



Winter Service Policy 2026 – 2031

Director.

Infrastructure and Organisational Development.

June 2026.

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Introduction

Winter Service Policy Statement 2026 - 2031

1. Orkney Islands Council aims to provide a winter service which allows the safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians on roads, and keeps to a minimum, delays caused by adverse winter weather.
2. The Council as Roads Authority will set the standards and level of service, make adequate budgetary provision to achieve the standards and approve a carriageway and footway hierarchy.
3. The operational management of the service will be provided by the Director, Infrastructure Services and Organisational Development. The service will be delivered using in-house resources and other contractors as appropriate.
4. The service will be provided in accordance with the aims and objectives of the Council Plan 2023-2028, The Roads Management and Maintenance Plan 2023 – 2028, the Infrastructure and Organisational Development Service Plans and this Winter Service Policy Statement.
5. The Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development will prepare a Winter Service Plan defining a Carriageway and Footway hierarchy for winter treatment, which will be reviewed annually by the Council.
6. The standard of performance achieved, and all the fixed and variable costs incurred will be monitored annually and reported to the Director, Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
7. The Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development will report to the Council annually on the standard of service achieved, the costs involved and where changes or improvements to the level of services should be considered.
8. The Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development may in certain circumstances due to severe weather conditions or other conditions amend or suspend part of the Winter Service Plan to achieve the best service that the prevailing conditions will allow.
9. The Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development may carry out trials whenever necessary on proposals to improve the service prior to the review.

A - Statement of Policies

1. The Service will be provided in accordance with this document and the current Winter Service Plan.
2. The Team Manager (Roads Support) shall amend the Winter Service Plan on an annual basis and shall submit a final copy before 1 October each year to the Service Manager (Roads and Grounds) for implementation.
3. This document reflects the recommendations in Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice 2016 to adopt a risk-based approach to winter service operations utilising recommendations within the National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG) Practical Guide for Winter Service.
4. The Team Manager (Roads and Grounds Operations) is authorised to make such operational decisions as are necessary to perform the service as specified and as allowed for in Appendices 1 and 2 of this document. If circumstances arise which require further instruction such matters should be referred to the Service Manager (Roads and Grounds) or such other person appointed by the Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development for this purpose.

B - Specification

1. General

This specification relates to the delivery of the winter service. Roads and Grounds will be required to follow the procedures and policies referred to as set out in this document.

The functions conferred by this document shall be exercised by the Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development, or duly appointed representative.

The Team Manager (Roads and Grounds Operations) shall provide and maintain sufficient personnel, vehicles, plant, machinery, and equipment as are necessary for the proper and safe delivery of the service outlined in this document and the Winter Service Plan.

If insufficient resources are available from within the Roads and Grounds Section to ensure delivery of the service, the Service Manager (Roads and Grounds) shall notify this to the Head of Infrastructure Services who will identify resources available from within other sections of the Service, other Services of the Council or from external contractors.

The Service as specified will be delivered during the winter period, namely 1 November to 31 March the following year. The Team Manager (Roads and Grounds Operations) may decide to extend this cover outwith this period as necessary.

All charges incurred through the delivery of this Winter Service Policy will be covered by the relevant revenue budget code.

All materials laid down in accordance with the Specification remain the property of Roads Services.

2. Safety

Drivers should be instructed to take all possible precautions to protect their own safety and that of other road users.

High visibility clothing to BS EN 471 Class 3 must be worn by all personnel carrying out treatment to carriageway or footway.

All vehicles being actively used in winter service operations shall have warning beacons on at all times.

Drivers must abide by regulation 110 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations, which prohibits a person from driving a motor vehicle from using a hand-held mobile telephone or a hand-held device.

3. Route Planning for Carriageways and Footways

Route plans showing extent of cover for treatment are provided annually in the Winter Service Plan.

Carriageway routine treatment – Treatment to commence not earlier than 06:00 and no new routes to be started after 18:00.

Footway routine treatment – Prioritised treatment will be provided Monday to Saturday 06:00 to 16:00. A reduced service, subject to available resources, will be provided on all days observed by the workforce as local holidays.

Emergencies – 24-hour cover will be provided for emergencies notified via the Police only.

4. Route Hierarchy

It is recognised by the NWSRG that no Council has sufficient resources to treat all its road network. It is therefore necessary to establish, based on the risk-based approach, a Carriageway and Footway hierarchy which provides a resilient network to the best of the Council's ability given current resource levels.

The following indicators are used to establish the route priority of each section of carriageway, footway and cycleway across Orkney and will be reviewed annually. Consultation with the community will also take place annually and feed into this decision-making process.

Carriageway Hierarchy

This hierarchy excludes Islands where resources are not currently present. All roads on those Islands will be treated when resources allow. Increased Salt bin allocation will be considered on these Islands.

Salting and Snow Clearance Carriageways

Priority 1

- Primary routes.
- Important principal roads.
- Roads leading to important industrial establishments.
- Roads leading to the hospital.
- Roads leading to health centres.
- Roads leading to Police and Fire stations.
- Roads leading to schools.
- Roads leading to transport terminals.
- Selected bus routes.
- Important journey-to-work routes.
- Known trouble spots.

Priority 2

- Other known trouble spots (not on Priority 1).
- Remaining principal roads.
- Town centres.
- School bus routes (Priority 2S) treated on school days.

Priority 3 (Snow clearance only. Not normally treated unless snow is present for more than 48 hours).

- Minor side roads.
- Residential roads.
- No salting or gritting to be undertaken.

Footway and Cycleway Hierarchy

Footway treatment will apply to Kirkwall and Stromness only.

Salting and Snow Clearance Footway, Footpath and Cycleway**Priority 1**

- Primary routes.
- Footways leading to the town centre.
- Footways leading to the hospital and other health centres.
- Footways leading to Police and Fire stations.
- Footways leading to schools.
- Footways leading to transport terminals.
- Important journey-to-work routes.

Priority 2

- Busy footways leading to Priority 1s from well populated areas.
- Other routes leading to schools.

Priority 3

- Other busy footways not included in Priority 1 or 2.

5. Car Parks

Public car parks including education and care establishments will be treated as per the Winter Service Plan.

When notified, car parks adjacent to cemeteries will be treated prior to any funeral. The adjoining public carriageway will also be treated if not already done so on that day.

6. Standards

The Team Manager (Roads and Grounds Operations) must ensure that sufficient resources are or can be made available in the light of the decisions made in accordance with Appendices 1 and 2 considering response times, treatment times, vehicle characteristics, treatment length and rate of spread.

The target response time is one hour. This is the mobilisation period for commencing winter service operations following receipt of a weather warning.

Salting and Gritting - Carriageways

Priority 1 Routes – on receipt of frost, ice, or snow warning but subject to judgement and local experience. Once treatment has commenced the target completion time for carriageway Priority 1s is 2 hours.

Priority 2 Routes – only when adverse conditions become apparent and when all Priority 1 routes have been completed. Priority 2s will not generally be pre-treated in the afternoon unless conditions become severe.

Priority 3 Routes – No salting or gritting to be undertaken.

Snow Clearance – Carriageways

Generally, should be started as soon as practicable and the need for it becomes apparent beginning with Priority 1 routes and then Priority 2 as equipment is available.

Under adverse weather conditions and when snow is drifting resources must be withdrawn from lower priority routes to preserve the integrity of the higher priority.

Priority 1 Routes – Should not remain impassable to heavy vehicles for more than 6 hours in rural areas or 4 hours in urban areas except under exceptional weather condition and when snow is drifting.

Priority 2 Routes – Should not remain impassable to heavy vehicles for more than 6 hours in urban areas or 24 hours in rural areas except under exceptional weather conditions and when snow is drifting.

Priority 3 Routes – To be made passable to heavy vehicles within 48 hours wherever possible after dealing with the higher priority routes and only when conditions are severe and likely to persist for several days. The priority of works should be areas with steep hills or where there is a higher number of vehicle movements.

Salting and Gritting – Footways, Footpaths and Cycleways

Priority 1 Routes – on receipt of frost, ice, or snow warning but subject to judgement and local experience.

Priority 2 Routes – only when adverse conditions become apparent and when Priority 1 routes have been completed. Priority 2s will not generally be pre-treated in the afternoon unless conditions become severe.

Priority 3 Routes – only when adverse conditions persist for more than 3 days and when Priority 1 and 2 routes have been completed. Priority 3s will not be pre-treated in the afternoon.

Snow Clearing – Footways, Footpaths and Cycleways

Generally, should be started as soon as practicable and the need for it becomes apparent beginning with Priority 1 routes and then Priority 2 as equipment is available.

Gaps will be formed in piled snow at roadsides at bus-stops and at crossing points.

7. Salt Bins

Salt bins will be deposited and maintained in locations such as known trouble spots, steep hills, dangerous bends, and densely populated areas not on priority routes, as set out in the Winter Service Plan. Additional bins may be instructed throughout the winter as deemed necessary.

The Council will provide salt bins, for self-help by members of the public only where the following criteria are met:

1. In general, where the location is not on a Priority 1 or 2 route.
2. The bin shall not obstruct pedestrians.
3. The location shall not obstruct junction sight lines.
4. In general, where the location is not within 200 metres of another salt bin location.
5. The location is within the boundary of the public road.
6. The Council will not provide bins in private roads or car parks or any other public or private property unless a service level agreement is in place.

Bins will only be located where they can be filled from a lorry and shall be replenished on a regular basis during the winter period, as resources permit.

The location of each bin will be recorded in an electronic database, with a unique identity code for each item.

Formal requests should be submitted to the Council's Roads Support team for consideration. Where the criteria for a bin are met the provision will be dependent on available resources.

8. Islands Services

The level of service for all main Ro-Ro connected islands will be the same as the Orkney Mainland where resources allow. This excludes islands where resources are not currently present.

Additional salt bins may be provided in consultation with the local Community Council during the annual Winter Service Plan review.

The local Community Council should liaise with the Team Manager (Roads and Grounds Operations) as quickly as possible where procedures are not being followed.

9. Personnel

The Team Manager (Roads and Grounds Operations) must ensure that, as a minimum, the following personnel are always on standby during the winter period:

- Duty Technician.
- Duty Officer.
- Duty Supervisor.
- One crew located on the Mainland and linking South Isles.
- One operative on each of the following islands: Hoy, Flotta, Rousay, Shapinsay, Stronsay, Eday, Westray and Sanday.

The Team Manager (Roads and Grounds Operations) will, in addition to the personnel noted above, ensure that an additional three crews are on standby on the mainland and linked isles for all local and public holidays, in particular 25/26 December and 1/2 January.

During these periods and in all circumstances other than an emergency the delivery of the service will be limited to between 06:00 and 18:00.

The Team Manager (Roads and Grounds Operations) will provide staff rotas, manpower plan, sources of manpower and methods of contact.

The Team Manager (Roads and Grounds Operations) will maintain an operations room for the use of operational staff. A copy of this Policy and the Winter Service Plan should be kept in the operations room.

In general vehicles will be single manned however if for reasons of safety or other operational reasons during periods of severe conditions it is necessary, double manning will be permitted.

The Team Manager (Roads Support) will amend the Winter Service Plan, incorporating any agreed changes following consultation, and present to the Service Manager (Roads and Grounds) by 1 October annually.

10. Training

The Team Manager (Roads and Grounds Operations) will ensure that all personnel engaged on winter service activities will be properly trained and are familiar with safe working practices.

The Team Manager (Roads and Grounds Operations) shall be responsible for training all winter service personnel and shall ensure that all employees are made aware, to whatever degree necessary for them to perform their functions, of the conditions, specification and operational statements relating to this document and the Winter Service Plan.

It is recommended that training be provided on the following issues. This is not an exhaustive list and will largely be based on local circumstances:

- The content and operation of both this Policy, and the Winter Service Plan.
- Route familiarisation.
- Driving in difficult and hazardous road conditions including duty of care to other road users.
- Circumstances where special safety considerations apply.
- Snow ploughing.
- Avoidance of spraying pedestrians, cyclists, where practicable with salt or slush when salting or ploughing.
- Avoidance of risks to pedestrians and cyclists when using vehicles in segregated or partially segregated areas and in treating footways.
- Ploughing and manoeuvring in restricted circumstances.
- Dealing with emergencies.
- Dealing with post ice and snow emergencies especially flooding.

In addition to such specific training, it will be necessary to ensure that all personnel are provided with information during operational periods on current network characteristics and constraints, including:

- Traffic management in place.
- Network unavailability.

A system of formal training records shall be maintained by the Team Manager (Roads and Grounds Operations).

11. Plant, Vehicles and Equipment

Roads and Grounds will maintain a fleet inventory highlighting location, capacity and characteristics of plant, vehicles, and equipment to be used in the delivery of the service.

12. Operational communication systems

The Team Manager (Roads and Grounds Operations) will provide and maintain operational communications systems as detailed in Table 1 below:

Table 1

Communications System	Method of Contact	Allocation
2 Way Radio	Radio Call Sign	All operational vehicles
Telephone Answering machine	Public Telephone System	Operations Room
Mobile Telephones	24-hour Contact/Message Relay Service	Duty Technician Duty Officer Duty Supervisor

A list of all radio call signs, radio paging numbers and telephone numbers shall be finalised no later than 1 October annually and distributed to all relevant personnel.

13. Weather Forecasts

Roads and Grounds will supply and maintain an approved ice prediction system covering the mainland and linked isles including thermal mapping and/or Route Based Forecasting to be used in conjunction with a weather forecasting service.

The forecasting service and a minimum 2-5-day prediction facility is to be directly transmitted into the ice prediction computer system.

The principal forecasts should be available no later than 14:00 each day with updates based on local sensor data transmitted no later than 05:00 the following morning.

The Roads and Grounds Operations Team shall provide, no later than 16:00 each day, a copy of the 24-hour forecast incorporating planned action, the 2-5-day prediction and the 24-hour temperature prediction graph. In addition, no later than 16:00 the following day a copy of the graph comparing the temperature prediction to actual temperatures will be provided.

14. Decision Making

The success or otherwise of winter service operations depends greatly on the judgement, enhanced by experience and local knowledge, of those who must make the decisions, however, it is essential that such judgements are also based on recognised and accepted good practice.

Decision making processes will follow the guidance documents provided by the National Winter Service Research Group.

The procedure for decision making is outlined in Appendices 1 and 2.

All decision-making procedures must be recorded and documented in an operational diary stored either electronically or in physical form.

15. Material standards and storage

Salt shall be supplied to Roads and Grounds by the Team Manager (Quarry) at Cursiter Quarry. All salt must be stored and delivered as per the Salt Specification in Appendix 3. Any deviation from this specification must be notified to the Team Manager (Roads and Grounds) as soon as reasonably practicable.

16. Treatment

Dry salting treatment will be used on all occasions. Should other treatment options be introduced through the life of this document, it must be ensured that the guidance provided in the National Winter Service Research Group guidance documents is followed.

Carriageway treatment will be undertaken as shown in Appendix 1.

Footway and cycleway treatment will be undertaken as shown in Appendix 2. It is noted by the NWSRG that there is considerably less research available regarding footway treatments when compared with carriageway treatments. Although recommended spread rates are issued by the NWSRG these are far less precise when compared with the carriageway treatments.

Road surface temperature has therefore been used as a guide as to when to treat footways and cycleways. If further research becomes available through the lifetime of this document, Appendix 2 will be updated where appropriate.

The spread rates indicated in Appendices 1 and 2 must only be used when salt moisture content is within the optimum range shown in Appendix 3, and when spreader performance is good and calibrated correctly.

Where moisture content falls out with the optimum range the effectiveness of the salt will be greatly reduced therefore consideration must be made for increasing the spread rate by 20%.

Following decisions taken according to the procedures outlined in Appendices 1 and 2, undertake the treatment in the locations depicted on the weather forecasts. The treatment should be undertaken lane by lane except on roads where low traffic and narrow width permit full width spreading.

The average speed for gritters should be 20mph and never exceed 25mph whilst operating.

During prolonged falls of snow, it is preferred to plough continuously from the onset to prevent build up and compaction by traffic. At all times once passage is achieved on Priority 1 routes, it must be maintained wherever possible and in preference to treatment of other routes when necessary.

17. Media Communications

A standard messaging service will be provided to the Council's Communications team and disseminated as required.

18. Performance Monitoring

The Team Manager (Roads Support) will monitor generally, winter maintenance performance and expenditure, against the agreed specification and budget, and will notify the Service Manager (Roads and Grounds) of any variations.

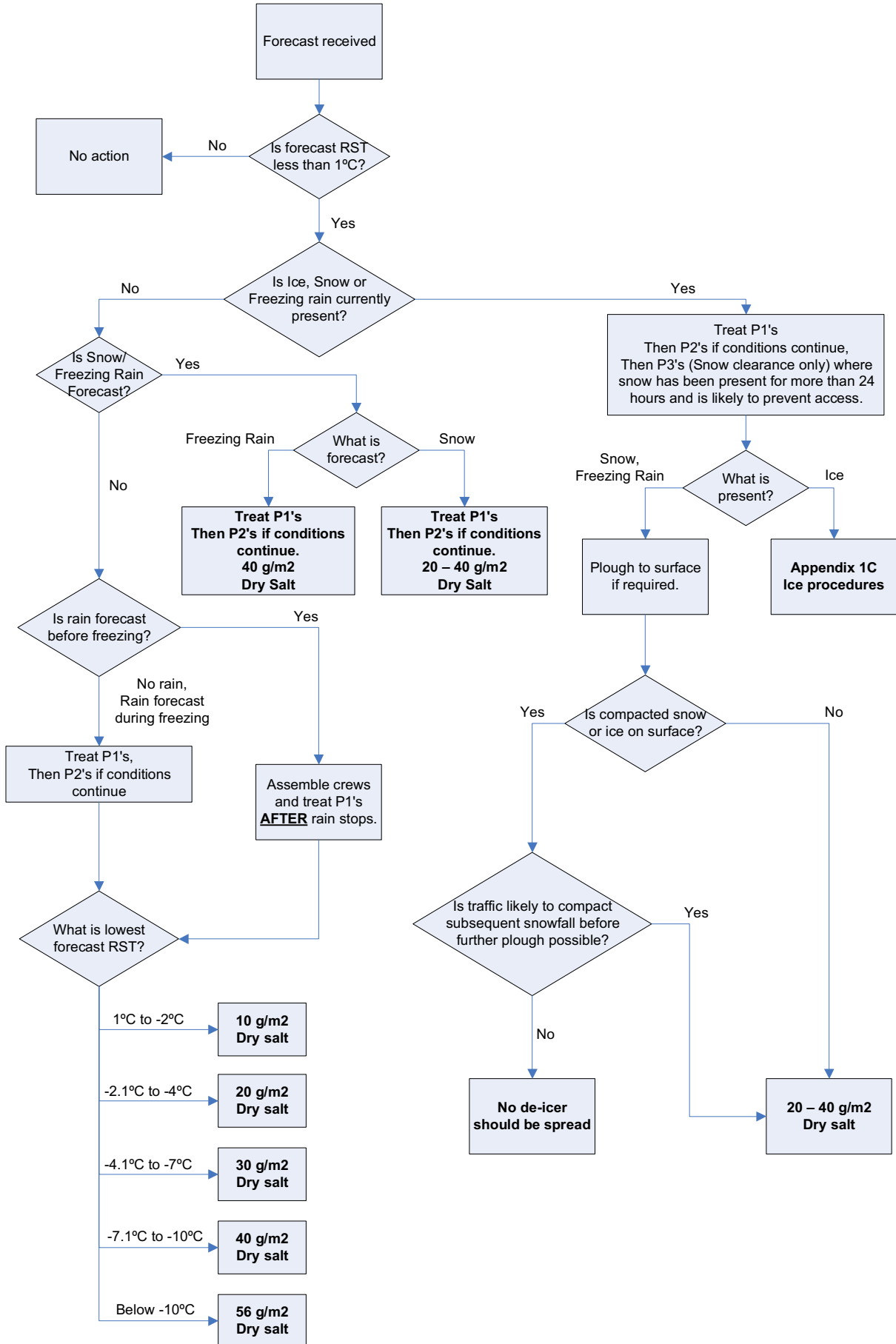
The Service Manager (Roads and Grounds) shall forward a report annually to the Head of Infrastructure Services detailing the performance of the service against the agreed specification and budget. This will include details of the accuracy of the forecasting and ice prediction systems and performance of OIC Quarries in relation to the supply of salt and grit in accordance with Appendix 3.

