

Minute

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee

Wednesday, 6 September 2023, 09:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Councillors Gwenda M Shearer, Jean E Stevenson, Graham A Bevan, Alexander G Cowie, Steven B Heddle, James R Moar, John A R Scott, James W Stockan, Ivan A Taylor and Heather N Woodbridge.

Religious Representative:

Reverend Fraser Macnaughton.

Present via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

Councillor Stephen G Clackson.

Religious Representative:

Marie Locke.

Clerk

- Sandra Craigie, Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- James Wylie, Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.
- Peter Diamond, Head of Education.
- Frances Troup, Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing.
- Steve Arnold, Service Manager (Support for Learning and Inclusion).
- David Brown, Service Manager (Resources) (for Items 1 to 16).
- Garry Burton, Service Manager (Leisure and Culture) (for Items 1 to 16).
- Catherine Diamond, Service Manager (Early Learning and Childcare) (for Items 1 to 8).
- Morag Miller, Service Manager (Primary Education) (for Items 1 to 8).
- Lesley Mulraine, Service Manager (Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation) (for Items 1 to 16).
- Jane Partridge, Service Manager (Secondary and Tertiary Education) (for Items 1 to 8).
- Pat Robinson, Service Manager (Accounting).
- Kerry Spence, Service Manager (Community Learning, Development and Employability) (for Items 1 to 9).
- Emma Billington, Head Teacher, Papdale Primary School (for Items 1 to 8).
- Nigel Fyffe, Team Manager (Maintenance and Heritage) (for Items 1 to 15).
- Vikki Kerr, Team Leader (Libraries and Archives) (for Items 10 to 15).
- Georgette Herd, Solicitor.

In Attendance via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

- Claire Kemp, Assistant Principal, UHI Orkney (for Items 1 to 3).
- Jane Downes, Director for UHI Archaeology Institute, UHI Orkney (for Items 2 and 3).
- Paul Clark, ORCA Senior Projects Manager, UHI Orkney (for Items 1 to 3).
- Avril Litts, Finance Manager, UHI Orkney (for Items 1 to 3).
- Rona Humphreys, Acting Head Teacher, Eday Community School (for Items 1 to 4).

Observing

- Kirsty Groundwater, Team Manager (Communications) (for Items 1 to 10).

Apologies

- Councillor Rachael A King.
- Reverend Susan Kirkbride, Religious Representative.
- Jo Hill, Teacher Representative.
- Mary Maley, Teacher Representative.

Declaration of Interest

- Councillor Heather N Woodbridge – Item 15.

Chair

- Councillor Gwenda M Shearer.

1. Disclosure of Exempt Information

The Committee noted the proposal that the public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of Item 16, as the business to be discussed involved the potential disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.

2. Revenue Expenditure Outturn

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Accounting), the Committee:

Noted:

2.1. The revenue expenditure outturn statement in respect of service areas for which the Education, Leisure and Housing was responsible, for financial year 2022/23, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, indicating the following:

- A net General Fund overspend of £1,180,600.
- A net non-General Fund overspend of £792,300.

2.2. The revenue financial detail by service area statement in respect of service areas for which the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee was responsible, for financial year 2022/23, attached as Annex 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee scrutinised:

2.3. The explanations given and actions proposed in respect of significant budget variances, as outlined in the Budget Action Plan, attached as Annex 3 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that appropriate action was taken with regard to significant budget variances.

3. Revenue Expenditure Monitoring

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Accounting), the Committee:

Noted:

3.1. The revenue financial summary statement in respect of service areas for which the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee was responsible, for the period 1 April to 30 June 2023, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, indicating a budget underspend position of £208,100.

3.2. The revenue financial detail by service area statement in respect of service areas for which the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee was responsible, for the period 1 April to 30 June 2023, attached as Annex 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee scrutinised:

3.3. The explanations given and actions proposed in respect of significant budget variances, as outlined in the Budget Action Plan, attached as Annex 3 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that action was being taken with regard to significant budget variances.

4. Education Scotland – Follow Up Inspection

Eday Community School and Nursery Class

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 (Primary Education), the Committee:

Noted:

4.1. That, in May 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland undertook a follow up visit to Eday Primary School and Nursery Class.

4.2. The positive feedback on progress made by the school since the original inspection in September 2019, as detailed in the letter from Education Scotland, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.

4.3. That, as a result of the inspection visit on 16 and 17 May 2023, HM Inspectors were confident in the school's capacity to continue to improve and as such would make no more visits to Eday Primary School and Nursery Class in connection with the original inspection in September 2019.

The Committee scrutinised:

4.4. The inspection letter in respect of Eday Primary School and Nursery Class, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, issued by Education Scotland on 27 June 2023, together with next steps outlined in section 5 of the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance.

5. Education Scotland – Inspection of Papdale Primary School

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 (Primary Education), the Committee:

Noted:

5.1. That, in May 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Papdale Primary School, being the first full inspection of any school in Orkney since before the COVID-19 pandemic.

5.2. That, during a full model inspection, four key quality indicators from How Good is Our School were used in a standard inspection, with the evaluations of those quality indicators for Papdale Primary School as follows:

- Leadership of Change – satisfactory.
- Learning, Teaching and Assessment – good.
- Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion – satisfactory.
- Raising Attainment and Achievement – good.

5.3. That, as a result of the positive inspection visit, HM Inspectors were confident in the school's capacity to continue to improve and as such they would make no more visits to Papdale Primary School in connection with this inspection.

The Committee scrutinised:

5.4. The inspection letter in respect of Papdale Primary School, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, issued by Education Scotland on 27 June 2023, together with next steps outlined in section 5 of the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance.

6. Education Scotland – Inspection of Papdale Nursery

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 (Early Learning and Childcare), the Committee:

Noted:

6.1. That, in May 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Papdale Nursery.

6.2. That four key quality indicators from How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare were used in a standard inspection, with the evaluations of those quality indicators for Papdale Nursery as follows:

- 1.3 Leadership of Change – Good.
- 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment - Good.
- 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion - Good.
- 3.2 Securing Children’s Progress - Good.

The Committee scrutinised:

6.3. The inspection report for Papdale Nursery, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, issued by Education Scotland, together with next steps outlined in section 5 of the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance.

7. Care Inspectorate – Willow Tree Nursery

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 (Early Learning and Childcare), the Committee:

Noted:

7.1. That, on 27 and 28 April 2023, the Care Inspectorate undertook an inspection of Willow Tree Nursery.

7.2. That four key quality indicators from the Care Inspectorate Quality Framework were used in the inspection, with the evaluations for Willow Tree Nursery as follows:

- How good is our care, play and learning? Adequate.
- How good is our setting? Good.
- How good is our leadership? Adequate.
- How good is our staff team? Adequate.

The Committee scrutinised:

7.3. The inspection report for Willow Tree Nursery, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, together with next steps outlined in section 5 of the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance.

8. Care Inspectorate – St Andrews Nursery

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 (Early Learning and Childcare), the Committee:

Noted:

8.1. That, on 24 and 25 April 2023, the Care Inspectorate undertook an inspection of St Andrews Nursery.

8.2. That four key quality indicators from the Care Inspectorate Quality Framework were used in the inspection, with the evaluations for St Andrews Nursery as follows:

- How good is our care, play and learning? – Very Good.
- How good is our setting? – Very Good.
- How good is our leadership? – Very Good.
- How good is our staff team? – Very Good.

The Committee scrutinised:

8.3. The inspection report for St Andrews Nursery, attached at Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, together with next steps outlined in section 5 of the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance.

9. Orkney Community Learning and Development

Partners Plan 2021 to 2024 – 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 (Community Learning, Development and Employability), the Committee:

Noted:

9.1. The statutory requirement placed on local authorities by the Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013 to publish a Community Learning and Development (CLD) plan every three years, describing how it will co-ordinate and secure adequate and efficient CLD provision with other sector partners.

9.2. That, on 5 October 2021, the Council adopted the Community Learning and Development Plan for Orkney 2021 to 2024, in so far as it related to the Council.

9.3. That, in line with governance arrangements for the Strategic Community Learning Group, the Community Learning and Development Plan was reviewed and updated annually to ensure it remained effective and relevant to evolving needs.

The Committee scrutinised:

9.4. The annual review of the Orkney Community Learning and Development Partners Plan 2021 to 2024, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance that effective progress was being made.

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

9.5. That the revised Orkney Community Learning and Development Partners Plan 2021 to 2024, attached as Appendix 1 to this Minute, which had been updated by partners of the Orkney Strategic Community Learning Group, be approved, in so far as it related to the Council.

Marie Locke and Reverend Fraser Macnaughton, religious representatives, left the meeting at this point.

10. Housing Revenue Account

Revenue Repairs and Maintenance Programmes – Expenditure Outturn

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing, the Committee:

Noted:

10.1. The summary position of expenditure incurred against the approved revenue repairs and maintenance programme in respect of the Housing Revenue Account for financial year 2022/23, as detailed in section 4.2 of the report by the Head of Finance, indicating an overspend of £176,000 against an approved budget totalling £1,548,500.

The Committee scrutinised:

10.2. The explanations given in respect of significant budget variances, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance with regard to progress made with delivery of the approved revenue repairs and maintenance programme for 2022/23 in respect of the Housing Revenue Account.

11. Housing Revenue Account

Revenue Repairs and Maintenance Programmes – Expenditure Monitoring

After consideration of a report by Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing, the Committee:

Noted:

11.1. The summary position of expenditure incurred, as at 30 June 2023, against the approved revenue repairs and maintenance programme in respect of the Housing Revenue Account, as detailed in section 4.2 of the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee scrutinised:

11.2. The explanations given in respect of significant budget variances, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance with regard to progress being made with delivery of the approved revenue repairs and maintenance programme for 2023/24 in respect of the Housing Revenue Account.

12. Housing Service – Annual Assurance Statement

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 Community Learning, Leisure and Housing, the Committee:

Noted:

12.1. The requirement to submit an Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator by 31 October.

12.2. That the Scottish Housing Regulator had enhanced its requirements in respect of assurance in relation to equalities, as well as tenant and resident safety, for Assurance Statements to be submitted by 31 October 2023.

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

12.3. That the Annual Assurance Statement, together with supporting Annexes, attached as Appendix 2 to this Minute, be approved for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Reverend Fraser Macnaughton, religious representative, rejoined the meeting during discussion of this item.

13. Policy on Dampness

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:

13.1. That each year, the Council received an average of 27 requests for service from its tenants as a result of issues with damp and mould.

13.2. That a Dampness Policy, including Dealing with Mould, had been developed in line with guidance produced by the Chartered Institute of Housing, the Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers and the Housing Ombudsman, to ensure that the Council's delivery of housing services was appropriately robust in dealing with damp and mould.

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

13.3. That the Dampness Policy, including Dealing with Mould, attached as Appendix 3 to this Minute, be approved.

14. Orkney Archive Digital Preservation Policy and Strategy

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Team Manager (Libraries and Archives), the Committee:

Noted:

14.1. That Digital Preservation was a key area which the Archive Service must focus upon with the advent of more electronic content being created by the Council as well as private bodies and individuals.

14.2. That digital records selected for permanent retention need to be preserved so that they could be accessed in future years, which required different methods compared to physical archival collections traditionally held.

14.3. That evidence of how the Archive Service was properly managing digital collections was a requirement for Archive Accreditation, an industry standard that Orkney Archive first achieved in 2017.

14.4. That the Archive Service would be looking to retain its accredited status when it began the standard re-application process in August 2023.

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

14.5. That the Orkney Archive Digital Preservation Policy, together with the Digital Preservation Strategy 2023-2025, attached as Appendices 4 and 5 respectively to this Minute, be approved.

15. Island and Rural Housing Fund – COVID-19 Funding

Councillor Heather N Woodbridge declared an interest in this item, her connection being that she was a Director and Co-Chair of The North Ronaldsay Trust, but concluded that her interest did not preclude her involvement in the discussion.

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 (Resources), the Committee:

Noted:

15.1. That, on 21 December 2021, when considering the allocation of one-off funding towards a series of projects considered to provide excellent recovery prospects from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Policy and Resources Committee recommended the allocation of funding to a series of recovery projects, which included a one-off allocation of £500,000 towards an Island and Rural Housing Fund.

15.2. That, as part of the budget setting process for 2023/24, following a review of all General Fund reserves and previous commitments for funding, the £500,000 allocation towards the Island and Rural Housing Fund was subsequently reduced to £400,000.

15.3. That the Council's Island and Rural Housing Fund would be utilised to bridge any shortfall in financing, allowing isles housing projects, which would otherwise not be financially viable, to proceed, following successful applications by development trusts to the Scottish Government's Rural and Islands Housing Fund and/or the Scottish Land Fund.

15.4. That, due to time pressures associated with the projects, the Chief Executive exercised emergency powers in awarding funding to the undernoted organisations, met from the Council's Island and Rural Housing Fund:

- Stronsay Development Trust – £37,126 towards the renovation of Beechwood, Stronsay.
- Papay Development Trust – £41,000 towards the purchase of Fairview, Papa Westray.
- Eday Partnership – £100,000 towards the development of two properties at Blett, Eday.

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

15.5. That powers be delegated to the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, in the consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee, to determine applications for funding from the Council's Island and Rural Housing Fund.

15.6. That powers be delegated to the Corporate Director for Education Leisure and Housing, in consultation with the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal and Governance, to conclude Agreements, on the Council's standard terms and conditions, with recipients of funding from the Council's Island and Rural Housing Fund.

16. Support for Learning

On the motion of Councillor Gwenda M Shearer, seconded by Councillor Jean E Stevenson, the Committee resolved that the public be excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 11 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Support for Learning and Inclusion), the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that consideration of the provision of Support for Learning be deferred.

The above constitutes the summary of the Minute in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 section 50C(2) as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

Reverend Fraser Macnaughton left the meeting during discussion of this item.

17. Conclusion of Meeting

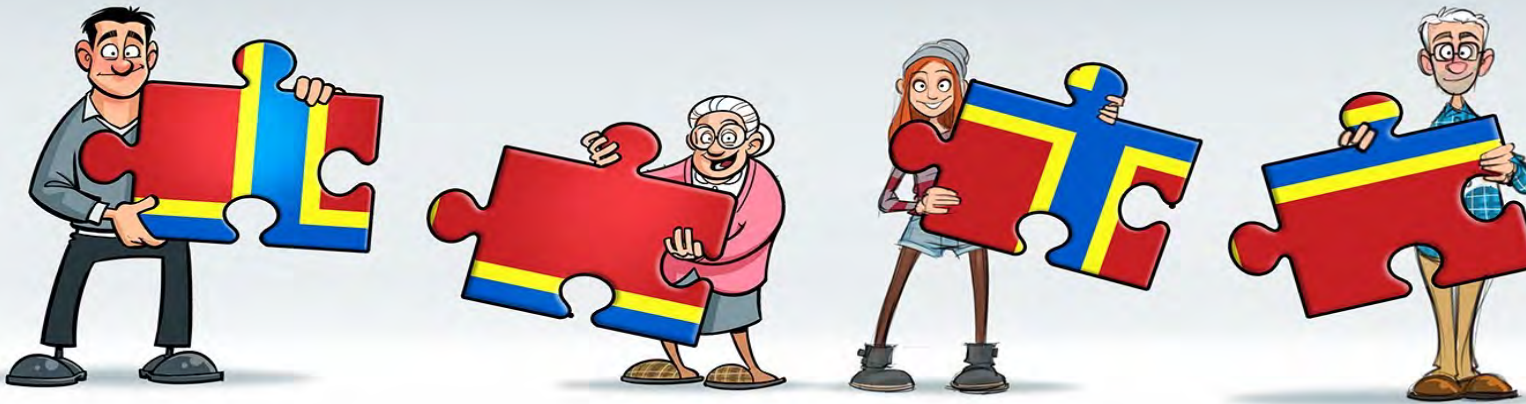
At 13:32 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: Gwenda M Shearer.

Orkney

Community Learning & Development
Partners Plan 2021 - 2024

(2023 Update)



Working
and
learning
together for
a better
Orkney

Executive Summary

The requirements for Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013 place a duty on all Local Authorities to prepare, consult on and publish a three-year CLD plan for the provision of community learning and development in the local area.

Orkney's 3-year Partners Plan for Community Learning and Development (CLD) is produced by Orkney's Strategic Community Learning Group (SCLG), which is a partnership of both public and third sector organisations who are delivering Community Learning & Development support and activities across Orkney.

The plan, which is based on local needs and meets the requirements of the Scottish Government Regulations for CLD, builds on previous CLD Partners Plans and sets out how we will deliver CLD across Orkney over a three-year period, ensuring services are planned for and delivered in a strategic and collaborative way.

Our partnership vision is to work together to improve the lives and outcomes for people and communities in Orkney through community learning and development opportunities and approaches.

Many developments have been made since the inception of statutory CLD Partnership Plans, including improved governance and strengthened connections with stakeholders and increased alignment with other partnerships and plans including Orkney's Community Planning Partnership.

To ensure strategic alignment to the previous Orkney Community Plan, (our statutory Local Outcomes Improvement Plan), three of the four priorities in the CLD Partners Plan were taken from the agreed priorities for the Community Plan, namely: Connectivity, Community Wellbeing and Sustainable Recovery. A new Local Outcomes Improvement Plan has been developed this year with the three new priorities identified as:

Sustainable Development - supporting Community Wealth Building & achieving Net Zero by 2030

Cost of Living Crisis - and tackling the underlying causes of poverty

Local Equality - so residents in all parts of Orkney have equal opportunities

For the final year of this CLD Partners Plan 2021-24 we will link our actions across these three new Community Planning priority areas and continue to keep our fourth priority of Partnership Workforce Development.

What is the CLD Partners Plan?

