



# HARRIS PLAN 2021-2025

A 5-year pragmatic vision  
and spatial strategy for the  
development of the Isle of  
Harris



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# PURPOSE

The Harris Plan is intended to be the template to enable public sector organisations in Harris to work together, share resources and improve services.

The purpose of the plan is to portray development needs from the following areas:

- **Housing**
- **Transport**
- **Employment**
- **Education**
- **Healthcare**
- **Communications**



## *Agent*

The Harris Forum has representation from community groups, land trusts and other agencies across the whole of Harris.

The aim of the Forum, since its first meeting on the 3rd of October 2017, is to facilitate an environment where member groups can discuss, share and encourage one another.

At each meeting of the Harris Forum the Harris Plan is updated as it is a live working document.



## *Aims*

The Harris Plan aims to promote the following:

Community Engagement

Joint Working

Rationalisation

Connection between local and national priorities.



# The Isle of Harris

The Isle of Harris forms the southern part of Lewis and Harris, the largest island in the Outer Hebrides, situated 25 miles Northwest of the Isle of Skye and 40 miles west of mainland Scotland.

Most of the land is in community ownership, with North and West Harris community estates responsible for 33,125 hectares of some of the most rugged and scenic landscapes in Europe.

According to the latest 2011 Census statistics 1916 people reside in Harris and Scalpay in 911 homes, with 41% being one-person households. The death rate outstrips the birth rate by 2.3:1 and the age profile is skewed towards the elderly with 33% over 65, 14% under 15 and 53% aged between 16 and 64.

# Background to the Harris Plan

The Harris Plan 2021-2025 follows on from Our Plan for Harris 2015-2020 and the earlier Isle of Harris Local Outcome Agreement 2010-2015 (HLOA) which was authored by Harris Development Limited. The HLOA illustrated the short, medium- and long-term development aspirations for Harris. Our Plan for Harris 2015-2020 further realised these aspirations and detailed 71 projects which were in various phases of development within Harris. A number of these plans have been completed, whilst others are in a range of development phases. It should also be recognised that some projects proved unfeasible and either had to be adapted or removed from the plan.

Early in 2015 a group of representatives from community development organisations, land trusts, community councils and other community representatives across Harris met to consider a new 2020 plan for Harris that would incorporate the priorities of the community owned estates with wider community priorities. In March 2015, recognising that work had already started on a locality plan, the group was approached by the Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership (OHCPP) to take part in a pilot “to identify aspirations and priorities, and how the partners can add value, by working in closer partnership with a specific community.”

This led on to the formation of the Harris Forum.





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## *ONGOING PROJECTS*

The following  
are currently  
ongoing  
projects within  
the Harris  
Plan:



Catalogue Number	Lead Group	Project Description including deliverables	Update
1	West Harris Trust	Deliver a playpark for the residents of the West Harris area.	Rionnagan Og looking at options, including to redevelop the Seilebost playpark, develop a playpark at Pairc Niseaboist and/or an adventure playpark.
4	West Harris Trust	Restoration of 1kn of stone dykes	4th section of wall completed at Talla na Mara Sept 2023. Larger project to repair existing walls on the estate remain
6	West Harris Trust	Develop Archaeology trail to improve knowledge of local area	The architectural sites of interest are on leaflets and advertised within Talla na Mara - more work required to progress the project.
8	West Harris Trust	Additional Electrical hook-ups for tourists	Plans have been drawn up for additional hook-ups at Seilebost but not taken further at the moment.
12	West Harris Trust	Extend the range of community events in West Harris to reduce social isolation.	6 month funded project ongoing
25	North Harris Trust	Construction of 2 affordable homes in Miabhaig North.	Planning application submitted, liaising with Rural Housing Fund on support and options.
34	North Harris Trust	Creation of Ardvourlie hub, public facilities, Café and Bike shop.	Design in place. Planning approved. Site prepared.
35	North Harris Trust	Native Woodland/Natural Peatland	Project on hold until further funding can be identified.

