



Item: 6

Asset Management Sub-committee: 4 November 2025.

Corporate Asset Management Plan.

Report by Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.

1. Overview

- 1.1. The Corporate Asset Management Plan, 2026 - 2031 (CAMP) provides an integrated framework for the management, renewal and optimisation of the Council's physical assets.
- 1.2. The plan describes the Council's approach to corporate asset management and establishes a clear, corporate direction for how the Council will maintain, adapt, and rationalise its assets in response to financial pressures, climate challenges, demographic change and statutory compliance. It sets out a consistent methodology for prioritisation, performance monitoring, and review, ensuring that investment decisions are transparent, sustainable, and aligned with Council priorities.
- 1.3. The new Plan captures significant changes across the Council's property, infrastructure, and operational portfolios, including updated subsidiary plans for Property, Roads, Waste, Fleet and Plant, Burial Grounds, ICT, Housing, Open Spaces and Heritage, Harbours, and Airfields. Strategies and Asset Management plans in these areas have been examined and factored into this Corporate Asset Management Plan.
- 1.4. The Plan has also been developed through collaboration with relevant services and asset owners. Input has been provided by services across the Council including Airfields, Infrastructure and Roads Services, Education, Leisure and Culture, and Housing, ensuring that the document reflects both operational realities and long-term service requirements.
- 1.5. The collective contributions have strengthened the Plan's evidence base. Each section identifies the principal aims, objectives and strategic direction for that asset category, incorporating the latest investment priorities and governance arrangements through the updated Capital Project Appraisal (CPA) process.

- 1.6. This version of the CAMP is more strategic, better integrated, and reflects the maturity the Council has now gained in asset management — shifting from data consolidation and backlog reduction towards evidence-based prioritisation, lifecycle planning, and sustainable reinvestment.
- 1.7. In parallel, a series of focused reviews are underway to inform the Council's medium-term asset strategy. These include comprehensive reviews of the Schools Estate (via the Learning Estate Strategy), the Office and Operational Estate, Fleet and Transport, and IT infrastructure. Each review aims to improve efficiency, condition, and utilisation, supporting service transformation and the transition to net zero. The Council is also engaging with partners to share best practice in learning environments, fleet decarbonisation, and sustainable property management.
- 1.8. The CAMP is a five-year framework for how the Council will manage, invest in, and rationalise its asset portfolio to support service delivery, financial sustainability, and strategic priorities. It replaces the prior CAMP 2019–2023.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Sub-committee:
 - i. Approve the Corporate Asset Management Plan 2026 to 2031, attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

3. Key Changes

- 3.1. Compared to the 2019 CAMP, this version introduces several important enhancements:
 - Modernised subsidiary asset plans: updated Roads (RAMP & RMMP), an updated PAMP, a new ICT & Cybersecurity Strategy and ICT Asset Plan, and incorporation of strategic housing plans.
 - A shift from “establishing frameworks” to “delivering change” — for example, the complete renewal of core ICT infrastructure and service-led transformation (Health & Social Care case management, Fleet Management system).
 - A stronger governance alignment via the 2024–2029 Capital Strategy and revised Capital Project Appraisal (CPA) process, ensuring investment decisions are more robustly tested for deliverability, risk, and return.
 - Embedding resilience, sustainability, and carbon reduction more deeply into asset objectives across categories.

- Explicit consideration of service consequences, affordability constraints and long-term life-cycle cost models rather than capital-led thinking alone.

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Implications of Report

- 1. Financial:** There are no immediate financial implications arising from the Corporate Asset Management Plan 2026 to 2031, attached as Appendix 1 to this report. Budgets are constrained and significant funding pressures exist across the Council and therefore any additional revenue or capital expenditure resulting from approval of the Corporate Asset Management Plan 2026 to 2031 will require to come forward through the budget setting process, or through the Capital Project Appraisal process, for consideration. Any capital investment must be affordable to the Council and comply with the Prudential Code for borrowing.
- 2. Legal:** The Council must show that it is securing best value (section 1, Local Government in Scotland Act 2003).
- 3. Corporate Governance:** Not applicable.
- 4. Human Resources:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.
- 5. Equalities:** No equalities implications are anticipated from the report recommendations. The report concerns the strategic approach to asset management and is about high level thinking about various types of assets and all decisions ultimately come from that future thinking and dedicated decision making process, and there are no actions/decisions intimated within the draft CAMP that would have specific equalities implications.
- 6. Island Communities Impact:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.
- 7. Links to Council Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:
 - ☐ Growing our economy.
 - ☒ Strengthening our Communities.
 - ☒ Developing our Infrastructure.
 - ☒ Transforming our Council.
- 8. Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:
 - ☐ Cost of Living.
 - ☐ Sustainable Development.
 - ☒ Local Equality.

☐ Improving Population Health.

9. **Environmental and Climate Risk:** Sustainable energy benefits and reduced carbon emissions can be achieved through investment in renewable and low carbon energy systems.
10. **Risk:** There is potential for increased property costs and inefficiencies arising from ineffective property management.
11. **Procurement:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.
12. **Health and Safety:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.
13. **Property and Assets:** The report and draft Corporate Asset Management Plan 2026-2031 aim to make effective and efficient use of assets, including Property Assets a core function of the Council's objectives.
14. **Information Technology:** The report and draft Corporate Asset Management Plan 2026-2031 aim to make effective and efficient use of assets, including ICT Assets a core function of the Council's objective
15. **Cost of Living:** None directly related to the recommendations in this report.

List of Background Papers

- Corporate Asset Management Plan 2019-2023
- Council Plan 2023–2028 and Council Delivery Plan 2023-2028
- Capital Strategy 2024–2029 and updated Capital Project Appraisal (CPA) Procedure
- Property Asset Management Plan (PAMP) 2024–2029
- Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP) 2023–2028 and Roads Management and Maintenance Plan (RMMP) 2023–2028
- Fleet and Plant Asset Management Plan (FPAMP) 2013–2018 (update pending)
- Waste and Resource Management Strategy (2025)
- ICT and Cybersecurity Strategy 2025-2029
- ICT Asset Management Plan 2021–2026
- Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2025-2029
- Harbours Masterplan Phase 1 2020 and Offshore Energy Development Strategy 2025
- Physical Activity and Wellbeing Strategy (2025) Play Area Strategy (2021)
- Local Development Plan

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Draft Corporate Asset Management Plan 2026 to 2031.



Corporate Asset Management Plan

2026-2031

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1. Introduction

The Corporate Asset Management Plan (CAMP) 2026–2031 sets out Orkney Islands Council's strategic approach to the stewardship of all assets under its control over the next five years. It provides a single, corporate framework for how the Council will plan, use, maintain, invest in, share, and, where appropriate, dispose of land, buildings, infrastructure, fleet, and other key resources.

The purpose of the CAMP is to ensure that the Council's asset base is aligned with service delivery needs, financial resources, and statutory obligations, delivering Best Value for the people of Orkney. It supports corporate priorities set out in the Council Plan and is written to align with national policy objectives, including Scotland's target of net zero by 2045, climate adaptation, community empowerment, and the delivery of accessible public services.

This plan covers the full lifecycle of assets, from acquisition through maintenance and improvement to eventual disposal or repurposing and provides a structured framework for making decisions based on whole-life cost, social value, and environmental impact. The CAMP covers the scale and categories of the Council's asset base; the governance model and allocation of responsibilities for decision-making and budgets; strategic principles such as applying the investment hierarchy to prioritise managing demand, re-utilisation and refurbishment. It facilitates for building new when essential; condition, suitability, and utilisation assessments conclude there is need - to inform investment; statutory compliance and maintenance regimes; the capital investment and improvement programmes and disposal including asset transfer; the key performance indicators frameworks such as condition, running costs, utilisation, and carbon emissions; and the integration of net zero and climate resilience measures.

This CAMP is set in a challenging financial climate. Across the public sector, resources are under significant pressure, with rising costs, competing demands, and tightening budgets. These constraints require the Council to take a cautious, evidence-based approach to all asset decisions, ensuring that every investment is justified, every disposal maximises value, and that operational efficiency is continually improved. Difficult choices will be unavoidable, and the emphasis will be on extracting the greatest possible public benefit from a leaner, more sustainable asset base.