All activities carried out in accordance with this document will be summarised and recorded.

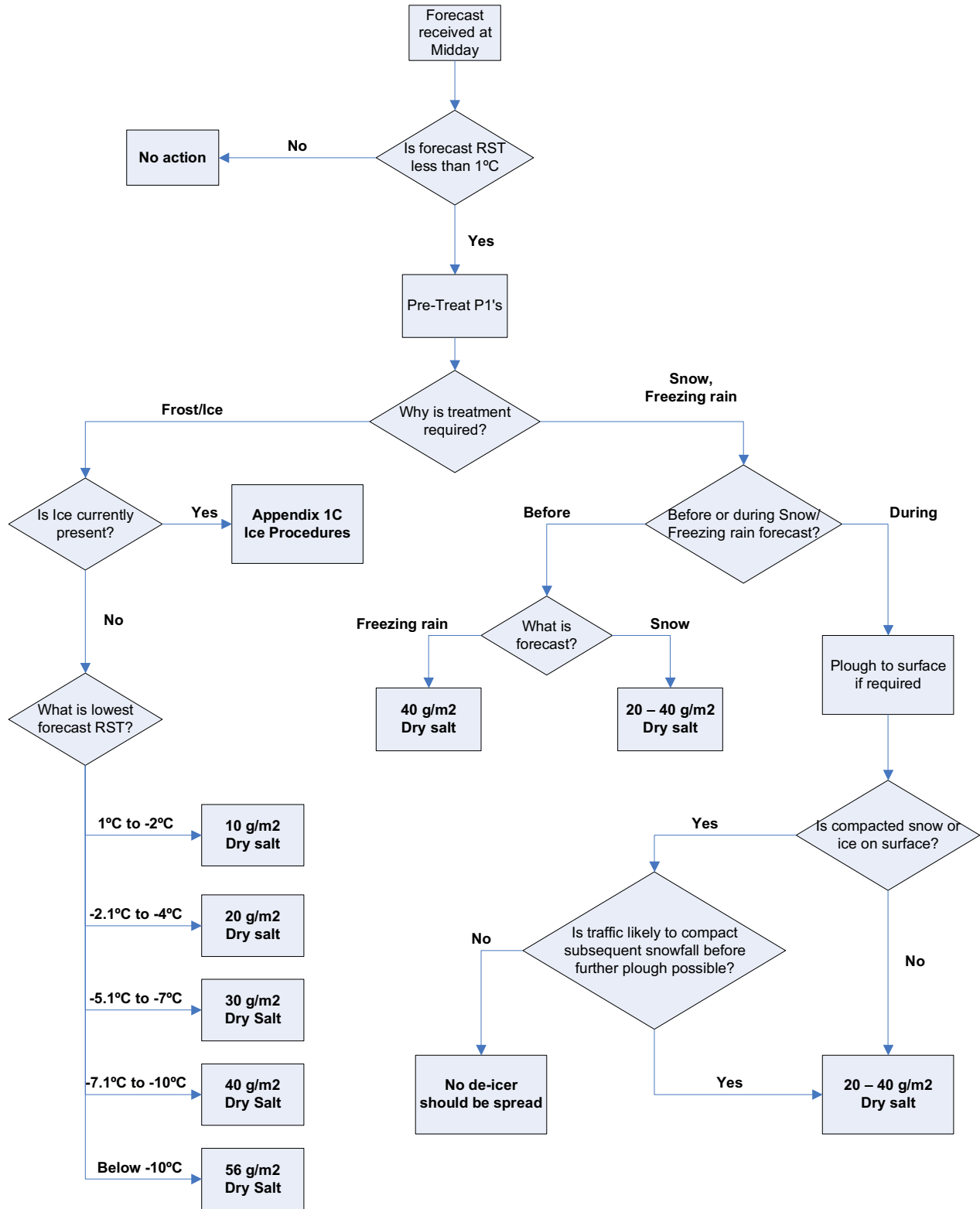
C - Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Carriageway Treatment Decision Making.
- Appendix 2 – Footway Treatment Decision Making.
- Appendix 3 - Salt Specification.

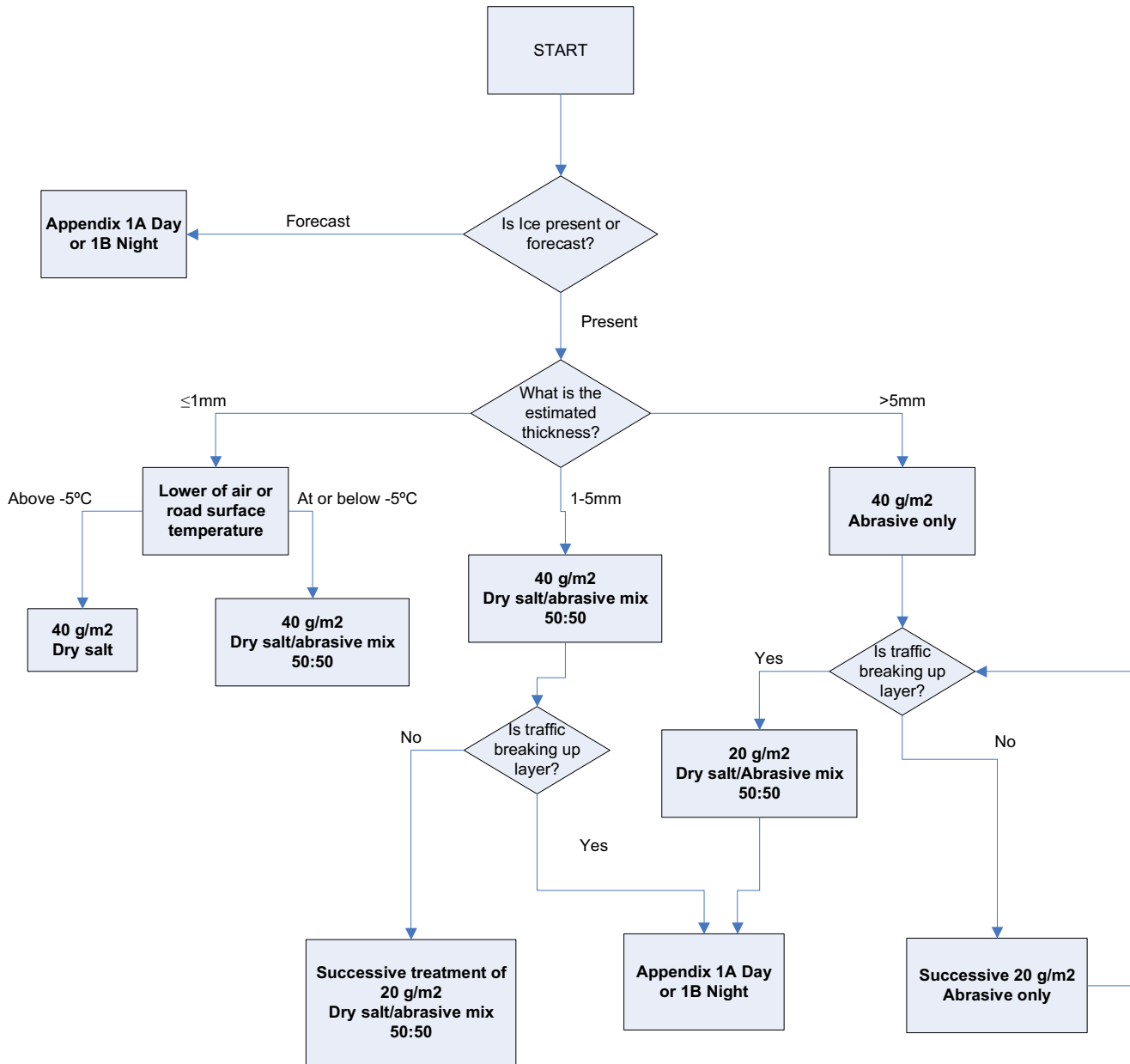
CARRIAGEWAY FORECAST PERIOD – DAY (06:00 – 18:00)



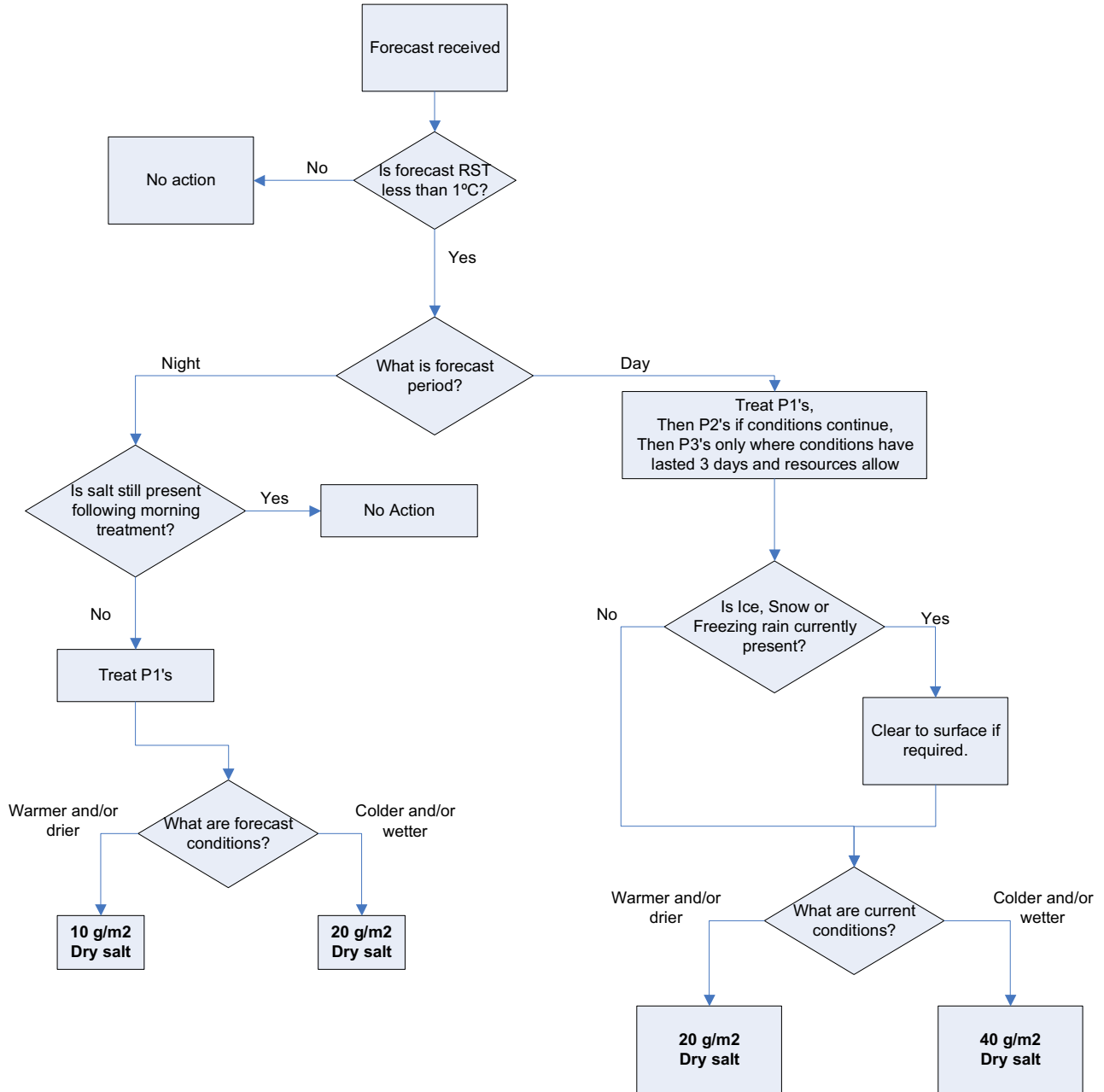
CARRIAGEWAY FORECAST PERIOD – NIGHT (18:00 – 06:00)



CARRIAGEWAY ICE PROCEDURES



FOOTWAY TREATMENT



Salt Specification

1. Supply of salt

Salt shall be fully compliant with BS 3247:2011 “Specification for salt for spreading on highways for winter maintenance”. Alternatives may be considered, upon approval.

Grade

Grading of the salt should be as per Table 1, below.

BS 410 test sieve	Percentage (m/m) passing test sieve
6.3 mm	100
2.36 mm	30 to 80
300 µm	0 to 20

Table 1 – Grading of salt. (BS 3247:2011)

Moisture content

The moisture content of all supplied salt shall be in accordance with BS3247:2011, and when sampled and tested on delivery shall not fall outside the optimum range identified in table 2. These moisture content values shall be consistent and representative of each delivered load. Alternative moisture contents may be considered, upon receipt of written request for approval.

Salt Type	Technology	Optimum Range
UK Rock Salt. Maximum fines content (<0.3mm particle size) is less than or equal to 7.5%	Dry Salting	1.5 to 4%
UK Rock Salt. Maximum fines content is above 7.5%	Dry Salting	2 to 4%

Should moisture content rise above 4%, the effectiveness of the salt is greatly reduced, therefore consideration must be made for increasing spread rates to compensate.

Chemical composition

The chemical composition of all salt supplied shall be in accordance with BS3247:2011 and as such, the following analysis upon delivery shall be as follows:

- Soluble chloride compounds (including sodium chloride (NaCl), magnesium chloride (MgCl₂), calcium chloride (CaCl₂) etc. expressed as sodium chloride): not less than 90%.
- Soluble sulphate compounds [expressed as calcium sulphate (CaSO₄)]: not more than 2.5%
- Material insoluble in water (at 20 ± 2°C): not more than 7.5%
- In addition to the above requirements, no substances should be present in such an amount as to be a hazard to human beings, animals (including fish) or plant life under normal conditions of use of the salt.

Alternative chemical compositions may be considered, upon approval.

Anti-caking additive

The minimum amount of anti-caking additive shall be used in order to prevent degradation of the quality of the salt and also ensure that after 18 months of covered/sheeted storage, all salt within a stockpile of at least 1 metre in height and the correct angle of repose shall remain loose and useable.

Full sampling and testing of the salt shall take place upon delivery as per the requirements of BS EN 932-1:1997 and BS 3247:2011. As such, the following test suite shall be completed, and results passed on to the Employer or its representative:

- Particle size analysis
- Moisture content analysis
- Concentration of anti-caking additive
- Chloride content

Samples taken for testing should be as representative as is practicable, (in accordance with BS EN 932-1:1997), and three test suites per shipment should be undertaken. This sampling and testing shall be undertaken at the Team Manager (Quarry)'s cost.

2. Salt storage

Storage shall be provided for the purposes of stockpiling salt for a duration to be agreed between the Team Manager (Quarry) and the Service Manager (Roads and Grounds) or a duly appointed representative.

Consideration shall be given to the following:

1. Access. The Storage Site shall be readily accessible by public highway. The storage site shall be accessible by any sized articulated lorry permitted to be used on public highway (without special order), with sufficient turning space provided. Consideration shall be given to the possibility of queuing vehicles.
2. The storage site shall be accessible on all days (with access provision on public holidays to be discussed between the Team Manager (Quarry) and the Service Manager (Roads and Grounds) or a duly appointed representative) between the hours of 05:30am and 18:30pm.
3. The storage site shall have a hard standing on all areas to be used for the stockpiling of salt. The hard standing shall be in good condition and shall not allow leachate from the salt stockpile to permeate the ground beneath.
4. Where the storage site is not directly on the coast, it shall have sufficient bunding to prevent leachate and run-off from the salt stockpile from polluting the surrounding environment.
5. The storage site should have interceptors to contain the leachate and run-off from the stockpile and other pollutants. Where interceptors are not present, a consent to discharge chlorides to the foul sewer network shall be provided to the Service Manager (Roads and Grounds) or a duly appointed representative.
6. The storage site shall have a secure boundary wall or fence to prevent any unauthorised access and any security issues arising from the use of the site for salt stockpiling.
7. The storage site should have provision for weighbridge facilities. The ticketing output from such facilities shall allow for the collection of information relating to:
 - Origin
 - Destination
 - Load (mass)
 - Customer
 - Haulier
 - Time and date

The Team Manager (Quarry) shall provide resources to staff at such weighing facilities.

The weight of all salt material extracted/removed from the storage site is to be obtained by the Team Manager (Quarry).

The Team Manager (Quarry) shall make available within 24 hours of receiving a request, provision for the reloading of vehicles making dispatches from the storage site. This shall include making available loading shovels and associated resources to be able to dispatch salt. Similarly, such provision shall be made available within 24 hours of receiving a request, for the stockpiling and profiling of salt delivered to storage site.

8. It is preferable for the salt to be stored within a building such as a salt barn or other suitable structure in order to protect the salt from the effects of the weather
9. All sites shall have requisite environmental and planning consents for the bulk storage of salt. These shall be sought by the Team Manager (Quarry) at their cost.

3. Sheeting

Where enclosed 'roofed' storage is not available, waterproof sheeting shall be provided and installed to protect the salt from the elements and the effects of leaching, run-off, and wind. Sheeting shall be of sufficient quality to protect the salt stockpile for two years but shall be maintained during that period.

The Team Manager (Quarry) shall ensure that sheeting shall be weighted down sufficiently so as to prevent the sheeting from coming free or blowing off. Any damage to sheeting caused by weather shall be repaired or replaced as soon as is practicable at the Team Manager (Quarry)'s cost.

The working face of each stockpile shall also be re-sheeted following stock removal or addition. The sheeting that is cut away at the time of excavation as well as off cuts from the installation process shall be disposed of efficiently and in a way, which minimises environmental impact.

Any material used for sheeting shall be designed specifically for the purposes of protecting bulk materials from wet conditions.

4. Transportation of salt

Once the salt has been stored, the Team Manager (Quarry) shall deliver salt as and when instructed in the OIC Winter Service Policy requirements from each of the locations to destinations specified by the Service Manager (Roads and Grounds) or a duly appointed representative. Vehicles transporting the material shall be fit for purpose to prevent loss of salt material or contamination to the salt material. Proof of delivery receipts shall be collated by the Team Manager (Quarry) from hauliers and provided to the Service Manager (Roads and Grounds) or a duly appointed representative by email within one week of dispatch.

5. Additional testing of supplied salt

The following test suite shall be available to the Service Manager (Roads and Grounds) or a duly appointed representative for the testing of any salt stockpile. Analysis shall be undertaken in accordance with BS3247:2011. Once analysis has been completed, results in the form of test certificates shall be passed on to the Service Manager (Roads and Grounds) or a duly appointed representative.

- Particle size analysis
- Moisture content analysis
- Concentration of anti-caking additive
- Chloride content

The Team Manager (Quarry) shall be responsible for the representative sampling of the stockpile to be sampled and will sample in accordance with BS EN 932-1:1997, as well as for the arrangement of courier services to transport test samples to the testing facility.

Additional analysis will be carried out monthly, during the winter season, from October to April.

6. Management of Storage Sites and provision of a logistics service

The Team Manager (Quarry) shall provide on-site resources (at the storage site) to monitor dispatches and deliveries and supervise the condition and security of the stockpile. On-site resources (the site supervisor) shall be provided during the operational hours at each storage site. Operational hours shall be defined as days of expected delivery and dispatch. In addition, the site supervisor shall undertake inspections of a frequency to ensure maintained security, quality of the salt and sheeting (site specific), and health and safety requirements of the storage site, the salt stockpile and the condition of the sheeting. Such inspections shall not be any less frequent than weekly and shall be carried out at all times throughout the year, irrespective of whether operational hours are affected.

The Team Manager (Quarry) shall, at the request of the Service Manager (Roads and Grounds), provide the following logistic service:

- Arranging distribution and advising distributors/receiving authorities of what loads are to be delivered and when
- Ensuring distributors book vehicles in and providing them with unique loading reference
- Monitoring vehicles arriving at stockpile for loading
- Managing daily collection of weighbridge tickets at stockpile
- Collecting and collating all Proof of Deliveries (PODs).

