



Shapinsay Community Action Plan

Research Report
Shapinsay Development Trust

2020-2025



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1. Introduction and Background

1.1 The Motivation for the Work



Shapinsay is an island with population of just over 300 and an area of just over 11 square miles, 5 miles east of Kirkwall on mainland Orkney and linked to it by ferry. The Shapinsay Development Trust was established by residents as a vehicle to improve lives on the island.

The Trust, through its subsidiary trading company Shapinsay Renewables Ltd (SRL), owns and operates a wind turbine, which generates income that is reinvested into development initiatives. The turbine was commissioned in 2011, and has an expected lifespan of around 20 years. This is currently part of a European-funded hydrogen project which aims to maximise income. At this stage, however, there is a need to identify and invest in projects that will generate income beyond the lifespan of the turbine.

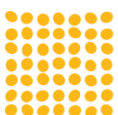
In this context, Community Enterprise was commissioned, with funding from Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), to produce a strategic five-year Community Action Plan, with input from the community. This plan follows on from the Trust's Development Plan for the Island of Shapinsay 2011-2015 and the subsequent consultation and visioning work carried out with Lateral North in 2015.

It is important to note that this Action Plan was developed before the covid-19 restrictions were implemented. Both the impact of the pandemic itself and the recovery phase may mean that actions need to be flexible as local circumstances change.

1.2 Our Organisation

The Shapinsay Development Trust was established in September 2003 and is a company limited by guarantee (SC255127) and registered charity (SC034818) with the following objects:

- To provide in the interests of social welfare, facilities for recreation and other leisure time occupation available to the public at large in Shapinsay with a view to improving their conditions of life.
- To advance education and in particular to promote opportunities for learning for the benefit of the general public.
- To protect and/or preserve the environment for the benefit of the community and the general public.
- To provide or assist in the provision of housing for people in necessitous circumstances within Shapinsay.
- To relieve poverty particularly among the residents of the island of Shapinsay.
- To promote Shapinsay trade and industry for the benefit of the community and general public.
- To promote, establish, operate and/or support other schemes and projects of a charitable nature for the benefit of the community of Shapinsay.



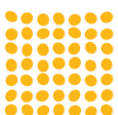
1.3 What We Did

Engaging with everyone in the local community is a critical part of any Community Action Plan. Community Enterprise, alongside Shapinsay Development Trust volunteers and staff, carried out research from January - February 2020 to ensure there was plenty of opportunity to share views. The aim of the research was to build up both a picture of what local people think and what needs to be done. Photos courtesy of SDT Facebook, Jean Coomber, Sheila Garson and Callum Orr.

An outline of our methodology is as follows:

- **Demographics and statistics** - The use of a platform called Community Insight which pulls 20 different data sets together to identify the specific nature of the target community using data from the most recent census, Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and others.
- **Asset mapping exercise** - Mapping the main assets on Shapinsay to understand the current level of provision. This is not an exhaustive list of every possible community space and activity, but an analysis of the most important ones.
- **Community survey** - This was undertaken to gather a broad range of community views about what people like and dislike about the area, and also what people would like to see happen in the future. These could be completed on-line or using paper copies.
 - Press release through the Shapinsay Sound and local group Facebook pages.
 - Survey distributed via the Shapinsay Sound and available on the ferry.
 - Posters were distributed throughout the community.
 - Paper copy surveys were made available on request from The Boathouse.
 - The survey was completed by 36 individuals, representing the views of 48 people¹.
- **Community Consultation** – A range of consultation methods were used to engage an estimated 40 people in conversation. Methods used were:
 - Afternoon and evening drop-in sessions at The Boathouse (around 18 people)
 - Focus group with primary pupils at Shapinsay School (18 pupils and staff)
 - Focus group with Guides (4 young people)
- **Stakeholder consultation** - Key local stakeholders and partners were interviewed via telephone for input into needs and priorities in the community and to establish opportunities for partnership working in the future. 19 people were contacted (up to 3 times) and 11 responded, representing a mix of local organisations and businesses.

¹ Respondents were given the opportunity to answer on behalf of a household.



2. The Research

2.1 Community profile and key assets

Shapinsay is an island with population of just over 300 and an area of just over 11 square miles, 5 miles east of Kirkwall on mainland Orkney and linked to it by ferry.

The island has a primary school, a community centre with fitness suite, additional community space at the Boathouse, which also serves as the headquarters of the Development Trust, a shop and post office, a medical centre with part-time GP coverage and a nurse practitioner in post, and a church. Most of these facilities are in Balfour Village, on the south-western part of the island. There are several active voluntary groups and community activities, including:

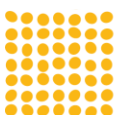
- Weekly youth drop-in
- Children's football
- Brownies, Guides and Scouts
- Monthly cinema club
- Art group
- Darn Good Yarn knitting club
- Carpet bowls
- Elwick Bookwrights, a creative writing group
- Periodic history and heritage workshops
- Various keep fit activities
- The Well-being Co-ordinator is particularly vital often delivering additional days when needed.
- Wellbeing activities organised by the Development Trust



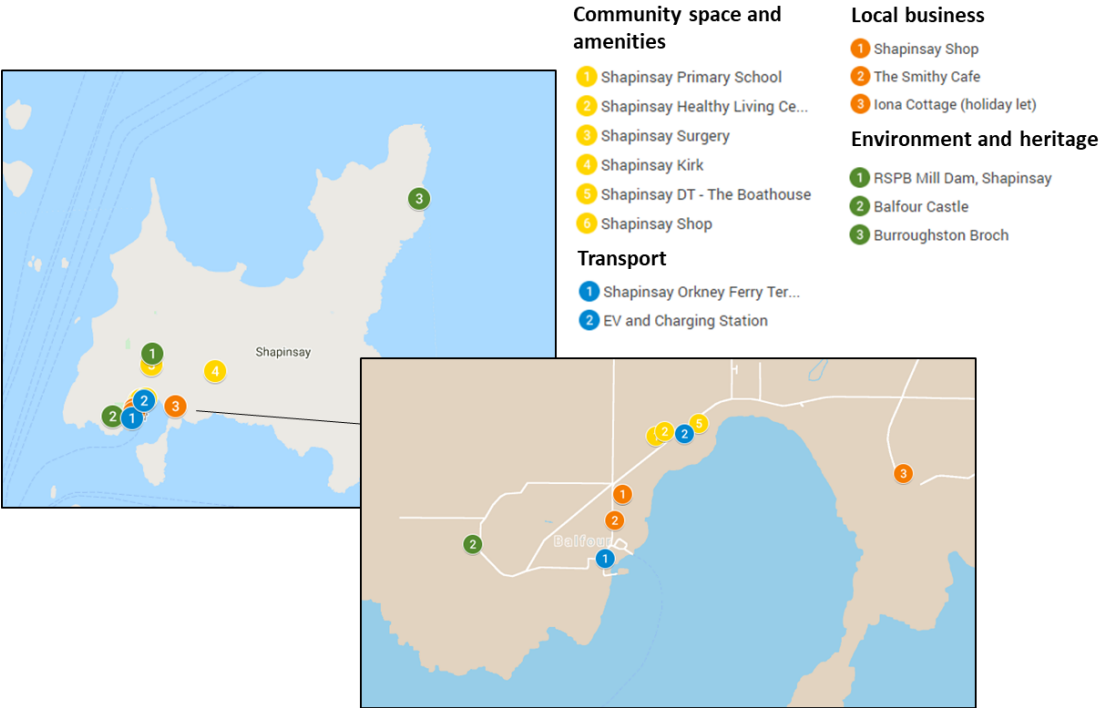
Shapinsay is served by a ferry to Kirkwall with six departures daily. There is also an out-of-hours ferry service subsidised by Shapinsay Development Trust, which runs twice during the evening and on Sunday mornings in the summer. The Development Trust has an electric rental car and runs a 12-seater minibus for residents and community groups, available from 9am – 5pm on weekdays.

