



## Island of Hoy Development Trust

### IoHDT Chair Report For Year ending 31.03.2024

**Community Funds:** The Training and Learning Fund has continued to support individuals in acquiring new skills and furthering their education. During this financial year, the fund awarded a total of £10,188.00 over Twenty-seven separate awards, covering expenses related to university accommodation, driving lessons, school residential trips, dancing and music lessons, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training, establishing a quilting group, and vocational training in various fields. Some of the specific vocational training areas supported included math, energy efficiency, payroll, CPC (Certificate of Professional Competence), retrofit assessor, and electrical installations.

The Community Fund was designed to support local groups and organisations. In this financial year, the fund awarded a total of £33,677.60. Seven awards were granted to community groups, funding various initiatives. These included: the Longhope Lifeboat Museum Trust, Friends of The Hoy Kirk and YM Empower which received significant funding to support employment opportunities within their respective organisations. The Hoy & Walls Community Garden was awarded funds to purchase necessary equipment for their gardening project. The North Walls Centre was provided with funding to cover a levy charge imposed by Orkney Islands Council and the Haey Hope Club received support to ensure the continued operation of their organisation.

**Community Hall:** A management agreement was established between IoHDT and YM Empower, with a review scheduled for April 2024. YM Empower is responsible for the day-to-day operations and continues to manage a twice-weekly Community Cafe and weekly Lunch Club. The Hall serves as a venue for various local groups and community events. Fundraising efforts and grant applications are ongoing to cover operational costs and to support the cafe. To mitigate electricity costs, a collaborative funding bid was submitted with YM Empower to support a feasibility study. This study will assess the most effective methods for improving building insulation and explore options for transitioning to renewable energy.

**Community Bus:** In its tenth year of operation, the Community Bus service continued to provide essential transportation, supported by a combination of funding sources. These included Transport Scotland's Network Support grant, Orkney Islands Council's (OIC) Community Transport Grant Scheme (CTGS), a one-day-a-week public service contract with OIC, and limited fare revenue. The Trust's contribution, funded by the turbine fund, has significantly increased from approximately 20% to around 50% of the total cost. Rising expenses for vehicle maintenance, fuel, and salaries have strained the service's finances. While the introduction of the electric minibus in February 2023 was intended to reduce costs, the escalating price of electricity and several unforeseen issues with the vehicle have limited its cost-saving potential. Despite limited funding, OIC awarded the Trust with a second grant from the CTGS to expand the Community Bus service to the northern part of the island. This seasonal service commenced late in the year and operated for only six weeks due to delays in obtaining approval from the traffic commissioner. Consequently, it was difficult to evaluate its impact. However, there are plans to run the service again in 2024, from May to October, subject to available funding.

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Company Limited by guarantee (SC306586)  
Registered Office: Revenge, Naval Hall, Longhope, Orkney, KW16 3PG



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**Enhancing Health & Wellbeing:** Voluntary Action Orkney (VAO) addressed the funding shortfall for the 2 days per week noted for the year 2023-24 in last year's report, while the Trust continued to fund a third day per week. The Trust's Wellbeing Coordinator continued to meet the significant demand for assistance, with referrals primarily related to financial, housing, and mental health challenges. A grant from the Big Lottery enabled the Community Larder to operate throughout the year, providing essential support to those affected by the cost-of-living crisis. Additionally, individual support group work focused on physical and mental well-being continued. VAO has initiated a consultation process to explore potential future structures for the project. A likely outcome is the creation of a separate registered charity capable of seeking its own funding and directly employing co-ordinators. This transition is anticipated to occur in April 2026, and VAO is currently exploring funding options for the 2024-2025 period.

**Youth, Leisure, and Heritage:** As in the previous financial year, the CDO, together with several Trust directors, endeavoured to revitalise the Longhope Playpark initiative. Despite initial community enthusiasm to establish a new SCIO to develop the project, progress has been negligible.

**Trust Structure:** The Trust's Board held regular meetings throughout the year to ensure all members were informed about the financial position and ongoing projects and activities. The Trust remains committed to reviewing operations to enhance the organisation's effectiveness. Discussions have also been on-going to work out a strategy for extension of life options for the turbine given its age.

Lindsay Hall

Chair  
25<sup>th</sup> May 2025