

# Our 4-Year Investment Plan.

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# Consultation and prioritisation

Building on a considerable body of existing community engagement and planning, including reviews of Local Place Plans and community development plans, a structured programme of community consultation was commissioned after the Orkney Fund Board was established. This process invited ideas from residents, community organisations, and businesses across Orkney. Additional analysis of Local Place Plans and other local strategies provided further insight into established community needs.

Submissions were gathered both in person and online, with every idea recorded in a central database. In total, more than 800 ideas and insights were collected, offering a comprehensive picture of local priorities across Orkney. Targeted outreach ensured participation from a wide range of voices, seldom-heard voices, community development trusts, and businesses from both Mainland Orkney and the outer isles.

All existing data and new submissions were reviewed, logged, and initially categorised under three themes set by the UK Government (Table 1). The themes were:

- Heritage and Regeneration
- Transport and Connectivity
- Safety and Security

These themes have since been reworked under the UK Government's MHCLG leadership, following the change in government, with the updated themes now being:

- Thriving Communities
- Stronger Communities
- Taking Back Control

**Table 1: Summary of Consultation Submission by Original Theme**

Original Theme	Submissions
Heritage and Regeneration	533
Transport and Connectivity	192
Safety and Security	55
Other projects	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>834</b>

As such, community consultation analysis reinforced that the projects considered for prioritisation broadly aligned with the three overarching themes. However, to reflect the range of ideas submitted and avoid forcing proposals into categories that were too broad, these three themes were expanded into ten more detailed themes based on needs identified through consultation and a review of Orkney’s existing strategic documents. Bringing these sources together helped group related submissions and highlight any emerging gaps.

**Table 2: Summary of Consultation Submissions by Revised Theme**

Sub-Theme	Submissions
Connectivity and Movement	175
Heritage, Conservation and Regeneration	135
Secure, Safe, Welcoming Public Spaces	125
Entertainment and Culture	73
Retail and Creative Working Spaces	63
Specialist Needs Support Facilities/Employment and Skills	59
Circular Economy and Fuel Poverty	57
Sport and Recreation	49
Young People	45
Tourism within our communities	36
N/A	17

In parallel, to reflect the unique opportunity to benefit the wider Orkney community, submissions were mapped geographically to understand how engagement varied across Orkney and to check for a reasonable balance between Mainland and isles communities.

This spatial analysis highlighted areas with strong participation as well as communities where responses were fewer. These insights will help the Board focus future engagement efforts, particularly by reaching more remote islands and communities that may require additional support to take part in the next stages of consultation.

**Table 3: Summary of Consultation Submission by Area**

Community	Submissions
Orkney	351
Kirkwall	155
Stromness	101
Isles	28
Stronsay	22
Papa Westray	22
Eday	21
Sanday	21
North Ronaldsay	16
Westray	16
Shapinsay	15
Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre	13
South Ronaldsay	9
Hoy and Walls	8
Stenness	7
Holm	6
Orphir	6
Burray	5
Birsay	4
Finstown	3
Flotta	2
Toab	2
Twatt	1

Project Officers then reviewed the full data set, removing duplicate or completed projects and grouping the remaining submissions within each theme. All ideas and development proposals were assessed in terms of frequency, where it came from, and how well it aligned with existing local strategies. Officers also produced short summaries for each theme to highlight the issues and opportunities that communities felt were most important. This work provided a clear picture of local priorities to support the Board's decision-making.

These insights were then considered alongside Local Place Plans and other community strategies already in place across Orkney. This helped ensure that the emerging priorities strengthened, rather than duplicated, ongoing work. Local Place Plans in particular offered valuable context on local aspirations, community needs, and how proposals sit within the wider Community Planning Framework.

To shape this into a focused and deliverable investment plan, the Board applied a consistent set of decision-making criteria:

- Strength of community support and local priority
- Fit with programme objectives and local strategies
- Deliverability within the first four-year period
- Potential to attract other funding or partnership support
- Benefits for inclusion, accessibility, and island communities
- Contribution to wellbeing and quality of place
- Value for money and long-term sustainability

Applying these criteria enabled the Board to identify four overarching strategic priority themes and develop a first set of indicative interventions for the first 4-year investment period. These reflect a balance between community demand, deliverability, and geographic spread. Engagement will continue throughout delivery to ensure that projects remain rooted in local knowledge and shaped by community priorities and will inform the programme of delivery after the initial four years.

