

# OUR ISLANDS, OUR PROJECTS



Sands of Doomy from Mussetter, Eday



*Eday*

## About the island



Eday lies at the heart of Orkney's North Isles, supporting a population of around 120 people. The island, with its beautiful beaches, moorland and distinctive red sandstone sea cliffs, is rich in archaeology, history and wildlife, yet it remains something of a hidden gem in Orkney with a low tourist footfall.

The community is working hard to increase the amount of housing and employment opportunities locally. The island also has various levels of support available, from a wellbeing team on hand to help when needed, to an NHS surgery with a nurse practitioner. There's also a primary school with a healthy number of pupils.

The Heritage Centre and the Community Cafe have also become a hive of activity for courses, classes and community gatherings on the small island.

[www.orkney.com/explore/eday](http://www.orkney.com/explore/eday)



## The Eday Partnership

The island's Development Trust - the Eday Partnership - plays a key role in island life, promoting social and economic development projects aimed at securing a more viable future for the Eday community.

Operated through a voluntary board, the Partnership has been central to a number of initiatives over the past decade, including the installation of a 900kW community wind turbine, the refurbishment and expansion of the Eday Community shop (which now includes a café), and the purchase of two electric minibuses for a range of community transport uses.

A development officer for the island was employed by the Partnership for a two-year period from April 2023, progressing a host of new projects that are already making a positive impact to island life.



Setter Stone © orkney.com



Eday Heritage & Visitor Centre © orkney.com



## Housing

Creating new affordable housing has been a key priority for the Eday Partnership, which was awarded £225,380 from the Scottish Land Fund to acquire a two-bedroom house on the island. The Partnership has also invested in building two three-bedroom houses. A household survey has been conducted focusing on housing stock condition, and taking on board community views on housing needs, will also help shape future allocation policies for new homes.



Two three-bedroomed house sites

## Eday Gardening Project/ Community E-Bikes and Bikes

Eday Partnership has created a community growing space project, complete with Polycrub- this is a storm-proof, hard polycarbonate clad version of a polytunnel. This was supported by £7,000 of Community Led Local Development Funding from the Orkney Local Action Group, with an additional sum of £500 coming from the Highlands & Islands Climate Hub to buy topsoil for the garden.

Additional funding of £6,000 from Eday Partnership and the Employer Recruitment Incentive has been allocated to create a one-year post for the set up and management of the growing space Polycrub.

This post will also involve the management and maintenance of new e-bikes bought by the Partnership for community and visitor use with £22,000 of funding from the Energy Saving Trust, and standard bikes (including two for children and a trailer for toddlers) funded by £9,000 from the UK Cycle Fund. An additional Polycrub has been built for use as a storage and maintenance area for the bikes next to the island's hostel, with £15,000 of funding secured by the Eday Partnership from the Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS)



Eday Community shop café

# OUR ISLANDS, OUR PROJECTS



## Orkney's Development Trusts

APRIL 2018 - MARCH 2024

TOTAL FUNDING SECURED

**£10,822,508**

TOTAL JOBS CREATED

**87**

For over 20 years, Orkney's development trusts have been making a positive and tangible impact on the communities they serve, securing millions in funding, delivering a huge variety of projects and creating vital employment in the process.

As models of community development go, Orkney's stands as a fine example of what can be achieved through engagement, collaboration and determination.

Ten development trusts operate within Orkney – nine serving island communities and one focused on the town of Stromness.

Although each trust area has a unique identity, many of the communities share similar issues around depopulation, lack of housing and local facilities, job opportunities and care for the elderly. Cooperation and knowledge sharing is therefore a key element of the Orkney approach to development.



*Number of employees to March 2024*      *Total funding secured April 2018 - March 2024*



**28**  
(5 FTE)

**£1,933,020**



**17**  
(5.9 FTE)

**£517,095**



**3**  
(1.6 FTE)

**£3,137,429**



**2**  
(1 FTE)

**£406,057**



**3**  
(1.4 FTE)

**£1,294,374**



**12**  
(4.7 FTE)

**£635,122**



**2**  
(1.2 FTE)

**£1,230,823**



**5**  
(3 FTE)

**£736,143**



**14**

**£597,645**



**1**

**£334,801**



Over the past six years alone, Orkney's development trusts have attracted almost £11 million in external funding, with over 80 local jobs currently supported by trust led projects.

It's a remarkable track record, with an equally impressive range of initiatives delivered. Redundant and empty properties across the islands have been refurbished and offered as new family homes. Community shops, cafés and drop-in centres for young and old have been created. And many areas now have community transport available, thanks to the local development trust.

