

# Hoy and Walls Community Action Plan 2022 - 2027



## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the Community Action Plan for Hoy and Walls. This plan sets out our community's priorities as identified through a process of community engagement carried out in 2018-2019. This action plan has been developed by a steering group made up of local people who represent a range of community organisations and roles on Hoy and Walls, including IOHDT; Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council, the North Walls Centre, North Walls School, Hoy Centre, Friends of the Hoy Kirk, Hoy and Walls Health Centre and the Island Liaison Officer.

The final consultation and publication of the plan was delayed as a result of the COVID pandemic with the initial launch having been planned for April 2020.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Supported by the Scottish Community Development Centre, the Island of Hoy Development Trust (IOHDT) undertook an engagement project during 2018 with the aim of finding out what the local community felt about living in Hoy and Walls.

To start the process off a survey was circulated to gather people's views and get a sense of the community's priorities for moving forward. The survey was circulated both online and in paper format and publicised through Radio Orkney, articles in the Blether, through the Trust's information newsletters, adverts in the Orcadian, announcements and reminders on Facebook and inserts in the Orcadian delivered to Hoy and Walls. In total, 123 responses were received including 78 from the main survey and 45 from a survey completed by the pupils at North Walls School.

Once the results had been collated feedback events were held in October 2018 in Longhope, Hoy and North Walls with an opportunity for members of the community to see the outcomes of the survey and give further comments and feedback. The following section illustrates the overall findings of the survey. More detailed information from the survey is available from the IOHDT.

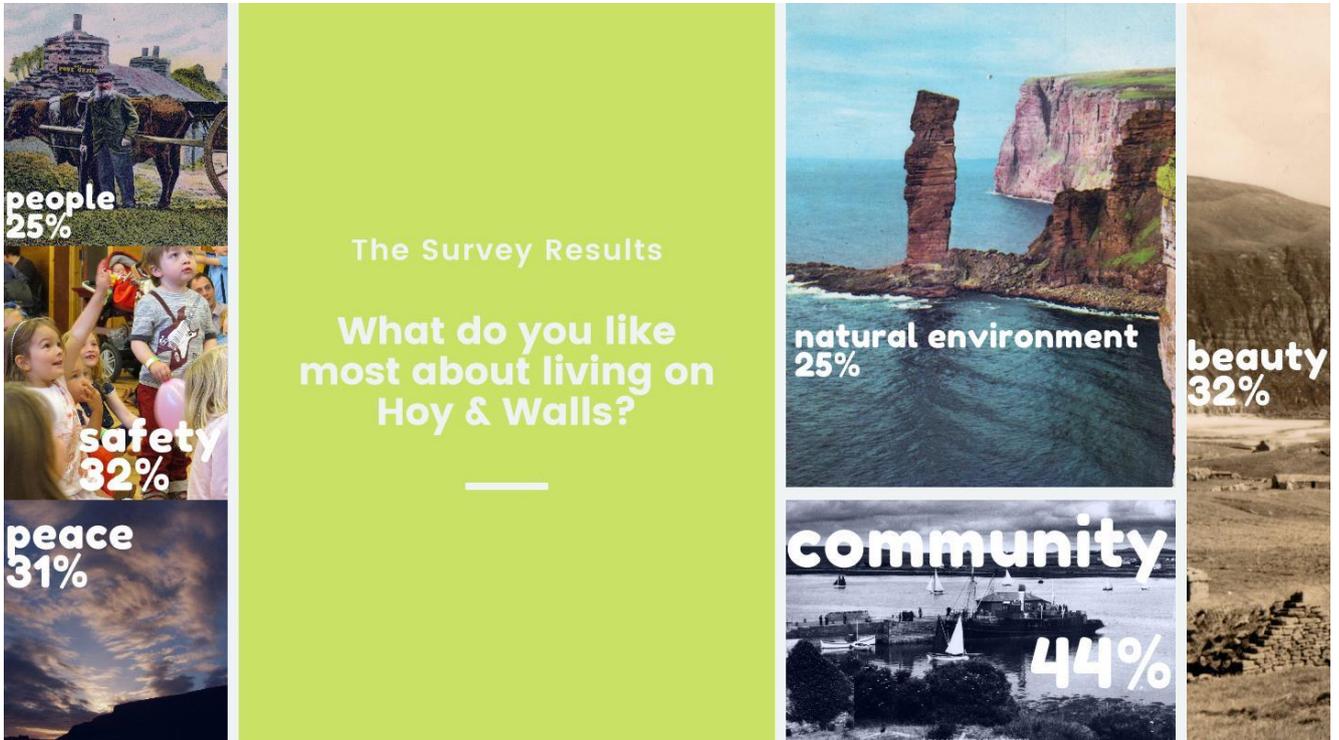
After the community events several focus groups were held with representatives from community groups, the Community Council, IOHDT, Orkney Islands Council, Voluntary Action Orkney, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the Island councillors. The aim of these meetings was to start discussions around the key priorities identified by the community and agree the next steps in creating this Action Plan. The Steering Group recognised that the delivery of the community's priorities was beyond the scope and responsibility of a single organisation, hence the need for a co-ordinated and integrated approach with organizations working together to achieve the community's aspirations.

