



**Orkney
Community
Planning
Partnership**

Annual Report

2024-2025

Incorporating a progress report on Orkney's
Local Outcomes Improvement Plan



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Foreword

We are pleased to present the Orkney Community Planning Partnership's Annual Report for 2024–2025. This report reflects the collective efforts of our partners to address the most pressing challenges facing our communities, and to lay the foundations for a fairer, greener, and more resilient Orkney.

This year's analysis of our progress indicators paints a sobering picture, one that should motivate everyone in Orkney to action. While we have seen modest improvements in child poverty rates, the reality remains that nearly one in five children in Orkney continue to live in poverty. Fuel poverty has worsened significantly, with over half of households now spending more than 10% of their income on heating—a figure that is deeply concerning and well above the national average. Many families are struggling to feed their children and heat their homes, and the urgency of our work has never been greater.

In response, our partners have worked tirelessly to provide immediate support. The Islands Cost Crisis Emergency Fund reached over 1,500 individuals, delivering dignified assistance in food, fuel, and wellbeing. For example, Orkney Money Matters partners have exceeded expectations, securing over £2.3 million in financial gains for residents through advice and support services. These efforts have made a real difference in people's lives.

Yet we know that reactive support alone is not enough. That's why the Partnership has begun to shift its focus toward preventative and systemic change. Initiatives like Orkney Money Matters, our [Community Wealth Building Action Plan](#), and the development of a Good Food Plan are designed to tackle the root causes of poverty and inequality. We are working to ensure that every household in Orkney is better off—not just today, but in the years to come.

At the same time, we are committed to a just transition to a net zero economy. Our emissions data shows progress, but not at the pace required. By acting decisively to reduce climate emissions, the impacts of climate change will deepen existing inequalities. That is why our Sustainable Development Delivery Group is prioritising a just transition to a net zero economy, nature-based solutions, and inclusive economic growth.

We must continue to work together, across sectors and communities, to build an Orkney where everyone can thrive. We thank all our partners for their dedication and invite everyone in Orkney to join us in shaping a future that is fair, sustainable, and full of opportunity.

Cllr Heather Woodbridge, Chair, Orkney Community Planning Partnership Board

Morven Brooks, Vice-chair, Orkney Community Planning Partnership Board

Welcome to our Annual Report 2024/25

Introduction

Community planning brings together local providers of public services, with the voluntary sector and businesses, to improve outcomes for individuals, families, and communities, and especially to combat inequality and prevent disadvantage.

Many of the challenges that Orkney faces cannot be resolved by a single agency and a collective effort is needed.

[The Orkney Community Plan](#) describes what the members of the Orkney Community Planning Partnership aim to achieve by working together and with others.

In 2023, The Orkney Community Planning Partnership agreed three key priorities for Orkney where it will take the lead. It established three delivery groups, each chaired by a member of the Partnership's Board, to develop detailed delivery plans to address these three priorities.

The three delivery priorities are:

- **The cost-of-living crisis and the underlying causes of poverty.** The work to address this is led by the Cost of Living Task Force, a multi-agency group that is chaired by Orkney Health and Care.
- **Sustainable development.** This is delivered through community wealth building, moving towards Net Zero and to a wellbeing economy that is resilient and is adapting to address climate change impacts. This is led by the Sustainable Development Delivery Group chaired by the Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HiTRANS). A particular priority is to support the sustainable development of the renewable energy sector, and this is led by the Orkney Energy and Enterprise Task Group. This task group provides reports to the delivery group and other stakeholders.
- **Addressing inequalities.** This includes reducing the inequalities between areas of Orkney that result in different life outcomes. This work is led by the Equality Delivery Group. It has already begun to address the specific challenges faced by those living on the ferry linked isles by developing a Locality Plan for 2024-26 and will address other inequities, including those that relate to population health and race. NHS Orkney chaired this group in 2024/25.

While the above three groups will lead on each of these three priorities, all are interdependent and underpin the whole work of the Partnership: we cannot overcome poverty and inequalities without sustainable development and a wellbeing economy, so strictly speaking, sustainable development is the overarching objective.

In December 2024, the OCCP Board reviewed the Community Plan and then published the 2025/30 Orkney Community Plan. In the revised plan, the Partnership has adopted a

new priority: to improve the health of Orkney's population and reduce health inequities. The main way the Partnership will do this is by addressing the biggest driver for population health: economic and social wellbeing. This will underpin all the work of the Partnership and its three delivery groups.

New ways of working

The revised Orkney Community Plan recognised that the demands on public services cannot be met with the existing resources. Community planning partners in Orkney have agreed that there must be a greater emphasis on preventative work and earlier interventions, which are more effective at addressing problems and lead to savings in the long term. Examples from this plan include:

- Providing proactive financial and benefits advice when people first need help through Orkney Money Matters.
- Using Community Wealth Building so that more people can lift themselves out of poverty and need less support from public services.
- Preventing people from getting ill and needing health interventions.
- Understanding and adapting to the risks and impacts to our communities from climate change along with opportunities for a 'just transition.'

The Partnership will explore ways we can make the use of our existing resources more impactful by working together to better plan and deliver public services and reduce duplication of work.