Orkney CLD Partners Plan is published by partners to help plan and deliver together, avoid duplication, strengthen co-ordination to improve opportunities and outcomes for learners



Contents

What is Community Learning and Development?.....	4
Why do we need a CLD Partner’s Plan?.....	5
The Strategic Community Learning Group (SCLG).....	6
Governance Arrangements.....	7
Community and Learner Engagement.....	8
Policy Context.....	9
Orkney Context.....	10
Plan principles, targets and identified barriers.....	11
2021-2024 CLD Priorities.....	12
Monitoring and Evaluation	13
Conclusion	13
Appendix 1 – CLD Partners Plan 2021-24.....	14
Sustainable Development.....	15
Cost of Living.....	16
Local Equality.....	17
Partnership Workplace Development.....	19
Unmet needs	20
Appendix 2 – Our Regional Approach in the North	21
Appendix 3 - Links/Bibliography.....	22

What does this document tell us?

This plan, focuses on local needs and meets the requirements of the Scottish Government Regulations for CLD, setting out how we will deliver CLD across Orkney, over a three-year period.



What is Community Learning and Development?

The role of CLD is to support individuals, groups, and communities to make a positive change in their lives or in their community by using a range of different approaches. Community Learning and Development (CLD) covers a broad range of practice including youth work, community-based adult learning, family learning, volunteer development and community development.

The Revised Guidance Note on Community Learning & Development Planning 2018-21 states that “CLD supports primarily disadvantaged or vulnerable groups and individuals of all ages to engage in learning, personal development, and active citizenship with a focus on bringing about change in their lives and communities.”

The Community Learning and Development Strategic Guidance emphasizes the important role CLD must play in the future delivery of public services, its contribution to early intervention and prevention and its ability to empower people both individually and collectively to make positive changes to their lives through learning.

The CLD Standards Council developed the code of ethics for Community Learning and Development which helps define what CLD is. Together with agreed values and principles and a Competence Framework, it provides the foundation for improving standards in CLD and for strengthening the identity of CLD as a profession.

The CLD Standards Council identified the values which are key to CLD practice across all its settings as:

- **Self-determination** – respecting the individual and valuing the right of people to make their own choices.
- **Inclusion & equity** – valuing equality of both opportunity and outcome and challenging discriminatory practice.
- **Empowerment** – increasing the ability of individuals and groups to influence issues that affect them and their communities through individual and/or collective action.
- **Working collaboratively** – maximizing collaborative working relationships in partnerships between the many agencies which contribute to CLD, including collaborative work with participants, learners, and communities.
- **Promotion of learning as a lifelong activity** – ensuring that individuals are aware of a range of learning opportunities and can access relevant options at any stage of their life.



What is Community Learning and Development (CLD)?

CLD is a way of working with individuals and communities which helps empower individuals and groups to address issues of importance to them and promotes learning and social development.



Why do we need a CLD Partners Plan?

Orkney Islands Council has a statutory duty (Community Learning & Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013) to produce a plan with partners every 3 years to secure “adequate and sufficient provision of Community Learning & Development (CLD) in our area”.

The CLD Regulations (Scotland) 2013 aim to: -

- Ensure communities across Scotland particularly those which are disadvantaged have access to the CLD support they need.
- Strengthen the coordination between the full range of CLD providers.
- Reinforce the role of communities and learners in assessment, planning, and evaluation processes.
- Make Community Learning & Development’s role and contribution more visible.

The plan provides a clearly defined framework for coordinating, planning, and delivering CLD with partners. The requirement affects all public, voluntary, third sector, private sector agencies and community partners who contribute to work supporting:

- **Improved life chances for people of all ages, through learning, personal development, and active citizenship; and**
- **Stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential, and inclusive communities**

The joint CLD Partners Plan 2021-24 facilitates how community learning and development will be taken forward by partners in Orkney. By aligning our CLD Partners Plan to the priorities identified by the Orkney Partnership Board, the work of the SCLG will complement that of the Orkney Partnership and will provide a conduit for the dissemination of information and for alerting community planning to emerging priority issues.

Year 1 of this plan was focused on the recovery phase from the Covid pandemic. The plan is then reviewed, evaluated, and updated annually to ensure it remains relevant and responsive to new and emerging needs. Last year’s plan was revised with partners, learners, and the community to ensure it was appropriate and reactive to developing needs, including additional support for refugees coming to Orkney, increased support for those voluntary community groups, facing significant challenges, and the worrying cost of living crisis which has impacted significantly on many in our community. This year a similar review has been undertaken and whilst the focus is on delivering on the relevant actions not yet completed within the plan, four further priority areas has been added to incorporate learner voice, social prescribing, adult learning pathways and sexual exploitation training.

Why do we need a CLD Partners Plan?

The plan provides a basis for planning and delivering CLD with partners to ensure:

- **Improved life chances for people of all ages, through learning, personal development, and active citizenship and**
- **Stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential, and inclusive communities**



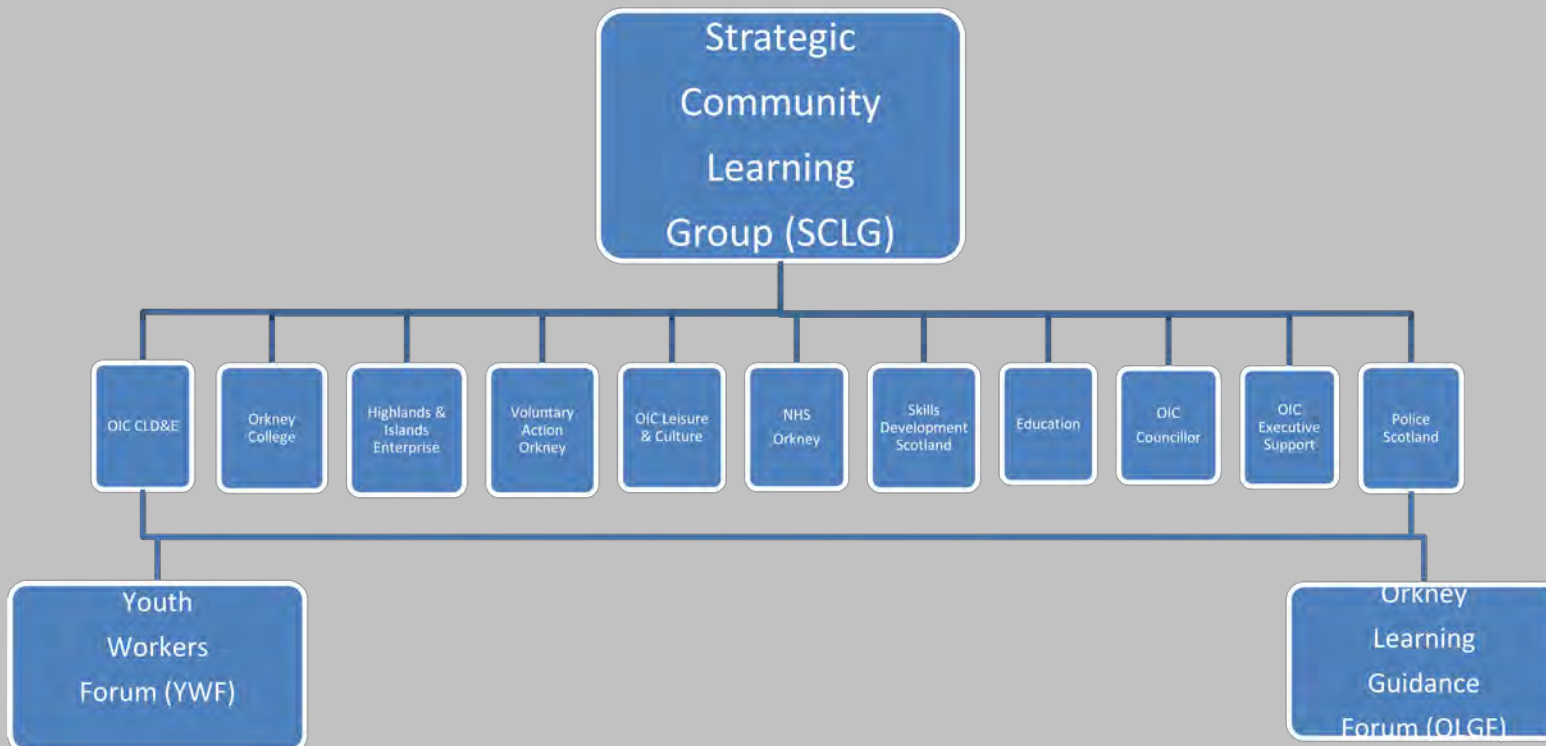
The Strategic Community Learning Group (SCLG)

The SCLG, currently chaired by the Council's Head of Community Learning, Leisure, and Housing, is a partnership of public and third sector organisations all working with a CLD focus.

Current partners include Orkney Islands Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Orkney College, Voluntary Action Orkney, NHS Orkney, Police Scotland, and Skills Development Scotland.

As an inclusive and effective partnership, the work of the SCLG is guided by 4 overarching principles:

- Working collaboratively to improve outcomes for individuals, families, and communities
- Sharing ownership, resources, and data to improve the identification of needs, planning, monitoring and evaluation
- Developing self-evaluation and quality assurance to ensure continuous improvement
- Ensuring CLD staff and volunteers have the skills, confidence and training required to respond to local needs through appropriate workforce development



What does the SCLG do?

It is the task of the SCLG and this plan to ensure that people in Orkney, especially those that are disadvantaged, have appropriate access to the CLD support they need.

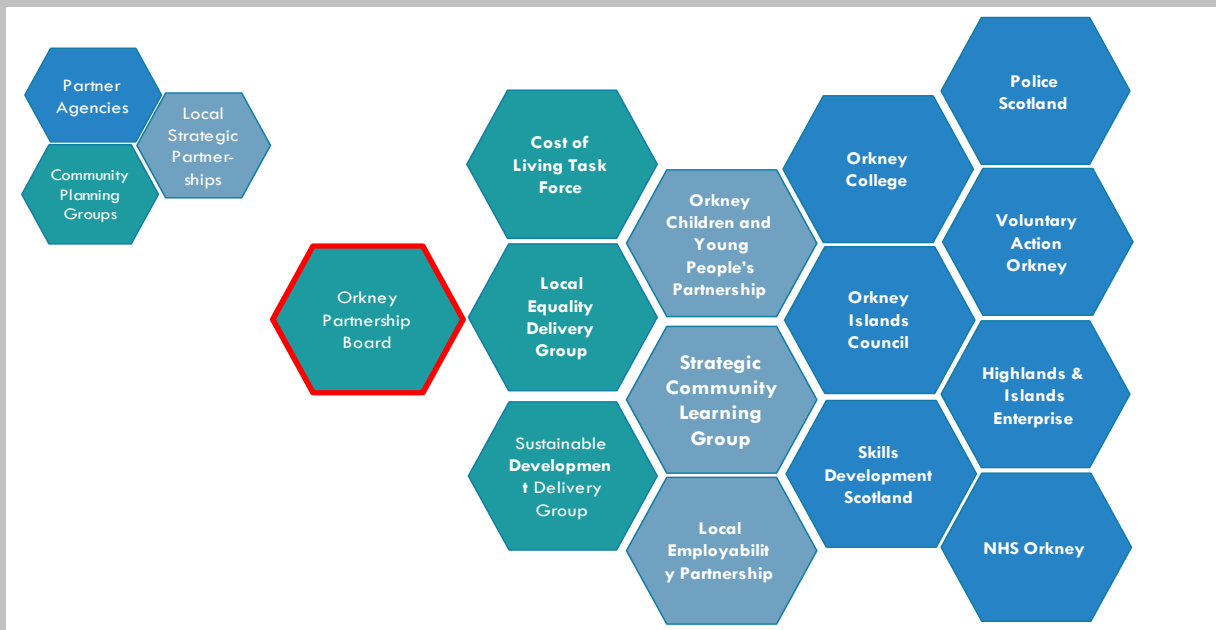


Governance Arrangements:

During the last CLD Plan cycle, the Strategic Community Learning Group developed improved governance arrangements and strengthened connections with stakeholders, through regular summarised updates, more formal reporting procedures and better links with other partnerships including our community planning partnership, The Orkney Partnership.

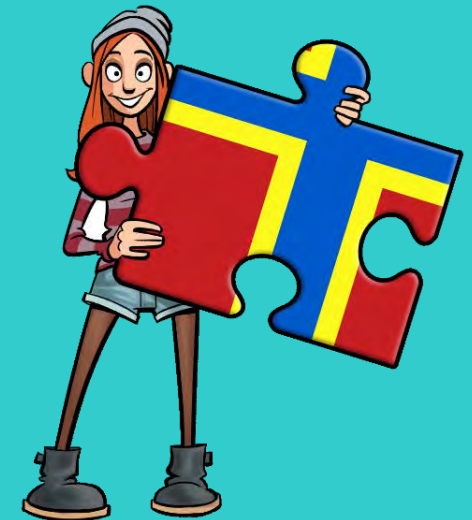
Rather than producing a static plan for the next 3 years, this is a live and dynamic plan which adopts a more fluid and organic approach to reflect the challenges and opportunities that are presented throughout the three-year period to ensure it remains an effective planning document which is relevant and responsive to changing needs.

The SCLG partners assume overall responsibility for delivering on the outcomes and actions detailed in the plan. The plan is reviewed quarterly by the SCLG, and an annual report is submitted to the Orkney Islands Council, Education, Leisure & Housing Committee. The plan is also submitted to the Orkney Partnership Board for noting, however, discussions have taken place to strengthen the collaboration between the SCLG and Orkney Partnership to ensure more robust and effective process are in place to align local partnership working. The Orkney Partnership and Orkney Islands Council have both endorsed the approach and recognise the critical role the CLD sector plays in supporting young people, learners and communities.



How will the plan be monitored?

The strategic direction for the SCLG and the actions outlined in the partners plan are developed and prioritised annually and are monitored and evaluated both internally and externally throughout the three-year period.



Community & Learner Engagement

The priorities agreed in the initial CLD Partner Plan 2021-24 sets out our shared vision, values and priorities over the next three years and are based on a full understanding of local need.

It is important to note that for the first iteration of this plan, engagement with learners and communities was challenging, due to the pandemic, as many of the key face to face methods of engagement were not possible due to the restrictions in place. Despite this, a collective understanding of community and learner needs was developed, and stakeholder input into the plan was assured through partner inputs and direct engagement with stakeholders through alignment with various community consultations including:

Orkney Partnership Community Planning Priorities Consultation 2021, Your Community Your Voice Place Standards Consultation 2021, COVID-19 Community Listening Events, Youth Employment Survey 2020 and Youth Forum Workshops.

Further to this community engagement partners also used several other methods to clearly identify need:

- A full appraisal and self-evaluation of the previous CLD Partners Plan
- Wider partners workshop to identify and prioritize the actions for the plan
- Working group and full SCLG input into plan development to ensure collaborative approaches to CLD
- Incorporating self-evaluation, monitoring, and shared ownership elements in response to HMI feedback
- An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken to ensure the plan, proposed actions and processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any groups.
- An Island Communities Impact Assessment has been completed to ensure consideration of impacts on the Isles

Last year the updated plan benefited from the in-depth data and feedback from the local community through the work of Orkney Matters, a large community consultation undertaken by partners. The Orkney Matters consultation included a questionnaire, community meetings and lesser heard voices project work to ensure a wider representation of input from the community. Issues and areas for development in respect of CLD have been incorporated into the updated plan including the cost-of-living crisis, volunteer fatigue and health & wellbeing support within communities.

Whilst utilising all the methods mentioned above, this year we have expanded both our self-evaluation activity and our analysis and use of data to determine priority needs. Additional learner and community consultation activity this year, such as the Youth Work review and the learning needs survey have also been considered and we are also incorporating more community and learner input into the development and design of the updated plan.

Who had a say in the plan?

The priorities have been identified through direct engagement with learners and the local community, local research and analysis of relevant data and partner knowledge in their CLD related field of expertise.



Policy Context

Alongside local data, information and consultation, this plan also considers several strategic policies and plans, both local and national, listed at the end of this document and referenced within the action plan, which relate to the needs of groups, individuals, and communities in Orkney. Although not an exhaustive list it illustrates the diverse range and depth of Community Learning & Development practice.

CLD planning guidance highlights five interrelated themes for CLD plans to be effective:

1. Involvement - Co-producing the plan with learners and communities
2. Shared CLD Priorities - Assessing need and setting priorities for CLD with partners
3. Planning - Integrating the CLD Plan within the current and evolving national policy context
4. Governance - Reviewing, monitoring, and reporting on progress and impact
5. Workforce Development - consideration of how partners will develop the CLD workforce in their area

Locally, the Orkney CLD Partners Plan has links to several other planning responsibilities and reports including the Community Plan, Council Plan, National Improvement Framework for Education Priorities, Integrated Children's Services Plan, Local Employability Partnership Plan, Local Child Poverty Action Reports and more. To ensure alignment and avoid duplication across plans, actions which are being progressed through other plans will not be detailed in the CLD Partners Plan, but focused work by the SCLG on connectedness ensures CLD representation on the other partnerships to further develop the links to and understanding of the CLD Plan and the importance of adopting CLD approaches.

The Strategic Community Learning Group is committed to supporting and fully contributing to collaborative CLD work regionally across the North, playing a full and active role in the Northern Alliance and Learn North.

The Northern Alliance is a Regional Improvement Collaborative between the eight local authorities in the north with the aim of working together to improve wellbeing, attainment, and positive outcomes for stakeholders.

Learn North, which used to be called The North Alliance, brings together CLD partners from both the public and third sector sectors to develop and share good practice, improve workforce development opportunities, and increase CLD opportunities across the North. Further details are provided in Appendix 2.