### **Our aims:**

For Hoy and Walls to be better connected and accessible  
to have an integrated community working together to support all our generations

to work towards a more sustainable future  
 to safeguard and care for our natural environment  
 We want this to be a living and evolving plan, responding to the community's voice, so we  
 invite all of you to help take these actions forward.

## COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS



### What do these figures represent?

Each individual who completed the survey was asked 'What do you like best about living on Hoy & Walls?' and 'What do you like least about living on Hoy & Walls?' The response

section for each question allowed for 3 possible answers. The percentages quoted in the above graphics refer to the percentage of surveys which listed any of those categories in no particular order.

### **What do you like best?**

#### **Community**

- Made up 44% of all answers
  - 31 people put this as their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choice
- Specific comments included
  - “Strong sense of community”
  - “Caring, thoughtful and kind community”
  - “Sound and supportive community”



#### **Safety**

- Made up 32% of all answers
  - 23 people put this as their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choice
- In most cases people referred to the feeling of safety in general
- 5 responses referred to Hoy and Walls as a safe place to bring up children
- 2 responses referred to road/ traffic safety

#### **Beauty**

- Made up 32% of all answers
  - 23 people put this as their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choice
- Specific comments included:
  - “The ever-changing beauty of the island”
  - “Unspoilt countryside”



#### **Peace**

- Made up 31% of all answers
  - 22 people put this as their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choice
- Responses include words such as:
  - Peaceful
  - Quite
  - Tranquillity
  - Remoteness

## What do you like best?

### The People

- Made up 25% of all answers
  - 18 people put this as their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choice
- Responses include words such as:
  - Friendly
  - People get involved



### Natural Environment/Wildlife

- Made up 25% of all answers
  - 18 people put this as their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choice
- Responses included words such as:
  - The fresh air
  - The sea
  - The wildlife

### Other Positive things on Hoy & Walls

- “Good services – health service, school and shop”
- “It’s home”
- “The quality/way of life”
- “Heritage and history”
- “Sense of space and freedom”
- “Small community/knowing everybody”
- “The weather”
- “Activities on offer in the community and the vibrancy”

## What do you like least?

### Travel/Transport

- Made up 39% of all answers
  - 27 people put this as their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choice
- Specific comments included:
  - “Evening/weekend ferry sailings”
  - “Community bus service route”
  - “Cost of ferry travel”
  - “Quality of road surfaces”



## What do you like least?

### Services/Activities

- Made up 39% of all answers
  - 27 people put this as their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choice
- Specific comments included:
  - “Provision of services”
  - “Access to services”
  - “Lack of specific activities”



### Broadband/Phone connectivity

- Made up 30% of all answers
  - 21 people put this as their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choice
- Specific comments included:
  - “Broadband/internet cost and connectivity”
  - “Service provider problems”
  - “Poor mobile phone signal”

### Community

- Made up 24% of all answers
  - 17 people put this as their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choice
- Specific comments included:
  - “Groups/committees and how well they communicate”
  - “Gossip”
  - “Local politics”
  - “General sense of division and negativity between old/new and geographic communities”