We already have a joint Child Poverty Strategy, which helps underpin the work of our Cost of Living Task Force, and joint reporting through the Local Child Poverty Action Report. In 2025, both NHS Orkney and the Council will need to write Good Food Plans, and the intention is that there will be a single Orkney plan for all the community planning partners.

Our structure during 2024/25



OCCP Board: The Orkney Community Planning Partnership Board is made up of all of the statutory partner organisations named in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, plus locally co-opted partners (see next page).

The board is chaired by Councillor Heather Woodbridge, Leader of Orkney Islands Council, and the Vice Chair is Morven Brooks, Chief Executive of Voluntary Action Orkney.

The Board regularly reviews and sometimes changes the Partnership's strategic priorities, to make sure they are still right for Orkney and to address any new challenges we need to tackle.

Executive Group: The Orkney CPP is supported by an Executive Group comprising senior officers of the five partners with a duty to facilitate community planning, plus Voluntary Action Orkney and the Delivery Group chairs.

Delivery Groups: Each of the Board's strategic priorities was assigned to a Delivery Group, whose chair sit on the Board. Delivery Groups include representatives of any organisation or group that can actively help to deliver the priority assigned to their group (see Appendix One).

Working Groups: During 2024-25, the Partnership had two working groups, the Community Wealth Building Working Group and the Orkney Energy and Enterprise Task Group. Also, the Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise convene a Business Forum with local businesses, that advises the Partnership.

Membership of Orkney Partnership Board

The [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#), sets the statutory framework for community planning in Scotland.

The Act names five partner agencies who share a statutory duty under the Act to facilitate community planning in Orkney:



Others have a statutory duty under the Act to participate in community planning:



The Partnership also includes key local partners who have been co-opted as members:



Each organisation nominates one member of the Partnership's Board, and all the key decisions regarding the Partnership are made by this Board. This includes agreeing the Orkney Community Plan, or Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP).

Orkney Community Plan

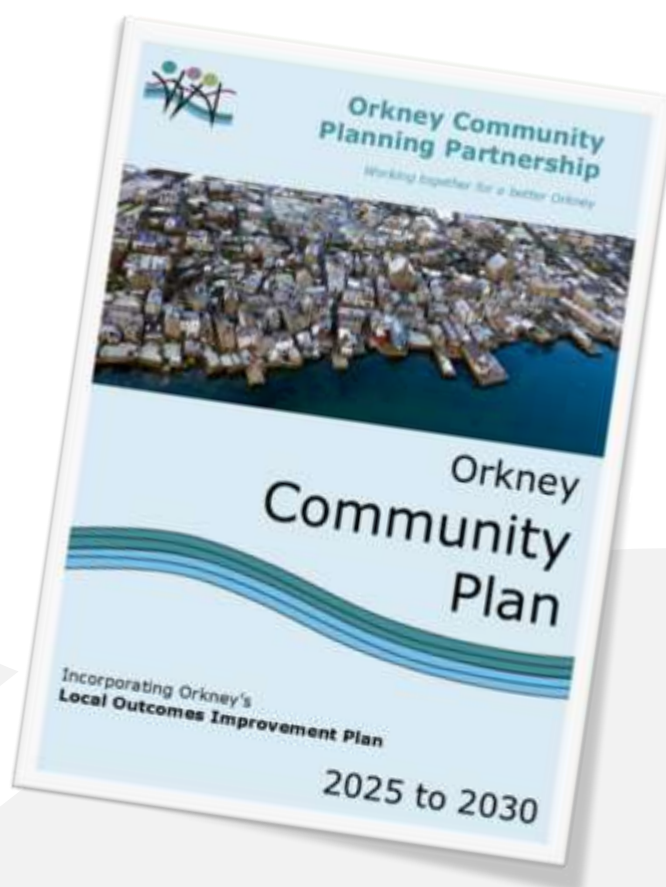
The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 places a duty on community planning partnerships to prepare and publish a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (often called the LOIP). The LOIP sets out the local outcomes that a partnership has prioritised for improvement. The Orkney Community Planning Partnership chooses to publish a Community Plan, incorporating our LOIP. This plan can be found on the Partnership's website.

The Partnership adopted its 2023/30 Community Plan, but during 2024 it reviewed the Plan and published a new version (2025/30) in December.

This Annual Report describes the progress made by community planning partners during 2024/25 in delivering the Community Plan. The performance measures reported by each group are not necessarily measures we can control but are indicators of how well Orkney is doing. For example, the roll out of digital connectivity (The R100 Programme) is the responsibility of the UK and Scottish Governments.

To measure progress against particular outcomes, we rely on various national surveys and data. The Partnership usually uses information that is collated nationally, to avoid disproportionate effort being put into researching data instead of implementing the plan. The data available nationally is generally reliable.

Some of the data we use is not collected annually, e.g., the Scottish Government's survey for the National Islands Plan but is published regularly enough for our longer term outcomes which require long term strategies. Where possible, the same indicators are used over time making it possible to track progress over time.



Strategic priority: Sustainable Development

The Sustainable Development Delivery Group will work for an economy that meets the needs of people and future generations, whilst protecting our unique natural environment and addressing the global climate emergency. The group taps into the synergy between measures to combat the climate emergency and the potential for Orkney's economy to benefit significantly from growth in the renewable energy sector.