Policies that affect CLD both nationally and locally continue to change and evolve. As we progress through the 3-year period, the plan is reviewed and updated to reflect new policies. Amongst these the **Adult Learning Strategy 2021-26** which has new actions aligned to it in this year's updated plan, and the long-awaited **National Youth Work Strategy (2023-2028)**, when published, will have a direct impact on future iterations of the Orkney CLD Partners Plan.

How does this plan link with other plans and policies?

CLD works across several strategic plans and priorities. By aligning to the Local Community Plan, it reflects the priority areas of need highlighted by the public and will assist in achieving the high-level outcomes agreed.



Orkney Context

The total population of Orkney in 2020 was approximately 22,400, this has now increased by 0.6% to 22,540, which is higher than the national increase of 0.3%. In Orkney, life expectancy is higher than across Scotland, but the demographic profile has aged significantly in recent years, with 54% of the Orkney population over 45 years old, compared to the national figure of 47%. There is a trend of depopulation from the outer isles into the mainland of Orkney and we continue to see migration of young people away from Orkney.

Orkney is often seen as a rural idyll, however alongside the positive statistics, there are challenges facing our remote, rural island communities in relation to housing, hidden poverty, and access to services.

Homelessness presentations increased to 142 in 2022-23, which is the highest since 2011.

The rurality of Orkney can pose many challenges for people to participate in activities or access services required, and for providers in planning and delivering services. Within the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, 14 of Orkney's 29 data zones are among the most deprived 10% in Scotland for access to services. Orkney does not have any data zones in the most deprived 20% in Scotland but due to the scattered pattern of poverty in Orkney, there are individuals and families in all areas experiencing multiple deprivation. Rural and island poverty has its own set of characteristics and presents its own set of unique challenges that may not be the uniform experience of poverty across Scotland. Rural households face an increased cost of living between 10% to 30% more than children and families living in urban Scotland, and for those living on islands the premium can exceed 40%. Children in low-income families has risen to 16% in 2022, the Scottish average is 15.9%. In 2021-22, 20.1% of children in Orkney are in child poverty. Across Orkney & Shetland 79% of the children in poverty were in working families in 2021/22

More than 50% of households in Orkney live in fuel poverty. The number of residents stating they have access to good public transport facilities is approximately 55% compared with 91% in the rest of Scotland.

The annual participation measure (16–19-year-olds in positive destinations) increased to 93.9% in 2022.

Prior to the pandemic, Orkney had a strong economy with very high employment levels however it had a relatively low wage economy with underemployment rather than unemployment tending to be a factor. In 2022, employment rate was 87.5%.

Orkney has the third highest Social Enterprise rate in Scotland with 31.9 per 10,000.

Whilst recorded crime is significantly lower than the national average, there has been increases in recorded drugs crimes and incidents of recorded sexual exploitation have increased over the past 5 years.

Deaths from suicide in young people (11-25) per 100,000 and alcohol related hospital admissions for 11–25-year olds were higher here than the national average during 2020-21. (ScotPHO, 2021)

What other information was used when creating the plan?

Alongside partner, learner and community input, this plan comes from a broad evidence base gathered from local and national information including data on population, health, crime, unemployment, income, living costs, education, the economy and much more. Understanding the challenges in Orkney allows us to build a CLD Plan relevant to need



467

Plan principles, targets and identified barriers

Rather than looking at CLD in its entirety, our plan focuses on 3 identified priorities aligned to the Community Plan priority areas of Sustainable Development; Cost of Living Crisis; and Local Equality, which the SCLG can work on together to maximise impact. This plan focusses on what the SCLG partnership is going to work on together to achieve over the three-year period. This plan has a strategic focus, designed to address areas of work that are not currently being achieved and that partners cannot do on their own. The objective is to strengthen collaborative working to coordinate and align the work of partners to achieve positive CLD outcomes in Orkney.

As an inclusive and effective partnership, the work of the SCLG, over the lifetime of this plan will be guided by some key overarching principles:

- Challenge inequalities and promote equity of access to services, support, and learning
- Provide wider achievement opportunities (to reduce the attainment gap) and improve life chances for all ages
- Contribute to health and wellbeing and poverty reduction improvement outcomes
- Ensure CLD principles and values are promoted and embedded in partnership plans and practice across the local authority

Targeted groups and individuals

Throughout the planning process we have sought to identify individuals, groups and communities that we must seek to support through CLD approaches. This is not an exhaustive list but will include:

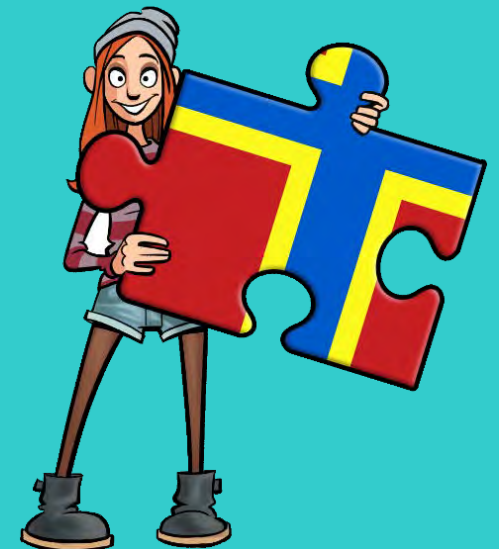
- Those who are experiencing poverty or hardship (including digital poverty)
- Those that are socially / geographically isolated
- Those within vulnerable categories / including those with mental health conditions
- Community groups and organisations working to make a positive difference

Barriers to participation identified by partners and stakeholders include:

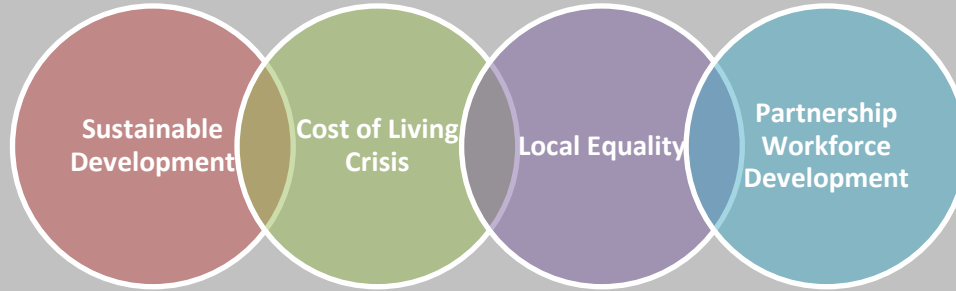
Transport	Cost	Stigma
Digital accessibility	Confidence	Awareness
Time pressures	Disabilities/Poor health	Language / cultural barriers
Childcare	Capacity	Substance misuse/ addictions
Availability	Motivation	

What is the focus of this CLD plan?

By concentrating on areas of work that require collaboration and partnership approaches, outcomes that individual organisations cannot achieve alone, the SCLG will be stronger than the sum of its parts.



2021-24 CLD Priorities



It is vital that this plan is positioned around and aligned with other priorities and plans to improve efficiency and ensure planning and delivery is coordinated. The CLD Partners Plan is working alongside many other partnerships to avoid duplication or gaps in service delivery.

Importantly, the CLD Plan is aligned to the identified priorities in the new Orkney Community Plan 2023-30. The CLD Partners Plan works alongside all three Orkney Partnership Delivery Groups, the Orkney Children & Young People Partnership responsible for the Integrated Children's Services Plan and the Local Employability Partnership (LEP) and associated LEP Delivery Plan, amongst others.

In 2021/22, a widespread consultation took place called Orkney Matters which gave residents an opportunity put their views forward on what they thought should be the priorities for the county over the next few years. Through Orkney Matters, key areas that were frequently highlighted included transport including active travel; housing; health and wellbeing; community resilience; and volunteer fatigue.

To reflect what people said, The Orkney Partnership adopted 3 new priorities:

- Sustainable Development - supporting Community Wealth Building and achieving Net Zero by 2030
- Cost of Living Crisis - and tackling the underlying causes of poverty
- Local Equality - so residents in all parts of Orkney have equal opportunities

For our CLD Plan a fourth priority area was included to consider professional development:

- Workforce Development and Partnership Planning – strengthening learning opportunities for the sector

Further information on how the SCLG will progress these priority areas is available in the detailed Action Plan which can be viewed at the end of this document in Appendix 1. The actions are focused on providing realistic but challenging aims which can only be achieved by working in partnership using CLD values and approaches. 11 actions were carried over from the previous years plan, with two updated to focus on employability support for people for whom English is not their first language and to specifically raise the profile of volunteering for the Island Games in 2025. 4 new actions have been added to the plan focused on delivering training on sexual exploitation, investigating social prescribing opportunities, the expansion of adult learning pathways and creating a lived experience panel to influence and inform the work of the SCLG.

What are the key priorities for this CLD Partners Plan?

The 4 priority areas for the CLD Partners Plan 2021-24 are:

- Sustainable Development
- Cost of Living
- Local Equality
- Partnership Workforce Development



Monitoring & Evaluation

We are working in rapidly changing times, so it is imperative that the plan is updated regularly to ensure the CLD workforce continues to be responsive to emerging needs and also to ensure our plans and ambitions align with updated policies and frameworks, both local and national, to provide the CLD support and services needed. Although this is set out as a 3-year plan we revisit this plan annually to reflect any changes in the planning and review process.

The SCLG continue to regularly monitor, review, and self-evaluate to measure progress, inform future planning and to ensure support and challenge is embedded as part of the planning cycles of developing and improving CLD Planning. The CLD Partners Plan is monitored and updated quarterly by the SCLG, and a report submitted to Orkney Islands Council's Education, Leisure & Housing Committee annually. A summary and progress update will also be disseminated widely to partners and stakeholders each year and will feed into other relevant partner plans.

CLD activity is also evaluated using 'How Good Is Our Community Learning and Development', a framework that includes a common set of quality and performance indicators for use in self-evaluation by partners and in Learning Community inspections by Education Scotland.

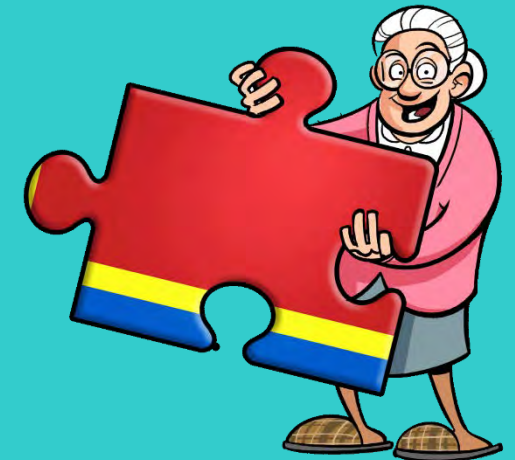
Conclusion

The information gathered by the SCLG has been used to develop the CLD Partners Plan for the final year of this 3-year period, attached in Appendix 1. The Partners Plan contains outcomes we aspire to, actions we will take to make improvements to current provision and practice and it identifies unmet needs and gaps in provision which are important areas of work which cannot be met in the timescale of this plan.

The strategic direction for the SCLG and the actions outlined in the partners plan have been developed and prioritised and will be delivered and evaluated through this partnership over this three-year period. Working together through the plan will ensure more coordinated delivery and support to improve life chances for people of all ages, through learning, personal development and active citizenship and help develop stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential, and inclusive communities.

How will the SCLG maintain quality assurance?

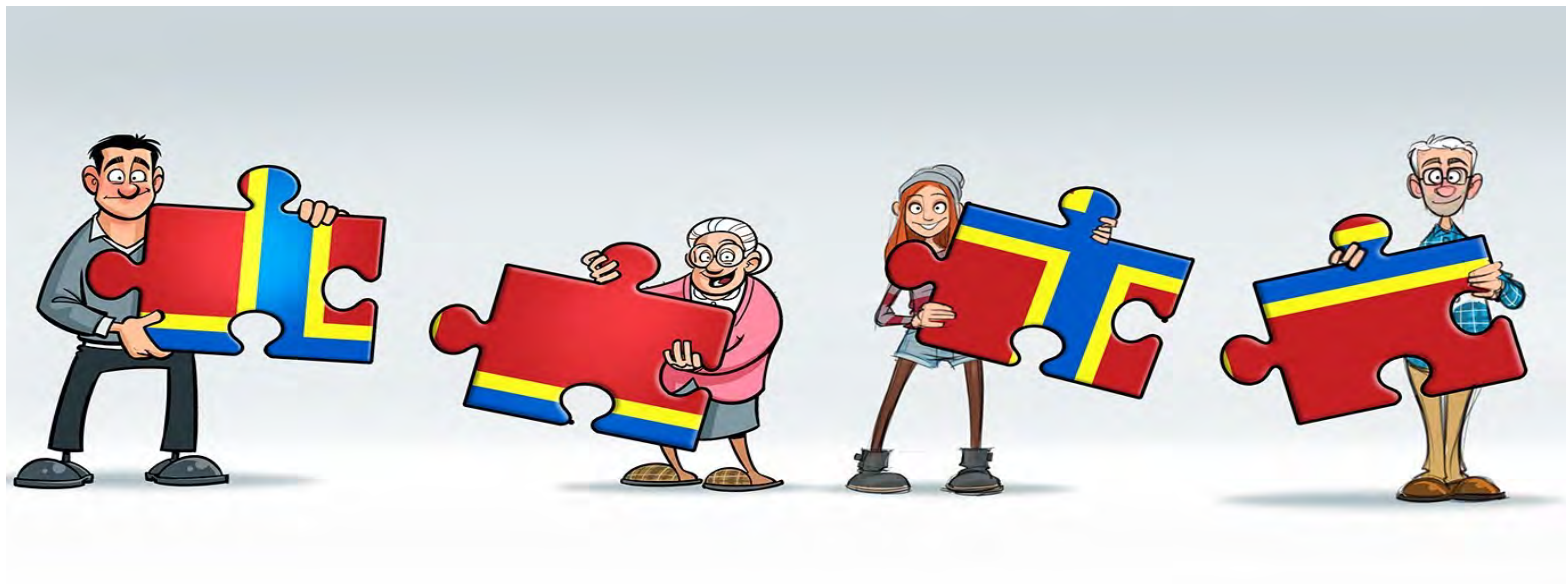
By working together and ensuring a high standard of practice, the SCLG will jointly review, monitor and evaluate progress on the identified actions and participants will experience consistency based on shared values.



CLD Partners Plan

2021-2024

(2023 update)



Sustainable Development

We will work to support sustainable development through partnership learning opportunities to build peoples skills, confidence and strengthen individual and community capacity and resilience to benefit everybody in our communities, with nobody left behind.

Outcome	Improvement Action	Lead	Implication (risk, cost, resources)	Target Date	Measures	Link to local policies & plans	Link to national policies & plans
1. People have increased accessibility to digital opportunities including support and training to expand their learning and use the internet safely	1a) Support Community Organisations to identify need and investigate opportunities for the development and co-production of Learning Hubs	HIE VAO CLDE	Cost, staff, identified need, resource, capacity, on-going revenue requirements, sustainability	September 2024	Funding allocated for hubs Number of sessions in supported hubs Number of partners delivering sessions Number of learners Number of new hubs	Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) / Sustainable Development Delivery Group	Digital Strategy: A changing nation: Digital Participation:
	*1b) Raise awareness of and deliver training on the sexual exploitation of young people	Police Scotland CLDE	Cost, staff, lack of uptake, resource, capacity, requirements, sustainability due to staff shortages	June 2024	Training schedule created and delivered Number of sessions delivered Number of attendees Number of views of web & media posts Evaluations & feedback	Orkney Digital Strategy 2021 HIE Operating Plan 2022 Police Scotland Plan 2020-23	National Performance Framework Adult Learning Strategy 21- 26
2. New and existing third sector organisations receive the support they need to ensure they can sustain delivery and develop to allow their organisations and volunteers to prosper	2a) Develop collaborative approaches in the delivery of voluntary sector support services to help enhance community development opportunities	CLDE VAO HIE CLLD	Reduction in community groups, volunteers, and community participation, inability to attract funding	September 2024	Community Development (CD) subgroup developed Minutes of quarterly update meetings of key partners Development of a baseline and increased number of collaborative CD projects Number of community organisations supported Number of interactions with organisations Organisation's feedback Number training sessions delivered	LOIP & Sustainable Development Delivery Group VAO Work Plan 2021-23 OIC Delivery Plan 2023-28 HIE Operating Plan 2021	National Standards for Community Engagement Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 Islands Scotland Act 2018
3. Learning is lifelong, life-wide and learner centred	*3a) Increased coordination and expansion of adult learning opportunities and pathways, particularly for those experiencing disadvantage	CLDE OC	Time, capacity, staff resource, funding, inaccessible resources or opportunities, lack of learning spaces	September 2024	Establishment of Adult Learning Forum Create baseline data on: Number of adult learning qualification gained Number of opportunities Number of participants Number of new learners New learning opportunities.	OIC NIF Plan Local Employability Partnership Plan 2022-23 Northern Alliance Plan	Adult Learning Strategy 22-27 Family Learning Framework UKSPF & Multiply

Cost of Living

We will support individuals, children, and families through this difficult time, committing time, energy, and resources to work towards the elimination of poverty throughout Orkney. Addressing both immediate need and longer-term initiatives to combat persistent poverty.