Through this CAMP, Orkney Islands Council will ensure that assets are safe, efficient, sustainable, and responsive to the needs of communities, while maximising value from every pound spent. The plan will be reviewed regularly to monitor progress and adapted where necessary to respond to emerging challenges, opportunities, and changes in service delivery requirements.

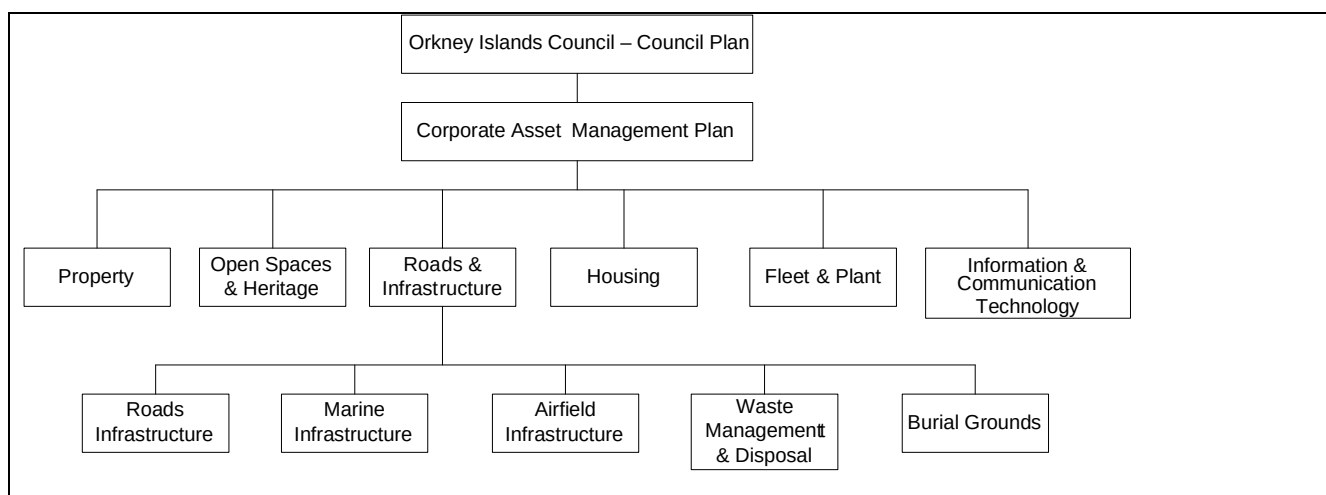
2.Executive Summary

The Corporate Asset Management Plan 2026–2031 defines how Orkney Islands Council will manage, maintain, invest in, and, where appropriate, rationalise its diverse portfolio of assets over the next five years. It continues the integrated corporate approach embedded during the 2013–2018 and 2019–2023 plans, ensuring that all investment decisions are considered within a systematic appraisal process linked to the Council’s updated Capital Project Appraisal framework. The plan supports the delivery of the Council Plan and national objectives, including the statutory duty to secure Best Value, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the principles of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

The scope of the plan covers physical asset categories under the Council’s control: property (operational and non-operational), open spaces and heritage, roads infrastructure, waste management and disposal, burial grounds, housing, marine infrastructure, fleet and plant, and information and communications technology.

Within each category, the plan sets out the context, aims, objectives, and strategic direction, with clear links to statutory compliance, condition and suitability standards, maintenance priorities, investment needs, and performance monitoring. It recognises the interdependencies between different asset types, particularly where strategic projects or service changes cut across multiple portfolios.

The plan is underpinned by the “building blocks” of effective asset management established in previous iterations: robust data on condition, suitability, sufficiency, revenue costs, accessibility, asset value, and energy performance. These measures support evidence-based decision-making, enable effective prioritisation, and allow the Council to monitor performance over time.



The Corporate Asset Management Plan is supported by a set of detailed subsidiary plans, each applying the corporate framework to a specific asset category. These set out the context, condition, statutory duties, performance measures, maintenance strategies, and investment priorities for their area, ensuring evidence-based decisions and Best Value. These include:

- Property Asset Management Plan 2024–2029
- Roads Asset Management Plan 2023–2028
- Waste and Resource Management Strategy 2025–2030
- Burial Grounds Management Plan 2021 (with Code of Practice and Customer Charter)
- ICT Asset Management Plan 2021–2026 and ICT & Cybersecurity Strategy 2025–2029

It also aligns with the plans and programmes concerned with Fleet Management, Open Spaces, Play Areas, Airfield Investment and Housing.

The corporate governance structure remains central, aligning with the Corporate Leadership Team and the Capital Programme Board, with political oversight via Asset Management Sub-committee, Policy and Resources Committee, Development and Infrastructure Committee and Member/Officer Working Groups.

Orkney's unique geography and dispersed communities mean that the Council's asset base includes infrastructure exposed to the Islands' environments and climate-related risks.

These factors heighten the importance of targeted investment, resilient design, and proactive maintenance to ensure continuity of essential community services.

The plan also recognises the need to adapt to climate change impacts, decarbonise operations in line with net zero targets, and incorporate renewable energy, low-carbon technologies, and biodiversity considerations into asset planning.

The financial environment for the 2026–2031 period is markedly more challenging than in earlier years. Revenue budgets and capital allocations are under sustained pressure across the public sector, with inflation, rising operational costs, and competing service priorities limiting available resources. This will require disciplined decision-making, careful phasing of capital commitments, and a stronger emphasis on whole-life costing, rationalisation, and partnership working.

The plan sets a cautious tone, acknowledging that not all desirable projects will be affordable, and that difficult choices will be necessary to maintain essential services while preserving long-term asset value. By 2030, the aim is for the Council to hold a leaner, better-performing, and more sustainable asset base that is fit for purpose, compliant with statutory requirements, and aligned with service priorities. Progress will be monitored and reported, and the plan will be reviewed as required to respond to emerging challenges, opportunities, and legislative changes.

3. Background

3.1. The Wider Context

Asset management in local government is shaped by statutory duties under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 to secure Best Value, the national commitment to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045, and the need for climate-resilient, adaptable public assets.

Since the last Corporate Asset Management Plan (2019–2023), the operating environment has been influenced by the Infrastructure Investment Plan, evolving building safety and accessibility requirements, and post-pandemic shifts in service delivery, including increased digital access, flexible working, and place-based approaches. Within the education estate, national policy is guided by the Scottish Government's Learning Estate Strategy, which promotes energy-efficient, accessible learning environments.

These frameworks shape how Orkney plans, maintains, and invests in its infrastructure, particularly in rural contexts where accessibility, sustainability, and cost pressures are heightened. All of this must take place against a backdrop of tighter budgets, rising costs, and the need for rigorous investment prioritisation.

The Council's refreshed Capital Strategy introduced an updated Capital Project Appraisal (CPA) process to ensure all proposed capital investments are assessed consistently, transparently, and in line with corporate priorities. Each project must demonstrate strategic fit, affordability, deliverability, and contribution to statutory duties such as Best Value and net zero targets.

The updated process incorporates whole-life costing, risk assessment, and evaluation against the drivers set out, and reviews business cases, monitors capital programme delivery, and ensures alignment with the Council Plan and subsidiary asset management strategies.

3.2. The Building Blocks of Asset Management.

Current best practice emphasises a consistent set of drivers that support transparent, evidence-based decision-making across the portfolio. These are assessed through structured surveys, statutory inspections, and financial monitoring:

Driver	Purpose	Application in Orkney Islands Council
Condition	Measures the physical state of an asset, identifying maintenance needs and risks.	Regular review and reporting using standard grading to prioritise works.
Suitability	Assesses how well the asset meets current and projected service needs.	Service-led reviews, especially in education, care, and operational facilities.
Sufficiency	Evaluates whether the asset has the capacity to meet demand.	Monitored via utilisation data, demographics, and service forecasts.
Revenue Cost	Captures the full running and maintenance costs over the asset's lifecycle.	Integrated into capital and revenue planning to inform decisions via the Capital Strategy and CPA process.
Accessibility	Ensures compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and other accessibility requirements.	Accessibility audits with prioritisation of works in the annual improvement programmes.
Value and Opportunity	Records current and replacement value for accounting, insurance, and investment purposes.	Regular valuation cycles aligned with financial reporting, considering also the value opportunities assets may have in alternative developments
Energy Performance	Measures efficiency and carbon impact to support net zero targets.	Energy audits linked to the Carbon Management Plan.