The Sustainable Development Delivery Group includes key organisations supporting Orkney's transitions to a sustainable net zero economy (see Appendix one).

There were three key developments during 2024/25:

1. The Partnership finalised its [Vision for a Just Transition to a Net Zero Orkney](#).
2. The Partnership developed the [Orkney Community Wealth Building Action Plan](#), finalised 3 July 2025.
3. An Energy and Enterprise Task Group has been established.

1. Climate Resilient and Net Zero Vision

- **Ambition:** Orkney aims to achieve Net Zero emissions across as many sectors as possible by 2030, and a fully decarbonised economy by 2045.
- **Just Transition:** Ensuring the shift to Net Zero benefits all communities, especially those most vulnerable.
- **Sectoral Focus:** Plans are to be developed for farming, housing, energy, transport, tourism, and construction.
- **Nature-Based Solutions:** Carbon, biodiversity, flood alleviation and a range of benefits from nature networks (for example through peatland restoration, soil health, trees, woods and nature enhancement (on land and in our seas))
- **Sustainable Travel:** Investment in active travel and public transport to reduce emissions and improve accessibility and well-being.
- **Green Energy:** Expansion of renewable energy generation and green job creation, with over 400 jobs already in the sector.
- **Climate Adaptation:** Preparing for flooding, sea level rise, extreme weather events and other climate change impacts through adaptation and resilience planning.

- **Collaboration and Community Approaches:** Trial and support a range of approaches that can support the just transition and address island specific issues and opportunities (e.g. Carbon neutral islands and the islands centre for net zero).

2. Community Wealth Building (CWB)

The [Orkney CWB Action Plan 2025–30](#) outlines a people-centred approach to economic development through five pillars:

Pillar 1: Fair Employment and Just Labour Markets

- Promotion of the Real Living Wage and Fair Work First principles.
- Support for inclusive employment, gender pay gap reduction, and flexible working.
- Expansion of childcare and wraparound care to support workforce participation.
- Development of an Orkney Skills Action Plan to match local skills with industry needs.

Pillar 2: Progressive Spending

- Public procurement strategies favouring local suppliers and fair work.
- Joint procurement models (e.g., school meals and hospital food) benefiting local businesses.
- Campaigns to promote local spending and the “sticky pound” effect.
- Establishment of the Orkney Circular Economy Network to promote reuse and repair.

Pillar 3: Financial Power for Local Places

- Investment in community-led projects through the Islands Growth Deal, Orkney Fund Board, and Local Action Group.
- Launch of Orkney Community Housing Bonds and exploration of green bonds and local investment funds.
- Support for development trusts and business grants aligned with CWB principles.

Pillar 4: Socially Just Use of Land, Sea, and Property

- Promotion of community asset transfers and ownership (e.g., Stronsay Fish Mart, HMS Tern).
- Integration of CWB principles into the Local Development Plan and Regional Marine Plan.

- Support for active travel infrastructure and sustainable land use (for example, Arcadia Park in Kirkwall).
- Coordination through the Public Sector Property Asset Group and the Community Development Forum.

Pillar 5: Inclusive Ownership

- Support for cooperatives, social enterprises, and community-owned businesses.
- Advice and capacity-building from VAO, HIE, and Business Gateway.
- Promotion of succession planning and diverse ownership models (e.g., employee cooperatives, community interest companies).

In addition to the above, specific actions by partners include:

- The SDDG working with the Poverty Alliance to explore making Orkney the first Real Living Wage archipelago.
- Orkney Housing Association is launching a local bond scheme to retain and reinvest money locally in building affordable homes.
- The Property Asset Management Protocol was revised to support CWB by helping communities make better use of public sector assets, including ownership.
- The Local Employability Partnership Annual Report highlighted strong progress in helping people into paid work but raised concerns about short-term funding cycles. The group resolved to send a joint letter to the Scottish Government requesting multi-year funding to improve planning, recruitment, and project sustainability.
- The Energy and Enterprise Task Group was formed to prioritise actions from the Sustainable Energy Action Plan (52 actions identified aligned with the global Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs](#)).
- The partnership was central in establishing the [Orkney Circular Economy Network](#), whose initial focus on household-level actions, with plans to expand to businesses. The Network subsequently launched the [Orkney Reuse and Repair Directory](#).
- Different agencies in Orkney have been working with the Scottish Climate Intelligence Service to produce emissions baselines for Orkney, aiding prioritisation of Net Zero actions.

Strategic priority: Cost of Living

The Cost of Living Task Force is a delivery group of the Partnership. It includes the main organisations working in Orkney to address the cost of living crisis and the underlying causes of poverty (see Appendix one).

The task force has created a single co-ordinated action plan that captures the different and overlapping workstreams arising from the [Orkney Child Poverty Strategy 2022-26](#), [Orkney Food Dignity Report \(2022\)](#), the actions needed to address fuel poverty in Orkney, and other challenges that must be addressed to reduce poverty in Orkney, including the failure of the market to address Orkney's childcare needs.

Key to the delivery of many of these actions has been the development of Orkney Money Matters (OMM), a partnership which has at its core THAW ('Tackling Household Affordable Warmth'), Orkney Citizens Advice Bureau and Voluntary Action Orkney, but extends wider to other members of the task force working with people in need, including the Orkney Foodbank, Blide Trust, NHS Orkney and the Scottish Welfare Fund. From 2025, the Task Force will take on the role as the steering group for the OMM partnership.