Outcomes	Improvement Action	Lead	Implication (risk, cost, resources)	Target Date	Measures	Link to local policies & plans	Link to national policies & plans
4. Increased opportunities for priority groups identified as needing additional support to achieve positive outcomes	4a) Deliver life skills and other support courses as the Partnership's contribution to the Local Cost of Living Taskforce	NHSO VAO OIC	Lack of engagement, from the people most in need of support, people in need not identified, lack of capacity, staff resource, limited funding available for delivery	September 2024	Number of life skills courses delivered e.g. Confidence to Cook Number of participants Participant feedback (formal / informal)	Child Poverty Strategy 2022-26	Community Health and Wellbeing supports and services framework
	4b) Influence the Cost-of-Living Taskforce to ensure best practice using CLD methodology in delivery approaches	CLDE VAO	Lack of engagement, Duplication, Limited capacity	September 2024	CLD representation at quarterly COLT meetings Number of meetings attended Case studies shared	Cost of Living Task Force Tracker Food Dignity Report NHS Orkney Equalities Outcome Plan 2021-25	Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) update: July 2017
	4c) Increase SCLG support to the work of the Refugee Planning Group to ensure CLD approaches and ESOL provision, employability support and community engagement underpin outcome delivery.	CLDE OC VAO	Lack of engagement, from the people most in need of support, people in need not identified, unrealistic expectations. Duplication of support People not accessing employment opportunities at their skill levels	September 2024	Attendance at Refugee Planning Group meetings Number of people engaged and supported Number engaged in employability support Number of positive progressions Number of awards / accredited qualifications gained Participant feedback	Isles Development Plans	Fairer Scotland Action Plan

Local Equality

We will work to address the continuing disadvantage experienced by some of our communities when trying to access services, facilities, and opportunities. Helping meet local needs through the effective provision of community learning and development opportunities to enhance individual and community capacity and resilience.

Outcome	Improvement Action	Lead	Implication (risk, cost, resources)	Target Date	Measures	Link to local policies & plans	Link to national policies & plans
5. People have increased confidence and opportunities to express their views and influence decision making and service design	5a) Promote and embed the continuous involvement of those with lesser heard voices and priority groups within consultation and in matters that affect them	VAO HIE OIC	Lack of engagement, missing those within identified target groups, lose momentum to maintain regular contact	September 2024	CLD approaches to consultation training session delivered to partner agencies. Number attending Evaluation / feedback Number of lived experience groups established	Local Equality Delivery Group CLDE Team Plan 2023-26 NHS Orkney Equalities Outcome Plan 2021-25	National Standards for Community Engagement Scottish Approach to Service Design Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
	*5b) Create a lived experience panel representing the wide range of learners and volunteers involved across CLD to influence and inform the work of the SCLG	CLDE VAO OIC	Lack of engagement, missing those within identified target groups, lose momentum to maintain regular contact	September 2024	Creation of a lived experience panel Participant feedback and evaluations Measured input and influence on the plan and direction of the SCLG	Isles Development Plans	Islands (Scotland) Act 2018
6. Increased awareness and support for individuals to promote and sustain positive health and wellbeing	6a) Coordinate mental health awareness training to upskill people in the community, reduce stigma and promote an understanding of mental wellbeing	NHSO OIC VAO	Staffing, resources, reaching the identified priority groups, information not accessible	September 2024	Programme of training developed Number of sessions delivered Number of participants Participant feedback	Orkney Islands Mental Health Strategy 2020-2025 (OHAC 2020) Physical Activity Wellbeing & Sport Strategy Enhancing Wellbeing in Our Island Communities: Delivery Plan	Volunteering for All: national framework Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027 Mental health - transition and recovery plan Resources for Mental Health and Wellbeing in Primary Care Services

Local Equality

We will work to address the continuing disadvantage experienced by some of our communities when trying to access services, facilities, and opportunities. Helping meet local needs through the effective provision of community learning and development opportunities to enhance individual and community capacity and resilience.

Outcome	Improvement Action	Lead	Implication (risk, cost, resources)	Target Date	Measures	Link to local policies & plans	Link to national policies & plans
6. Increased awareness and support for individuals to promote and sustain positive health and wellbeing	*6b) Investigate collaborative approaches and opportunities to expand social prescribing across Orkney	OIC VAO CLLD	Lack of resources, limited appetite from wider partners, Staffing, resources, reaching the identified priority groups,	September 2024	Number of meetings A roadmap towards social prescribing is established Funding identified to undertake a trial on social prescribing Identify existing examples of good practice	Orkney Islands Mental Health Strategy 2020-2025 (OHAC 2020)	Volunteering for All: national framework Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027
	6c) Wider promotion of the values of volunteering to health, wellbeing and to the community including the Islands Games	VAO OIC CLLD	Lack of awareness, capacity - including time and resources	September 2024	Programme of activities delivered for volunteers week Deliver training on attracting volunteers at Annual Halls Event Development of Get Ready to Volunteer programme Number of registered volunteers for the Island Games	Physical Activity Wellbeing & Sport Strategy Enhancing Wellbeing in Our Island Communities: Delivery Plan	Mental health - transition and recovery plan Resources for Mental Health and Wellbeing in Primary Care Services
7. Improve community wellbeing and increased engagement with learning to develop motivation, confidence, and skills through youth work, adult & family learning and community development	7a) Work collaboratively with the Local Equality Delivery Group to develop priorities, design and deliver wellbeing and learning opportunities and early intervention support	OIC VAO HIE	Capacity, time, resource, experienced and trained staff, consistency of provision, lack of engagement from those who would most benefit from opportunities, lack of awareness. Duplication of effort	September 2024	Local Equality Delivery Group Action Plan created Record the number of opportunities created through the SCLG Number of participants Case studies Participant feedback Development of ways to track equalities information across SCLG activity	Local Employability Partnership (LEP) Plan 2023-24 OIC Delivery Plan 2023-28 NHS Orkney Equalities Outcome Plan 2021-25	CLD responses to the pandemic, lockdown and initial re-opening No One Left Behind: delivery plan

Partnership Workforce Development
 We will work to ensure we have a skilled workforce by raising awareness of CLD and strengthening learning opportunities for those working and volunteering in the CLD sector.

Outcomes	Improvement Action	Lead	Implication (risk, cost, resources)	Target Date	Measures	Link to local policies & plans	Link to national policies & plans
8. CLD is recognised and promoted as a profession	8a) Explore and expand opportunities and pathways into and within the CLD profession through collaborative work with Learn North and The Northern Alliance	CLDE VAO SDS	Time, staff resource, capacity, lack of uptake and awareness	September 2024	Increase in numbers registered with CLDSC Number of CLDSC bulletins shared Number of training opportunities shared across the network Number of people completing CLD qualifications CLD Pathway publication developed	OIC Council Plan 2023-28 OHAC Workforce Plan The Northern Alliance RIC CLD Plan	Working with Scotland's Communities 2018 Growing the Learning Culture in CLD (CLDSC 2015)
9. Orkney has a skilled, trained, and confident CLD workforce with a shared understanding of relevant national occupational standards, CLD values and competences	9a) Based on the training needs audit create and deliver a suite of short course training for the CLD workforce	CLDE VAO CLLD	Lack of uptake, staff time, resources, accessibility	July 2024	Programme of training is developed and delivered Attendance numbers Number of organisation benefiting Participant feedback	CLDE Team Plan 2023-26 The Northern Alliance RIC CLD Improvement Plan Learn North	Working with Scotland's Communities 2018 CLD Statement of Values Code of Ethics for CLD CLD Competence framework Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan
10. Planning and progress is informed by more effective collection, analysis and reporting of data	10a) Create a subgroup to improve methods for collaborative data collection in response to the chosen partnership KPIs	CLDE VAO SDS	Lack of partner input, staff capacity, buy in	September 2024	Subgroup created Minutes of regular meetings Data sharing protocols developed Progress against identified KPIs Data collected, analysed and reported six-monthly to SCLG.	CLDE Team Plan 2023-26 The Northern Alliance CLD Improvement Plan	CLDMS KPI Data Gathering Guidance Document

Unmet needs over this time (2021-24)

At a time of changing national policy, realignment of priorities and ever decreasing resources, it is clearly evident that not all CLD needs can be met during the lifetime of this plan. This recognition that there will be unmet need over the life of the plan is highlighted in the CLD legislation which requires CLD partners to identify unmet need.

Priority areas that may not be met during the life of this plan includes:

- Development of wider accreditation opportunities for adults
- Widening STEM opportunities through CLD activity
- Undertake a Third Sector Skills Survey
- While we have been unable to include specific actions in the plan around climate challenge engagement work to raise awareness and support within the community, we will seek opportunities to weave this into actions where possible/appropriate
- Expanding partnership work with housing partners to explore preventative work around homelessness with young people
- Develop closer links with partners leading on transport and broadband improvements to ensure barriers to participation in learning are reduced
- Identifying resources to fund individual professional qualifications and wider course opportunities for staff within the CLD sector

Appendix 2 – Our Regional Approach in the North



The Northern Alliance

Orkney Islands Council is one of eight regional local authority partner members in the Regional Improvement Collaborative for the North – **The Northern Alliance**. Other members are Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Moray, Highland, Argyll and Bute, Shetland and the Western Isles (Eilean Siar).

The **Northern Alliance** Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC) aims to develop a culture of collaboration, sharing of expertise and creating local and regional networks to improve the educational and life chances of children and young people.

For further general information - [The Northern Alliance – A Regional Improvement Collaborative](#)

There are 9 workstreams delivering against the above agenda including a specific **CLD Work-stream** which is managed and delivered through the local authority Lead Officers for CLD. Some support for this is provided by Education Scotland through their Education Officers. This has been particularly evident in their involvement in CLD Planning and in aspects of continuous improvement.

The current operational improvement priorities of the CLD Leads group are to...

- Capture approaches to wider achievement for young people and adult learners and share practice
- Capture and analyse youth participation and youth voice
- Further develop approaches to Family Learning
- Increase access to professional learning, including online

Read about our **collective** achievements here [Northern Alliance CLD Sway](#)

Building on these priorities going forward we will be establishing and supporting a Youth Advisory Group for the region, planning and delivering professional learning in STEM (Science, technology, engineering and maths) using a funding award from Education Scotland, strengthening networking around equalities and young people through a new forum, extending practice sharing in relation to Family Learning and contributing to the wider collaborations created through the Regional Improvement Collaborative.

Professional Learning for practitioners and Learn North (previously known as the North Alliance)

Access to professional learning and development for practitioners in CLD in the North is enhanced through a regional network of partners, including from the third sector, known as **Learn North**. In turn, this network is a member of the national grouping of CLD Training Consortia. The North Alliance is awarded a small amount of annual funding from the CLD Standards Council in Scotland to deliver professional learning activities for practitioners across the geography.



Appendix 3 - Links / bibliography

CLD Drivers & Strategies

CLD Plans Guidance Note (2021-24) <https://www.gov.scot/publications/cld-plans-guidance-note/pages/5/>

CLD Revised Guidance Note (2018-21) <https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/scottish-education-system/cld/revised-cld-guidance-note/>

CLD Managers Scotland reference sheet/checklist CLD Planning <https://cldmanagersscotland.wordpress.com/>

Planning for Change – review of CLD Plans [Planning for Change, A Review of CLD Plans 2018 – 21](#)

Improving life chances and empowering communities (Education Scotland)

<https://education.gov.scot/media/ryklpn1i/improving-life-chances-and-empowering-communities.pdf>

How good is the learning and development in our community4 [How good is the learning and development in our community?](#) (Education.gov.scot)

The Requirements for Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2013/175/contents/made>

CLD [statement of values](#) (CLDSC)

The [Code of Ethics](#) (CLDSC)

The [CLD Competence framework](#) (CLDSC)

CLD responses to the pandemic, lockdown and initial re-opening (CLDSC, 2020) <https://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/the-standards-council/council-reports/cld-responses-to-the-pandemic-lockdown-and-initial-re-opening/>

Working with Scotland's Communities 2018 (ES & CLDSC) <https://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/WorkingwithScotlandsCommunities2018.pdf>

CLDMS KPI Data Gathering Guidance Document (CLDMS, 2020) <https://cldmanagersscotland.files.wordpress.com/2021/04/2021-03-31-cldms-kpi-paper.pdf>

Strategic guidance for community planning partnerships: community learning and development (SG, 2012) <https://www.gov.scot/publications/strategic-guidance-community-planning-partnerships-community-learning-development/>

The Northern Alliance RIC CLD Improvement Plan <https://northernalliance.scot/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Northern-Alliance-Regional-Improvement-Plan-Phase-3.pdf>

Local Plans & Strategies

Orkney NIF Return 2020 (OIC) [I08 National_Improvement_Framework.pdf](#)

Orkney Integration Joint Board annual audit plan 2020/21 (IJB) <https://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/report/orkney-integration-joint-board-annual-audit-plan-202021>

Orkney Community Plan and incorporated LOIP 2023-30 (Orkney Partnership) [The Orkney Partnership | Home](#) (orkneycommunities.co.uk)

Enhancing Wellbeing in Our Island Communities: Delivery Plan (VAO) https://www.vaorkney.org.uk/download/27/news/2977/enhancing_well-being_delivery_plan___final.pdf

Orkney Local Police Plan 2020 – 23 (Police Scotland) <https://www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/y2vduxju/orkney-local-policing-plan-2020-23.pdf?view=Standard>

Orkney Islands Council Plan 2023-28 [Council Plan](#) (orkney.gov.uk)

Orkney Islands Council Delivery Plan 2023-28 [Council Plan](#) (orkney.gov.uk)

HIE Operating Plan 2022 <https://www.hie.co.uk/about-us/policies2and-publications/strategy-and-operating-plan/>

North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme <https://www.nilps.co.uk/>

Links / bibliography Continued

Wider policy context significant for CLD

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

Getting It Right For Every Child (Education Scotland) <https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/getting-it-right-for-every-child-girfec>

Our ambitions for improving the life chances of young people in Scotland - National Youth Work Strategy 2014-2019 (SG, ES, YL) <https://education.gov.scot/Documents/youth-work-strategy-181214.pdf>

Welcoming our Learners: Scotland's ESOL Strategy 2015-2020 (SG, ES) https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/22892/2/ESOLStrategy2015to2020_tcm4-855848_Redacted.pdf

Adult Learning Strategy 2022-27 (SG) [Adult learning strategy 2022 to 2027 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

National Standards for Community Engagement (SG, SCDC) <https://www.scdc.org.uk/what/national-standards>

Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 Summary (SG) <https://www.gov.scot/publications/community-empowerment-scotland-act-summary/>

Community Empowerment: Empowering our Islands (SG) <https://www.gov.scot/policies/community-empowerment/empowering-our-island-communities/>

National Action Plan on Internet Safety for Children and Young People (2017) (SG) <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-action-plan-internet-safety-children-young-people/>

Children & Young People Act 2014 (SG) <https://www.gov.scot/publications/children-young-people-scotland-act-2014-national-guidance-part-12/pages/3/>

Opportunities For All - Post-16 transitions Policy and Practice Framework (SG) <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/20678/1/00456919.pdf>

The National Improvement Framework (Education Scotland) <https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/what-we-do/implementing-the-national-improvement-framework>

Curriculum For Excellence (Education Scotland) <https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/cfe-building-from-the-statement-appendix-incl-btc1-5/what-is-curriculum-for-excellence>

Youth Work and Employability (Youthlink, September 2020) <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/5048/200831-youth-work-and-employability-final.pdf>

Food Insecurity and Learning Loss Pilot Evaluation Report (For Youthlink 2020) https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/5659/food-insecurity-report_proofed.pdf

Youth Work's Contribution to the Scottish Attainment Challenge (Youthlink, 2020) <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/2198/youth-work-and-the-attainment-challenge-findings-from-youth-scotlands-member-groups.pdf>

Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027 (SG) <https://www.gov.scot/publications/mental-health-strategy-2017-2027/>

Public Health Priorities for Scotland (SG) <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-public-health-priorities/>

No One Left Behind (SG) <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/impact-assessment/2019/09/no-one-left-behind-funding-stream-equality-impact-assessment-summary/documents/no-one-left-behind-nolb-employability-funding-stream-eqia-summary/no-one-left-behind-nolb-employability-funding-stream-eqia-summary/govscot%3Adocument/no-one-left-behind-nolb-employability-funding-stream-eqia-summary.pdf>

Outdoor learning briefing paper (Policy Scotland, 2020) <https://policyscotland.gla.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/psoutdoorlearningbriefingpaper.pdf>

Community Participation Action Learning Report (SG, SCDC, & IS) https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/8210/Comm-Participation-Action-Learning-Report.pdf

Family Learning Framework (ES, 2018) <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/FamilyLearningFrameworkApril18.pdf>

Review of FL in Scotland (2021, ES) <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/documents/family-learning-report-full-document.pdf>

Strategy for Communication and Community Engagement (Orkney Partnership, 2018) <https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3.spanglefish.com/s/34034/documents/community%20engagement/strategy-for-communication-and-community-engagement-sep-2018.pdf>

Curriculum for excellence through outdoor learning (LTS 2010) <https://education.gov.scot/Documents/cfe-through-outdoor-learning.pdf>

Community Consultation and Engagement Guide (Orkney Partnership, 2018)

<http://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/COMMUNITYPLANNING/documents/community%20engagement/community-consultation-and-engagement-guide-version-3-2.pdf>

Digital Strategy: A changing nation: how Scotland will thrive in a digital world (SG) <https://www.gov.scot/publications/a-changing-nation-how-scotland-will-thrive-in-a-digital-world/>

Links / bibliography Continued

CLD Data review and analysis

NOLB Data toolkit 2022-23

End Child Poverty Data - [Child Poverty Statistics - End Child Poverty](#)

Labour market - [Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](#)

Additional Child poverty data

<https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/child-poverty/>

Orkney Matters 2022

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation - [SIMD \(Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation\)](#)

Population data - [Orkney Islands Council Area Profile \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](#)

CPP data dashboard - [CPOP \(shinyapps.io\)](#)

Annual Participation Measure [Annual Participation Measure | Skills Development Scotland](#)

National Benchmarking Measure: School Leavers Destinations [Chapter 7: Background Notes - Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations, No. 4: 2022 Edition - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Orkney Education Services Report 2022-23

<https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwiF5NPxpY6AAxXUUEEAHcOoDuAQFnoECBcQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.orkney.gov.uk%2FFiles%2FEducation-and-Learning%2FOrkney%2520Education%2520Service%2520Report%25202022%2520-%25202025.pdf&usg=AOvVaw2vXHQ8nQSJJoqMCJ6pwjhg5&opi=89978449>