The Smithy café and restaurant is usually open during the summer, but this depends on the availability of a tenant to lease it from Orkney Islands Council. Above the Smithy restaurant is a Heritage Centre which contains old photographs and objects from the island's history. This is funded largely by the adjacent craft shop. Balfour Castle is a key landmark, but is not currently open to the public. There are currently no hotels or B&Bs on the island although there are a small number of self-catering cottage available for visitors.

Shapinsay is fertile and low-lying, and much of the island is made up of agricultural land. Shapinsay is a place to see marine wildlife such as seals and otters and the occasional rare sightings of orca. The island has large seabird colonies and an RSPB reserve that is one of Orkney's most important wetlands providing a breeding habitat for ducks, waders, geese and swans.



Some of these assets can be seen on the map below:



2.2 A Statistical Profile of the Place

The table below brings together some statistics to help understand where needs may lie in the community. Unless otherwise noted, the figures above have been obtained from Community Insight, a software package that collects data from over 30 databases including Census Scotland, Department of Work and Pensions, NHS and others.

Domain	Rank	Decile
Overall	2569	4
Income	2481	4
Employment	3467	5
Health	3950	6
Education/skills	4282	7
Housing	1798	3
Geographic Access	146	1
Crime	5670	9

On the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), Shapinsay is part of datazone S01011830. Overall, the datazone falls into Decile 4; that is, the 40% most deprived areas nationally.

Under the Geographic Access domain, however, Shapinsay is ranked as one of the most deprived



SIMD and overview

localities, at 146 out of the 6,976 datazones – this puts it within the 2% most deprived areas in Scotland. There is also a relatively high level of deprivation in terms of housing (within the 30% most deprived) and income (40% most deprived). Conversely, Shapinsay compares positively against other areas nationwide in terms of health, education and skills and particularly crime. This does not mean that some people within the community do not experience challenges in these areas, however. It should also be noted that in remote and rural settings SIMD may be a less useful marker of deprivation.²

² https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Files/OHAC/Joint_Strategic_Needs_Assesment_July_2016.pdf





Population and Demographics

There are 305 people living on Shapinsay, according to ONS mid-year estimates for 2018.

- 45 people are aged 0-14, which is 15% of the island's population; this is around average (Scotland: 17%).
- 175 people or 57% of the population are of working age; this is lower than average (Scotland: 64%).
- 85 people or 28% are aged 65+; this is higher than average (Scotland: 19%).

As of the 2011 census, 30% of people on Shapinsay were born elsewhere in the UK and 8.5% of residents were born outside the UK. Only 62% of residents were born in Scotland, and although no statistics are available on where Scottish-born residents come from, many have moved to the island from outside Orkney.

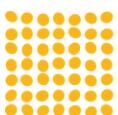


Housing and Households

Shapinsay falls into the 30% most deprived areas in Scotland in terms of housing (SIMD 2020). At the last census, 108 dwellings on Shapinsay were occupied by the owner, while 19 were socially rented (7 from the Council and 12 by Orkney Housing Association). Only 8 dwellings were privately rented. The Development Trust is currently working to develop additional socially rented housing.

Although houses on Shapinsay are less likely to be overcrowded than in Orkney overall, data from the last census shows more houses lacking central heating: 18 on the island, which is 20% of the total. This is much higher than average for Scotland. More recent data from the Scottish House Condition Survey 2012/14 Local Authority Tables estimated that 63% of households across Orkney are living in fuel poverty, rising to 85% for pensioner households. Orkney Islands Council's own Affordable Warmth survey (2015) puts the overall rate of fuel poverty at 54%, but estimates that it is much worse in island areas such as Shapinsay, at up to 70%³.

³ Orkney's Fuel Poverty Strategy 2017-2022. Statistics and a further explanation of the causes of Fuel Poverty in Orkney can be found in Appendix 1 to the Strategy.





Transport and Connectivity

Shapinsay falls into the 2% most deprived areas in Scotland in terms of geographic access to services (SIMD 2020).

At the time of the last census, 25 households had no car – this is average for Orkney although lower than average for Scotland.

According to 2017 data from Ofcom, there are 21 internet connections with low broadband speeds on Shapinsay (17%, much higher than the average of 3% throughout Scotland). The average broadband download and upload speeds are much slower than average, at 5.6 Mbit/s and 0.45 Mbit/s, respectively (Scotland: 41.8 Mbit/s download and 4.8 Mbit/s upload).

More recent data crowdsourced from internet speed tests on thinkbroadband.com shows similar speeds of 7 Mbit/s download and 0.3 Mbit/s upload on Shapinsay, in line with feedback that there has been little improvement in recent times. There is one telephone exchange covering the island, which is not enabled for faster fibre-optic broadband⁴.

Shapinsay falls into the 40% most deprived areas in Scotland in terms of income and the 50% most deprived in terms of employment (SIMD 2020). Most of the working population commute to work on mainland Orkney.



Economy and Employment

The Shapinsay Development Trust subsidises several local services, including transport and personal care. Income to do this comes almost exclusively from Shapinsay Renewables Ltd, a trading company which operates a wind turbine.

Recent DWP data shows that 28% of the pensioners on the island claim pension credit, which is available to people with a low income; the average for Scotland is 14%. This suggests that older people on Shapinsay tend to be less well off than their counterparts elsewhere.