# Priority themes

Each funding priority is a direct outcome of the community consultation analysis. The Board reviewed insights from all ten themes and identified areas most consistently highlighted by residents, community groups, businesses, and underrepresented voices across Orkney. These priorities reflect what matters most to people of all ages and backgrounds and capture the issues communities felt investment could meaningfully address.

The four priority themes identified by the Orkney Fund Board are therefore grounded in this community insight, supported by existing local strategies, and aligned with the programme's overarching themes set by the UK Government. Together, they provide a clear and community-led basis for guiding investment across Orkney.



## Community and Cultural Wellbeing

Improving access to sports, recreational, community, and arts facilities to foster inclusivity, strengthen community ties, and support overall health and wellbeing



## Safe and Accesible Spaces

Investing in active travel infrastructure and safety initiatives that enhance accessibility, create welcoming spaces, and build a stronger sense of security and belonging



## Heritage, Conservation and Regeneration

Revitalising historic buildings and promoting local heritage to bring underused areas back into use and reinforce Orkney's sense of place and identity.



## Local Enterprise and Creative Support

Promoting vibrant retail spaces and community-driven projects to stimulate the local economy, boost employability, and celebrate Orkney's cultural distinctiveness.

Collectively, these themes align with local, regional, and national priorities and provide a clear, community-led foundation for future investment. They ensure that funding decisions remain rooted in what people across Orkney have said matters most, supporting projects that strengthen places, improve wellbeing, and reflect local ambitions.

# Allocated Capacity Funding

The Orkney Fund Board has benefitted from targeted capacity funding to help build local delivery capability and prepare communities for future investment. This support has been essential in establishing the Board, enabling consultation with communities, and developing early project concepts aligned with the Orkney Fund's long-term objectives.

During 2024/25, capacity funding was used to commission consultants to lead community consultation and engagement across Orkney. This work helped to identify local priorities while also supporting the formal establishment of the Board.

In 2025/26, further funding was allocated to strengthen delivery. Some of this investment supported the appointment of a dedicated Project Officer within the Orkney Islands Council's Economic Development service to work alongside the Board, while additional resources were directed towards the first round of Local Place Plans, feasibility studies, and capacity-building initiatives. These activities helped shape local ambitions and prepare developed projects for future investment.

Alongside this, a further £150,000 has been announced to the Board in 2026/27, which will build on the momentum established so far. This next round of funding will continue to strengthen community capacity, enable more Local Place Plans, and support early-stage projects as communities move closer to delivery.

Collectively, these actions have already had a tangible impact across Orkney. From local development planning and feasibility work in several islands, to community-led projects in Kirkwall, Stromness, and other parts of the Mainland, the Orkney Fund's reach is broad and inclusive. These early investments have laid the groundwork for long-term regeneration by empowering communities to plan and deliver projects that respond directly to their local priorities.

The table below provides an overview of capacity-funded projects supported during 2025/26, illustrating the range of initiatives that have received funding through the Orkney Fund to date.