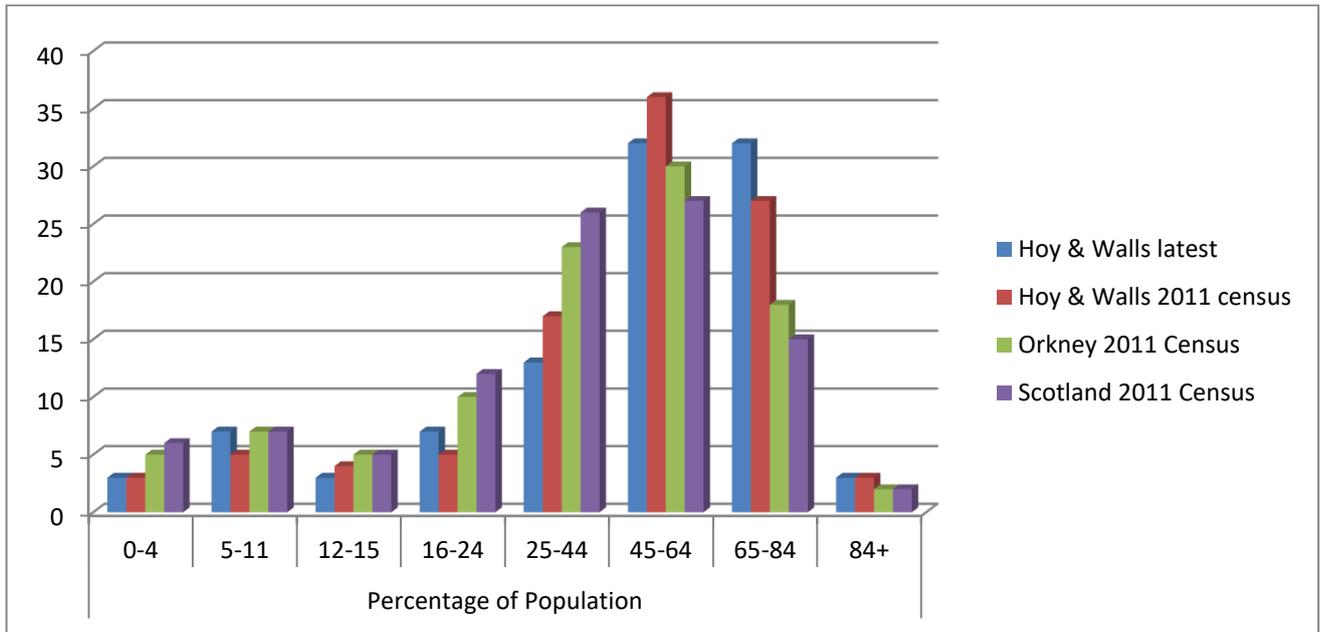
### Other common themes

- Change, e.g. to way of life
- Too few young people on the island
- Weather (& midges!)
- Derelict buildings and abandoned cars
- Dangerous driving and antisocial behaviour
- Limited opportunities/difficult generating income
- Infrastructure
- Cost of living

## OUR COMMUNITY NOW

Hoy & Walls is the largest of Orkney's South Isles. The distance by road from one end to the other being 26 miles, with the current population of around 390 dispersed over four communities – Hoy, Lyness, Brims and Longhope

### Our Population



The island has many assets in terms of the community and the environment. Our community centres are well used by a wide range of groups and clubs involving people of all ages. There is family ethos at North Walls Community School and the creative learning culture ensures a holistic learning experience for all pupils. The school has very good outdoor space including a football pitch, tennis court, adventure playground, school garden, outdoor library and nature trail. Parents and the wider community are very supportive of the school.

Attached to the school is the Health Living Centre with a swimming pool and gymnasium. There is also a very active drama group based at the Gable End Theatre, which also has a busy schedule live entertainment and films throughout the year. The main employment opportunities are focused around local services, farming and fish farming and with public sector organisations such as Orkney Islands Council and the National Health Service. There are two churches St Columba's Kirk (Church of Scotland), St Johns Kirk, (Non-denominational place of worship) which is now owned and managed by a local Trust and the Hoy Kirk

The community is supported by community and private bus services and linked to mainland Orkney via Orkney Ferry services. There is a Health Centre in Longhope and volunteer operated island-based emergency services. We also have a general store, 3 hotels and 2 cafes.