Towards 2030

The 2019–2023 CAMP strengthened governance, improved asset data, and supported investment in infrastructure and facilities. The 2025–2030 CAMP builds on this foundation but recognises the more constrained financial environment. Key shifts include embedding climate resilience and energy performance into all asset decisions, aligning more closely with national policy frameworks, targeting investment where it will have the greatest service and community impact, and pursuing asset rationalisation and partnership models to maximise value from the Council's portfolio.

4. Asset Management Planning

4.1. Financial Climate

The Council manages a diverse portfolio of assets, from schools and care facilities to marine infrastructure, housing, open spaces, and ICT systems.

In the years from the approval of the previous CAMP, capital investment delivered significant improvements in service delivery and facilities provision, including the construction of a new care facility in Stromness and with a second due for completion in Kirkwall in late 2025, significant vessel replacements for Scapa Flow, airfields infrastructure investment across six isles, housing developments, marine infrastructure works to piers and marine infrastructure, continuing upgrades to the education estate including the expansion of St Andrews Primary School, expansion at Glaitness School, the construction of a new Nursery, and a full renewal of the Council's ICT core networking, server, storage and cybersecurity infrastructure including a disaster recovery arrangement and new telephone switchboard.

However, the financial landscape for 2026–2031 is more challenging. Revenue budgets face sustained pressure from inflation, energy prices, and rising service demands. Capital resources are expected to be significantly reduced, with a core programme of improvements likely to average around £5.50 million, which exceeds the annual allocation of General Capital Grant from the Scottish Government.

In this environment, the Council must apply a disciplined approach to prioritising projects, with the updated Capital Strategy and Capital Project Appraisal (CPA) process providing the framework for decision-making. Every proposal is now assessed on its strategic fit, affordability, deliverability, and whole-life value, ensuring that scarce resources are directed to projects with the greatest public benefit.

4.2. Approach to Asset Management

Since the introduction of the first Corporate Asset Management Plan, the Council has embedded a corporate, centrally coordinated approach to asset planning and oversight. Historically, asset management was undertaken within individual service areas, which developed strong knowledge of needs but lacked corporate coordination. The shift to a central model has brought improved strategic oversight, consistent use of asset data, better cross-service collaboration, and more transparent prioritisation of investment.

This corporate approach was strengthened through targeted reviews, which identified surplus or underused assets for disposal, and by consolidating governance arrangements to align asset management with capital planning.

Asset condition, suitability, sufficiency, revenue cost, accessibility, value, and energy performance are monitored corporately, with decisions informed by statutory compliance data, independent condition surveys, and service need analysis and engagement with statutory services including planning and building standards. Asset management processes are subject to internal audit, Best Value review, and regular elected member scrutiny.

4.3. Framework for Asset Management Planning and Governance

Governance now follows the arrangements set out in the Capital Strategy 2024–2029 and CPA Procedure, integrating strategic oversight, operational delivery, and member scrutiny:

- **Capital Programme Board**, chaired by the Chief Executive, exercises executive oversight of the CPA process and capital programme, evaluating project proposals and monitoring delivery.
- **Capital Programme Team** supports services in preparing CPAs, ensures consistency of information, manages the capital pipeline, and monitors programme risk and performance.
- **Capital Programme Advisory Board**, meeting twice yearly, provides an informal forum for senior members, committee chairs, and Project Sponsors to review progress and advise on programme direction.
- **Project Teams**, led by a Project Sponsor at service level, are responsible for delivery throughout the project lifecycle, from strategic outline case to completion.
- **Asset Management Sub-committee** receives reports on the Corporate Asset Improvement Programme, ICT Corporate Replacement Programme, the Property Asset Management Plan, the Plant and Vehicle Replacement programme and revenue expenditure. It scrutinises performance and ensures alignment with corporate priorities and statutory duties.
- **Education, Leisure and Housing Committee** receives reports on the Learning Estate, Leisure assets and Housing Assets including the Housing Revenue Account.
- **Development and Infrastructure Committee** receives reports on the Road Asset Management Plan, waste strategy and fleet management, while the Harbour Authority Sub-committee scrutinises harbours' asset projects and programmes.

This structure replaces the former Capital Planning and Asset Management Sub-group with a more formalised, process-driven arrangement that is integrated directly with the Council's capital programme and financial governance.

4.4. Carbon Management and Emissions

Emissions reduction remains a core asset management driver, with the Council's updated Carbon Management Strategy aligning with Scotland's net zero 2045 target. The Carbon Management Group, comprising officers and external partners such as EMEC and OREF, leads initiatives on renewable energy integration, low-carbon heating, electric and hydrogen vehicle infrastructure, and energy efficiency across the estate.

Energy performance data now feeds directly into CPA assessments to ensure that capital investment supports carbon reduction goals.

4.5. Links to Best Value

Best Value remains a statutory duty and a critical measure of the Council's asset management success. The updated CPA process directly supports this by embedding whole-life costing, robust option appraisal, and transparent decision-making. The Audit

Scotland Best Value Toolkit for Asset Management continues to be used to measure and improve performance, ensuring assets are safe, sustainable, and aligned to service needs.

4.6. Detailed Asset Management Plans for Each Asset Category

The Corporate Asset Management Plan is supported by subsidiary plans covering property, open spaces and heritage, roads, marine infrastructure, airfields, waste facilities, burial grounds, housing, fleet and plant, and ICT. Each plan is prepared in line with the corporate framework and CPA process, providing data-led analysis, investment priorities, and goals for each asset group. These plans are reviewed on their own cycles but must align with the overarching corporate approach to ensure integrated planning and prioritisation across the Council.

4.7. Operational Priorities by Asset Category (2026–2031)

Property – Deliver the 2024–2029 Property Asset Management Plan, rationalising the estate through strategic disposals, joint working with partners, and targeted reinvestment in priority buildings. Maintain a comprehensive programme of independent condition surveys and statutory compliance inspections. Deploy the corporate energy and water monitoring platform to support carbon reduction, integrating results into CPA evaluations. Improve accessibility and suitability across the portfolio to meet service requirements and statutory obligations.

Open Spaces and Heritage – Implement biodiversity-led grounds maintenance specifications in line with policy. Apply place-based planning to play area investment and prioritise upgrades for maximum community benefit. Ensure heritage assets are managed in compliance with statutory conservation requirements and integrated into sustainable tourism plans.

Roads Infrastructure – Deliver the Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP) and the associated Roads Maintenance Management Plan (RMMP) as the core frameworks for maintaining and improving the road network. Maintain SCOTS-aligned asset management planning, informed by annual high-speed condition surveys, visual inspections, and backlog assessments. Apply a risk-based inspection regime to target investment effectively. Review material specifications and road strengthening options to ensure resilience to climate impacts and integrate prioritisation to ensure best use of limited resources.

Marine Infrastructure – Continue with comprehensive condition inspections and prioritise projects in line with harbour strategies including the Harbours Master Plan Phase 1 and Phase 2 and the Offshore Energy Development Strategy (2025–2027). Integrate CPA into major marine infrastructure projects to ensure alignment with renewables sector growth, climate resilience, and operational efficiency.

Airfield Infrastructure – Maintain compliance with the Civil Aviation Authority inspection regime. Undertake regular condition assessments for runways, lighting, and navigational aids. Assess sustainability and prioritisation, particularly for small airfields serving remote communities.

Waste Management Facilities – Deliver the Waste and Resource Management Strategy approved in July 2025, focusing on waste minimisation, increased recycling, and sustainable disposal. Plan for infrastructure investment to meet regulatory change,

including Circular Economy legislation. Maintain partnership arrangements with Shetland Islands Council for energy recovery and landfill, ensuring long-term capacity and resilience.

Burial Grounds – Implement the 2021 Burial Grounds Management Plan, ensuring efficient and sensitive use of space. Carry out rolling five-year inspections of memorials and infrastructure, with findings feeding into CPA submissions for prioritised investment. Plan future provision in line with demographic trends and community needs.

Housing – Deliver the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2025–2029 in partnership with partners to meet housing needs. Maintain stock to the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing, with works prioritised via the housing asset database and performance reporting via the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Fleet and Plant – Development of a Fleet and Plant Asset Management Plan, will ensure accuracy of the asset register, that investment is balanced between maintenance and replacement, and that procurement favours low-carbon or alternative-fuel vehicles. Using relevant technologies and performance monitoring to inform operational and investment decisions.