**Table 4: Projects Supported Through TOF Feasibility and Capacity Funding**

Project	Description	Ward	TOF grant awarded
North Ronaldsay Place Plan	Development of a Local Place Plan	North Ronaldsay	£10,000
Firth Place Plan	Development of a Local Place Plan	Firth	£7,200
Holm Place Plan	Development of a Local Place Plan	Holm	£8,450
Harray and Sandwick Place Plan	Development of a Local Place Plan	Harray and Sandwick	£12,000
Kirkwall and St Ola Place Plan (ringfenced)	Development of a Local Place Plan	Kirkwall and St Ola	£15,000
Creative Orkney Feasibility Study	Creative Hub Feasibility Study	Kirkwall	£11,150
Kirkwall Amateur Operatic Society Feasibility Study	Performance and rehearsal space Feasibility Study	Kirkwall	£14,857
Orkney Zerowaste Feasibility Study	Accessibility Improvement Feasibility Study	Stromness	£1,230
Pickaquoy Centre Feasibility Study	Covered Synthetic 3G Pitch Feasibility Study	Kirkwall	£17,750
The Space Community Craft Hub Feasibility Study	Accessibility Improvements Feasibility Study	Rousay	£8,498
Sanday Community Craft Hub Feasibility Study	Site Extension Feasibility Study	Sanday	£2,500
Tomb of the Eagles Feasibility Study	Site Developments Feasibility Study	South Ronaldsay and Burray	£15,000
Stenness Community Association Capacity Funding	Stenness Outdoor Community Centre Facilities Capacity Funding	Stenness	£10,000
Stromness Community Development Trust Capacity Funding	Stromness Community Centre Capacity Building	Stromness	£12,000
Stromness Musuem Capacity Funding	Digitising Natural History Collection Capacity Building	Stromness	£14,630
Orkney West Mainland Agricultural Society Feasibility Study	Dounby Show Park Developments Feasibility Study	Dounby	£12,861
Westray Development Trust Feasibility Study	Westray Golf Club and Men's Shed Joint Facility Feasibility Study	Westray	£7,393
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£180,519</b>

# Interventions: Years 1-4

The following interventions are proposed within the initial 4-year investment period. Indicative funding allocations have been included for each category and further detailed in the 4-year funding profile but may be adapted to better meet community needs and as projects emerge from capacity building activities supported by the Orkney Fund.

The following case studies are set out under each of the Orkney Fund Priorities and are informed by feasibility studies and developing projects that have approached the Orkney Fund so far, helping to confirm that community priorities can be readily addressed by existing organisations across Orkney.

It is important to note that capital funding won't commence until the 2026/27 financial year, and that capital investment will require robust project assessment before funding can be awarded. This also means that eligible projects which have yet to apply to the Orkney Fund can still apply for funding in the first four years, where they fall within the scope of the interventions set out below.

**Table 5: Funding Types and Their Purposes**

Funding Type	Purpose	Examples
Capacity Funding	Builds local capability and prepares projects for future investment. Used for early-stage work such as feasibility studies, community consultation, and project development.	Local Place Plans, feasibility studies, business cases.
Capital Funding	Invests in physical infrastructure or assets that provide long-term community benefit.	Construction or refurbishment of buildings, facilities, or public spaces.
Revenue Funding	Supports the operation, delivery, or maintenance of projects and services.	Staffing, programmes, maintenance, and community activities.

# Community and Cultural Wellbeing

Improving access to spaces and facilities that bring people together and strengthen overall wellbeing across all ages.

**Allocation: £2m**

Investment in connected, inclusive, and vibrant community infrastructure is central to Orkney's long-term social and economic wellbeing. The Orkney Fund aims to strengthen the places where people gather, participate, and celebrate shared identity - from sports facilities and cultural venues to community halls and public spaces. By improving access to high-quality sports, community, cultural, and recreational facilities, the Fund supports healthier lifestyles, fosters pride of place, and helps sustain a strong sense of belonging across the islands.

## Sports Facilities:

Development of high-quality sports infrastructure has emerged as a clear community priority across Orkney. Consultation feedback highlighted strong demand for accessible, year-round facilities that promote active lifestyles and community wellbeing.

Orkney already benefits from the Pickaquoy Centre, a key asset and the main hub for sport and fitness. It offers a wide range of indoor and outdoor facilities that support community health, sports participation, and local events. However, despite these strengths, Orkney lacks several facilities commonly available on Mainland Scotland, limiting opportunities for year-round training, competition and access to dedicated sport-specific venues. This gap was a recurring theme throughout the consultation process, with residents and local clubs highlighting how the absence of certain facilities restricts progression, reduces participation options and increases the need for costly travel off island to train or compete.

The recent 2025 Island Games, hosted in Orkney, brought a significant influx of athletes, visitors, and volunteers, demonstrating the islands' ability to deliver major sporting events to a high standard. The Games highlighted Orkney's sporting competitiveness and generated a strong sense of pride across communities. Building on this momentum, the Orkney Fund will support further investment in the facilities and infrastructure that enable both increased local participation and the hosting of future events, ensuring the legacy of the Island Games continues to benefit residents and visitors alike.