Catalogue Number	Lead Group	Project Description including deliverables	Update
49	Northton Heritage Trust	Seallam Visitor Centre/Hiort na Hearadh - Refurbishment and new development.	Land under Seallam!, Old Schoolhouse, and land owned by Bays of Harris Estate was purchased in March 2022 with assistance from the Scottish Land Fund. Design team led by Tighean Innse Gall for RIBA 3-4 appointed in February 2023. Environmental studies and review of RIBA 0-2 Concept Designs have been carried out. Currently putting funding package together for remainder of RIBA 3-4 works, Crown Estates is being applied for. Aiming to have RIBA 3-4 completed up to planning and be shovel ready by November 2023 with construction beginning Spring 2024 to extend existing Visitor Centre to house new interactive exhibitions, an extended car park, student accommodation and an outdoor learning area.
51	Harris Development Ltd.	Develop a Bluefin Tuna fishery in the Western Isles	Socio-economic feasibility study completed. Next step to move from scientific project to a fully commercial project.
53	Harris Development Ltd.	Harris Accommodation Solutions Project - meet demand for ensuite rooms with shared facilities for workers in modular blocks to free up housing stock for families.	SLF stage one application submitted 20.03.2023

Catalogue Number	Lead Group	Project Description including deliverables	Update
54	South Harris Community Council	Enhancement of the roadside area surrounding the "Mill Pool" and adjacent areas of Leverburgh.	Annual work to improve and enhance the landscape - funding is required annually for work to be undertaken
57	Leverburgh Moorings Association	Redevelop and refurbish the pier area at Leverburgh and look at the possibility of a new marina.	Awaiting response from seabed survey to direct feasibility study brief.
58	Bays of Harris Steering Group	Community purchase of estate	Interim Board in place, finalising Articles with view to create company by end June and initiate buyout activities including fundraising and membership development.
60	Harris Football Club / Sport Harris	Creation of a multi sports hub including an all-weather facility	Initial meeting held with representatives from Stornoway to understand project objectives. Community meeting to be held as next step.
61	Leverburgh Community Hub Ltd.	Develop the Leverburgh Old School into a Community Hub	Launderette and Charity Shop (Aosd' is Ùr) opened in July 2021. Main renovation due for completion Spring 2023. Charity shop operating in Leverburgh Community Hall. Main renovation due to be complete May 2023, enterprises open thereafter.
69	Scalpay Community Association	Redevelopment of CC to maritime Heritage Centre with boatbuilding school and restored curing station	Awarded funding for RIBA Stage 3 & 4 and tendering process for design contractor at advanced stage.
71	North Harris Trust	Campervan Aire - Formal parking and servicing area at Urgha to reduce "wild camping".	Planning approved, RTIF funding awarded, completion scheduled Jan 2024.

Catalogue Number	Lead Group	Project Description including deliverables	Update
72	North Harris Trust	Parking Provision - Approximately 40 extra parking spaces throughout North Harris. Reduction in issues at key areas of traffic pressure.	Seeking agreement from the crofting community.
74	South Harris Community Council	Carpark adjacent to Church in Rodel	Project is at the very early stages and awaiting further detail to understand its viability.
76	North Harris Trust	Develop horticulture facilities to encourage participation from local community	£18k capital funding secured. National Lottery staff funding unsuccessful. Proceeding with Polycrub build, to be completed by Dec 2023. Staffing planned from March 2024.
78	Scaladale Centre	Looking to build bike repair facilities and run further bike maintenance training along with water sports offering.	Secured funding and bike workshop will be built this year. Aiming to develop water sports offering to include canoeing and offer paddle sports training to instructors and leaders.

Catalogue Number	Lead Group	Project Description including deliverables	Update
79	West Harris Trust	Develop a further 10 houses of mixed tenure available for permanent residents	Three-year revenue funding from Investing in Communities and awaiting recruitment of Development Manager.
80	West Harris Trust	An exploration and feasibility study of the Trust buying housing which comes onto the market, and then converting this for affordable rental	10 houses - TIQ acting as consultant to drive project forward
81	West Harris Trust	An exploration of the provision by others of childcare services for under 3s	10 houses - TIQ acting as consultant to drive project forward
82	West Harris Trust	An investigation of the provision of new business premises	10 houses - TIQ acting as consultant to drive project forward
85	West Harris Trust	Improving the access to the estate - beach access	Funding received from Crown Estate for child size beach wheelchair and storage container. Planning application for siting of storage container to be submitted.
86	West Harris Trust	More proactive visitor management, through the provision of visitor wardens through the summer season, improving both the visitor and resident experience.	CLOH have employed 2 Wardens this year, responsible for 8 community owned areas between Lewis and Harris.