Fuel Poverty Strategy

https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjWhdWwpY6AAxUWhf0HHf1VDWwQFnoECBQQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.orkney.gov.uk%2FFiles%2FHousing%2FHousing%2520Options%2FHousing%2520Strategy%2FFuel_Poverty_Strategy.pdf&usg=AOvVaw0OLZ8yEZWNRRWuPtbk7mcj&opi=89978449

Police Scotland Data

ScotPHO - [ScotPHO profiles \(shinyapps.io\)](#)

Drug dashboard - [Data explorer - Drug-related hospital statistics - Scotland 2020 to 2021 - Drug-related hospital statistics - Publications - Public Health Scotland](#)

Public Health Data

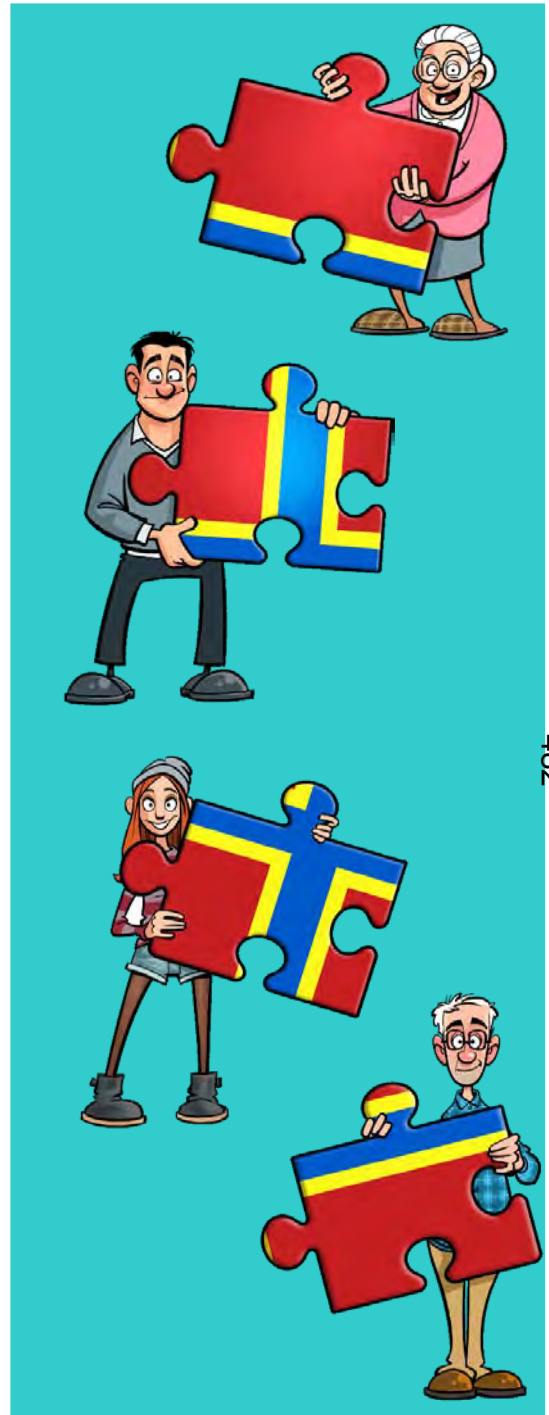
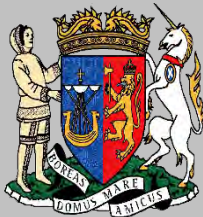
P1 healthy weight dashboard - [Dashboard - Primary 1 Body Mass Index \(BMI\) statistics Scotland - School year 2020 to 2021 - Primary 1 Body Mass Index \(BMI\) statistics Scotland - Publications - Public Health Scotland](#)

Alcohol dashboard - [Dashboard - Alcohol related hospital statistics - Scotland financial year 2020 to 2021 - Alcohol related hospital statistics - Publications - Public Health Scotland](#)

Scottish Health Survey - [Scottish Health Survey \(shinyapps.io\)](#)

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment in Orkney - [Integration Joint Board \(orkney.gov.uk\)](#)

Housing data - [The extent of homelessness in Scotland - Homelessness in Scotland: update to 30 September 2022 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)



Orkney Islands Council's Housing Service

School Place

Kirkwall

Orkney

KW15 1NY

Annual Assurance Statement

We achieve all of the following standards and outcomes for tenants, people who are homeless and others who use our services:

- All relevant regulatory requirements set out in Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework.
- All relevant standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter.
- All relevant legislative duties.

Where additional explanatory information is required, this is included in annex 1 of the attached report and will be reproduced in the contextual information provided with the Annual Return against the Charter to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

I confirm that the Council's Education, Leisure and Housing Committee have seen and considered appropriate evidence to support the level of assurance we have at the meeting held on 6 September 2023.

Signed

Chair of Education, Leisure and Housing Committee.

Annex 1 – Key points relating to the Council’s performance

Explanatory information has been provided to explain either a change in performance or areas where Orkney’s context is particularly important.

Annual Return Against the Charter

The Annual Return against the Charter (ARC) for financial year 2022/23 has been completed for Orkney Islands Council and was submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator by 31 May 2023. Areas of performance which required additional explanation are as follows (the indicators referred to are nationally required):

Satisfaction Survey

The Council has recently undertaken a wholesale tenant survey in line with the Scottish Social Housing Charter. The Council does this every 2 years as opposed to every 3 to ensure closer alignment with the current tenant base. Results were timed to align with submission of the ARC and accordingly results have been very recently received. This time the survey was undertaken by electronic and paper surveys and fewer telephone surveys were undertaken than was the case during the 2020 pandemic period. Last time the interviewing and fieldwork took place at the very start of the pandemic and the experience of the company which undertook the survey, was that service providers were getting very positive ratings at that point in time. The company undertaking the survey advised in 2022, that they were noticing a drop in customer satisfaction results for Councils undertaking surveys at present. For Orkney, the difference in results for 2022 is predominantly about a shift in the “neither / nor” responses rather than an increase in outright dissatisfaction. Given that the levels of tenant satisfaction were lower than has previously been the case, the results have been considered and an action plan developed to try and improve satisfaction.

The tenant survey was undertaken by an independent body to ensure tenants felt able to openly express their views. Planning will begin shortly to deliver the survey in 2024 and consideration will be given to the methods used to collect customer satisfaction information from tenants accordingly. The aim is to provide the results in the ARC submission in May 2024.

In addition to the wholesale survey the Council undertakes a range of satisfaction surveys covering different parts of the service and these generally show good levels of satisfaction, though the response rate is low (with the exception of repairs customer satisfaction).

The Tenant Participation Officer is working with tenants with a view to increasing their involvement, improving the provision of information and considering alternative ways to collect information. This has included arranging events at the community fridge and parent and child groups in partnership with Orkney Housing Association Limited. She has also started a process of trying to develop an armchair panel and has created a leaflet promoting this accordingly. In addition, a social media page is being developed to improve the Council’s provision of information in an accessible manner across the island group.

Information obtained from customer surveys and other means of obtaining information is used to inform the Housing Service's relevant Service Delivery Plan accordingly.

Given that the repairs customer satisfaction survey is run as a rolling programme, this data has been used for the Annual Return against the Charter rather than the wholesale tenant survey.

Indicators 3 and 4 (Complaints)

During financial year 2022/23, of the 14 stage 2 complaints received, 3 were during March 2022 which were not concluded before year end, resulting in a figure of 77.78% being responded to in full. Without these the Housing Service's percentage responded to in full would have been 94.44%. Some complex stage 2 complaints have been received during the year which have taken longer to conclude than the required timescale. These were about property condition and the approach taken was to ensure that the situation was fully addressed and appropriate remedial action was in place before closing the complaint.

The Housing Service have recognised that the approach taken to complaints should have been tighter, the complaint should have been closed and any work which required to be taken forward should be done separately. Previously in some cases the complaint had remained open. One complex complaint took 248 days, if this were removed alone the average days to respond to a stage two complaint would drop from 44.93 to 29.31 days.

Previously managers responded to stage 1 complaints and due to staff shortages this was taking too long. Frontline Housing Officers will now undertake stage 1 complaints and accordingly training was delivered to all Housing Officers in June 2023.

Indicators 8 and 9 (Repairs)

Delivery of property management services is undertaken by the Council's Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure (NSI) for the Housing Service.

In April 2022, a restructure was implemented at corporate level (the element affecting Housing Services was implemented a year earlier). The restructure resulted in a range of changes across Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure (NSI), some being immediate and some resulting slightly later. Consequently, there were changes of personnel within key posts in NSI. This resulted in changes throughout the entire management structure relevant to the field of repairs and maintenance. Due to challenges with recruitment, the Senior Maintenance Surveyor was not filled until May 2023. In addition, one of four Building Inspectors (25% of the resource) was recruited in March 2022 and has been undertaking internal training and becoming established in the role. This combined situation has had an impact on the delivery of services due to the loss of organisational knowledge and experience.

Reference was made previously to the installation and development of the computer system, Concerto. As regards the handheld app being shared with contractors to further enhance the functionality, unexpected problems were encountered. The app was effective in relation to recording the main contractor's information but didn't work

when they sub-contracted work. The Council's measured term contractor sub-contracts electrical and plumbing work particularly. This can be as much as 85-90% of emergency repairs. The supplying company, Concerto, were unable to find a solution and therefore regrettably it was accepted that the app wasn't a viable option accordingly. In order to address this regular spot checks of worker's timesheets had been installed in order to ensure the audit trail between them finishing a job and the main contractor inputting that time onto the system, matched. This process was agreed as appropriate with the company which undertakes the independent review of ARC data, C D Consultancy. However, due to staffing gaps during 2022/23, this process stalled but will now be reinstated.

The time to complete emergency repairs, decreased from 10.06 hours for financial year 2021/2022 to 9.12 hours for 2022/2023. An analysis of emergency repairs figures shows that 24 of 256 (9.4%) were in excess of the 24 hour limit. Half of these, 12 of 24 (50%) were completed between 24 and 29 hours.

The remainder are as follows:

- 75 were 30 - 49 hours.
- 4 were 50 - 79 hours.
- 1 was over 100+ hours

If these worst 9 cases (3.5%) were removed the average would drop from 9.12 hours down to 7.00 hours.

The reasons for some repairs being out of time included contractors, especially on the isles, reporting incorrect dates and times of completions or failing to raise second orders/stopping the clock once an emergency has been addressed but further parts require to be ordered/additional works are needed to fully address the issue. An additional complexity involved mainland contractors undertaking works on the isles and the above issues being exacerbated with weather and travel disruption. Due to changes in key personnel the process which had been set in place to ensure all work orders were reviewed on a monthly basis and information was used actively in meeting with contractors, had stalled but restarted in January 2023.

The Council continues to work closely with its contractors to ensure the performance management culture remains central to service provision despite significant pressures on services and Orkney's remote and rural context.

The time to complete non-emergency repairs decreased slightly to 15.11 days for 2022/2023 from 15.34 days in 2021/2022. A detailed analysis of the cases which are most in excess of the 20 working day limit, has highlighted similar issues to those outlined above for emergency repairs. Serious supply issues continued to impact up to the end of calendar year 2022. This has started to resolve now but can still be a factor. If all repairs above 76 days which are generally due to supply issues, were to be removed, this would bring the figures down to 12.20 days.

The Council continues to work closely with its contractors and aims to improve performance wherever possible. The contractors remain very busy and there are difficulties in obtaining sub-contractors with availability. Some trades are particularly

scarce including painters, one contractor has experienced difficulties as a result of a loss of a back of house member of staff. Some contractors have been successful in expanding their staff teams and tried to restructure their processes which is positive. Recruitment remains challenging generally, many contractors are reporting that they are having difficulties. The Council has commissioned a piece of work around the housing needs of essential workers (much wider than purely key workers). The results of this work will be presented to this cycle of meetings.

Repairs customer satisfaction remains high at 89.04%, which is very positive. Some analysis will be undertaken of the reasons behind cases where dissatisfaction is recorded and the outcome of complaints relating to repairs.

In relation to Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS), processes are currently being reviewed around property inspections, ensuring robust evidence is in place and readily accessible. Processes are being developed to ensure greater electronic completion of surveys are developed and enhanced.

Data has been compiled on the renewal cycle for core property elements such as windows, doors, kitchens, bathrooms. This provides accurate data based on historic renewal data and update surveys done while Building Inspectors are in the properties. The data is then reviewed and prioritised to ensure the properties are maintained to a good standard, both affordable and planned. This process continues to be further automated. Undertaking works on core property elements should also assist with improving tenant satisfaction with the quality of tenant homes (indicator 7) In addition, given the cost of living crisis, a review of decoration allowances offered to new tenants will be undertaken shortly.

The Council's in-house resource incorporates accredited Energy Assessors (Scotland) staff and has resulted in a significant survey programme. Modern Energy Performance Certificates are held for the majority of the housing stock. A recently recruited Building Inspector has just completed his qualification and will take forward Energy Performance Certificates on properties which require an updated assessment for the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing 1.

Indicator 12 (Repairs Satisfaction)

Repairs customer satisfaction remains high at 89.04%, which is very positive.

Indicator 14 (Tenancy Offers Refused)

The percentage of offers of housing refused has recorded a positive reduction to 29.92% 2022/23 from 32.64% in 2021/22. In general, work has been underway to reduce the numbers of offers refused and this has continued.

It was previously advised that there is an intention to introduce a new lettings policy, based on the principles of choice, by April 2021, while delayed as a result of COVID-19, this is now being progressed with a view to it being implemented during this financial year. The Lettings Plan to outline percentage targets allocated to groups inside the lettings policy was approved at the June cycle of committee meetings.

Indicator 15 (Anti-Social Behaviour)

The Council has neighbourhoods which are clean and attractive. The level of anti-social behaviour in Orkney remains very low. Along with Orkney Housing Association Limited, joint work is undertaken closely with the Council's corporate Anti-Social Behaviour Co-Ordinator and the Police in order to take a multi-agency approach to any issues which arise.

Orkney has a very low level of anti-social behaviour with few cases of serious anti-social behaviour. The Council's anti-social behaviour policy, was significantly reviewed in 2019 with the addition of realistic and proportionate targets. An appendix to the anti-social behaviour policy on harassment was introduced recently to ensure appropriate processes are in place to address any issues which may arise specifically as a result of harassment and this is related to enhancement of equalities processes.

There has been an increase in anti-social behaviour over recent months, most of it low level but some of it connected to a decision to allocate a sizeable proportion of 44 new build properties to homeless households, many of whom were young people. Staff have worked in partnership with the Police and the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator. The new scheme has been occupied since December 2021 and is becoming more established and settled now. A reduction in cases is expected going forward.

Indicator 16 (Tenancy Sustainment)

Overall tenancy sustainment (indicator 16) shows sustained performance.

An assessment of cases where a tenancy had not been sustained indicated reasons such as death, hospitalisation and leaving Orkney as well as those who had sought housing in another sector.

As regards tenancy sustainment generally, the Council is keen to assist tenants to sustain their tenancies and employs a qualified Social Worker within Housing Services. This allows specialist Social Work skills to be used to assist those with a range of issues including addiction. In addition, the Council employs a Housing Support worker who works directly with tenants in this respect. A new Housing Support Officer has recently been recruited following the resignation of the previous member of staff. The Housing Support and Homelessness aspects of the Housing service are registered with the Care Inspectorate accordingly and these obtain good inspection grades and staff are registered with the SSSC accordingly.

Indicators 18 and 30 (Empty Property Rental Loss and Time taken to Relet Properties)

Void (empty property) loss decreased from £54,453 in 2021/2022 to £53,954 in 2022/2023, which represents a decrease in the percentage of rent due to properties being empty from 1.42% to 1.32%. There were slightly more relets, 80 in 2022/ 2023 as opposed to 78 in 2021/2022. Supply issues affected a range of items including internal doors and issues with electricity meters, while this has generally resolved now, it still had an impact during 2022/23. Pressure on staffing for the measured term contactor is also having an impact.

As regards indicator 30 on the average length of time taken to relet properties, a total of 80 properties were relet during financial year 2022/2023. The time taken to relet properties has increased slightly. The total number of calendar days they were empty was 4,635 giving a relet time of 57.94 which is slightly longer than financial year 2021/22 which recorded 52.10 days.

Various voids were subject to extended void periods including four sheltered properties which together accrued 868 days and 3 isles properties subject to low demand which were void for 595 days. If the value of 7 is excluded from the calculations, it would lead to a reduced average days to let of 43.45. Furthermore, approximately 10% of cases contribute to 31.56% of the total void loss.

Indicator 27 covers gross rent arrears as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year.

Gross arrears continued to be challenging throughout financial year 2022/2023. The figures at year end showed a decrease to 12.65% from 14.35% for financial year 2021/2022.

Throughout COVID-19 and beyond a strong focus was maintained on the recovery of arrears. Initially this included undertaking welfare checks for all the Council's tenants throughout lockdown, working with tenants to ensure that those who needed assistance to claim Universal Credit Housing Costs / Housing Benefit, were assisted to do so. Close joint working continues with Orkney Citizen's Advice Bureau in relation to income maximisation and money advice / debt assistance. Every attempt has been made to recover outstanding arrears where this is possible. This included senior management prioritising the pursuit of arrears and significant levels of staffing resource being focused on this aspect. The level of arrears has been reported to the Chief Executive and Senior Councillors throughout.

Although the overall level of arrears remains high, the rent collected as a percentage of rent due in the year stayed relatively stable at 99.33% for financial year 2022/2023 from 99.50% for 2021/2022. This is a positive indication that the strong focus on reducing rent arrears is starting to net results.