### Supporting comments from community consultation:

"This facility (covered 3G pitch) will allow Orkney to level up without Island neighbours with a covered facility which will allow grass roots sport to continue all year round."

"Orkney Gymnastics Club have outgrown their current facilities and require a dedicated facility to meet the needs of enthusiastic gymnasts in Orkney."

"Young people in Orkney deserve the same sporting opportunities as those on the mainland. A modern training space would make an enormous difference."

"Clubs are turning people away because they have no space. Investing in facilities would allow more children and adults to take part in regular exercise."



### Case study: 3G Pitch

The Orkney Fund has awarded £17,750 towards a feasibility study for a new covered 3G sports pitch in Kirkwall – an important first step towards creating a modern and year-round sports facility for the community. The study is exploring design options, delivery models, and funding routes to ensure the facility meets both local needs and regional sporting ambitions.

Orkney's main sports hub, the Pickaquoy Centre, provides a solid foundation for sport and recreation across the islands, offering a range of excellent facilities used by residents, schools, and visiting teams. However, the absence of a covered 3G pitch, which was a need identified repeatedly through community consultation, limits opportunities for year-round training and competition. The feasibility study will provide the evidence and technical groundwork required to advance the project to full capital delivery in future years.

If successfully delivered with a full funding package in place, the new pitch will enable consistent training and competition throughout the year, support youth and grassroots participation, and bring Orkney in line with neighbouring regions such as Shetland, where similar facilities have proven a great success. Above all, it represents a community-driven vision for wellbeing and local pride in Orkney's sporting future.

## Community, Cultural and Recreational Facilities:

Community, cultural, and recreational facilities are vital assets that underpin social connection and cultural identity across Orkney. They provide inclusive spaces where people of all ages can come together to socialise and celebrate local culture. In rural and island settings, where distance and isolation can limit opportunities, these facilities are especially important in supporting wellbeing and strengthening community cohesion.

Community consultation made clear that residents value these spaces highly and want to see them protected and modernised. In response, the Orkney Fund is supporting facilities that bring people together — from young people seeking creative and recreational opportunities to older residents who rely on local venues for companionship and connection. Well-equipped, accessible facilities play a crucial role in sustaining balanced, vibrant island communities.

The Orkney Fund has already backed a wide range of feasibility and capacity-building projects designed to broaden access to recreation and the arts. These include exciting developments at the Stenness Outdoor Community Centre, feasibility work for Kirkwall Amateur Operatic Society's new performance venue, the planned expansion of The Craft Hub in Sanday, refurbishment of a community building in Rousay to create a craft and activity space, and development of a joint facility for the Men's Shed and Golf Club in Westray. Together, these projects reflect the importance communities place on creative and recreational spaces in supporting local identity and wellbeing.

By investing in such places, the Orkney Fund is helping to sustain a thriving cultural and social life across the islands. These interventions demonstrate how community-led priorities are being translated into practical improvements that support wellbeing, encourage participation, and provide accessible spaces that inspire pride and connection.

### Supporting comments from community consultation:

"The Stromness Community Centre will provide somewhere for the community to hold events, for the youngsters to go and to prevent degeneration of a prime site in Stromness."

"Orkney currently has no accessible play parks. Creating an accessible play space is vital to treat Orkney's disabled children and for them to be included and proud of where they live."

"Our village hall is the heart of the community, but it's struggling to cope with demand. Investment would let us run more activities for young families and older residents alike."



## Case study: Stromness Community Centre

The Orkney Fund is prioritising the renewal and long-term sustainability of community spaces, so they remain fit for purpose and responsive to local needs. This includes supporting key facilities such as the Stromness Community Centre through capacity funding, contributing to the community's ongoing efforts to secure a buy-out and carry out a planned refurbishment that will create a revitalised local hub.

The project has been shaped by strong community involvement from the beginning. First identified as a priority through the What's Next for Stromness consultation in 2019, it was subsequently incorporated into the Stromness Place Plan in 2020. A comprehensive feasibility study followed, supported by extensive engagement with community groups, local businesses, and residents. Workshops with Stromness Primary School pupils ensured younger voices were also included, while public exhibitions during Stromness Shopping Week and the Winter Fayre provided further opportunities for feedback and input.

