiency improvements, to establish the best value approaches required to meet the new standard.

Orkney Housing Association

98% of Orkney Housing Association (OHAL) properties met the SHQS at March 2023, (98.5% at September 2023) and 97% met the EESSH energy efficiency standard as reported (98.5% at September 2023). A very small number (13 properties) fail the standards. This is due to a range of reasons including not having an up to date EICR (4) due to tenants refusing entry which means the Association's staff and contractors are physically unable to carry out the required work. The remaining 9 are down to staff being unable to gain access to carry out an updated EPC following planned maintenance works such as heating replacements.

OHAL's approach to improving its stock involves both direct tenant support and a Fabric First approach.

Tenant support - Over the course of the last three years OHAL has successfully bid for a total of £325,000 from various Scottish Government funding schemes. This has allowed OHAL to provide direct financial support to tenants for their energy costs. For example, in the current financial year (2022/23) every OHAL tenant will be able to access a £150 grant to assist with fuel costs. In addition to this OHAL has a dedicated Energy Advice Officer who provides bespoke support to tenants experiencing fuel poverty and/or in need of support or advice.

Fabric First - Like all social landlords, OHAL has an ongoing planned maintenance programme that looks to make best use of energy efficient improvements. This year OHAL has augmented that by successfully accessing the Scottish Governments Social Housing Net Zero Fund. This has allowed the Association to add an additional 50 properties into 2023/24's planned maintenance programme. Works being undertaken through this funding are high efficiency triple glazed windows, replacement high insulation doors, loft insulation top ups and

hot water cylinder jackets. It is anticipated that the results of this work OHAL will see all properties move to an EPC banding of at least C, with many achieving a rating of B. Given this funding stream will be available until 2026 the Association will continue to bid for additional funding to enhance the existing planned maintenance programme. This will include carrying on the Fabric First approach whilst also looking at the feasibility of installing zero direct emission heating systems such as high energy retention storage heaters and heat pumps.

Private housing

In order to tackle BTS housing in the private sector the Council has a [General Enforcement Policy](#), and specific procedure in relation to BTS housing which sets out the various statutory options for addressing the condition. The Council does not have any areas designated as a Housing Renewal Area as there are no areas where there is a concentration of sub-standard houses. As set out in the More Homes section above, 10% of properties are empty in Orkney and an Empty Homes Officer implements the Empty Homes Strategy.

The [Scheme of Assistance](#) in Orkney is delivered through Orkney Care and Repair. It offers independent advice and assistance to help homeowners repair, improve or adapt their homes so that they can continue to live in comfort and safety in their own community. This service also includes referrals to [Warmworks](#) and [THAW Orkney](#) regarding potential heating and energy efficiency improvements, and income maximisation. The Care and Repair scheme will continue to be funded by Orkney Islands Council, and there will be discussions held with Orkney Health and Care, and the Integrated Joint Board with the aim that the small repairs service is strategically and fully funded to maintain the independence for older, disabled and vulnerable residents.

The Council has been successful in securing resources through the [Energy Efficient Scotland: Area-based scheme \(EES:ABS\)](#) which has increased from £785,102 in 2015 to over £1.7million claimed in 2022/23 to install energy efficiency improvements in private sector housing. The current managing agent is Warmworks. In the last financial year 2022/23 there was:

- 239 energy improvements completed across 176 households.

- Grants of between £10,500 to £16,100 were made available per customer.
- SAP ratings for each household improved by an average of 11.7 points.
- On average this resulted in individual annual household fuel bill savings of £728.
- 22% of homes referred to the EES:ABS were previously in the worst SAP Bands F or G.
- Energy efficiency improvements installed under the scheme have helped to save more than 108 tonnes of CO₂.

Since 2015 a total 1,292 energy improvements have been completed across 1,012 households, using a total of £7.9m funding.

The Council secured a record £2 million in funding for 2023/24 and will continue to bid for these resources and promote the scheme. It will also develop a framework for annual reporting of the impact of the scheme through the LHS Annual Report.

Private rented housing

The Orkney Housing Need and Demand Assessment shows that private rented housing in Orkney comprises 10% of all housing stock. As at December 2023 there were 964 landlords and 720 properties were held on the private landlord register (with some joint landlords for individual properties explaining more landlords than properties). There is little data on the condition and energy efficiency of private rented housing due to the small numbers not being reported in official statistics. The [Heat in Buildings Bill](#) proposed that private rented homes meet the minimum energy efficiency standard by 2028, reflecting the need to protect tenants from fuel poverty as much as possible.

Advice and information for private tenants is currently provided through the Council's Housing Options team, or through independent advice agencies e.g. Citizens Advice Bureau. Currently the information, advice and enforcement role for private landlords is also located in the Housing Options Team. The service in relation to private landlords is currently reactive, and through this Local Housing Strategy review it is recognised that more work is required to encourage and support private landlords to improve house condition and energy efficiency

standards. Through the period of this strategy there will be a review the approach for private landlord registration and enforcement.

Orkney Net Zero by 2030

The Orkney Partnership has set the ambitious policy target of Orkney meeting Net Zero by 2030 - 15 years in advance of the Scottish Government 2045 target. The housing contribution to this will mean mainstreaming and embedding net-zero emissions into housing design and across tenure including taking opportunities for additional funding (e.g. ECO4 funding). The Council and Orkney Partnership will bring through formative Orkney best practice into a housing net zero plan for implementation (year 3 onwards of this plan). There will be engagement with the Council's other climate change initiatives such as the OIC Climate Change Officer working group, engaging with the OIC 2024 Net Zero transition study, and seeking funding and transition opportunities such as through the developing Islands Centre for Net Zero.

Fuel poverty in Orkney

A household is in [fuel poverty](#) if, in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime, total fuel costs necessary for the home are more than 10% of the household's adjusted net income (after housing costs), and if after deducting fuel costs, benefits received for a care need or disability and childcare costs, the household's remaining adjusted net income is insufficient to maintain an acceptable standard of living. The remaining adjusted net income must be at least 90% of the UK Minimum Income Standard to be considered an acceptable standard of living, with an additional amount added for households in remote rural, remote small town and island areas.

Orkney continues to have some of the highest levels of fuel poverty (ranked 7th) and extreme fuel poverty (ranked 2nd) in Scotland. The Scottish House Condition Survey (SHCS, Local Authority Analysis Tables 2017-19) showed:

- fuel poverty of 31% compared to Scotland average of 24%
- extreme fuel poverty of 22% compared to Scotland average of 12%.

The estimated median fuel poverty gap in Orkney was £1,640 compared with £690 for Scotland median fuel poverty gap for fuel poor

households. The fuel poverty gap is defined as the annual amount that would be required to move the household out of fuel poverty.

Seven local authorities had significantly higher fuel poverty rates than the national average, and all but one of these were in rural areas – these were (in order of fuel poverty severity) Na h-Eileanan Siar, Highland, Argyll and Bute, Moray, Dundee City, Shetland Islands and Orkney Islands. The higher levels of fuel poverty in rural areas is evidenced in the recent Changeworks research – [A Perfect Storm: Fuel Poverty in Rural Scotland](#) (2023) which sets out the reasons for greater prevalence of fuel poverty in rural areas. The findings are summarised below and applied to the Orkney context:

High energy costs – rural households are more likely to use electricity to heat their homes, but it can be three to four times more expensive. Standing charges are more expensive, and households spend more than urban equivalent households for the same energy usage. This is particularly unfair for Orkney residents because it is a net exporter of energy to the grid. There is a greater proportion of homes with restricted meter tariffs which limits customers' ability to switch to more competitive rates and there is a greater proportion of dwellings that are reliant on unregulated fuels including oil, LPG and solid fuels. There are fewer protections for householders in the unregulated market for issues such as price increases and performance standards. According to the [Scottish Government's consumption of electricity figures](#), the average household annual electricity KWh consumption figure for Scotland was 3,737 in 2021 while Orkney's figure was 7,493; over double the Scottish rate. This was second highest to Shetland Islands (9,011), and above Na h-Eileanan Siar (6,492), Argyll and Bute (5,999), and the Highland's (5,649) average household consumption. This higher average electricity use in Orkney evidences the reliance on electricity as one of the three main heating types in Orkney.

The latest SHCS (2017-2019) found that 86% of households in Orkney had central heating throughout the home, compared with 96% of households across Scotland. 100% of Orkney households are off the gas grid, compared with just 17% of households across Scotland. The mean Energy Efficiency Rating (EER) in Orkney was 58.3, compared with 66.0 for Scotland overall. Only 15% of Orkney dwellings have an EER of B or C, compared with 45% of dwellings

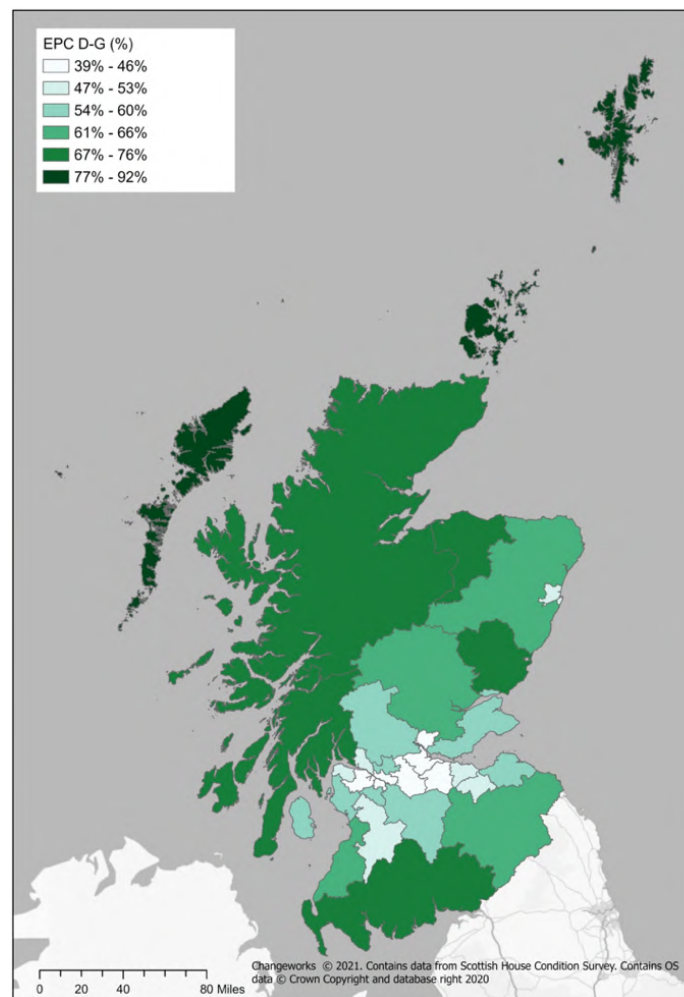
across Scotland. The new Census data will provide an update on these figures and enable a more up-to-date analysis of fuel poverty in Orkney and at lower geography.

Poor energy efficiency of homes - this is a key driver of fuel poverty throughout Scotland, and poorly insulated properties require greater fuel consumption to maintain comfortable temperatures. In rural areas there is a greater proportion of older, less energy efficient properties, particularly those of solid wall construction which can be difficult and expensive to retrofit. Houses are often larger, isolated and are more exposed to wet and windy weather, increasing the rate of degradation. Isolated properties also have higher rates of heat loss, as they lack the benefits of shared warmth from neighbouring properties as with terraced housing or flats. Those in fuel poverty often do not have the financial means to improve the energy efficiency of their homes, potentially leading to self-rationing and further degradation of properties and associated health risks. Many older traditional properties are not suitable for heat pumps without expensive retrofit improvement works. The Orkney Housing Needs Assessment showed that most of Orkney's housing stock is relatively large (69% has 3+ bedrooms), and most are houses (96% are houses and 4% are flats). The age of the housing stock in Orkney is broadly similar to that of Scotland overall - 33% of houses were built pre-1945 and 67% post 1945.

The Changeworks map below (2021) shows the very high proportion of dwellings in the Orkney Islands that have the poorest Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating D-G

Low household income - Households with lower incomes have a greater proportionate spend on fuel, especially where that fuel is also more expensive than in urban areas. The [Orkney Housing Need and Demand Assessment](#) showed that the Orkney mean household income is £42,239 (CACI 2022) which is slightly higher than the Scottish average of £41,878. Lower quartile incomes in Orkney are £19,646 (Scotland £18,225) and there is considerable disparity by Housing Market Area (HMA) with a mean income of £34,622 on the Isles and lower quartile income of £15,512 per annum – 21% lower than the Orkney average. Orkney also shows higher average earnings growth compared to Scotland at 3.7% between 2009 and 2021 compared to

2.5% Scotland (Nomis), although inflation has recently outstripped these income growth rates in the most recent period.



Source: [The Existing Homes Alliance](#) (2021)

Therefore, while on average Orkney has higher incomes, this masks lower incomes in certain areas, particularly on the Isles (excluding the linked South Isles) where dwellings are more exposed therefore

leading to higher propensity to fuel poverty. More work is required through this Housing Strategy period to undertake more fine-grained area level analysis of fuel poverty once the new census data is available.

How energy is used in the home – The Changeworks research points to the number of children in the household being a more important determinant of fuel poverty in rural areas than in urban areas. Children and young adults in rural areas spend more time in the home compared with urban counterparts, and self-employment and working from home are both around two to three times more common in rural areas compared with urban areas, meaning more people are spending long periods of time in the home, equating to greater heating and energy usage.

