

SFT OUTCOMES 2023

Support to Islands Programme delivering positive outcomes to the heart of rural communities

PRIMARY OUTCOME

SECONDARY

OUR CORPORATE PRIORITIES

01

02

05

07

08

09

A CLEAR PICTURE OF
INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS



NET
ZERO



SUSTAINABLE
PLACES



INCLUSIVE
GROWTH

Did you know there are some 93 inhabited islands spread around Scotland's coastline, home to over 100,000 people?

And around these wave-battered isles, you'll find whisky distilleries, awesome beaches, epic landscapes and wonderful wildlife.

But, what you will also find, are declining populations.

Scottish Government's Islands Programme represents a £25.8 million capital investment over five years to support the delivery of its National Islands Plan. This funding is being used to support community infrastructure projects that not only stem population decline, but encourages population growth; helps to deliver Scotland's net-zero ambitions, and supports a green economic recovery from the impacts of the recent pandemic.



The Islands Programme is open for applications from all six of Scotland's local authorities with inhabited islands – Shetland Islands Council, Orkney Islands Council, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Argyll and Bute Council, Highland Council and North Ayrshire Council.

During 2021, our Place team was asked by Scottish Government's Islands Team to assist with its work to deliver the Islands Programme.

Our Place team brought its expertise, resource and capabilities to lead the delivery of the Islands Programme, that includes working closely working with the six local authorities and other key stakeholders during the application process, and to ensure completion of projects and the desired outcomes and impacts are achieved.

Following a competitive bid process, during 2021/22 £5m was committed against the Islands Programme, with nearly £4.5m invested during 2022/23 and a further £4m to be allocated next year.

The team delivered an assurance approach to realise the objectives of the National Islands Plan ensuring long term sustainability of the investment and works with Scottish Government's Islands Team to report on the progress of the Islands Programme as a whole. This ensures consistency and aligns reporting for the Islands Programme for each year and will enable Scottish Government to monitor how each year's funds fit together and connect within the overall intentions of the Islands Programme.

Since the launch of the Islands Programme, funding has been allocated to 61 different projects, covering 44 islands. And while some infrastructure investment may be relatively small, it is nonetheless critical to deliver vital local projects at the heart of communities.



Gareth Waterson, Corporate Director of Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration at Orkney Council said: *"The Islands Programme has been a fantastic initiative in enabling the delivery of projects that protect our island way of life, from providing a solution for the export of livestock from remote islands to building a new nursery at Orkney College that will provide training opportunities and childcare for working families when there has been market failure in this critical service area."*

"The Scottish Futures Trust team have been engaging and responsive in dealing with our queries, they have provided advice on the completion of application forms and have been exemplary in their support of the Council. The process of applying for funding through a competitive process is challenging and resource intensive so that a guiding hand is invaluable in directing effort to where it will be most effective in telling the story behind the projects."

Some other examples of projects awarded funding are as follows:

Aald Skul Enterprise Development £88,095.
Mainland Shetland. Shetland Islands Council

New build nursery facility located next to Orkney College campus, to replace an existing building earmarked for demolition and which is the only current nursery facility in Orkney. The project has strong links to population retention, addressing child poverty and meeting net zero ambitions.

Old Surgery Housing Enablement £72,000.
Eigg. The Highland Council

With the current housing crisis on Eigg, the community want to deliver two new homes in as timely a manner as possible. This project will deliver the enabling ground works, bore hole and electricity connections in preparation for the main construction phase. This project has strong links to population retention and growth, housing and will use off grid and renewable energy connections.

Papa Stour Kirk Development £252,505.
Papa Stour. Shetland Islands Council

This second phase of a three-phase project will help safeguard and improve the building fabric of Papa Stour Kirk, the only community facility on the island. The work will protect the building for continued use and provide a stepping stone ultimately to a new community hub and visitor centre. There are strong links to supporting NIP Strategic Objective 10 empowered local communities and incorporates net zero ambitions.

Tobermory Seawall and Railings Improvements £250,000.
Mull. Argyll and Bute Council

This project will provide critical sea front infrastructure to the community of Tobermory by adding resilience against tidal surges and helping to reduce the impact of climate change. The work will also support the sustainability of existing businesses and provide a safer and more welcoming environment.