

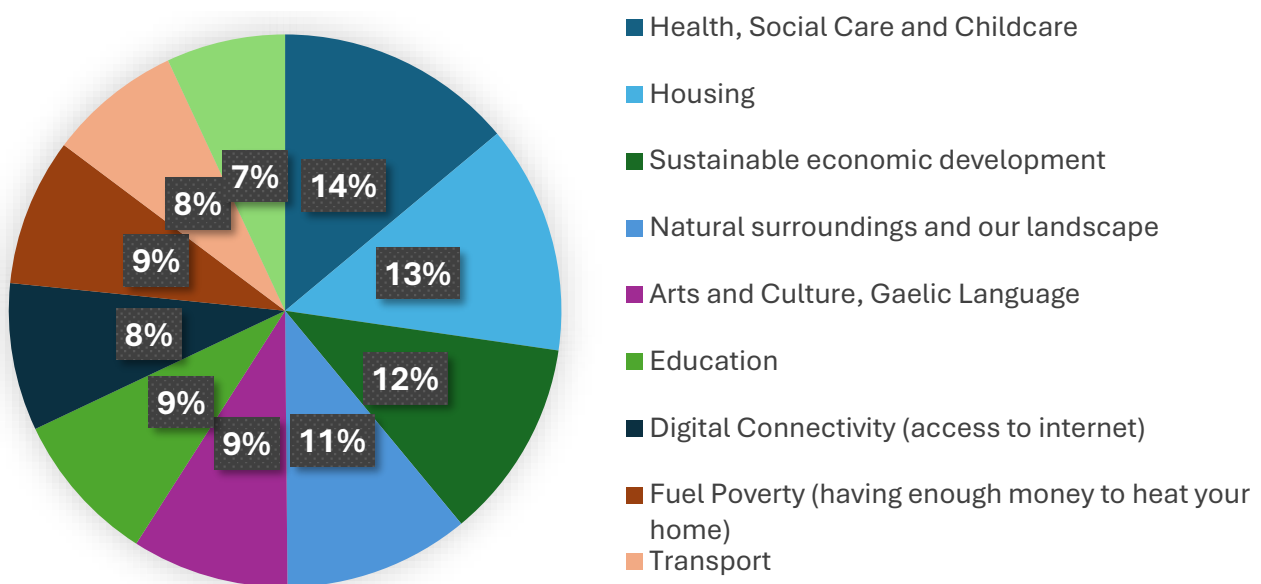
A Local Place Plan for Harris: Questionnaire response summary

Questionnaires could be submitted between: 20.11.2024 – 31.01.2025

Participants: 68

Which of the following topics are important to you, in relation to Harris as well as your home:

- Education
- Sustainable economic development
- Transport
- Housing
- Fuel Poverty (having enough money to heat your home)
- Digital Connectivity (access to internet)
- Health, Social Care and Childcare
- Natural surroundings and our landscape
- Climate Change and renewable energy
- Arts and Culture, Gaelic Language