The level of housing costs received directly, through Housing Benefit / Universal Credit Housing Costs, increased from the previous financial year with 494 households recorded in comparison to 467 the previous year. The amount rose to £1.61m from £1.52m the year before. However, a system, of inputting payments manually impacted on a small staffing resource adding complexities for a small Housing Revenue Account.

Steps continue to be taken to progress the automation of Universal Credit and bank payments and the relevant software suppliers were asked to remedy this during 2022. However, the combination of an internal restructure and other staffing gaps has affected the Council's ability to upgrade the system to the most recent release and the Housing test system required to be replaced. The test system has been procured and is in place and upgrades / new releases are progressing. A test plan has been developed and upgrades will be taken forward with the relevant software provider in due course. Unfortunately, staffing changes can have a significant impact given the small size of the Housing Service.

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) continue to be publicised through the Council's website, social media etc in an attempt to reach more tenants who are struggling.

The percentage of former tenant arrears in 2022/2023 decreased to 3.00% from 5.71% in 2021/2022.

The Council previously actively and prudently pursued former tenant arrears rather than writing these off, however this had a detrimental impact on overall rent arrears performance – statistics and anecdotal evidence suggested that practice in other organisations is to write-off the majority of former tenant debt. This approach has now been reconsidered as there is a need to ensure resources are being targeted at bringing in current arrears and that tenants who are in arrears are ensuring their focus is on current arrears as opposed to former tenant arrears from the past. Currently a process is underway in relation to the consideration of a wider programme of write off. This will take time to affect the statistics however. Write-offs for financial year 2022/2023 totalled £58,037, or 33.72% of the former tenant arrears outstanding, representing a significant increase from a year previously. A meeting has been arranged to discuss increasing the level of write off for former tenant arrears.

The Housing Service continues to have a specialist post called Housing Officer (Income Collection). In addition, a further specialist officer has been employed on recovery of rent arrears over the last year given the level of arrears. This is to supplement the role of Housing Officers with the aim to reduce the level of rent arrears and other housing debt outstanding.

Mandatory box

For the first time, the Annual Return against the Charter included a new box for completion which was mandatory. This was intended to allow social housing providers to provide information around electrical (and where relevant gas) safety checks.

For the Council, in December 2022, an issue was identified around electrical installation condition reports (EICR) and the process of evidencing compliance. Accordingly, a piece of work was instructed through an independent party, C D Consultancy Ltd, to determine the level of compliance. A programme of works was instigated and weekly meetings were put in place (and remain in place) between senior staff within the Education Leisure and Housing Directorate and also Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure Directorate. A range of local contractors were sourced to assist with undertaking checks and a structure was implemented to ensure the evidence base was appropriate. C D Consultancy undertook an additional piece of work around the current status of delivery on 29 May, immediately prior to submission of the ARC and provided a report accordingly.

In addition, the Council had identified an issue with the data around interlinked smoke alarms in autumn 2022, and a programme of works was developed and taken forward with the contractor who had been employed to undertake the contract. A further works programme is currently underway to ensure the final remaining households have their interlinked smoke alarms fitted in the summer of 2023.

While SHQS compliance has been reported to be 52.8% at 31 March 2023, at 30 May 2023, fails had been reduced to 233 properties which equates to 72.6% of properties meeting SHQS. A breakdown of this data is outlined below:

List of Failures (as of 31 March 2023):

- 6 cases failed on all three criteria (Fire, EICR, and EESSH).
- 56 cases failed on Fire and EICR criteria.
- 1 case failed on Fire and EESSH criteria.
- 4 cases failed on EIRC and EESSH criteria.
- 8 cases failed on EESSH criteria only.
- 256 cases failed on EICR criteria only.
- 55 cases failed on Fire criteria only.

Total cases: 386.

List of Failures (as of 30 May 2023):

- 1 case failed on all three criteria (Fire, EICR, and EESSH).
- 37 cases failed on Fire and EICR criteria.
- 4 cases failed on Fire and EESSH criteria.
- 4 cases failed on EICR and EESSH criteria.
- 11 cases failed on EESSH criteria only.
- 129 cases failed on EICR criteria only.
- 47 cases failed on Fire criteria only.

Total cases: 233.

The Council has endeavoured to focus on ensuring it delivers the SHQS as far as is practicably possible. The Council has a strong knowledge of its stock and data held on properties is at an individual level. A process of cloning is not used as a general rule, though have recently moved to having a small number of cloned properties. Information held on Concerto is being enhanced to try and make it more dynamic and facilitate onsite update while Building Inspectors are in properties. This is to ensure the evidence base is updated much more swiftly and that the data can be actively used to ensure delivery of appropriate standards. An action plan has been developed following reports from C D Consultancy and will be taken forward accordingly. A further piece of work has been arranged for autumn to provide assurance of the level of compliance at that stage.

Annual Report for Tenants

The annual report for tenants will be produced by 31 October 2023 as required by the Scottish Housing Regulator. This will include key information which is of interest to tenants.

The Council has a joint Residents' Panel with Orkney Housing Association Limited which consists of tenants / residents of both organisations. They will be asked for their views on the Annual Report ahead of publication and their views will be taken into account in producing the final document. The Council includes a section in the Annual Report which encourages feedback from tenants more generally on how they feel about the report and the information in it.

The Residents' Panel will also be involved in discussions around the Annual Assurance Statement prior to submission.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

The Council is required to undertake a wholesale tenants' satisfaction survey every three years. This was undertaken most recently during 2022 by an independent body in order to ensure impartiality.

A range of customer satisfaction surveys are in place across the Service in order to assess the quality of the service on an ongoing basis. These include:

- New tenants' survey regarding quality of home and service.
- Repairs Satisfaction survey.
- Improvements satisfaction survey.
- Exit questionnaires for tenants leaving the Council's accommodation.
- Homelessness service, new tenants' questionnaire.
- Homelessness service, exit questionnaire.
- Housing Advice service, exit questionnaire.

In addition, information is used from complaints and general feedback as encouraged by footnotes on all correspondence etc. The information is used to inform the Service Delivery Plan for the relevant part of the Service which underpins service improvements.

This links to standard 3.12 in the National Standards for Information and Advice Providers which is part of the Council's accreditation.

While the Council collects data from its wholesale tenant satisfaction survey, this can lead to some distortion in figures. For example, when questions are raised regarding repairs it should be the most recent repair. It is therefore more effective to collect this data immediately following completion of the repair.

The Council intends to use its ongoing customer satisfaction information so it can evidence that the information collected relates to the present day.

The next wholesale customer satisfaction survey will be undertaken in early 2024 with a view to the results being submitted in the Council's Annual Return against the Charter in May 2024.

Scottish Housing Regulator's Engagement Plan

The Scottish Housing Regulator's engagement plan highlights key indicators, relating to service quality, where they have indicated they wish to engage with the Council.

During 2022/23 they reviewed and compared the data for all local authorities from the Scottish Government's national homelessness statistics and the Annual Returns on the Charter. They also spoke to all local authorities to gather further information and assurance about their homelessness services. To assess the risks to people who are threatened with or experiencing homelessness they will engage with all local authorities during 2023/24 with a focus on the provision of appropriate temporary accommodation.

Specifically, they will engage with Orkney in relation to the following areas:

- Orkney's assessment of homelessness applications; and
- Outcomes for people who are homeless.

Their engagement plan states that in order to assess the risk to social landlord services the Scottish Housing Regulator have reviewed and compared the 2021/22 service quality performance of all social landlords to identify the "weakest performing" landlords. They will therefore engage with Orkney about tenant satisfaction, complaints handling, emergency repairs and rent arrears.

Data on homelessness is not included within the Annual Return against the Charter generally. Instead, this information is provided through returns outlined at section 4.2 of the committee report and is reported to the Council's Education, Leisure and Housing Committee, specifically a report is presented to the June cycle of meetings.

The position relating to the other areas referred to above, is outlined at the relevant parts of this annex.

Annex 2: Assurance Action Plan

Assurance and Notification

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
Prepare an Annual Assurance Statement in accordance with guidance.	Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing and Data Analysts.	October 2023.	Green.	Committee report and appendices to be presented to Education, Leisure and Housing Committee on 6 September 2023.
Submit Annual Assurance Statement to Scottish Housing Regulator between April and October each year.	Data Analysts.	October 2023.	Green.	On target to be submitted by October 2023.
Make Annual Assurance Statement available to tenants and other service users.	Data Analysts and Tenant Participation Officer.	October 2023.	Green.	To be included in Housing Services' area of website.
Notify Scottish Housing Regulator during the year of any material changes to the assurance in the Annual Assurance Statement.	Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing and Data Analysts.	As required.	Green.	
Have assurance and evidence that we are meeting all our legal obligations associated with housing and homelessness services, equality and human rights, and tenant and resident safety.	Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing and Team Manager (Maintenance and Heritage).	Ongoing.	Amber*.	In general compliance with our legislative duties links to Standard 1.5 of National Standards for Information and Advice Providers. We were re-accredited by the Scottish Legal Aid Board during 2022. Evidence includes a broad range of Council corporate policies including the Health and Safety Policy; Challenging

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
				<p>Behaviour by Members of the Public: The Role of Customer Service Advisers and All Staff Using the Customer Services Facility; Housing Services' Staff Training and Development Policy; Library Procedure for Housing Services; staff training logs and internal portal which includes a broad range of information on corporate policy areas.</p> <p>Staff management processes are in place across Housing Services including induction, regular one to ones in line with the Line Management Policy and all staff are required to complete the Personal Development Award for Advisors with Shelter at the next intake after taking up post. In addition, structures such as qualified housing officer are in place to encourage housing staff to complete a housing qualification.</p> <p>During 2021 we undertook a review of our equalities policy and the processes relating to equalities data collection and human rights. Our revised Equalities Policy and Action Plan was approved by our Education, Leisure and Housing Committee in June 2021. We sought equalities information from all existing</p>

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
				<p>tenants and housing applicants, in relation to 9 protected characteristics in line with the Scottish Housing Regulator’s Regulatory Framework and Scottish Federation of Housing Association Limited’s Guidance. Equalities data requested has been expanded across all housing and homelessness service areas accordingly and data will be used as required to ensure continued improvement of service provision.</p> <p>As regards tenant safety, specifically in relation to the points outlined in the Scottish Housing Regulator’s guidance of summer 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas safety is not applicable as Orkney has no mains gas; • As regards electrical safety, we have in place a 5 yearly rolling programme to carry out EICRs and address any remedial works identified from them. An issue arose which affected this in December 2022 and we have been working through a programme to ensure electrical checks and any remedial works

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
				<p>have been undertaken across our stock and have kept the Scottish Housing Regulator informed throughout. At August 2023, 96% of our housing stock holds a valid EICR certificate and we have plans in place in relation to EICRs requiring to be updated over the coming months. In addition, we have implemented an independent check of our performance and data accordingly. We expect to be back to a position of full compliance by autumn 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire safety - We are also working through a programme of implementing the residual aspects of our contract on interlinked smoke alarms. At August 2023, 96% of housing stock is fitted with an interlinked smoke alarm. Again, the Scottish Housing Regulator was kept informed throughout. In addition, we have implemented an independent check of our performance and data accordingly.

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1518 256 2029 730">• Water safety – we have a contract around legionella testing . The contract identifies the requirement to carry out risk assessments to a sample of the housing stock.. We are currently developing a schedule of properties to receive a risk assessment, based on house type and location. We are also in discussion with the contractor who will arrange visits to the identified properties <li data-bbox="1518 772 2007 1023">• Asbestos – The amount of asbestos in our properties is relatively low and is largely confined to common areas that have been surveyed in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. <li data-bbox="1518 1064 2029 1390">• Our asbestos records are held on an external platform. Details are held of when the property last had an update carried out as well as if any asbestos containing materials were identified.. This platform allows us to monitor and manage through a register, as well as the

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
				<p>online platform, the asbestos present in our properties. In addition we have carried out surveys to our housing stock based on house type and location. These reports have been linked to all houses matching that profile. Additional / update surveys are carried out on a requirement basis with the latest programmed to occur in late September 2023. All of our works orders also have reference to the external platform including its login details for contractor review before commencing work on a property.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radon – we have carried out radon gas testing to 56% of our properties which generated remedial works to 18 properties that have been subsequently completed. The survey data and remedial actions are captured and maintained in a property tracker held by the Council. An update of the review is due to be carried out starting in 2024. This will focus on the properties not

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
				<p>captured in the previous review and those that required remedial works.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damp and mould – a policy on damp and mould is being presented to our Education, Leisure and Housing Committee in September 2023. Staff have received training by the Chartered Institute of Housing this summer and specific procedural training has been arranged for later this year. We are enhancing our structures for the recording, monitoring and addressing cases of damp and mould in our social housing. Where damp and mould has been identified we have put in place joint visits, between Building Inspectors and Housing Officers to provide our tenants with technical and practical assistance and guidance to address the issue. Where fabric issues have been identified as the cause, remedial works have been carried out.

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lift safety – this is not applicable in an Orkney situation as the Council has no social housing which is fitted with lifts. <p>Going forward we will implement revised structures around monitoring of preventative, protective maintenance.</p>
<p>Notify Scottish Housing Regulator of safety matters which have been reported to or investigated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) or reports from other regulatory or statutory authorities or insurance providers, relating to safety concerns.</p>	<p>Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing / Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities and Team Manager (Maintenance and Heritage).</p>	<p>In place.</p>	<p>Green.</p>	<p>The Council's Health and Safety Advisor provides guidance on all aspects of health and safety as required. If a report were received from the Health and Safety Executive, immediate steps would be taken to address the issue and the Scottish Housing Regulator would be advised accordingly.</p> <p>We have policies covering issues such as Asbestos and procedures in place regarding Radon / Legionella etc. Our Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure undertake property inspections and ensure properties are fitted with interlinked smoke alarms etc.</p> <p>Risk assessments and procedural documentation were in place throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure staff and tenants / service users were / are appropriately protected and</p>

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
				supported throughout the COVID-19 crisis and beyond to ensure appropriate protections are in place to mitigate risk.
Make Engagement Plan easily available and accessible to tenants and service users, including online.	Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing and Data Analysts.	May 2023.	Green.	To be included by link to the Scottish Housing Regulator's website from Housing Services' area of the Council's website.
Register all requirements for providing data to Scottish Housing Regulator and Information Commissioners Office.	Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing and Head of Legal Services.	In place.	Green.	Housing Services will hold a register of any matters reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator and Legal Services will record all matters reported to the Information Commissioners Office.

Scottish Social Housing Charter Performance

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
Submit Annual Return against the Charter to Scottish Housing Regulator in accordance with published guidance.	Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing and Data Analysts.	May 2023.	Green.	Submitted by 30 May 2023.
Involve tenants, and where relevant service users, in the preparation and scrutiny of performance information. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree an effective and meaningful approach with tenants. 	Tenant Participation Officer.	In place.	Green.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents' Panel involved in development of annual report as standard. Section in the annual report to encourage feedback. Residents' Panel are invited to an annual presentation on performance from Scotland's Housing; Network

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise approach to tenants. • Verify approach and evidence involving tenants has happened. • Involve other service users in an appropriate way. 				(from 2019) and discussion at Residents' Panel meeting thereafter.
<p>Report performance to tenants and other service users no later than October each year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree format of performance reporting with tenants and ensure accessible with plain and jargon free language. • Provide assessment of performance in delivering Charter outcomes. • Include relevant comparison including previous years, other landlords and with national performance. • Set out how we intend to address areas for improvement. • Give tenants and service users a way to feedback views on style and form of reporting. 	Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing and Data Analysts and Tenant Participation Officer.		Green.	The Council has a joint Residents' Panel with Orkney Housing Association which consists of tenants / residents of both organisations. They are asked for their views on the Annual Report ahead of publication and their views will continue to be taken into account in producing the final document. The Council includes a section in the Annual Report which encourages feedback from tenants more generally on how they feel about the report and the information on it.

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
Make Scottish Housing Regulator report on our performance easily available to tenants including online.	Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing and Data Analysts.	When produced by SHR.	Green.	To be included as a link to the Scottish Housing Regulator's website from Housing Services' area of the Council's website.

Whistleblowing

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
Ensure effective arrangements and a policy for whistleblowing for staff and elected Members.	Head of HR and Performance.	In place from October 2015.	Green.	Policy on Whistleblowing is available on internal portal or in either electronic or hard copy from HR on request. Trade Unions are also aware of this. There is a monthly meeting with Trade Unions which is corporate and each individual service holds regular meetings with the Trade Unions as well.
Make Whistleblowing policy easily available and promote its existence.	As above.	In place. As above.	Green.	As above.

Tenants and Service Users Redress

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
Make information on reporting any significant performance failures, including the Scottish Housing Regulator's leaflet, available to our tenants.	Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing and Tenant Participation Officer.	In place from June 2019.	Green.	A link will be provided to the Scottish Housing Regulator's leaflet from the Council's website.

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
Provide tenants and service users with the information they need to exercise right to complain and seek redress.	Team Manager (Housing Strategy, Development and Data).	In place.	Green.	The Council's corporate complaints process is used and corporate policy in line with the guidance from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. Information is available through our website and in hard copy on request.
Respond to tenant complaints within our service standards timescales and in accordance with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman guidance.	Team Manager (Housing Strategy, Development and Data).	In place.	Amber*.	Reporting against timescales is included in the Annual Return against the Charter. Complaints was included in our engagement plan from the Scottish Housing Regulator and complaints data has been provided to the Regulator accordingly. Complaints are being responded to within the required timescales for financial year 2023/24.
Ensure we have effective arrangements to learn from complaints and other tenant and service user feedback, in accordance with SPSO guidance.	Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing and Head of Legal Services.	In place.	Green.	This links with standard 3.12 of the National Standards for Information and Advice Providers which covers using feedback to inform service provision. Information collected through complaints, comments and customer satisfaction surveys is used to inform the update of the Service Delivery Plan for the relevant service area.