Progress Highlights

Partners took significant action to address both the immediate impacts of the cost of living crisis and its underlying causes, including the strategic use of the Scottish Government's Islands Cost Crisis Emergency Fund. Orkney Islands Council tasked the Cost of Living Task Force with ensuring the fund was deployed in the most effective and impactful way.

1. Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency

- **Private Sector Homes renovations support via OIC:** £1.48M invested in 2024/25, 146 energy efficiency improvements delivered across 106 homes with an average savings of £728 per household.
- **Support via THAW:** THAW Orkney delivered installations and upgrades for households in fuel poverty, £36,228 allocated to THAW's Flexible Fund for energy efficiency improvements.
- **Cash-First Support:** Orkney Money Matters (via THAW) provided vouchers and debt relief to households in extreme fuel poverty.

2. Food Access and Nutrition

- **Holiday Free School Meals:** £24,572 allocated to ensure children received meals during school holidays.
- **Healthy Snacks for Youth Activities:** £9,000 provided to Youth Services to ensure free healthy snacks during youth programmes.
- **Baby Weaning and First Aid Training:** Home-Start Orkney received £15,000 to help families prepare affordable, nutritious meals.
- **Supermarket Vouchers:** Orkney Foodbank received £15,000 to provide fresh food vouchers alongside food parcels.
- **Good Food Plan:** OIC and NHS Orkney began scoping work with Nourish Scotland to prepare for the national Good Food Nation Plan rollout.



3. Support for Children and Young People

- **Schools Participation Fund:** £36,228 allocated to schools to support children's access to trips, clothing, and extracurricular activities.
- **Youth Self-Care Support:** Orkney Youth Café received £5,000 to distribute self-care and home care products to young people.

4. Advice and Crisis Support and Orkney Money Matters:

- **Advice:** Continued delivery of wraparound support and financial advice.
- **Referrals:** Online referral pathways established and used by core partners.
- **Outreach:** THAW and CAB actively engaging with island communities.
- **Vouchers:** Orkney Money Matters and THAW provided vouchers to households facing financial crisis.

5. Community and Wellbeing

- **Winter Fuel Grants:** Age Scotland Orkney received £36,228 to support older people during winter.
- **Warm Wednesdays:** Stronsay Development Trust received £3,000 to run weekly winter hubs and hot meals.
- **Christmas Support:** Orkney Charitable Trust received £27,000 to provide festive grants to children and families in crisis.

Success of the Islands Cost Crisis Emergency Fund (ICCEF)

- **Total Allocated:** £218,000 in 2024/25.
- **Reach:** Supported over 1,500 individuals, including hundreds of children.
- **Impact:** Delivered targeted, dignified support across fuel poverty, food access, youth wellbeing, and family resilience.

Strategic priority: Equality

A key objective of the Orkney Community Planning Partnership is to address the inequalities and inequities of outcome which persist in Orkney. The Equalities Delivery Group involves a range of organisations who are working to reduce inequalities in Orkney (see Appendix one).

The [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#) requires community planning partnerships to identify areas within their boundaries that experience disproportionate levels of socio-economic disadvantage and develop one or more locality plans to reduce inequality. The 2022 Census showed that while the population of Orkney had increased, the population of the ferry linked isles had fallen by 5% since the 2011 Census. In 2024/25, the Delivery Group focused on the delivery of the Locality Plan for the Ferry Linked Isles 2024/26, beginning with digital connectivity, transport, health and social services.

Progress made in delivering the Locality Plan 2024/26

1. Digital Connectivity

- **R100 Programme:** Some islands (e.g., Shapinsay, Papa Westray) now have access to fibre services. Others (e.g., Hoy, Stronsay, Flotta) are scheduled for completion by 2028.
- **Project Gigabit:** Expected to fill gaps left by R100, with procurement underway and contracts expected by July 2025.

However, there are still challenges to be addressed:

- **Delayed Rollout:** Several islands won't be connected until 2028; some not included in R100 at all.
- **Affordability:** Even where broadband is available, cost remains a barrier for many residents.
- **Action to be Taken:** The Equalities Delivery Group agreed to identify mobile “not spots” and raise affordability issues with the Board and Cost of Living Task Force.

2. Transport

- **Ferry Fare Reductions:** 38% reduction achieved under Road Equivalent Tariff (RET).
- **Equity Improvements:** Council is adjusting bulk ticket pricing to reduce inequity for low-income residents.

- **Fares for children and young people:** Following lobbying, the Scottish Government is now funding free ferry fares in line with the bus travel scheme for young people and children.
- **Ferry Replacement:** Ongoing coordination and lobbying to support the case for fleet upgrades.

However, there are still challenges to be addressed:

- **Bulk Ticket Inequity:** Upfront costs exclude low-income residents from discounts.
- **Accessibility:** Ferry and plane fleets lack adequate accessibility features.

