

## Island Communities Impact Assessment

### *Orkney Community Plan 2025-30 (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan)*

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS	Responses
Please provide a brief description or summary of the policy, strategy or service under review for the purposes of this assessment.	<p>The publication of a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) is a statutory duty of the facilitating partners of a community planning partnership under Part 2 (Community Planning) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.</p> <p>The purpose of Orkney Community Plan, which incorporates the statutory LOIP, is to articulate a coherent framework for long term partnership working in Orkney in accordance with the requirements of the Act.</p>
STEP 1 - Develop a clear understanding of your objectives	Responses
What are the objectives of the policy, strategy or service?	Orkney's Community Plan describes what the members of the Orkney Community Planning Partnership (CPP) aim to achieve by working together, and how this adds value to what we can achieve as individual organisations. The proposed planning period of 2025 to 2030 is intended to focus attention on the Orkney Partnership's ambition to make substantial progress by 2030 in meeting its objective of achieving net zero. The LOIP is a rolling plan and will be reviewed and updated as necessary, for example if the Orkney CPP Board changes its strategic priorities. As at 11 December 2024, the Board's strategic priorities are the Cost of Living, Sustainable Development, Equality and Population Health.
Do you need to consult?	Consultation has been undertaken and will continue to be undertaken whenever the LOIP is reviewed for updating. No further consultation is required at present prior to publication.
How are islands identified for the purpose of the policy, strategy or service?	The whole of Orkney is considered to be islands for the purpose of the LOIP. Comparisons are made with the UK or Scottish mainland where applicable, for example where national policy places islands in general, or Orkney in particular, at a disadvantage. In accordance with the requirements of ICIA, special consideration is given to individual islands, and to the ferry-linked isles as a group, where their circumstances and/or the effects of the LOIP may be different from those of Orkney as a whole.
What are the intended impacts/outcomes and how do these potentially differ in the islands?	<p>The aims and outcomes in the 2025-2030 LOIP are:</p> <p><b>Priority 1: Cost of Living.</b></p> <p>Our aim is to co-ordinate an agile response to the cost of living crisis, supporting both immediate need and longer-term prevention of poverty and disadvantage.</p> <p>Our target outcomes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of advice-and-cash-first approach to address hardship.</li> </ul>

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- Improved uptake of locally administered funding and support.
- Co-ordination of partnership action plans relating to child poverty, food dignity and fuel poverty.
- Wider understanding of poverty and its prevention in terms of human rights, equality and fairness, and community wellbeing.
- Evidence of mitigation of the immediate cost of living crisis and of the longer-term reduction of persistent poverty in Orkney.

#### **Priority 2: Sustainable Development.**

Our aim is to exploit the synergy between two linked themes: the development of a wellbeing economy and combatting the climate emergency.

Our target outcomes are:

- An integrated route map for the well-being economy and climate action.
- Inclusive progress towards a wellbeing economy focusing on climate change, fair work, and diversity.
- Shared understanding, adoption and implementation of Community Wealth Building.
- Adaptation and mitigation strategy to protect our communities, habitats and wildlife from the effects of climate change.
- Measurable progress towards Orkney's target of net zero emissions by 2030.

#### **Priority 3: Local Equality.**

Our aim is to improve the viability of Orkney's most disadvantaged communities by levelling up the availability of services, facilities and opportunities.

Our target outcomes are:

- A Locality Plan which supports local community-led development plans.
- Digital connectivity in every community improved to the best standard achievable.
- Transport connectivity in every community improved to the best standard achievable.
- Improvement in the population, demographic balance, resilience and wellbeing of Orkney's most fragile communities.
- Improvement in the ratings of Orkney's most disadvantaged communities in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

#### **Population Health**

The biggest driver of both good and bad health outcomes are social and economic factors. Orkney CPP will contribute to improving health outcomes and reducing inequalities in those outcomes by:

- The implementation of Community Wealth Building.
- Developing a better understanding of the causes of health inequalities to inform improvements in the