Shapinsay falls into the 6th decile in terms of health (SIMD 2020).

At the time of the 2011 census, there were 60 people on Shapinsay with a limiting long-term illness. At 19% of the island's population, this is about average for both Scotland and Orkney.



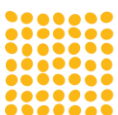
Health and Wellbeing

The island's health centre is staffed by a nurse practitioner 24/7, with a GP in attendance twice a week. Patients are also able to make appointments in Kirkwall. The centre has access to an ambulance, which local residents have been trained to help operate.

Shapinsay's population is older than average, which means that social care for older people is a key concern. The proportion of older people is projected to continue to increase across Orkney, particularly those aged 75+, and Shapinsay is unlikely to be an exception⁵. Recent data from the Department for Work and Pensions shows that 10 people on the island receive an Attendance Allowance to cover the cost of personal care for those aged over 65 with severe disabilities. 15 people receive a Personal Independence Payment,

⁴ Local Broadband Information on thinkbroadband.com

⁵ https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Files/OHAC/Joint_Strategic_Needs_Assesment_July_2016.pdf



which is available to people aged under 65 who have personal care needs due to disabilities or ill health.

The Well-being Co-ordinator (funded by Aspiring Communities Fund) employed by the Trust is a vital component of promoting well-being with residents.



Education

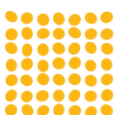
There is a primary school on the island which currently has 23 pupils: 5 of them in the nursery and pre-school class and 18 in the primary classes. Older children travel to secondary school in Kirkwall each day.

Shapinsay falls into the 7th decile in terms of education and skills (SIMD 2020). As of the latest census, the proportion of people with no qualifications is higher than average: 36% of the working age population (Scotland: 27%), while the percentage of people with a degree-level qualification is about average, at 25% (Scotland: 26%).



Crime

On the SIMD 2020, Shapinsay falls into the 9th decile, meaning that it is one of the least deprived areas in Scotland in terms of crime.



2.3 The Policy Context

As part of the Community Action Plan process, national and local policies and strategies have been reviewed and the following summarised as having a direct bearing. It will be important for the Development Trust to align its developments, where possible, with work already underway locally.

National policy:

Policy	Key Priorities
A Connected Scotland: Scotland's social isolation strategy	<p>The Scottish Government's strategy to tackle social isolation is underpinned by four priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Empower communities and build shared ownership 2. Promote positive attitudes and tackle stigma 3. Create opportunities for people to connect 4. Support an infrastructure that fosters connections <p>Recognises key role of third sector and social enterprises in tackling social isolation locally.</p> <p>Highlights impact on older and younger people including those living in rural communities.</p>
Scottish Government - Community Empowerment Act 2015	<p>The act aims to give local people a renewed sense of pride in their communities, a real sense of a stake in the future of the places they live and work and this includes both assets and services</p>
Scottish Government's Achieving Sustainable Futures	<p>"Our vision is a Scotland where our most disadvantaged communities are supported and where all places are sustainable and promote well-being."</p> <p>Among other points, the future sustainability actions should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put communities first, effectively involving local residents in the regeneration process and empowering communities • Be holistic, connecting the physical, social and economic dimensions • Adopt a long-term vision for a places and focus on the safety and quality of places
The Fairer Scotland Action Plan	<p>Based on five ambitions to reduce poverty and tackle inequality in the period to 2030:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 A Fairer Scotland For All 2 Ending Child Poverty 3 A Strong Start For All Young People 4 Fairer Working Lives 5 A Thriving Third Age

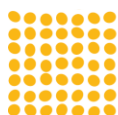


Scotland's Social Enterprise strategy⁶	It states "Over the next decade social enterprise will be at the forefront of a new wave of ethical and socially responsible business in Scotland. It will become a far-reaching and valued alternative and a key part of the Scottish way of doing business". Creating enterprising communities is a key priority.
A new blueprint for Scotland's rural economy	Sets out a vision for a "vibrant, sustainable and inclusive rural Economy" Prior to this an interim Rural Economic Framework (REF) has been developed which emphasise the vital importance of the rural economy and sets out a road map to embed it in mainstream economic development.
Scotland Outlook 2030	This commits to the growth of tourism based on the following priorities - Our passionate people, our thriving places, our diverse businesses, our memorable experiences.

Local policy

Policy	Key Priorities
Orkney Islands Council – The Council Plan 2018-2023	<p>The Council's five year plan identifies five strategic themes, listed below along with the outcome sought and some of the most relevant priorities and aspirations (in line with the results of community consultation):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected Communities: Orkney's communities enjoy modern and well-integrated transport services and the best national standards of digital connectivity, accessible and affordable to all. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue to invest in improvements to the transport infrastructure and improve its reliability ➤ Improve cycle and walking paths across Orkney ➤ Continue to lobby for access for all to superfast broadband • Caring Communities: People in Orkney enjoy long, healthy and independent lives, with care and support available to those who need it. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure Mental Health services continue to meet local need for people of all ages. ➤ In response to demographic change, redesign health and social care services to provide the best care we can for those who need it in the appropriate place. • Thriving Communities: The Orkney Community is able to access work, learning and leisure through a modern, robust infrastructure which supports all our communities and meets the requirements of 21st-century life. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with partners to develop strategies for improving housing conditions and reducing fuel poverty.

⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-social-enterprise-strategy-2016-2026/pages/5/>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explore how communities can further be empowered to take decisions on services throughout Orkney. • Enterprising Communities: A vibrant carbon neutral economy which supports local businesses and stimulates investment in all our communities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explore ways to reduce the volume, and cost of handling, of the county's waste ➤ Work with partners to develop and manage high volume tourism and associated infrastructure. ➤ Explore options for revenue generation via the tourism sector to support associated infrastructure. • Quality of Life: Orkney has a flourishing population, with people of all ages choosing to stay, return or relocate here for a better quality of life. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Protect Orkney's landscape and wildlife heritage. ➤ Protect and promote Orkney's unique culture and community events. ➤ Work with partners to improve the visitor experience. ➤ Promote community safety. ➤ Work with partners and communities to support improvements to recreational facilities.
The Islands Deal	<p>Proposal for a joint programme between Orkney Islands Council, Shetland Islands Council and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, with designated budgets and shared resources. Will require formal tripartite agreement between the three islands councils, the UK Government and Scottish Government. Sign-off anticipated in August 2020.</p> <p>Priorities have been identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading the Way to Low Carbon Future • World Class Tourist Destinations • Digital Islands • Creative Islands • Future Fit Housing • Healthy ageing and affordable remote health and care • Strengthening Primary Production and Increasing Local Value • Islands Future Skills • Talent Attraction & Retention
Orkney Community Plan– Incorporating Orkney's Local Outcomes	<p>Under the Community Empowerment Act, Orkney Partnership has produced a LOIP setting out how community planning partners will work with local communities to improve outcomes for individuals, families and communities where inequality persists. The Plan sets out 3 strategic priorities:</p>