That's just scratching the surface though, with hundreds of innovative, community-led projects delivered over the past two decades.

Orkney's development trusts remain a powerful and positive force in the islands, encouraging grass roots engagement and enhancing the quality of life in some of Scotland's most fragile communities.



This project is funded by the Scottish Government's Community Led Local Development Fund, as part of the Scottish Rural Delivery Programme, and is delivered by the Orkney Local Action Group in collaboration with the Orkney Development Trusts, Orkney Islands Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

# OUR ISLANDS, OUR PROJECTS



## North Ronaldsay

### About the island

North Ronaldsay is Orkney's most remote island, with a population of just under 70 people. Despite its small size – it's just 3.4 miles long – the island is rich in archaeological and natural heritage, and home to an ancient breed of seaweed eating sheep. The sheep, which are confined to the foreshore by a 13-mile-long stone dyke encircling the island, are a key part of the local economy.

Upkeep of the stone sheep dyke - a Grade A listed monument - is an ongoing task for the community. Each year, volunteers from around the world travel to North Ronaldsay to take part in its popular sheep festival, helping to repair sections of the dyke while experiencing a taste of island life.

North Ronaldsay is a unique and vulnerable community with resilient, entrepreneurial islanders and spectacular attractions, but significant challenges.

[www.orkney.com/explore/north-ronaldsay](http://www.orkney.com/explore/north-ronaldsay)



### The North Ronaldsay Trust

Formed in 2000, the North Ronaldsay Trust (NRT) was one of the first bodies of its kind in Orkney. It aims to preserve the built and natural heritage of the island for the benefit of the community, visitors and the public at large. The Trust also promotes community development, industry and commerce through projects such as the self-catering cottages, café, exhibition space and gift shop at the New Lighthouse and support for the island's wool mill. In addition, it owns and manages the Old and New Kirks, with the New Kirk used as a heritage centre.

Other activities of the NRT include the provision of housing (one property currently), the relief of poverty, help for the elderly and less mobile, and the advancement of education through creative applications of technology for distance learning.

The Trust is also looking to develop a community transport service and improve broadband connectivity, in addition to other projects aimed at enhancing community resilience and sustainability.

The Trust has around 60 members, made up mostly of islanders and those with family links to the island.

[www.northronaldsaytrust.com](http://www.northronaldsaytrust.com)



## Lighthouse cottages, café and exhibition space

The Trust has developed a number of capital projects over the last couple of decades, but the largest to date has been the Lighthouse project. This initiative included the redevelopment of two of the old lighthouse keeper's cottages on the island for self-catering rental, as well as a number of other buildings within the lighthouse complex, to create a café, gift shop and exhibition space.

The Lighthouse complex has four 6kW wind turbines feeding renewable energy into the site. The Trust also has funding from the Community and Renewable Energy Scheme to add battery storage and potentially solar PV systems to complement the energy generated by the turbines.

A mill on the site takes the wool from North Ronaldsay's unique seaweed eating sheep and processes it into yarn for sale across the United Kingdom and beyond. Given the fact large wool mills elsewhere in the UK do not want to process wool from small, unique sheep breeds, the island mill provides the opportunity for sheep owners in North Ronaldsay to receive an income from their fleeces.

The Lighthouse project has brought a new use to an iconic building in the North Ronaldsay landscape, at the same time as supporting employment, tourism and the island's sheep breed.

## The Pund

The NRT is currently developing The Pund, a major capital project aimed at enhancing the sustainability of the community and economy on the island. It will utilise a large redundant property at Trebb, acquired by the Trust in 2021 with help from the Scottish Land Fund.

The £1.944m project involves the development of a community hub to provide a gym and wellbeing centre, a two-bedroom flat, a flexible office area, meeting room and kitchen space. A new wool mill and meat larder will be built at Trebb to help support and sustain flocks of the island's seaweed eating sheep along with garage and fire station facilities for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's new fire engine. There is also the potential for future phases on the site, with a community laundry, additional flexible home/remote working space and modular housing provision amongst the potential options.

The project is being funded by: Orkney Islands Council Community Development Fund, Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund, Orkney Islands Council Crown Estate Community Led Development Fund, Sport Scotland, Rural & Island Housing Fund, Orkney Islands Council Housing Fund, UK Government Community Ownership Fund, Scottish Government Islands Communities Fund and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.



# OUR ISLANDS, OUR PROJECTS



## Papa Westray



### About the island

Papa Westray, known as Papay, is one of the smallest islands in Orkney at just four miles long by one mile wide. Papay's population has been relatively stable in recent years and now numbers around 90, compared to a low point of 50 in the 1990s.