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	<p>delivery of services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writing and implementation of a Good Food Plan to ensure better access to and uptake of affordable nutritional food.</li> <li>• Reducing health inequalities, including life expectancy, health life expectancy and reduced obesity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Differential effects on the ferry-linked isles.</b></p> <p>A key strategy driver behind the LOIP is the need to level up provision on the ferry-linked isles compared with the Orkney mainland / linked south isles. Access to many services is significantly restricted on most of the outer isles due in large part to outdated transport infrastructure and constraints on transport service provision, and sub-standard or non-existent broadband / mobile infrastructure. This inequality is contributing to the continuing depopulation of the ferry-linked isles.</p> <p>Many of the ferry-linked isles have a relatively older population than the Mainland, putting their sustainability at risk. The isles also proved particularly vulnerable to income and food insecurity early in the first lockdown.</p> <p>The Equality strategic priority specifically addresses the need to improve the resilience of Orkney's most disadvantaged communities, including the ferry-linked isles.</p>
Is the policy, strategy or service new?	No. The LOIP has been a statutory plan since the passing of the 2015 Act. In Orkney it is published as a rolling plan, typically of 3 years duration and updated every year. The previous plan, 2021-2023, was atypical as it covered a shorter period and focused specifically on Orkney's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. The new plan has a longer duration to focus attention on our ambition to make significant progress by 2030 in meeting our target for net zero.
<b>STEP 2 - Gather your data and identify your stakeholders</b>	<b>Responses</b>
What data is available about the current situation in the islands?	Most published data sources cover Orkney as a whole, which does not enable comparison between the Orkney Mainland / linked south isles and the ferry-linked isles. There are three main national sources of data which differentiate between the two: the <a href="#">Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD 2020)</a> , which is reported at datazone level, <a href="#">Scotland's Census data</a> , some of which is available at individual island level, and the recently published <a href="#">National Islands Plan Survey report</a> . The results of the 2022 census were considered by the CPP Board when reviewing the Plan, and a summary of some of the main findings is available <a href="#">here</a> .

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	<p>At present the 2020 National Islands Plan survey is the most useful national data available at isles level. Survey responses are split between Orkney Mainland (630) and Orkney Outer Isles (160), and all of the survey data can be interrogated online via the <a href="#">data explorer</a>. Questions cover a wide range of topics including employment and business opportunities, transport, housing, fuel poverty, digital connectivity, health, social care, the environment, climate change, culture and education. <a href="#">A second survey result</a> for 2023 was published September 2024, but the information has not yet been published in the data explorer.</p>
Do you need to consult?	Consultation has been conducted and no further consultation is required prior to publication.
How does any existing data differ between islands?	<p>All data sources which differentiate between the isles and the Orkney mainland show differences between the two. SIMD 2020 shows a higher degree of socio-economic deprivation in the ferry-linked isles, due to difficulty in accessing services and lower incomes. A table showing the correlation between SIMD and household incomes (derived from CACI Paycheck data) was included in the Orkney Child Poverty Strategy 2022-26.</p> <p>National Islands Plan survey results show poorer results for many services on the ferry-linked isles and some of the survey questions have been selected as indicators to measure progress against the outcomes in the LOIP.</p> <p>Population data estimated locally at January 2021, and the <a href="#">2022 census results</a>, showed that the long-term trend towards depopulation of the ferry-linked isles has continued since the last Census of 2011 (decrease of 5%). While Orkney's population has risen overall, there has been a drift away from the isles into Kirkwall and the age profile on the isles has risen.</p>
Are there any existing design features or mitigations in place?	<p>Previous editions of the LOIP have highlighted the isles and the Partnership's first Locality Plan 2018-21 specifically targeted the ferry-linked isles. To support the Locality Plan, two successful bids were made to the Scottish Government's Community Choices fund, and participatory budgeting exercises badged "Your Island, Your Choice" were carried out.</p> <p>Nevertheless, key elements of infrastructure remain to be solved, notably transport links and digital connectivity. As shown in the data above, there is a significant differential between service provision on the mainland and the isles. The new LOIP elevates Equality to a strategic priority and commits to tackling persistent inequality on the isles. The new delivery group for Equality will be tasked with addressing socio-economic disadvantage wherever it occurs in Orkney, with a particular focus on supporting local community-led development plans.</p> <p>The strategic priorities in the LOIP – Cost of Living, Sustainable Development and Population Health – are not so specifically focused on the isles but will contribute to their improved sustainability as these factors are critical to island communities where even one house or job can determine whether or not a</p>