Reports on deliveries and dispatches taking place from the storage site shall be prepared on request for the Service Manager (Roads and Grounds) or a duly appointed representative. Such reports shall include elements relating to site security, sheeting condition, health and safety, environmental concerns and any other matters deemed relevant.

Salt will be supplied to Roads and Grounds by the Team Manager (Quarry) at Curister Quarry. In addition, the Team Manager (Quarry) will maintain a standby rota during the winter period.

Orkney Island Council

Household Refuse and Recycling Service Policy

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Waste and recycling containers

Households in receipt of an Alternate Weekly Collection Service (AWC) are eligible for the following containers to present their waste and recycling for collection:

- One 240 litre (L) grey wheeled bin for residual (non-recyclable) waste.
- Two 140 L green wheeled bins with blue lids for recyclable materials.

Where AWC is delivered, two additional recycling bins can be requested for each household.

Households not in receipt of an AWC service (non-linked North and South Isles) are provided with an annual allocation of single use black refuse sacks to present waste weekly at the kerbside for collection. No more than three black bags should be presented each week for collection.

Materials permitted in wheeled bins or bags are shown in Table 1. Materials prohibited in these containers are shown in Table 2.

Households receiving AWC can request green boxes and canvas bags instead of wheeled bins if the bins are too difficult to manage or where storage is an issue (see the *Alternative Collection* section for more details). The containers issued to households remain the property of Orkney Islands Council but households are responsible for their safe storage, cleanliness and safekeeping. If containers are damaged, lost or stolen, households should request a replacement. If a bin becomes damaged through misuse, the Council reserves the right to charge for a replacement.

Recyclable materials from the list in Table 1 must be separated according to their category and presented in an individual green bin for collection.

Caddies are provided for the storage of recycling only and should not be presented for collection either inside or outside the bin. Recycling presented in caddies will not be collected.

Bins must not be stored on a public highway (roads or footpaths).

Households not in receipt of an AWC service (non-linked North and South Isles) can dispose of their recycling at the communal recycling points. Recycling points are usually located at the pier. More details on the location of the recycling points on the isles are provided on [Council's website](#).

Table 1 - Materials which can be presented at the kerbside.

<p>Grey wheeled bin (refuse sacks) for residual (non-recyclable) waste</p>	<p>Green wheeled bins with blue lids for recyclable waste separated into four categories</p>
<p>Non-recyclable materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic tubs, pots and trays. • Food waste. • Dog faeces and cat litter. • Pet bedding. For example, wood shavings, shredded paper and straw. • Nappies and sanitary products. • Polystyrene. • Small broken toys. • Plastic bags and wrapping/film. • Food cartons (Tetra Pak). • Corrugated cardboard*. • Small quantities of grass cuttings*. • Flowers, weeds, plants, hedge and tree clippings*. 	<p>Recyclable materials</p> <p>Category 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspapers and magazines. • Junk mail and flyers. • Envelopes (including window envelopes). • Brochures, thin catalogues, directories, thin phone books and yellow pages. • Thin card. For example, food packaging (such as cereal boxes) and toilet roll tubes. <p>Category 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household plastic bottles (Types 1 and 2 - PET and HDPE) <p>Category 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinks cans. • Food tins. • Pet food tins. • Clean foil and foil trays. • Empty aerosol cans. For example, deodorant, hairspray and polish. • Metal lids from jars and bottles. • Biscuit and sweets tins. <p>Category 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glass bottles and jars (any colour).
<p>* If you cannot take these items to a local recycling centre.</p>	

Table 2 - Prohibited materials for each bin/ bag.

Grey wheeled bin (refuse sacks) for residual (non-recyclable) waste	Green wheeled bins with blue lids for recyclable materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Dry recyclable materials that can be accepted in the green wheeled bins with blue lids for recyclable materials. × Hot ashes. Always allow ashes to cool before disposal. × Broken windows and large pieces of glass. × Car parts. × Rubble, soil and demolition waste. × Corrosive materials. × Liquids such as oil and paint. × Fluorescent tubes and low energy light bulbs. × Electrical and electronic equipment. × Pesticides. Pesticides must be taken to Bossack. × Large amounts of cooking oil. × Live ammunition and other explosives. × Marine flares. × Gas cannisters. × Batteries (including vehicle and household batteries, single use and rechargeable). × Special or hazardous waste (as outlined in <i>Hazardous Materials and Special Waste</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Black sacks (with or without recyclable waste in them). × Carrier bags. × Textiles. For example, clothes, bedding and duvets. × Egg boxes. × Plastic tubs, pots and trays. × Plastic film from packaging or cling film. × Food waste. × Polystyrene. × Broken toys. × Any other plastics except plastic bottles (types 1 PET and 2 HDPE). × Dog waste and cat litter. × Nappies and sanitary products. × Paper towels. × Garden items. For example, plastic plant pots and trays. × Soil, stones, rubble and hardcore. × Sheet glass. × Light bulbs. × Corrugated cardboard. × Food cartons (Tetra Pak).

Alternative collection service

Alternative collection service is provided for households receiving an AWC where the use of wheeled bins is not possible due to lack of access or no storage for bins. These include terraced and rural properties over 75m from a public road, flatted properties (low rise/high rise and in converted properties) or houses of multiple occupancy.

Alternative collection services can be requested by filling in an application form which must be completed in full and returned to the Council. Application form can be obtained from the Council's Customer Services or on [Council's website](#).

An alternate collection method will be applied as follows:

- For general waste, the Council will provide residents with a red bag allocation. This is 75 bags per year delivered to each qualifying property annually.
- For recycling, green boxes and green canvas bags will be provided to be presented at each recycling collection. Residents receiving an alternative collection service must still separate materials for recycling.

Residents can apply for additional capacity if they meet the criteria set out in *Additional capacity*.

The collection frequency and schedule will be the same and is a part of the Alternate Weekly Collection Service (AWC) just using bags/boxes instead of wheeled bins.

Residents will be expected to observe the following guidance:

- The total number of red bags (for residual waste) presented at each collection shall not exceed three. Any red bags above three will be treated as side waste and will not be collected.
- Any green boxes/bags (for recycling) that contain non-recyclable items will be treated as contaminated as outlined in *Contamination* section.
- For items that do not fit in the red bag, the resident will be required to use the Council's bulky waste collection service, take these items themselves to their nearest Household Waste Recycling Centre or pay for a licensed waste carrier to collect the waste and dispose of it at a licensed facility.

Services for terraced properties

Where storage is an issue for residents who live in terraced houses, the Council may advise properties or groups of properties to use communal containers for residual waste and recycling instead of individual bins. In such circumstances, residents will decide on their participation but the Council will confirm in writing the location of the communal bins.

Where contamination of the recycling containers becomes significant the Council reserves the right to remove this service from the properties affected (as per *Contamination* section).

Service for rural properties or where access is difficult

There are geographical locations within Orkney where the use of a standard collection service is not viable due to health and safety risks or a lack of infrastructure. These locations include un-adopted roads, tracks or private drives where the condition, surface and alignment of the highway are unsuitable for the vehicle and manoeuvrability requirements for the collection of the waste and recycling.

To ensure that properties in these locations receive the same level of service, the Council will either recommend the Alternative Collection Method service or seek that all containers or bags are presented by residents at an agreed collection point which will normally be adjacent to a highway or an adopted road.

Additional capacity

The Additional Capacity service applies to households receiving the AWC services utilising wheeled bins and those who qualify for the Alternative Collection Method.

Alternate Weekly Collection Service

Residual Waste

Each household on the Alternate Weekly Collection Service is provided with a standard 240 L grey wheeled bin for residual (non-recyclable) waste. Additional grey residual waste bins can be provided in the following circumstances:

- If a household has 5 to 7 permanent residents, one additional 140 L bin will be provided.
- If a household has 7 or more permanent residents one additional 240 L bin will be provided.
- If a household has two or more children under 3 years old, one additional 140 L bin will be provided.
- If a household has a resident with a medical condition which results in generation of additional waste, additional 140 L or 240 L bins will be provided as required.

Recycling

Each household on the Alternate Weekly Collection Service is provided with two 140 L green wheeled bins with blue lids for recyclable materials. The Council can issue up to four wheeled recycling bins per household in recognition of a commitment to recycle more materials. Alternatively, households can receive two 240 L wheeled bins on request through Council's Customer Services.

Alternative Collection Service

Residual waste

Each household on the Alternative Collection Service (using red bags) receives an annual allocation of 75 red bags for residual (non-recyclable) waste. Additional red bags can be provided in the following circumstances:

- If a household has 5 to 7 permanent residents, 50 additional bags will be provided each year. This is equivalent to one additional 140 L bin.

- If a household has 7 or more permanent residents 75 additional bags will be provided each year. This is equivalent to one additional 240 L bin.
- If a household has two or more children under 3 years old, 50 additional bags will be provided each year. This is equivalent to one additional 140 L bin.
- If a household has a resident with a medical condition which results in generation of additional waste, additional bags will be provided as required.

The maximum red bag allowance for a household is 150 red bags per year.

Recycling

Each household on the Alternative Collection Service is provided with three canvas bags and a box for recyclable materials. Additional canvas bags and boxes are available to households upon request through Customer Services.

Additional capacity is initially provided for a period of two years, after which the Council will review the allocation to determine if it is still required. Residents with additional capacity allowance must notify the Council if they change address or there is a change in their circumstances that effect their eligibility for this service.

The Council reserves the right to remove additional capacity allowance in the following circumstances:

- Residents are not recycling effectively.
- Residents using additional bins or bags inappropriately.
- Residents are found to have obtained additional containers under false circumstances.
- Residents are no longer eligible for additional containers.

Waste and recycling presentation

All waste and recycling must be presented in containers or bags provided by the Council at the designated collection point. The collection point must be located no more than 2m from the public road. Collection vehicles will not travel on private or unadopted roads.

Containers and bags must be presented no later than 08:00 on the designated collection day. The collection day schedule is available on the Council website. If a container is not presented by 08:00, it may not be collected. Containers should be taken in as soon as possible after collection.

Access to containers should not be restricted by padlocks, chains or bungee cords. If these are present, it is the responsibility of the resident to ensure that they are removed on the collection day for easy access.

Surfaces on which containers need to be moved over for collection must be of a smooth continuous finish and free from steps or other obstacles. Any steps must incorporate a drop-kerb.

Bins can be kept in a bin store either within the curtilage of a property or on the verge so long as they are presented less than 2 metres from the roadside or designated collection point and there is unrestricted access on the collection day.

Waste must not be compacted in the bin to prevent waste getting stuck when being tipped. Excessively heavy bins will not be emptied.

The Council may change a collection point in the following circumstances:

- Road surfaces present an unacceptable risk to the property.
- Collection vehicles cannot access the property safely.
- Presenting the containers is no longer safe for the resident.
- Any other reason relating to the safety and efficiency of the service.

The Council will inform residents of changes to collection days and times, such as during public holidays through one or more media outlets, including the Council website, social media and/or *The Orcadian* newspaper.

Alternative Collection Method

In households using the Alternative Collection Method, no more than three bags should be presented for collection at any one time. The red bags must be presented in a tidy manner at the same collection point as wheeled bins. The red bags must be securely tied and only contain residual (non-recyclable) waste.

Excess waste

All waste and recycling must be presented in containers and bags provided by the Council. Excess residual waste and recycling that is presented outside of a container will not be collected. No more than three red bags will be collected from any household that qualifies for Alternative Collection.

Any excess waste or recycling that households have can be taken to one of the Household Waste and Recycling Centres or arranged to be collected as a special collection, available at cost through the Council's Customer Services.

Missed collections

The Council will endeavour to empty bins on the designated collection day.

Where collection is delayed due to unforeseen circumstances (for example, severe weather or a vehicle breakdown), the Council will communicate this through the Council's social media and advise when the collection will take place.

Where a collection is missed in error and this is reported by a resident through an online form or by phoning Customer Services, the Council will make reasonable efforts to return and empty the bin. Missed collections must be reported no later than two working days after the missed collection.

Where the Council cannot return to collect a missed collection, residents should take their containers in and present them on the next available designated collection day.

Alternatively, residents can take their waste and/or recycling to the Household Waste and Recycling Centres.

Collection crews will not return to empty containers in the following circumstances:

- If the collection crews record that the container has not been presented at the time of collection. The container must be presented on the next available designated collection day. Dashcam footage is used to verify if the container was presented in time for collection.
- If the collection crews report that a recycling container is contaminated. The bin will be tagged to advise the resident. The contamination must be removed by residents. The container must be presented on the next available designated collection day.
- If a resident presents the wrong recycling material. The bin will be tagged to advise the resident. The container must be presented on the next available designated collection day.
- If the collection crews report that a bin is damaged. The bin will be tagged to advise the resident which part of the bin is broken. Residents must order a replacement bin as soon as possible from Customer Services. The broken bin and its contents will be taken away when the replacement bin is delivered.
- If excess waste presented outside of a container was not collected.

Contamination

Recycling containers are provided for the collection of the materials specified in Table 1.

Recycling containers that contain materials other than those listed in Table 1 will not be collected and the bin will be tagged by the crews. When a container is tagged, residents must remove these materials and present the recycling container on the next designated collection day or take the material to the nearest Household Waste and Recycling Centre.

If it is found that recycling containers continue to be contaminated and the Council has made every effort to educate and assist residents at the property, the Council reserves the right to remove recycling containers without notice.

An officer from the Council's Waste Team will arrange to meet with the household to discuss the options for re-introducing the recycling collection.

If a household has had recycling bins removed owing to ongoing contamination issues, that household cannot apply for additional capacity.

Assisted collection service

The assisted collection service is provided for households where there is no one living at the property who is able to present bins for collection. The service is available to residents receiving Alternate Weekly Collection only.

Assisted collection service can be requested by filling in an application form which must be completed in full and returned to the Council. The application form can be obtained from Customer Services or on the [Council's website](#).

An assessment will be carried out as part of the application process to establish a collection point accessible to the resident and to the collection crews. A Council Officer may need to contact the resident or visit the property to aid the assessment process and to consider the health and safety risks.

Where assisted collection service is agreed, the crews will collect bins from the collection point and return them to this point after collection.

The collection point must be as close to the highway as is practicably possible and accessible to collection vehicles. The maximum distance from the collection point to where the collection vehicle can safely stop is 20 metres. Collection points must not present any hazard for collection crews (such as rough surfaces, steps or inadequate lighting).

Collection crews will not collect bins from people's homes or property such as outbuildings or sheds.

Other Council household waste collection policies apply to assisted collections.

Assisted collections are periodically reviewed by the Council with letters sent to all residents who have previously qualified for the service.

If a resident in receipt of assisted waste collection service moves elsewhere in Orkney, they must inform the Council straight away, so that the service can be applied at their new address and the old one removed from the list.

The Council will assess each application for Assisted Collection and reserves the right to decline an application if a suitable collection point cannot be established, or if the provision of the Assisted Collection leads to significant operational difficulties or unreasonable expense for the Council.

If at any time the Council has a reason to believe that the resident no longer meets the criteria for the assisted collection service, the resident may be asked to re-apply and for a re-assessment to be undertaken.

Household bulky waste service

A bulky waste collection service is provided for items that are too bulky for the household kerbside collections. It is available for household waste only and can be booked by filling in a request form on the [Council's website](#) or by contacting Customer Services.

Bulky uplift charges will be set annually and published on the [Council's website](#).

Bulky items comprise items you take with you when you move to a new house, to differentiate from what may reasonably be considered trade waste rather than household waste.

Items must be able to be safely lifted by 2 people or the item will not be taken. Items must be presented at the usual collection point by 08:00 on the day of collection.

Only items that are on the request form will be collected. A list of items that can and cannot be accepted are available on the [Council's website](#).

Bulky waste collection service is for domestic waste only. Commercial waste of any kind will not be collected.

Notified or published collection date/time is issued as a guide only as the actual collection can be affected by weather or other operational issues. In the event of any delay, the applicant should seek clarification by contacting Customer Services.

Hazardous materials and special waste

Examples of hazardous or termed in Scotland, 'Special' Waste, include:

- Asbestos.
- Chemicals, for example brake fluid and printer toner.
- Electrical equipment with potentially harmful components such as cathode ray tubes – for example computer monitors and televisions.
- Fluorescent light tubes and energy-saving light bulbs.
- Vehicle batteries and other lead-acid batteries.
- Oils (except edible oils), for example engine oil.
- Refrigerators containing ozone-depleting substances solvents.
- Pesticides.

These waste types cannot be disposed of in a household bin but can be disposed of through the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres. A full list of suitable disposal locations for each material is available on the [Council's website](#).

Larger quantities of liquid hazardous waste (typically above 25 litres) are treated as commercial waste and must be disposed of via a suitable qualified commercial waste haulier.



ORKNEY
ISLANDS COUNCIL

Trees and Woodland Strategy 2026 - 2036

April 2026



**ORKNEY
ISLANDS
COUNCIL**
Development &
Marine Planning

Overview

The purpose of the Orkney Trees and Woodland Strategy is to support and inform the spatial strategy of the new Local Development Plan by setting out the vision, policies and plans for the future of woodland and trees in Orkney. Forest and woodland strategies are a requirement under section A159 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 (the Act) section 53, and Policy 6, Forestry, woodland and trees, of Scotland's National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). Forest and woodland strategies will contribute to the delivery of Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029.

The statutory and policy contexts means that the main audience are those involved in built development and the planning system. The Strategy is also relevant to anyone who wants to plant trees and will outline planning consideration, planting opportunities, constraints and potential funding opportunities.

As there are no large forests in Orkney, the Strategy has been named the Trees and Woodland Strategy, however it still meets the requirements of the Act. In this Strategy, the terms 'tree' and 'trees' are used as shorthand for 'trees and shrubs' and 'woodland and scrub'. This is because woodland and scrub are important contributors to woodland type habitat in Orkney, often around built development and in urban and rural locations. Trees may also form 'hedges', due to their stunted growth, or small 'woodlands'.

The Trees and Woodland Strategy sets out a clear vision, providing high level encouragement for how planting around Orkney can contribute to mitigating the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, while bringing multiple benefits to people, such as landscape enhancement, amenity and recreational opportunities; small-scale planting is an important aspect of the Orkney context. The three themes in section 3 are based on the core principles of protecting, enhancing and creating resiliency, which are set within the Act.