Papay is rich in archaeology which includes the Knap of Howar Neolithic settlement – site of the oldest house in northern Europe. In addition, a former workers' bothy at the farm of Holland has been made into a museum containing a fascinating range of artefacts from Papay's history. Papay is also famous for its birds and the island's North Hill is an important nature reserve. The two-minute hop between Papay and its neighbour Westray is the world's shortest scheduled flight and remains a constant draw for visitors.

[www.orkney.com/explore/papa-westray](http://www.orkney.com/explore/papa-westray)



### Papay Development Trust

The Papay Development Trust, formed in 1999, works to support the island's community and develop its economy, progressing a diverse range of initiatives. In 2013, the Trust became a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), regulated by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. The Trust works in partnership with others to achieve development appropriate to the changing needs of the local community and is supported in this by Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Orkney Islands Council. The Papay Development Plan was originally launched in 2000 as part of Initiative at the Edge and revised in 2011, 2015 and 2021.

The Development Trust also employs a Development Manager to support its work helping deliver the community priorities outlined in the Papa Westray Development Plan. Current priorities include affordable housing, population numbers, environment, and increased sustainability. The post has been funded by Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the Scottish Government.

[www.papawestray.co.uk](http://www.papawestray.co.uk)



## The Kelp Store Heritage and Arts Centre

Owned and managed by the Trust, The Kelp Store Heritage and Arts Centre provides a home for the Papay archive, and a focal point for a wide range of cultural, community and craft events on the island.

The centre, opened in June 2016, is a sensitive restoration of a storage facility for kelp dating back to the early 1800s. Its restoration was central to the Trust's vision for the regeneration of the island, with the first phase of works to renovate the external fabric of the building and replace the roof starting in 2001.

A further raft of funding a decade later allowed the building to finally be transformed into the island's craft and heritage centre. Funding for the project has come from Orkney Island Council's Community Development Fund, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, the Postcode Community Trust, The Trails of Holland, the UK Government's Coastal Communities Fund, Papa Westray Community Council, North Hill Grazing Committee and Orkney Marinas.

The adjacent **Nouster Boat Store** is currently undergoing phase 1 refurbishment as part of a community project to create a centre for creative residencies and a store for local heritage boats with interpretation displays. This project is being funded by the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme with support from Papa Westray Community Council.

## Affordable Housing

For over 20 years, the Papay Development Trust has provided community owned housing for affordable rent with the aim of supporting population retention and encouraging growth in the island. The property of Bewan was acquired by the trust in 2019, with financial support for its refurbishment coming from the Scottish Land Fund and the Scottish Government Rural and Islands Housing Fund. This followed the Trust's acquisition of Morven House to act as gateway accommodation for people taking up employment in Papay. Rose Cottage is also owned by the Trust and provides housing for the seasonal RSPB (The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) Warden based in Papay.

Phase 2 of the Papay Affordable Housing Project is currently underway with the aim of providing three more rented homes for essential workers from previously empty or underused houses. The project is also looking at the feasibility of developing an additional affordable home for younger people. Fairview is the first property to be acquired in Phase 2 and this is expected to be refurbished later in the year. To date, funding for the Papay Affordable Housing Project has come from Scottish Land Fund, Orkney Islands Council, the Scottish Government's Rural Housing Fund and Papay Development Trust.



*The Kelp Store and Nouster Boat Store*



# OUR ISLANDS, OUR PROJECTS



Wyre from Knitchen Hill, Rousay

## Rousay, Egilsay & Wyre



### About the islands

Although the three islands of Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre are grouped together for development purposes, each is very different in character.

**Rousay** is the largest of the trio, with a coast of fertile farmland and a lofty interior of high moorland, abundant in wildlife. Known as the 'Egypt of the North', Rousay's history and heritage is revealed in over 150 archaeological sites. The island, which is encircled by a 13-mile-long road taking in some spectacular coastal scenery, supports a population of around 200.

Low lying **Egilsay** is situated to the east of Rousay, with a small but active community of 20 people. Historically, Egilsay was an important destination for pilgrims - A 12th century Norse church with its distinct Viking round tower identifies the site of the martyrdom of Orkney's patron saint, Magnus, in 1117. The island now has its own section of the St Magnus Way guided pilgrimage walk, opened in 2018. Much of the island is an RSPB reserve, which sits alongside farmland used for the rearing of cattle and sheep.

Although small - the island is just two miles long and a mile wide - **Wyre** is rich in wildlife and history, with a castle built by legendary Viking giant Cubbie Roo and a fascinating heritage centre open to visitors. Connected by ferry links to its neighbours, Rousay and Egilsay to the north and north-east, Wyre has a community of around five, making it one of the smallest inhabited islands in Orkney.