Visibility of the project has been strengthened through proactive communication, particularly the Stromness Orkney Facebook page, which reaches more than 3,000 followers and keeps residents informed and involved. This ongoing engagement has helped maintain momentum and has demonstrated strong community support for the redevelopment.

Once refurbished, the Stromness Community Centre will offer a flexible, accessible venue for events, learning, and social connection - addressing the town's recent loss of communal spaces and providing a central anchor for community life. It represents a clear example of how local empowerment and targeted investment can work together to deliver sustainable regeneration across Orkney.

# Safe and Accessible Spaces

Investing in infrastructure and local improvements that make places safer and better connected.

**Allocation: £1.5m**

Creating safe, accessible, and welcoming environments is vital to ensuring that everyone in Orkney can move freely, feel secure, and take pride in their local areas. Communities consistently identified safety and accessibility, as well as public space improvements, as key priorities during consultation. These priorities reflect the desire for not only practical improvements, such as better lighting and pathways, but also for places that foster belonging and confidence in shared community spaces. Through targeted investment, The Orkney Fund aims to collaborate with communities and partners to deliver improvements that strengthen connections between places and make Orkney an even safer and more inclusive place to live, work, and visit.

## Safety Initiatives

While crime in Orkney remains among the lowest in Scotland, recent community consultation highlighted increasing concerns around antisocial behaviour, vandalism, and road safety - particularly in town centres and shared public spaces. Residents emphasised that maintaining safety and a sense of security is essential to Orkney's wellbeing and overall quality of life, both of which are regarded as major local strengths.

In response, the Orkney Fund Board aims to support initiatives that strengthen community safety through close collaboration with Police Scotland, community groups, and local residents. This includes improvements to CCTV in identified hotspots, targeted traffic-calming measures, improved lighting in key areas, and youth engagement programmes that provide positive activities and reduce isolation. These actions form part of a preventative and community-led approach to creating a safer Orkney.

By investing in practical safety improvements and responding directly to priorities raised through consultation, the Orkney Fund will help reinforce public confidence, reduce antisocial behaviour, and create inclusive public spaces that feel welcoming and secure for everyone. These interventions also support wider regeneration goals by strengthening wellbeing and building stronger local partnerships across the islands.

### Supporting comments from community consultation:

"Better CCTV coverage in key locations would really help deter anti-social behaviour and vandalism, especially in areas that are regularly targeted."

"More frequent Police Scotland visits to the isles would strengthen relationships and help people feel safer. Residents want to see more visible engagement and reassurance."

"Several hotspots in Kirkwall were highlighted as particular problem areas, including the public toilets near the pier and the Visitor Centre. Residents suggested upgrading CCTV, adding clearer signage, and working closely with Police Scotland to reduce graffiti, vandalism, and other antisocial behaviour."



## Case study: Safer Together

The Orkney Fund is working in partnership with Police Scotland and Orkney Islands Council to design and deliver a coordinated programme aimed at improving community safety and wellbeing across the islands. Recognising the importance of prevention and visibility, the Safer Together initiative combines practical safety measures with community-led action to address local priorities.

A central element of the programme focuses on improved CCTV coverage in identified hotspot areas to help reduce antisocial behaviour and improve road monitoring. Community consultation highlighted particular areas of Kirkwall as experiencing ongoing challenges with antisocial behaviour, prompting targeted investment to ensure residents and visitors feel safe while protecting public spaces. In addition, a mobile CCTV unit is considered to provide flexible coverage at events and other locations as required.

The programme is also exploring opportunities for youth outreach, expanding support within schools and through community-based initiatives to engage young people positively and reduce the risk of antisocial activity.

Complementing these measures, a series of non-statutory road safety and accessibility improvements are being developed directly in response to community feedback. Local Place Plans will play a key role in shaping this work, ensuring that each intervention is informed by strong local engagement and reflects the needs of the communities it serves.

## Active Travel Infrastructure:

Consultation feedback highlighted a strong and consistent demand for improved active travel infrastructure across Mainland Orkney and the outer islands. Residents repeatedly expressed the need for safer, more accessible routes that encourage walking and cycling while reducing reliance on vehicles. Suggested improvements included upgraded footpaths, new cycleways, and trails linking key amenities, schools, and community facilities.