Catalogue Number	Lead Group	Project Description including deliverables	Update
88	Various	Improve public environment in the village	Initial discussion at NHCC to discuss a project. Interest from Volunteer Centre to run a project in support.
89	Harris Community Wheels SCIO	Accessible Community Vehicle - To purchase a vehicle (5- or 7-seater) with wheelchair access for the use of the community to transport people to appointments, respite etc.	A bank account has been opened in their name; funding received to apply the logo onto the vehicle; project has been extended to also offer the community the loan of a wheelchair.
90	Community Learning & Development	Upgrade of Flodabay Jetty	Funding application to Crown Estate for detailed costing for proposed project.
91	Harris Development Ltd.	Purchase of Scalpay School to create affordable housing and a retail unit.	SLF stage one application submitted 20.03.2023
93	Northton Heritage Trust	Redesign of Hebrides People website alongside the modernisation of its archive database	Funded by Heritage Lottery and own funds raised from Community Share Offer. Works began in February 2023, Stage 1 -Restructure and modernise the existing website - a completion date for this element is the end of April 2023 in time for the 2023 Hebridean Homecoming Year. Stage 2 scheduled for completion in early 2024 which will focus on Database and search upgrades,

Catalogue Number	Lead Group	Project Description including deliverables	Update
94	Northton Heritage Trust	Creation of learning packs and educational materials.	Funded by Heritage Lottery. Heritage Officer Angus MacLean has created illustrated learning packs on emigration. 4 Teachers have been commissioned to write a course on St Kilda covering from Primary up to early Secondary. Expected to be completed by May 2023.
96	West Harris Trust	Improve access to Niseaboist beach	Plans drawn up but haven't applied for funding.
97	South Harris Community Council	Bringing Leverburgh Playpark into community ownership and carrying out refurbishment.	Awaiting creation of new group/existing group to take forward project.
98	Roinnagan Oga	Purchasing of Soft Play Building	Agreed sale with North Harris Trust. Ready to begin conveyancing.
99	Roinnagan Oga	Developing an Adventure Playpark in Harris	At the concept stage. A subgroup is to be set up which will look to create a feasibility study brief.
100	Bays of Harris Charitable Trust	Upgrade of Bays Community Centre heating system.	First step is to find a consultant to review the current heating system and provide options appraisal for upgrade.
101	Isle of Harris Golf Club	New Clubhouse development offering destination services Restaurant and merchandising for visitors and members.	Feasibility Study is completed. Looking to progress towards funding of RIBA Stages 3-4.

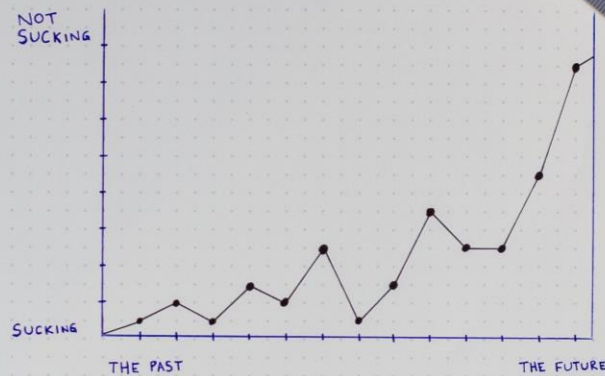
# Prioritisation Matrix

In order to rank the ongoing projects in terms of priority for the Harris Forum a matrix has been created.

The options under each subject have been chosen by the Harris Forum and each option is given a score that meets the current priorities of the Forum.

The scoring of the matrix will be approved every six months by the Forum to decide whether priorities have changed.

The current matrix system can be seen below.





SUBJECT	OPTIONS	SCORING	SUBJECT	OPTIONS	SCORING
Project Theme	Economy	10	Project Length	6 months or less	10
	People	7.5		1 year	8
	Capital Resources	5		2 years	6
	Quality of Life	4		3 years	4
Project Theme Sub-Category	Affordable Housing	10		4 years or more	2
	Employment	9		Required Start Date	Immediate
	Commercial Development	8	Within 6 months		8
	Infrastructure and Assets	7	Within 1 year		6
	Childcare	6	Between 1-2 years		4
	Equipment and Resources	5	After 2 years		2
	Technology	4			
	Health and Wellbeing	3			
	Social Inclusion	2			
	Nature	1			
Project Outcome	Population Stability & Growth	10			
	Greater Economic Prosperity	8			
	Enhanced Quality of Life	6			
	Improved Transport Infrastructure & Resources	4			
	Sustainable Use of Resources	2			