[www.orkney.com/explore/rousay-egilsay-wyre](http://www.orkney.com/explore/rousay-egilsay-wyre)



Midhowe Broch © orkney.com



### The Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust (REWDT)

The Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust (REWDT) is dedicated to promoting the sustainable development and prosperity of the three ferry-linked islands of Rousay, Egilsay, and Wyre. The Trust was established in 2006 to address various social, economic, and environmental challenges facing these islands and to harness local resources and expertise to create positive change.

REWDT is involved in a wide range of initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality of life for residents and preserving the unique cultural and natural heritage of the islands.

In 2011 the Trust commissioned its own community wind turbine - a 900kW unit on Rousay's Kingarly Hill. The turbine produces approximately three gigawatt hours of power, enough to power around 290 homes for a year. The revenue earned by the turbine helps deliver a number of projects and provides the money to be able to operate a generous grant scheme for island residents and organisations.

The Trust is based at new offices near to Rousay's ferry terminal, and currently employs five people with the expectation this will increase to seven in 2024.

A Trust Manager for the island was employed by the REWDT for a two-year period from April 2023, progressing a host of new projects that are already making a positive impact to island life.

[www.rewdt.org](http://www.rewdt.org)



St Magnus Kirk, Egilsay © orkney.com



Cubbie Roo's Castle, Wyre © orkney.com

## Community Assets

In 2019 the Trust received £270k of funding from the Scottish Land Fund to acquire the 690 hectare Trumland Estate - around 15 per cent of the island's landmass - with the aims of protecting and enhancing biodiversity, maintaining and enhancing the condition of the environment, and providing access for recreation and educational purposes.

The Heart of Rousay boardwalk was completed in 2023, giving full access to the rich moorland habitat, and affording amazing vistas over the Orkney archipelago, along with interpretation boards giving information about the views, flora and fauna and energy production. An estate ranger is being recruited in 2024 to look at further land use, and the restoration of historic peatland harvesting areas.

The Trust has several other funding applications underway, to increase social housing in the island, create a marina and associated development, and bring the only hotel on the island into community ownership.

## Wellbeing

The Trust offers a wellbeing grant of up to £200 per annum for residents to cover all sporting, craft, art and other non-certificated learning and general well-being courses, workshops or events. As part of the Islands Wellbeing Project, which is managed by Voluntary Action Orkney, the Trust also employs a wellbeing co-ordinator who proactively organises events and activities for people.

With no public bus or taxi serving Rousay, the Trust operates a bookable 'dial-a-ride' community transport service, assisted by a grant from Orkney Island Council, to take residents to the shop, surgery or post office. The service also runs to Kirkwall to access other services and is fully booked on most occasions.

In 2024 the Trust introduced an e-bike rental/loan scheme for visitors and residents in Rousay with funding from the Energy Savings Trust.

Heart of Rousay boardwalk



# OUR ISLANDS, OUR PROJECTS



## Sanday

### About the island

Sanday is the largest of Orkney's North Isles, with a population of over 500. Famed for its idyllic beaches and coastline, Sanday has a rich natural habitat and is home to many breeds of birds and animals making it a mecca for wildlife enthusiasts. The island also boasts an impressive archaeological heritage, with many famous finds, such as the Viking Scar whalebone plaque.

The island is well served with facilities, including the Heilsa Fjold youth and community centre, the Sanday Community School, a swimming pool, healthy living centre, craft hub and heritage centre.

[www.orkney.com/explore/sanday](http://www.orkney.com/explore/sanday)



### The Sanday Development Trust

The Sanday Development Trust (SDT) was formed in 2004 as a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. It has a board of 10 directors and is tasked with delivering sustainable initiatives aimed at making the island economically prosperous, while also protecting its unspoilt environment.

Sanday Development Trust has two wholly owned subsidiaries - the Sanday Enterprises Community Interest Company (SECIC) and the Sanday Renewables Community Interest Company (SRCIC). The SECIC is currently being transferred into the main charity in order to help expand transport services to the community. The company operates the local bus service, which serves passengers who embark/disembark the ferry service linking Sanday to mainland Orkney. It also provides transport for the Sanday Experience visitor tours.

Meanwhile, the SRCIC was established to embark on a co-venturing agreement with SSE in the rebuilding and extending of the island's Spurness Wind Farm. SRCIC took out a loan in order to purchase a 10-per-cent stake in the wind farm, with income (after the annual loan repayment and interest is deducted) used by the SDT to fund its core activities and contribute towards the cost of major projects in partnership with external funders.