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	family is able to stay.
<b>STEP 3 - Consultation</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Who do you need to consult with?	The facilitating partners have a statutory duty to consult with island residents, which in our case means all residents of Orkney. In addition we routinely consult with all community planning partners and other interested stakeholders, both within and without Orkney.
How will you carry out your consultation and in what timescales?	<p>Consultation was carried out in two stages. The first stage, prior to drafting, was the Orkney Matters consultation conducted by Orkney Islands Council between October 2021 and March 2022. This included information gathered via virtual meetings for representatives from small groups of islands so that their particular experiences could be captured.</p> <p>In September 2022, members of Orkney Partnership Board held a horizon scanning workshop to analyse the environmental, legal, social and economic factors acting on the Orkney community and the Partnership (taking account of Orkney Matters output) and to provisionally agree on the strategic priorities to be adopted in the new LOIP.</p> <p>The priorities were worked up into the draft LOIP and a public consultation exercise was conducted in parallel with the public consultation on the new draft Council Plan 2023-28. The two consultations were co-ordinated into a single survey both to avoid duplication and to emphasise the relationship and interaction between the two plans. The survey was open from 23 December 2022 to 20 January 2023.</p> <p>A range of options was offered for public response, with the primary channel being an online survey but with paper copies posted out and written responses accepted where that was the channel preferred by respondents. 84 responses were received via Smart Survey online and a further 5 were submitted on paper, most of which were in the form of free commentary rather than responding to the survey questions. The consultation analysis took all responses into account.</p> <p>One question asked respondents where they lived with three options, viz:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orkney mainland and south linked isles</li> <li>• Orkney ferry-linked isles</li> <li>• Somewhere other than Orkney</li> </ul> <p>This enabled answers to be mapped to location and also to correlate with answers to the National Islands Plan survey. 9 respondents said they were on the ferry linked isles, which is proportionate to the total survey responses. Respondents were not asked which island they were on to avoid identifying individuals who preferred to remain anonymous.</p>

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<p>What questions will you ask when considering how to address island realities?</p>	<p>Questions were a combination of quantitative (yes/no/don't know) answers and qualitative commentary on the following subjects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strategic priorities</li> <li>• The net zero target of 2030</li> <li>• The aims and target outcomes chosen for each priority</li> <li>• For ICIA: place of residence, any perceived unfair or unintended consequences of the plan on where they live and how these might be mitigated</li> <li>• For EqIA: any perceived differential effects of the plan on those with protected characteristics or experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, which groups might be affected, and what could we do to prevent or mitigate against any such effects.</li> </ul>
<p>What information has already been gathered through consultations and what concerns have been raised previously by island communities?</p>	<p>The results of the National Islands Plan survey and Orkney Matters are noted above. Concerns raised at Orkney Matters meetings by island representatives included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lifeline ferry services – sustainability, critical need for new fleet, timetabling to enable access to services and social events.</li> <li>• Limited capacity of inter-island air travel.</li> <li>• Community-led planning with a single plan for each island or community</li> <li>• The need for housing to attract new residents</li> <li>• Gaps in digital connectivity</li> <li>• The potential for community hubs for local/visiting workers</li> <li>• Mental health and access to healthy living/gym facilities</li> </ul> <p>The National Islands Plan survey revealed significant disadvantages in access to services, facilities and employment opportunities for isles residents compared with Orkney Mainland residents.</p> <p>The consultation on the draft LOIP found that 62% of respondents overall (55% of those on the ferry-linked isles) were in agreement with the proposed set of strategic priorities. In commentary, some respondents suggested substituting one or more with different priorities. Those proposed by 3 or more respondents were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and wellbeing (6)</li> <li>• Transport and cost of travel (5)</li> <li>• Housing (4)</li> <li>• Education (4)</li> <li>• Economy (especially farming) (3)</li> <li>• Roads (3)</li> </ul>