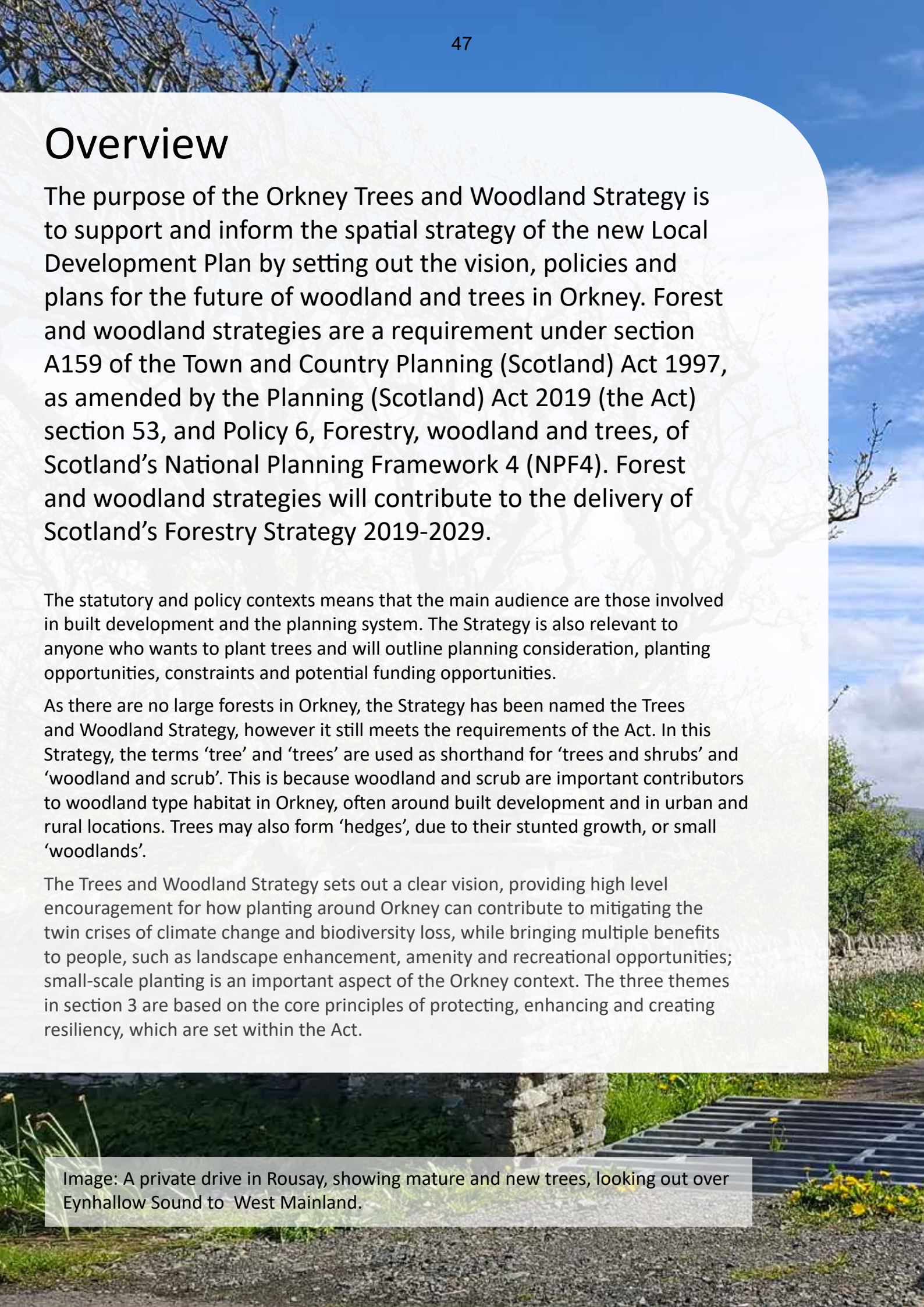
A photograph of a gravel driveway in Rousay, Orkney. The driveway is bordered by a stone wall on the left and a metal grate on the right. In the background, there are mature trees and a view of Eynhallow Sound and West Mainland under a blue sky with light clouds.

Image: A private drive in Rousay, showing mature and new trees, looking out over Eynhallow Sound to West Mainland.

Vision

To protect, enhance and support new trees, woodlands and hedges in Orkney, that are resilient and contribute to tackling the effects of climate change, provide diverse and functional habitats that support wildlife, complement land uses and are valued and enjoyed by people.



Protect



Enhance



Resilient

The following contexts give an understanding as to how Orkney's small-scale planting is relevant within National and policy contexts and the various ways in which more trees can be realised through the development planning process and from community and private planting schemes.



Image: Core path K14, route along Wideford Burn, showing mixed planting on the riparian corridor.

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1: Context

Image: View from core path H2, to the Old Man of Hoy, the ancient native woodland at Berriedale and other planting can be viewed around Rackwick, in the north-west corner of Hoy, which boasts high hills and dramatic coastal cliffs.

1.1 Statutory Context

1.1.1 Section A159 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by section 53 of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019), places a requirement on planning authorities to prepare a forestry and woodland strategy to:

- Identify woodlands of high conservation value in the planning authority's area and
- Set out the planning authority's policies and proposals in their area to develop woodlands and protect and enhance woodlands.
- Outline the resilience to climate change of woodlands and
- Expand woodlands to provide multiple benefits to people, the environment and the economy.

1.2 National Policy

1.2.1 National Planning Framework 4, Policy 6, Forestry, woodland and trees, lays out the policy intent, policy outcomes and guidance for local development plans and development proposals in relation to ancient woodlands, ancient and veteran trees, native woodlands, hedgerows and individual trees of high biodiversity value.

1.2.2 Policy 6 sits within a suite of policies within the sustainable places spatial principle; sustainable places are where we reduce emissions, restore and better connect biodiversity. This group of policies is driven by the need to tackle the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss; trees and woodlands can contribute to the mitigation of the twin crises through carbon sequestration and biodiversity enhancement. Furthermore, trees can form part of solutions for heat and cooling, blue and green infrastructure, flood risk and water management and recreation.

1.2.3 The policy connections for Policy 6 extend beyond natural environments into the built environment because trees contribute to the settings, design and quality of historic, existing and new places. Therefore, Policy 6 connects to policies within the Liveable Places policy family, in NPF4, and outlines the guidelines for supporting development in relation to trees and woodlands.

NPF4 Policy 6 on forestry, woodland and trees

- a. Development proposals that enhance, expand and improve woodland and tree cover will be supported.
- b. Development proposals will not be supported where they will result in:
 - i. Any loss of ancient woodlands, ancient and veteran trees, or adverse impact on their ecological condition;
 - ii. Adverse impacts on native woodlands, hedgerows and individual trees of high biodiversity value, or identified for protection in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy;
 - iii. Fragmenting or severing woodland habitats, unless appropriate mitigation measures are identified and implemented in line with the mitigation hierarchy;
 - iv. Conflict with Restocking Direction, Remedial Notice or Registered Notice to Comply issued by Scottish Forestry.
- c. Development proposals involving woodland removal will only be supported where they will achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits in accordance with relevant Scottish Government policy on woodland removal. Where woodland is removed, compensatory planting will most likely be expected to be delivered.
- d. Development proposals on sites which include an area of existing woodland or land identified in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy as being suitable for woodland creation will only be supported where the enhancement and improvement of woodlands and the planting of new trees on the site (in accordance with the Forestry and Woodland Strategy) are integrated into the design.

NPF4 Policy Connections

- Policy 2: Climate mitigation and adaptation – woodland creation contributes to carbon sequestration and climate adaptation options.
- Policy 3: Biodiversity – woodland habitats have high biodiversity value.
- Policy 4: Natural places – woodland habitats support Nature Networks.
- Policy 14: Design, quality and place – trees and woodlands can help address four of the six NPF4 qualities of successful places – Healthy, Pleasant, Distinctive and Sustainable.
- Policy 15: Local living and 20-minute neighbourhoods – trees and woodlands in settlements can support a range of activities, for example, sports, leisure, arts, culture and education.
- Policy 20: Blue and green infrastructure – trees and woodlands are an important component of green infrastructure.
- Policy 21: Play, recreation and sport – trees and woodlands contribute to outdoor play and sports.
- Policy 22: Flood risk and water management – trees and woodlands can help manage flood risk and water quality.

1.3 National Strategy

1.3.1 **Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029** and **Scotland's Third Land Use Strategy 2021-2026**, have similar themes and objectives, particularly in relation to safeguarding existing resource, increasing the number of trees and recognition of the public health and well-being benefits of trees and woodlands.

1.3.2 The relevant strategic drivers in Scotland's Forestry Strategy include:

- Climate change mitigation – trees and woodlands are one natural solution that can contribute to CO₂ being removed from the atmosphere;
- Adaptation and resilience – trees and woodlands can help us adapt to climate change by, for example, providing natural flood management and shelter for livestock;
- Integrated land use – woodlands do not exist in a vacuum, trees must fit in with other rural activities such as farming, nature conservation and recreation;
- Skills and workforce – address the skills development requirements for tree and woodland planting and management;
- Natural assets, environmental quality and biodiversity – trees and woodlands support the delivery of biodiversity;
- Landscape quality and the historic environment – trees and woodlands can be a positive addition in some areas;
- Health and well-being – trees and woodlands can contribute to people's wellbeing along with other types of green space.

1.3.3 Woodland creation is far from simple, with suitability dependant on a number of social, ecological and economic factors. The social benefits of woodlands, although hard to measure, can include improvements in physical and mental health. Diversity and local distinctiveness are important for maintaining and enhancing the rich range of woodland habitats and species that exist in Scotland and the Islands and recognising that different species will suit different areas.

1.3.4 By encouraging provision of additional habitat, featuring trees, which increases the amount of carbon sinks, the Orkney Trees and Woodland Strategy will also contribute to the delivery of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045, and Scotland’s Climate Change Plan 2026-2040.

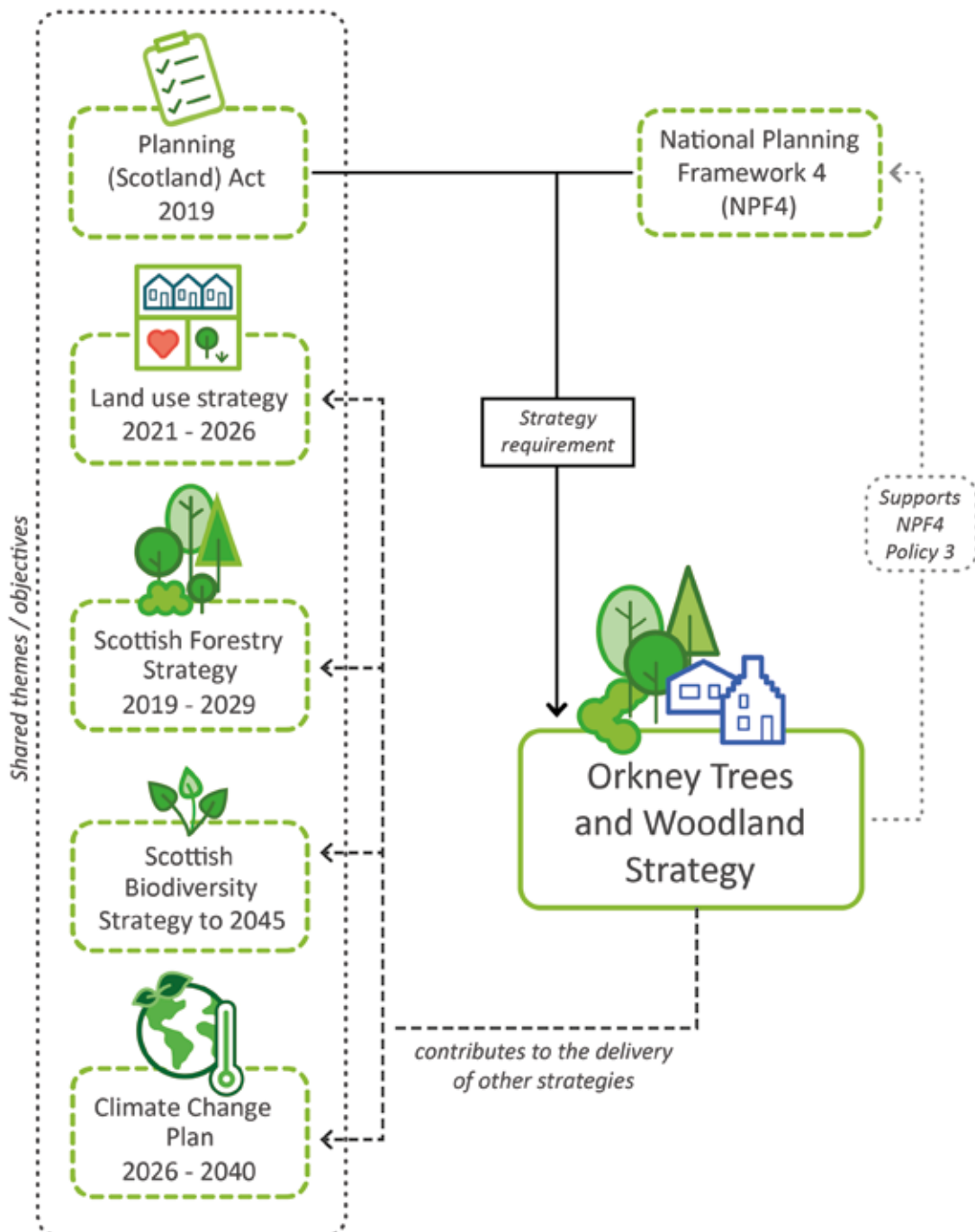


Figure 1: Diagram showing Policy and Strategy Documents.

1.4 Orkney's Climate and Land Use

1.4.1 Orkney's landscape has been shaped by the climatic conditions and the marine environment. The climate is hyper-oceanic, which results in a cool and moist equitable climate, exposed to the severity of the Atlantic weather systems and salt-laden winds. Gales occur, on average, 29 days a year; the windiest months occurring between October and March. Atlantic depressions bring strong winds, which are unimpeded as they cross the sea, so they can reach high velocities and carry salt spray.

1.4.2 Salt carried from the sea means that salt-resistant plants are more likely to survive in Orkney. The amount of salt concentrated in the air should deplete as you move further from the coastal regions where salt spray from wave-action is also present. The effects of the wind are most clearly displayed in the growth habits of many trees and woodlands in Orkney, which can result in woodlands maintaining a scrub habitat in more exposed areas. While in leaf the salt winds often 'burn' the foliage, resulting in foliage turning brown and shrivelling before autumn. Funnelling winds can also bend trees into a characteristic wedge shape. Careful planning of tree planting can mitigate these challenges and have helped trees, shelter belts and smaller woodlands to establish.

1.4.3 Land use in Orkney is predominantly agricultural, with the agricultural land area amounting to 92,932 hectares, equivalent to 94% of land use. Farmland is mainly grassland, mostly enclosed pasture, with beef cattle being the largest livestock group. Farmland overlaps with Orkney's many national and internationally important areas for nature conservation (56 protected areas), locally important nature reserves (250 conservation sites) and the National Scenic Area of Hoy and West Mainland.

1.4.4 In Orkney designated areas for nature conservation include peat soils. Peat is a significant feature in some upland areas in Eday, Hoy and Rousay, and hills in Evie, Rendall and Orphir in the Mainland. There is also basin and valley peat, and when restored or in good condition, peatland can offer important potential as carbon sinks. Any site-specific assessments for tree planting will include consideration of designations and existing landscape and biodiversity value and national guidance regarding tree planting on peatland.

1.4.5 Orkney also has extensive designated cultural and heritage sites (one World Heritage Site, 373 Scheduled Monuments). Also within the built environment are 6 Conservation Areas and 3 Gardens and Designed Landscapes, these sites house woodlands or specimen trees. Settlements, farm steadings, housing groups, single houses and infrastructure, such as roads and harbours, cover a lesser percentage of land in Orkney.



Image: Whitebeam growing in a characteristic shrub shape by Bay of Firth.

1.5 Orkney's Existing Trees and Woodland

1.5.1 Despite the factors noted, trees played a significant role in Orkney in the past and continue to do so today. Archaeological investigations indicate that Neolithic Orkney used to have a significant number of woodlands. Clearance of native woodlands, combined with the introduction of livestock grazing and changing climatic conditions, are likely to have caused the depletion of almost all of the native woodlands in Orkney. Some native woodland remains on the east and north-west of Hoy and areas of native willow carr survive on the West Mainland. Some tree species take longer to grow and are often smaller in height and girth but where trees, hedges and woodlands are present, they can provide important environmental and cultural benefits to Orkney. Commercial forestry is not regarded as currently viable in Orkney due to Orkney's weather, soil types, existing biodiversity and historic features. This context could change in the future.

1.5.2 Orkney's weather, soil types, existing biodiversity and historic features, also mean that in order for trees to thrive it is important to get the right tree in the right location. While recognising the challenges of tree planting, there is a role for new tree planting in Orkney that this Strategy seeks to support.

1.5.3 For some years the Council has been part of the Orkney Woodland Group (OWG), whose members include representatives from NatureScot, RSPB, Orkney Field Club and the Council. This Group works to promote appropriate tree planting schemes and gain funding; this joint working will continue.



Image: Tankerness House - Kirkwall Museum, Kirkwall. The gardens of Tankerness House provide a unique town centre space for locals and visitors to enjoy.

1.5.4 Orkney has a number of native woodlands identified in the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland; existing areas of native woodland should be retained and enhanced where appropriate. However, because the native woodlands in Orkney are very small and do not show up very well on an Orkney wide map, it is better to view the data directly via the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland mapping on SE Web <https://map.environment.gov.scot/sewebmap/?layers=nativeWoodlandSurveyForScotland>.

1.5.5 Much of the planting of native woodlands in Orkney, from 1998-2025, was facilitated through the Orkney Woodland Project, and grant aided either by Woodland Trust for Scotland or Scottish Forestry (see Appendix 2). Around 300 new small-scale woodlands were planted on private land, amounting to over 150 hectares in total. These small woodlands are not all shown on the Native Woodland Survey for Scotland because they may be too small to be picked up.

1.5.6 There are no specific targets set out, the Strategy seeks to encourage and promote the value of tree and woodland planting in appropriate locations, acknowledging that most of these opportunities are likely to be smaller scale planting proposals that will emerge over time, creating an incremental increase in the number of trees and woodlands.

1.5.7 Although not currently mapped; non-native trees are important for the services they provide to nature, climate change and people. Such trees and woodland should be retained and enhanced where appropriate. Many non-native trees and woodlands are found in other locations throughout Orkney, including in gardens, within open spaces in towns and villages, along path networks and scattered throughout rural areas. It is important to protect what Orkney already has because recreating their value is challenging and takes a long time in the Orkney climate.

1.5.8 Within settlements, trees thrive and contribute positively to the setting and amenity of urban locations. Sycamore, for example, thrives in the more sheltered areas in towns and villages, growing to a significant size. Enhancement of the existing tree and woodland resource can happen through the



Image: Tree planting providing shelter around private residence in Tankerness

development process. The Settlement Statements, that will form part of our next Local Development Plan, will map green infrastructure that will include the location of existing trees and woodland and will look to expand these areas to promote and increase green infrastructure that will include tree planting and contribute to Nature Networks.

1.5.9 Within Orkney there are notable trees and woodland that are culturally and socially important, as well as having a conservation value.

Examples of valued trees in Orkney include:



The large mature trees seen in views in and around settlements such as Kirkwall, Stromness, Finstown and St Margaret's Hope, where they contribute to the character of the settlement.



Veteran trees and woodlands of historic and cultural interest, for example, the Big Tree and Gorie's Oak in Kirkwall, Happy Valley near Stenness, Binscarth policy woodland by Finstown, Trumland policy woodland in Rousay, and woodland at Carrick House in Eday planted in the 1830s by Samuel Laing.



The contribution trees make to the setting of villages such as Norseman and Evie, as well as, patches of woodlands/groups of trees and hedges scattered throughout Orkney that provide shelter to gardens and farmland.



Ancient native woodland of particular species lineage importance at Berriedale on Hoy, the most northerly native woodland in Britain. Other areas of native woodland can be found at Lyrawa and Pegal, also on Hoy and areas of native willow carr, for example, Durkadale carr near Loch of Boardhouse, Caldale carr near Finstown and Loch of Kirbister west of Kirkwall.



Wooded areas and path networks used by the public for recreation, for example, Olav's Wood in South Ronaldsay, Arcadia Community Park, The Willows and Muddisdale, all in Kirkwall, and the playgrounds in St. Margaret's Hope and Stromness, and Happy Valley near Stenness.

1.6 Orkney's Sensitive Designations

1.6.1 Orkney has significant designations for natural heritage, cultural heritage and landscape that could be considered as sensitive locations for significant tree planting. Sensitivities that require consideration include but are not limited to: archaeology, biodiversity (including protected species and areas protected for nature conservation or otherwise important for nature), soils (especially peatland), water environment, landscape character (in particular how proposals fit within the open landscape of Orkney and, if relevant, effects on the special qualities of the Hoy and West Mainland National Scenic Area), the World Heritage Area and its landscape setting and existing and neighbouring land uses. An understanding of exposure and local topographical effects on exposure is also essential. The location of these sensitivities can be viewed through the Local Development Plan. Orkney Islands Council are currently reviewing the Local Development Plan <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/development-planning-land/orkney-local-development-plan/>



Image: Berridale Native Woodland on Hoy, the most northerly native woodland in Britain, sits within the National and Scenic Area of Hoy and West Mainland. Photo by Jenny Taylor



Image: View of the Orphir and Stenness Hills SSSI from Orphir Bay, core path WM2.



2: Benefits

Image: View across Trumland House and policy woodland and newer planting, Rousay. Trumland House and Binscarth House, and their policy woodlands, were designed by David Bryce in the 1870's.

