

What did we do well?

The Council has been successful in recycling and diverting waste from landfill sites, doing better than the Scottish average. Street lighting repairs have improved significantly due to increased investment.

What do we have to improve?

Cost of refuse collection and disposal is in general much higher than the Scottish average, partly due to the rural layout and distance between properties.

What did we do in 2003/04?

- Completed major building projects including the Orkney Library and Archive, Orkney Meat's abattoir, and the Council's new Customer Service Reception at the former East Kirk.
- Conducted Best Value reviews of quarries, refuse collection and environmental cleansing.

What do we plan to do in 2004/05?

The department's management structures and processes are currently under review, making it difficult to plan key actions. Some include revising the car parks policy, carrying out building alterations to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act, and assessing the runway surface integrity of the Council's airfields.

DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

The Department of Technical Services provides a wide range of services including central support to the Council, roads, airfields, operational environmental services, corporate land and property, voluntary competitive tendering arrangements and direct services.



DEPARTMENT OF HARBOURS

The Department of Harbours looks after the oil port of Scapa Flow and Orkney's piers and harbours. Functions include oil port operation, pilotage, and marine environmental services. The department provides performance information to the General Lighthouse Authority and keeps internal records for its own use.



What did we do in 2003/04?

- Upgraded the Stromness pier for the new ferry, and upgraded the port authority building at Scapa.
- Established marinas in Kirkwall and Stromness, and developed the marina in Westray.
- Widened and resurfaced the Scapa pier, bought the Pole Star pier in Stromness and upgraded the Tingwall marshalling area.
- Introduced the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code

What do we plan to do in 2004/05?

Further develop the international container transshipment hub project on Flotta; complete the Scapa pier works; replace one pilot boat; introduce training in Port Marine Safety Code; provide lairage facilities at Hatston pier; construct radar coverage for Kirkwall Bay; review oil spill response plan.

ANNUAL SPENDING BY DEPARTMENTS 2003/04 where the money went

2003 / 2004	£000
Development Services	2,834
Finance and Housing	4,137
Harbours	4,451
Chief Executive	8,622
Technical Services	10,056
Community Social Services	13,374
Education and Recreation	27,204

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

The Department of Development Service's functions include economic development, transport, planning, environmental health and trading standards, and museums and heritage.



What did we do well?

The Council improved the performance of its food hygiene inspections and the processing time for planning applications. The trading standards section has performed well in processing consumer complaints, doing better than the Scottish average, and has improved the time taken to deal with business advice requests. These successes have been partly due to an increase in staff.

What do we have to improve?

In building control, response times for building warrants and completion certificates were well below the Scottish average, although this has improved slightly over previous years due to better administration.

What did we do in 2003/04?

- Provided serviced self-build sites at Garson and Glaitness.
- Secured funding for travel centres in Kirkwall and Stromness, and introduced the concessionary travel scheme.
- Improved transport links via the HITRANS public transport improvement scheme.
- Introduced the woodlands strategy and biodiversity manual, and set up an Orkney heritage website.
- Established the post of arts development officer.
- Expanded laboratory services.

What do we plan to do in 2004/05?

Introduce a scheme for investment in community-owned wind turbines; establish a working group to review the design and siting guide for housing in the countryside; publish the joint health improvement strategy for Orkney; facilitate the Orkney arts forum showcase.

Keep in touch

we'd like to hear from you

If you would like a copy of the complete Annual Performance Report, or would like to comment on any aspect of the Council's performance, please contact Eileen Linklater at the Policy Unit, Orkney Islands Council, School Place, Kirkwall, Orkney, KW15 1NY, telephone Customer Services on 01856 873535, email: eileen.linklater@orkney.gov.uk.

Name:

Address:

Your Comments:



Annual Performance Report 2003/04 HIGHLIGHTS

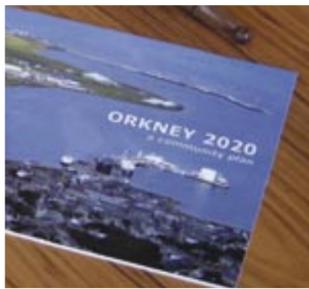
Orkney Islands Council measures and monitors its performance to help plan, manage, and improve Council services. An important part of this is reporting our performance to Orkney's residents, so you know how your money is being spent.

We do this in several ways. We have a statutory duty to record aspects of our practice to compare them with other Scottish Councils. We carry out Best Value reviews of individual services like refuse collection or the libraries; services such as care homes or schools are inspected and recommendations made for improvements. We also report progress on Council projects and other developments.

All this information is contained in the Council's Annual Performance Report, a detailed report on how services have performed over the last three years. We have focussed on the highlights of that report for each department in this leaflet.

This is an honest account of what we do well, where we need to improve, our achievements so far and our planned improvements for the future. We hope you will find it of interest and we welcome your comments.

Alistair Buchan, Chief Executive.
Stephen Hagan, Convener.



What did we do well?
Sickness absence levels among staff improved in 2003/04, due to better support for staff who were ill, such as the procedure for managing absences, training for managers, strategies for intervention and the use of the occupational health service.