Hoy and Walls boasts a renowned natural landscape with much of the island designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) while the area is also a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA) under European legislation. There is also a wealth

of heritage sites including the Longhope Lifeboat Museum, Scapa Flow Visitor Centre & Museum, The Hoy Kirk & Hoy Heritage Project, Folk Museums and Martello Towers.

## Community Assets



We have 3 community Centres and a Theatre

- The Hoy Centre
- North Walls Centre
- YM, Longhope
- Gable End Theatre

We have 18 different community groups and clubs providing opportunities for entertainment, to learn new skills and to socialise,

### Local Employment focused on:

- Local services
- Farming
- Fish farming
- NHS, Orkney Islands Council, IOHDT



We have 3 Churches

- St Columba's, Church of Scotland
- St John's Kirk, Non-denominational
- Hoy Kirk

## Community Organisations

- Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council
- The Island of Hoy Development Trust



## Community Assets

### Housing

There are two areas of social housing in Lyness and Longhope

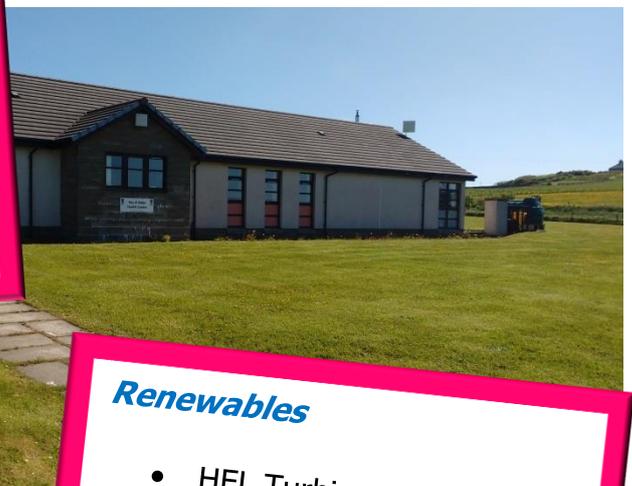


### Transport

- Orkney Ferries
- IOHDT Community Bus
- Haey Hope Bus
- Private Hire Buses

### Health and Emergency Services

- Hoy & Walls Surgery
- Daily Living Aids Resource Centre based in the Health Centre
- Longhope Lifeboat & Station
- Ambulance
- Coastguard
- Fire Service



### Education & Childcare

**North Walls Community School:** Provides education to children from 5 to 11, with a nursery which caters for children aged 2 to 5.

### Renewables

- HEL Turbine
- Development of Community Green Transport



## Natural Environment & Heritage



### Natural Environment

- SSSI Designation for much of the island
- RSPB Reserve
- Berridale Wood – most northerly native woodland
- SWT Reserve



### Historical Sites

- Wartime Installations
- Betty Corrigan's Grave
- Dwarfie Stane
- The Battery & Martello Towers

### Museums

- Longhope Lifeboat Museum
- Scapa Flow Visitor Centre & Museum
- The Hoy Kirk & Hoy Heritage Project
- Folk Museums, Rackwick
- Wartime Museum, Lyness



## PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED IN THE SURVEY

### DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY



- People living on Hoy & walls have better digital connectivity
- The Community is better informed about developments at a regional/national level to improve local connectivity
- Multi-media communication will be used to reach as many people as possible

### ACTIONS

- Establish a Sub-group to explore different connectivity options, starting with consultation with other islands but also elsewhere in Scotland, e.g. 4/5G
- Invite broadband providers including representatives from BT, HIE and mobile phone operators to a public meeting. Obtain update regarding subsea fibre cable laying
- Enlist support of MSP and MP
- Explore the options of community partnership with BT, cost of upgrading the exchange
- Establish current situation and timescales of any planned updates
- Establish an agreement with providers around how they work with the community
- Develop a system for regular updates from providers and OIC
- Review adequacy of current public Wifi availability

## Transport



- The Community is more involved in reviewing and developing ferry timetables
- Better integration of transport connections both internally and externally to the island
- Increase the availability and reach of the community bus service
- People are better able to afford ferry travel

## ACTIONS

- Engage with OIC to request to participate in the consultation processes that are currently underway for inter island ferries and connecting bus services and to get feedback on their planning options
- Contact other island community councils and trusts in Orkney to find out if and how this is being addressed by others
- Lobby MP and MSPs to raise the issue with the Scottish Government
- Review the current community bus timetable and explore feasibility of expanding existing service
- Training Fund to help new crew gain qualifications to work on the Ferry
- Establish effective processes for feeding information back into the community, including setting up a transport sub-group