In summary, fuel poverty in Orkney is high due to:

- High cost of fuel (mainly electricity and oil), restricted tariffs and lack of choice to switch supplier;
- Poor energy efficiency of homes due to house types and climate exposure;
- Low household income in some areas (there are large disparities in income across Orkney) and concentrations of low incomes where property types are more vulnerable to heat loss;
- Home use where households living in rural and remote areas are more likely to be spending more time at home for work and leisure, especially those with children.

Information and advice across housing sectors

Information and advice on fuel poverty energy efficiency and income maximisation is currently provided by a range of organisations: the Council, THAW, Care and Repair, and Citizens Advice. It is not clear the extent to which advice and information is available consistently across the different Orkney communities, and particularly those areas that are more vulnerable to fuel poverty. This is an area for further action over the strategy period.

Fuel poverty: plans for improvement

There is currently a wide range of action being taken to address fuel poverty in Orkney as described above. However, more needs to be done to enable fuel poverty to be reduced to at least the Scottish average. The key actions outlined in the action plan are around the following areas:

- Lobbying Scottish and UK governments on the unfair tariffs experienced in Orkney to enable a just transition for Orkney residents and to reflect energy production on the Islands.
- Undertaking further analysis of fuel poverty at a lower Orkney Islands geography, with annual monitoring and review to enable more targeted action.
- Review information and advice provision for individual households and private landlords on fuel poverty and energy efficiency particularly in areas where fuel poverty is more prevalent.
- Develop a housing net-zero plan for implementation across tenure including taking opportunities for additional funding e.g. ECO4, Social Housing Net Zero Fund, and income from Orkney windfarms.
- Work with schools, universities, HIE and local contractors to promote careers and develop the local workforce in repairs, maintenance and energy efficiency works including accreditation in the insulation sector (across housing sectors).

In addition to actions around fuel poverty, the delivery plan includes detailed actions to be taken for improving housing condition and achieving net zero in the housing stock.

8. Access and Choice of Housing for All

The Local Housing Strategy outlines Orkney’s approach to housing options and homelessness and sets out plans to improve access to housing for all. Current approaches in relation to independent living are outlined, and how the needs of those who require specialist housing provision will be improved. The strategy describes how housing contributes to the outcomes of the Strategic Commissioning Plan and sets out plans for joint action and resources to deliver on health and social care outcomes. This section also includes action around the housing needs of other specialist housing requirements, including essential incoming workers and students.

Access and Choice of Housing for All	Homelessness is prevented as far as possible, and when it does occur, the time spent homeless is kept to a minimum.
	Access to housing and choice of housing is improved for all.
	People live independently and safely at home or in a homely setting in their own community.

Regulatory and policy context

Homelessness, housing options and access to housing

Homelessness and Housing Options - The Scottish Government is committed to its vision of [Ending Homelessness Together](#) so that everyone in Scotland has a home that meets their needs and homelessness is ended. There is a large amount of homelessness legislation and associated regulation with more new legislation expected. This includes Scottish Government and COSLA’s commitment to ensuring homelessness services are grounded in ‘no wrong door’ and person-centred principles. This means homelessness services should be more flexible so that anyone who needs a service can access it in a way that suits them - people should be able to get help regardless of the service or agency they initially connect with. This principle will be endorsed through a new Prevention Duty to be introduced through a new Housing Bill in 2023/24.

The Scottish Government is also committed to [reducing the use of temporary accommodation by 2026](#) with provision for this also being included in 2023/24 Programme for Government. This links to the established Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans guidance where local authorities and their partners must should focus on:

- a person-centred approach
- prevention of homelessness
- prioritising settled accommodation for all
- responding quickly and effectively when homelessness happens
- joining up planning and resources to tackle homelessness.

All social landlords have an existing role through the [Social Housing Charter](#) to ensure that homelessness is prevented by providing information and advice, and to support tenants to remain in their home.

The local authority also has a [Housing Support Duty](#) which places a requirement on local authorities to complete a housing support assessment for people who are unintentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness where there is reason to believe there is a need for housing support services to help in sustaining a tenancy.

[Housing Options](#) – local authorities and housing associations have a requirement through the Social Housing Charter to work together to ensure that people looking for housing get the information they need that helps them to make informed choices and decisions about the range of options available to them. It is also expected that tenants and people on housing waiting lists can review their housing options if they wish to. People looking for social housing should be able to find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available.

Independent living

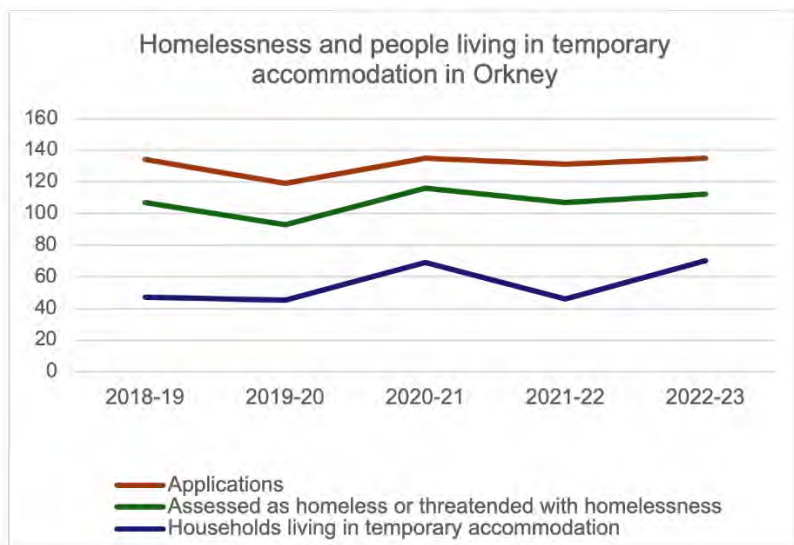
Living in the right type of housing plays a crucial role in addressing health and social care needs in Orkney. The key strategic planning framework for health and social care is the Orkney Health and Care Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2021) and the [Strategic Commissioning Implementation Plan](#). The previous Housing Contribution Statement is now out of date, and this Local Housing Strategy and the supporting Housing Needs and Demand Assessment serves to provide a review and update on housing outcomes and action which contribute to Orkney’s health and social care needs. The

Council Plan, within the priority of Strengthening our Communities, sets out action between 2023-2027/8 around the themes of:

- Prevention and early intervention
- Community led support
- Care in a co-designed approach
- Redesigning services to support people live in their own homes for longer
- Improving the ranging of, and access to supports relating to dementia and frailty
- Planning and delivering housing provision for people with enduring mental health.

Homelessness in Orkney

The level of homelessness applications and people found to be homeless or potentially homeless in Orkney has been fairly stable over the last five years. However, the number of people living in temporary accommodation rose to 72 households at March 2023 (52% increase on 2021/22) and the total requiring rehousing (including those living with family and friends) was 87 households.



Source: Scottish Government Homelessness statistics 2022/23

This increasing reliance on temporary accommodation reflects the current pressured housing system in Orkney and the fall in new supply over the last 10 years (see More Homes above).

The rehousing outcomes for homeless households tend to be local authority lets, following by housing association lets. Others return to their previous accommodation or go to live with family and friends. At the same time the proportion of all Council and Housing Association lets going to homeless households has varied significantly over the last 4 years. Orkney's [Homelessness Strategy](#), the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan provides detailed analysis of the key issues, and this Housing Strategy sets out a range of actions for preventing homelessness and reducing the number of people living in temporary accommodation, including enabling more supply (More Homes above), reviewing the proportion of lets to homeless households, flipping temporary homes to permanent tenancies, and increasing housing choice for people that have experienced homelessness. The key outcomes from the Homelessness Strategy are:

- Ensure that homeless households' views are sought and taken into account when reviewing and developing services
- Provide accurate advice and information including through our Housing Options service
- Continue to develop and improve services to prevent and address homelessness through partnership working with other services/organisations.
- Ensure that no one is prevented from making a homeless application.
- Have an effective, timely response to those presenting as homeless including those in crisis.
- Keep stays in temporary accommodation to a minimum.
- Reduce the use of temporary accommodation.
- Increase the proportion of social lets (both Council and OHAL) that are made to homeless households.
- Provide appropriate advice and support to assist households in sustaining their accommodation.

Access to housing in Orkney

The [Housing Options service](#) in Orkney is provided through the Council who provide a range of advice and information on housing options and to prevent homelessness, and support through the homelessness application process where homelessness cannot be avoided. The Council provides a dedicated housing support service across tenure and OHAL provides tenancy support through its housing officers. The Council and the Housing Association has a shared social housing application form and work together on the common housing register. Through the work of the Housing Market Partnership in developing this Housing Strategy it has been agreed that more work needs to be done within a partnership service redesign approach on housing options and access to housing. This should embrace national best practice including digital and self-serve options to increase efficiency and effectiveness for customers, the Council and OHAL.

The Essential Workers Housing Strategy sets out the housing needs of:

- keyworkers and other essential workers moving to Orkney permanently;
- agency/interim staff working in Orkney, who are living temporarily in Orkney for work purposes, but who are permanent residents elsewhere;
- students moving to Orkney for study;
- workers required for potential infrastructure construction projects.

The acute shortage on housing on Orkney means that keyworkers and other essential workers, and students find it very difficult to find housing, and employers responding to the Employers Survey in 2023 showed that housing was one of the main reasons that employers found it difficult to recruit across the public, private and academic sectors. Lack of access is seen to be a key area for stifling growth across sectors including the research and innovation sectors. At the same time, the Essential Worker Housing strategy estimated that up to 1,500 bedspaces will be required to accommodate construction workers for potential infrastructure projects that may start in the islands from 2024 (pending approvals) for completion over the next 10 years.

Most of the action required to improve access to housing for key and essential workers relates to increasing supply (More Homes above). In terms of accommodation for infrastructure construction workers, the Council will work with each developer to consider a specific accommodation plan which mitigates against potential negative impacts on the existing market while maximising the long-term housing legacy for the future.

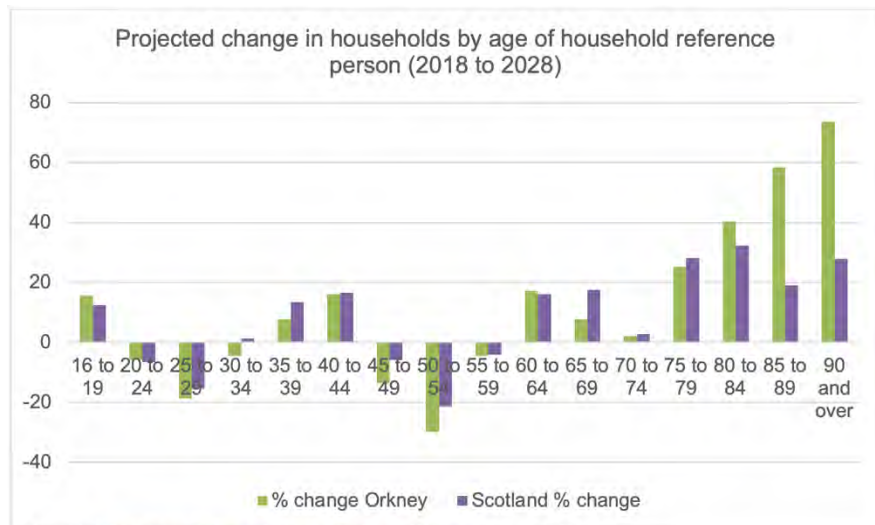
In relation to housing for students, Heriot Watt University and Orkney College UHI have been exploring options for student accommodation including using the youth hostel in the short-term, and developing new purpose-built accommodation in Stromness which would also service Orkney Research and Innovation Centre (ORIC). The Housing Market Partnership will maintain dialogue with education providers to keep options open for existing and new housing supply for students.

The needs of refugees and asylum seekers were explored through the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment. There are currently 14 households (24 people) under Homes for Ukraine Scheme in Orkney: 12 currently living with host families and 2 in social housing. These households will continue to be supported in meeting their future housing needs as required. The lack of an existing host community with appropriate support facilities means Orkney has significant challenges around hosting asylum seekers or refugees who need Muslim community facilities and support. Orkney lacks an equivalent host population, a mosque etc. From experience of refugee resettlement and people from the Muslim community, the appropriateness of Orkney raises issues for the sustainability for resettlement. The Housing Strategy is also required to consider the needs for site provision for Gypsy/ Travellers and sites for Travelling Showpeople. There is currently 0.01% of the Orkney population that consider themselves as White: Gypsy Traveller. As such there is no requirement for a site and the population and demand for this type of provision will continue to be held under review.

Independent living and specialist housing provision

As discussed in section on the housing system, Orkney's population has increased significantly over the last 20 years driven by net migration with increases across all age groups except children. Over

that time the highest growth rate has been in those aged 65 plus (70%, compared to Scotland 33%) and looking forward, while there will be growth in working age households, the most significant growth will be in those aged over 75 years. This has significant implications for health and social care provision, and the suitability of housing stock for older people, those with mobility difficulties and disabled people.



Source: 2018-based Household Projections (Council area profiles)

The [Housing Need and Demand Assessment](#) sets out the current provision and the requirements for additional accessible, adapted and wheelchair housing. Around 300-600 households each year require adaptations to help people remain in their own homes – in practice Care and Repair typically provides 550 annually, with the most common major adaptations being level access showers, external ramping, stair lifts and grab rails. Recent resource levels (until 2023) have been in line with needs, but with the increasing ageing population, this will mean increasing need, and increasing resource requirements for adaptations. There is currently a significant backlog of level access shower installations, in part due to lack of capacity in the specialised workforce required for this type of adaptation.