## *Prioritised Projects*

After putting all the projects through the matrix scoring system the following projects were calculated as the highest priority:

15,058	154,568	95,054	124,500
487	56,845	97,511	125,000
700	110,000	99,011	150,000
0	150,000	99,216	101,090
	35,000	101,090	
	83,000		
	45,000		

<b>Number</b>	<b>Lead Group</b>	<b>Project Description including deliverables</b>	<b>Total Matrix Score</b>
53	Harris Development Ltd.	Harris Accommodation Solutions Project - meet demand for ensuite rooms with shared facilities for workers in modular blocks to free up housing stock for families.	48
71	North Harris Trust	Campervan Aire - Formal parking and servicing area at Urgha to reduce "wild camping".	46
79	West Harris Trust	Develop a further 10 houses of mixed tenure available for permanent residents	44
80	West Harris Trust	An exploration and feasibility study of the Trust buying housing which comes onto the market, and then converting this for affordable rental	44
91	Harris Development Ltd.	Purchase of Scalpay School to create affordable housing and a retail unit.	42
93	Northton Heritage Trust	Redesign of Hebrides People website alongside the modernisation of its archive database	41.5
82	West Harris Trust	An investigation of the provision of new business premises	41
81	West Harris Trust	An exploration of the provision by others of childcare services for under 3s	40
69	Scalpay Community Association	Redevelopment of CC to maritime Heritage Centre with boatbuilding school and restored curing station	38
8	West Harris Trust	Additional Electrical hook-ups for tourists	38

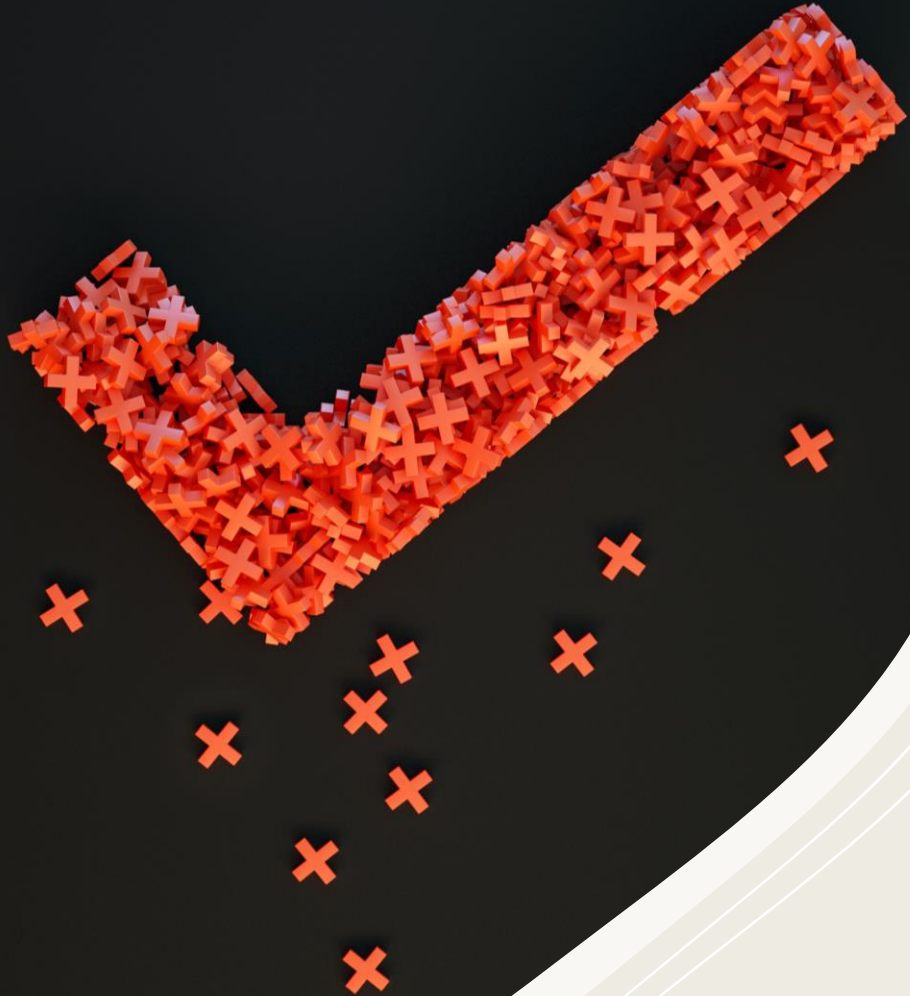
<b>Number</b>	<b>Lead Group</b>	<b>Project Description including deliverables</b>	<b>Total Matrix Score</b>
101	Isle of Harris Golf Club	New Clubhouse development offering destination services Restaurant and merchandising for visitors and members.	38
49	Northton Heritage Trust	Seallam Visitor Centre/Hiort na Hearadh - Refurbishment and new development.	37.5
57	Leverburgh Moorings Association	Redevelop and refurbish the pier area at Leverburgh and look at the possibility of a new marina.	37
25	North Harris Trust	Construction of 4 affordable homes over two sites in Miabhaig North and West Tarbert.	35.5
34	North Harris Trust	Creation of Ardvourlie hub, public facilities, Café and Bike shop.	35
61	Leverburgh Community Hub Ltd.	Develop the Leverburgh Old School into a Community Hub	35
90	Community Learning & Development	Upgrade of Flodabay Jetty	35
97	South Harris Community Council	Bringing Leverburgh Playpark into community ownership and carrying out refurbishment.	35
74	South Harris Community Council	Campsite development	33
54	South Harris Community Council	Enhancement of the roadside area surrounding the "Mill Pool" and adjacent areas of Leverburgh.	31