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	<p>Re. the more detailed aims and outcomes, 35% of all respondents felt they were about right, 24% disagreed and 41% were undecided. Several respondents added thoughtful and constructive commentary which will be passed on to the relevant agencies and groups.</p> <p>Re. the ICIA question, 19% felt the plan could have unfair or unintended consequences for where they lived, 30% disagreed and 51% didn't know. Figures for those on the ferry-linked isles were very similar. Little commentary was made, suggesting the draft LOIP does not contain enough detail (as a high level strategic plan) to enable respondents to form an opinion. Further consultation including ICIA will be conducted on specific projects at the appropriate stage.</p>
Is your consultation robust and meaningful and sufficient to comply with the Section 7 duty?	Yes. We believe the two consultations taken together – Orkney Matters and the public consultation on the draft plan – comply with the Section 7 duty.
<b>STEP 4 - Assessment</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Does your assessment identify any unique impacts on island communities?	<p>The assessment and consultation have confirmed the impacts of issues which are already known and acknowledged in the LOIP. Challenges with transport, digital connectivity, access to services etc. are not unique to any one specific island community but are important across Orkney as a whole.</p> <p>The LOIP is a strategic document and while it identifies target outcomes under each of the strategic priorities, the actual activity to be undertaken will be worked up at a later stage in the delivery plans to be prepared and implemented by the delivery groups assigned to each priority. Policy decisions made in these areas will impact differently on different islands at different times, but the assessment has not identified any policy decisions in the draft LOIP itself which will have unfair or unintended consequences for any one island community compared with others.</p>
Does your assessment identify any potential barriers or wider impacts?	<p>As noted above under step 3, some respondents raised issues which are not currently Partnership strategic priorities in the draft LOIP. In general these are issues which are the statutory responsibility of one or more partners and not issues which would benefit from concerted Partnership action, e.g. health, housing, education or roads.</p> <p>Some of the issues raised are of active concern to many island communities across Scotland and are addressed at a higher level in the National Islands Plan e.g. demographic balance, transport and housing. But again, it is the issues which are creating differential impacts, rather than the measures proposed to mitigate against them, in both the National Islands Plan and the LOIP.</p> <p>There are significant cost barriers to the improvement of connectivity infrastructure. These are contributing to the depopulation problem on the isles.</p>

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How will you address these?	<p>A key aim of including the strategic priority of Equality in the LOIP is to embed the duty of locality planning within the Partnership's mainstream business. The Partnership's Equality Delivery Group will identify communities across Orkney which are experiencing disproportionate levels of socio-economic disadvantage compared with other areas and propose measures to address these issues. These communities may be individual island communities and/or multiple different communities within a single island (remembering that the Orkney Mainland is an island for the purposes of ICIA). Depending on the actions included in the locality plan, there may well be differential impacts on different islands as a result, but the delivery group will be tasked with ensuring that these impacts are wholly positive and do not have unfair nor unintended consequences on any other island communities. Further rounds of ICIA will be conducted as necessary to ensure this.</p> <p>Easch island communities have their own specific local priorities and many have their own community-led local development plans. The Fery Linked Islands locality pan does not reinvent these but instead complements them and lends support to the priorities chosen by those communities. However, the group will bear in mind that most Mainland communities do not have their own development plans and will ensure that they are not disadvantaged as a result.</p> <p>With regard to the priorities proposed by consultees which are not included in the draft LOIP, these are in general being addressed already by the responsible partner agency. However, should the situation change, or partner agencies request help or support from the Partnership, the Board will take action as required and will take any such matters into account during its annual horizon scanning exercise to review its strategic priorities. This will also apply to new issues arising nationally which are expected to have differential impacts on different islands, such as the proposed National Care Service.</p>
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**You must now determine whether in your opinion your policy, strategy or service is likely to have an effect on an island community, which is significantly different from its effect on other communities (including other island communities).**

If your answer is **NO** to the above question, a full ICIA will NOT be required and **you can proceed to Step**

**SIX**. If the answer is **YES**, an ICIA must be prepared and **you should proceed to Step FIVE**.

To form your opinion, the following questions should be considered:

• Does the evidence show different circumstances or different expectations or needs, or different experiences or outcomes (such as different levels of satisfaction, or different rates of participation)?	Yes. The LOIP is intended to have a positive differential effect on island communities which are relatively disadvantaged.
• Are these different effects likely?	Yes.
• Are these effects significantly different?	Yes.
• Could the effect amount to a disadvantage for an island community compared to the Scottish mainland or between island groups?	No. The effect will not be to disadvantage any island communities but rather to level up those which are relatively disadvantaged.