Trees and woodlands provide key landscape features that help connect people to places, in relation to both cultural and natural history. They also provide shelter from the elements for people and habitat for the natural environment; in the countryside, they can provide shelter for livestock and crops. With the changing climate, trees can assist in moderating flooding by slowing water flows and reducing soil erosion. They also remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere as they grow and establish. The benefits of trees and woodlands are categorised below; these benefits are interconnected and the services trees provide are multi-layered.

2.1 For People

2.1.1 Trees and green spaces provide opportunities for people to be in nature, which has health and well-being benefits. Trees and hedges added to existing development or incorporated into the layout and design of new development can also enhance the character, setting and amenity of the development, helping to create a sense of place. For example, hedges and trees can be used to define boundaries, and focal points and areas of visual interest can be created using specimen trees and areas of shrub planting. Clusters of trees and hedges can also offer shelter from the elements in exposed open areas used by people.

2.1.2 Trees, shrubs and scrub can be found around many farms and houses, either planted to form wind breaks or making use of buildings as shelter to aid growth. More significant areas of woodlands and clusters of trees can also be found in more sheltered locations and associated with larger historic estate houses, such as Binscarth, Firth and Balfour Castle, Shapinsay. Such Woodland trees and scrub woodland contribute to the landscape character of Orkney, providing features, variety and interest.



Image: Tree-lined route on the Gyre Circular Core Path. Photo by David Mager.



2.2 For Climate Change

2.2.1 Trees absorb carbon dioxide from the air, locking it into their wood. Carbon is stored in the trunk, branches, leaves and roots, and continues to be stored in leaf litter and deadwood, transferring carbon into the soil when they decompose. By removing carbon from the air, trees play an important role in helping tackle emissions that contribute to climate change. Therefore, small-scale planting in Orkney, can provide dispersed carbon sinks. However, it is important to have trees in the right place – planting trees on certain peatlands (especially deep peatland >50cm), for example, would not be appropriate, as it can cause carbon to be released from the peat. See Appendix 2 for more detailed information.

2.2.2 Trees can build resilience to climate change by providing shelter from changing weather patterns. They can do this by providing shade for people, animals and buildings, and their evapotranspiration, which is like sweating, releases water vapour into the atmosphere and cools the air.

2.2.3 Trees also have the potential to moderate flood water and reduce soil erosion. They do this by intercepting rain and slowing its descent to the ground. Tree root systems improve soil, thereby increasing its capacity to absorb water, which reduces surface water runoff and the risk of flooding.



Image: new house retaining existing trees, St. Ola.

2.3 – For Agriculture

2.3.1 Trees and hedges can provide shelter for livestock and crops, acting as windbreaks, trees and hedges can reduce wind speeds by over 50%, therefore reducing the risk of damage. Using trees and hedges as part of farm management options can increase water filtration rates, which helps to reduce soil and water movement.

2.3.2 Trees and hedges can also enhance biodiversity on farms by providing food and protection for wildlife. In conjunction with their carbon capture ability, trees and hedges should contribute positively to farm carbon audits and Whole Farm Plans.

2.3.3 Small-scale tree and shrub planting is supported within the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS), the scheme promotes land management practices which protect and enhance natural heritage, improve water quality, manage flood risk and help to mitigate and adapt to climate change.



Image: beef cattle have shelter and shade from a 1km of hawthorn and downy birch along the old Seatter Path track (core path K10).



2.4 – For Nature

2.4.1 Trees provide for a diverse range of species with food, shelter and places to live, therefore, making a positive contribution to tackling the nature crisis. It is not just the trees themselves that are important, but the associated species that rely on them both within the soil, above ground and over freshwater habitats. For example, fungi and invertebrates such as earthworms that live underground and fungi and larva that live on dead trees and lying dead wood and lichens and mosses that live on the surface of trees. Trees provide further shelter for wildlife, such as breeding and roosting birds, protecting them from the weather. As noted above in the climate change section, when trees shade freshwater water habitats, keeping water temperatures cool, this benefits aquatic species.

2.4.2 Existing woodlands, trees and hedges contribute to Orkney’s nature networks that can, where appropriate, incorporate water bodies and water courses. Nature networks provide links between areas important for biodiversity, to enable wildlife to move between areas for dispersal, migration and recolonisation, using habitat corridors and stepping stone patches of habitat.

2.4.3 It is important to note that some of Orkney’s biodiversity and natural heritage features benefit from locations away from trees and woodland such as Orkney’s wading birds in wetland and coastal locations, Orkney voles in uncultivated grassland and botanically species rich areas, like heaths and moorlands. This is why this strategy advocates the right tree in the right place.



Image: Small woodland showing lichen and moss on the trees and different field layers below them, offering varying habitats for nature. Core path WM2, Gyre Circular, by Orphir House and Gyre Cottage, Orphir.

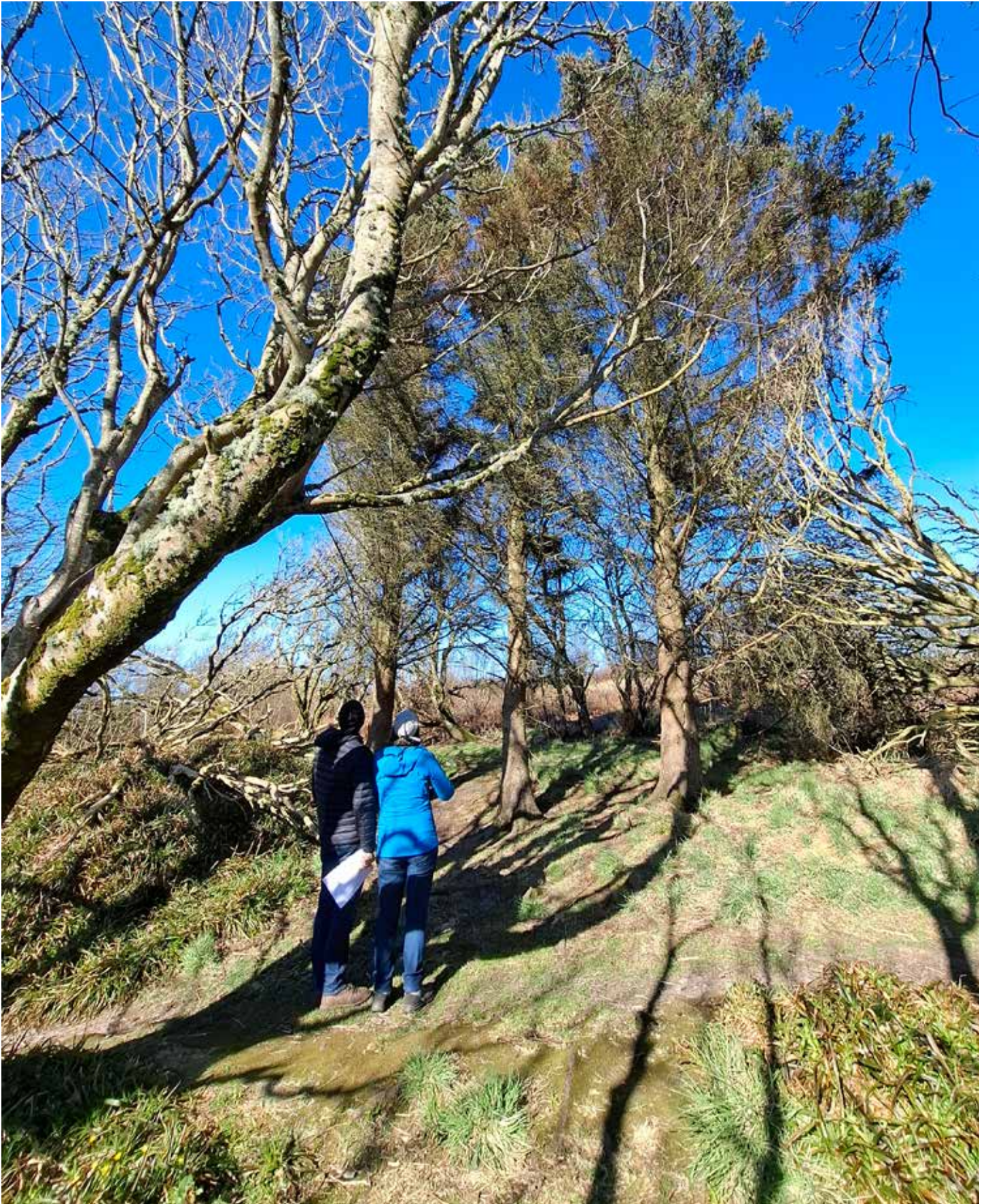


Image: Local Nature Reserve, Happy Valley near Stenness, offers recreational walks in all seasons; a place where people can enjoy nature in mature and newer mixed woodland.

3: Themes: Protecting, Enhancing and Resilient

Image: Vias Moss in Dounby is a tree group of mixed species, including downy birch, elm, aspen, white beam and ash.

3.1 Design led management

3.1.1 The Strategy's three themes are based on the core principles of protecting, enhancing and creating resiliency, which are set within the Act. For each theme there are actions that the Council will work towards alongside partners from interest groups and community groups.

3.1.2 One of the areas that the core principles of protecting, enhancing and creating resiliency can be achieved is through the statutory planning process. All planning applications are expected to take a design-led approach to development in line with NPF4 Policy 6 (see introduction s1.2). The Mitigation Hierarchy must be used in a design-led approach (see below), so that removal and adverse effects on existing trees, woodlands, and hedges are avoided in the first instance.

3.1.3 The design led Mitigation Hierarchy, shown below, is an established environmental planning tool that gives a structured approach to minimise environmental harm during development, for example to trees. It works by avoiding impacts, minimising impacts and lastly restoring or offsetting biodiversity loss.

3.1.5 Through this hierarchy, adverse effects will be minimised, for example, through careful siting of infrastructure and built development and through construction methods that avoid root protection areas, which can vary per species. The first two stages of the mitigation hierarchy should be followed before any residual effects are mitigated, for example, through comparable or better provision of trees or woodlands.

3.1.6 Where mitigation is required, it should be delivered on the proposed development site or, if it is not possible, off-site delivery maybe required. Ideally, these matters will be directly addressed through planning conditions for new development proposals. Mitigation measures should be the equivalent to the trees and woodland proposed to be lost. Replacement of lost trees and woodland does not satisfy biodiversity enhancement requirements on development sites, which is a requirement under Policy

3, Biodiversity, in NPF4. Biodiversity enhancements require additional building and strengthening of nature networks and the integration of nature-based solutions.

3.1.7 All new tree and woodland planting and any work to existing trees and woodland should be completed in line with ‘Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations’ (BS 5837:2012). This is a good practice guide for tree retention or new planting in the design and construction phases of development.

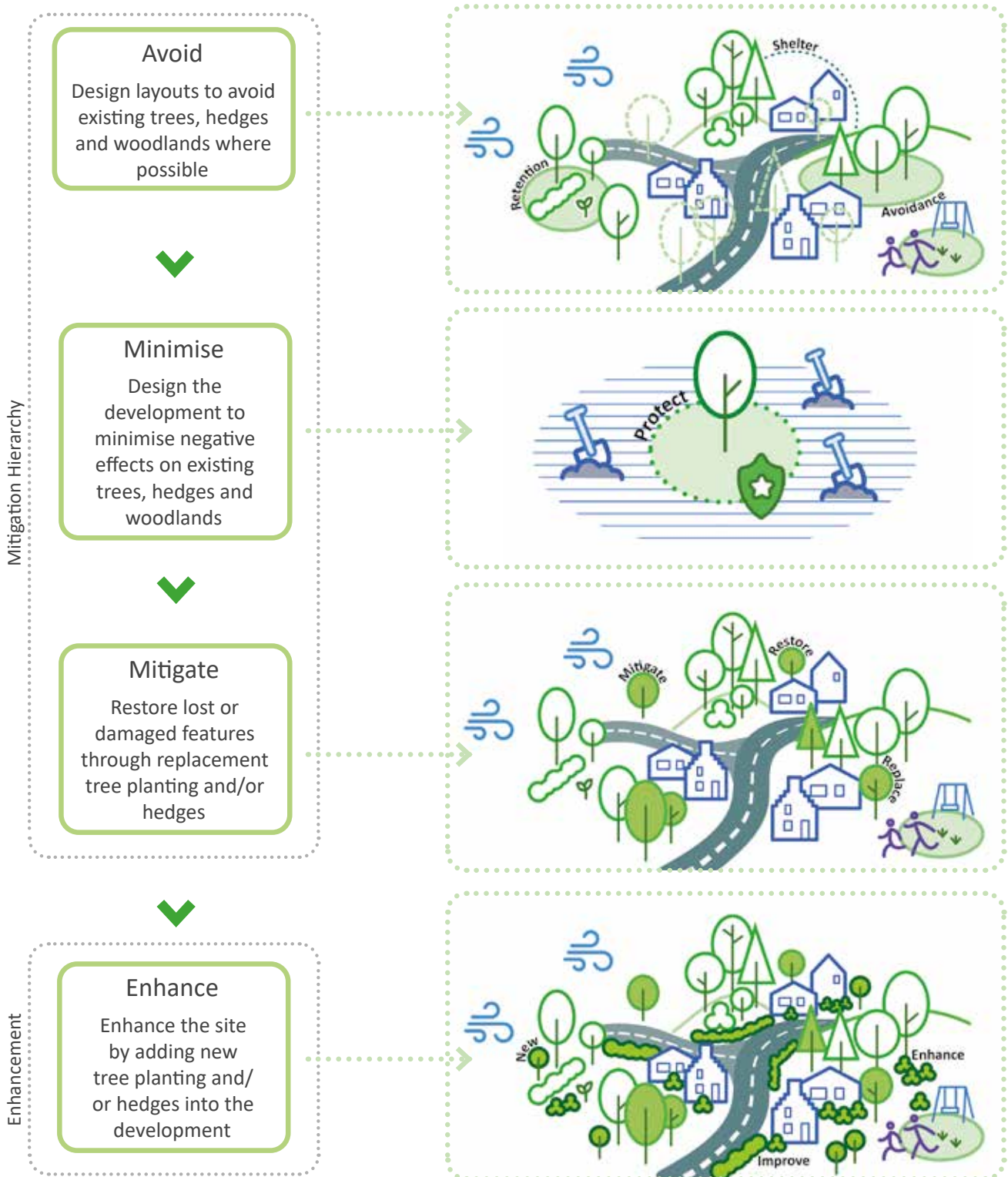
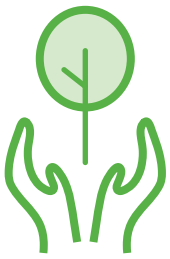


Figure 2: Design led Mitigation Hierarchy, also showing where enhancement fits in the process.

3.2 Protecting: existing trees and woodland



3.2.1 This Strategy aims to protect existing trees and woodlands in Orkney. Some trees in Orkney have specific protection, through Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) that may have groups or individual trees mapped for that specific TPO. Trees are also protected under Scottish planning law if they are within a Conservation Area or by a condition of a previous planning permission. It is the landowner/manager's responsibility to check whether a tree or trees are protected and to gain the necessary permission before undertaking any works.



Conservation Areas

Trees within a Conservation Area are protected where they provide an important contribution to the character and amenity of the area. Conservation Areas are areas of special architectural or historical interest with a character or appearance that is desirable to preserve or enhance, which trees often contribute to. In Orkney there are six Conservation Areas, four on the mainland (in Kirkwall, Stromness, St Margaret's Hope, Brodgar), Eynhallow (off the south coast of Rousay) and Balfour village in Shapinsay. Information about Conservation Areas in Orkney can be found on the council website. Six weeks prior notice must be given to the Planning Authority OIC of the intention to carry out works affecting a tree or trees within a Conservation Area. The law relating to Conservation Areas and trees within them is Part II of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. Planning circular 1 (2011) provides information on what work requires permission from the Planning Authority OIC.



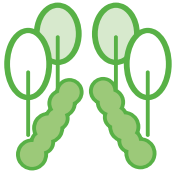
Tree Preservation Orders

TPOs are a means of protecting individual trees, groups of trees or woodlands, where the removal of or damage to those trees could have an adverse effect on the public amenity of an area. TPOs are made by the Planning Authority and form a legal constraint permanently attached to the title of the land where the trees are located. Prior consent is required from the Planning Authority for any works affecting TPO trees. Information about the law for TPOs can be found in the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation Order and Trees in Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Regulations 2010. Further information on TPOs is on the Council website.



Previous Planning Conditions

Some trees may be protected by way of a planning condition of a previous planning permission, for example to safeguard existing trees as part of biodiversity measures to meet the requirements of NPF4 Policy 3. Information on previous planning permissions can be found by searching planning applications by address or using the map function.



Gardens and Designed Landscapes

The Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland does not confer specific statutory protection for trees, however, protection of these landscapes is a material consideration in the Scottish planning system. In line with NPF4, Policy 6 – Forestry, Woodland and Trees; trees and woodland have protection because of their value to climate resilience, natural environment, cultural heritage and for their amenity value that include shelter. Orkney has three sites in the Gardens and Designed Landscapes inventory: Melsetter House in Hoy, Balfour Castle in Shapinsay, and Skail House in the West Mainland.

3.2.2 When trees or woodland form part of a planning application site, the planning application will require a survey of the trees and woodland and a statement on how they will be protected during the construction phase of the development and incorporated within the final development proposal (see Appendix 1 for more information).

3.2.3 Other trees and woodlands in Orkney are cared for by community groups or individuals, although they do not have a legal status, they are important to people because of the value they bring for health and wellbeing, biodiversity, amenity and shelter.

Action framework for protecting



Promote protection of existing trees and woodlands through the Local Development Plan process by creation of positive and effective policies for design led solutions.



Protect existing trees and woodlands in appropriate urban and rural settings, through relevant statutory duties, including reviewing existing TPOs and conservation areas as resources allow.



Increase understanding of the extent of existing woodlands through digitisation of known tree groups and woodlands in partnership with WTS.

3.3 Enhancing: Increasing and expanding trees and woodland



3.3.1 Trees, woodlands and hedges provide many benefits to people and the environment therefore, increasing the amount of trees, woodlands and hedges is beneficial to Orkney.

3.3.2 Through the review of the Local Development Plan, Settlement Statements will map existing green infrastructure; that includes existing trees and woodland groups. This mapping will also indicate locations where new tree and woodland planting will thrive and be encouraged.

3.3.3 For all appropriate planning applications, as part of Biodiversity Enhancement requirements, applicants will be encouraged to incorporate tree and hedge planting to enhance new development as noted in this Strategy. For some developments trees and hedge planting will be dependant on locational and climatic conditions and the type of development proposed, such as the change of use of a building with little or no outside space provision. Trees can be planted as part of biodiversity enhancement requirements; these are found in NPF4 Policy 3. The main focus is to strengthen nature networks and integrate nature-based solutions.

3.3.4 Enhancement of woodlands can be achieved by individuals through community planting schemes, and private planting on their own land, working with relevant partners in the Orkney Woodland Group, Woodland Trust for Scotland and Scottish Forestry.

3.3.5 For the majority of tree and woodland enhancement proposals a site-specific assessment will be required to identify the most suitable areas for planting and the species most appropriate. This will be required for planning permission and for funding applications. Sensitivities are noted in the earlier sections of this Strategy and summarised in section 1. Optimum sites for planting have deep, rich soil as well as good shelter from strong salt winds. Useful sources of information to help with site specific assessment are provided at the end of the Strategy. Detailed formal assessment through an Environmental Impact Assessment may also be required for proposals meeting the criteria set out in the Forestry (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.



3.3.6 Some sites may be suitable for native species for new and replacement (compensatory) planting, as native species are considered to have evolved with and adapted alongside native wildlife, providing greater benefits compared with non-native tree species. However, it is recognised that in some locations and circumstances, non-native species may be better able to achieve the desired outcome. For example, within settlements that require a specimen tree as a landscaping feature, or evergreen shrubs for year-round privacy and screening purposes. In such situations, the non-native species must be known to survive Orkney conditions.