<p>Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2019-2027</p>	<p>Strong Communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities have vibrant, innovative, sustainable and inclusive populations. • Communities have access to the services, facilities and resources they require to enable them to lead, develop and innovate. • Partners and communities share trusting relationships and understand their own and others' accountability, responsibility and capacity. <p>Living Well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People live in safe, warm, homely settings. • People have the support they need to adopt healthy lifestyles throughout their lives, and take responsibility for their wellbeing. <p>Vibrant Economy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orkney is a location of choice for people to live, work, learn, visit and invest. • Orkney is widely recognised as a location for innovation and the application of experimental thinking in an island context. • Orkney's economy offers a broad range of employment opportunities in all localities
<p>The Orkney Partnership Locality Plan for the non-linked isles 2018-21</p>	<p>The Partnership has identified the non-linked islands (including Shapinsay) as an area facing specific challenges.</p> <p>The priorities identified to address them are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital connectivity, including the aim of ensuring all premises on the isles will have the option to connect to superfast broadband at a minimum speed of at least 30 Mbps by 2021. • Work and local economies, including an increasing proportion of well paid, full time and permanent employment • Housing and communities, including sufficient affordable and attractive housing to accommodate anyone wishing to live and work on the isles, reduced fuel poverty and housing adapted to 21st century requirements. • Influence and engagement, including "Isles-proofing" all new local policy and ensuring a well-coordinated partnership approach to all consultation and service provision • Getting around the islands, including flexible public transport options and improved flights and ferries <p>All of these link back to the theme of maintaining sustainable populations in the Isle</p>

⁷ [Orkney Community Plan 2019-22](#)

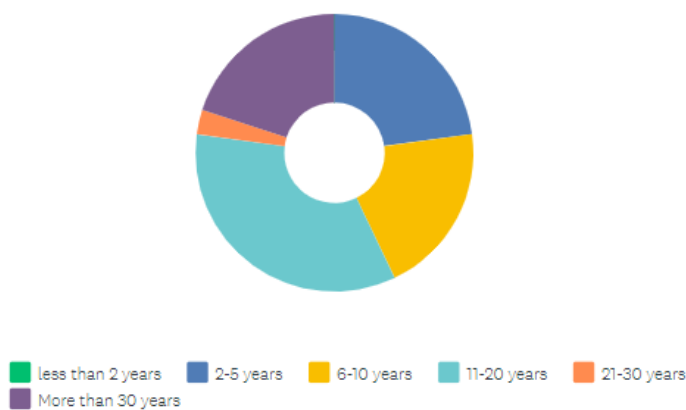


3. Community and Stakeholder feedback

3.1 Community Survey

The community survey was distributed online via Shapinsay Development Trust’s Facebook page, on paper via the community newsletter which is delivered to each household, and at the Boathouse. 36 survey responses were received, representing the views of 48 people⁸. Almost all were from local residents, while 1 response was from somebody who works on Shapinsay. No survey responses were received from representatives of community groups, but separate telephone interviews were carried out to gather their views.

Respondent characteristics:

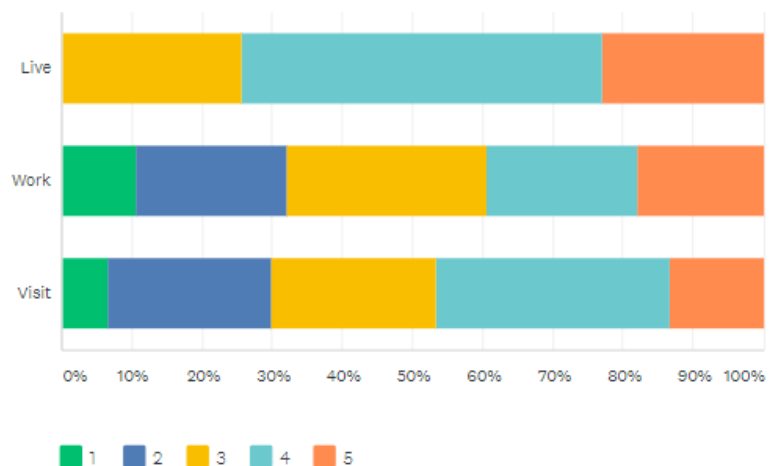


Respondents represented a mix of people who had been on the island for a relatively short time (although none for less than 2 years) and those who have been on Shapinsay for many years:

In common with many community surveys, respondents were predominantly female (82%). Responses to the survey will therefore be balanced against other forms of consultation, including the public drop in and stakeholder consultation. A range of age groups were represented:

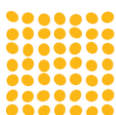
Views about Shapinsay:

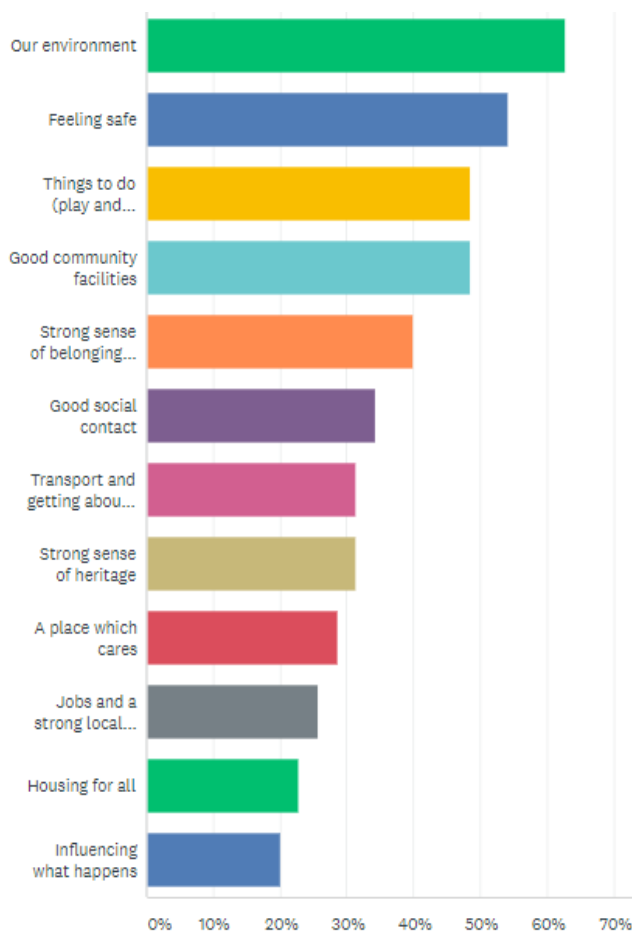
The survey asked people to rate Shapinsay as a place to live, work and visit, on a scale of 1 (strongly dislike) to 5 (love). Overall, the island was highly rated as a place to live, with no respondents scoring it below 3 and almost 3 quarters saying they liked it or loved it. However, almost a third of respondents gave the island a low score of 1 or 2 as a place to work and to visit.