ICT – Deliver the ICT Asset Management Plan 2021–2026, which provides a comprehensive inventory of IT hardware and infrastructure, with condition assessment, utilisation data, and lifecycle replacement priorities. Address the identified funding and replacement gap, where current cycles fall short of the required five-year depreciation standard.

The plan aligns ICT investment with the Corporate Asset Management Plan and the Council Delivery Plan. From 2025, all ICT capital programming and performance monitoring operate under the ICT & Cybersecurity Strategy 2025–2029, which replaces the earlier ICT Strategy 2021–2024.

This integrated strategy strengthens governance, resilience, digital skills, and cybersecurity, ensuring ICT supports corporate priorities and is embedded into the Council's governance framework. A revised ICT Asset Management Plan will be prepared for 2026 to reflect technological, service delivery, and security developments.

5. Property

5.1. Context

Property assets are essential to the services delivered by Orkney Islands Council. Managing these assets is a structured process that seeks to ensure best value for money from property holdings and to deliver improved performance in meeting strategic needs.



It is recognised that:

- Managing property assets effectively is a key driver of service transformation.
- Properties are at the centre of the public's perception of a local authority.
- The value of property assets and expenditure on construction and running the estate is significant.

Property is one of six generic categories of corporate asset identified by the Council. Although the property database holds the details of all the Council's properties—including infrastructure and Council housing—only buildings, except for Council housing, associated land, and surplus properties are reported in this section.

Properties are classified by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) as being either Operational or Non-Operational. The Council has refined its classification of property assets to improve accuracy and ensure compliance with CIPFA guidance.

CIPFA guidance distinguishes between operational and non-operational property within local authority asset management and accounting frameworks. The CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting, which aligns with International Financial Reporting

Standards, treats operational assets as Property, Plant and Equipment, while non-operational assets are categorised according to their purpose and valuation basis.

5.1.1. Operational properties

Operational properties are those held and used for the direct delivery of services or to support service provision, such as schools, libraries, offices, depots, care homes, and leisure centres.

The Learning Estate forms a vital part of the public sector property portfolio, encompassing all assets used for the delivery of education and lifelong learning. Its management is guided by the Learning Estate Strategy, jointly developed by the Scottish Government and COSLA in 2019, which sets out a long-term vision for schools and learning environments that are well-maintained, digitally enabled, inclusive, and low carbon. The Learning Estate Strategy sets out a clear vision for how the Council will align its educational property assets with national policy, community need, and improved outcomes. It focuses on the school estate and was developed in line with the national strategy *Connecting People, Places and Learning*. It is underpinned by 10 guiding principles that emphasise inclusion, condition, sustainability, digital capability and place.

Beyond the Learning Estate, the Council's operational property portfolio includes a wide range of assets supporting frontline and corporate services — offices, depots, stores, care homes, and community areas.

These properties are fundamental to daily service delivery, providing secure, accessible and efficient bases for operations across the mainland and isles. The Property Asset Management Plan 2024–2029 identifies a need to rationalise and modernise these assets to reduce energy consumption, support hybrid working and improve utilisation.

5.1.2. Non-Operational properties

In contrast, non-operational properties are not currently used in service delivery but remain in the authority's ownership. These may include surplus assets awaiting disposal or redevelopment, investment properties held to generate rental income or capital appreciation, and assets under construction.

5.2. Aim

To make more effective and efficient use of Orkney Islands Council's property assets in support of service delivery, community wellbeing, and long-term financial sustainability.

5.3. Objectives

The Council will deliver on the aims of the PAMP 2024–2029 by:

1. Embedding governance and corporate oversight

- o Ensuring property is managed as a corporate resource within the Council's governance framework.
- o Aligning property-related decisions with the Capital Project Appraisal (CPA) process and the Council Plan.

2. Basing decisions on measurable data

- o Using a centralised property information system to maintain real-time records of condition, utilisation, running costs, and compliance.
- o Supporting investment and disposal decisions through robust business cases and option appraisals.

3. Monitoring and improving performance through modern metrics

- o Tracking condition score improvements, carbon emission reductions, utility consumption per square metre, planned versus reactive maintenance ratios, estate utilisation rates, and cost per user.
- o Benchmarking against other Scottish local authorities via the Local Government Benchmarking Framework.

4. Maximising value from assets

- o Reviewing the operational and non-operational estate to ensure assets meet service and community needs.
- o Identifying opportunities for co-location, consolidation, or disposal where appropriate including through engagement with planning services.

5. Prioritising energy efficiency and decarbonisation/emissions reduction

- o Embedding net-zero emissions targets and carbon reduction requirements into capital projects and maintenance programmes.
- o Targeting investment towards energy performance improvements with measurable outcomes.

6. Managing the commercial estate effectively

- o Monitoring occupancy, income generation, and cost-to-income ratios.
- o Reviewing properties regularly to ensure alignment with economic development objectives.

7. Ensuring assets are safe, compliant, and accessible

- o Meeting statutory inspection and servicing requirements.
- o Ensuring accessibility standards are maintained and improved where possible.

8. Rationalising surplus property

- o Preparing assets for disposal in advance of vacancy.

9. Driving continuous improvement

- o Producing performance and intelligence dashboards for management review.
- o Integrating findings from property performance monitoring into future investment priorities.

5.4. Strategic Direction and Investment Requirements

The Council's property portfolio represents a significant long-term community asset base, encompassing roads, footpaths, schools, care establishments, operational buildings, piers, harbours, and recreational facilities. These assets are long-life in nature but require ongoing investment to remain fit for purpose.

Future investment requirements will be shaped by:

- The need to adapt to changing service delivery models.
- Rising maintenance costs and the challenge of balancing planned and reactive maintenance.
- Opportunities to reduce the estate's carbon footprint.
- The drive to optimise the use of space and consolidate where appropriate.

The Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy commits to:

- Allocating resources according to risk, priorities, funding, and performance.
- Reassessing sustainable expenditure levels annually.
- Using reserves strategically to manage timing of savings and invest in income generation.
- Setting a maximum annual capital expenditure limit linked to sustainable funding sources.

A corporate approach to property asset management—integrated with capital planning and supported by the CPA process—will continue to ensure that investment decisions are systematic, evidence-based, and aligned with the Council's long-term vision.

6. Open Spaces and Heritage

6.1. Context

Orkney's open spaces form a critical part of the Council's asset base. They encompass a wide range of provision including play areas, public parks, sports pitches, natural green space, coastal margins, and amenity planting areas. These assets support community wellbeing, recreation, biodiversity, and climate resilience, and they shape the lived environment of towns, villages, and isles.

The Council's Physical Activity and Wellbeing Strategy (2025) provides the most recent framework for leveraging active places for learning and active travel. Aligned to the Scottish Government's Physical Activity for Health – Scotland's National Framework, the strategy applies a systems-based approach to physical activity across multiple sectors and settings.

Orkney's Play Area Strategy (2021) sought investment and rationalisation in play facilities and introduced a categorisation of provision into local, neighbourhood, and destination play areas, setting standards for accessibility, quality, and long-term sustainability. The Strategy recognises challenges around an ageing asset base, varying levels of accessibility, and the need to balance community expectations with available funding.

Open spaces are also central to delivery of the Active Travel Strategy, the Climate Action Plan, and biodiversity duties under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. These wider drivers require that the Council's approach to open spaces goes beyond amenity value to include carbon sequestration, habitat connectivity, sustainable drainage, and equitable access to safe outdoor environments.

Heritage stewardship includes museums such as Orkney Museum, and notably the award-winning Scapa Flow Museum on Hoy. The Council also maintains the Orkney Archives, which hold local government records, photographs, audio-visual materials, and local publications—now under increasing pressure for additional, secure storage.

Heritage Assets most obviously includes some of Orkney's flagship cultural assets, including St Magnus Cathedral, whose iconic role is integral to Orkney's history and identity. As well as the cathedral, the Council also has many listed buildings within its portfolio.

6.2. Aim

To provide inclusive, sustainable, and high-quality open space and heritage provision that preserves Orkney's cultural and natural heritage, supports community well-being, biodiversity, and Orkney's distinctive sense of place.

6.3. Objectives

6.3.1. Corporate alignment

- Manage open spaces as a corporate asset integrated with other land and property portfolios.
- Align with strategic policies including the Play Area Strategy, Active Travel Strategy, Local Development Plan, and Climate Action Plan.