[www.sandaydt.org](http://www.sandaydt.org)



## Heilsa Fjold

Heilsa Fjold was one of the first SDT development projects and transformed two old schoolhouses into a community, youth and visitor centre. Heilsa Fjold is open to the community and visitors seven days a week from 9 AM until 8 PM. The centre provides a warm and welcoming place for people to meet, have a coffee, access free internet or work at one of the 'hot desks'. The centre is also used by visiting services, from osteopaths to vets, and for a variety of public events. In addition, Heilsa Fjold hosts youth drop-ins three times a week.



*Heilsa Fjold a community, youth and visitor centre*

## Care for Sanday

Care for Sanday is SDT's ambitious project to develop 12 new independent living homes in Sanday. When Sanday residents reach the point where they have certain health/mobility needs, usually the only option for them is to leave the island. This means leaving their friends, family and a community they may have lived in all of their life.

Care for Sanday is a new model for care in the community, with a health hub providing the residents of the 12 independent living homes with a place to meet and take part in social activities. The health hub will also offer a wide range of related services to the whole community, including podiatry and osteopathy. In addition, the project will provide respite care and a place for those returning from hospital who may not be ready to go home. And, finally, Care for Sanday will offer people the choice to receive end of life care on the island, as opposed to a hospital hundreds of miles away.



# OUR ISLANDS, OUR PROJECTS



## Shapinsay



### About the island

Shapinsay has a thriving population of around 300, with farming still the main industry on this fertile island. Regular ferry links to nearby Kirkwall, and a boat service operated by the Shapinsay Development Trust, make the island highly accessible for visitors and ideal for commuters working on Mainland.

The island's maritime heathland, cliffs and beaches provide the perfect natural habitat for seabirds including large gull and tern colonies.

The village of Balfour, with its imposing castle, is the main settlement on the island, with a range of local facilities on offer to residents and visitors alike.

[www.orkney.com/explore/shapinsay](http://www.orkney.com/explore/shapinsay)



Dooocott, Balfour Castle © orkney.com



Burroughston Broch © orkney.com



The Smithy Café



### Shapinsay Development Trust

The island's development trust - Shapinsay Development Trust (SDT) was formed in 2003 and currently employs 25 people - two full time and 23 part time - making SDT the largest employer on the island. Seven volunteer directors serve on the SDT board. The Trust aims to be the vehicle through which islanders can collectively help to maintain and improve their lives in Shapinsay.

[www.shapinsay.org.uk](http://www.shapinsay.org.uk)



## Housing for all

Creating affordable housing has been SDT's most recent focus, with its initial priority to attract families to the island and keep the school roll above the threshold for two teachers. The Trust achieved this goal by acquiring and renovating a pair of unoccupied properties, insulating and bringing them up to a good modern standard of living.

With those homes now occupied by families with children in the primary school, the Trust has turned its attention to the renovation of two more properties. Balfour Cottage was bought by SDT in February 2023 with the intention of converting it to four accessible, two-bedroom units to allow islanders with mobility issues to remain within their local community a bit longer. Rullinvoe was purchased by the Trust in February 2024 and work is underway to make it an attractive home for families looking to move to the island.

In addition to these projects, SDT purchased land in 2023 and has further plans to build two more family homes, along with two homes and three serviced sites for young people on the island. These projects have been made possible thanks to Rural Housing Fund, Scottish Land Fund and Orkney Islands Council grants.

## The Smithy – A community café

Shapinsay had lacked an eating establishment and pub since 2019 - The Smithy Café /restaurant closed that year due to prohibitive energy and running costs - so the islanders felt rekindling the establishment was a priority.

Shapinsay Development Trust purchased The Smithy building in December 2022, and, after extensive renovation and efficiency measures, the café re-opened in June 2023.

The project created part-time employment for 13 adults and seven under 18s, providing young people with the skills and confidence needed to help them go out into the wider world of work.

It's also made Shapinsay a more vibrant community, offering a place to eat out, get a takeaway, have a drink and meet friends. Crucially, it's helping attract visitors to the island, putting Shapinsay back on the tourism map.

The Smithy project was made possible thanks to funding from Highlands and Islands Enterprise, North Isles Landscape Partnership, Orkney Islands Council, Shapinsay Community Council and Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES).



*The Smithy café, Shapinsay*



# OUR ISLANDS, OUR PROJECTS



## Stromness



### About the town

Stromness is Orkney's second largest town, with a population of around 1,800. With its narrow winding streets, terraces of houses and steep passageways leading to its iconic waterfront and harbour, Stromness is a firm favourite with visitors, and an inspiration for writers and artists.