Such developments would deliver wide-ranging benefits, promoting healthier lifestyles, reducing carbon emissions, and improving safety for all users, particularly children walking or cycling to school. Improved routes would also improve accessibility for older residents and those with mobility challenges, while supporting local businesses by strengthening connections between communities and town centres.

The Orkney Fund Board recognises that investment in active travel is central to the priorities identified through consultation and is essential for wellbeing, climate resilience, and equitable access to services across the islands. The Board will continue to work closely with communities to identify and deliver these improvements as a key focus for the first four-year investment period, helping ensure that the advantages of safer, low-carbon mobility are felt across all of Orkney.

### Supporting comments from community consultation:

"Development of paths around Stromness and surrounding areas with signage, improved surfaces, improved accessibility and business links."

The proposed Stromness–Kirkwall cycle route was among the most frequently mentioned ideas, highlighting strong demand for better cycling infrastructure.

"Cycling between communities is dangerous in places. Dedicated paths or widened verges would encourage more people to leave the car at home."

"Better paths would help older residents stay active and reduce isolation. Many avoid walking because they don't feel the routes are safe or accessible."

# Heritage, Conservation, and Regeneration

Revitalising historic buildings, underused spaces, and bringing valued assets back into productive use.

**Allocation: £1.5m**

Orkney's heritage is a cornerstone of its identity, shaping both its sense of place and its appeal as a destination to live, work, and visit. Orkney's historic buildings, townscapes, and cultural landmarks reflect centuries of community life, yet many require investment to remain viable and sustainable for future generations. By revitalising these assets, Orkney can preserve its unique character while supporting sustainable growth.

The Orkney Fund Board aims to support a balanced approach to heritage and regeneration - one that both empowers community-led initiatives and enables transformational, flagship projects. Together, these investments will contribute to thriving, resilient communities and strengthen Orkney's position as a leader in heritage-led regeneration.

## Heritage Scheme

Across Orkney, communities are demonstrating a strong commitment to conserving and reimagining their local heritage assets. Many historic buildings that once stood at the heart of island life now require new purposes to remain relevant and sustainable. These buildings, from community halls to traditional town landmarks, hold the potential to be adapted for modern use while preserving their historic value and character.

The Orkney Fund will support this ambition through a coordinated Heritage Scheme that helps communities restore and repurpose historic assets for future generations. This includes providing funding for restoration work and adaptive reuse projects that breathe new life into existing structures while maintaining their authenticity.

By supporting this kind of investment, the Orkney Fund will enable heritage to act as a driver for regeneration - encouraging local enterprise, creating new spaces for community and cultural activity, and sustaining skilled employment across the islands. The scheme will also work alongside other regional and national heritage programmes, strengthening Orkney's reputation for innovation in conservation and ensuring that the area's distinctive built environment continues to inspire creativity, and economic vitality.



### Case study: Tomb of the Eagles

The Tomb of the Eagles is one of Orkney's most significant archaeological sites, offering a unique insight into Neolithic life and ritual. Located on the cliffs of South Ronaldsay, the site is a nationally important heritage asset, renowned for its rich collection of artefacts and its role in telling the story of Orkney's early communities. For decades, the site has attracted visitors from around the world, contributing to the cultural tourism economy.

In recent years, community ambition has driven efforts to secure the site's long-term future. Following its acquisition by the South Ronaldsay and Burray Development Trust, the focus has turned to revitalising the visitor experience and ensuring the site remains accessible. Through Orkney Fund capacity-building support, the Trust is undertaking feasibility work to explore new development opportunities, including options for restoring and reusing associated buildings and improving facilities.

This project exemplifies the aims of the Orkney Fund's proposed Heritage Scheme by supporting community-led stewardship of heritage assets. By investing in feasibility and design development at an early stage, the Fund is helping to safeguard a key part of Orkney's archaeological landscape while creating potential for future capital investment. The work will ensure the Tomb of the Eagles continues to serve as both a cultural landmark and a source of economic and educational benefit for local people and visitors alike.