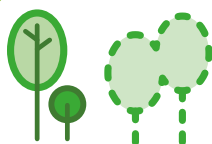
Image: Trees within the Finstown TPO, providing benefit to the settlement setting.

3.3.7 The Orkney Woodland Project A Woodland Design Guide contains information about native and other species known to survive Orkney conditions; as well as guidance on integrating woodland into the Orkney landscape. In all situations, invasive non-native species listed in Annex B of the NatureScot guidance on Developing with nature must not be planted. <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/media/p5jfazi4/woodland-design-guide.pdf>

Action framework for enhancing



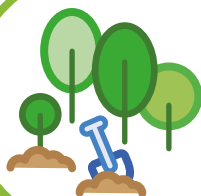
Continue to promote enhancement of trees and woodlands through the planning processes of the Local Development Plan by way of positive and effective policy and the determination of planning applications.



Outline potential areas for tree planting by enhancing existing tree groups or new planting in settlement statements.



Continue to enhance trees and woodlands through the development planning process by ensuring the designed mechanism is put into action for any development having the potential for planting more trees to enhance biodiversity and/or add to the setting of a building or building group.

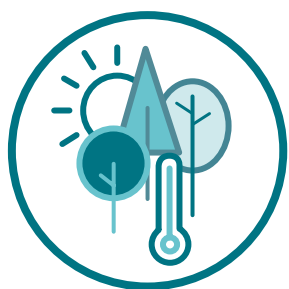


Support individuals and community groups to plant trees and small-scale woodlands in appropriate places through the Orkney Woodland Group, contributing to outdoor and nature education.



Where appropriate through the planning system, establish requirements for tree and woodland planting through Biodiversity Enhancement statements.

3.4 Resilient: right tree, right place



3.4.1 Orkney's specific and distinct climatic conditions and topography mean that planting the right species of tree and in the right location are key to supporting and building resilience in trees to ensure effective establishment in the Orkney environment, and to mitigate the effects of climate change, pests and diseases.

3.4.2 While there is limited scope for natural regeneration in Orkney due to the limited extent of seed producing woodlands and suitability of adjoining habitat, allowing natural regeneration of existing trees or collecting and growing on seed from existing trees for use to expand an existing woodland should result in the strongest seedlings most able to withstand climate and other pressures. This should help build natural resilience to local conditions, as well as contributing to woodland expansion.

3.4.3 When planting new trees, there are different views on provenance. The provenance of tree seed refers to its geographical origins. Generally, choosing the appropriate tree species and provenance for site characteristics and local climate harbours greater resilience. Therefore, local provenance is a good first choice because trees will be best adapted to local conditions and weather patterns. However, greater genetic diversity can increase resilience to the future effects of climate change. It is recognised that it may not always be possible to source Orkney provenance trees due to limited stock. In such situations, the next choice would be trees with provenance within the same seed source region (Caithness and Sutherland seed zone 102), preferably also with similar exposed northern coastal conditions. Provenance for choosing non-native species usually looks to the north of Scotland area, again, for similar climatic conditions.

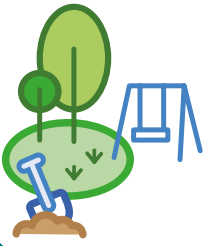
3.4.4 The Scottish Forestry Seed Sources for Planting Native Trees and Shrubs in Scotland guidance provides information on seed zones and the species native to them, which may be helpful in identifying alternative tree supplies.

3.4.5 For all planting of more than one tree, species diversity is essential. Different species have different strengths and weaknesses, therefore a mix of species should ensure that the trees, or hedging, are better able to withstand adverse effects caused by climate change, pests and diseases and so remain functional. Shrub or hedge planting can be used to protect new trees until they are established in more exposed areas.



Image: Muddisdale, Kirkwall - woodland showing diversity of species which encourages greater resiliency.

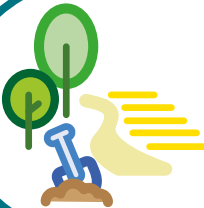
Action framework for resiliency



Support tree planting on the public land and where appropriate across Orkney to bring benefits to people and nature such as landscape enhancement, biodiversity, amenity and recreational opportunities as well as benefits in tackling climate change and its impacts.



Identify, through the statutory planning and flood management provisions, potential opportunities where trees can provide natural solutions for flood and water management as well as other benefits.



Support tree planting that will deliver multiple benefits such as shelter for people, places, livestock and crops in conjunction with partners such as development trusts and supporting the carbon neutral islands initiative.



Continue to work in partnership with UHI, supporting arboreal culture schemes like the tree nursery at Orkney College, to ensure a bank of native trees and others that can survive the Orkney Climate.



Identify opportunities where trees can contribute to water and biodiversity enhancement on riparian corridors, contributing to Nature Networks, in the spatial strategy in the Local Development Plan.



Support tree planting alongside path networks in conjunction with partners such as Hitrans, Walk, Wheel and Cycle Trust, community groups and schools.

Appendix 1: Works on protected trees and protecting trees before and during development

Image: New house and mature trees by Bignold Park, Kirkwall.

A1.1 Permission for works on a protected tree

If you are applying to fell or carry out pruning works on a protected tree, the Planning Authority would expect you to include the following information with your application:

- ✓ Description of proposed works and reasons why these works are required
- ✓ Tree Survey – a tree survey should provide these details for each tree, using the reference numbers from the site plan:
 - Species
 - Stem Diameter (cm)
 - Branch spread
 - Crown height
 - Age class
 - Structural condition
 - Visible defects
 - Management recommendations
 - Tree constraints
- ✓ Site Plan - reference the trees by number.
- ✓ Annotated photos of the trees showing the proposed works.

A1.2 Protection of trees and woodland within or adjacent to a proposed development

If there are trees within or near your proposed development site, the Planning Authority require the following to accompany your application:

- ✓ Description of proposed works and reasons why these works are required.
- ✓ Tree Survey with Site Plan (as above).
- ✓ Tree Constraints Plan – show how retained trees will be maintained in the proposed site layout, including Root Protection Area Calculation.
- ✓ Proposed Site Layout Plan – should consider how works below and above ground may affect the trees. The document should show the development area, location of building/s, tree positions, proposed access routes and proposed service routes.
- ✓ Tree Protection Plan – show measures to protect retained trees, for example, barriers round the RPA.

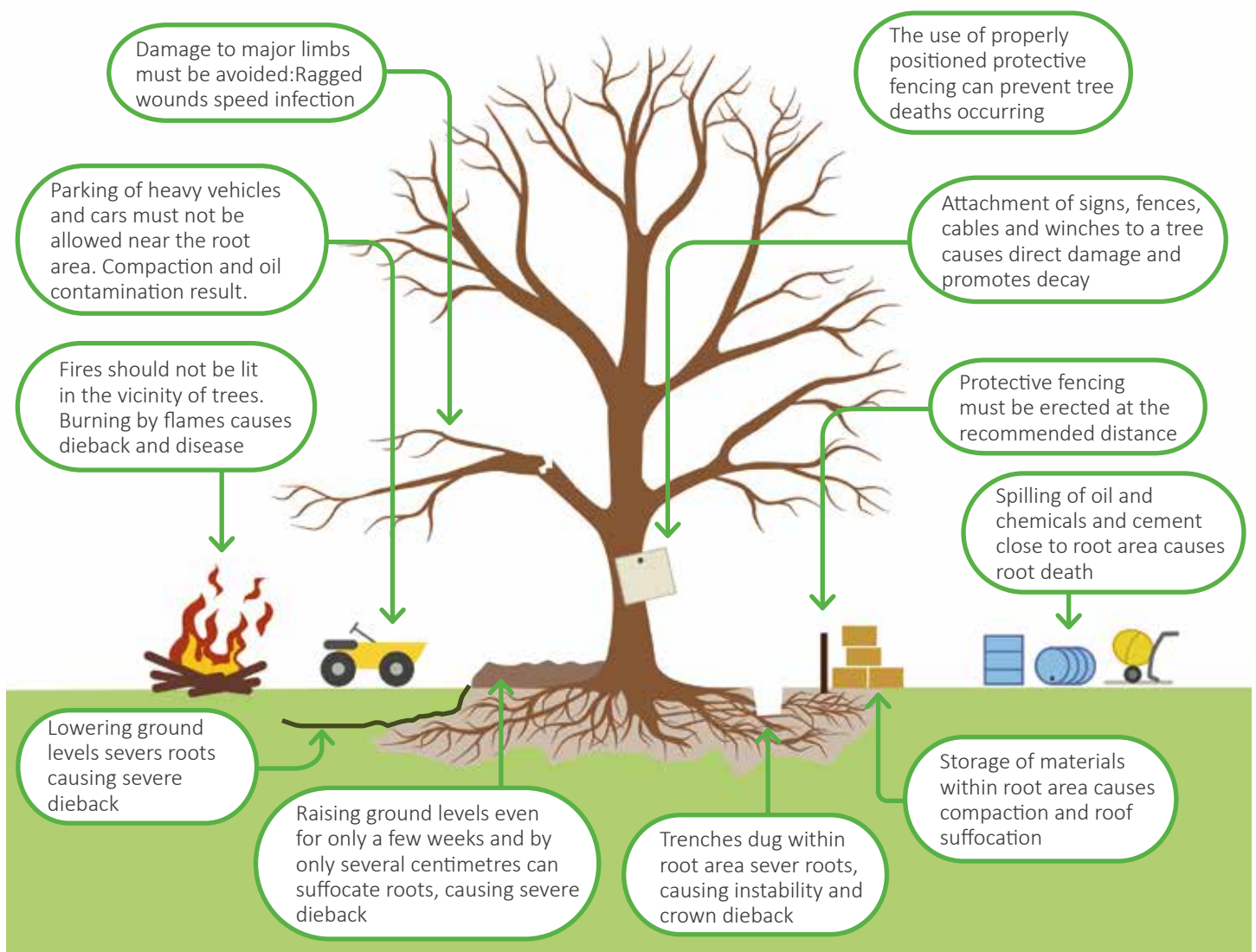


Figure 3: Common causes of Tree Death diagram

A1.3 Replacement Planting, Landscape Plans and Woodland Management Plans

Where trees have to be felled the Planning Authority may request that replacement trees are planted on or near the site. However, planting new trees or woodlands does not always compensate for the loss of valued, mature trees.

Where compensatory planting is made a condition of an approved planning application, it is important, to seek professional advice on the species and location of replacement trees. The opportunity to plant replacement trees should be viewed as a chance to improve the environment.

Where appropriate, the planting of native trees is encouraged. The Forestry Commission have produced guidance “The Right Tree the Right Place” that is a useful reference when considering replacement planting. Please see Further Information in Appendix 2.

You should provide the Planning Authority with a:

- ✓ Landscape Plan - shows how new trees will help integrate the new development into the existing green network and avoid any negative impact in its surroundings.
- ✓ Management Plan - to ensure that woodland areas are healthy and sustainable resources. Different management strategies would apply dependant on the desired long-term outcome for the woodland, for example for wildlife, landscaping, or shelter.



Image: new planting by new commercial building in St. Ola.

A1.4 Carrying out approved works

- ✓ When - Pruning should be undertaken in mid-summer or winter and protected species should not be disturbed, for example, bats.
- ✓ Who – tree surgery and felling should only be done by a qualified arborist, they should be able to show evidence of required certificates.
- ✓ What – in some cases a Felling License may be required if you intend to fell 5 cubic metres of timber outwith a garden, public park, orchard or graveyard in any calendar quarter, contact Scottish Forestry, see Appendix 2.



Image: View of mature Sycamores within Kirkwall.



Appendix 2: Further information and funding opportunities

Image: View of Stromness from the Hamnavoe ferry showing the crowns of mature trees.

This section is divided up into topic areas to help navigate the various information and funding streams in relation to protecting and planting trees and woodlands; the topics include agriculture, funding, protecting trees, historic environment, natural environment and water environment.

It should be noted that funding streams can change annually, and this section is not inclusive of all funding opportunities. This section is there to assist.

A2.1 Agriculture advice & funding

Farmers can benefit from some of the same grant funding streams that are available for community planting, including MOREwoods and MOREhedges from the Woodland Trust.

The Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme offers financial support for the creation of new woodland and the sustainable management of existing woodland. The scheme includes options that cover planting, integrating farming with forestry, woodland protection and harvesting.

Creating woodland within a farm has recognised benefits and a specific, Sheep and Trees Forestry grant package is available from Scottish Forestry.

- <https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/agri-environment-climate-scheme/management-options-and-capital-items/small-scale-tree-and-shrub-planting/guidance-for-small-scale-tree-and-shrub-planting/>
- <https://www.forestry.gov.scot/support-regulations/forestry-grants>
- <https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/>
- <https://www.fas.scot/article/grants-for-small-scale-tree-planting-fwn37-autumn-2021/>
- <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/trees-for-landowners-and-farmers/morehedges/>
- <https://www.gov.scot/publications/code-practice-sustainable-regenerative-agriculture/documents/>
- <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/agroforestry-benefits/shelterbelt/>
- Agri environment schemes- the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS) promotes land management practices which protect and enhance Scotland's magnificent natural heritage, improve water quality, manage flood risk and mitigate and adapt to climate change.
<https://www.ruralpayments.org/publicsite/futures/topics/all-schemes/agri-environment-climate-scheme/>



Image: Woodland Trust Scotland offer grants and advice for new woodland planting

A2.2 General funding opportunities

Communities may be able to benefit from free trees and funding opportunities. Some charities such as the Woodland Trust run initiatives to give away free trees to community led projects on a range of scales, including small groups of trees or short hedges, as well as woodlands.

Where communities have ownership or access to land that they wish to create a community woodland within, there is potential for communities to fund tree or hedge planting by partnering with developers that need to deliver biodiversity measures through NPF4 Policy 3, but are unable to do that within the development site.

The smallest area that can be grant funded under the Woodland Trust's MOREwoods grant is 0.1 hectare. The tree species are specified as downy birch, rowan, aspen and willow (grey and tea-leaved), all of Orkney native provenance and Scottish natives from the Highland region.

The Forestry Grant Scheme specifies up to 80% downy birch, rowan, aspen and willow (grey and tea-leaved), all of Orkney native provenance and 20% mixed broadleaves or conifers. Scottish Forestry grant funding, also, encourages smaller scale proposals of 0.25 to 1ha in Orkney in recognition of the climatic, nature conservation and land use sensitivities here because these conditions reduce opportunities for large scale planting.

Woodland Trust - advice, guidelines & funding

WTS provides an advisory service for native woodland design, project delivery and funding, including grants for small woodlands and hedges.

- Funding for community and other woodland creation projects under the 'Plant trees' heading.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/>

- The Highlands & Islands Woodland Handbook (pages 179- 181) available via the bottom of the The Croft Woodland Project webpage.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/scotland/croft-woodlands/>

Scottish Forestry & government – guidelines & funding

Scottish Forestry are the Scottish Government agency responsible for forestry policy, support and regulations.

<https://www.forestry.gov.scot/>

- Scottish Forestry Seed sources for planting of native trees and shrubs- Scottish Forestry policy and information about selecting suitable origins and provenances of native plants and seeds.

<https://www.forestry.gov.scot/forests-environment/biodiversity/native-woodlands/seed-sources>

- Scottish Forestry grants and funding- information and support for tree planting.

<https://www.forestry.gov.scot/support-regulations/woodland-creation>

- UK Forest Standard- sets out the UK Government approach to sustainable forestry. Although written for commercial forestry, it contains information on topics including biodiversity, historic environment, soils and people that will be useful for non-commercial woodland creation and tree planting.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uk-forestry-standard>



Image: Grant funded native woodland showing enhanced biodiversity and setting in Holm. Photo by Anne Bignall

A2.3 Useful Websites

Protecting trees

Orkney Islands Council & Tree Protection

- Tree Preservation Orders – Orkney Islands Council

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/natural-and-built-environment/tree-conservation/>

- Conservation areas in Orkney, trees are also protected if they fall within a conservation area:

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/natural-and-built-environment/built-heritage/>

- Orkney A Woodland Design Guide gives direction for selecting and establishing trees for woodland projects and lists native and other tree species known to grow in Orkney.

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/natural-and-built-environment/tree-conservation/orkney-woodland-group/>

- Tree root protection zone calculations- Woodland Trust information providing an explanation of root protection areas and their importance in safeguarding the health of existing trees.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2021/04/root-protection-areas/>

Historic environment

Historic Environment & designated sites

Archaeology and historic environment - Orkney is exceptionally rich in heritage assets and is internationally famous for its prehistoric archaeology. While some archaeological assets may be obvious and well known (and in some places, given legal protection through a designation), much may remain unknown, concealed underground. Tree planting could affect heritage assets by having a direct physical effect (such as damage caused by intruding tree roots), affecting the setting of a heritage asset (for example by changing the landscape context), or through indirect effects (for example by increasing erosion caused by increased visitor numbers). All known historic environment assets, designated or not, must be taken into consideration during a site assessment.

- Orkney Islands Council, Islands Archaeologist may be able to provide advice on the potential for unknown and undesignated archaeology.

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/planning-and-building/development-and-marine-planning-policy/natural-and-built-environment/built-heritage/kirkwall-thi/kirkwall-thi-latest-news/archaeology/>

- Trove.Scot and Pastmap provide information about known archaeological sites, buildings and industrial heritage.

<https://www.trove.scot/search/map>

- Historic Environment Scotland provide information about scheduled monuments and other known historic environment designations, for example, Gardens and Designed Landscapes.

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/scheduled-monuments/>

Natural environment

- Nature Networks are a system of corridors which allow species to move between landscapes, ecosystems and habitats, natural or modified. These corridors ensure the maintenance of biodiversity and mitigate the twin crises of biodiversity loss and climate change.

<https://www.nature.scot/doc/nature-networks-framework>

- National soil map- map showing the different soil types found across Scotland, with more detailed mapping available for Orkney by selecting the partial cover map. This can be used to identify areas of carbon rich and peaty soils, which are important stores of carbon unlikely to be suitable for tree planting.

<https://soils.environment.gov.scot/maps/soil-maps/national-soil-map-of-scotland/>

- Native Woodland Survey of Scotland- information and a map for the Scotland wide surveys carried out from 2006-2013 to identify native woodlands.

<https://www.forestry.gov.scot/forests-environment/biodiversity/native-woodlands/native-woodland-survey-of-scotland-nwss>

- Ecological site classification tool- a tool provided by Forest Research to suggest what tree species are suited to a particular site based on climate background data. However it should be noted that the tool does not take account of localised topographical exposure/shelter, so the results may not be accurate for Orkney conditions and do not replace the need for local advice and site specific assessment.

<https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/fthr/ecological-site-classification/>

- Scotland's environment web- provides a range of environmental datasets that can be viewed on a map or downloaded, including on areas protected for nature conservation.

<https://map.environment.gov.scot/sewebmap/>

- Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS)- list of LNCS in Orkney. LNCS are identified by the Council as part of the Local Development Plan process.

https://www.orkney.gov.uk/media/fjwaijxk/appendix_b_2_local_nature_conservation_sites.pdf

Water environment

Scottish Water & SEPA - guides for planting by water & public water infrastructure

- Scottish Forestry and Scottish Water have teamed up to offer guidance on tree works beside or near water supplies.

<https://www.forestry.gov.scot/private-and-public-water-supplies>

- The Farm Advisory Service gives a comprehensive guide to planting in the region of water bodies.

<https://www.fas.scot/environment/water-management/water-margins-2/riparian-planting/>

Spatial data sources

Scottish Forestry Open Data resource

- The Native Woodland Survey of Scotland undertook a baseline survey of all native woodlands, nearly native woodlands and PAWS (plantations on ancient woodland sites) to create a woodland map linked to a dataset showing type, extent and condition of those woodlands. The parameters for the survey are explained in the View Full Details section and you can also select woodlands on the map to show its status.

https://open-data-scottishforestry.hub.arcgis.com/datasets/6d27b064fcba471da50c8772ad0162d7_0/explore

- Scottish Forestry has an open data portal which allows you to search for various information relating to the management of trees and woodlands. This portal includes the Scottish Forestry Map Viewer, which you will find by scrolling down the page on the link below. There is spatial data for Forestry Grant Scheme target and eligibility areas and current and legacy grant application schemes.