# Completed Projects

Achievements to date stem from a resilient, forward looking and determined Harris community, coupled with robust public/private partnerships resulting in significant private sector investment and targeted public sector spending by a wide range of organisations.

Completed projects serve as an encouragement to the Forum members and a stimulus to further progress.

The following show just a few examples of completed projects over the years.

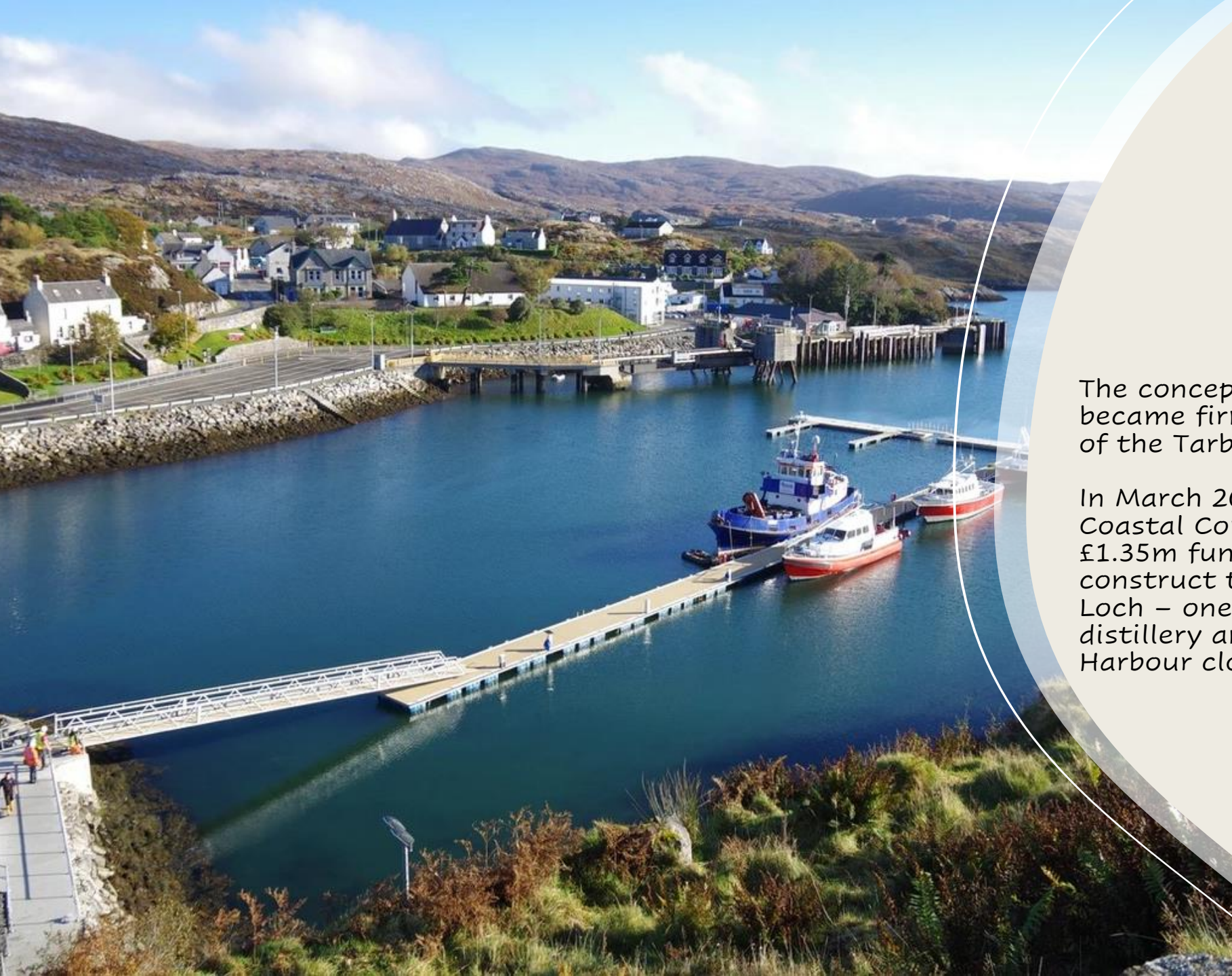


# NORTH HARRIS TRUST - UPGRADE TRAILS

A project to upgrade trails, construct a wildlife observatory and interpretation at Ardvourlie Woodland which was completed in the Autumn of 2020 alongside the Ardvourlie Common Grazings Committee.

It was a project aimed at getting more people involved in healthy activity whilst also being a benefit to tourists.





# HARRIS DEVELOPMENT LTD - ISLE OF HARRIS MARINA

The concept of a marina in East Loch Tarbert became firmly established through the efforts of the Tarbert Pier Users Association.

In March 2017, the award of £300k from the Coastal Communities Fund completed the £1.35m funding package required to construct two sets of pontoons in the East Loch – one at Tarbert adjacent to the new distillery and the other at Scalpay's North Harbour close to the Scalpay Bistro.