The small repairs service offered by Care and Repair provided 520 small repairs in 2023. Again, the need will increase with the aging population, projected at 630 small repairs by 2033. This means a need for increasing resources.

It is estimated 50-70 wheelchair properties are required over the next ten years, based on varying assumptions on health outcomes. There is strong demand, and provision for/of bungalows among older residents, which will make adaptation for wheelchair use easier. There is also scope to adapt some of the existing social ambulant disabled housing stock to wheelchair housing to meet this demand.

There is very high demand and unmet need for care at home services, in part due to lack of workforce. At the same time, the level of care home provision is well below the Scottish average rate. This does not mean the solution is more care homes, but there must be adequate resources for the alternative including care at home, very sheltered and / or extra care housing as the need increases. The Council has recently completed a core and cluster development for people with learning disabilities and the Housing Market Partnership discussed using more core and cluster developments, including extra care housing for mixed client groups (e.g. older people, those with dementia, disabled people). This could be a more efficient and effective approach compared to home care in a rural setting, particularly in the context of travel distances and lack of care workforce.

There is a gap in supported housing provision for those with enduring mental health needs who currently live on the Scottish mainland due to lack of appropriate provision in Orkney.

The Housing Market Partnership considered these needs and agreed a range of key actions including:

- Ensuring sustainable resourcing for the Care and Repair service, recognising the vital role this plays in enabling timely discharge from hospital and supporting independent living.
- Pursuing a core and cluster approach for new housing suitable for older people and a range of other needs, including extra care housing.
- Enhancing the telecare service and introducing SMART homes.

- Putting in place supported housing/care provision for those with enduring mental health.
- Review incentives for older people to downsize to move to homes more suitable for their needs.

The full range of actions for access and choice of housing for all are listed in the action plan below.

9. Delivery Action Plan

The following action plan shows the priorities, outcomes, and actions to be implemented over the next 5 years. The action plan also includes the methods by which the action plan will be monitored by the Housing Market Partnership through quarterly monitoring meetings, and annual reporting on the Local Housing Strategy implementation through the LHS Annual Report to the Partnership, and the Council.

Priority: More Homes

Summary: The Housing Supply Target is 1030 homes over 10 years (103 per annum). The Council will shift its focus to develop its housing strategic and enabling role to support the housing supply system to deliver this target across tenure and by different providers (affordable and private). Additional affordable housing providers will be required to achieve housing targets. All new housing supply will be built in line with the principles of good placemaking and sustainability.

Other local plans and priorities: Community Plan – Sustainable development, Local Equality. Council Plan – Growing our Economy, Developing our infrastructure. Local Development Plan. Orkney Strategic Housing Investment Plan. Essential Workers Housing Strategy.

Outcome: More homes are supplied for rent or to buy across Orkney Islands communities

Actions	Baseline 2022/2023	Target / timescale	Lead Responsibility	Resources
Introduce a 'More Homes' strategic programme delivery approach to create a longer term and more certain pipeline to enable supply of 103 homes per annum over 10 years. Target of 60/40 affordable/private. The enabling approach will include masterplanning, infrastructure first and land assembly where required to facilitate development. The More Homes Programme includes new housing across all Orkney islands communities, and for supported housing.	Existing SHIP sub-group	More Homes Programme approach From Year 1 515/1030 homes over 5/10 years	Orkney Islands Council ELH and NSI	Scottish Government More Homes funding HRA development from HRA Business Plan;
Implement the Essential Workers Housing Strategy to deliver 220 homes for essential workers over 10 years including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OIC securing 20 properties through private sector leasing Enabling 150 new build houses for Mid Market Rent Enabling 85 acquisition for Mid-market rent Enabling 40 empty homes brought back into use targeted for essential workers 	-	More Homes Programme From Year 1 220 homes over 10 years. At least 110 first 5 years	Orkney Islands Council ELH and NSI	OHAL development in line with OHAL Business Plan; Specific Resources to be identified as part of Essential Workers Housing

Definition of acronyms for lead responsibility: ELH – Education, Leisure and Housing; NSI – Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure; OHAC/IJB – Orkney Health and Care / Integration Joint Board; Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration – ESR; Strategy, Performance and Business Solution – SPBS; OHAL – Orkney Housing Association Ltd.

				Strategy development during 2024/25; Resources from additional housing providers to be determined.
Undertake acquisitions of individual properties in the existing market or from developers for social rent or MMR where the properties can be brought up to relevant standards.	-	Ongoing	Orkney Islands Council ELH and NSI	As above
Identify and appraise options/feasibility for developing new accommodation and repurposing existing buildings for shorter-term accommodation for essential workers and students.	-	Ongoing	Orkney Islands Council ELH and College/Universities	As above
Work with new infrastructure developers to understand their temporary accommodation requirements, mitigate risks to the existing market and maximise legacy for future housing supply.	Discussions started 2023 Q3	Ongoing	Orkney Islands Council ELH with infrastructure developers	Existing resources
Use the Council's 'Rural Housing Body' status so that where new homes are built on council land and building apply a primary residence burden on housing property (and potential affordability criteria).	-	Implement from Year 1 All housing built on OIC land/property	Orkney Islands Council ELH	Existing resources
Ensure principles of good placemaking and sustainability are adopted on all new housing sites across all Orkney communities i.e. mixed communities, housing choice, quality homes, in the right location and of the right tenure and size. (Will be considered through the review of the Local Development Plan)	Ongoing	Ongoing All new housing developments approved from Year 1	Orkney Islands Council ELH and NSI	Existing Planning Resources

Increase density in towns and key villages where relevant in line with National Planning Framework 4 and the review of the Local Development Plan.	Ongoing	Ongoing Increase density 20-35 density per hectare	Orkney Islands Council NSI	No additional resource required
Provide serviced sites and a design guide for self-build and develop a register for those interested in self-build. Consider within the More Homes programme where demand for self-build can be satisfied.	-	More Homes Programme Year 1	Orkney Islands Council NSI and ELH	Existing Planning Resources and within the LDP Review

Outcome: The capacity to deliver more affordable homes is increased by attracting new housing providers to Orkney, and/or by creating new affordable housing supply mechanisms.				
Actions	Baseline 2022/2023	Target / timescale	Lead Responsibility	Resources
Undertake discussions with at least one established affordable housing provider with track record and financial capacity to supply new housing in Orkney.	-	Year 1	Orkney Islands Council ELH	Existing resources
Create a Council-sponsored approach to new supply for mid-market rent to complement other supply.	Council decision 2023 Q4	Implement from Year 1	Orkney Islands Council	Specific Resources to be identified as part of Essential Workers Housing Strategy development during 2024/25

Outcome: Housing supply processes are more efficient within the Council, and across partners and to enable value for money new supply.				
Actions	Baseline 2022/2023	Target / timescale	Lead Responsibility	Resources
Develop a common affordable housing specification to improve efficiency and design out cost.	-	Year 2 onwards	Orkney Islands Council ELH and NSI with housing partners	Existing resources
Adopt a partnership approach to new mixed housing developments where one partner leads on design and procurement and transfers ownership at the end of development. Test through implementation of site K9.	Underway Q3 2023	Year 2 complete	Orkney Islands Council ELH with developer	Existing resources
Review the Council's Capital Project Appraisal process as it relates to new Council housing to ensure it is sufficiently agile.	-	Year 1	Orkney Islands Council ELH with other Council partners	Existing resources
The review of the Local Development Plan will be completed in line with National Planning Framework 4. The Service is proposing to provide within a new Local Development Plan infrastructure and Design information for settlements and allocated land to enable appropriate development.	Ongoing	Year 1 onwards	Orkney Islands Council NSI	Existing resources
Where there are workforce constraints e.g. in new housing design, regulatory approval and construction sector, make use of the wider supply chain to provide greater capacity and agility to deliver the More Homes programme.	-	Year 1 onwards	Orkney Islands Council - all	Existing resources
Consider use of modular build and modern methods of construction where relevant.	-	Year 2 onwards	Orkney Islands Council ELH and NSI with housing partners and colleges/ Universities	Existing resources

Outcome: Empty homes are brought back into use for Orkney residents and essential incoming workers.				
Actions	Baseline 2022/2023	Target / timescale	Lead Responsibility	Resources
Encourage homeowners to bring empty homes back into use through information and advice.	70 homes since 2016 – average 10 per annum	15 per annum	Orkney Islands Council ELH	Existing resources – Empty Homes Development Officer / Strategy and website provision
Incentivise more empty homes being brought back into use through local authority grant (Housing (Scotland) Act 2006)	-			Specific Resources to be identified as part of Essential Workers Housing Strategy development during 2024/25
Bring empty homes back into use through acquisition for social rent or MMR where the properties can be brought up to relevant standards.	-			Specific Resources to be identified as part of Essential Workers Housing Strategy development during 2024/25
Understand the scope of empty homes that can be used for infrastructure workers – undertake empty home-owners survey and work with infrastructure developers through the 'matchmaker scheme' to match properties to temporary residents.	-	10 homes while infrastructure works ongoing (10 in addition to above)	Orkney Islands Council ELH	Existing resources – Empty Homes Development Officer / Strategy and website provision
Achieve legacy from empty homes that are brought back into use for infrastructure workers by working with homeowners to continue offering the property for let or sale for primary residence once infrastructure workers have left Orkney.	-	10 properties added to residential housing stock	Orkney Islands Council ELH	Existing resources

Lobby UK/Scottish Government directly and through existing networks on additional resources to improve energy efficiency for private sector housing, to revise VAT on repairs and maintenance works, including funding for empty homes (also in Quality Warm Homes below).	-	Ongoing	Orkney Islands Council ELH	Existing resources
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Outcome: The number of Short-Term lets (STLs) and second homes are monitored to understand the impact on Orkney's housing system, and where necessary the number of STLs are controlled.

Continually monitor the number of Short Term Lets (STLs) and review the experience of STL control areas from other areas in Scotland to assess their impact and relevance to Orkney.	At May 2023 400 STLs	Monitor change Annually	Orkney Islands Council ELH and NSI	Existing resources
Consider the introduction of a new Planning Housing Policy to enable holiday accommodation to change to long-term residential use where appropriate.	-	Year 1	Orkney Islands Council NSI	Existing resources
Consider the full range of mechanisms available to safeguard primary residency including the use of the Council's Rural Housing Body status (as above), STLs control areas, use of Scottish Government Housing Grant in affordable new build, and potential housing policies in the reviewed Local Development Plan.	Only primary residency mechanism used currently is when Scottish Government grant is provided	Year 1	Orkney Islands Council ELH and NSI	Existing resources

Priority: Quality, Warm homes

Summary: The quality and energy efficiency of homes across tenure is improved, and fuel poverty is reduced across all Orkney Island communities through a just transition to Net Zero. New homes optimise sustainability standards.

Other local plans and priorities: Community Plan – Cost of Living, Sustainable development, Local Equality. Council Plan – Growing our Economy, Strengthening our Communities, Developing our infrastructure. Orkney Child Poverty Strategy. Local Development Plan. Sustainable Orkney Energy Strategy. Carbon Management Plan.

Outcome: The quality and energy efficiency of social housing is improved through the use of up-to-date technology, and construction methods.

Actions	Baseline 2022/2023	Target / timescale	Lead Responsibility	Resources
Continue investment across social housing to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.	OIC – 53% OHAL – 98%	OIC – 94% OHAL – 99%	Orkney Islands Council ELH and OHAL	HRA development from HRA Business Plan
Undertake an independent stock condition survey of Council housing to establish up to date costs of 30 years component replacement and energy efficiency improvements.	Current OIC costs	Year 1	Orkney Islands Council ELH	HRA development from HRA Business Plan
Continue investment across social housing to meet the new Social Housing Net Zero standard.	OIC – 96% OHAL – 97%	OIC – 96% OHAL – 99%	Orkney Islands Council ELH, NSI and OHAL	HRA development from HRA Business Plan
Lobby UK/Scottish Government directly and through existing networks on additional resources to improve energy efficiency in social housing, and to revise VAT on repairs and maintenance works.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Orkney Islands Council ELH, NSI and OHAL	Existing resources
Work with schools, colleges, universities, HIE and local contractors to promote careers and develop the local workforce in repairs, maintenance and energy efficiency works including accreditation in the insulation sector (across housing sectors). Establish forum through HMP to drive forward.	-	Year 1	Orkney Islands Council ELH, NSI and ESR	Resource to be identified

Outcome: The quality and energy efficiency of existing private housing is improved through information, advice and grant support.				
Actions	Baseline 2022/2023	Target / timescale	Lead Responsibility	Resources
Review the approach and implement guidance to provide information and advice for homeowners and private landlords on home repair and maintenance, including energy efficiency (Energy Efficiency Standard for private landlords).	-	Year 1	Orkney Islands Council ELH and NSI	Existing resources
Review the approach for private landlord registration and enforcement.	Currently in Housing Options team	Year 1	Orkney Islands Council ELH and NSI	Existing resources
Continue to increase the resources available through Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Scheme (EES:ABS) by bidding for additional resources.	£2million (2023/24)	£4million by Yr 3	Orkney Islands Council ELH	Existing resources
Create a framework and measure the impact of EES:ABS and report annually through the LHS Annual Report.	-	Year 1	Orkney Islands Council ELH	Existing resources
Lobby UK/Scottish Government directly and through existing networks on additional resources to improve energy efficiency for private sector housing, to revise VAT on repairs and maintenance works, including funding for empty homes.	-	Year 1 ongoing	Orkney Islands Council ELH	Existing resources

Outcome: Fuel poverty in Orkney is reduced.				
Actions	Baseline 2022/2023	Target / timescale	Lead Responsibility	Resources
Explore analysis framework to measure the level of fuel poverty (at a lower geographic level than Orkney) and then report annually on change to fuel poverty and extreme fuel poverty in the LHS Annual Report and to the Cost of Living Task Force.	31% fuel poverty 22% extreme fuel poverty (SHCS LA analysis 2017-2019)	Year 1 Q4 framework in place Monitoring ongoing	Orkney Islands Council ELH and SPBS	Resource to be identified
Review the approach to the provision of information and advice for individual households on energy efficiency and fuel poverty (including income maximisation) provided through the Council, third and private sectors, in collaboration with the Cost of Living Task Force.	-	Year 1	Orkney Islands Council ELH and SPBS	Resource to be identified
Following a review of information and advice, propose and implement any action required, and measure the impact with Cost of Living Task Force.	-	Year 2 onwards	Orkney Islands Council ELH and SPBS	Resource to be identified
Lobby UK Government on the cost of fuel tariffs to ensure these are reduced in Orkney.	-	Year 1 ongoing	Orkney Islands Council ESR	Existing resources
Maximise the potential benefits from Orkney renewable energy developments to reduce cost burden of energy for residents.	-	Year 1 ongoing	Orkney Islands Council ESR	Resource to be identified

Outcome: Carbon emissions across all housing tenure are reduced to net zero.