## Environment



- Buildings are repaired and made safe
- People on Hoy & Walls have access to improved local recycling facilities
- People on Hoy & Walls have access to facilities to dispose of white goods
- Hoy & Walls has improved road quality to ensure that no vehicles incur damage when using the road

## ACTIONS

- Consult with other Development Trusts to explore community-led recycling solutions and their feasibility for Hoy & Walls
- Establish an Environment Sub-group to act as a focal point for Community groups and elected representatives will engage with OIC to discuss:
  - opportunities for improved maintenance/removal of disused buildings.
  - opportunities for reviewing existing recycling facilities and identifying recycling needs
  - opportunities for disposing of white goods
  - opportunities for improved road maintenance
- Raising awareness within the community of existing recycling services

## Community Cohesion



- People are better informed of community activities, services and developments
- People are better informed of community activities and events via the community calendar
- All new and existing members of the community have access to practical, up to date and accessible information about island life

## ACTIONS

- Regularly update the community on activities and developments using a range of media:
  - social media e.g. Community Facebook
  - The Blether
  - Leaflet distribution via the Orcadian, at local group meetings e.g. lunch clubs
  - Posters in local public buildings & use of island notice boards
- Improve access to the community calendar by promoting it through other media
- Establish an annual 'what's on Hoy?' social evening inviting community groups to have stalls and invite the community to find out what's on
- Use of the Community Development Officer to promote islands facilities
- Create a welcome pack containing information about local services, community groups, timetables, etc that will be available from public buildings or online

## Young People



- Young People have improved access to a range of activities both on and off the island
- Young people are attracted to live and work on the island and increase the younger population
- Young people have better access to advice on careers, benefits, funding opportunities and housing

## ACTIONS

- Support young people to develop skills in community participation, including peer research
- Ensure young people are involved in community consultations
- Drive forward Youth facilities including after school clubs/Youth club & Youth Hub
- Explore opportunities to expand the range of sports/activities available for children and young people both on and off-island - link to transport issues
- Lobby OIC and any Companies starting businesses on the island to include employment opportunities/ apprenticeships for young people
- Explore options for grant funding to support employment opportunities
- Establish existing advice supports available for young people , Identify gaps and develop an advice facility with and for young people which supports them to access information on employment and training
- Explore housing options to encourage young people to live & work and stay on the island

## Business/ Employment/ Enterprise



- Island residents have more on-island and off-island opportunities for training and work
- People are aware of both on-island and off-island development opportunities and support

## ACTIONS

- Research what opportunities are available for people who live in the community, what skills are held, and what skills people would like/need to obtain, if any, in order to obtain employment
- Lobby OIC to explore future employment/business opportunities that could be based on the island
- Identify if there are any on island organisations looking to employ people or offer apprenticeships and collate information within the information pack which would be available online?
- Keep the community updated with training and funding updates from other organisations in order to assist individuals in accessing these facilities, such as Skills Development Scotland, VAO, HIE etc.

In June 2022 a further survey was sent to a randomly selected group of the Community to assess the impact that COVID has had. 34 were sent and 20 responses were received (59%)

Six questions were asked:

What do you like least about living on Hoy?

What changes would you like to see with the ferry timetable?

How do you think that young people could be encouraged to live on the isles?

What is the best way to let you know about what is happening in the Community?