6.3.2. Investment and appraisal

- Ensure that capital investment in Council assets is subject to appraisal under the Capital Project Appraisal (CPA) process.
- Prioritise funding for assets that best meet community need, safety standards, and long-term sustainability.

6.3.3. Performance monitoring and data management

- Maintain an up-to-date inventory of play areas, pitches, cemeteries, and other open space assets.
- Use condition, suitability and sufficiency assessments to guide maintenance and rationalisation decisions.
- Benchmark quality of provision against national standards, including Play Scotland guidance and the Scottish Household Survey indicators on access to greenspace.

6.3.4. Best Value and continuous improvement

- Seek efficiencies by standardising equipment specifications and maintenance regimes.
- Benchmark service delivery with comparable authorities through APSE Performance Networks.
- Use the Climate Action Plan metrics (carbon sequestration, biodiversity enhancement) to evidence added value from open space investment.

6.3.5. Community engagement and equity

- Ensure community councils, schools, and local groups are engaged in shaping priorities for play and open spaces.
- Consider equality and inclusion in all provision, with an emphasis on accessible play equipment and barrier-free green routes.
- Support community-led initiatives, including transfer or co-management of certain facilities where appropriate.

6.3.6. Sustainability and climate resilience

- Enhance biodiversity value of open spaces through planting schemes, wildflower areas, and sustainable drainage features.
- Plan for long-term resilience to climate change, including coastal erosion and extreme weather impacts.
- Expand provision of active travel corridors linking open spaces with settlements.
- Integrate planning and provision of parks, open spaces, and heritage assets under corporate governance, with decisions grounded in strategies like the Play Area Strategy.
- Ensure asset condition, suitability, and accessibility through regular maintenance, inspections, and prioritised investment.
- Achieve Best Value in service delivery through benchmarking, efficient maintenance, and alignment with capital investment processes.
- Enhance community connection and use of heritage assets through programming, exhibitions, and volunteering partnerships.
- Safeguard and expand archives capacity while improving access to collections.

6.4. Strategic Direction and Investment Requirements

The Council holds stewardship of a significant number of play areas, parks, cemeteries, and landscaped grounds. The Play Area Strategy confirmed that rationalisation and reinvestment are required to maintain quality and safety across this portfolio. The priority is to focus resources on sites that deliver the greatest community benefit and meet defined standards of accessibility and inclusion.

Investment will continue to target high-value, sustainable heritage assets. Priorities include maintaining safe and accessible facilities in line with strategic plans, ongoing stewardship of the award-winning Scapa Flow Museum, addressing archives storage capacity.

Future investment will be considered within the Council's Capital Strategy and assessed through the CPA process. This approach ensures open space projects are judged alongside other asset classes and aligned to wider corporate priorities such as wellbeing, climate adaptation, and economic development.

The Council recognises that open space assets are not static. They require sustained revenue investment in grounds maintenance, equipment renewal, and biodiversity management. Pressures on resources mean that greater emphasis will be placed on partnership approaches, including community participation, external funding, and innovative land use.

7. Roads Infrastructure

7.1. Context

The road network is one of the Council's most visible and valuable assets, essential to the economic vitality, social cohesion, and resilience of Orkney. It comprises adopted roads, footways, cycle routes, street furniture, street lighting, drainage systems, and a range of structures such as culverts, retaining walls, and bridges. The network extends across the mainland and isles, serving as the critical link between homes, businesses, public services, ports, and airfields.

The Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP) and the Roads Maintenance and Management Plan (RMMP) provide the strategic and operational frameworks for managing this asset. The RAMP sets out the long-term vision, condition targets, and investment priorities for the network, while the RMMP defines inspection regimes, maintenance standards, and operational delivery models. Both documents are aligned to national guidance, including the Code of Practice for Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure and the SCOTS (Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland) performance framework.

The network consists of:

- Carriageways, highway drainage, and road markings.
- Footways, cycleways, paved verges, footpaths, and bridleways.
- Street lighting columns, lamps, cabling, feeder pillars, illuminated signs, and bollards.
- Traffic signals, pedestrian crossings, and school crossing lights.
- Signs, barriers, street furniture, and pedestrian safety infrastructure.
- Bridges, subways, culverts, retaining walls, sea walls, and other coastal defences.
- Winter maintenance facilities, vehicles, and grit bins.
- Flood prevention schemes and other water-related assets.
- Quarry operations, bus shelters, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

Over the last plan period, investment has prioritised surface preservation treatments to protect against water ingress and extend service life. While this has kept the network in relatively good overall condition compared to other Scottish authorities, structural deterioration is an increasing risk.

The coming years will see a continued pressure on the asset, with available funding no longer sufficient to maintain it in its current condition. Therefore it is inevitable that the asset will experience significant decline during the lifetime of this plan, unless additional funding can be identified,

7.2. Aim

To provide and maintain a road network that is safe, reliable, resilient, and supports sustainable economic growth, community wellbeing, and everyday life across Orkney.

7.3. Objectives

The Council will deliver its roads service in line with the RAMP and RMMP, focusing on:

7.3.1. Compliance and safety

- o Meeting or exceeding statutory inspection and maintenance requirements.
- o Maintaining readiness for adverse weather, coastal events, and climate impacts.
- o Ensuring that necessary repairs are undertaken promptly and to a high standard.

7.3.2. Performance monitoring and improvement

- o Using SCOTS performance measures and the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey (SRMCS) to track network condition.
- o Monitoring reactive versus planned maintenance ratios, cost per lane kilometre, and carbon footprint of operations.
- o Reporting regularly to elected members and the public on performance against targets.

7.3.3. Data-driven decision-making

- o Maintaining a complete and up-to-date asset inventory covering all roads-related infrastructure.
- o Using lifecycle planning models to optimise investment over the long term.
- o Integrating asset data with corporate systems to improve prioritisation and transparency.

7.3.4. Best value and efficient delivery

- o Applying the CPA process to assess and approve capital investment in roads infrastructure.
- o Coordinating works across services to reduce disruption and maximise efficiency.
- o Procuring services through compliant frameworks that deliver value for money and innovation.

7.3.5. Sustainability and climate resilience

- o Reducing material use through recycling and re-use.
- o Introducing low-carbon construction techniques and materials.
- o Strengthening assets to withstand extreme weather, flooding, and coastal erosion.

7.3.6. Stakeholder engagement

- o Consulting with communities, transport operators, and other stakeholders to inform priorities.
- o Supporting active travel initiatives and aligning with the Local Transport Strategy

7.4. Strategic Direction and Investment Requirements

The RAMP sets out the forward view for Orkney's Road network, identifying the scale of maintenance required to sustain its value and functionality. The RMMP translates these

strategic objectives into practical delivery actions, ensuring that resources are directed where they deliver the greatest long-term benefit.

Future investment will be guided by:

- Addressing structural weaknesses in priority sections of the network, particularly high-use and strategic routes.
- Managing the maintenance backlog while mitigating deterioration of currently serviceable assets.

Given ongoing financial pressures, the Council will need to balance essential maintenance with strategic improvements, seeking external funding where available and ensuring that all investment decisions are evidence-based, fully appraised, and aligned to corporate priorities.

8. Marine and Harbour Infrastructure

8.1. Context

Marine and harbour assets are a critical component of Orkney Islands Council's infrastructure portfolio. They include commercial and community harbours, piers, linkspans, mooring infrastructure, navigation aids, harbour buildings, and related operational facilities. The network plays a dual role: sustaining lifeline ferry services for island communities and supporting commercial, tourism, and energy-related activities centred around Scapa Flow and Orkney's wider maritime environment.

The Harbours Masterplan, for which Phase 1 was approved in 2020, provides a framework for modernising facilities, improving operational efficiency, meeting compliance obligations, and planning for growth. It identifies a sequence of priority projects across the harbour estate and sets out appraisal criteria, integrating with the Council's Capital Strategy.

The Offshore Energy Development Strategy (2025–2027) builds on this by aligning marine asset development with the growth of offshore renewable energy, hydrogen production, and associated supply chain opportunities. It includes committed investment in enabling infrastructure, notably £2.2 million towards pre-construction work for the Scapa Deep Water Quay, which is positioned as a key asset for offshore wind deployment and marine energy expansion.

8.2. Aim

To ensure Orkney's harbour and marine infrastructure is managed, maintained, and developed in a way that safeguards lifeline services, supports sustainable economic growth, and enhances the islands' position as a strategic maritime hub.