Stromnessians have traditionally prided themselves on their outward looking and pioneering spirit, and it remains a strong and vibrant community. For centuries, the town has looked to the sea, from maritime explorers like John Rae (credited with discovering the final section of the North-West Passage in the 19th century) to a contemporary focus on renewable marine technologies, fishing and nautical training.

The town's busy harbour acts as one of Orkney's key arrival points for ferries from the Scottish mainland, as well as serving local inter-island ferries, marine and renewables industries and smaller cruise ships.

Although Stromness has benefitted from a concerted period of regeneration over the past 20 years, and is now well served with community facilities, the town faces challenges around local accommodation, business retention and investment, seasonal tourism, and maintenance of the built heritage, particularly in the face of climate change.

[www.orkney.com/explore/stromness](http://www.orkney.com/explore/stromness)



John Rae statue at Pier Head



Stromness Museum tour



STROMNESS  
COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
TRUST



### The Stromness Community Development Trust

Stromness Community Development Trust (SCDT) was established in 2006 and works with statutory authorities, voluntary organisations and local residents to facilitate developments for the benefit of the community.

Following the successful employment of a temporary Development Officer post in 2017, SCDT was keen to use the momentum created to establish a more permanent Development Officer position for the town, achieving this goal in 2019, thanks to funding from the LEADER programme and economic development support from Orkney Islands Council. Since then, the SCDT has driven a number of projects in the town.

[www.stromnessorkney.com/about/](http://www.stromnessorkney.com/about/)



## Yule Log Pull and Stromness Hogmanay Event

Stromness' unique Yule Log Pull community competition was revived on Hogmanay in 2017, as part of the town's Per Mare 200 celebrations, marking 200 years since it became a Burgh of Barony. The competition, which had last been played in 1937, pits people living in the north end of the town against those in the south, with the two teams battling in a tug of war involving a huge log. The log has to be dragged through the streets to opposing goals at either end of the town, bringing the whole community together for some good-natured rivalry and fun during the dark days of winter.

Funded by the Orkney LAG Community Led Local Development Fund, the Yule Log Pull has been jointly organised by SCDT and the Stromness Yule Log Pull committee – made up of an equal number of 'northender' and 'soothender' volunteers. Since its revival, the event has continued to evolve and generate interest. In 2018, to celebrate Event Scotland's Year of Young People, a Junior Log Pull was added to the competition. The event has previously been supported by Event Scotland's Winter Festivals Fund, providing money for essential expenses, such as event safety, marketing costs and a fireworks display. Since 2017, the event has also been backed by many local companies and businesses through in-kind donations.

In 2021, thanks to funding from Orkney Island's Council's Culture Fund, a short film featuring the 2019 competitions was released.



## Southend Play Park

The Southend Play Park in Stromness has been a focal point for the town's young people for generations, providing an important amenity for local people and visitors. However, much of the existing play equipment had deteriorated to the point where it needed removal, prompting SCDT to launch a redevelopment plan in 2018.

Funding towards the £72,000 redevelopment costs was secured by SCDT from the LEADER programme, and Orkney Island's Council Community Development Fund, with additional cash raised by the local community, and donations received from businesses and the Stromness Community Council.

Work on the play park began in the summer of 2019, starting with the removal of the old equipment before landscaping and groundwork. New handcrafted features – including a Viking ship and sea monster – were specially made for the park, with The Orkney Woodland Project and Woodland Trust Scotland kindly supporting the project by donating a variety of native trees and shrubs, as well as recycled stakes and guards. The COVID-19 pandemic caused delays with the project, but a huge effort to finish saw it officially opened to the community in spring 2021.



# OUR ISLANDS, OUR PROJECTS



## Stronsay

### About the island

Stronsay, one of Orkney's outer North Isles, offers a captivating blend of natural beauty, rich history, and vibrant community life. At around three miles wide and six miles long, Stronsay is a relatively small island but one with a big personality. Its diverse landscape ranges from stunning sandy beaches to rugged cliffs and fertile farmland. Once a busy hub for the herring fishing and kelp processing industries, Stronsay's economy now relies on a mix of agriculture, inshore fishing, tourism and crafts.

With a population of around 350 residents, the island maintains a strong sense of community spirit, evident in the various events and activities organised throughout the year, from traditional festivals to arts and crafts workshops.

[www.orkney.com/explore/stronsay](http://www.orkney.com/explore/stronsay)



Stronsay  
Development  
Trust



### The Stronsay Development Trust

The Stronsay Development Trust was established in August 2004 and is charged with promoting the sustainability of the island by gathering ideas from residents, identifying projects, and turning these into fully realised community assets.