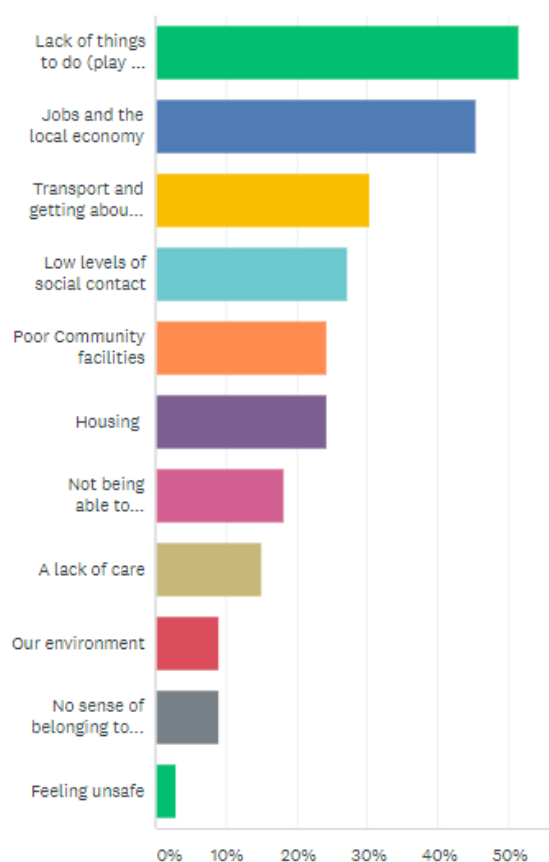
Respondents highlighted positive aspects of the community. Notably, over 60% valued the environment on Shapinsay, more than half liked the feeling of safety, and almost half valued the things to do and good community facilities.

⁸ Respondents were given the opportunity to respond on behalf of a household.





Respondents were also asked to identify challenges or dislikes. Despite 'things to do' being valued by many residents under the previous question, 'lack of things to do' was the top answer to this question. Comments shed further light on this: people pointed to the lack of a pub, café or restaurant on the island, as well as the timing of the existing activities which some people found to be a barrier. The second most frequent selection was 'jobs and the local economy', followed by 'transport and getting around'.



While most comments expanded on the ideas above, others alluded to division within the community, and lack of communication among different groups.

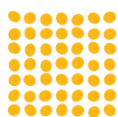
Over half the respondents thought that they would be living on Shapinsay in 10 years' time. 30% were not sure, and 17% did not think they would be living on the island.

Reasons for moving away (or being unsure of whether to stay) included:

- Business difficulties connected to limitations on transport and internet connectivity: 'business here is proving too difficult and expensive. Transport is poor, haulage expensive and transport unreliable' 'it is too expensive and difficult to run a business on Shapinsay'; 'Working here running own business is too difficult, and I can be a lot more profitable on Mainland Scotland'.
- Family reasons, including being closer to grandchildren who have moved away.
- 'struggling with aspects of island life'

People who intend to stay on Shapinsay said:

- 'Health permitting, yes, I'd like to be here in 10 years'
- 'Plan is to live rest of life here as long as there are the resources available to enable me to'



Project ideas:

Respondents made the following suggestions for projects, which have been categorised into broad themes⁹:

<p>Work and enterprise</p>	<p>A pub, restaurant or café was mentioned by 15 people in the survey. One person specified ‘run possibly by volunteers, open maybe twice a week’. A suggestion was that the [existing] ‘café should be properly invested in and brought up to full working standards for the benefit of both visitors and residents’. However, another suggestion was to develop the ‘gas house connected to a café / craft shop’.</p> <p>Many project ideas centred on attracting visitors to the island and developing things for them to do during a visit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Phone box as part of Orkney wide trail. Reference to the Traditional Red Phone Box Trail project run by the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme, which aims for redundant BT phone boxes to be purchased by communities, repaired and transformed into visitor information hubs, interpretation points, community arts or heritage projects. ● A museum or heritage space ● An art trail around the island. Similarly, one person suggested developing an island tour to bring groups, possibly from the cruise industry, to see island heritage and environment. ● A circular minibus route twice or more a day might enable visitors better access 2 or 3 days a week ● Looking forward to island web page to improve visibility <p>In line with the focus on tourism, accommodation such as a hotel or B&B was mentioned by 3 respondents.</p>
<p>Housing and sustainable living</p>	<p>The development of a community garden, allotment or polytunnel was mentioned 3 times. Community composting (to reduce waste having to be transported off the island) was another suggestion that could complement this.</p> <p>Three people suggested improvements to the landscape:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ‘tree planting and rewilding’ ● ‘more accessible nature walking areas’ ● ‘Removal of old rubbish at quarries and on the shore (dumped farm machinery, etc.) as well as the plastic that litters our shoreline’ <p>2 people mentioned a need for housing, and 1 pointed to a need for ‘elderly care facilities.</p>

⁹ Ideas from comment boxes on other questions within the survey have been incorporated where relevant



<p>Transport and connectivity</p>	<p>Fast or super-fast broadband was mentioned by 3 respondents.</p> <p>5 people mentioned improvements to the ferry, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ‘More ferry runs per day and faster runs’/‘continue sailings instead of stopping during lunch hour’ ● ‘Passenger ferry as well as freight/vehicles’ ● ‘Toilet blocks/waiting room renovated and useful as information point’ ● ‘Vehicles up to 6 metres same price as 5’ <p>1 person suggested a higher level of grants for maintaining tracks.</p>
<p>Essential services</p>	<p>There was support for the wellbeing work already being undertaken: ‘continue to develop support for our older and more vulnerable residents’; ‘Services and activities for all with mental ill health’ There were various ideas for further activities and services to bring people together. Several of these specifically mentioned evening/weekend activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cinema (x 2) ● weekend/evening beginners yoga classes ● weekend art group ● A men’s shed ● more activities for teenagers, better use of community centre facilities <p>One respondent felt that resources should be invested in a staff member to stand in for stretched volunteer resources: ‘I wish our community had just one elected organisation to take care of all Shapinsay's needs, with a full-time, remunerated leader to be Shapinsay's voice on all matters’</p>

Capacity to contribute

Respondents were given an option to note the skills and experience that they could bring to developing projects. 19 people answered, representing a mix of soft skills, business experience and community development:

- Hard-working, honest, artistic, practical, painting, creating posters, able to set up art trail or similar
- Experience of healthcare needs of the community
- Organisational skills, retail experience, interior design, bags of enthusiasm
- Understanding and listening to those who were born here.
- Café/pub volunteer, baking, helping out with all sorts. Arts, crafts, befriending the isolated people.
- Good ideas and experience of living and running a business here for many years.
- Experience in presenting ideas, good communication skills.
- Community development experience; knowledge and skills in local heritage along with many years’ experience in the heritage industry.