8.3. Objectives

We will:

- Maintain marine assets in a safe, compliant, and operationally effective condition through planned inspection and maintenance regimes.
- Implement capital projects in line with the Harbours Masterplan Phase 1, prioritising those that deliver greatest operational, economic, and community benefit.
- Align investment in marine infrastructure with the Offshore Energy Development Strategy to maximise economic return from renewables and offshore energy markets.
- Integrate harbour and marine asset planning into the Council's Capital Project Appraisal process to ensure all proposals are supported by robust business cases.
- Build resilience to climate change and extreme weather by incorporating adaptation measures into asset renewal and upgrade projects.
- Engage with stakeholders, including community representatives, industry partners, and national agencies, to ensure marine infrastructure continues to meet evolving needs.

8.4. Strategic Direction and Investment Requirements

The combined application of the Harbours Masterplan Phase 1 and the Offshore Energy Development Strategy ensures that both operational and development priorities are addressed within a coherent investment framework. This approach enables the Council to plan for lifeline ferry terminal renewals alongside major commercial port projects, ensuring that decisions are staged, affordable, and based on sound appraisal.

Short- to medium-term priorities include targeted reinvestment in existing linkspans and harbour structures to maintain service continuity, and preparatory works for major developments such as the Scapa Deep Water Quay. Investment will continue to be guided by the Capital Strategy and informed by risk-based asset condition assessments, with a focus on protecting revenue streams, enabling economic diversification, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of Orkney's marine estate.

9. Airfield Infrastructure

9.1. Context

The isles aerodrome infrastructure remains a critical part of Orkney's economy, culture, and community life, providing essential transport links and access to education, health, and other lifeline services for the North Isles. The Council owns and maintains six operational isles aerodromes (Eday, North Ronaldsay, Papa Westray, Sanday, Stronsay, and Westray), together with associated terminal buildings, fire facilities, aprons, parking, and communications infrastructure. In addition, the Council owns a hangar at Kirkwall Airport, leased to the Public Service Obligation (PSO) contract holder.

The Council Plan 2023–2028 places strong emphasis on connectivity as critical infrastructure, recognising that Orkney's prosperity, community wellbeing, and net-zero transition depend on reliable air, ferry, and road links. The airfields are therefore not only transport assets, but enablers of the islands' economy, renewable energy development, and wider sustainability agenda.

Being such a critical part of Orkney Islands Council's asset portfolio, the airfields require ongoing and planned maintenance, robust regulatory compliance, and forward investment to ensure their long-term sustainability.

9.2. Aim

"To provide a safe, resilient and sustainable aerodrome infrastructure that supports the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Orkney's North Isles, whilst enabling growth in business, leisure, education, health, and community connectivity."

9.3. Objectives

9.3.1. Compliance

We will ensure compliance with relevant Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) legislation and regulations by:

- Maintaining trained, competent staff and providing continuous professional development.
- Taking a proactive role in the development of new guidance and safety management practice.
- Conducting regular inspections and condition assessments.
- Working with CAA to undertake annual audit inspections and respond to findings.
- Ensuring all necessary repairs are completed timeously to a high standard.

9.3.2. Performance and Monitoring

We will monitor, report, and improve asset performance by:

- Developing and reporting Key Performance Indicators on asset condition, availability, and compliance.
- Reporting regularly to the Development and Infrastructure Committee.

- Implementing affordable planned maintenance schedules and rolling programmes of resurfacing and renewal.

9.3.3. Asset Management and Data

We will enhance asset management information to support effective decision-making by:

- Maintaining the airfield asset register and condition surveys through the relevant asset management system.
- Developing inspection and monitoring methods.
- Recording and reporting lifecycle and cost information to support long-term financial planning.

9.4. Best Value

We will demonstrate best value in the management of airfield assets by:

- Applying the Capital Project Appraisal (CPA) framework for all significant investment.
- Benchmarking with comparator authorities and industry partners.
- Engaging with local communities and stakeholders to ensure assets meet needs.

9.4.1. Climate and Sustainability

We will respond to the challenge of climate change and net-zero by:

- Reducing material consumption through recycling and reuse.
- Encouraging the adoption of sustainable products, processes, and construction methods.
- Exploring opportunities for electric and low-carbon aircraft in future PSO contracts, aligning with Orkney's wider decarbonisation ambitions.

9.5. Strategic Direction and Investment Requirements

The airfields remain a lifeline service but generate very limited income. Public Service Obligation (PSO) flights are subsidised and do not contribute to the airfields budget, meaning that continued maintenance and improvement rely almost entirely on Council funding. Condition surveys confirm recurring pressures, including the need for regular resurfacing of hard runways, replacement of older terminal buildings and the ongoing challenge of meeting CAA compliance standards across all sites.

Looking ahead, investment will need to balance statutory compliance, safe operations, and resilience with the Council's wider connectivity and climate ambitions. Priorities will be determined through the Capital Project Appraisal process and reported to the Development and Infrastructure Committee.

A key factor of this will be undertaking remedial actions under deadlines imposed by the CAA audits to ensure the runway, taxiway and apron surfaces align with UK CAA regulatory compliance standards.

Close alignment with Transport Scotland, industry partners, and the Isles Connectivity Plan will be essential to secure long-term sustainability, while opportunities for innovation such as low-carbon aviation technologies will be actively explored.

10. Waste Management

10.1. Context

Waste management is a core responsibility for Orkney Islands Council, delivering essential services to residents, businesses, and visitors across the islands. The Council oversees refuse collection, recycling, waste transfer sites, and supports broader circular economy objectives.

The newly adopted Waste and Resource Management Strategy (2025) sets out a vision to provide the Orkney Islands with cost-efficient reuse, recycling and waste services that maximises the recovery and recycling/reuse of valuable natural resources and meets the needs and expectations of residents and businesses. This service will be compliant with forthcoming national legislation and compatible with any partnership working arrangements.

10.2. Aim

To deliver waste services that are efficient, sustainable, and responsive to the needs of Orkney communities, enabling the transition toward a circular economy while meeting environmental and legislative requirements.

10.3. Objectives

- Delivery of a more efficient waste service by reducing costs per tonne and increasing the recycling rate performance by implementing an expanded kerbside collection service encompassing a wider range of materials.
- Implement actions that deliver wider benefits to the community, such as employment, low-cost goods or materials for use on Orkney.
- Reduce waste generation by implementing practices to minimise waste at source, for example by supporting and encouraging waste prevention and reuse.
- Developing the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) to maximise items and materials for reuse and recycling.
- Promote a sustainable approach to the use of infrastructure by encouraging the reuse of existing vehicles, buildings, etc.
- Ensure compliance in terms of cost recovery from commercial waste management.

10.4. Strategic Direction and Investment Requirements

Building on the Vision of the new Strategy, the Council will focus investment on waste prevention and reuse during 2025–2030, prioritising initiatives that deliver local economic, environmental, and social benefits.

Where infrastructure upgrades or new facilities are required, they will be assessed through robust business cases using the Capital Project Appraisal framework and will require community engagement and environmental oversight.

11. Burial Grounds

11.1. Context

The Council administers 52 burial grounds across Orkney.

A significant programme of investment was approved in 2015 to address long-standing issues of capacity, condition, and safety, and has delivered expansions, major repairs, and a systematic review of memorial stability.

Despite this progress, challenges remain. Many burial grounds are in exposed coastal locations where walls, paths, and drainage deteriorate quickly. More cemeteries are now nearing capacity. The Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Act 2016 places ongoing obligations on the Council to manage burial grounds safely, maintain records, and ensure service provision for the future.

Day-to-day presentation of burial grounds remains a key community concern, with seasonal grass-cutting and grounds maintenance included in the wider green asset delivery programme, albeit with insufficient funding to meet the aspirations of the community.

Buildings associated with burial grounds are limited to small equipment stores, and the main assets remain the land and memorial structures themselves. Accurate lair records are essential both for sensitive management and for efficient use of remaining capacity.

11.2. Aim

“To provide safe, dignified and sustainable burial grounds which support Orkney’s communities through bereavement, while preserving their cultural and heritage value.”

11.3. Objectives

11.3.1. Corporate planning and investment

- Review service requirements annually through the corporate asset management framework.
- Maintain comprehensive asset and capacity records.
- Ensure all investment decisions are supported by a clear business case, using the Capital Project Appraisal process.