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STEP 5 – Preparing your ICIA	Responses
In Step Five, you should describe the likely significantly different effect of the policy, strategy or service:	
Assess the extent to which you consider that the policy, strategy or service can be developed or delivered in such a manner as to improve or mitigate, for island communities, the outcomes resulting from it.	<p>The inclusion of Equality as a strategic priority in this plan focuses attention on the need to mitigate the disadvantages currently experienced by the ferry-linked isles.</p> <p>Escalating Local Equality to a strategic priority for the Partnership overall will ensure that socio-economic disadvantage in the isles remains at the top of the Partnership agenda. This will help to focus effort and resources.</p>
Consider alternative delivery mechanisms and whether further consultation is required.	<p>The Partnership has already tried an alternative mechanism (the Locality Plan 2018-21) and while this was successful at generating local action on the isles, it was not able to resolve barriers at national level.</p> <p>The previous LOIP had a strategic priority of Community Wellbeing which included an ambition to improve the resilience of Orkney's most fragile communities, including the isles. This group was tasked mainly with social recovery from the pandemic and the subsequent fuel price crisis has taken it towards a new focus on poverty and the cost of living. While this is undoubtedly a vital concern for many isles residents, it means that the attention of this group has necessarily been focused on responding to the immediate crisis.</p> <p>The new delivery mechanism proposed in this plan highlights the strategic importance of Local Equality by assigning it to a dedicated delivery group reporting directly to the Board.</p>
Describe how these alternative delivery mechanisms will improve or mitigate outcomes for island communities.	<p>Partnership attention can make a significant difference. For example, a current Partnership short life working group is addressing the issue of inequality in First Responder provision, and the terms and conditions for First Responders on different islands, both within Orkney and in comparison with other island authorities. The aim of this group is to achieve the levelling up of First Responder provision on every island to the best model currently in operation. Partner agencies are supporting those agencies with statutory duties to find a resolution.</p> <p>Ultimately, the long-term success of the LOIP will be measured in a reversal of depopulation on the ferry-linked isles and a more sustainable demographic balance in</p>

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	Orkney overall.
Identify resources required to improve or mitigate outcomes for island communities.	<p>The resources required to improve outcomes permanently for isles residents are substantial. Replacement of the existing inter-island ferry fleet will cost many millions. Extending superfast broadband provision to all island premises is both a financial and logistical challenge, although significant progress has already been made. These issues will take years to fully resolve but it is important to keep them on the agenda so that when an opportunity arises to make progress, we can move fast.</p> <p>Other issues may require less resource but more imagination and flexibility. For example, some inequalities in health provision can be addressed through remote access or through enabling health professionals to travel to patients rather than the other way about. Sometimes the most important resource is the commitment and goodwill of partner agencies towards partnership working, and their willingness to work together to find a collective solution.</p>
<b>STEP 6 - Making adjustments to your work</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Should delivery mechanisms/mitigations vary in different communities?	Yes, where necessary to achieve equality of outcomes.
Do you need to consult with island communities in respect of mechanisms or mitigations?	No further consultation is required on the LOIP prior to publication. Further consultation will take place as and when required with regard to specific projects.
Have island circumstances been factored into the evaluation process?	Yes.
Have any island-specific indicators/targets been identified that require monitoring?	Yes.
How will outcomes be measured on the islands?	The LOIP includes a selection of indicators to measure differential impacts on islands. The National Islands Plan repeat surveys will be especially welcome as they are conducted by Scottish Government and the results published nationally. Where necessary we will collect bespoke data although we generally avoid this where an alternative source is available due to the future resource implications.
How has the policy, strategy or service affected island communities?	The previous LOIP and Locality Plan did not resolve the long-term strategic issues impacting on the isles. The Locality Plan led to the piloting of participatory budgeting and

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	the facilitation of a range of community-led projects funded by Community Choices funding, but further progress was hampered by the pandemic.
How will lessons learned in this ICIA inform future policy making and service delivery?	Keeping Local Equality on the agenda as a strategic priority demonstrates that the Partnership remains firmly committed to the sustainability of all Orkney's island communities.

<b>STEP 7 - Publishing your ICIA</b>	
Have you presented your ICIA in an Easy Read format?	Not specifically. We try to use plain language and avoid jargon at all times.
Does it need to be presented in Gaelic or any other language?	No, but like all Partnership documentation it can and will be made available in other languages or formats on request.
Where will you publish your ICIA and will relevant stakeholders be able to easily access it?	The ICIA will be published on the Orkney CPPp's website and will be readily accessible. As with all our publications, hard copies and other languages / formats will be made available on request.
Who will sign-off your final ICIA and why?	The Orkney CPP Board, as the governing body of the CPP, will sign off the final ICIA.
ICIA completed by:	Georg Vickers
Position:	Community Planning business Manager
Signature:	<i>George E Vickers</i>
Date complete:	29 January 2025.