3. Health and Social Care

- **Island Wellbeing Project:** Active in several islands, providing one-to-one support and monthly coordination meetings.
- **Crossroads and Age Scotland Orkney:** plans to improve communication and outreach.
- **Sanday Care Project:** Community-led initiative to build 12 homes and a health hub—land secured, funding now being sought.
- **Food Cost Study:** Public Health Orkney planning quarterly surveys to compare food costs and availability across Orkney, including the ferry linked isles. An academic partner (Glasgow University) found, NHS and Glasgow University staff time has been given to support this project, a number of volunteers come forward and the project begun, scheduled to finish the end of 2025.

However, there are still challenges to be addressed:

- **Fragmented Services:** Referral paths unclear; communication between agencies and communities needs improvement.
- **Unmet Needs:** Some residents needing care have never been referred; services must proactively identify needs.
- **Workforce Challenges:** Recruiting and retaining carers on the isles remains difficult.
- **Funding Gaps:** Expansion of successful projects like the Wellbeing Project depends on securing sustainable funding.

In 2025/26, the Delivery Group plans to also address the economy, jobs and housing on the ferry linked isles.

In 2025/26, the Group will also focus on Orkney's Gender Pay Gap and will go on to explore what needs to be done to ensure Orkney is a fully inclusive society.

Measuring progress in Sustainable Development

Summary of Progress

Indicator	Status	Notes
Climate Emissions	<div><div></div>Improving</div>	Needs faster reduction
Gender Pay Gap	<div><div></div>Lagging</div>	Still far from target
Mean Wages	<div><div></div>Mixed</div>	Some improvement, gap remains
House Completions	<div><div></div>Improving</div>	Needs consistent growth
Youth Participation in education, employment or training.	<div><div></div>Strong</div>	Above national average

Local Authority territorial area – Climate change emissions estimate (kilo tonnes CO2 or equivalent ¹)				
Sector	2019 Baseline*	2021*	2023* (latest figures)	Annual Milestone
Industry	4.3 kt	4.4 kt	3.5 kt	Reduction in line with ambition to go for Net Zero Emissions in as many sectors of our economy as possible by 2030 and a fully decarbonised (zero carbon) island economy by 2045.
Commercial	6.9 kt	6.1 kt	5.4 kt	
Public Sector	2.8 kt	3.3 kt	2.3 kt	
Domestic	45.2 kt	43.7 kt	35.4 kt	
Transport	35.5 kt	30.7 kt	30.0 kt	
LULUCF**	58.0 kt	55.0 kt	54.2 kt	
Agriculture	218.2 kt	218.7 kt	210.3 kt	
Total for Orkney	373.8.4 kt	366.1 kt	344.8 kt	
Per capita	17.1 (tCO2e)	16.6 (tCO2e)	15.7 (tCO2e)	
<p>*Note that in these statistics the entire time series going back to 2005 is revised each year to take account of methodological improvements, so the estimates presented here supersede previous ones. Therefore, these figures differ from those published in previous Annual Reports and Local Outcome Improvement Plans published by The Orkney CPP. In addition, the figures published in earlier reports were for carbon dioxide emissions only, this table now also captures methane and nitrous oxide emissions. Further changes are likely in future years as data improves.</p> <p>**The figure for land use, land-use change, and forestry (LULUCF) are net values and therefore reflect a balance of emissions and removals (sequestration). Within these values, peatland emissions are large at over 100 kt, offering potential for emissions reduction via peatland restoration.</p> <p>Figures are for the whole of a local authority’s territorial area, not the local authority itself.</p>				

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics-2005-to-2023>

Analysis: Orkney is showing a steady reduction in emissions across most sectors, especially in domestic and transport. However, the rate of reduction needs to accelerate to meet the Net Zero by 2030 and Zero Carbon by 2045 targets.

Closing the Gender pay gap* (source: ONS Website², Table 8.12)

Baseline (2021 revised)	Annual milestone	2022 (revised)	2030 target	2023 (revised)	2024 (provisional)
19.8%** (Scottish average is 10%****)	Close the gap	24.4%** (10.2%****)	The gap is no larger than the Scottish average	26.5%** (6.8%****)	19.9%*** (8.2%****)

*Gender pay gap is defined as the difference between men's and women's hourly earnings as a percentage of men's earnings

**Estimates are considered lower quality

***Estimates are considered reasonable quality

****Estimates are considered good quality

Analysis: The gender pay gap in Orkney is significantly higher than the Scottish average, though there was a notable improvement in 2024. Continued efforts are needed to meet the 2030 target of aligning with the national average.

Average mean wages in Orkney (Source: ONS website³ table 7.7a)

Sex	Baseline 2021	Annual milestones	2022 (revised)	2030 target	2023 (revised)	2024 (provisional)
All	£26,582* (Scottish average is £29,752**) Gap = £3,170	Gap closing between Orkney and Scotland	£29,021* (£31,374**) Gap = £2,353	Average wages for Orkney match those for Scotland	£27,215* (£33,268**) Gap = £6,053	£31,547* (£36,017**) Gap = £4,470
Male	£34,124* (£34,902**) Gap = £778		£34,604* (£37,158**) Gap = £2,554		£38,857* (£39,135**) Gap = £278	£41,965* (£42,168**) Gap = £203
Female	£20,231* (£25,290**) Gap = £5,059		£23,351* (£26,265**) Gap = £2,914		£20,302* (£28,141**) Gap = £7,839	£23,854* (£30,810**) Gap = £6,956

2

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/annualsurveyofhoursandearningsasgenderpaygaptables>

3

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/placeofworkbylocalauthorityashtable7>

Analysis: The average wage for men is close to the national average but the pay for women is significantly less than the national average for women and the pay for men in Orkney. The 2024 figures show improvement, but the gap remains substantial.