<https://open-data-scottishforestry.hub.arcgis.com>

- The National Forest Inventory (NFI) woodland map covers all forest and woodland areas over 0.5 hectare with a minimum of 20% canopy cover, or the potential to achieve it, and a minimum width of 20 metres. Both this spatial data and the NWS will not include many of Orkney's small woodlands that are less than 0.5ha.

https://data-forestry.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/dec82458381246f98bbcddc2eb76a80b_0/explore



Image: Papdale House in Kirkwall maintains many of the trees that were planted within the grounds, although these are now part of open space within the towns bounds giving access to the school halls of residence and general active travel to the primary and secondary schools and further on into the town centre. Sir Walter Scott visited his friend at Papdale House (built in 1807) and is rumoured to have influenced the planting schemes.



Image: Looking down Church Road in St. Margaret's Hope out to the Sound of Hoxa. St Margaret's Hope, in South Ronaldsay, is one of only two towns in Orkney covered by a Tree Preservation Order, consisting predominantly of individual trees. The trees enhance the setting of this attractive coastal settlement.

Back Cover Image: Olav's Wood on South Ronaldsay has been established over many years; the first plantings took place in the mid 1970s, with major planting beginning in the 1980s. The woodland is approx. 4.5 acres (1.8 hectares) in area and comprises trees and shrubs from around the world. The woodland now has areas of dense growth and open grassland and heath. (All photos by Erica Hume Niven, except where credited to another person)



Enterprise and Resources Risk Register – April 2026

Strategic Risks

Cluster.	Risk Number.	Owner.
Financial.	3.	Head of Finance.
	5.	Director of Enterprise and Resources.
	6.	Head of Marine Services and Transportation.
	7.	Head of Marine Services and Transportation.
	8.	Director of Enterprise and Resources.
Staffing.	1.	Director of Enterprise and Resources.
	2.	Director of Enterprise and Resources.
Governance.		
Legislation.		
Communication.		
Reputational.	4.	Head of Marine Services and Transportation.
Reputational / Physical.		
Legislative / Governance.		
Technological.		

Risks by rating

Risk Rating.	Risk.	Owner.	Cluster.	Risk Number.
20.	Inability to deliver core services and expand demand-led services in line with expectation.	Head of Finance.	Financial.	3.
16	Continuity of staffing and knowledge.	Director of Enterprise and Resources	Staffing.	1.
15.	Loss of service due to lack of funding for ferry and terminal replacement.	Director of Enterprise and Resources	Financial.	8.
15.	Major project delay or failure.	Director of Enterprise and Resources	Financial.	5.
15.	Risk of reduced income from Harbours business activity as the market changes.	Head of Marine Services and Transportation.	Financial.	7.
12.	Continued lack of Scottish Government support for costs of concessionary travel on ferries, air and community transport.	Head of Marine Services and Transportation.	Financial.	6.
9.	Staff training and development.	Director of Enterprise and Resources	Staffing.	2.
9.	Airfield closure or non-conformity.	Head of Marine Services and Transportation.	Reputational.	4.

Risk Matrix

			IMPACT				
			1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
			Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
LIKELIHOOD	5.	Almost Certain.	Medium	Medium	High	High	Extreme
	4.	Likely.	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme
	3.	Possible.	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
	2.	Unlikely.	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	1.	Rare.	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High

Risk Title: 01 – Continuity of staffing and knowledge.

Likelihood	3	Impact.	4	RAG	High	Current Risk Score	12	Target Risk Score	8
Owner	Director of Enterprise and Resources					Cluster.	Staffing		

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
<p>Smaller teams are less resilient and more vulnerable.</p> <p>Recruitment and retention are ongoing challenges due to a challenging job market.</p> <p>Small teams or single key people in critical posts.</p> <p>Demographic of the workforce with several staff members becoming eligible for retirement.</p>	<p>Unplanned and planned staff absence; unexpected and unplanned events.</p> <p>Retirement of staff members with many years of corporate knowledge.</p>	<p>Impact on staff morale and ability to take leave; impact on team effectiveness; poor communication; impact on management capacity; inefficient use of staff; inability to implement planned work and deliver statutory functions.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>01.01 Undertake workforce planning and opportunities for career succession planning.</p> <p>01.02 Take a flexible approach to staffing to help cover workloads.</p> <p>01.03 Develop a flexible post/job description to cover more than one area in the directorate.</p>

01

Risk Title: 02 – Staff training and development

Likelihood	3	Impact	3	RAG	Medium	Current Risk Score	9	Target Risk Score	4
Owner	Director of Enterprise and Resources						Cluster	Staffing	

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Staff may not be fully trained or experienced; staff may not be aware of or may inadvertently breach Council policy or Code of Practice; limited access to training budget.</p> <p>Staff may not feel valued if no investment in continuing professional development is made.</p>	<p>The Directorate and Council are unable to deliver functions effectively; lack of corporate consistency.</p>	<p>Lack of resilience; poor staff morale; legal and financial implications; reputational loss; increased rate of error; unable to meet professional development requirements.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>02.01 – Development of skills identified through staff Good Conversations.</p> <p>02.02 – Promote the Council's Learning and Development programmes and resources.</p>

Risk Title: 03 – Inability to deliver core services and expand demand-led services in line with expectation.

Likelihood	5	Impact	4	RAG	Extreme	Current Risk Score	20	Target Risk Score	9
Owner	Head of Finance						Cluster	Financial	

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
The risk of insufficient financial resources to meet current and future demand.	The Council's inability to deliver essential services within the funding package provided by Scottish Government; expectations outstrip capacity to deliver.	Community unrest; dissatisfied service users and elected members; unmet demand; loss of credibility of the Council; failure to deliver the range of services expected.	Treat.	<p>03.01 – Follow revenue budget monitoring process and procedures.</p> <p>03.02 - Communication with Scottish and United Kingdom Governments.</p> <p>03.03 – Support the Corporate Leadership Team to develop longer term strategic planning.</p> <p>03.04 – Actively consider and progress new opportunities for income generation and efficiency savings.</p>

03

Risk Title: 04 – Airfield closure or non-conformity

Likelihood	3	Impact	3	RAG	Medium	Current Risk Score	9	Target Risk Score	4
Owner	Head of Marine Services and Transportation						Cluster	Reputational	

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>Insufficient plans in place to ensure delivery of training and exercises take place. The Council may not have sufficient funds to sustain assets, replace ageing assets and develop key assets.</p> <p>Difficulty of staff recruitment in some areas.</p>	<p>Failure to carry out training of staff.</p> <p>Insufficient resilience of staff – singleton post.</p> <p>Changed standards for runways, facilities and equipment.</p> <p>Material deterioration of runways.</p> <p>Shortage of staff to muster fire team for any island</p>	<p>Failure to provide a service to the outer islands of Orkney; airfields deteriorate; plant/vehicles deteriorate; scarce resources; reputational risk to Council; closure of islands airfields.</p> <p>Failure to monitor health due to lack of supplier or sufficient budget.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>04.01 – Ensure appropriate staff training in place and undertaken.</p> <p>04.02 - Regular communication with customers and stakeholders to articulate and manage expectations.</p> <p>04.03 - Actively seek customer/ stakeholder feedback and identify any improvements required.</p> <p>04.04 - Agreed brief/terms of reference/service standards with full understanding of customer and stakeholder requirements.</p> <p>04.05 - Co-ordinated public engagement across the Council and with partners/stakeholders where appropriate.</p> <p>04.06 – Fill vacant posts timeously where appropriate to ensure where possible services are operating at optimum staff complement.</p>

04

Risk Title: 05 – Major project delay or failure

Likelihood	5	Impact	3	RAG	High	Current Risk Score	15	Target Risk Score.	6
Owner	Director of Enterprise and Resources						Cluster	Financial	

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The risk of insufficient financial and/or staff resources to meet current and future demand makes it difficult for the Council to realise its priorities e.g. Scale Wind, Islands Deal, Harbours Master Plan.</p> <p>Failure to spend grant funding.</p> <p>Reputational damage.</p>	<p>Strategic high-level project programme slippage.</p> <p>Scale of project management business requirements associated with the Islands Deal.</p>	<p>Failure to deliver major projects.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>05.01 – Ensuring appropriate consideration of pressures during capital and revenue budget setting and most efficient use of existing resources.</p> <p>05.02 – Establish additional project specific staff and budget resources to ensure new project delivery where required (property and planning resource reviews and commitment to increase resource levels).</p> <p>05.03 – Implement recommendations relevant to the capital programme arising from the external review of the Planning Service.</p> <p>05.04 – Seeking to conclude the planning for the next capital programme (period 2024 to 2029) and thereby adjusting resource levels to meet delivery demands.</p> <p>05.05 - Review of the level of support for the next stage of Islands Deal work beyond Strategic Outline</p>

05

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
				Business Case. This would be addressed via future Project Management Office committed resource across the partners.

Risk Title: 06 – Continued lack of Scottish Government support for costs of concessionary travel on ferries, air and community transport

Likelihood	4	Impact.	3	RAG	Medium	Current Risk Score	12	Target Risk Score	4
Owner	Head of Marine Services and Transportation						Cluster	Financial	

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The Council may not have sufficient funds for dealing with concessions on Ferries, Air and Dial-a-Bus.</p> <p>This vulnerability is also increasing due to the increased ageing population.</p>	<p>Ageing population.</p> <p>Reducing Scottish Government proportion of grant/Scottish Government “pot” is capped.</p> <p>Any change to Scottish Government policy on the provision of support to concessions.</p>	<p>Vulnerable people left without ability to meet basic needs, budgets inadequate due to reduction in Scottish Government support.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>06.01 – Outwith Local Authority control; reimbursement of over 60/disabled National Entitlement Card paid by the Scottish Government.</p> <p>06.02 – Orkney Inter Islands Air and Ferry Study Project/Fair Funding activity.</p> <p>06.03 – Contribute to the Transport Scotland Fair Fares Review.</p>

97

Risk Title: 07 – Risk of reduced income from Harbours business activity as the market changes.

Likelihood	5	Impact	3	RAG	High	Current Risk Score	15	Target Risk Score	4
Owner	Head of Marine Services and Transportation						Cluster	Financial	

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
Harbours has become increasingly reliant on the oil industry and cruise liners for generating income. Changes to these markets could have a profound effect on harbour revenues.	The Council fails to identify and exploit new markets/income streams if/when current marine activity reduces. Cruise ships reduce. Oil revenues worsen.	Failure to provide a comprehensive 24/7 marine service; reputational risk to Council; dissatisfied service users and elected members; failure to deliver the range of services expected. Enterprise and Resources self-financed budget strategy leading to overspend. Inability to provide funds to the Strategic Reserve Fund.	Treat.	07.01 – Development and marketing of infrastructure and services. 07.02 – New business e.g. Ship to Ship transfer in Scapa Flow and other oil and gas related activity. 07.03 – Identify and exploit new markets and invest in infrastructure and skilled people. 07.04 – Implementation and investment in the Harbours Master Plan. Costs associated balanced against implications for Council-wide financial planning.

Risk Title: 08 – Loss of service due to lack of funding for Ferry and Terminal replacement.

Likelihood	3	Impact	5	RAG	High	Current Risk Score	15	Target Risk Score	4
Owner	Director of Enterprise and Resources						Cluster	Financial	

Vulnerability.	Trigger.	Consequences.	Options.	Mitigating Actions.
<p>The Council does not have sufficient funds for Ferry and Terminal maintenance and replacement programme. If Scottish Government funding is not forthcoming the costs of additional essential lifeline services could impact on other service priorities.</p>	<p>The Council cannot maintain or develop its essential assets to provide public services.</p>	<p>Ferries reach end of life with no replacement – rapid service deterioration.</p> <p>Excessive support costs as aged ferries kept running.</p> <p>Excessive running costs of old ferries.</p> <p>No opportunities to achieve expected service levels.</p> <p>Crisis purchase of new ferries – loss of bargaining power.</p>	<p>Treat.</p>	<p>08.01 – Maintain contact with Scottish Government through Ferry Task Force meetings.</p> <p>08.02 – A revised funding mechanism for revenue and capital elements of ferry service provision has been established with the Scottish Government.</p>

Orkney Islands Council (OIC)

Infrastructure and Organisational Development (IOD) Service Risk Register – June 2026

Risks by risk number

Cluster.	Risk number.	Risk.	Owner.
Financial.	1.	Waste.	Head of Infrastructure Services.
Managerial/Professional.	2.	Workforce Planning.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Reputational.	3.	Major Capital Projects, delay or failure.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Financial.	4.	Financial pressures across the Directorate – Fuel and inflationary costs.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Financial.	5.	Quarries, reduced income.	Head of Infrastructure Services.
Financial.	6.	Operational, insufficient funding.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Legislative/Regulatory.	7.	Health and Safety (accidents and incidents).	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Financial.	8.	Residual liability, property not in use.	Head of Property and Asset Management.
Financial.	9.	Discretionary services and affordability.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.

Cluster.	Risk number.	Risk.	Owner.
Managerial/Professional.	10.	Failure to progress strategic objectives.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Legislative/Regulatory.	11.	Climate Change Impacts.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Legislative/Regulatory.	12.	The Effective Management of Trees and Woodlands.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Financial.	13.	Financial and reputational impact of liabilities falling to the Council from planning decisions issued without Section 75 legal agreements to secure decommissioning/site remediation works (major/higher impact environmental works e.g. wind turbines).	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.

Risks by cluster

Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.	Owner.
Legislative/Regulatory.	7.	Health and Safety (accidents and incidents).	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Legislative/Regulatory.	11.	Climate Change Impacts.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Legislative/Regulatory.	12.	The Effective Management of Trees and Woodlands.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Financial.	1.	Waste.	Head of Infrastructure Services.
Financial.	4.	Financial pressures across the Directorate - Fuel and inflationary costs.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Financial.	5.	Quarries, reduced income.	Head of Infrastructure Services.
Financial.	6.	Operational, insufficient funding.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Financial.	8.	Residual liability, property not in use.	Head of Property and Asset Management.
Financial.	9.	Discretionary services and affordability.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Financial.	13.	Financial and reputational impact of liabilities falling to the Council from planning decisions issued without Section 75 legal agreements to secure decommissioning/site	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.

Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.	Owner.
		remediation works (major/higher impact environmental works e.g. wind turbines).	
Managerial/Professional.	2.	Workforce Planning.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Managerial/Professional.	10.	Failure to progress strategic objectives.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
Reputational.	3.	Major Capital Projects.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.

Risks by Owner

Owner.	Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.
Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Financial.	6.	Operational, insufficient funding.
Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Financial.	9.	Discretionary services and affordability.
Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Legislative/Regulatory.	7.	Health and Safety (accidents and incidents).
Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Managerial/Professional.	10.	Failure to progress strategic objectives.
Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Financial.	4.	Financial pressures across the Directorate - fuel and inflationary costs.
Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Managerial/Professional.	2.	Workforce Planning.
Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Reputational.	3.	Major Capital Projects, delay or failure.
Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Legislative/Regulatory.	11.	Climate Change Impacts.
Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Legislative/Regulatory.	12.	The Effective Management of Trees and Woodlands.
Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Financial.	13.	Financial and reputational impact of liabilities falling to the Council from planning decisions issued without Section 75 legal agreements to secure decommissioning/site remediation works (major/higher impact

Owner.	Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.
			environmental works e.g. wind turbines).
Head of Infrastructure Services.	Financial.	1.	Waste.
Head of Infrastructure Services.	Financial.	5.	Quarries, reduced income.
Head of Property and Asset Management.	Financial.	8.	Residual liability, property not in use.

Risks by rating

Risk Rating.	Owner.	Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.
16.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Legislative/Regulatory	11.	Climate Change Impacts.
16.	Head of Infrastructure Services.	Financial.	5.	Quarries, reduced income.
16.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Financial.	4.	Financial pressures across the Directorate - fuel and inflationary costs.
16.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Financial.	9.	Discretionary services and affordability.
15.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Financial.	6.	Operational, insufficient funding.
15.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Managerial/Professional.	10.	Failure to progress strategic objectives.
15.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Managerial/Professional.	2.	Workforce Planning.
12.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Legislative/Regulatory.	12.	The Effective Management of Trees and Woodlands.

Risk Rating.	Owner.	Cluster.	Risk Number.	Risk.
12.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Financial.	13.	Financial and reputational impact of liabilities falling to the Council from planning decisions issued without Section 75 legal agreements to secure decommissioning/site remediation works (major/higher impact environmental works e.g. wind turbines).
12.	Head of Infrastructure Services.	Financial.	1.	Waste.
9.	Head of Property and Asset Management.	Financial.	8.	Residual liability, property not in use.
9.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Reputational.	3.	Major Capital Project delay or failure.
8.	Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.	Legislative/Regulatory.	7.	Health and Safety (accidents and incidents).

Risk Prioritisation Matrix

			IMPACT				
			1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
			Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
LIKELIHOOD	5.	Almost Certain.	Medium	Medium	High	High	Extreme
	4.	Likely.	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme
	3.	Possible.	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
	2.	Unlikely.	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	1.	Rare.	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High

Title						Cluster		Owner	
01 - Affordability of Waste Collection and Disposal						Financial		Lorna Richardson	
Likelihood	4	Impact	3	RAG	Amber	Current Risk Score	12	Target Risk Score	4

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
Affordability of existing waste collection models.	The Council fails in the delivery of this service, waste is not collected.	<p>The Council will be unable to fulfil its regulatory obligations with regards to waste collection.</p> <p>The Council will not be able to close the gap towards meeting the Government targets for recycling.</p>	Treat	<p>01.01 – Ongoing programme of review and service redesign.</p> <p>01.02 — Integrated Waste Strategy. Following the Council decision that a new facility is unaffordable, an Integrated Waste Strategy was developed, which identifies service improvements, efficiencies and opportunities for redesign.</p> <p>01.03 – The Service continues to review best practice and looking at examples from other places, both within Scotland and beyond.</p>

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
				01.04 - Recruitment for a Service Manager (Environmental Services) has been unsuccessful and this lack of resource continues to be a significant issue within a small team.

Title					Cluster		Owner		
02 - Workforce Planning.					Managerial/Professional		Lorna Richardson		
Likelihood	5	Impact	3	RAG	High Risk	Current Risk Score	15	Target Risk Score	6

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
The Council may have insufficient training plans in place and Good Conversations (GCs) not being conducted regularly.	The Council does not have fully trained staff with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time, to deliver set priorities and/or statutory functions. Lack of career progression.	The Council cannot manage with an untrained workforce. Existing workforce becomes demoralised; service standards drop; an increased risk of non-compliance with changes in legislation, practices etc.	Treat	02.01 – Appropriate systems in place to measure competency, ensure training, and people development is undertaken as required, with a particular focus on statutory services.

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
<p>Challenge of recruitment to key professional posts.</p> <p>Failure to retain staff.</p> <p>Inability to carry out statutory functions as we do not have the staffing resource capacity.</p> <p>Staff morale falls leading to an impact on performance and ill health.</p> <p>Lack of proper training including career grade plans/apprenticeships will impact on the Service in the future.</p> <p>Workforce Plans were approved through Committee in March 2017 and further reviewed through the</p>	<p>Limited opportunity for succession planning.</p>	<p>Lack of valuable experience and knowledge.</p> <p>Unable to deliver priority core work and services.</p>		<p>02.02 – Workforce Plans implemented within teams. Noted that budget pressures will impact on plans, and that recruitment for some key posts remains exceedingly difficult. At every possible opportunity (such as a staff member leaving) the Service Manager and Head of Service will review their staffing profile and consider any reasonable changes.</p> <p>02.03 – A focus on Good Conversations for all staff from 2022/23 to date has significantly improved performance with feedback from staff who have conducted the Good Conversation framework that this is helpful for all involved.</p> <p>02.04 - updated October 2025 to incorporate key elements and mitigation from the Staffing and Workforce risk in the last Strategy Performance and Business Solutions Risk</p>

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
staffing re-structure in 2021/22.				Register. This reflects that HR&OD are part of the new IOD Directorate.