Six people left details and gave their consent to be contacted in order to be involved in projects, to oversee the delivery of the Community Action Plan, to help fundraise or to be kept up to date.



3.2 Stakeholder Consultation

Using a structured questionnaire, stakeholder interviews sought to draw out views and aspirations on a number of topics and themes relating to community life on Shapinsay. The interviews were conducted by phone or, in one case, via email during February 2020. A total of 19 people were contacted (up to 3 times) and 11 responded.

The interviewees represented the following local groups, organisations and businesses:

- **Shapinsay Development Trust** – A mix of trustees and staff
- **Shapinsay Community Association**
- **Shapinsay Community School**
- **Kirkwall East Church of Scotland**
- **NHS Orkney**
- **Barry Moncrieff Joinery**, a local business
- **Orkney Isles Preserves**, a local business



Findings from these interviews are outlined below:

Shapinsay as a place to live, work and visit:

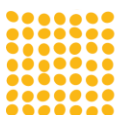
- Good connectivity to mainland Orkney although ferry transport is weather dependent. The out-of-hours service is seen as crucial.
- Visitor numbers have dropped. Reasons cited were lack of amenities including no café.
- Cliques and long-standing differences in relationships can mean some community events and facilities not always supported that well.
- Great for walking, beautiful natural environment

Things to be protected for the future:

- Transport to enable connectivity – out-of-hours boat is vital
- The school (currently a 2 teacher school but if numbers drop to below 16 could lose a post)
- The Trust – the work it has done to get an EV for the island which helps with local transport and subsidising the out-of-hours ferry
- Natural environment
- Good community spirit
- The EV car owned and run by SDT for the community
- The Smithy – protect and refurbish it as a café and heritage centre
- The Boathouse (owned by the Trust) – it's a good club and film venue
- Mini-bus
- GP surgery and the current good medical provision

Key local assets

- School
- Medical centre and healthy living centre with a gym that's well used.
- The Boathouse



- Community hall – used by a lot of groups
- Village shop and PO
- The turbine – but also a risk as it currently funds everything SDT does and when it reaches the end of its life (estimated at between 6 – 10 years) SDT will need to have in place other revenue streams.
- Heritage centre (aka The Smithy)
- The people
- The natural environment
- Retained fire service and first responders

Health and wellbeing:

- Ageing population and care issues associated with that including suitable housing and care.
- Very good health centre and people are able to get appointments reasonably quickly. Nurse can be accessed 24/7. Island has own ambulance and back up from first responders
- Wide consensus that the well-being co-ordinator (funded until the end of March 2022) does a great job and is providing an invaluable service
- Fitness suite and health centre popular and well-used.
- Mental health issues – these exist and are slowly starting to be talked about. Finding solutions is less easy. Part of this is because of stigma and visibility.

Transport and connectivity:

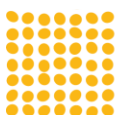
- Out of hours ferry provides a crucial service for commuting and heading to/from Kirkwall for social events. Concerns over its viability once the income from the wind turbine (which subsidises the service) goes.
- Electric car taxi service and minibus (the latter for clubs and larger groups) – important for local, on-island transport and accessibility and is well-used. A hire car, at some point in the future, might provide even greater flexibility
- Ferry to Kirkwall is good. Enables people to live on Shapinsay and commute.
- Cost of travel to mainland deemed expensive
- Good, regular ferry service but ageing boat which isn't always reliable

Community spirit/activity:

- Quite a proactive community with lots of social events/activities going on.
- Limited pool of volunteers to run things/join and run groups. Especially difficult to get young people involved.
- Previously some difficult history with the Trust but now it's very good at consulting locally and keeping the community informed.

Strength and resilience of Shapinsay Development Trust:

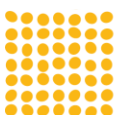
- For a board of volunteers, it does a good job and trustees put a lot of time in. – the chair in particular.



- Recruitment of trustees is a challenge due to population size and the fact that people's capacity – often on other groups. And resilience does depend on being able to recruit people.
- Good at communicating, e.g. regular newsletter
- Meetings can be 'fiery' but the Trust is keen to get things done.
- One view is that the Trust alienates young people – the example given was the unsupervised drop-in which appears to have caused some tensions.
- Perhaps the relationship with the community association could be better?
- The current board is relatively new (2 years) and has a good range of skills.
- There has been some difficult history with the Trust – primarily around a lack of confidence

Challenges/needs and how these might be addressed:

- Lack of facilities to attract visitors (when compared with the rest of Orkney). A café would help.
- Getting community agreement and encouraging people to express views and opinions.
- Cost of goods and services.
- Fuel poverty – many of the homes are poorly insulated.
- Lack of job opportunities
- A limited number of people to get involved in things – quite a lot of community groups and a finite number of people to join these groups and help run them.
- Possibly an apathy about community surveys – one was done 5 years ago and none of things contained in it have been acted upon.
- Income from turbine will come to an end
- Isolation and its link with mental health and alcohol issues – no on-island skills to deal with these.
- No meeting place – a pub or café would have a role to play here
- Few young people return once they've left university and the island tends to attract older, retired people.
- Lack of affordable housing is a key reason people leave – having suitable housing would help attract and retain families. SDT has made housing one of its priorities and is currently exploring the viability of renovating 2 properties on the island primarily to rent to local people or attract new families to the island.
- Risk of falling school roll – affordable housing key to this.
- Someone to do practical jobs (e.g. plumber, electrician) which would be too small to make it worth contractors from Kirkwall coming over for.
- Poor internet
- Some kind of care facility for older people
- Ensuring the school stays is vital – could do with a couple more families moving in but housing is a barrier to this.