House build completions in Orkney (new builds and conversions to dwellings), all sectors (source: OIC Building Standards)

2020-21 Baseline	Annual milestone	2030 target	2023-24 Outcome	2024-25
92	Increase	125 per year	68	100

Analysis: House building dipped in 2023-24 but rebounded in 2024-25. Continued growth is needed to meet the annual target of 125 completions by 2030.

% of 16-19 year olds participating in education, employment and other training and development activities (source: [Skills Development Scotland, Annual Participation Measure⁴](https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/publications-statistics/statistics/annual-participation-measure/))

Baseline (2022)	Annual milestone	2030 target	2023 figure	2024 figure	2025 figure
93.9% (92.4% national figure)	Increase	Recover to previous high 95.4% (2018-19 figure)	93.5% (92.6% national figure)	93.5% (92.7% national figure)	94.4% (93.3% national figure)

Analysis: Orkney maintains above-average youth participation in education, employment, and training. While it has not yet recovered to the 2018–19 high of 95.4%, there was significant progress in the last year.

⁴ <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/publications-statistics/statistics/annual-participation-measure/>

Measuring progress in Cost of Living

Summary of Cost of Living Indicators

Indicator	Status	Notes
Household Financial Wellbeing	● Declining	Fewer households managing well
Child Poverty	● Improving	Slow progress, far from target
Fuel Poverty	● Severe	Over 50% affected, worsening
Extreme Fuel Poverty	● High	Likely worsened, no recent data
SWF Crisis Payments	● Mixed	Improvement then decline
Financial Advice Gains	● Strong	Far exceeding targets

How households are managing financially in Orkney (Source: [Scottish Household Survey 2019](#)⁵, [Data Explorer](#)⁶ and [Scottish Household Survey 2022 Key Findings](#)⁷ and [Results Explorer 2023](#)⁸).

	2019 Baseline	Annual milestone	2030 Target	2022 Outcome	2023 Outcome (latest)
Managing very well or quite well	66%	increase	70%	60%	59%
Get by all right	31%	decrease	30%	35%	37%
Don't manage very well and have some financial difficulties	3%	decrease	0%	5%	4%

Analysis: Fewer households feel they are managing well financially, with a growing number just “getting by.” This reflects the ongoing cost of living crisis, particularly due to high fuel prices and low wages for women.

The number of children in Orkney who are in Relative Poverty after Housing Costs (Source: [End Child Poverty](#) ⁹)

Baseline (2021/22)	Annual Target	2030 Target	2022/23 Outcome	2023/24 Outcome
20.1% (23% across Scotland overall, 2021-24 3-year average ¹⁰)	Reduce	Less than 10% (Scottish Government target for 2030-31 is 10%)	19.3%	18.6%

The Scottish Government is now relying on these figures from End Child Poverty, which includes the cost of housing so these will be a more reliable as the real levels of child poverty in Orkney. This is particularly relevant given the rising cost of housing in Orkney.

Analysis: Orkney has seen a modest decline in child poverty, but it remains far from the 2030 target. Rising housing costs are a key factor. The end of the two-child cap may help reduce poverty further.

⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-household-survey-2019-annual-report/>

⁶ <https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-scottish-household-survey-data-explorer/>

⁷ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-household-survey-2022-key-findings/documents/>

⁸ <https://ruralfutures.shinyapps.io/islands-survey-2023/>

⁹ https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Child-poverty-AHC-2015-2024_final.xlsx

¹⁰ <https://data.gov.scot/poverty/>

Percentage of dwellings in Orkney in Fuel Poverty (Source: [Scottish House Condition Survey Local Authority Analysis 2019](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-house-condition-survey-2017-local-authority-analysis-2019/pages/6/)¹¹)

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-house-condition-survey-2022-key-findings/documents/>¹²

2020-21 Baseline	2021-22 Milestone	2030 Target	Progress in 2024-25
30.5% (Scottish average 24.4%)	Reduce	Same as Scottish average	The figures by council area have not been updated by the Scottish Government. (Scottish average 34% in 2023 ¹³)
The lack of updated figures from the Scottish Government is problematic. However, the Orkney Household Survey, which was undertaken by Aquatera in 2019 and 2024, which had replies from over 10% of resident in Orkney is helpful. It shows that the number of households who spend more than 10% of their income, after tax and housing costs, to heat their homes, went up from 36.55% in 2019 to 50.34% in 2024. ¹⁴			
Analysis: Fuel poverty in Orkney is severe and worsening, with over half of households spending more than 10% of income on heating. This is well above the national average, and updated official figures are lacking.			