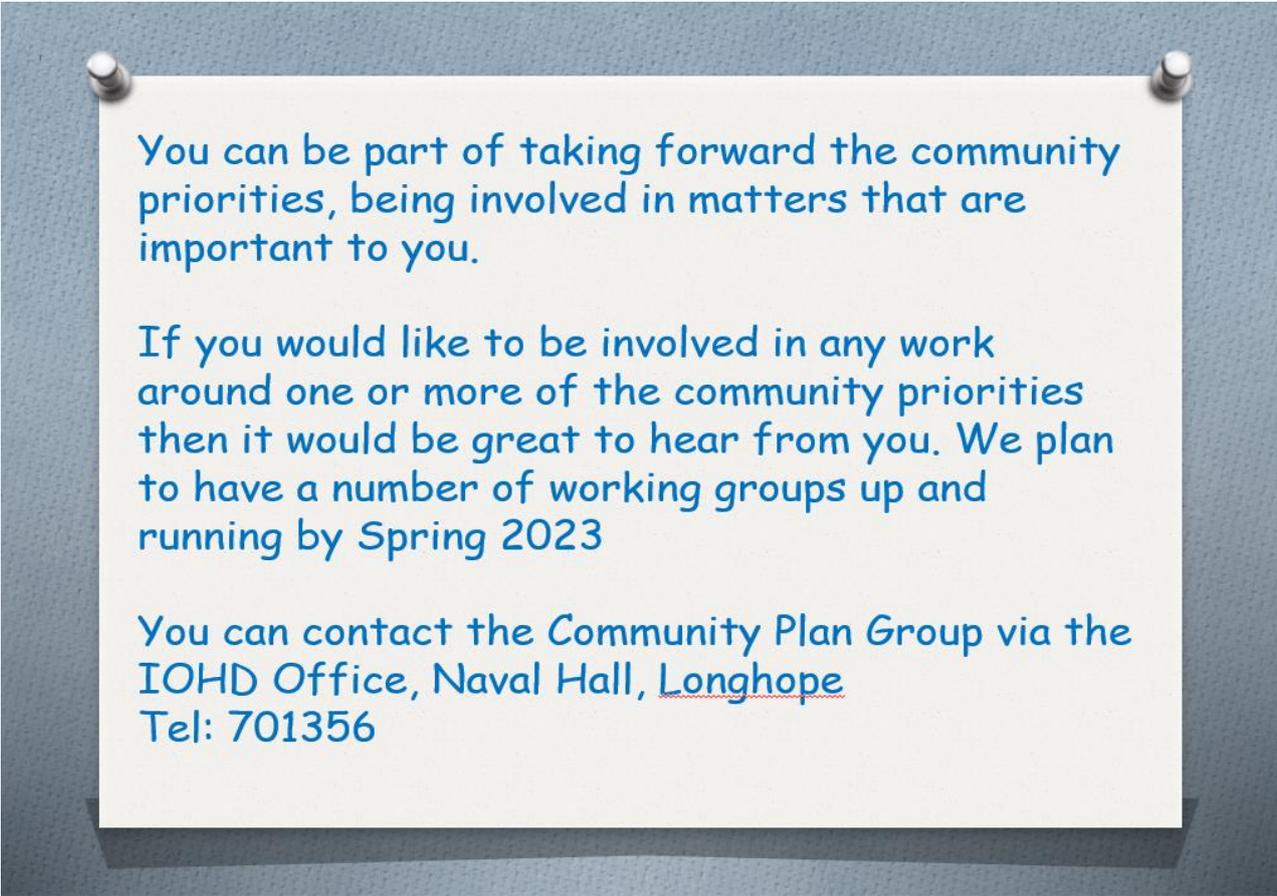
How has COVID changed the way you live your life?

If you had a magic wand that would grant you one wish for the island, what would that wish be?

Many of the responses reiterated the issues previously raised about transport, recycling, digital connectivity, housing and young people.

Further concerns were raised about the cost of energy and the need to encourage young people and families to the island.

It was also felt that COVID had impacted on social activities and that they would like to see things get 'back to normal' although there is an element of anxiety about doing this.



You can be part of taking forward the community priorities, being involved in matters that are important to you.

If you would like to be involved in any work around one or more of the community priorities then it would be great to hear from you. We plan to have a number of working groups up and running by Spring 2023

You can contact the Community Plan Group via the IOHD Office, Naval Hall, Longhope  
Tel: 701356

## ***PUTTING THE PLAN INTO ACTION***

***The Community Action Planning Group  
October 2019***

### ***Acknowledgements:***

The Community Action Group would like to thank the following groups and individuals for their support in the development of this plan:

The Community of Hoy and Walls  
Scottish Community Development Centre especially Olivia Hanley  
North Walls School  
North Walls Centre  
The Friends of Hoy Kirk  
The Hoy Centre  
YM Longhope  
The Orcadian  
Graemsay, Hoy & Walls Community Council  
IOHDT  
Mary Harris  
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