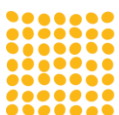
- Having a project officer would help move projects forward and relieve the burden on volunteers.
- Climate change – Orkney as a whole is very dependent on fossil fuels

Where money/time should be invested:

- Serious thought and action needs to be given to what happens to SDT income once the turbine is no longer operational. We need to assess options for the future.
- A project officer.
- Keeping the Wellbeing co-ordinator and out-of-hours ferry
- Housing
- Café/bar
- Care home
- Supporting local businesses
- Better recycling facilities (learn from what other island-communities are doing)
- Polytunnel to encourage local growing of crops that aren't vulnerable to weather

Shapinsay in 5-10 years' time

- Thriving and vibrant community
- More young people staying and involved in local groups
- School, shop and PO doing well
- Good mix of ages of people living here
- Enough suitable housing to enable people to live here
- SDT has sufficient income from projects and activities
- Good local transport



3.3 Focus Groups

Primary students

A focus group was carried out with the primary-age pupils at Shapinsay School. Points from the discussion are summarised below:

Good things about Shapinsay	Not so good things about Shapinsay
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family and friends • Seeing animals and birds • Feeling safe • The beach • Great school and teachers • The Smithy • The Picnic (annual sports day and community event) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have to get the ferry • Not many places to go out with family • The Smithy is closed/might not be open this year
What would you like to see happen in Shapinsay?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A KFC – or somewhere to go out and eat with family • Swimming pool • An area to ride bikes (safe to ride on the road, but bumpy) • More geocaches to get people to go out and walk 	

Guides

A second session took place with secondary school-age girls at the Guides group. The same broad questions were used as with the primary school group.

Good things about Shapinsay	Not so good things about Shapinsay
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know everyone • Live by the beach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not easy to take part in activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cinema ○ Climbing ○ Meeting people • Nowhere to socialise apart from these clubs • No café – something more casual • Having to travel every day to go to school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have to be up very early – long days
What would you like to see happen in Shapinsay?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good to have café or pub • Hotel so people can come for events like dances and stay over • Swimming pool • Quicker and easier way to get to Kirkwall 	



3.4 Community Drop-in

An afternoon and evening drop-in session were organised at the Boathouse. Discussion was structured around themes that had emerged from interviews and the community survey. The points raised are summarised below:

What kind of community will this be in 5 years?

- Enterprising
- Young
- Kind
- Caring
- Welcoming to 'incomers' / strangers
- Neighbourly
- Looked after: will always rally round in a crisis
- More empowered
- More involved

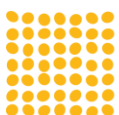


Housing and sustainable living

- Focus on attracting families
- Worry about losing the school
 - 'Baby boom' goes in cycles
 - 10 children moving to secondary
- Concern about dropping school roll – needs family homes
- Very few holiday homes. Air B&Bs – could encourage families to come to stay longer term and make it more affordable for family to visit.
- Concern about Orkney Islands Council housing a single person in a 3 room home
- Buying rather than building – empty properties in the village. Existing housing needs renovation to improve efficiency.
- Housing for incoming workers
- Would be more attractive if there was more going on on Shapinsay

Shops and essential services

- Community meal nights
- Take away
- Better produce
- Having a social hub means you actually meet people...locals, incomers
 - Walks
 - Darn good yarn
- Meals on wheels
 - Housebound and vulnerable people



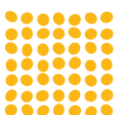
- Packaged food available but nobody to prepare and plate
- Extra meals from school lunch
- Not always able to prepare it
- Wellbeing programme has been a big success
- Vulnerable discharged patients
 - Hospital don't notify when discharged and on boat (can take 3 days)
- Care:
 - In the past when people were not well, people knew and would check in – now you wouldn't know.
 - Ageing population
 - Small families
 - Ties are strong
- Young people well educated and go to work elsewhere (mainland or off Orkney)
- Care project – picking up 6-8 people, several carers, stimulating demand, flexible jobs
 - Need to bring in more families
- Strain on volunteers who commit themselves

Connectivity: Digital & Transport

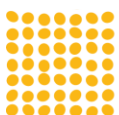
- Families dotted around the island - can be difficult to get out and see friends but it's safe and protected
- Poor internet connectivity; some houses use satellite to get a usable connection
- Transport link to mainland is good, but people from outside don't see that
- Suggestion for a tunnel
- Transport for visitors:
 - People visiting don't know there is transport until they get here
 - Info on boat: transport available for visit to Broch (advertise in Kirkwall)
 - Tourism group has helped in the past
 - Most points of interest are in the village
 - Cycle routes map to hand out to bike hirers – visitors especially
 - Noticeboards need to be kept updated

Work and Enterprise

- Encourage people to come with online jobs
- Pub – there was one in the past
- Community-run café & pub
 - Tourists need somewhere to go but hard to make it profitable enough
 - No footfall, relies on people making the trip
 - Embarrassing that there's nowhere to go
 - Find an innovative solution
 - Focus on tourists - visitors centre



- Offer tied accommodation
- A few days a week run by volunteers on a rota
- Would help to get to know people – neutral ground
- Darts, games, pool etc.
- Staff Dos and Christmas meals
 - Meal deal with ferry and local bistro
 - People come from Kirkwall
 - Lots of people from mainland including hen parties
- Smithy – facilities provided have been poor (no dishwasher)
 - Lovely place to go and see people
 - Not best location
 - Noticing when people are doing well
 - Downstairs area needs upgrade – high utility bills
 - OIC should support amenities that struggle in small communities
- Other possible sites: Gas House – just a shell; School House – owned by council
- Enterprise Group
 - Worked well in the past
 - Volunteer run shop & fish & chips (Friday night) soup, rolls, cakes
 - hard work for not much money
 - proceeds distributed, co-op style
- Holiday accommodation
 - Island hoppers need a nice place to stay
 - Nicer rooms
 - Bunkhouse
 - Used to be 3 B&Bs – not enough demand for all. Mostly workers, workmen, council staff etc.
 - Now only self-catering
 - Mill building fitted out as a hostel
- Better heritage centre



4. Key Findings

Key findings identified through analysis of the research and consultation:

Assets

Essential services

- Connectivity to mainland Orkney and crucial out-of-hours ferry service. With an electric vehicle and minibus and new bike provision, connectivity on the island is also improving.
- Good medical provision, retained fire service and first responders.
- Turbine providing income in the medium term.

A Sustainable Income Stream

- The turbine is a substantial funder of community services, from the Boathouse, to the out of hours transport and well-being activity

People and community

- A confident and proactive community.
- Skills and experience in delivering community-based projects and services.
- The school (currently a 2 teacher school but if numbers drop to below 16 could lose a post).