Actions	Baseline 2022/2023	Target / timescale	Lead Responsibility	Resources
Mainstream and embed net-zero emissions into housing design and across tenure including taking opportunities for additional funding (e.g. ECO4 funding).	Ongoing	Yr 1 ongoing	Orkney Islands Council ELH and NSI	Existing resources
Bring through formative Orkney best practice into a housing net zero plan for implementation.	Ongoing	Implementation from Yr 3	Orkney Islands Council ELH and NSI	Resource to be identified
Engagement with the Council's other climate change initiatives including contributing into the OIC climate change officer working group, engaging with the OIC 2024 net zero transition study, and seeking funding and transition opportunities, such as through the developing Islands Centre for Net Zero.	Ongoing	Yr 1 ongoing	Orkney Islands Council ELH and NSI	Resource to be identified

Outcome: The design of new homes optimises the principles of good placemaking and sustainability.

See More Homes above - Ensure principles of good placemaking and sustainability is adopted on all new housing sites.	Ongoing	Ongoing All new housing developments	Orkney Islands Council NSI	As above
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Priority: Access and Choice of housing for all

Summary: Homelessness is prevented through a partnership housing options approach, and temporary accommodation is minimised for homeless households. Access and choice of housing is increased for all demand groups. People with specific needs are able to live independently. This priority will require close working and resources through OHAC and the Integration Joint Board.

Other local plans and priorities: Community Plan – Cost of Living, Local Equality. Council Plan – Strengthening our Communities. Local Development Plan. Homelessness Strategy. Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. Strategic Commissioning Implementation Plan.

Outcome: Homelessness is prevented as far as possible, and when it does occur, the time spent homeless is kept to a minimum.

Actions	Baseline 2022/2023	Target / timescale	Responsibility	Resources
Review, develop and implement a refreshed Housing Options approach within a partnership service redesign which embraces national best practice (see Access to housing below) including digital approaches.	Existing Housing Options approach	Start - Year 1 Complete – Year 4	Orkney Islands Council ELH and OHAL	Resources would require to be attached through the required governance processes
Review, develop and implement a refreshed approach to rehousing for homeless households which embraces national best practice, including the proportion of lets by each social landlord.	2022 and 2023 OIC – 58%, 48% OHAL – 27%, 24%	Targets to be agreed Year 1	Orkney Islands Council ELH and OHAL	RRTP funding / existing resources
Reduce the use of temporary accommodation through rehousing (as above) in line with the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.	March 2023 – 72 households in temporary accommodation	Year 5 - 45 households in temporary accommodation	Orkney Islands Council ELH and OHAL	RRTP funding
Flip properties used for temporary accommodation to permanent homes for homeless households.	2023 5 between OIC and OHAL	Annually 5 between OIC and OHAL	Orkney Islands Council ELH and OHAL	RRTP funding

Review the approach to the provision of information provided on homeless households to ensure tenancy sustainment is maximised.	Existing approach	Year 1	Orkney Islands Council ELH and OHAL	Existing resources
Provide training across all public sector partners and social landlords on the new prevention of homelessness duty.	-	Following enactment of duty	Orkney Islands Council ELH	Resources to be confirmed by Scottish Government following implementation

Outcome: Access to housing and choice of housing is improved for all.				
Review, develop and implement a refreshed system for access to housing through a partnership approach which meets national best practice – Housing Options, applications, housing register and allocations (including homelessness allocations – see above).	Individual approaches	Start year 1, complete Year 4	Orkney Islands Council ELH and OHAL	HRA Business Plan / OHAL Business Plan and resources from any additional housing providers
Maintain dialogue with the education providers to keep options open for existing and new housing supply for students.	Range of need 50-90 student households	By Year 5 50 new provision for students	Orkney Islands Council ELH and College/Universities	Existing resources

Outcome: People live independently and safely at home or in a homely setting in their own community.				
Actions	Baseline 2022/2023	Target / timescale	Responsibility	Resources
Provide supported accommodation through a core and cluster approach in the campus of each of the three care homes (with the care homes acting as the core) for mixed client groups to maximise efficiency and outcomes for those requiring care and support.	Carness	Within 10 years Develop 3 core and cluster developments associated with the 3 care homes	Orkney Islands Council ELH and OHAC/IJB	Resources would require to be attached through the required governance processes
Ensure the housing needs for older people are met on the isles through developments including co-housing	-	Year 1 onwards	Orkney Islands Council ELH and OHAC/IJB and Development Trusts	Existing resources
Review joint adaptations protocol particularly around private housing adaptations to ensure there is equity of access across housing tenure for adaptations.	Existing approach	Year 2 Equitable approach across tenure	Orkney Islands Council ELH and OHAC/IJB	Existing resources
Ensure there is sufficient provision for wheelchair provision through the More Homes programme, or through conversion of existing amenity housing.	-	Ongoing 50 new over 10 years – 5 per annum	Orkney Islands Council ELH and OHAC/IJB	Existing resources
Explore options to supplement the Orkney Housing Association adaptations budget from Orkney Health & Care, recognising the importance of timely adaptations in reducing hospital admissions.	No revenue contribution from OHAC/NHSO	Year 2 Revised approach agreed	Orkney Islands Council ELH and OHAC/IJB and OHAL	Existing resources
Work in partnership with NHSO/OHAC to support resourcing of Orkney Care & Repair to both aid hospital discharge and prevent hospital admission or demands on care services.	No contribution currently from NHSO/OHAC	Year 2	OHAC/IJB	Existing resources
Ensure Orkney Care and Repair is sustainably resourced to meet the growing demand which supports independent living	2023 budget	Year 2	Orkney Islands Council	Existing resources

Definition of acronyms for lead responsibility: ELH – Education, Leisure and Housing; NSI – Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure; OHAC/IJB – Orkney Health and Care / Integration Joint Board; Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration – ESR; Strategy, Performance and Business Solution – SPBS; OHAL – Orkney Housing Association Ltd.

			ELH and OHAC/IJB	
Work in partnership with OHAC to enhance the existing telecare provision including provision of SMART homes.	Existing approach	Year 3	Orkney Islands Council ELH and OHAC/IJB	Existing resources
Explore developing local letting initiatives, especially on the outer isles to prioritise housing to health and care staff and other essential workers.	Existing policies	Year 2	Orkney Islands Council ELH	Existing resources
Work with the Development Trusts to advertise vacant social homes, where local letting initiatives exist to prioritise health and care staff, or other essential workers as relevant.	Existing approach	Year 2	Orkney Islands Council ELH	Existing resources
Review current approaches to downsizing to further incentivise smaller older households to move to homes suitable for the needs.	Existing OIC policy	Year 2 Revised policy	Orkney Islands Council, ELH	Existing resources
Ensure supported housing / care provision is supplied for people with enduring mental health conditions to enable people living on Scottish mainland to return to Orkney.	No provision	From Year 2	Orkney Islands Council OHAC/IJB	Resources would require to be attached through the required governance processes
Review housing support in the round – enabling the third sector to provide lower level housing support and freeing up resources for more intense provision to be provided by the statutory sector.	Existing approach	From Year 2	Orkney Islands Council OHAC/IJB	Resources would require to be attached through the required governance processes

Priority: Monitoring and review				
Outcome: The local Housing Strategy implementation is monitored, and changing drivers in the housing system (demographic, economic and housing market factors) are understood.				
Actions	Baseline 2022/2023	Target / timescale	Responsibility	Resources
Develop a monitoring system to continually monitor and review the Local Housing Strategy implementation.	None	Year 1 Q1	Orkney Islands Council ELH	Existing resources
Hold quarterly Housing Market Partnership meetings to review progress on the LHS actions and report on any change in underlying assumptions and housing system drivers.	None	Quarterly Year 1-5	Orkney Islands Council ELH	To be taken forward following recruitment of Strategy Officer and delivered from that resource
Develop a system to regularly maintain and refresh the evidence base in the Housing Need and Demand Assessment and report change through the HMP quarterly meetings and the Local Housing Strategy Annual Report.	None	Year 1 Q1	Orkney Islands Council ELH	Resource to be identified
Provide a Local Housing Strategy Annual Report to the Housing Market Partnership and the Council on progress.	None	Year 2-5	Orkney Islands Council ELH	To be taken forward following recruitment of Strategy Officer and delivered from that resource
Put in place staff and undertake training to undertake the LHS monitoring and review function.	Vacancy in housing strategy officer	Recruitment and training required Year 1 Q1	Orkney Islands Council ELH	To be taken forward following recruitment of Strategy Officer and delivered from that resource

Definition of acronyms for lead responsibility: ELH – Education, Leisure and Housing; NSI – Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure; OHAC/IJB – Orkney Health and Care / Integration Joint Board; Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration – ESR; Strategy, Performance and Business Solution – SPBS; OHAL – Orkney Housing Association Ltd.

10. Impact Assessments

The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) consultative draft webpage included impact assessments and screening documents which have informed finalisation of the Strategy.

Equality Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Assessments need to be carried out to consider the impact the LHS would have on groups of people with 'protected characteristics', as defined by the Equality Act 2010. Protected characteristics include age, sex, race, disability and sexual orientation (sexuality or sexual preference). The Council must also meet the Fairer Scotland Duty to consider the impact the LHS would have on those who are experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. This equality impact assessment has also included consideration of child rights and wellbeing impacts.

The LHS is expected to improve housing outcomes for people of all age groups. Older people will be provided with better housing outcomes and choice, and the ability to remain longer in their own home. The needs of older people on the isles have been specifically included to ensure suitable housing models are developed in the isles context. Young people and families' housing choices and conditions (including children living in poverty) should be broadened and improved through more housing supply and improved housing conditions. The household income of families (including children living in poverty) should improve through targeted action to reduce fuel poverty, especially in the remote and exposed areas and on the Isles. There are actions in the plan proposed to improve the housing options, and related care and support for disabled people and those with ill-health who may require specialist supported housing. The Strategy sets out the objectives to tackle homelessness and reduce temporary accommodation, with most homeless households experiencing significant socio-economic disadvantage.

Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) are designed to evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed Strategy. Plans and

strategies should be submitted to Scottish Government for a decision on whether a full SEA needs to be carried out.

The LHS has been pre-screened for SEA under section 7 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and a notification sent to the Scottish Government SEA Gateway that no environmental effects are predicted. Therefore, Orkney Islands Council considers SEA is not required.

Island Communities Impact Assessment

Island Communities Impact Assessments (ICIAs) were introduced by the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018. Their purpose is to determine whether the proposed Strategy has different effects on, or different unintended consequences for, any particular island community compared with other island or mainland communities. Island residents must be consulted to gather their views on any perceived disadvantages to their communities, and any measures they would like to be put in place.

The LHS has been developed with the Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) as the foundation data reference. This identifies 5 Housing Market Areas (HMAs) which are the geographic basis for all the HNDA and LHS data analysis. One of the HMAs is the East Mainland and Linked South Isles, and another HMA is 'the Isles' which comprises all the other inhabited Isles. The ICIA considers consultation evidence from Orkney Matters, the Housing Market Partnership workshops which include Development Trust representatives, and direct consultation with the Development Trusts on the Housing Need and Demand Assessment. Consultation was undertaken on the LHS consultative draft with the 10 Development Trusts. A total of 15 responses to the LHS consultation came from individuals or organisations representing the Orkney ferry-linked isles. The key themes from this feedback was to ensure the Housing Strategy supports sustainability of the isles by tackling empty homes and holiday homes, and ensuring new supply which meets a range of needs – in particular smaller and starter homes, and those that meet the needs of older people on the isles so they do not have to move away from their communities.

The LHS will improve housing outcomes through specific differentiated action for the Isles where circumstances differ to the Orkney mainland including adjustment to resources for housing supply, review of letting policies to help sustain fragile communities, and health and social care services which help to support older and disabled people in their own homes on the Isles. The Strategic Housing Investment Plan has identified a range of new housing supply projects, working with the Development Trusts. The Council continues to encourage Scottish Government to meet the higher costs of housing supply on the isles, which to date has generally been supported by Scottish Government through the Rural and Islands Housing Grant, and this needs to continue.