Equality and Human Rights

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
<p>Have assurance and evidence we consider equality and human rights issues properly when making decisions, in the design and review of internal and external policies, and in our day to day service delivery.</p>	<p>Senior Management Team of the Council.</p>	<p>In place.</p>	<p>Green.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All policies within Housing Services contain a section on equalities. • The Housing Service has a specific Equalities Policy and one on Accessibility and reviewed its Equalities Policy during 2021. Equalities monitoring across 9 protected characteristics has been taken forward in line with the national guidance. We sought equalities information from all existing tenants and housing applicants, in relation to 9 protected characteristics in line with the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework and Guidance from the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations. Equalities data requested has been expanded across all housing and homelessness service areas accordingly and data will be used as required to ensure continued improvement of service provision. • Committee reports on policy matters contain a section on equality. • Completion of equality impact assessments is standard.

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Island communities impact assessments are undertaken as required. • The Council monitors its website and ensures it meets website accessibility requirements. • The Council employs a specialist equalities officer to ensure compliance. • Housing staff and staff within our Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure Service are scheduled to receive refresher training on equalities in the autumn of 2023.
Collect data relating to protected characteristics for existing tenants, new tenants, people on waiting lists and elected Members and staff.	Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing	In place.	Green.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equalities criteria does not currently apply to elected Members given that they are democratically elected. • Equalities monitoring information across 9 protected characteristics is now collected for new tenants and applicants and information has also been sought in relation to existing tenants also. This is sought along with information relating to requirements for information in a range of formats. • As regards staff, our HR Service collect information relating to 9 protected characteristics for staff

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
				<p>when they apply for any post whether when they initially come into the organisation or where an internal application is submitted. Updates are requested re equalities data through the MyView portal and annual communications are issued to remind staff to update details. The staff survey also requests information relating to the 9 protected characteristics and an annual report is produced on staff diversity which in turn is used to inform any relevant changes to policy required.</p>
<p>Collect data on protected characteristics of people who apply as homeless.</p>	<p>Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing.</p>	<p>In place.</p>	<p>Green.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equalities monitoring information is collected for people who apply as homeless. • Our homelessness interview form has been updated to include all 9 protected characteristics.
<p>Collect data on protected characteristics of people who use our Gypsy / Traveller services.</p>	<p>N/A.</p>	<p>N/A.</p>	<p>N/A.</p>	<p>N/A.</p>

* Those requirements marked as “amber” will all revert to green during 2023/24 when the issue has been addressed through ensuring the Council complies with the requirements in the Scottish Housing Regulator’s engagement plan.



Dampness Policy including dealing with mould

July 2023

Version Control

Document Reference.	Rev.	Issue date.	Reason for issue.	Reviewer.
HD POL 145.	Draft.	21/07/2023.	New.	Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing.

Contents

Section 1: Dampness policy: strategic context	4
Section 2: Dampness policy objectives	5
Section 3: The legal and regulatory framework	6
Section 4: Implementing our dampness policy	8
Section 5: Staff training	10
Section 6: Partnership Working	11
Section 7: Performance management	12
Section 8: Complaints	13
Section 9: Consultation and review of policy	14

We can produce this document in different formats such as in larger print or audio-format; we can also translate the document into various languages, as appropriate.

Section 1: Dampness policy: strategic context

1.1. Purpose of our dampness policy

We have developed this dampness policy to establish an appropriate framework that we use to address dampness issues that may arise in relation to our housing stock. This framework includes, not only policy objectives, but a range of activities that are critical in ensuring effective implementation of policy objectives as well as monitoring progress.

1.2. Comprehensive service provision

We recognise that dampness is a complex matter as it may involve dealing, not only with one specific cause, but with a range of physical, social and environmental issues. Our approach reflects this latter perspective, then, by mainstreaming actions to address dampness across a range of housing and maintenance services.

1.3. Linking council strategies

As well as providing comprehensive housing services, we also link council strategies so that dampness issues are considered systemically. For example, our dampness policy and procedure can be linked to three other Orkney Islands Council strategies and policies, namely fuel poverty¹, equality and diversity² and tenant participation³. Fuel poverty is a major issue in Orkney; this is likely to continue in line with rising fuel costs and food prices. And inadequate or inappropriate heating provision can be a contributory factor in causing dampness.

Our equality and diversity policy aims to address a wide range of barriers that may lead to people being excluded from active participation in society. Damp housing can be one of these barriers, not forgetting its effects on the health of tenants and their families. Addressing dampness is, therefore, central to our equality strategic policy objective of promoting an inclusive society in Orkney.

Finally, given that dampness is an important housing issue, it is essential that we develop this dampness policy in liaison with our tenants and other local groups. We do this through our tenant participation strategy.

1.4. Summary

Our dampness policy sets out our policy objectives and the activities we undertake to ensure its effective implementation. The policy is linked to key Council strategies so it is not viewed as an issue to be addressed in isolation but as integral to Orkney governance.

¹ Orkney Islands Council Fuel Poverty Strategy (2017 – 2022) <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/H/strategy-and-policy.htm>

² Orkney Islands Council Equality and Diversity Policy 2021 <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/H/strategy-and-policy.htm>

³ Orkney Islands Council Tenant Participation Strategy (Consultative Draft) 2021 - 2026 <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/H/strategy-and-policy.htm>

Section 2: Dampness policy objectives

This section explains our dampness policy objectives which are comprehensive and holistic in nature as they cover a range of organisational activities.

2.1. Policy objectives

In line with our eight dampness policy objectives, we:

- Meet relevant legal and regulatory standards relating to the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and in particular those standards that effect dampness.
- Reduce dampness and the causes of dampness within our housing stock.
- Take account of good practice guidance when developing our dampness policy and related procedure.
- Integrate dampness issues into a range of housing services so that dampness is addressed comprehensively as part of service delivery.
- Provide information to tenants about the nature of dampness and how to access local agencies which can provide further advice.
- Monitor all incidents of dampness relating to our housing services through a range of local performance indicators.
- Provide staff training to promote effective implementation of the dampness policy.
- Offer tenants advice and information about our complaint system.
- Review our dampness policy every five years or sooner, as required, for instance, due to legal changes or new guidance.

2.2. Summary

This section has described our main dampness policy objectives. These objectives describe the framework of principles that regulate how we address dampness in relation to council housing in Orkney. The implementation of the dampness policy is achieved through internal staff procedures.

Section 3: The legal and regulatory framework

3.1. Background

Section 3 provides a plain language guide to key legal and regulatory requirements that we meet in relation to council housing. This is not intended as a definitive statement of law.^{4;5}

3.2. Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Schedule 4

We are required to ensure that our houses are wind and watertight – and in all other respects fit for human habitation – when we let them. We must also keep houses in this condition throughout the tenancy.

Before we let our houses, we are required to inspect houses to identify work required to meet the above statutory standard.

We must also carry out work within a reasonable time; either after being notified by tenants or otherwise becoming aware of it, for example, during house visits. We must also rectify any damage we cause when carrying out the repairs. We may enter a house to inspect it and/or carry out works provided we give the tenant twenty fours written notice.

These duties are encapsulated within our tenancy agreement that is signed by Scottish secure tenants.

3.3. The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, section 86

The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 places a duty on every local authority to secure that all houses in their area which do not meet the tolerable standard are closed, demolished or brought up to the tolerable standard. This duty applies to all tenures which means that we must ensure that council houses meet the current tolerable standard.⁶ This standard requires us to ensure that our houses are substantially free from rising and/or penetrating damp, as well as being satisfactorily provided with heating, ventilation and insulated.⁷

This tolerable standard is also part of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, the Standard that we are required to meet as part of our monitoring requirements.

⁴ Information about law is provided to housing staff as part of ongoing training. The law in relation to dampness is complex. The law is supported in practice by a wide range of guidance; this is contained in our staff procedures on dampness.

⁵ Other law can also be relevant to addressing dampness, for example, environmental health law, in particular law relating to dealing with statutory nuisance; this is an issue covered in staff training when remedies available to tenants are considered, but is beyond the scope of this policy.

⁶ The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, section 85 (1).

⁷ The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, section 86, (1) (b). Our houses must also have satisfactory provision for ventilation and heating (Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, section 86 (1) (c)).

3.4. Our tenancy agreement: Scottish secure tenants

Our tenancy agreement is the contractual document that our tenants sign. This document sets out the rights and obligations of Orkney Islands Council and its tenants. With reference to repair law, the document specifies compliance with the statutory provisions above.⁸

The tenancy agreement, Clause 5.6. covers dampness, too, so it is important to cite Orkney Islands Council's contractual obligations in full.

“Our general repair obligations contained in paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 include a duty to carry out repairs relating to water penetration, rising dampness and condensation dampness as well as the obligations contained in this paragraph. We will provide and maintain the house so that any tenant who we might reasonably expect to live in the house can heat the house to a reasonable temperature at a reasonable cost, so as to avoid condensation, dampness and mould. If during the tenancy, the house suffers from condensation dampness which is partially or wholly caused by a deficiency in, or absence of, any feature of the house (including insulation, provision for heating or ventilation), we will carry out repairs (including, where appropriate, replacement, addition or provision of insulation, ventilation or heating systems) within a reasonable time so that that feature is not a cause of the condensation dampness.”

3.5. Regulatory provisions

The Scottish Housing Regulator is expected to develop specific regulatory provisions for the purposes of monitoring responses to damp and mould and this section will reflect their requirements when these are published.

3.6. Summary

Our statutory duties to address dampness are covered in both housing law and our main contractual document that Scottish secure tenants sign. Section 4 now summarises in outline how we translate these objectives into practice.

⁸ Orkney Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement, Clauses 5.2. and 5.3.

Section 4: Implementing our dampness policy

If dampness issues are to be addressed to satisfy legal and contractual obligations, it is essential to incorporate actions across a range of staff procedures. This section describes these key actions that are, in turn, detailed in actual council housing documentation. These procedures can be categorised under three headings as follows: empty housing; tenanted homes; monitoring; and using dampness data to improve future housing services. The text below is a summary of key actions with details contained in our staff procedures.

4.1. Empty houses

4.1.1. Actions before houses are let

As part of our void management policy and procedure, we carry out an inspection of houses before they are let. One of the key activities within this procedure includes assessment of whether a house is damp. This covers three main categories of dampness, namely penetrating damp, rising damp and condensation damp. Having identified the nature of the dampness and its extent, appropriate repairs are then implemented to address the dampness, including the treatment of mould.

4.1.2. Tenancy sign-ups and information to tenants

At the tenancy sign-up stage for new tenants, we provide tenants with an information leaflet about dampness; this is part of their Tenants' Handbook. This information describes in plain language the different forms of dampness and steps that can be taken to address the issue. One of these steps is, of course, to contact Orkney Islands Council promptly to address the issue as quickly as possible. At the sign-up stage, we inform tenants of our home visit service during which a qualified staff member will visit them at home to provide practical guidance about using heating systems appropriately and how best to conserve energy and reduce fuel costs.

4.2. Tenanted homes

4.2.1. Home visits

At the home visit during which information about using heating systems is given, the officer concerned will also provide more detailed technical guidance about dampness and signs to be aware of. This will assist in reinforcing the message that the causes of dampness are complex and involve an array of inter-acting elements.⁹ This approach is emphasised in staff training when it is highlighted that dampness is not something that can be attributable solely to tenants' actions.

4.2.2. Dampness notification by tenants

If a tenant reports dampness and or mould, this is covered within our repairs and maintenance procedures. This triggers a range of actions as follows: home visit by a Housing Officer and a Building Inspector within a set period to visit and inspect the nature and extent of the damage; determining, in liaison with the tenant, the most

⁹ These can be physical, personal and environmental in nature.

appropriate way to address the dampness and treat mould; and organising repairs as necessary.

At this meeting, information about any possible claims for damages should be discussed and information passed to our internal Insurance Officer to process.

4.3. Monitoring

Our monitoring system has been established to ensure that dampness monitoring is contextualised and takes account of issues relevant to Orkney Islands Council. Further information is provided in Section 5.

4.4. Using dampness data to improve future housing services

Dampness data is extremely important as we use this to inform a wide range of service related matters. For example, data about types of housing affected by dampness can be used to examine how this might be linked to property design and its facilities such as heating systems. Again, by identifying types and numbers of households affected by damp housing, we can use this data to target services more appropriately (actions linked directly to identified needs).

4.5. Summary

We have mainstreamed our dampness policy objectives into a range of housing management and maintenance services; these are encapsulated into a number of separate housing procedures. This section has described these procedures that form separate and substantial organisational documentation.

Section 5: Staff training

Staff training is vital if we are to implement our dampness policy objectives effectively. Training on dampness is carried out based on our dampness policy and its related dampness staff procedures; this is reinforced by inserting dampness commitments into the documentation of a range of separate housing services.¹⁰

5.1. Our dampness training programme

Our training programme covers the following topics:

- Our dampness policy.
- The nature of dampness.
- The causes of dampness (consciousness raising about the diverse causes of dampness).
- Identifying dampness during the void inspection.
- Explaining our obligations to tenants about dampness at tenancy sign-up stage (law and regulatory framework).
- Heating costs and income maximisation.
- Information leaflet to tenants about dampness, including judicial and non-judicial remedies.
- Post-tenancy visit to provide detailed information about using heating systems and how to address dampness.
- Responding to dampness complaints and identifying what is to be done (in liaison with the tenant concerned).
- Dealing with claims for compensation.
- Monitoring dampness reports.
- Using monitoring data to improve service delivery.

5.2. Summary

Staff training on dampness is comprehensive in nature and involves ensuring housing and maintenance services are harmonised.

¹⁰ Void management; the tenancy agreement provisions; tenancy agreement sign-up; information leaflets; post-tenancy sign-up home visits; and repairs and maintenance procedures (asset management).

Section 6: Partnership Working

We promote partnership working in Orkney Islands Council to ensure that tenants can access appropriate forms of support and guidance. This applies in the case of dampness too. Agencies and organisations that tenants can contact about dampness related matters are as follows:

Orkney Citizen's Advice Bureau

- Address: Anchor Buildings, 6 Bridge Street, Kirkwall, KW15 1HR.
- Telephone: 01856 875266.

THAW Orkney

- Address: Unit 4, Anchor Buildings, 6 Bridge Street, Kirkwall, KW15 1HR.
- Telephone: 01856 878388.

Section 7: Performance management

In order to evaluate if our dampness policy is being implemented effectively, we have established a local performance management system. This covers the following issues: dampness in empty houses; dampness in tenanted homes; compensation claims relating to dampness; complaints about dampness; and legal actions.

7.1. Dampness in empty houses

- Numbers and types of houses in which dampness is identified and by area/location.
- Types of dampness by category (penetrating damp, rising damp and condensation damp).
- Actions taken to remedy.

7.2. Dampness in tenanted homes

- Numbers and types of houses in which dampness is identified and by area/location.
- Profiles of households affected (equality data).
- Types of dampness by category (penetrating damp, rising damp and condensation damp).
- Actions taken to remedy.

7.3. Compensation claims relating to dampness

- Numbers of compensation claims made and by type of house and area.
- Numbers settled and outcomes.

7.4. Complaints about dampness

- Numbers of complaints about dampness and by type of house and area.
- Numbers settled and outcomes.

7.5. Legal actions relating to dampness

- Numbers of legal claims made and by type of house and area.
- Numbers settled and outcomes.

7.6. Summary

Our performance management system in relation to dampness is focussed on local context and intended to provide information that can be used to enhance future housing services, as appropriate.

Section 8: Complaints

We define a complaint as:

“An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the local authority’s action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the local authority”.

A copy of the Council’s Corporate Complaints Procedure is available on request from the Council offices or can be downloaded from our website.

Applicants should note that an independent review of decisions is available by referring a case to the Public Sector Ombudsman after the complaints procedure has been used.

This is a free and impartial service and a leaflet giving details is available at the Council offices.

The Ombudsman’s address is:

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman,
Bridgeside House,
99 McDonald Road,
Edinburgh,
EH7 4NS.

Telephone: 08003777330.

Section 9: Consultation and review of policy

Consultation is part of our tenant participation strategy and we use a wide range of consultation methods to reflect the needs of people in our community. These methods also take into account of accessibility requirements of disabled people.



Orkney Islands Council Education Leisure and Housing

Orkney Archive



Digital Preservation Policy September 2023

Orkney Archive promotes understanding of the history of the Orkney Islands by selecting, preserving and providing access to the archives of Orkney Islands Council and its predecessors, local individuals, estates, businesses and organisations, as well as published material.

Version Control

Document Reference.	Revision.	Issue Date.	Reason for Issue.	Reviewer.	Sign.
	00.	Date	New Policy.	Service Manager (Area)	

Contents

1. Scope of Policy	4
2. Scope of Collections	4
3. Professional Standards	4
4. Roles and Responsibilities	5
5. Digital Record Keeping	5
5.1 Principles.....	5
5.2 Formats.....	6
5.3 Metadata	6
5.4 Deposits and Accessions	6
5.5 Storage	6
5.6 Cataloguing.....	7
5.7. Appraisal	7
5.8. Access	7
5.9. Preservation and Care	7
5.10. Withdrawal	8
6. Policy Review.....	8

1. Scope of Policy

The purpose of the Digital Preservation Policy is to define why and how Orkney Archive acquires, preserves, develops, and facilitates access to the digital records in its care.

The Policy reflects the overall mission and objectives of the archive service and should be read in conjunction with the Collections Management, Collections Care and Conservation, Collections Development and Access Policies.

This Policy also needs to be read in conjunction with Orkney Archive's Digital Preservation Strategy which will outline how the service will achieve effective and efficient practices in digital preservation to ensure the long-term survival and accessibility of its digital collections.