What do we have to improve?
In comparison to the rest of Scotland, Orkney Islands Council has fewer female employees in the higher earning brackets. As a first step, we need to find out why.

What did we do in 2003/04?

- Published Orkney's Community Plan Orkney 2020.
- Restructured the Council's committees to make them work better.
- Established the new One Stop Shop customer services facility in the former East Kirk.

What do we plan to do in 2004/05?
Update the Council's complaints procedure; complete a race equalities scheme and associated staff training; develop customer services; redesign the Council's website; review the corporate and community plans; review the Council's diversity policies for employment; improve IT support to other departments.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT

The Chief Executive's department leads and supports other Council departments in delivering their services. It provides support services in administration, legal services, policy, communications, personnel and information technology.

What did we do well?
The Council's performance was excellent in the time taken to process new benefit claims, and ranked first out of 32 Councils in the average time taken to process changes in claimants' circumstances. The Council also ranked first in Scotland in the percentage of council tax collected, and the percentage of income due from non-domestic rates which was received. Orkney was one of two Councils to achieve the Scottish target of only 3% of rent arrears as a percentage of the net amount of rent due. We have also seen a steady reduction in the percentage of tenants owing more than 13 weeks rent.

What do we have to improve?
The Council performed poorly in the percentage of empty houses that were re-let within four weeks, so new allocation procedures are to be introduced in this area. It is taking longer to complete Council house sales, though this has been linked to an increase in the volume of house sales. The cost of benefit administration increased to be higher than the Scottish average.

What did we do in 2003/04?

- Restructured the finance and internal audit divisions.
- Completed the first corporate resource plan, linking planning and budgeting processes; revised the Capital project appraisal system, and conducted a Best Value review of internal audit.
- Submitted the homelessness strategy and tenant participation strategy to the Scottish Executive.

What do we plan to do in 2004/05?
Develop the financial information system and develop staff training in the payments section; increase the extent to which services can be delivered electronically; publish Orkney's local housing strategy 2004/09 and fuel poverty strategy.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE & HOUSING

The Department of Finance and Housing provides housing for the people of Orkney, and financial services to both the Council and general public. The department includes accountancy, payments, revenues, internal audit and housing services.



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES

The Department of Community Social Services' four main functions are community care, criminal justice, children and families services, and strategic services.

What did we do well?
The Council ranked first in Scotland for performance in relation to social enquiry reports, probation and community service. Increased staff development has resulted in a great improvement in the percentage of staff with appropriate qualifications in residential accommodation. The number of children looked after by the Council at home or in community placements (as opposed to residential accommodation) has improved and is on a par with the Scottish average.

What do we have to improve?
The total number of home care hours provided weekly has declined. This may simply be because some service users now employ their own help through the direct payments scheme, though we do have difficulty recruiting enough care workers.

What did we do in 2003/04?

- Introduced direct payments, enabling people to buy care and support services with Council funding.
- Extended the joint future initiative which promotes joint working between NHS Orkney and the Council.
- Continued to invest in staff development and training with 89 staff receiving accredited awards.
- Introduced a number of strategic planning documents and introduced a new client database (PARIS) for occupational therapy which allows health workers and social service employees to gain quick access to information regarding their patients.
- Noted recommendations made in Care Commission and Social Work Services inspection reports

What do we plan to do in 2004/05?
Open the Westray and Dounby care centres; meet the requirements of the Scottish Social Services Council for staff training and development; develop a training and support package for all foster carers; identify funding for the installation of CCTV throughout Kirkwall.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & RECREATION SERVICES

The department provides high quality education and recreation services to children and adults. Its services include school education, library services, community education, Orkney College, and recreation.



What did we do well?
The Council ranked top among Scottish Councils in relation to the percentage of primary 1-3 classes with no more than 30 pupils, and the average number of weeks taken to complete an assessment of special educational needs. The number of attendances at traditional swimming pools, and indoor facilities, per thousand of the population was considerably better than the Scottish average. The Council's performance in library stock turnover was very good, and the number of borrowers has increased, partly due to new members joining the new Orkney Library.

What do we have to improve?
The ratio of pupils to available places in primary and secondary schools was not as good as the Scottish average, though difficult to improve upon in view of the number of small island schools. The time taken for processing library book requests has increased, affected by the move to the new library.

What did we do in 2003/04?

- Opened the new Orkney Library and Archive.
- Published the education Service Improvement Plan.
- Conducted Best Value reviews of the Orkney College, primary, secondary and community education and noted recommendations from inspections reports by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education.

What do we plan to do in 2004/05?
Establish the early intervention guidelines for literacy and numeracy; introduce an outdoor education entitlement for pupils; introduce revised 5-14 guidelines in most schools; repeat 'ethos survey' in all schools; progress improvement actions identified by Best Value reviews; expand range of SVQ courses and modern apprenticeships at Orkney College; launch Shapinsay healthy living centre, KGS teen gym, and refurbished Hoy centre.