Education, Leisure and Housing

Anti-Bullying Policy for Our Children and Young People

2024

Version Control

Document reference	Version	Issue Date	Reason for issue	Reviewer	Sign
ELH017	1	January 1997	New Procedure		
ELH017	2	6 January 2017	Accessible Format	Susan Thornton	
ELH017	3	May 2024	Updated and renamed from original Policy guidelines for action against Bullying in Education Establishments	Morag Miller	

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Foreword

This policy has been written with clear reference to the following publications and guidance:

- *Respectme* – Policy through to Practice – Getting it Right, 2017.
- <https://respectme.org.uk/>.
- Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People, 2017 <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00527674.pdf>.
- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland, 2021 – updated 2023 [national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021-updated-2023.pdf](http://www.gov.scot/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021-updated-2023.pdf) (www.gov.scot)

It has also been reviewed in light of the passing into law of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 (“the 2024 Act”).

Further useful links can be found at the end of this document.

Useful Definitions:

- ‘Parents and carers’ are the terms used for adults who have caring and guardian responsibilities for children and young people.
- ‘Settings’ refer to any place or venue that is managed, promoted or controlled by Education, Leisure or Housing for example; Schools, Papdale Halls of Residence, Youth clubs, after school clubs run by schools or Parent Councils, with the exception of Early Learning and Childcare settings.
- ‘Children and Young People’ refer to all who attend or participate in the venues or activities defined above and managed, promoted or controlled by Education, Leisure and Housing.
- We would not use the term ‘bullying behaviour’ to describe behaviours shown by children in Early Learning and Childcare settings due to the age and developmental stages the children are at.
- Where the term ‘adult’ is used, this refers to the full range of adults within our services; staff, coaches, volunteers, parents/carers.

1. Introduction and Rationale

Learning and health and wellbeing are fostered by positive relationships and the experience of being bullied can impact negatively on this. Bullying affects individuals, families and relationships as well as impacting on achievement and participation for children and young people. A child or young person who is bullied will not feel safe, included or respected and their wellbeing will be affected. A child or young person who is bullied and those causing bullying may both have wellbeing needs and these needs should be assessed and supported.

Bullying can have both long and short-term effects on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. There can be no doubt that being bullied is traumatic for the individual and is, therefore, likely to lead to a range of coping mechanisms and reactive behaviours.

The impact of bullying behaviour can extend far beyond the individuals involved. Bullying impacts on a person's capacity for self-management, their internal feelings of control, and their ability to take action. Their ability to take effective action is affected by someone else's behaviour. This is called a person's 'agency.'

In the latest Child Protection Guidance for Scotland 2021 – updated 2023, it is stated clearly that the impact of bullying can be an issue of child protection due to the risk of significant harm to the individual.

“Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People” (2017) has a fundamental role to play in helping us realise our vision for all children and young people. It provides a holistic framework for all adults working with children and young people to address all aspects of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying. This guidance reflects ‘Getting it Right for Every Child’ approaches and recognises that bullying impacts on wellbeing. In order to thrive and achieve their full potential, children and young people need environments which are safe, nurturing, respectful and free from fear, abuse and discrimination.

Health and wellbeing is at the centre of this approach. ‘Respect for All’ has a fundamental role to play in ensuring that all of us working with children and young people fulfil our responsibility to support their health and wellbeing. This can be achieved through embedding positive relationships and behaviour approaches to prevent bullying in and across all of our settings including learning communities, clubs and organisations.

Our vision is that:

- Every child and young person in Scotland will grow up free from bullying and will develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults.
- Children and young people and their parent(s) and carers, will have the skills and resilience to prevent and/or respond to bullying appropriately.
- Every child and young person who requires help will know who can help them and what support is available.
- Adults working with children and young people will follow a consistent and coherent approach in dealing with and preventing bullying from Early Learning and Childcare onwards.

Taken from Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People, 2017.

Orkney Islands Council's Education, Leisure and Housing Service is committed to this vision and seeks to ensure prevention of all forms of bullying among children and young people. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and must be addressed. Bullying should never be seen as a typical part of growing up. We will enable all those involved in our services to recognise and challenge bullying behaviours.

“Children have the right to protection from all forms of violence (physical or mental). They must be kept safe from harm and they must be given proper care by those looking after them.” *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19.*

1.2. Our Aims

Through this policy we aim to:

- Promote respectful, positive relationships and behaviour in order to provide an environment where children and young people can feel safe, have their wellbeing supported and thrive.
- Raise awareness of bullying and its impact on children and young people.
- Provide guidance for all adults, including parents and carers, on recognising and responding to bullying.
- Provide support and guidance to schools and settings around recording bullying incidents to create an accurate picture across our local authority.
- Develop children and young people's skills and awareness in recognising and responding to bullying.
- Ensure that we listen to and take on board the voice and opinions of the child or young person.

2. Scope of Policy

Bullying takes place in the context of relationships. Promoting respectful relationships, repairing relationships where appropriate and ensuring we respond to all forms of prejudice will help create an environment where bullying cannot thrive.

This document is the strategic anti-bullying policy for Education, Leisure and Housing. It gives a clear definition of bullying and its impact on children and young people. All schools and settings will review and update their existing policies against this strategic policy ensuring that they meet current national and local guidance. Policies for settings will include the specific details in relation to how they will address and follow up incidents of bullying in their setting.

This policy applies to Schools and all settings run by Education, Leisure and Housing. This policy also covers afterschool clubs and sports clubs promoted and controlled by Education, Leisure and Housing. This Policy sets out Orkney Islands Council's aims to ensure children and young people are treated with dignity and respect, equality is promoted, and diversity is valued in all environments. The Policy also outlines the rights and responsibilities associated with this commitment.

This policy takes into account the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill as this has become law in Scotland from 16 January 2024. At all stages of dealing with incidents involving bullying behaviours, the voice and opinions of children and young people will be sought, recorded and where possible acted on. In accordance with the Bill, children and young people have the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting them. Their views have to be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.

Orkney Islands Council's Dignity at Work Policy, February 2016, provides guidance on the working environment for staff and adults where activities are promoted and controlled by Education, Leisure and Housing.

3. Definition of bullying behaviour

In Scotland, bullying is defined as:

'Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of 'agency'. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour happens face to face and online.'
Respectme, 2017.

This behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be sustained over time, typically by actions, looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, being excluded, or the fear of these.

This behaviour can include:

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened face to face/online.
- Being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked.
- Having belongings taken or damaged.
- Being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you (face-to-face and/or online).
- Sending abusive messages, pictures or images on social media, online gaming platforms or phone.
- Behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives (face-to-face and/or online).
- Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be (face to face and/or online).

3.1. Prejudice-based bullying

We recognise that bullying is closely related to how we respect and recognise the value of diversity. We will be proactive about:

- Seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference.
- Creating a welcoming environment in schools in which all can feel a sense of belonging.

Bullying behaviour may be a result of prejudice that relates to perceived or actual differences. This includes all protected characteristics as described in the 2010 Equalities Act. This can lead to behaviour and language that could manifest itself as racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia or prejudice and discrimination towards disability or faith.

Prejudice-based bullying is when bullying behaviour is motivated by prejudice based on an individual's actual or perceived identity; it can be based on characteristics unique to a child or young person's identity or circumstance, for example, prejudice arising from socio-economic background or a child or young person's appearance. There is a need to address the root cause of prejudice as well as effectively respond to incidents as they arise in all settings.

For more detailed definitions of bullying refer to Appendix 1.

3.2. Labelling and Use of Language around Bullying

Labelling children and young people as ‘bullies’, ‘perpetrators’ or ‘victims’ can be disempowering and unhelpful in changing behaviour or supporting recovery from being bullied. Labelling an action as bullying is a more effective way of motivating a child or young person to change their behaviour.

Adults dealing with bullying incidents are expected to be able to distinguish between a person and their behaviour. Any bullying behaviour must be challenged, however, all people (including those causing bullying) should always be treated with respect. This does not diminish the seriousness or the impact of bullying behaviour; rather, it is an essential way of maintaining the adult’s focus and response on the behaviour that is problematic.

This solution-oriented approach is designed to help people change the way they behave without being stigmatised. Adults, rather than labelling children and young people, can help them change by telling them that the behaviour is bullying and that what they did is not acceptable. These approaches should underpin practice.

4. Roles and responsibilities

All involved in Education, Leisure and Housing have a responsibility to promote and role model positive relationships and positive behaviour across all aspects of the service. Tackling bullying is the responsibility of all adults; staff, volunteers, parents and carers. There is a clear role for children and young people too in ensuring the bullying does not happen and when it does for them to feel confident in reporting and working through the situation.

The following details specific roles and remits for individuals.

The Education, Leisure and Housing service

- Have in place a strategic policy for anti-bullying.
- Undertake a regular review of the anti-bullying policy by consultation and feedback from stakeholders.
- Ensure that settings have in place their own anti-bullying policies which includes actions to be taken.
- Monitor the implementation of anti-bullying policies, recording of incidents and take action as necessary.
- Provide training and guidance on anti-bullying awareness, policy and implementation.

Head Teachers and Senior Staff

- Create and implement an anti-bullying policy which includes action to be taken.
- Ensure that staff create a climate of respect, responsibility and positive relationships.
- Create an ethos where children and young people are confident to tell an adult about bullying behaviour experienced or witnessed.

- Ensure that children and young people are aware of the process for reporting concerns.
- Ensure that all instances of bullying are investigated, recorded using SEEMiS (see section 7.2) and that any necessary actions are taken as a response, including referring through child protection procedures or the police if necessary.
- Ensure that the views and opinions of the child/young person are taken into account and recorded as part of the process.
- Inform parents/carers of any bullying affecting their child. Ensure that parents/carers are informed and involved when their child is displaying bullying behaviours. This can be through telephone calls, letters and emails or at a meeting.
- Ensure that children, young people and their families understand the difference between bullying and other behaviours.
- Provide training and guidance on anti-bullying, policy and implementation, including digital and online information.

Other Adults

- Ensure that they are fully aware of the anti-bullying policy and approaches to be taken.
- Build capacity in children and young people to recognise and challenge bullying.
- Create an ethos where children and young people are confident to tell an adult about bullying behaviour experienced or witnessed.
- Deliver preventative work on bullying to children and young people, including the use of technology and online safety.
- Follow up promptly and effectively any allegations of bullying.
- Supporting any appropriate follow up actions or interventions as a result of bullying.
- Ensure that they promote acceptance and create an ethos which respects diversity and values difference.

Children and Young People

- Having confidence to speak out about bullying behaviour, knowing that they will be listened to.
- Challenging bullying behaviour if they feel able to do so.
- Telling a trusted adult if they have any worries about bullying.
- Keeping themselves and others safe by their own actions, choices and behaviours in an age and stage appropriate manner.
- Undertaking any follow up actions related to bullying situations.
- Following the positive behaviour approaches and expectations including the use of mobile and online technology.

Parents and Carers

- Ensuring and promoting their children's health and wellbeing.
- Encouraging and promoting safe and responsible use of mobile and online technology.
- Communicating any concerns to a relevant adult in the first instance; for example, teacher, sports coach.

- Working in partnership with the setting in the first instance and considering any advice offered by relevant professionals.
- Taking account of the rights of their child to have a say in what happens and the decisions surrounding the issue.
- Respecting their child's right to confidentiality if their child does not want them to know something that they have reported at school.
- Attending any training offered by the setting in relation to awareness raising around bullying policies and approaches including building resilience and online safety.

More detailed guidance on roles and responsibilities taken from 'Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People', 2017 is included in Appendix 4.

5. Actions to prevent or minimise bullying

Equality, Equity and Diversity.

Equality is more than simply treating everyone the same. Not everyone needs exactly the same treatment; we are not all starting from the same place with the same privilege and support. There are people and groups of people who have experienced less favourable treatment and still do. Promoting equality involves challenging inequality. It means challenging language and behaviours that lead to people being treated less favourably or having poorer outcomes at school or in life.

Equity is about addressing the imbalance and making sure those who need more help, support or protection can get it. When we do this, we are working towards equality. We strive for a society where people are treated fairly, which might mean taking extra steps to help those with less money get to school or college, making sure that those with a disability can access and enjoy the same places and experiences as everyone else, and so on. It is not enough to simply give everyone the same resources or tools to succeed, people may need ones that are specific to them and their circumstances to succeed.

Diversity aims to recognise, respect and value people's differences. Diversity recognises difference, not just tolerating it, but acknowledging and celebrating the richness it can bring.

Fully integrating and embedding equity, equality and diversity into an organisation relies on a culture where language and behaviour is challenged. Creating environments where difference is celebrated, together with role modelling how to challenge prejudices is what we expect from all our settings.

5.1. Promoting Positive Relationships

It is important to ensure that the ethos of anti-bullying is embedded in day-to-day practices that are in step with Respect for All. The message that caring relationships must be prioritised and bullying is never acceptable needs to be continuously and consistently reinforced.

Bullying takes place in the context of relationships. Time spent on combatting bullying will be greatly reduced by an approach which places positive respectful

relationships at the centre. This is core to the relational (relationship based) approach promoted by the Scottish Government.

The relational approach is based on a philosophy embracing many linked ideas, including Positive thinking (e.g. Solution Oriented and Growth Mind-set concepts); Nurture (e.g. attachment promoting practice, attuned interaction); and social engagement and respect (e.g. Social Pedagogy; Restorative Practice).