Environment

- A beautiful natural environment and wealth of wildlife, particularly birds and marine life.
- A feeling of safety. Children appreciate being able to play and meet friends outdoors, with easy access to nature.

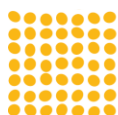
Challenges

Loss of Income

- As the turbine only has a finite life span, the income will be lost at some point which puts core services at risk. This will have a major impact on island life and the scale of income will be challenging to replace.

A changing population

- Supporting older and vulnerable people. The proportion of older people is projected to continue to increase across Orkney, particularly those aged 75+, and Shapinsay is unlikely to be an exception. Ensuring that people have suitable care and can access services will be a key priority.
- Attracting families to live on Shapinsay and maintaining the school at its current capacity. Part of this involves drawing attention to the island's existing assets in terms of transport, community and quality of life.
- Developing and managing housing to meet current need, respond to future demographic changes and attract new residents. This could include efficiency measures to tackle the high



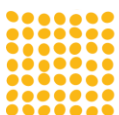
rate of fuel poverty identified across the Isles: Orkney Islands Council estimates up to 70% on islands like Shapinsay and this issue will be particularly severe among older people and those who are otherwise vulnerable.

Work and enterprise

- Supporting home based working and local businesses: the difficulties of doing business were one of the top reasons cited among survey respondents who did not see themselves staying on the island, so this is crucial to maintaining a sustainable population. Along with freight costs and charges for larger vehicles on the ferry, one obstacle to this is poor broadband connectivity. Recent data from thinkbroadband.com shows speeds of 7 Mbit/s download and 0.3 Mbit/s upload on Shapinsay, and frustration with a lack of improvement was expressed during consultation. The island's existing telephone exchange is not enabled for faster fibre-optic broadband. A considerable extension to the fibre optic broadband network is planned as part of the Scottish Government's R100 scheme which aims to bring 100% coverage across Scotland by 2021. As a stopgap, groups of businesses and households can apply for the Gigabit Voucher Scheme – this could be investigated.
- Encouraging sustainable tourism and visits to Shapinsay and ensuring that these support the local economy, which is challenging given that services for visitors are scarce: limited accommodation and visitor transport and, currently, no café or heritage centre. In consultation it was suggested that better marketing could also attract new residents, making more people aware of the attractions of Shapinsay.

Quality of life

- Expanding opportunities to meet and socialise, and ensuring that everyone has the chance to participate. Although there was positive feedback about the existing range of groups, clubs and activities, a lack of things to do was the top 'dislike' identified on the survey. Reasons given included the lack of a venue for informal get-togethers, and a lack of activities at times when some working people are able to attend, particularly weekends. Stakeholders also reflected that long-standing differences within the community can mean some community events and facilities can struggle to attract enough participants.
- Protecting and enhancing the island's natural assets. Although this is something that is valued highly by island residents, consultation highlighted issues such as deforestation and rubbish on beaches. A number of environmental initiatives were proposed to tackle these.
- Building future income streams for the Trust beyond the lifespan of the wind turbine, which currently subsidises many programmes that enhance island life. This is likely to involve a number of different income-generating projects.



5. Action Plan

5.1 Vision

Shapinsay will be a living island community where people of all ages and circumstances are connected and looked after and where core local services are sustainable

5.2 Values and Principles

The following values and principles will underpin the way in which this action plan is rolled out and implemented.

1. **Flexibility** – the impact of covid-19 and what a recovery phase will require may need changes to the actions more swiftly than usual.
2. **A radical approach** – the loss of turbine income and the threat to the infrastructure it funds will not be easily replaced and this will require a new and bold approach to income generation rooted in the assets of the island but open to new ideas.
3. **Whole Community responsibility** – project development lies in the hands of the whole community and should not be seen as solely the responsibility of SDT
4. **Inclusion** – people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds will be valued and included
5. **Looking outwards** – working in partnerships with agencies on as well as off the island will be vital to achieving the vision

5.3 Monitoring the Community Action Plan

Monitoring and evaluation is an essential requirement of any Community Action Plan to ensure it is being implemented but it is especially important here due to the changes that may need to be addressed due to covid-19. Though projects can be developed by anyone, the Shapinsay Development Trust will have a role to oversee the plan as it evolves. The SDT will check on progress and take stock of where things are on a regular basis, stimulating and resourcing ideas as required.

SDT will set up an enterprise working group that will consider income generating ideas that permeate the plan. These meetings will be open to other representative bodies such as the local authority and HIE.

5.4 The Action Plan

1. A community that is connected	
Short (years 1-2)	Engage with the Scottish Government's broadband connectivity programme and seek advice on measures to improve connectivity for rural communities, such as the gigabit voucher programme.
Medium (years 2-4)	Map walking and cycling routes on the island and ensure that information is available online and offline at key points used by residents and visitors. Develop an art trail and/or geocaches to encourage people to explore the island on foot or by bike.
Long (year 5+)	Work with the Community Council and others to engage with the Council, Orkney Ferries, the Orkney Partnership and other relevant partners on issues with scheduled ferry provision.



2. A Community that attracts visitors	
Short (years 1-2)	Options appraisal for a possible community-run café/pub with visitor accommodation. Engage with past Enterprise Group members and others in the community to plan how this could be run.
Medium (years 2-4)	Develop a listing of residents with practical skills to offer to encourage use of local companies, labour and skills. Develop an island website and use social media to promote Shapinsay as a destination for walking, cycling and birdwatching.
Long (year 5+)	Develop a tourism strategy and marketing activities to make visitors (as well as prospective residents) aware of what Shapinsay has to offer Development of café/pub and programme of events timed and packaged to bring in income from visitors.

3. A Community that Grows	
Short (years 1-2)	Identify possible sites for a community garden Identify sites for clean-up, planting and re-wilding, with a view to access and conservation
Medium (years 2-4)	Establish a polytunnel and community composting unit Build volunteer capacity for environmental initiatives.
Long (year 5+)	Develop community growing

4. A community with housing for all	
Short (years 1-2)	Develop plans for affordable housing in line with current and identified future needs
Medium (years 2-4)	Assess need for housing for people with disabilities and/or care needs
Long (year 5+)	Manage properties to ensure continuous and full occupation to contribute to population sustainability on Shapinsay and to generate an income for the Trust.

5. A sustainable community	
Short (years 1-2)	Set up an island enterprise working group, with local people and external supporters Commission consultants to facilitate commercial ideas generation and early scoping and prioritisation study. Radical thinking will be required
Medium (years 2-4)	Commission in depth feasibility study and business planning into a short list of ideas
Long (year 5+)	Secure investment in the most viable idea(s) so that income will be coming on stream before the turbine income ceases