## *WEST HARRIS TRUST - ADDITIONAL CAMPSITE*

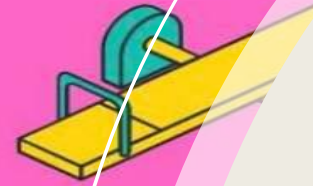
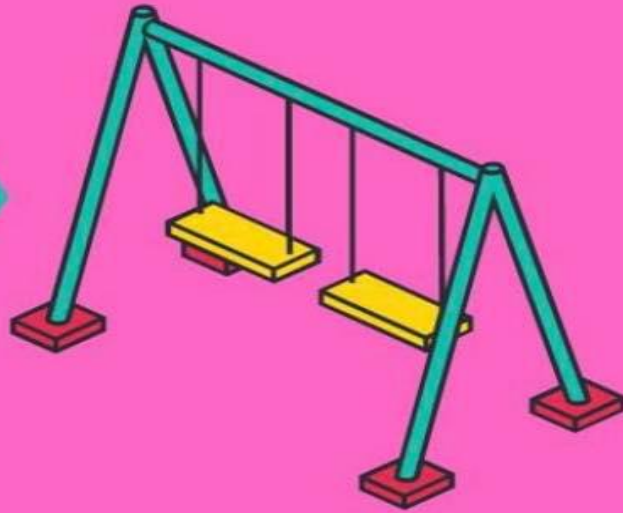
A project to add additional campsite space next to Talla na Mara that offers electrical hook up, rubbish and recycling facilities, water supply and a chemical toilet disposal point.

The project was a tremendous success and a much-needed resource in the busy tourist season.





**Saturday  
20th  
August**



## **SCALPAY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION - UPGRADE PLAYPARK FACILITIES**

A project to renovate the playpark at Scalpay as a key resource for families and making the park once again a safe place for children to enjoy outdoors.

A decrease in the younger population of Scalpay resulted in the local school closing in 2012 but the trend has since reversed and now more than 30 local children as well as the extended local community will benefit from the refurbishment of the park.

“The generosity of the local Scalpay community with funds and time shows how a community can make a difference and put life back into a playpark.”

# **Scalpay Playpark Grand Reopening & Funday**

**Bouncy Castle  
Fancy Dress  
Competiton  
BBQ  
Games  
Tea & Coffee**

**12-4**