¹¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-house-condition-survey-local-authority-analysis-2017-2019/pages/6/>

¹² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-house-condition-survey-2022-key-findings/documents/>

¹³ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-house-condition-survey-2023-key-findings/>

¹⁴ <https://www.aquatera.co.uk/news/new-survey-reveals-energy-cost-surge-and-shifting-attitudes-to-renewables-in-orkney>

Percentage of dwellings in Orkney in Extreme Fuel Poverty 2017-19 (Source: [Scottish House Condition Survey Local Authority Analysis 2019¹⁵](#))

2020-21 Baseline	2021-22 Milestone	2022-23 Target	Progress in 2021-22	Progress in 2022-23
21.8% (Scottish average 11.9%)	Reduce	Same as Scottish average	National figures have not been updated.	The figures by council area have not been updated by the Scottish Government. (Scottish average 18.5% in 2023 ¹⁶)

Analysis: Orkney's extreme fuel poverty rate was nearly double the national average in 2020–21. Though recent local data is unavailable, rising energy costs likely worsened the situation.

The percentage of crisis payment applications to the Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) that are successful (Source: SWF)

Baseline (2021-22)	Annual milestone	2030 target	2023-24 outcome	2024-25 outcome
40% (Scottish average 66%)	Increase	Equal to the Scottish average	68% (Scottish average 63% ¹⁷)	45% (Scottish average 62%)

Analysis: Orkney exceeded the national average in 2023–24 thanks to improved application support. However, success rates dropped again in 2024–25, suggesting a need for continued support and outreach.

¹⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-house-condition-survey-local-authority-analysis-2017-2019/pages/6/>

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-house-condition-survey-2023-key-findings/>

¹⁷ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-welfare-fund-statistics-annual-update-2023-24/>

Value of financial gains achieved by those who access Orkney Money Matters advice services (Source: the Orkney Money Matters project and Orkney CAB)				
2023-24 target	2024-25 target	2025-26 target	2023-24 outcome	2024-25 outcome
£0.5m	£0.6m	£0.7m	£1,693,127 (Orkney CAB figure for client financial gain) £277,107 (THAW figure for client financial gain)	£2,103,594 (Orkney CAB figure for client financial gain) £212,000 (THAW figure for client financial gain)
Analysis: Orkney Money Matters and CAB have delivered exceptional financial gains for residents, exceeding targets by over 300%. This highlights the success of the Orkney Money Matters partnership, and the value of local advice services in mitigating cost of living pressures.				

Measuring progress in Equality

Summary of Equality Indicators

Indicator	Status	Notes
Population of Isles	● Declining	5% drop since 2011
Resident Retention	● Improving	More residents plan to stay
Transport Connectivity	● Worsening	Significant decline in ease
Broadband Access	● Improving	Still 19.1% without 30Mbit/s
Internet Speed Satisfaction	● Mixed	Isles improving, mainland static
Mobile Signal	● Mixed	Isles improving, mainland declining
Deprivation (SIMD)	○ Pending	Awaiting 2024 data

Population of the ferry-linked isles (Source: Scotland's Census ¹⁸)		
2020-21 Baseline	2030 Target	Outcome 2023-24
2,862 (Census 2011)	Maintain or increase NRS mid-year estimates	2,713 (Census 2022)
Analysis: The population of the ferry-linked isles has declined by 5%, indicating challenges in retaining residents. This may reflect issues with connectivity, services, or economic opportunities.		

Percentage of adult residents (18-75) planning to stay on the island for the next 5 years (Source: National Islands Plan Survey Report 2020 ¹⁹ and online results explorer too 2019 ²⁰ and Explorer Tool 2023 ²¹)				
	Baseline (2020)	Annual milestones	2030 target	2023-24 outcome
Orkney Mainland				
Yes	87.2	Increase	Increase	91
No	4.4	Decrease	Decrease	3
Don't know	8.4	Decrease	Decrease	6
Orkney Outer				
Yes	79.0	Increase	Increase	85
No	8.7	Decrease	Decrease	4
Don't know	12.3	Decrease	Decrease	11
Analysis: A growing number of residents plan to stay, especially on the mainland. This suggests improved satisfaction or stability, despite population decline in some areas.				

¹⁸ <https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/>

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/research-and-analysis/2021/07/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report/documents/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report/govscot%3Adocument/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report.pdf?forceDownload=true>

²⁰ https://mappingrd342.shinyapps.io/online_tool/

²¹ <https://ruralfutures.shinyapps.io/islands-survey-2023/>

% of Orkney residents who agree “When I make journeys to or from my home, it is easy connecting between different forms of transport” (Source: [National Islands Plan Survey Report 2020](#),²² [National Islands Plan Survey Report 2024](#)²³ and [online results explorer tool](#)²⁴)

	Baseline (2020)	Annual milestones	2023-24 outcome	2030 target
Ferry-linked isles	29%	Increase	18%	50%
Orkney Mainland	46%		35%	60%

Analysis: There has been a significant decline in perceived ease of transport connections. This could impact mobility, access to services, and overall quality of life.

% Orkney premises unable to access 30Mbps/s Broadband (Sources: [Ofcom Connected Nations 2022](#)²⁵, and [Ofcom Connected Nations 2024](#)²⁶ and [2025 update](#)²⁷)

Baseline (2022)	Annual milestone	2030 target	2023-24 Outcome (as of January 2024)	2024 Outcome (as of January 2025)
31.5%	Decrease	0%	26.3%	19.1%

Analysis: There is steady progress in broadband access, with a 12.4% improvement over two years. However, 1 in 5 premises still lack adequate speeds.