11.3.2. Best value and financial sustainability

- Monitor income and expenditure on a quarterly basis.
- Explore alternative or complementary service delivery strategies, including community involvement where appropriate.
- Engage regularly with stakeholders and user groups to understand expectations.

11.3.3. Condition and maintenance

- Maintain burial grounds to an appropriate standard, targeting investment at areas of greatest need.

- Incorporate biodiversity and environmental sustainability into grounds management.
- Continue a rolling programme of memorial safety inspections and remedial works.

11.3.4. Legislative compliance

- Ensure compliance with the Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Act 2016 and related statutory requirements.
- Undertake regular inspections of sites, walls, memorials and paths.
- Improve accessibility where practical, ensuring new works meet equality and accessibility standards.

11.3.5. Stakeholder needs

- Respond to changing community needs and demographic trends through strategic capacity planning.
- Ensure lair allocation policies are transparent and equitable.

11.4. Strategic Direction and Investment Requirements

The Council continues to face capacity pressures in certain locations, requiring either land acquisition or the development of existing reserves of land.

Non-routine maintenance is also required to safeguard the condition of existing assets, including boundary walls, paths, gates, and drainage at several sites, subject to provision of funding.

Future planning will also place greater emphasis on digital records, GIS-based mapping of lairs, and improved customer information. This will enhance transparency, allow more efficient capacity management, and support long-term sustainability.

12. Housing

12.1. Context

Housing is a core element of the Council's asset base, both as landlord and as the strategic housing authority. The Council owns and manages a significant number of dwellings across Orkney, providing affordable rented housing to meet local need. In addition, it has statutory duties to assess housing demand, address homelessness, and plan future investment in line with Scottish Government policy.

The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2025–2029 sets out the Council's investment programme for new affordable homes, including Council house building, housing association developments, and targeted interventions in specific communities and tenures. This aligns with the national commitment to high-quality, energy efficient, affordable housing.

Challenges specific to Orkney include high construction costs due to remoteness, skills shortages, and weather-related impacts on the build programme. At the same time, affordability pressures, demographic change, and the needs of fragile island communities all shape how the Council plans and manages its housing portfolio.

The Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) provides the evidence base for all housing planning and investment decisions. It identifies the scale and type of housing required across Orkney, considering population change, affordability pressures, and the distinct challenges faced by the isles.

The Orkney Housing Market Partnership brings together the Council, Registered Social Landlords, developers, and community stakeholders to review the HNDA, shape the Local Housing Strategy, and support coordinated delivery.

12.2. Aim

"To provide and enable access to affordable, good-quality, energy efficient housing that meets the diverse needs of Orkney's communities, supports population sustainability, and contributes to wider social and economic wellbeing."

12.3. Objectives

12.3.1. Compliance and standards

- Ensure compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH).
- Meet statutory obligations in relation to homelessness and housing allocations.
- Deliver high quality homes and living environments through the planning process.

12.3.2. Investment and appraisal

- Align new build and major refurbishment programmes with the SHIP, the HNDA evidence base, and the Council's Capital Strategy.

- Use the Capital Project Appraisal (CPA) process to ensure all investment decisions deliver best value, are affordable and contribute to corporate priorities.

12.3.3. Asset management and performance monitoring

- Maintain robust stock condition information through regular survey programmes.
- Use data on demand, voids, and repairs to guide future investment and rationalisation decisions.
- Report performance through the Scottish Housing Regulator's Annual Return on the Charter (ARC).

12.3.4. Best Value and efficiency

- Deliver housing projects maximising external grant funding and working with partners.
- Benchmark housing management and repairs performance against national comparators.
- Pursue efficiency in procurement, design, and build methods to reduce costs and deliver more quality homes within constrained budgets.

12.3.5. Sustainability and climate resilience

- Reduce carbon emissions from Council housing stock through energy efficiency upgrades and low-carbon heating systems.
- Design new homes for climate resilience, including insulation standards, drainage solutions, and renewable energy readiness.
- Support community sustainability by ensuring housing is located where it underpins schools, services, and local economies.

12.3.6. Strategic Direction and Investment Requirements

The SHIP 2025–2029 identifies the programme of housing investment aimed at meeting Orkney's projected needs while addressing affordability and sustainability challenges.

Delivery will require partnership working, continued access to Scottish Government grant funding, and a focus on efficiency in both new build and refurbishment. The Council's own housing stock remains a vital asset, with capital investment focused on compliance with national standards, energy efficiency, and modernisation to extend asset life.

Future direction is therefore shaped by the HNDA, the Orkney Housing Market Partnership, the SHIP, and national frameworks. There is also regular engagement across Council services including between the Housing and Planning Services to inform the SHIP and also the Local Development Plan. Together these ensure that Orkney's housing portfolio is well-maintained, affordable, energy efficient, and aligned with the needs of sustainable communities across the mainland and isles.

13. Fleet and Plant

13.1. Context

The Council's fleet and plant assets are essential to the delivery of services across Orkney. They include heavy vehicles, vans, pickups, minibuses, disabled access buses, zero emission vehicles, licensed and unlicensed plant, and fixed equipment such as waste balers. Together, these represent a replacement value of many millions of pounds and remain critical to the Council's ability to meet statutory obligations and community needs.

A budget allowance of £1.4 million per annum has been allocated for financial years 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28 for the replacement of fleet, plant and equipment. This is overseen by the Asset Management Sub-committee as part of the Council's corporate governance. While this level of investment falls short of industry benchmarks for optimum replacement cycles, it provides a basis for sustaining essential assets through careful prioritisation and efficient maintenance.

The Council continues to operate comprehensive in-house garage services from Hatston, maintaining vehicles as they age beyond warranty and meeting safety, MOT and operational requirements. In addition, partnerships with the private sector provide supplementary capacity to respond to peaks in demand. Retention of skilled mechanics remains a challenge within a competitive local labour market.

The fleet profile has shifted gradually in recent years, with modest reductions in overall numbers but a continued increase in the proportion of zero emission vehicles. This reflects both national policy drivers and the Council's own commitments to reducing carbon emissions and supporting sustainable operations.

13.2. Aim

To provide an efficient, safe and sustainable Fleet and Plant service that supports the delivery of Council priorities and maintains the resilience of local services.

13.3. Objectives

- Ensure services have access to appropriate and fit-for-purpose vehicles and plant.
- Maintain all vehicles and plant to legal and operational standards, ensuring compliance with VOSA, Construction and Use Regulations, and operator licence conditions.
- Publish a new Fleet and Plant Asset Management Plan (FPAMP) to replace the 2013–2018 version and provide a refreshed strategic framework.
- Implement a modern fleet management IT system to strengthen asset tracking, utilisation analysis, and replacement planning.
- Demonstrate Best Value through benchmarking, standardisation of fleet specifications, and effective procurement.
- Support the transition to Zero Emission Vehicles by monitoring performance, investing in sustainable technologies, and developing associated infrastructure.

- Provide clear and consistent asset information to inform corporate decision-making and scrutiny.

13.4. Strategic Direction and Investment Requirements

The Council will continue to deliver its statutory and community obligations through careful stewardship of its fleet and plant. The annual replacement programme will prioritise assets most critical to service delivery, safety, and compliance.

Strategic direction will be shaped by three priorities: maintaining resilience and safety through the existing replacement programme, addressing sustainability through phased expansion of the zero-emission fleet, and modernising management systems through the publication of a new FPAMP and the introduction of a fleet management IT system.

The Plant, Equipment and Vehicle Replacement Programme will remain the key mechanism for prioritisation, underpinned by scrutiny from the Asset Management Sub-committee.

The Council's approach will continue to balance the realities of constrained budgets with the need to sustain a reliable, efficient and increasingly sustainable fleet that underpins delivery of essential services across Orkney.

14. ICT Infrastructure

14.1. Context

ICT is one of the Council's most critical asset groups, underpinning almost every aspect of service delivery. It provides the digital backbone that allows education, social care, housing, transport, and other services to function effectively.

Since the last CAMP, the Council has embarked on a programme of complete renewal of its core ICT infrastructure. This has included the replacement of servers, storage, and networks, the introduction of new cybersecurity platforms, and the establishment of a two-site disaster recovery arrangement to provide resilience in the event of system failure, cyber attack, or other disruption.