A relational approach should be embedded in all areas of the life of schools and other child centred environments. Education, Leisure and Housing is fully committed to the implementation of a relationship-based approach across all teams.

There are a range of strategies, approaches and programmes being used throughout Scotland that embed a relational approach thus creating an environment where bullying cannot thrive.

These focus on:

Positive Thinking

- Solution Oriented Approaches.
- Growth mind-set Approaches.
- The Compassionate Mind Approach.

Nurture

- Nurturing Approaches.
- Roots of Empathy.
- Video Enhanced Reflective Practice.

Social Engagement and Respect

- Restorative Practice.
- Social pedagogy.
- Philosophy for Children.

Appendix 3 has a brief description of these approaches.

We foster a clear understanding that bullying, in any form, is unacceptable. We believe that preventing bullying is the responsibility of our whole community and when there are incidents of bullying we will work together to deal with the situation and to learn from what has happened.

In our settings we do this by:

- Creating an ethos of emotional safety in which pupils understand that they have a right to feel and be safe and a responsibility to support others to feel and be safe.
- Involving the school community in developing our policy including a child/pupil friendly version of our policy.
- Using assemblies and together time in class to ensure that pupils understand the differences between relational conflict and bullying.

- Building a positive ethos based on respecting and celebrating all types of difference in our schools.
- Creating a safe and happy environment, with consequent positive relationships that have an impact on learning and achievement.
- Fostering work in school which develops empathy, social skills and emotional understanding (Emotion Coaching, The Compassionate Connected Classroom, restorative practice, peer mediation and playground buddies).
- Securing the safety of the target of bullying. Taking actions to stop the bullying from happening again through whole school learning - reflection on what has been learned from specific incidents.
- Thinking about any safeguarding concern and reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Providing assurances to a child that concerns have been listened to and action will be taken.
- Considering who else is involved and what roles they have taken.
- Work with both parties to find solutions. Identify the most effective way of preventing reoccurrence and any consequences. Send a clear message that the bullying behaviour must stop.
- Focused work with individuals and groups of pupils where required to provide emotional support and develop understanding and development of social skills e.g. social skills groups, support from ESA (Emotional Support Assistant) etc.
- Ensuring playground staff are equipped to encourage a range of activities during less structured times to promote positive play.
- Offering training to all school staff around bullying, including specific guidance on those groups who are most likely to be bullied. Raising awareness of online bullying through regular e-safety lessons.

5.2. Resilience

One of the most important things we can help develop in children and young people for preventing and responding to bullying is resilience. We can help children and young people find sources of resilience by promoting:

- A positive and safe climate within the setting.
- A sense of belonging and connectedness.
- Involvement in decision making generally, including anti-bullying policy and practice.
- Opportunities for personal challenge and success.
- Recognition of all achievement.

We need to ensure that we create an ethos which accepts mistakes will be made and learned from and fresh starts are always possible. We have a shared understanding that beliefs can be challenged and everyone has the right to their own opinions.

The most successful interventions for children and young people involved in bullying are embedded within a positive ethos and culture with children and young people using a wide range of coping strategies.

Children and young people value choice when responding to bullying. They need to explore a range of options that may suit them, as what works for one person may not work for another. Adults can support children and young people to make informed choices about how to respond to bullying.

A person who has been bullied does not feel in control of their life and may not feel free to exercise choice. By supporting children and young people to make choices, this helps restore their sense of agency; develop their resilience; and establish positive relationship approaches that they will need for the rest of their lives.

Children and young people need to have choices on how they share and report bullying and bullying concerns. The most important actions that adults undertake are to:

- Take children and young people seriously when they talk about bullying.
- Know about the anti-bullying plan/policy.
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour.
- Think about how to stop bullying before it happens.
- Ensure all children and young people are included, engaged and involved and have the opportunity to participate in school and community events.

5.3. Learning and teaching

Much of the teaching and learning around inclusion and valuing difference in all settings stems from the ethos and culture we create.

There should be a clear progressive programme of learning and teaching about respect and valuing differences as well as the message that bullying is never acceptable. Children and young people should be taught about the impact of bullying at different ages and stages. Programmes should ensure that they develop awareness and understanding regarding all equalities issues.

Initiatives such as anti-bullying week and Black History Month, LGBT Charter and Rights Respecting Schools should be seen as part of a whole ethos and not stand-alone events. Promote inclusion and reduce incidents of bullying within education settings.

Programmes should cover the use of online environments and technology and help prepare children and young people to become responsible digital citizens.

5.4. Use of Technology

Mobile and other technology is now an integral part of life and with this there are additional challenges and responsibilities for managing this within our settings especially in relation to bullying.

Settings need to develop approaches that promote the safe and responsible use of mobile devices and online environments. It has to be recognised that the mobile and online environment is addictive and it is unrealistic to expect young people to turn their phones off if they are at the receiving end of unwanted or bullying behaviour online. This includes young people being left out on social media group chats for example.

Settings should develop policies and approaches to protect adults, children and young people from bullying and abuse which can arise from the misuse of such technology. These should reflect the promotion of positive relationships and behaviour in a digital context and should be part of whole school/establishment approaches to health and wellbeing.

Settings should encourage regular opportunities for training for adults, including parents, on the online environment and the ways in which technology can be used and is being used by young people.

Online bullying (sometimes called 'cyber-bullying') is technology-assisted. It can involve the circulation or sharing of rumours, messages, gaming and images. Bullying can cause significant and sustained harm (*National Child Protection Guidance 2021*). It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some online bullying can involve unlawful or criminal behaviour.

The most common places where cyberbullying occurs are:

- Social Media.
- Text Messages.
- Instant Messages (including images and videos).
- Email'.

6. Reporting Bullying

In all settings, children and young people are encouraged to talk to trusted adults when they are unhappy or have concerns. Children and young people should feel that they have a right to feel and be safe and a responsibility to support others to feel and be safe.

Children and young people are encouraged to report bullying to:

- A trusted adult.
- Their class teacher or Support for Learning Assistant.
- Peer mentors or buddies.
- Their parents, carers or close family members who can then communicate with the school or setting.

It is important that when a child or young person talks to a trusted adult about bullying behaviour that they have been experiencing, then the adult and child understand in what circumstances this information must be passed on or may be passed on, taking to account the views of the child and through appropriate channels. Schools should have clear procedures in place for staff to share this information and who to share this with. Parents should feel confident in approaching schools to share any information about their child relating to bullying behaviour.

7. Responding to bullying and Record keeping

Any response to reported incidents must be child-centred and based on 'Getting it Right for Every Child' approaches. These should be undertaken using a partnership approach and co-operation and dialogue between parties should always be the starting point for resolution of incidents. Confidentiality in these circumstances is important for all children and young people and their families.

It is important that all children and young people are supported throughout any incidents of bullying.

7.1. Responding to bullying

The important elements of following up on an allegation of bullying are detailed below. Further specific approaches will be detailed in individual anti-bullying policies for each setting.

- The adult investigating the incident(s) should listen actively to children and young people displaying and experiencing bullying behaviour. They should take account of the voice and opinions of the child/young person.
- Whether or not bullying has taken place, the incident should be reported on SEEMiS within 3 days of the incident coming to light. The voice and the opinions of the child or young person should be recorded on SEEMiS.
- If, following the investigation, it was determined that this was not a bullying incident, the record on SEEMiS should be completed to indicate this. The record on SEEMiS should remain.
- Adults should ensure they record the details according to the procedures outlined in this policy (Appendix 2).

For incidents that have been identified as bullying the following procedures need to be in place.

- Adults need to ensure that they are sensitive to the child or young person experiencing the bullying. This has to include taking on board feedback from the child or young person and ensuring they are aware of what will happen next.
- Adults need to ensure that the child(ren) and young people displaying the behaviour are aware of the impact their bullying behaviour is having on others.
- Consider and implement agreed interventions involving children and young people and staff and parents/carers, where appropriate.
- Ensure all involved are kept informed of the on-going situation until it has been resolved.
- It would be good practice to reflect on each incident and the way that it has been responded to by those involved to inform future practice.

If the incident reported involves bullying by a member of staff, the above principles still apply, but the investigation and follow-up work should be carried out by a member of the leadership team or an Education Service Manager / senior officer.

7.2. Record Keeping and Record Sharing

All schools and other settings should have a consistent approach to recording bullying incidents. This will detail the key information relevant to the situation. Settings should record any interventions and actions taken while dealing with the bullying behaviour along with clear records of engagement with children and young people and their families. This will also detail any closure steps taken as part of the incident(s). All bullying incidents in schools must be recorded as such on SEEMiS. The recording details required by SEEMiS can be seen in Appendix 2.

Forms with the relevant information are available for services that don't have direct access to SEEMiS and the information is then transferred to SEEMiS at a later date. Appendix 3 contains the relevant recording information required through SEEMiS.

Education, Leisure and Housing have a responsibility to monitor on the number and types of bullying across its services and it will do this regularly through the data recorded on SEEMiS.

If parents and carers are unhappy with how a bullying situation has been dealt with they have the right to escalate this further through the complaints procedure. Details of this can be found in Appendix 5.

8. Bullying or Criminal Behaviour

The following section is taken directly from 'Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People', 2017 and clarifies the position regarding bullying and criminal behaviour.

Some online behaviour may be illegal, and children and young people need to be made aware of the far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content online. In cases of sexual imagery, the Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016 criminalises the non-consensual sharing of intimate images.

Similarly, hate crime is defined through the law as a crime motivated by malice or ill-will towards individuals because of their actual or perceived disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity. A hate crime can take a number of forms that are potentially criminal and should be treated as such. Adults, children and young people can seek appropriate advice and guidance from Police Scotland if they feel a hate crime may have taken place.

There is no legal definition of bullying in Scotland and, as such, bullying is not a crime. Bullying can be motivated by prejudice similar to hate crime; the distinction is when a crime has taken place, such as assault, graffiti or a breach of the peace that has been motivated by prejudice.

The Lord Advocate has issued guidelines about which category of offence will be reported to the Procurator Fiscal for consideration of prosecution. Children who do not come within these guidelines may be referred to the Children's Reporter or made subject to Police direct measures, depending on the circumstances. The Procurator Fiscal and the Children's Reporter discuss cases which are subject to joint referral and the Procurator Fiscal will decide where the case is best dealt with.

The presumption should be against criminalising children and young people wherever possible unless it is in the public interest. Promoting the principles of inclusion amongst children and young people is key to preventing hate crime. Adults and children and young people can seek appropriate advice and guidance from Police Scotland if they feel a crime may have taken place. A new law has come into effect: Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021.

9. Specific feedback from Young People involved in updating this policy

Children and Young People want to be listened to. They want adults who they interact with at school to work hard to build a relationship of trust and mutual respect. If that trust breaks down, they want to know that school staff will take steps to rebuild the trust so children and young people will be more likely to approach them with concerns in the future.

Young people told us that they want to be more involved in delivering Personal and Social Education programmes and other anti-bullying interventions as they feel they are more likely to listen to their peers. There should be opportunities for young people to have training and to deliver programmes and key messages to younger people on bullying.

Feedback from our young people suggested that settings should ensure that any programmes and learning have a clear focus on ensuring a greater understanding of equality issues for children and young people and their parents and carers. This would especially include promoting greater awareness of issues relating to LGBTI+, mental health and hidden disabilities.

Local Authorities have a duty to comply with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 (“the 2024 Act”) and the rights of children to have their views taken into account in certain processes.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed no later than December 2027.

11. Relevant and useful links

Organisation.	Link.	Description.
National Bullying Helpline	Information and advice about all forms of bullying (nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk)	General guidance re bullying.
Stop Bullying.	https://www.stopbullying.gov/	General site re approaches to stopping bullying.
Respectme - Policy through to Practice – Getting it Right.	Home - respectme	Scottish Government Anti-Bullying Service which provides guidance, support, advice, e-learning and further interaction through social networking to all stakeholders. Learning settings should refer to

Organisation.	Link.	Description.
		this website when updating their Anti-Bullying Policy.
Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People.	http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00527674.pdf	The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland.
Respectme.	https://respectme.org.uk/adults/bullying-a-guide-for-parents-and-carers/	Bullying – a guide for parents/carers.
The links below are more specific to keeping children safe online and cyberbullying.		
Childnet.	Childnet — Online safety for young people	Practical resources for cyberbullying for parents and carers and staff.
Stop bullying.	https://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/index.html	Specific information and guidance re cyberbullying.
CEOP.	https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/	Keeping children and young people safe on line.

12. References

(Many of the websites and links in section 11 were also used as references.)

Milner, J and Bateman, J, 2011 Working with Children and Teenagers Using Solution Focused Approaches, Jessica Kingsley Publishers UK.

Dweck, C, 2017 Mindset: Changing the way you think to fulfil your potential, Little, Brown Book Group Limited, UK.

Gilbert, P, 2010, The Compassionate Mind, Constable, UK.

Thorsborne, M, 2008, Restorative practices in Schools, Routledge, UK.

'Respectme', Scotland's Anti-bullying Service, 2015.

Respectme - Policy through to Practice – Getting it Right, <https://respectme.org.uk/>.

Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People, 2017 <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00527674.pdf>.

Anti-bullying policy (Revised February 2016) Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar, Department of Education and Children's Services.

'Stop bullying' <https://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/index.html>.

**United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation)
(Scotland) Act 2024** <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2024/1/contents/enacted>

Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021

13. Members of working groups leading on policy development and review:

If you have any questions about this policy, please contact education.leisure@orkney.gov.uk and a member of staff will be in contact.

2018 Edition:

Morag Miller – Education Service Manager, Orkney Islands Council.