²² <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/research-and-analysis/2021/07/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report/documents/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report/govscot%3Adocument/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report.pdf?forceDownload=true>

²³ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/research-and-analysis/2024/09/scottish-islands-survey-2023-main-findings-report/documents/scottish-islands-survey-2023-main-findings-report/scottish-islands-survey-2023-main-findings-report/govscot%3Adocument/scottish-islands-survey-2023-main-findings-report.pdf>

²⁴ https://mappingrd342.shinyapps.io/online_tool/

²⁵ <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/multi-sector-research/infrastructure-research/connected-nations-update-spring-2022>

²⁶ <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-and-broadband/coverage-and-speeds/connected-nations-update-spring-2024/>

²⁷ <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-and-broadband/coverage-and-speeds/connected-nations-update-spring-2025>

% Orkney residents whose internet connection at home is fast enough to do what they want online (Source: [National Islands Plan Survey Report 2020](#),²⁸ [National Islands Plan Survey Report 2024](#)²⁹ and [online results explorer tool 2019](#)³⁰ [online results explorer 2023](#)³¹)

	2020 Baseline	Annual milestone	2023-24 Outcome	2030 target
Orkney Mainland	70%	Increase	69%	100%
Ferry-linked isles	45%	Increase	55%	100%

Analysis: Satisfaction is static on the mainland but improving on the isles. The R100 and Project Gigabit initiatives are helping, but full coverage is still a work in progress.

% Orkney residents who have a good mobile phone signal at home (Source: [National Islands Plan Survey Report 2020](#),³² [National Islands Plan Survey Report 2024](#)³³ and [online results explorer tool](#)³⁴)

	2020-21 Baseline	Annual milestone	2023-24 outcome	2030 target
Ferry-linked isles	27%	Increase	49%	100%
Orkney Mainland	78%	Increase	68%	100%

Analysis: Ferry-linked isles show strong improvement, but mainland signal quality has declined. Infrastructure investment and lobbying are ongoing to address this.

²⁸ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/research-and-analysis/2021/07/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report/documents/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report/govscot%3Adocument/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report.pdf?forceDownload=true>

²⁹ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/research-and-analysis/2024/09/scottish-islands-survey-2023-main-findings-report/documents/scottish-islands-survey-2023-main-findings-report/scottish-islands-survey-2023-main-findings-report/govscot%3Adocument/scottish-islands-survey-2023-main-findings-report.pdf>

³⁰ https://mappingrd342.shinyapps.io/online_tool/

³¹ <https://ruralfutures.shinyapps.io/islands-survey-2023/>

³² <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/research-and-analysis/2021/07/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report/documents/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report/govscot%3Adocument/national-islands-plan-survey-final-report.pdf?forceDownload=true>

³³ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/research-and-analysis/2024/09/scottish-islands-survey-2023-main-findings-report/documents/scottish-islands-survey-2023-main-findings-report/scottish-islands-survey-2023-main-findings-report/govscot%3Adocument/scottish-islands-survey-2023-main-findings-report.pdf>

³⁴ https://mappingrd342.shinyapps.io/online_tool/

Fewer areas of Orkney suffer from higher levels of deprivation as determined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (Source: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation website³⁵) (Note: lower scores measure higher deprivation)

Baseline (2020 figures)	Annual target	2030 target	2024-25 outcome
1 in the lowest 25-30% 1 in the lowest 30-35% 4 in the lowest 35-40%	Improve	No areas in the lowest 0-35% Fewer areas in the lowest 40%	2024 figures will not be published until 2026.
Analysis: SIMD data is pending, but the goal is to eliminate areas in the lowest deprivation brackets. Progress will depend on improvements in income, access, and services.			

³⁵ https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020/?utm_source=redirect&utm_medium=shorturl&utm_campaign=simd

Appendix one: Membership of the Delivery Groups

Membership of The Community Planning Delivery Groups during 2024/25		
Cost of Living Task Force	Sustainable Development Delivery Group	Equalities Delivery Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orkney Citizens Advice Bureau • THAW (Orkney's fuel poverty charity) • Orkney Foodbank • Home Start Orkney • Orkney Housing Association (v-chair) • Age Scotland (v-chair) • Voluntary Action Orkney • Sanday Development Trust • Orkney Charitable Trust • NHS Orkney Public Health • Integration Joint Board (chair) • OIC's Schools Service, Housing Service, Leisure, and the Scottish Welfare Fund • Community Learning and Development Partnership • Social Security Scotland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic Environment Scotland • Highlands and Islands Enterprise • Integration Joint Board • Island Centre for Net Zero • Orkney Renewable Energy Forum (v-chair) • NatureScot • National Farmers' Union • NHS Orkney • Orkney Islands Council: Economic Development, Planning and Climate Change • Local Employability Partnership • Sustrans • UHI Orkney • Skills Development Scotland • Voluntary Action Orkney • Visit Scotland • HITRANS (Chair) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Learning, Development and Employability (CLDE) • NHS Orkney (chair) • NHS Orkney Public Health • SEPA • Highland and Islands Enterprise • Integration Joint Board • OIC Transport, Islands Deal, Equalities, Empowering Communities, and Leader • Orkney Ferries • Sanday Development Trust • Shapinsay Development Trust • Stronsay Development Trust • Voluntary Action Orkney (VAO) • VAO Community Development • VAO Island Wellbeing



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