2. Scope of Collections

The geographical area served by Orkney Archive is that governed by Orkney Islands Council (OIC), and the types of digital records taken into the custody of the archives reflects those of a physical nature (paper, parchment, photographic, microfilm etc) and represent the Orkney Islands Council and its predecessor bodies, local estates, people, organisations, and businesses, reflecting the changing landscape, communities, and economy.

Orkney Archive will also be the place of deposit for any future electronic records given over to the service by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland under their charge and superintendence, which can include Court and Church records, for example.

3. Professional Standards

Orkney Archive seeks to be guided by all relevant legislative and professional standards as set out in the Collections Management Policy, as well as those specifically relating to digital preservation, including but not limited to:

- ISO 14721:2012 Space Data and Information Transfer Systems – Open Archival Information System – Reference Model (OAIS) - provides a systematic framework for understanding and implementing the archival concepts needed for long-term digital information preservation and access, and for describing and comparing architectures and operations of existing and future archives. It describes roles, processes and methods for long-term preservation.
- ISO/TR 18492:2005 Long-term preservation of electronic document-based information - provides a practical methodology for the continued preservation and retrieval of authentic electronic document-based information and to ensure authenticity of records beyond the lifetime of original information keeping systems.
- ISO 16175:2011 Principles and functional requirements for records in electronic office environments - relates to electronic document and records management

systems, and the need to maintain records over time and that format obsolescence issues need to be considered in the specification of these electronic systems.

- PREMIS (Preservation Metadata: Implementation Strategies) - data dictionary and supporting tools that have been specifically developed to support the preservation of digital material.

It is important to note that the rate of change in technologies and standards make it impossible to base a policy solely on standards. A mix of standards and best practice that meets the need of the archive service will form a comprehensive strategy to meet the needs of the digital materials held and preserved by the archive service.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Team Manager (Libraries & Archives) is responsible for developing the Digital Preservation Policy and ensuring that it is implemented, monitored, and reviewed regularly (at least every three years), while also ensuring that there are sufficiently trained staff with appropriate knowledge to accomplish long-term objectives in this area.

The Digital Archivist will be responsible for ensuring that the policy and subsequent strategy is put into practice within the archive, as well as being the main point of contact with internal and external agencies relating to digital preservation. This will include, but is not limited to, OIC IT, Information Governance, Information Security and Digital Communications colleagues, as well as external agencies such as the Digital Preservation Coalition, Archivists of Scottish Local Authorities Working Group (ASLAWG) sub-groups relating to digital preservation and depositors of digital records.

The Archivist and Digital Archivist will work closely to align practices where possible between physical and digital collections to ensure best practice across all archival collections in the care of Orkney Archive.

5. Digital Record Keeping

5.1 Principles

Orkney Archive undertakes to preserve and offer access to the digital records in its care.

Relevant national standards and best practice are followed, and a professional code of ethics (Archives and Records Association Code of Ethics) is observed.

It may be necessary to apply appropriate techniques to stabilise digital collections to ensure long term access. Such interventions will be documented, and appropriate metadata collected to ensure the integrity and authenticity of the digital records.

5.2 Formats

Orkney Archive will strive to accept most formats, but there may be some that cannot be supported. In this instance the Digital Archivist will discuss options with the depositor.

Depositors will not be advised to convert file formats pre-deposit as this may remove essential metadata from the records.

Orkney Archive may create additional copies of records in other formats for preservation and access purposes, but the original deposited file will always be retained.

5.3 Metadata

Depositors will be encouraged to supply as much technical and descriptive metadata as possible.

Assistance can be provided by the Digital Archivist to help gather metadata for deposits.

Applications may be used to extract technical metadata, such as those advised by The National Archives and the Digital Preservation Coalition and approved for use by OIC IT.

5.4 Deposits and Accessions

The deposit process for digital records will take more time than for the physical analogue records held by Orkney Archive. Digital deposits require to be prepared for transfer to digital archive storage.

The legal deposit and accessioning process remains the same as it is for physical analogue records.

It is imperative that digital deposits retain their authenticity and are properly documented to retain the chain of custody/ownership.

The Digital Archivist will support depositors through this process in the same way the Archivist does.

5.5 Storage

We will store at least two copies of digital records in separate locations, with one of these being offsite from the archive building.

Storage for digital collections will be secure and have methods of being backed up to prevent the potential for data loss and corruption.

Long term storage solutions will be discussed with OIC IT, Information Governance and Information Security colleagues as digital collections continue to expand.

5.6 Cataloguing

Digital records will be catalogued using, where possible, the same style and format as the analogue/physical collections in the custody of the archives.

Cataloguing standards will be met when cataloguing digital collections.

Cataloguing to item level is preferred, but depending on the size, complexity, and organisation of the digital records this may not always be possible. If item level cataloguing is not achievable, a note will be put on the catalogue entry to make this clear to all researchers.

5.7. Appraisal

Digital records, just like analogue/physical records, in the care of the archive will be subject to appraisal during the cataloguing process. Any digital material not in keeping with the Collections Development Policy will be offered back to depositors or securely destroyed after consultation with them.

5.8. Access

Access to digital collections will, where possible, be provided in line with Orkney Archive Access Policy.

Finding aids will be produced for digital collections as they are for analogue/physical collections to facilitate access.

Access to digital collections will be given via public access computers in the public searchroom, or by sending electronically to a person's email depending on what is being requested, size and format etc.

Access restrictions will apply to digital collections in the same way as they do for analogue/physical collections. Reasons for restrictions may include, but are not limited to, Data Protection legislation, copyright, political and commercial sensitivity, and will be discussed and agreed with depositors prior to the collections coming into the custody of the archive.

At present, there are no plans to access digital collections in an online environment apart from when individual items may be featured in archival blogs, on the library and archive's other social media platforms, or as images on the future online catalogue.

5.9. Preservation and Care

Digital deposits will be fixity checked on accession into the archives. This will be the case for any copies made by the archives for preservation or access purposes.

Fixity checks will also be carried out at set intervals to ensure the bitstream remains the same as at time of deposit.

Such checks will remain in place and be a manual process for the Digital Archivist until such times as digital preservation software may be procured to make such checks automated.

5.10. Withdrawal

The process for withdrawing digital collections will be discussed with the depositor at the time of deposit and will be in line with what is discussed for analogue/physical collections.

Gifted digital deposits cannot be withdrawn from Orkney Archive.

6. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, and in line with any changes to the Digital Preservation Strategy as required. As with other archival policies, this policy and accompanying strategy will be incorporated into the Archive Management Scheme in 2025 when all other policies will be reviewed and submitted for approval by the Education, Leisure, and Housing Committee of Orkney Islands Council.



Orkney Islands Council Education Leisure and Housing

Orkney Archive



Digital Preservation Strategy 2023 - 2025

Orkney Archive promotes understanding of the history of the Orkney Islands by selecting, preserving and providing access to the archives of Orkney Islands Council and its predecessors, local individuals, estates, businesses and organisations, as well as published material.

Version Control

Document Reference.	Revision.	Issue Date.	Reason for Issue.	Reviewer.	Sign.
	00.	Date	New Strategy.	Service Manager (Area)	

Contents

1. Scope of Strategy.....	4
2. Digital Collections.....	4
3. Challenges	4
4. Strategic Priorities 2023 - 2025.....	5
4.1 Staff development and resources	5
4.2 Assessing capabilities for digital preservation.....	6
4.3 Surveying existing collections	6
4.4 Procedures for transferring and accessioning digital collections.....	6
4.5 Storage of digital collections	7
5. Expected Outcomes and Timescales.....	7
5.1 Staff development and resources.....	7
5.2 Assessing capabilities for digital preservation.....	8
5.3 Surveying existing collections	8
5.4 Procedures for transferring and accessioning digital collections.....	8
5.5 Storage of digital collections	8
6. Conclusions and Review	9

1. Scope of Strategy

The purpose of this strategy provides a framework for Orkney Archive's digital preservation activities and focus between 2023 and 2025. It clearly identifies strategic priorities within this area, reflecting on the Orkney Archive Digital Preservation Policy to achieve effective and efficient practices in digital preservation, ensuring the long-term survival and accessibility of its digital collections.

2. Digital Collections

Orkney Archive currently holds approximately 1.1TB of digital material, mainly in the format of digitised audio, photographic and text-based files. There is great potential to also add digitised newspapers and manuscripts, electoral registers, and personal/private digital archives to the collections in the future.

It must also be acknowledged that a lot of Orkney Islands Council (OIC) electronically created files, which have a legislative requirement to preserve or are deemed to be historically significant, will also pass into the archive's possession.

Digital content is acquired via the same deposit and accessioning procedures as the physical analogue collections. Records which are analogue and are subsequently digitised are held under the same deposit conditions.

Currently, most records being deposited in Orkney Archive are traditional analogue records; however, the amount of digitised content is steadily increasing, as well as the offerings of more born digital records, including official OIC electronically created content. Orkney Archive recognises the need to standardise and implement procedures to ensure it can preserve such digital content in the long term like it does for its physical collections.

3. Challenges

There are many technical challenges surrounding the preservation of digital preservation. Technological obsolescence and the pace of change in technology is a massive test to ensure that digital content remains accessible as well as authentic and reliable.

Digital content requires earlier intervention than traditional, physical records. The fragile nature of digital records means issues around data integrity and its authenticity need to be addressed as it is easier to make changes to digital files that can go unnoticed, as well as manage the process of appropriate changes and accompanying metadata.

The fragile state of digital storage media is also a cause for concern. Corruption and bit rot can render digital content inaccessible and at a swift pace. This needs to be actively observed and managed to ensure long term accessibility and usability.

Staff expertise and learning new skills to enable Orkney Archive to properly look after its digital collections when changes and lessons learned are still moving at pace present challenges too.

4. Strategic Priorities 2023 - 2025

The digital preservation strategy of Orkney Archive between 2023 and 2025 is oriented around establishing dedicated staff resources, surveying existing digital collections, creating workflow priorities, as well as embedding key processes and procedures to ensure the long-term preservation of such digital records are following the necessary professional standards required. Such strategic aims fit in with the overall mission statement of Orkney Archive as well as the general principles of the Collections Management, Development and Care policies.

4.1 Staff development and resources

Recognising the importance of managing and preserving digital content into the future led to the creation of a Digital Archivist post within Orkney Archive in March 2023. The post is currently filled with a Digital Archivist trainee who is enrolled on the Dundee University Archives and Records Management Diploma course. This post will be dedicated to the implementation and management of digital preservation activities within Orkney Archive and contribute to wider OIC digital preservation initiatives.

There will be opportunities for staff to develop and enhance their skills in digital preservation, through formal courses and continuing professional development prospects. This will ensure that there is a staffing skill set to sufficiently deliver and manage the preservation of Orkney Archive digital collections.

The Digital Archivist trainee will work collaboratively with OIC Information Technology (IT), Information Governance and Information Security teams to enhance knowledge on the principles and practices required to receive, manage, and provide access to both internal and external digital collections. This collaborative work will ensure there is a wider OIC approach to digital preservation and safeguard that archive practice is in line with OIC information security and governance policy.

A digital preservation sub-group has been established in the Archivists of Scottish Local Authorities Working Group (ASLAWG) and the Digital Archivist trainee and the Team Manager (Libraries & Archives) have contributed to the establishment of initial outcomes for the sub-group. The Digital Archivist trainee will join other representatives from across the local authority archive sector to look at best practice in digital preservation and look at common processes and procedures to align what archives are doing across the country.

This sub- group will be a means to look at resources required, and lessons learned from other services who are further along in their digital preservation journey, and the tools and systems put in place to judge what will work best here in Orkney Archive. This should also help inform what budgets may be required and the potential need for separate resources from the current Archive funding structure.

4.2 Assessing capabilities for digital preservation

To gain meaningful insight into moving forward with digital preservation, it is necessary to assess the risks associated with digital records and what processes and procedures are already in place.

It is a priority to use toolkits and assessment models to accurately assess Orkney Archive's capabilities for digital preservation and define where the Archive and wider organisation is at present for record keeping.

Toolkits such as the NDSA Levels of Preservation and DPC's Rapid Assessment Model will be used as a starting point to define where Orkney Archive are regarding capabilities for digital preservation. The outcomes of which will help inform future strategy and practices with regards to preserving digital collections within the Archive and wider OIC environment.

4.3 Surveying existing collections

There are few born digital collections so far in the Orkney Archive, but there are records created by both OIC and external bodies which have been created electronically which will be scheduled to be transferred to the Archive for long term preservation.

The bulk of the digital collections within the Archive are records that have been digitised by the Archivists over several years. These collections mainly consist of audio, photographic and text-based files. There have been no set processes or procedures documented for this material and how it was captured to inform its longer-term preservation needs. A survey of the digital collections is a priority to establish file formats, metadata, security, integrity, and access requirements of the existing collections. This will also inform current storage arrangements and future storage requirements to ensure best practice and ongoing access.

Processes and procedures for conducting a digital collections survey will be documented and be consistent with the Orkney Archive Digital Preservation Policy.

4.4 Procedures for transferring and accessioning digital collections

There needs to be a formal procedure developed for accessioning digital collections into Orkney Archive. This legal deposit and accessioning process should reflect that already in place for physical analogue records, but practices need to be put in place to ensure the authenticity, collected metadata and integrity of the digital records coming into the Archive are documented to accurately reflect the chain of custody so far in the records' life cycle.

This will also involve producing guidance for depositors and record creators, so they know what is expected of them during the accessioning and transfer period to ensure vital information is passed over along with the digital assets.

It will be imperative for the Digital Archivist trainee to work with OIC's IT, Information Governance, and Information Security colleagues to look at what systems and

software are appropriate to use and put in place when establishing the accessioning procedure. Tools and systems to assist with virus checking, integrity checks, metadata capture as well as future checks to ensure authenticity, integrity and access levels are maintained and traceable through auditing and reporting processes.

There is currently an OIC EDRMS project being piloted (with wider OIC roll-out expected thereafter) which will see electronically created records from OIC service areas stored and managed within Microsoft365/SharePoint. While there has been input from the archives since the start of the project, there is a need for the Digital Archivist trainee to ensure that processes and procedures are put in place to manage the transfer and access to a dedicated Archive space within the EDRMS.

4.5 Storage of digital collections

With the progression of the EDRMS project, the medium-term storage of OIC electronically created content which has long term preservation requirements will be relatively stable. There will still need to be all the necessary checks put in place to ensure metadata capture, integrity and authenticity and access controls, but the environment will be secure, and the Archive will have access to the content.

The digital collections already held by Orkney Archive are currently stored on Networked drives, external hard drives, and USB flash drives. This is not a secure and backed up method to ensure long term preservation and access to these records. Discussions between the Digital Archivist trainee, Team Manager (Libraries & Archives) and OIC IT colleagues need to establish a more secure and backed up method of storage. This will also allow for the preservation of digital collections in a geographically different location to the Archive which will reduce the risks of information loss, following industry best practice and in line with Orkney Archive Digital Preservation Policy.

5. Expected Outcomes and Timescales

5.1 Staff development and resources

By 2025:

- The Digital Archivist trainee will be close to completing their formal Archive and Records Management qualification.
- Collaborative working with OIC IT, Information Governance and Information Security colleagues will be standard practice.
- Outcomes of the ASLWAG Digital Preservation sub-group will have been achieved, or at least well under way. The sharing of best practice, processes and procedures should be inbuilt to the reporting process of the group and wider archive network.
- Budgets and resources for digital preservation will have been investigated and assessed against current Archive funding.

5.2 Assessing capabilities for digital preservation

By the end of 2023 Orkney Archive will have:

- Used the NDSA Levels of Preservation and DPC's Rapid Assessment Model to inform where the Archive is sitting regarding its capabilities for digital preservation.

By 2025 we will have:

- Used the above Models of assessment as live documents, updating our progress in each of the categories to inform future strategy and practice within Orkney Archive and the wider OIC.

5.3 Surveying existing collections

By 2025 Orkney Archive will have:

- Conducted a survey into its existing digital collections, capturing necessary data to inform any collections at immediate risk, and priorities for action.
- Informed procedures and best practice on areas such as file formats, metadata, security, integrity, and access.

5.4 Procedures for transferring and accessioning digital collections

By 2025 Orkney Archive will have:

- Well established procedures in place for the transfer and accessioning of digital records into its custody. This includes guidance being in place for Archive staff, depositors and record creators around accessioning and the overall process for digital content.
- Accepted tools embedded into such procedures which will ensure virus and integrity checks happen as standard, with metadata extraction and capture happening for each digital record coming into the custody of the Archive.
- Procedures in place for the secure transfer of OIC created content to a dedicated Archive space within the OIC EDRMS, with access controls established.

5.5 Storage of digital collections

By the end of 2023 Orkney Archive will have:

- Agreed with OIC IT colleagues to secure space on a dedicated OIC server, and safely transferred copies of the Archive's digital collections to this server to give better resilience to the records and their future access.

By 2025 we will have:

- Looked at longer term storage needs and solutions that could be put in place to properly manage the digital collections coming into the custody of the Archive.

- Assessed the longevity of the records being held in the OIC Microsoft 365/SharePoint environment as part of the EDRMS project and how those with permanent retention will be managed in the long-term by the Archives.

6. Conclusions and Review

Orkney Archive are at the beginning of their digital preservation journey, with many steps needing to be implemented to ensure progress made is in line with best practice, and in keeping with professional standards like those upheld when dealing with physical analogue collections.

Establishing where we are now using available toolkits and assessment models is imperative to show us the areas in which we must further develop.

Working with wider OIC colleagues and service areas is essential for the Archive to meet the outcomes of this strategy, and to inform future progress.

Longer term storage and access solutions needs to be considered by Orkney Archive and OIC. Solutions identified in 4.5 and 5.5 will cover short to medium term risk regarding digital preservation. This will inform future strategy requirements and will require joint resourcing and planning across OIC.