Ernie Skea – Community Learning and Development Officer, Orkney Islands Council.

Kerry Spence – Community Learning & Development Team Leader, Orkney Islands Council.

Garry Burton – Sport and Leisure Manager, Orkney Islands Council.

Claire Jacobsen – Senior House Parent, Papdale Halls of Residence.

Charlotte Harrison – Chair of Parent Council, Kirkwall Grammar School.

Jane Bruce – Head Teacher, Papdale Primary School.

Cathy Lyner – Educational Psychologist, Orkney Islands Council.

Cara McLean – Member of Youth Forum.

Ross Whitehill – Member of Youth Forum.

Jane Partridge – Head Teacher, Stromness Academy.

2023/24 Reviewed Edition:

Steve Arnold – Service Manager, Pupils Support and Inclusion, Orkney Islands Council

Morag Miller – Service Manager, Primary Education, Orkney Islands Council

Kaydence Drayak – MYSP and member of the Youth Forum

Andrew Trafford – Head Teacher, North Walls Primary School

Mel Johansen – Guidance Manager, Stromness Academy

Alasdair Harvey – Depute, Kirkwall Grammar School

David Hall – Police Scotland

Cathy Lyner – Principal Educational Psychologist, Orkney Islands Council

Kayla Costie – CAMHS

Cheryl Rafferty – Community Learning and Development

14. Accessibility

This policy is available on the Orkney Islands Council website (<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/>) and on the Growing Up in Orkney website (<https://growingupinorkney.co.uk/>).

Each school has their own Anti-bullying policy, based on this one, to suit their own specific circumstances.

Appendices

Appendix 1- Definition of Bullying

Prejudice-based bullying.

Bullying behaviour may be a result of prejudice that relates to perceived or actual differences.

Bullying behaviour may be a result of prejudice that relates to perceived or actual differences. This can lead to prejudice and discriminatory language or behaviour, including racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia.

We need to create environments where diversity is celebrated and name calling and comments based on prejudice are challenged.

Some personal characteristics are protected within the law, to address the years of unfavourable treatment experienced by some groups.

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with a 'protected characteristic'. These are:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Marriage and civil partnership.
- Race.
- Sex.
- Religion or belief.
- Sexual orientation.

Prejudice-based bullying includes the protected characteristics, but prejudice can and does extend beyond these and can lead to bullying for a variety of reasons.

The following sections cover a brief description of the protected characteristics detailed above and some of the other prejudices that are often an aspect of bullying incidents.

Protected Characteristics:

Age: Although prejudice and discrimination based on age is not applicable in school settings, it can affect children and young people in a variety of other settings. For example, in workplaces, further and higher education and in wider society.

Disablist Bullying: People who bully others may see children and young people with disabilities as being less able to defend themselves and less able to tell an adult about the bullying. The bullying behaviour is likely to be focused upon their specific disability or disabilities, whether they are in mainstream schooling or in specialist provision.

Gypsy/Travellers: This group of children and young people is a particularly discriminated against and marginalised group and concerns about bullying are

especially acute for secondary schools. Perceived risks about bullying and parents' own experiences of discriminatory behaviour may lead to low levels of enrolment and poor attendance for Gypsy/Traveller children and young people, as well as early exit from formal education. Other Traveller families, such as Roma, may have similar concerns.

Sexual Orientation and Homophobic Bullying: Bullying based on sexual orientation is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people. It is also commonly referred to as 'homophobic bullying' but can also be expanded to recognise the specific experiences of bisexual young people using the term 'biphobic bullying'.

Children and young people do not necessarily have to be gay, lesbian or bisexual themselves to experience 'homophobic bullying'. This type of bullying may be directed towards young people perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual young people; those that do not conform to gender norms and/or expectations; and those who have gay friends or family. Children with LGB parents may also experience homophobic bullying. Although homophobic bullying is distinct from sexist and transphobic bullying, it is related to these forms of bullying through underlying sexist attitudes.

Marriage/Civil Partnership: Whilst it is unlikely that a school-aged pupil will be in a same sex marriage or civil partnership and directly experience prejudice and discrimination as a result, there could be instances of indirect discrimination. For example, if the child or young person is associated with someone (parent, sibling, etc.) who is in a same sex marriage or civil partnership or in a same sex relationship. Marriage and civil partnership discrimination and prejudice can also affect children and young people in a variety of other settings, for example, in workplaces, further and higher education and in wider society.

Racial Bullying: Children and young people from minority ethnic groups often experience bullying based on perceived differences in dress, communication, appearance, beliefs and/or culture as well as their skin colour and accent. The status of the ethnic group a child belongs to (or people assume they belong to) in a school, community or organisation can often lead to a child or young person experiencing bullying behaviour. This can arise from a misguided and/or learned belief that they are less valued and 'deserve' to be treated differently, or with less respect.

Religion and Belief: Lack of knowledge and understanding about the traditions, beliefs and etiquette of different faiths can lead to religious intolerance. Lack of awareness about the differences in practices of religions such as prayer times, dietary requirements, fasting and the wearing of religious clothing or articles of faith can result in misunderstandings and stereotyping, which may lead to bullying. People who have no religion or belief are also protected under the Equality Act.

Sectarianism: Most people understandably associate Sectarianism with religion. The reality of prejudice however means that your family background, the football team you support, the community you live in, the school you attend and even the colour of your clothing can mark you out for sectarian abuse - whatever your beliefs may be. In Scotland, sectarianism is most often related to Protestant and Roman Catholic divisions within Christianity but can also relate to other religions, for example Sunni and Shia Muslims within Islam, and Orthodox and Reform Jews within Judaism.

Sexism and gender: Bullying in the form of derogatory language and the spreading of malicious rumours can be used to regulate both girls' and boys' behaviour - suggesting that they are not being a 'real' man or a 'real' woman. These terms can be of an explicit sexual nature and it is worth noting that many can involve the use of terms for people who are gay and lesbian as a negative towards a person's masculinity or femininity. Sexism and gender stereotypes feed into homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. Gender stereotyping, based on the notion of acceptable and unacceptable male and female behaviour, can leave children and young people who are not perceived to conform to these notions vulnerable to indirect and direct bullying.

Personality traits that do not fit into the unwritten rules of 'appropriate' male and female behaviour can lead to bullying because of the prejudice towards their perceived difference.

Gender Identity and Transphobic Bullying: The term 'transgender' is an 'umbrella term' for those whose 'gender identity' or expression differs in some way from the gender that was assigned to them at birth. Gender identity reflects an individual's internal sense of self as being male, female, or an identity between or outside the two.

Transgender people face significant societal prejudice, largely because they are perceived as not conforming to gender stereotypes, expectations and norms. As a result, transgender or gender 'variant' children and young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying. This can manifest in many ways, including transphobic and homophobic name calling or deliberately mis-gendering them. An individual may also experience transphobic bullying as a result of a perception that a parent, relative or other significant figure is transgender.

Other characteristics – some of these could also be covered under protected characteristics, depending on the context of any bullying incident:

Additional Support Needs: An additional support need can arise for any reason and be of short or long term duration. Additional support may be required to overcome needs arising from learning environment; health or disability; family circumstances or social and emotional factors. A child or young person may be bullied because they have an additional support need and crucially being bullied can also lead to an additional support need.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Children and young people who are asylum seekers or refugees may be at greater risk of bullying directly and indirectly. Stigma, due to lack of knowledge and understanding of asylum seekers and refugees, and reluctance to burden parents with extra worries can allow bullying to go undetected and continue.

Body Image and Physical appearance: This can be hugely important to children and young people, with bullying because of body image having the potential to negatively impact upon their wellbeing.

Intersectionality: Understanding the different and unequal social and economic outcomes for particular groups, based on interactions between race, class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age and ethnicity. In the context of anti-bullying, it is

important to understand the connection between the experiences of belonging to one or more of these groups and people's prejudice towards them, which can lead to inequality in attainment and wellbeing.

Looked After Children and Young People: Children and young people who are looked after at home or who are looked after and accommodated, are vulnerable to bullying behaviour for a number of reasons. It may be due to regular changes in schools or where they are placed, which can make forming friendships difficult. Forming relationships with peers and adults can be more difficult due to their early childhood adversity.

Young Carers: The lives of young carers can be significantly affected by their responsibility to care for a family member who has a physical illness or disability, mental health problem, sensory or learning disability or issues with the misuse of drugs or alcohol. Young carers are at risk of bullying for a variety of reasons. Depending on responsibilities at home, they may find themselves being unable to fully participate in school or after-school activities or 'fun stuff'. This can make it difficult for them to form relationships; it can hinder successful transitions or lead to educational difficulties.

Socio-economic Prejudice: Bullying due to socio-economic status can take place in any community. Small differences in perceived family income/family living arrangements/social circumstances or values can be used as a basis for bullying behaviours. These behaviours, such as mocking speech patterns, accents, belongings, clothing, etc. can become widespread through those considering themselves to be in the dominant social economic group. Bullying of children who endure parental substance misuse can also be prevalent.

Appendix 2 – SEEMIS Recording information

BASIC INFO			
Reported To <i>(Name of Staff Member)</i>			
Addressed By <i>(Name of Staff Member)</i>			
Incident Owner <i>(Name of SMT/Guidance Staff)</i>			
Incident Location <i>(please tick)</i>	Cyber/Virtual		
	In Class		
	In School		
	In the Community		
	School Grounds		
	School Transport		
	Various Locations		
Incident Date			
Incident Time			
Reported By			
ALLEGED INCIDENT			
Name of Person(s) Experiencing	Pupil		
	Staff Member		
	Other Person		
Name of Person(s) Displaying	Pupil		
	Staff Member		
	Other Person		
NATURE OF INCIDENT			
Nature of Incident	Damage to Property		<i>e.g. theft (of bags, clothes, money), tearing clothes, ripping books, etc.</i>
	Emotional		

<i>(Please tick all that apply)</i>	Extortion		
	Incitement		<i>e.g. encouraging others to bully, behave in a racist, sexist or discriminatory manner; wearing discriminatory insignia such as racist badges; distributing racist or other discriminatory literature</i>
	Isolation		<i>e.g. shunned, rejected, left out of activities/groups, refusal to cooperate etc.</i>
	Other (Please Specify)		
	Physical		<i>e.g. pushing, shoving, fighting, tripping-up etc.</i>
	Text (SMS) or IT related		<i>e.g. instant messaging, mobile phone texting, email, Social Networking Sites etc.</i>
	Verbal		<i>e.g. name-calling, threatening, sarcasm, ridicule, discriminatory comments during classes, discriminatory jokes, mimicking, spreading rumours etc.</i>
	Written		<i>e.g. graffiti, notes, letters, writing on jotters, written threats, ridicule through drawings etc.</i>

Characteristics <i>(Please tick all that apply)</i>	Age		Marital Status	
	Assailant Medical Condition/ Disability		Not Known	
	Body Image		Pregnancy / Maternity	
	Care Circumstances		Racial	
	Disability of Victim		Religion or Belief	
	Economic Circumstances		Sectarian	
	Family Circumstances		Sexual Harassment	
	Gender		Substance Misuse – Alcohol	
	Gender Reassignment		Substance Misuse – Not Alcohol	
	Homophobia / Sexual Orientation		Territorial / Gang Related	
	Other			
Incident Detail				

MONITOR / REVIEW			
Reviewer <i>(Member of SMT/Guidance Staff)</i>			
Date Due			
Date Complete			
Person(s) Experiencing <i>(Yes/ No / NA)</i>	Do they feel their concerns were listened to?		
	Do they feel satisfied with the outcome? (child or young person)		
	Parent / Carer are satisfied with the outcome?		
Person(s) Displaying <i>(Yes/ No / NA)</i>	Do they feel their concerns were listened to?		
	Do they feel satisfied with the outcome? (child or young person)		
	Parent / Carer are satisfied with the outcome?		
ACTION PROGRESSED			
Action Procedures			

Incident Conclusion	Being Addressed	
	Not Resolved	
	Resolved	
	Unfounded	

Appendix 3 – Definition of approaches used to prevent bullying.

Schools and settings use different approaches to create an ethos of trust, respect and positive relationships. These approaches are the main ones that are used by schools and settings in Orkney. Not all approaches are used by every school and setting.

It is important that all schools and settings clearly state how they create and establish their school ethos and how they will follow up with any incidents of bullying. There needs to be clear links between schools and settings Anti-bullying policies and any other relevant policies; eg Positive behaviour/relationships policies.

These policies should also refer to and detail how de-escalation is used as a key strategy in dealing with any challenging situation.

Nurture.

Nurture is an ethos with its origins in John Bowlby's influential attachment theory. This theory was applied in Colwyn Trevarthen's research on the interactions which promote bonding between babies and their caregivers, to give a family of approaches which promote positive, trusting relationships in education and care environments. The Nurture ethos is at the base approaches such as **Nurturing Approaches**, **Roots of Empathy**, and **Video Enhanced Reflective Practice (VERP)**.

Nurturing Approaches (Marjorie Boxall).

This family of approaches had its origins in the development of Nurture Groups in education and early childcare settings in East London in the late 1960s. The concept of Nurture has more recently been embraced by the Scottish Government as an overarching whole-school philosophy, moving away from the idea that the Nurture should exist in a discrete part of a setting for the benefit of a select few children.

The Nurture principles

Marjorie Boxall put forward six 'Nurture Principles' - key concepts that shape our understanding of child development through the lens of attachment. These principles, in Boxall's work, were used as an anchor and reference to underpin the creation and ethos of Nurture Groups.