A major project for the Trust has been the building of a 900Kw community wind turbine, installed in 2012, with income generated by the device used to assist local projects.

And, after a successful funding award from the Scottish Land Fund, the Trust has been able to purchase an existing, three-bedroomed property on Stronsay for refurbishment and rental as family accommodation.

The Trust is run by volunteer Trustees, and employs a Development Officer, Wellbeing Coordinator and Recycling Officer, all on a part-time basis, as well as other project-specific posts.

[www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/sdt/](http://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/sdt/)



## Stronsay Hotel

Thanks to combined funding from the Scottish Land Fund, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, and Orkney Islands Council, the Trust has transformed the historic Stronsay Hotel, in the village of Whitehall, into a vibrant, multi-use community facility.

The project, completed in 2023, retained the hotel's traditional hospitality features, such as its welcoming bar and comfortable rooms, but added a host of modern amenities, including versatile multi-functional rooms, a state-of-the-art kitchen and ample storage facilities.

By preserving the built heritage of the hotel, while adapting to meet the island's current needs, the project has created a space that will continue to serve and enrich the lives of residents and visitors alike. At the same time, the project has created up to five jobs and numerous training opportunities locally. A community garden is also planned



*Stronsay Hotel*



## Stronsay Wellbeing Project

The Island Wellbeing Project is a partnership between Voluntary Action Orkney and the Development Trusts of Hoy, Sanday, Shapinsay, Stronsay, and Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre. Each Development Trust employs a Community Wellbeing Coordinator.

The aim of the project is to improve the wellbeing of island residents. It uses a very broad definition of wellbeing which encompasses health, economic, social and place wellbeing.

The project does this through the development of community-led initiatives and the provision of generalised one-to-one support. This dual role enables coordinators to respond to the immediate needs of the community, whilst developing long-term capacity.

In Stronsay, the Wellbeing Project has yielded tangible results for island residents, driving everything from wildlife conservation initiatives and the promotion of healthy lifestyles through its Paths for All Health Walks, to the development of a local Men's Shed that's become a hub for community support. The Stronsay Wellbeing Coordinator also offers discreet one-on-one assistance to help with financial challenges, combating loneliness, or accessing essential services.



# OUR ISLANDS, OUR PROJECTS



## Westray

### About the island

Westray, affectionately known as the 'Queen of the Isles', supports a thriving community of around 600 people. This large and fertile island possesses a strong farming tradition, but it also has a diverse range of local businesses, particularly in the food, creative and tourism sectors. Rich in archaeology and wildlife, with stunning cliffs and beaches, Westray is a popular destination for visitors.

Despite its current prosperity, Westray has historically faced the same challenges as other islands, particularly in terms of depopulation, housing provision and care for the elderly.

[www.orkney.com/explore/westray](http://www.orkney.com/explore/westray)



Notland Castle, Westray © orkney.com



### Westray Development Trust

The Westray Development Trust was formed to drive development initiatives on the island, with the aim of ensuring a more sustainable future for residents. The Trust has its origins in a major conference held on the island in 1998 to address a declining population, decreasing numbers of jobs available to young people, and the falling school roll. The event ultimately sparked the formation of the Westray Development Group, which in turn became the Westray Development Trust (WDT) in 1999.

In 2009 - recognising the need to reduce dependency on grants with some kind of income stream - the WDT set up a trading subsidiary, Westray Renewable Energy (WRE). A 900kW community turbine was up and running in Westray three years later, providing an income for community led development on the island.

The WDT office now has 4.7 full-time equivalent staff, including an operations manager, admin & finance officer, admin assistant and wellbeing coordinator, with additional part-time posts created by the island's Höfn youth centre, Here 2 Help, community garden and housing projects.

[www.westraydevelopmenttrust.co.uk](http://www.westraydevelopmenttrust.co.uk)

# Westray Development Trust - key projects

## Here 2 Help

In partnership with Age Concern Orkney, the WDT has supported the development of a home care support service for members of the community aged 60 and over who might need a little help to make life easier and more comfortable.

Launched in 2015, Here 2 Help excludes personal care, but can offer assistance with housework, laundry, shopping, preparing meals or even stocking the freezer with home cooked meals. Service providers are employed by WDT and are all disclosure checked, trained and insured. Over a dozen island households are now supported by the Here 2 Help team.



*Höfn - which means 'safe haven' in Old Norse*

## Höfn Youth Centre

The Höfn drop-in youth centre was opened by WDT in 2000, after the community identified a need to provide the island's young people with a warm and safe space to gather. The popular centre was refurbished by the Trust in 2014.