## Flagship Heritage Regeneration Project

Alongside the heritage scheme, the Orkney Fund Board recognises the importance of delivering a flagship heritage regeneration project that showcases Orkney's collective commitment to cultural preservation. This initiative will focus on restoring and reusing a heritage asset of regional importance with an identified purpose, transforming a landmark building into a vibrant, sustainable space that strengthens its surrounding area and attracts long-term investment.

The Orkney Fund intends to provide seed funding to initiate this project, positioning it as a catalyst for wider match funding from partners such as Historic Environment Scotland, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and other national regeneration programmes. This early investment aims to unlock the potential for a high-impact project that contributes to Orkney's long-term regeneration vision and demonstrates leadership in heritage-led renewal.

To ensure the chosen flagship project reflects shared community priorities, further consultation will be undertaken with local residents, development trusts, and partner organisations. This engagement process will identify the most suitable project to deliver the greatest local and island-wide benefits, ensuring that community voices help shape the outcome from the outset.

The flagship project will not only conserve and repurpose an important part of Orkney's built environment but also create new opportunities for employment, enterprise, and tourism. It will stand as a visible symbol of community ambition and confidence in Orkney's future, showing how heritage can drive sustainable development and place-based regeneration.

### **Supporting comments from community consultation:**

"Many of Orkney's historic buildings are sitting empty or underused. People want to see these places brought back into productive use."

"There is a strong desire to see landmark sites revitalised in ways that respect their history but also make them relevant."

"Some of our most iconic sites could be fantastic assets if they were looked after properly. It's a shame to see places with so much potential lying unused."

# Local Enterprise and Creative Support

Supporting small businesses, creative initiatives, and community-driven enterprise to boost local economic activity and promote Orkney's distinct culture.

**Allocation: £1.5m**

Orkney's creative spirit and strong culture of local enterprise are central to what makes the islands a distinctive and inspiring place to live, work, and visit. From makers, artists, and musicians to small and community-led enterprises, these sectors play a vital role in sustaining Orkney's economy while preserving its unique character and heritage. Supporting creativity and enterprise not only helps people develop skills and confidence but also fuels economic activity and promotes Orkney's distinct cultural identity.

## Local Enterprise Support Fund

The Orkney Fund Board aims to strengthen local charities, community enterprises, and small businesses so they can continue to be vibrant contributors to the local economy. Investment in this area will help revitalise town centres and stimulate new business activity.

To make sure investment is focused on local priorities, the Board will engage with business stakeholders, including representatives from enterprise, tourism, and the third sector, to identify key challenges and opportunities for growth. Insights from this engagement will inform a tailored support scheme that directly responds to the needs of Orkney's business and community economy.

An example of this is the feasibility funding provided to Orkney Zerowaste, a local charity that resells second-hand goods while promoting environmental sustainability and reducing waste. The study will explore how improved accessibility and layout can support resilience and community impact.

By investing in local enterprise and listening to business voices, the Orkney Fund supports organisations that deliver both economic and social value, helping Orkney's local economy remain dynamic and sustainable.

## Creative Fund

Orkney's creative industries are integral to its identity and long-term vitality. The Orkney Fund aims to support creative development by enabling artists and performers to access improved facilities, shared spaces, and opportunities for collaboration. Community consultation revealed strong public support for initiatives that celebrate local culture and promote Orkney as a dynamic and welcoming place.

As part of the first four-year investment period, the Orkney Fund will explore the creation of a Public Realm Art Scheme, bringing creativity into everyday life through public art, street installations, and community-led design projects. This initiative will connect local artists directly with communities, enhance the visual appeal of public areas, and strengthen pride of place across the islands.

Further consultation may also identify other creatively linked priorities, such as shop-front refurbishments, gallery and studio spaces, or small-scale cultural improvements that contribute to the vibrancy and visual character of Orkney's towns and villages. Together, these interventions will showcase local talent, support cultural participation, and ensure creativity remains at the heart of Orkney's regeneration story.



### Case study: Creative Hub

Creative Orkney represents a collective of local artists, makers, and creative businesses who play a vital role in the islands' cultural life. Building on strong community engagement, the group identified the need for affordable, well-equipped workspaces, improved collaboration, and better access to markets for Orkney's growing creative sector.