Title					Cluster		Owner		
03 - Major Capital Project delay or failure.					Reputational		Lorna Richardson		
Likelihood	3	Impact	3	RAG	Amber	Current Risk Score	9	Target Risk Score	9

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
The risk of insufficient financial and/or staff resources to meet current and future demand makes it difficult for the Council to realise its priorities e.g. Housing Programme, ASN School, Scale Wind, Islands Deal, Harbours Master Plan etc.	Strategic high-level project programme slippage of being over budget. Scale of project management business requirements associated with key strategic projects over the next 5 to 10 years.	Failure to deliver major projects. Failure to deliver anticipated income or anticipated efficiency savings. Reputational harm. Impact on Service Delivery.	Treat	03.01 – Ensuring appropriate consideration of pressures during capital and revenue budget setting and most efficient use of existing resources. 03.02 – Establish additional project specific staff and budget resources to ensure new project delivery where required.

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
<p>Failure to spend grant funding due to tenders in excess of budget or similar issues.</p> <p>Reputational damage.</p> <p>Resources – financial and people, including loss of key staff and difficulty in recruiting new members of the team on a timely basis.</p>				<p>03.03 – The Capital Programme Board provides an effective gateway route for new Capital Programme items and provides the refreshed, streamlined framework but noting that changes in the levels of funding and borrowing available has restricted capacity.</p> <p>03.04 - CLT have demonstrated flexibility and adjusted routine CLT meetings to sit as a special Capital Programme Board for urgent projects which require governance. This is proving highly effective.</p> <p>03.05 – A project is in development by Hub North to review the current list of capital projects and identify the relevant resourcing, priorities and structural changes necessary to make this happen.</p>

Title					Cluster		Owner		
04 - Financial pressures across the Directorate - fuel and inflationary costs.					Financial		Lorna Richardson		
Likelihood	4	Impact	4	RAG	High Risk	Current Risk Score	16	Target Risk Score	12

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
<p>The Council faces challenges because of the volatility of fuel costs and the rate of inflation, which affects both materials and labour costs.</p> <p>The running costs for plant and vehicles is directly affected by the cost of fuel. This is particularly challenging for contracted services where the Council is obliged to honour contractual agreements.</p>	<p>The Council has a large increase in costs which impacts on the services that are delivered across this Directorate.</p>	<p>Running costs of Council premises and associated energy efficiency impacted.</p>	<p>Tolerate</p>	<p>04.01 – Contingency planning where possible to account for current financial situation, including information to Members when appropriate around risks and consequences.</p> <p>04.02 – Continued close working relationship with Finance colleagues to seek advice and support.</p> <p>04.03 – Procurement critical in terms of seeking best tenders and appropriate value for money solutions, including the use of nationally agreed frameworks where appropriate (for example, energy costs).</p>

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
				<p>04.04 – Encourage lower fuel usage. Migration to low energy vehicles and other alternative fuels.</p> <p>04.05 – Capital project development of renewables to offset energy consumption (electricity rather than oil) through Council owned renewables project and properties.</p> <p>04.06 – cost of electricity has dropped with the current contract however the risk remains given the world financial situation.</p>

Title					Cluster		Owner		
05 - Reduced income from business activities from Quarries and associated budget overspend due to self-financed strategy which relies on income generation and continued supply.					Financial		Lorna Richardson		
Likelihood	3	Impact	4	RAG	High Risk	Current Risk Score	12	Target Risk Score	12

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
<p>The Council Quarry has been a significant income resource which has been applied to a self-financing budget approach within IOD.</p> <p>This is market dependent on the availability of infrastructure and ongoing supply. When sales fall this anticipated income is not realised and there is then an associated burden on the IOD budget.</p>	<p>Change in local market for quarry goods.</p> <p>Extensive periods of plant breakdown/time to replace unplanned failure.</p>	<p>Lack of availability of quarry products for Council projects and local markets.</p> <p>IOD self-financed budget strategy leading to overspend.</p>	Treat	<p>05.01 – The updated Business Plan covering the period 2024 – 2029 has been approved by Council. This Plan identifies opportunities around income generation and sets out the platform for the long term sustainability of the Quarry. The Quarry Manager continues to proactively engage with external markets.</p> <p>05.02 – Closer working arrangements with the Roads Operations team to ensure that the Quarry team fully understands future demand</p>

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
				<p>and can supply the appropriate product.</p> <p>05.03 – The pricing strategy has been reviewed to ensure that it remains competitive within the market whilst covering costs. This remains under close review given the dynamic conditions within the market. The external market is currently showing some signs of improvement.</p> <p>05.04 – External support for blasting procured and implemented in March 2023. This is a 3 year contract (with a 2 year extension clause) which will enable blasts to be planned and programmed in accordance with business needs and to ensure an appropriate supply of material to the market.</p> <p>05.05 – Ongoing discussions with the finance team to understand opportunities for</p>

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
				review of the quarry finance model.

Title					Cluster	Owner			
06 - Insufficient operational equipment and infrastructure funding, including support of the maintenance of current assets and infrastructure.					Financial	Lorna Richardson			
Likelihood	5	Impact	3	RAG	High Risk	Current Risk Score	15	Target Risk Score	9

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
<p>The Council may not have sufficient funds to sustain assets, replace ageing assets and develop key assets and infrastructure.</p> <p>Essential plant and equipment have to be maintained to ensure they can support the Council's services.</p>	<p>The Council does not have sufficient budget to maintain or develop its essential assets or infrastructure to provide public services.</p> <p>The Council cannot implement an asset management strategy.</p> <p>The Council fails to meet statutory or regulatory requirements on maintenance.</p>	<p>Plant, equipment and infrastructure deteriorate; services are not delivered.</p> <p>Council's reputation at risk.</p> <p>Risk of accidents and potential claims.</p>	Tolerate	06.01 – Funded asset management plans are in place for annual programmes for repair and replacement across roads, fleet, property and IT. The funding allocated for these programmes has been increased temporarily for 3 years commencing in FY 25/26, which will ease some of the pressure.

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
<p>Existing building assets must be maintained to agreed standards and, where possible, supported towards Net Zero targets.</p>				<p>06.02 – Capital programme planning and prioritisation focusing on repairs, renewals and additions that mitigate rising costs through the revised business focussed Capital Project Appraisal process and linked to the Asset Management Plan.</p> <p>06.03 – The Capital Programme Board provides an effective gateway route for new Capital Programme items and provides the refreshed, streamlined framework.</p> <p>06.04 – Cross working with the Estates team to reduce the size of the “estate” in the current Medium-Term Resource Strategy (MTRS) planning period to then see a fall in demand for maintenance (pressure on funding the asset replacement).</p>

Title						Cluster		Owner	
07 - Health and Safety (accidents and incidents).						Legislative/Regulatory		Lorna Richardson	
Likelihood	2	Impact	4	RAG	Amber	Current Risk Score	8	Target Risk Score	6

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
<p>The risk of not managing accidents and health and safety incidents.</p> <p>Particular operational vulnerabilities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand and Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS), • quarrying accident, • lifting injury, • machinery injury, • heavy vehicle – moving injury. 	<p>The Council not supporting the wellbeing of staff.</p> <p>The Council fails to manage accidents and health and safety incidents appropriately.</p>	<p>An increase in the number of accidents/incidents; loss of productivity; loss of equipment; an increased risk of legal challenges; risk of financial claims and financial penalties.</p>	<p>Treat</p>	<p>07.01 – Council Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Policy approved by Council in March 2025.</p> <p>07.02 – Control of Vibration Guidance - Completed and approved by the Safety Committee in March 2025 and available on the S&R intranet page etc.</p> <p>07.03 – Lone Working Policy and Guidance - Completed and approved by the Safety Committee in December 2025 and available on the S&R intranet page etc.</p> <p>07.04 - Fire Safety Policy – Reviewed and refresh</p>

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste related injury / contamination, • lone working, • working at height and up ladders. 				<p>completed. This update has not been presented to the Policy and Resources Committee, as there are no operational or legal changes, the amendments relate solely to organisational structure and formatting.</p> <p>07.05 - Major Emergency Plan – A draft version is being prepared, with the aim of having it ready for review in May 2026.</p> <p>07.06 – Training programme(s), reporting, implementing improvements.</p> <p>07.07 – Work Methods Safety meetings and reviews. Safety Management Systems and Audit.</p> <p>07.08 – Maintaining a comprehensive schedule of staff and management meetings and culture in relation to Health and Safety matters e.g. Safety</p>

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
				<p>Committee, tool box talks etc. Delivering the Safety Forums, including Member attendance. The Safety Forum meets quarterly, and we provide input to all Service safety communications or toolbox talks upon request. See 07.10 for further details.</p> <p>07.09 – Service Health and Safety Induction process and introduction of new Near Miss Process in Spring 2021.</p> <p>07.10 – Ongoing review of Health and Safety issues at various management forums including Heads of Service, works reps meetings and union meetings and monthly meetings with OHAC and ECH.</p> <p>07.11 – Access to People Safe MySOS devices (or equivalent devices) to services with a high level of lone working has been trialled and is being evaluated. Need to link this</p>

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
				<p>with the Lone Working Policy. A paper is in draft for CLT consideration outlining the proposed next steps. Linked to 07.03 the Lone Working Policy has already been updated to include the use of such devices.</p> <p>07.12 – Use of Violence/Unacceptable Behaviour Flagging process to alert staff of potentially challenging service users.</p> <p>07.13 – Promoting Positive Behaviour initiative to support staff in frontline roles. The delivery of the initiative, along with operational responsibility for its implementation, sits with OHAC for the Council.</p> <p>07.14 – Planning and Regulatory has reviewed their risk assessments, introduced an annual review monitoring process and conflict resolution training is being arranged for 2026. Body Cameras have</p>

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
				also been purchased to be available to staff for site visits.

Title					Cluster	Owner			
08 - Residual Liability for properties no longer in original use.					Financial	Lorna Richardson			
Likelihood	4	Impact	3	RAG	Amber	Current Risk Score	12	Target Risk Score	6

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
<p>The Council is exposed to significant expenditure to remediate sites to appropriate level.</p> <p>Public liability arising from the fact that sites are no longer in active use. Hence not necessarily secure or part of an inspection regime. The alternative is the Council does</p>	Current liability (has been the case for many years).	<p>Financial, staff resources for inspection, planning, penalties. Specialist studies are required.</p> <p>Public health and reputation.</p>	Treat	<p>08.01 – Asset Management planning and mitigation, including the disposal of assets which are no longer required.</p> <p>08.02 – Prioritise inspection and immediate remedial action through existing service budgets with corresponding risk of overspend.</p> <p>08.03 – Additional budget pressures associated with any</p>

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
<p>nothing and is at risk of claim arising from injury etc.</p> <p>Assets that are no longer in use, where no service is identified in terms of ownership and responsibility and where there is no budget attached to a property mean that the assets are unable to be maintained and become liable to damage/become hazard – and/or divert resource from other priority budget areas.</p>				<p>approval for the final works programme.</p> <p>08.04 – Cross-Directorate work to support the Estates team on accelerating (if possible) disposal routes, including bringing in external support to deliver this project given current lack of staffing resources within the Estates Team.</p> <p>08.05 - Landfill and ex-quarries – disused quarries have been made safe but there is a risk that they need to be remediated before they are disposed of as some have ongoing maintenance requirements.</p> <p>08.06 – Continue efforts to identify and allocate assets as appropriate.</p>

Title					Cluster		Owner		
09 - Affordability of Services and likelihood of reduction in spending on discretionary services.					Financial		Lorna Richardson		
Likelihood	4	Impact	4	RAG	High Risk	Current Risk Score	16	Target Risk Score	12

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
<p>Political expectation that service levels will not change despite budget reductions.</p> <p>Discretionary services likely to be the focus for reductions in funding.</p>	Budget reductions below baseline service level requirement.	Budget overspends.	Treat	<p>09.01 – Ensure full awareness and understanding of consequences through the budget setting process.</p> <p>09.02 – Strong Corporate Leadership/Improvement Support Team Board approach to budget setting.</p> <p>09.03 – Follow through budget savings with service changes quickly and resolutely following decisions.</p>

Title					Cluster		Owner		
10 - Failure to progress strategic objectives due to the inevitable focus on day-to-day service delivery.					Managerial/Professional		Lorna Richardson		
Likelihood	4	Impact	4	RAG	High Risk	Current Risk Score	16	Target Risk Score	12

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
<p>Lack of progress on strategic outcomes.</p> <p>Loss of opportunity.</p> <p>Medium to long term failure of service.</p> <p>Volume of priority activity and lack of clarity means difficult to focus on genuine strategic priorities.</p>	<p>Volume of attention required on day-to-day activities and priorities that removes time, resource commitment and focus away from progressing strategic objectives, e.g. both operational such as responding to day-to-day questions and/or requests and also corporate processes, e.g. Freedom of Information (FOI), performance management etc.</p>	<p>Strategies not delivered.</p> <p>Service failure.</p> <p>Negative impact on service delivery.</p> <p>Deterioration in long term performance of the service.</p> <p>Inefficiencies.</p> <p>Pressure on staff leading to poor health and wellbeing e.g. stress, sickness and/or a drop in morale.</p>	<p>Treat</p>	<p>10.01 – Seek to focus resources on delivery of the Council Plan’s approved strategic objectives/projects for the service.</p> <p>10.02 – Managing expectations in regard to the responsiveness of day-to-day operational demands and also corporate demands.</p> <p>10.03 – Re-calibration of service standards e.g. review service response standards/times for non-safety critical or strategic outcome items.</p>

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
				10.04 – Regular and open communication with Community Councils and Councillors, with visible senior leadership throughout.

Title					Cluster		Owner		
11 - Climate Change Impacts.					Physical		Lorna Richardson		
Likelihood	4	Impact	4	RAG	High Risk	Current Risk Score	16	Target Risk Score	12

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
Council infrastructure impacted by extreme and unpredictable weather, resulting in increased costs of maintenance and weakened or disrupted delivery of services including travel disruption.	<p>Extreme and unpredictable sustained weather (lightning, winds, tides) causes increased damage or wear and tear to Council infrastructure.</p> <p>Increased severity of coastal flooding leads to damage to property in coastal communities, while surface water levels impact transport routes</p>	<p>Weakened or disrupted delivery of Council services including transport, roads maintenance, property access and digital services.</p> <p>Reduced economic output in Orkney requires increased Council interventions.</p>	Treat	<p>11.01 – Declaration of Climate Emergency.</p> <p>11.02 – Council Plan has specific climate related goals including baseline review and Net Zero targets and milestones.</p> <p>11.03 – Orkney Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy</p>

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
<p>Communities facing increased frequency of coastal flooding and increased volumes of surface water.</p> <p>Local economic production affected by climate impacts.</p> <p>Transition to support climate response initiatives require significant capital investment.</p>	<p>and agricultural activities in the community.</p> <p>Surface water and other climate impacts affect normal activity cycles impacting food production including agriculture.</p> <p>Move to Net Zero requires capital funding and resourcing beyond Council capacity.</p>	<p>Failure to meet targets or reductions in funding of other Council Priorities to support initiatives.</p>		<p>and the Carbon Management Plan.</p> <p>11.04 – Flood Risk Management Plan 2022 – 2028.</p> <p>11.05 – Resilience review and response to SEPA Flood Warnings as an Incident Management process.</p> <p>11.06 – Development of the Coastal Change Adaptation Plan is underway with expected completion towards the end of 2025/26.</p> <p>11.07 – Development of local resilience capabilities and the ongoing involvement in resilience planning and exercises.</p> <p>11.08 – Development of Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, with associated engagement events with Members and Officers. The Council baseline study has</p>

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
				<p>been completed (March 2026). This includes a series of recommendations for the Council Corporate Leadership Team to progress. A detailed action plan will be developed with the CLT over the course of 2026.</p> <p>11.09 – Cross-Council officer working group established, recognising that Climate Change impacts all Directorates. This will be involved in preparing the detailed Action Plan referred above.</p> <p>11.10 – The Council is a participant in the Strategic Territorial Partnership Board and therefore works across multiple authority areas, with a focus on decarbonisation.</p> <p>11.11 - Food security plan under discussion following a presentation to Elected Members by Professor Tim Laing. This is wider than IOD</p>

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
				and includes external partners such as NHSO and UHI and the Community Planning Partnership.

Title					Cluster	Owner			
12 - The Effective Management of Trees and Woodlands on Land that is in the Ownership and Control of the Council.					Legislative/Regulatory	Lorna Richardson			
Likelihood	3	Impact	4	RAG	High Risk	Current Risk Score	12	Target Risk Score	12

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
Declining health of trees due to lack of maintenance and care leading to the potential for falling trees or branches to cause injury to members of the public visiting the location or cause damage to	Lack of regular inspection of all trees in the ownership and / or control of the Council. Disease such as Ash Dieback affecting the structural integrity of a tree(s).	Injury to visiting members of the public and/or damage to neighbouring land and/or property, and/or damage to vehicles. Financial claims from third party if they suffer accident, injury, loss or damage. Reputational damage to Council.	Treat	12.01 – Include all trees in the ownership and control of the Council in the bi-annual tree survey and inspection that is completed on some of OIC trees as part of the ground maintenance work completed by Engineering Services, the next survey is due to be completed late 2027, this may

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
<p>neighbouring land/property.</p> <p>Lack of professional expertise within the Service to deliver responsibilities.</p>				<p>require budget growth proposal.</p> <p>12.02 – Consider the establishment of a budget for the onwards maintenance and management of all trees in the ownership and control of the Council. This would be subject to a Service Pressure Bid and would be considered as part of the budget setting process for 2027/28.</p> <p>12.03 – Undertake any maintenance works e.g. felling trees/lopping branches where there is an immediate risk to public safety, this to be commissioned through existing professional contractors as appropriate.</p> <p>12.04 – Where a large number of trees require to be felled provide for compensatory replacement tree planting on-site or in general location.</p>

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
				12.05 – Establish a training plan within Development and Marine Planning to increase capability to survey and undertake maintenance works to trees.

Title					Cluster	Owner			
13 - Financial and reputational impact of liabilities falling to the Council from planning decisions issued without Section 75 legal agreements to secure decommissioning/site remediation works (major/higher impact environmental works e.g. wind turbines).					Financial	Lorna Richardson			
Likelihood	3	Impact	4	RAG	High Risk	Current Risk Score	12	Target Risk Score	16

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
Historic and future planning permissions issued without Section 75 Agreement/bonded sums to secure funding to address decommissioning and	Insolvency or desertion of operator of a development/site without means to enforce planning conditions/remediation requirements.	Council is left with the burden of site remediation/decommissioning.	Treat	13.01 - A process has been established between Planning, Finance and Legal teams which will mean future planning decisions will only be issued when there is conclusion of appropriate

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequences	Options	Mitigating Actions
remediation should this be required at a future date.				<p>agreement (most likely Section 75 Agreement) and establishment of a bonded sum to cover remediation costs should these be required at the end of the life of a development. This has included appointment of expert advisors to support the drafting of Agreements over a five year contract period.</p> <p>13:02 - The Capital Project Appraisal process includes this requirement to be factored into the costing and project budget setting process.</p>

Minute

Harbour Authority Sub-committee

Tuesday, 19 May 2026, 09:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Councillors Mellissa-Louise Thomson, P Lindsay Hall, Ivan A Taylor and Duncan A Tullock.

Present via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

Councillors Graham A Bevan and Heather N Woodbridge.

Clerk

- Katy Russell-Duff, Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- Karen Bevilacqua, Service Manager (Legal Services).
- Shonagh Merriman, Service Manager (Corporate Finance).
- Douglas Manson, Interim Harbour Master.
- Ross Spence, Port Safety Manager.

Declarations of Interest

- No declarations of interest were intimated.

Chair

- Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson, Vice Chair.

1. Port Marine Safety Code – Annual Compliance Audit Report

Progress Update

After consideration of a report by the Director of Enterprise and Resources, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Interim Harbour Master, the Sub-committee:

Scrutinised the Port and Marine Facilities Safety Code progress update on outstanding actions, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Director of Enterprise and Resources, and obtained assurance that action was being taken.

2. Conclusion of Meeting

At 09:34 the Vice Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: M Thomson.