Open to all 12-18-year-olds in Westray, it's a unique facility with no adults on site. The centre's users are responsible for cleaning up and generally making good choices while using the drop-in, following rules and guidelines they've created themselves. The centre has allocated sessions for its members, previously discussed and agreed with parents and children.

In addition to insurance covering all kinds of activities for young people, the centre holds PRS licences, enabling members to watch movies and listen to music while enjoying the Höfn. Wi-Fi is also available in the centre, with strict restrictions imposed and content filters to suit an audience aged 12-17.

Although the Höfn (which means 'safe haven' in Old Norse) is unstaffed, a team of support workers are on call during sessions for any young people needing help.



This project is funded by the Scottish Government's Community Led Local Development Fund, as part of the Scottish Rural Delivery Programme, and is delivered by the Orkney Local Action Group in collaboration with the Orkney Development Trusts, Orkney Islands Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

# OUR ISLANDS, OUR PROJECTS

North Walls, Hoy



*Hoy*



## About the island

Hoy means 'High Island' from the Old Norse 'Haey'. It is the second largest island in Orkney, at 57 square miles, with a population of around 400. The north and west of Hoy are hilly and more akin to the Scottish Highlands in character, whereas the south and east of the island are low-lying and fertile.

Hoy is steeped in history with sites dating from prehistoric times, through the Viking period and into the 20th century. Lyness, in the south of the island, was a key naval base during both world wars and is now home to the outstanding Scapa Flow Museum.

The richness of Hoy's heritage is equalled by its treasure trove of natural history, from unique plant communities normally associated with mountain areas, to extensive bird life, including white-tailed and golden eagles. Much of North Hoy makes up the RSPB Hoy Nature Reserve.

Soaring sea cliffs, the iconic Old Man of Hoy rock stack, breathtaking Rackwick Bay and the dramatic summits of Ward Hill and Cuilag, make Hoy a favourite destination for walkers and adventurers.

[www.orkney.com/explore/hoy-graemsay](http://www.orkney.com/explore/hoy-graemsay)

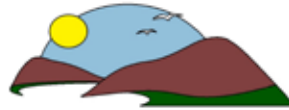


Rackwick, Hoy



Hackness Martello Tower and Battery, Hoy

Island of Hoy Development Trust



## The Island of Hoy Development Trust (IoHDT)

The Island of Hoy Development Trust (IoHDT) is a charitable organisation founded in 2006 with the aim of enhancing the social, educational, economic and environmental aspects of the island. The Trust is a not-for-profit organisation but owns a commercial trading subsidiary, Hoy Energy Ltd, which operates a 900kW wind turbine. This enterprise provides a long-term income stream to support the Trust and its work.

The Trust provides assistance to island-based community groups and social enterprises, but also runs a number of projects in its own right. The Trust is run by a volunteer board of directors and currently supported by a finance officer and project development officer.

[www.hoyorkney.com/iohdt](http://www.hoyorkney.com/iohdt)



Longhope, Hoy

## Wartime heritage

In 2013, the IoHDT gained funding from the ScotGrad Graduate Placement Scheme, Orkney Islands Council's Community Development Fund and the Heritage Lottery Fund's Sharing Heritage Grant Scheme to undertake a 12-month study of the Island's rich World War Two (WWII) archaeological heritage.

The Legacies of Conflict project was launched at a time of heightened global interest in wartime heritage, fuelled by the 70th anniversary of WWII, and when many of the derelict standing remains of the era in Hoy appeared to be reaching a critical 'point of no return' in their rate of decay. It built partly upon initiatives and interest for Hoy's wartime heritage initially stimulated by the Scapa Flow Landscape Partnership Scheme of 2009-2012. Redevelopment work at the Scapa Flow Visitor Centre & Museum, which reopened as the Scapa Flow Museum in 2023, also highlighted the value of an island-wide wartime heritage evaluation project for cooperating with and mutually supporting larger initiatives interpreting Hoy's rich wartime heritage.

Full details on the project can be found at <https://hoYorkney.com/attractions/hoy-history/wartime-heritage/>

## Community bus service

The trust has operated a 'hail and ride' community bus service in Hoy since 2013. The buses, which can carry up to 16 passengers at a time, run between Longhope and the ferry terminal at Lyness. Additional Sunday services meet the morning and evening passenger ferry sailings between Stromness and Moaness, in the north of Hoy.



*MV Graemsay, Moaness Pier, Hoy*



*Hoy Development Trust bus service*