To address this, the Orkney Fund has supported a feasibility study to explore the development of a Creative Hub - a shared facility designed to nurture emerging talent and strengthen Orkney's creative economy. The proposed hub would provide start-up studios and incubation spaces for new businesses, offering access to training and shared resources that help creative entrepreneurs establish sustainable careers.

In addition to workspaces, the concept includes a gallery and event area to showcase local craftsmanship and design, and a dedicated mail-order and distribution centre to improve logistics for local producers. This will enable creative businesses to reach new markets while reducing costs and supporting growth.

Consultation with artists and creative industry stakeholders has highlighted a clear need for spaces that encourage collaboration, support business growth, and help retain creative talent within the islands. The proposed Creative Hub aims to meet this need, establishing a lasting centre for innovation and cultural expression that will continue to strengthen Orkney's creative identity.

## Public Realm Improvement Scheme

Improving Orkney's public spaces is about more than upgrading infrastructure; it's about creating places that bring people together, celebrate local identity, and strengthen pride of place. Community consultation highlighted a strong desire for more welcoming and attractive public areas that support everyday activity and reflect the character of the islands. Well-designed streets, parks, and gathering spaces help people move around safely and feel connected to their surroundings.

Through the Public Realm Improvement Scheme, the Orkney Fund will combine local creativity with place-based investment to deliver lasting upgrades to shared spaces. Communities will work together to develop improvements that reflect Orkney's heritage and landscape to create public areas that are welcoming, attractive, and meaningful to local residents.

These projects will help revitalise streets and open spaces, support local artists and makers, and encourage more people to spend time in their local areas. In doing so, they will strengthen Orkney's sense of identity and community life while contributing to a safer, more accessible, and more vibrant public realm across the islands.

### Supporting comments from community consultation:

"Public art created with local artists would really lift the character of our villages and towns. It helps tell the story of Orkney and boosts mood."

"Simple improvements like better seating, planting, and lighting would make our town centre far more welcoming, especially in the darker months."

"There aren't many places to sit, pause, or meet others. More sheltered spaces would make our centres more usable for everyone, especially older residents."

# 4-Year Funding Profile

	2026/27		2027/28		2028/29		2029/30		Total		Total
	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	
Sports Facilities	£0	£0	£200,000	£0	£500,000	£0	£400,000	£0	£1,100,000	£0	£1,100,000
Community, Cultural and Recreation Facilities	£70,000	£0	£250,000	£0	£300,000	£0	£300,000	£0	£920,000	£0	£920,000
Orkney-wide Safety Initiative	£50,000	£100,000	£200,000	£118,000	£200,000	£118,000	£100,000	£118,000	£550,000	£354,000	£904,000
Active Travel Links	£0	£0	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£50,000	£200,000	£20,000	£300,000	£70,000	£370,000
Regeneration and Heritage Scheme	£75,000	£15,000	£100,000	£20,000	£100,000	£20,000	£75,000	£20,000	£350,000	£75,000	£425,000
Flagship Heritage Building Restoration	£0	£15,000	£150,000	£0	£300,000	£20,000	£200,000	£20,000	£650,000	£55,000	£705,000
Creative Fund	£75,000	£0	£300,000	£20,000	£200,000	£20,000	£200,000	£20,000	£775,000	£60,000	£835,000
Local Enterprise Support Scheme	£75,000	£0	£100,000	£0	£100,000	£20,000	£200,000	£20,000	£475,000	£40,000	£515,000
Public Realm Improvement Scheme	£0	£0	£75,000	£0	£75,000	£0	£75,000	£0	£225,000	£0	£225,000
Capacity Building		£150,000									£150,000
Fund Admin	£0	£100,000	£0	£100,000	£0	£100,000	£0	£100,000	£0	£400,000	£400,000
Total Available	£360,000	£382,000	£1,736,000	£256,000	£1,605,000	£432,000	£1,605,000	£432,000	£5,306,000	£1,502,000	£6,808,000
Remaining	£15,000	£2,000	£326,000	£0	£106,000	£84,000	-£39,000	£114,000			£608,000