- NP1** Learning is understood developmentally.
- NP2** The setting offers a safe base.
- NP3** Nurture is important for the development of wellbeing and self-esteem.
- NP4** Language is a vital means of communication.
- NP5** All behaviour is communication.
- NP6** Transitions are important in the lives of children and young people.

Whole school nurture

In 2017, the Scottish Government launched guidance to help establishments embrace and develop 'Nurture as a Whole-School Approach'. Whilst the main goal is to promote and develop Nurture as a universal approach in Scotland's education and childcare establishments, it is also an important cornerstone of more focused trauma-informed practice. In addition, the Nurturing Approach is key to responding to the increasing levels of anxiety present in Scotland's schools, particularly since the Covid 19 pandemic and the associated school closures from 2020. Education Scotland's self-evaluation framework <https://education.gov.scot/resources/applying-nurture-as-a-whole-school-approach-a-framework-to-support-self-evaluation/> acts as a powerful guide, and a highly practical audit tool, for schools and Early Years settings to use as they develop their nurturing ethos and practices.

Positive Thinking.

Solution Orientated Approaches (Steve De Shazer, Insoo Kim Berg, Bill O'Hanlon).

Solution orientated approaches have their origins in therapeutic approaches such as brief solution-focused therapy and have been found to have much wider applications in the way people work together. The approaches centre on key principles which help focus our minds on solutions, positive futures and strengths. This empowering approach helps to avoid the easy trap of becoming embroiled in negative thinking patterns which can impede progress and hamper the prospect of positive change.

"It seems clear that one cannot solve the problem with the same thinking that created the problem" (Berg and De Shazer, 1993).

A Solution Oriented approach helps people identify what they want to achieve, understand what is in their capacity and explores what they can do to move towards this.

Solution Oriented approaches have a number of applications within settings to help encourage positive relationships, tackle difficulties in a productive way, and promote an inclusive ethos.

Growth Mind-Set Approaches (Carol Dweck).

Growth mind-sets can be developed and shaped through an ethos within which both children, young people and adults work and the daily interactions they have with each other.

Positive Coaching Scotland (PCS) uses Growth Mind-Set concepts and is designed to create a positive environment for young people in sport. The programme will:

- Empower parents, coaches, teachers and sports leaders to help create a more positive sporting environment from where young people learn and develop through sport.
- Support young people, along with their coaches, parents and teachers, to move away from the win at all costs mentality and focus instead on effort, respect and responsibility.
- Ensure young people are developed not just physically, but socially and psychologically as well.

Compassionate Mind Approaches – Learned Optimism (Paul Gilbert).

Drawing from a long background of psychology, the Compassionate Mind Foundation describes compassion as “behaviour that aims to nurture, look after, teach, mentor and offer feelings of acceptance and belonging in order to benefit another person.”

Compassionate Mind Approaches use skills and exercises to build compassion towards ourselves and others. These activities help people with three different types of emotional regulation (self-protection, wants and achievements, safeness and connectedness.)

Roots of Empathy.

This is a Canadian approach that was promoted with Scottish Government funding in recent years. Within this approach, a trained facilitator works at whole class level within an education setting. The focus of the work comes in the form of regular visits from a young baby with its mother. The whole class gets the chance to experience and reflect on the components of sensitive attuned interaction. The sessions give all participants the chance to engage with empathy as the central driver for all trusting, mutually satisfying relationships.

Video Enhanced Reflective Practice (VERP).

VERP is an approach to professional reflection where practitioners learn together about the key elements of attuned interaction. They then apply this learning in their professional lives, by analysing video footage of their interactions. This involves reflecting on their use of the ‘attunement principles’ (see Table below) within their interactions, and the effect that this has, in turn, on their communicative effectiveness and their relationships. This is of great value for professionals wishing to build mutually rewarding, positive relationships with pupils, clients, or even colleagues.

Table: Principles of Attuned Interactions and Guidance.

Being Attentive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking interested with friendly posture. • Giving time and space for others. • Wondering about what they are doing, thinking or feeling. • Enjoying watching them.
Encouraging Initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiting. • Listening actively. • Showing emotional warmth through intonation. • Naming positively what you see, think or feel. • Using friendly and/or playful intonation as appropriate. • Saying what you are doing. • Looking for initiatives.
Receiving Initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing you have heard, noticed their initiative. • Receiving with body language. • Being friendly and/or playful as appropriate. • Returning eye-contact, smiling, nodding in response. • Receiving what they are saying or doing with words. • Repeating/using their words or phrases.
Developing Attuned Interactions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving and then responding. • Checking they are understanding you. • Waiting attentively for your turn. • Having fun. • Giving a second (and further) turn on same topic. • Giving and taking short turns. • Contributing to interaction/activity equally. • Co-operating – helping each other.
Guiding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scaffolding. • Extending, building on their response. • Judging the amount of support required and adjusting. • Giving information when needed. • Providing help when needed. • Offering choices that they can understand. • Making suggestions that they can follow.
Deepening Discussion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting goal-setting. • Sharing viewpoints. • Collaborative discussion and problem-solving. • Naming difference of opinion. • Investigating the intentions behind words. • Naming contradictions/conflicts (real or potential). • Reaching new shared understandings. • Managing conflict (back to being attentive and receive initiatives aiming to restore attuned interactions).

Social Engagement and Respect (Carl Rogers and Alfie Kohn).

Social engagement and respect are concepts based in the frame of person-centred and humanist philosophy. The underlying belief is that all people have equal worth,

and that every person must be given respect. In more recent times, Humanism has become expressed in belief systems such as **Restorative Practice**, **Social Pedagogy**, and **Philosophy for Children**. Where schools model the humanist approach and promote social responsibility as a way of being, rewards systems and extrinsic motivators cease to have relevance. Controlling methods are viewed as counterproductive, and coercion as damaging to relationships. Instead, pupils' ability to apply empathy is prioritized, and mutual responsibility is promoted through all aspects of school life, including school behaviour systems promoting reflection and repair rather than punishment.

Restorative Practice.

Restorative approaches aim to improve behaviour and relationships in schools by moving away from a blame and retribution model of dealing with unacceptable behaviour towards one which is based on social responsibility and self-awareness. These approaches have their origins in North American Indian and Maori cultures. The concepts were taken forward as 'Restorative Justice' in Canada, New Zealand and Australia in the 1970's. The philosophy has been developed for the shaping of school ethos and conflict resolution in many forms, including the Scottish Government approach of 'Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour'.

Social Pedagogy.

Social Pedagogy is an approach that has developed most fully in continental Europe and Scandinavia. Its philosophy is very much based in the concept that education and care is intimately entwined, and that educators need to engage deeply with the child as a whole person rather than as a recipient of knowledge or guidance. This approach is built on the concept of 'pedagogues' who do not pigeon-hole themselves into caring or teaching roles, but embrace a broad-based, holistic, and deeply respectful approach to working with children.

Philosophy for Children.

Within Philosophy for Children, and similar approaches, children are invited to participate in regular group sessions, where they learn to reflect deeply on the moral and philosophical aspects of stories and other materials, and to express their reflections in a safe and respectful context. In common with other approaches to education within the Social Engagement and Respect family, Philosophy for Children is capable of promoting far-reaching ethos change at whole-school level.

Appendix 4 – Policy and practice expectations

This appendix was written with reference to roles and responsibilities from 'Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People', 2017. It has been edited to make it specific for this policy and Orkney Islands Council.

Your Role	What is expected of you	What you can expect from others
Local authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement an organisational anti-bullying policy in step with the principles and values that underpin 'Respect for All' and ensure an explicit commitment to challenging prejudice-based bullying. • Develop and implement an anti-bullying policy in consultation with stakeholders including children and young people, parents and staff/volunteers. • Engage and consult with local/community stakeholders. • Provide access to training and materials to support all those who work with children and young people in the organisation's services. • Ensure parents/carers are provided with information on how to raise a complaint and the escalation process. • Take action to promote equality and diversity and children's rights and provide training relevant to these areas. • Monitor incidents of bullying on SEEMiS. • Explicitly mention all protected characteristics and other forms of prejudice-based bullying. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to resources, professional learning and materials such as those provided by Respectme and Education Scotland and those that are in step with Respect for All.
Individual schools or settings run or managed by OIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an anti-bullying policy for own setting/school that reflects the OIC policy including an explicit commitment to challenging prejudice-based bullying. • Develop and implement practices that promote fairness, inclusion and respect in line with Respect for All and national 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local authority to ensure that they have an up to date policy and guidance. • The local authority to provide access to training and materials for staff and volunteers.

Your Role	What is expected of you	What you can expect from others
	<p>guidance on promoting positive relationships and behaviour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve and consult meaningfully with children and young people. • Involve parents/carers and consult meaningfully. • Make parents/carers aware of organisational and local anti-bullying policies. • Ensure parents are provided with information on how to raise a complaint and the escalation process. • Ensure there is clear monitoring and recording procedures using SEEMiS and everyone in the school or service are aware of these and know what the process is for ensuring that the details are added to SEEMiS. • Monitor and review policy and practice on a regular basis. • Take action to promote positive respectful relationships. • Take action to promote equality and diversity and children's rights. • Offer children and young people a range of ways to report bullying or to talk about any concerns they have in confidence. • Resolve incidents of bullying proactively, using a respectful, proportionate and holistic approach which takes account of the impact of the incident as well as any underlying prejudice or other negative attitudes. 	
Children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat people with respect and not engage in bullying behaviour. • Be aware of anti-bullying policies and practices in schools/clubs/groups attended. • Where safe and appropriate, challenge bullying behaviour. • Share concerns with peers/trusted adults if appropriate to the individual. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools, clubs and all children's services' should have an anti-bullying policy and approaches to prevent and respond to bullying that are in step with Respect for All. • Be treated with respect and ensure your rights are protected and fulfilled.

Your Role	What is expected of you	What you can expect from others
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work collaboratively to help ensure bullying cannot thrive. • Share concerns with peers/trusted adult. • Consider carefully any online engagement especially through social media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be included and involved when developing policy, approaches to bullying, and what happens when affected by bullying. • Be listened to and have concerns taken seriously. • Have choices on how you respond and options on where and how to report incidents. • Receive guidance and direction to services or resources that can meet individual specific needs or concerns. These could relate to any individual or protected characteristic.
Parents/ Carers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of anti-bullying policies and practice in any school/clubs/ groups attended by their child or young person. • Work collaboratively to help ensure bullying cannot thrive. • Share concerns about their child as early as possible with appropriate teacher/practitioner/ coach. • Engage through school Parent Forum/Parent Council or other appropriate forums to contribute to and learn about anti-bullying practice. • Treat people with respect. • Promote positive respectful relationships. • Listen and take children and young people seriously. • Sharing concerns about their child as early as possible with appropriate teacher /practitioner/coach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools, services and clubs attended by children and young people should have an anti- bullying policy and approaches to prevent and respond to bullying that are in step with Respect for All. This should be communicated clearly to parents. • Be made aware of and involved in developing any new policies and practices. • Be included and involved when developing policy, approaches to bullying, and what happens when affected by bullying. • Be listened to and have concerns taken seriously and to be treated with respect. • Be signposted to a range of services or resources that can meet individual specific needs or concerns. These could relate to any individual or protected characteristic. • Be made aware of the complaints process and also the escalation process at establishment and local

Your Role	What is expected of you	What you can expect from others
		authority level and know how to make a complaint at appropriate stages.
Staff and volunteers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand both local and organisational antibullying policy and procedures. • Be aware of the values and principles of Respect for All and act in accordance with them in terms of preventing and responding to bullying behaviour. • Act in accordance with the relevant professional standards and codes of conduct, e.g. Common Core CLD/youth work/volunteer adult SSSC, GTCS, etc. • Act as positive role models to establish open positive and supportive relationships. • Listen and take children and young people seriously. • Engage with parent(s). • Share concerns appropriately within your organisation/service and seek support where appropriate. • Take action to promote equality and diversity and children's rights. • Work collaboratively to help ensure bullying cannot thrive. • Treat people with respect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to undertake a appropriate training on anti-bullying, promoting positive relationships and behaviour, equality and diversity and children's rights. • Support, resources and materials from the local authority, organisation, Education Scotland, Youthlink Scotland, Sportscotland and respectme etc. • Support when responding to bullying and support when developing approaches. • Be included and involved in the development of anti-bullying policies and practices.

Appendix 5 – How to make a complaint

Orkney Islands Council is committed to providing high-quality customer services. We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services. If you are unhappy with how a bullying situation has been dealt with you have the right to escalate this further through the complaints procedure.

How do I complain?

You can complain in person at the Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall, Orkney, KW15 1NY, by phone, in writing, email to complaints@orkney.gov.uk. Further details can be found on our website www.orkney.gov.uk.

It is easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So please talk to a member of our staff at the service you are complaining about. Then they can try to resolve any problems on the spot. All services will endeavour to resolve this as quickly as possible. This can be done in person, by telephone or email.

When complaining, tell us:

- Your full name and address.
- As much as you can about the complaint.
- What has gone wrong.
- How you want us to resolve the matter.

How long do I have to make a complaint?

Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of:

- The event you want to complain about.
- Or finding out that you have a reason to complain, but no longer than 12 months after the event itself.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

Head of Legal and Governance, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall, Orkney, KW15 1NY on telephone 01856873535.

If you need more information please refer to the Orkney Island Council's complaints handling procedure, you can find it here

<http://www.orkney.gov.uk/Council/C/complaints-procedure.htm>