Other major programmes include the corporate replacement of PCs and laptops, the roll-out of a new corporate phone system, and the migration from microwave to fibre connectivity wherever possible to deliver greater resilience and higher capacity across the isles estate.

ICT is also central to service-led digital transformation. Recent initiatives include the development of a major update to the Health and Social Care case management system, the introduction of a new Fleet Management system, and wider automation of routine business processes. These investments support better data-driven decision-making, enhance customer experience, and reduce service delivery risks.

The Council's ICT & Cybersecurity Strategy and ICT Asset Plan set out the direction of travel, ensuring that systems are secure, resilient, and fit for purpose. The Council must also continuously review and update its systems to remain compliant with legislation, aligned with the national Digital Strategy for Scotland, and capable of meeting future service demands.

14.2. Aim

To provide a secure, resilient and modern ICT infrastructure that enables efficient service delivery, supports digital transformation, and ensures the Council can meet the needs of its communities now and in the future.

14.3. Objectives

14.3.1. Strategic alignment

- Align ICT investment with the Council Plan, the ICT & Cybersecurity Strategy, the ICT Asset Plan, and the Scottish Government Digital Strategy.
- Ensure ICT systems directly support service transformation and customer outcomes.
- Contribute to the Council's connectivity and digital inclusion objectives, particularly for island communities.

14.3.2. Cyber security and resilience

- Deliver a modern cyber security framework including endpoint protection, monitoring, penetration testing, and staff awareness training.

- Operate the dual-site disaster recovery arrangement to protect service continuity.
- Maintain compliance with the Public Sector Cyber Resilience Framework and national standards.

14.3.3. Asset management and lifecycle

- Maintain a comprehensive ICT Asset Register covering servers, storage, networks, devices, and applications.
- Deliver the rolling corporate PC and laptop replacement programme.
- Implement lifecycle replacement for servers, networking, and storage to reduce risks of obsolescence and downtime.

14.3.4. Service delivery and customer experience

- Provide robust network and connectivity services, including migration from microwave to fibre wherever possible.
- Expand modern collaboration tools to support hybrid working and digital customer engagement.
- Enhance online access to services through secure, mobile-enabled platforms.

14.3.5. Innovation and intelligence

- Develop artificial intelligence and automation tools to increase efficiency and reduce manual workloads.
- Expand use of business intelligence dashboards to provide members and officers with live performance and financial data.
- Explore opportunities for shared services and collaboration through the Islands Deal and regional digital partnerships.

14.4. Strategic Direction and Investment Requirements

ICT requires continuous investment to remain secure, resilient, and effective. Renewal of the core ICT infrastructure is one of the largest programmes undertaken by the Council, and this work will continue on a phased basis.

The investment priorities are:

- Ongoing renewal of servers, storage, and network infrastructure.
- Delivery of the corporate PC and laptop replacement programme.
- Implementation of the new phone system and integration with collaboration tools.
- Expansion of cyber security measures and continuous resilience testing.
- Acceleration of fibre connectivity across Council sites.

- Further development of service-led systems, including the Health and Social Care case management system, the Fleet Management system, and other sector-specific applications.
- Development of new capabilities in automation, artificial intelligence, and business intelligence dashboards.

ICT governance and investment decisions are scrutinised corporately through the Asset Management Sub-committee, ensuring transparency, alignment with corporate priorities, and consistency with wider asset management principles.

15. Summary

The new Corporate Asset Management Plan reflects a marked evolution from the 2019–2023 CAMP, with significant changes in both scope and strategic direction. The earlier plan was largely focused on embedding a culture of asset management across the Council, introducing structured approaches to condition, suitability and sufficiency assessments, and bringing forward the first generation of subsidiary asset management plans. Since then, the Council has undertaken substantial renewal of its asset base, advanced its governance arrangements, and adopted a more integrated, digitally enabled approach.

The governance framework has been strengthened, with the adoption of the Capital Strategy 2024–2029 and the revised Capital Project Appraisal process, ensuring that all investment proposals are subject to consistent scrutiny and prioritisation. This replaces earlier processes which were less formalised and ensures tighter alignment to Council Plan priorities, risk management, and affordability considerations.

The subsidiary plans have also been modernised. Updated strategies now exist for Roads (RAMP and RMMP), Property (PAMP), ICT and Cybersecurity. Housing, and Waste. Several areas have seen significant change since 2019: the Scapa Flow Museum redevelopment was completed, the St Magnus Cathedral quinquennial report has set new conservation priorities, and a new ICT & Cybersecurity Strategy has replaced the earlier ICT framework, reflecting rapid digital change. Fleet and Plant management now incorporates a new IT system.

Housing now incorporates the Strategic Housing Investment Plan driven by Housing Needs and Demand Assessment, giving a comprehensive view of demand and investment.

Waste management has been reshaped by the Waste Strategy 2023–2030. Burial Grounds management continues to focus on expansion and safety, with updated priorities for future capacity. Airfields infrastructure has been more explicitly linked to connectivity and resilience objectives in the Council Plan.

A significant shift is the stronger emphasis on resilience and sustainability. Whereas the 2019 CAMP acknowledged environmental responsibilities, the new plan embeds them more directly into objectives across each asset class, consistent with net zero commitments and adaptation requirements. Open Spaces and Heritage have also been reframed, with greater recognition of community use, play area strategy, and cultural conservation following recent capital investment.

ICT has advanced most visibly since 2019, with the complete renewal of core infrastructure, new disaster recovery arrangements, and service-led digital transformation across health and social care, fleet management, and business intelligence. Cybersecurity, automation, and data-led services are now central to asset planning in a way that was not envisaged in 2019.

Financially, the new CAMP places greater emphasis on affordability and whole-life costing, linking asset decisions to long-term service planning. It moves beyond the early focus on establishing a corporate framework, to a more mature model where asset decisions are tightly linked to capital strategy, service delivery, and national policy frameworks.

In summary, the new CAMP builds on the foundation laid in 2019 but reflects a Council and community context that has changed substantially. It is more strategic, integrated, and digitally enabled, with a clearer line of sight between asset management, service transformation, and national priorities.

16. Conclusion

The Corporate Asset Management Plan sets out how Orkney Islands Council will manage its diverse portfolio of assets in a sustainable and affordable way, ensuring they remain safe, functional and fit for purpose and contribute to the creation of high quality buildings and living environments across Orkney. Good asset management is central to service delivery across the county: it enables schools to operate, housing to be maintained, waste to be managed, transport to function, and heritage to be preserved. By taking a structured and long-term approach, the Council reduces risk, avoids unnecessary costs, and maximises value for the community.

Delivery will be achieved through strong governance, careful investment, working positively with statutory services including planning and building standards and continuous monitoring. Governance is provided through the Capital Strategy, the Asset Management Sub-committee, and a suite of subsidiary asset management plans. Investment decisions are appraised against affordability, risk and alignment with Council Plan priorities, while condition surveys, statutory inspections and regular reporting provide assurance and accountability.

The CAMP also responds to wider drivers of change. It reflects the importance of climate adaptation, digital transformation, and national strategies on housing, transport, energy and heritage. It recognises that in a remote island context, resilient infrastructure and reliable connectivity are not optional extras but essential enablers of daily life, business, and community wellbeing.

As a living framework, the CAMP will evolve over time. Subsidiary plans will continue to be refreshed, technology and service delivery models will change, and new risks and opportunities will emerge. Its strength lies in providing corporate visibility and strategic direction, ensuring that asset management is recognised not as a technical background function, but as a core enabler of service quality, financial sustainability and the wellbeing of Orkney's communities.

17. Bibliography & References

Council Policies, Strategies and Plans

- Council Plan 2023–2028 and Council Delivery Plan 2023-2028
- Capital Strategy 2024–2029 and updated Capital Project Appraisal (CPA) Procedure
- Property Asset Management Plan (PAMP) 2024–2029
- Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP) 2023–2028 and Roads Management and Maintenance Plan (RMMP) 2023–2028
- Fleet and Plant Asset Management Plan (FPAMP) 2013–2018 (update pending)
- Waste and Resource Management Strategy (2025)
- ICT and Cybersecurity Strategy 2025-2029
- ICT Asset Management Plan 2021–2026
- Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2025-2029
- Harbours Masterplan Phase 1 2020 and Offshore Energy Development Strategy 2025
- Physical Activity and Wellbeing Strategy (2025) Play Area Strategy (2021)
- Local Development Plan