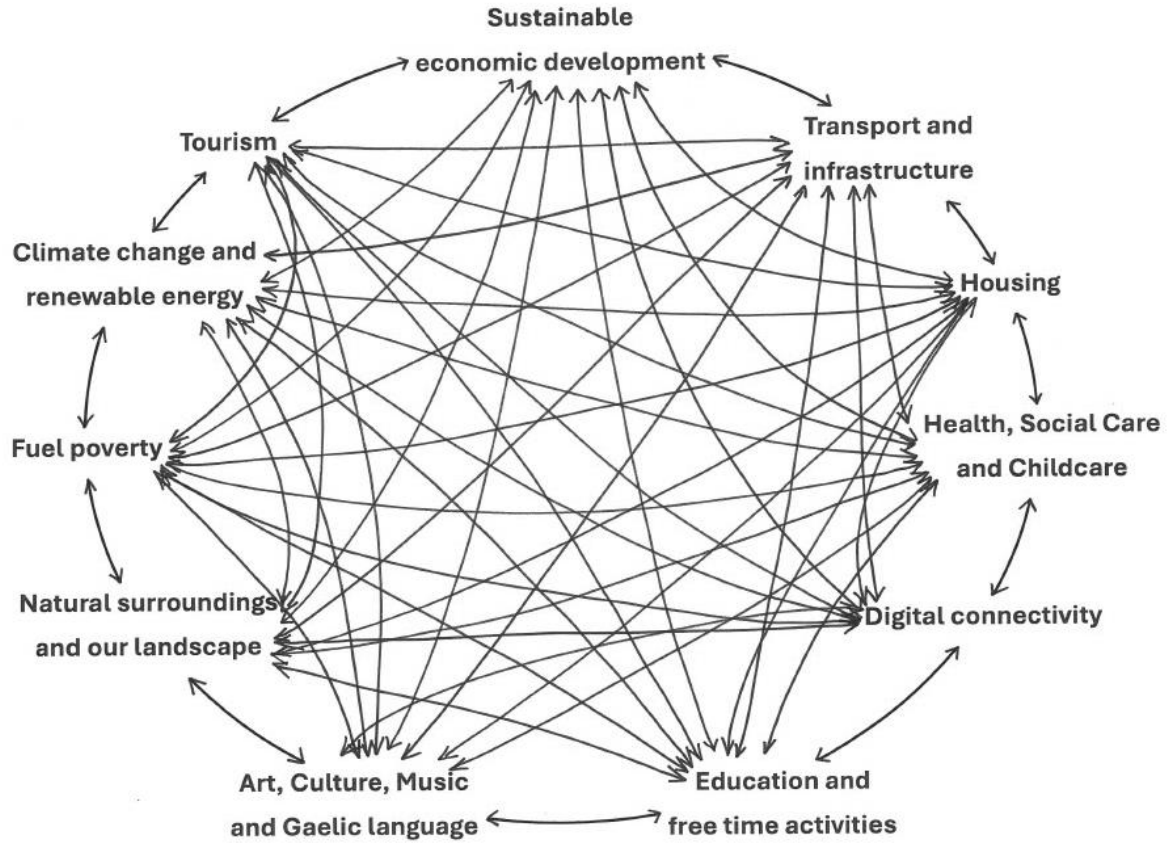
HARRIS | FORUM

*Progress / Partner / Protect
Adhartas / Cairdeas / Dion*

Pursuing development through community connection

Are there any missing topics you think should be included for the future of Harris?

Overall topics in combination with missing topics:



What do you want for Harris? What do you want for your community? What do you want for yourself and your family?

Sustainable economic development

Sustainable **year-round** and gainful **employment**.

To maintain sense of community which makes it desirable place to live.

What is needed is an increase in the quality of services and more **cross island co-operation** to develop new projects

I wish for a strong sustainable future for our younger generation.

Rubbish collection that makes sense!

Better support for EXISTING businesses. Support for those businesses which continue over decades to employ and serve the community.

The past is not used enough as a marketing strategy

More communication between townships and groups without the need for more quangos.

More jobs that aren't reliant on Gaelic.

A thriving, sustainable Harris, where people of all ages can live, work, and raise families if they wish to, while maintaining a deep connection to our natural surroundings, cultural heritage, and the Gaelic language.

Development should balance economic opportunity with preserving what makes Harris unique.

Support for local businesses, sustainable tourism, and "traditional" industries.

A safe, productive, forward-thinking place to live, be educated and work.

More focus on full time residents so they are in better balance with needs and wants of tourists/part-time residents.

A viable year-round thriving and sustainable community.

To see it move forward and embrace change, recognising that there are many different voices here

Opportunities for small businesses to start up and flourish.

Support for Crofting & Local Food Production

Coordinated efforts to make the islands liveable for future generations (prevent brain drain - matching skilled people to jobs, long-term transport and housing policies that are taking climate change seriously). More cooperation with other Hebridean islands.

To continue to live in a community of neighbours and long term residents who look out for each other and properties with a sense of pride and ownership.

Easier life; trades people, builders, fair trade, not being over charged, better support from locals for in-comers, freedom from religion, tackle the 'mafia' style of control by Church Elders and various 'family' businesses.

To stay in a happy, safe community that is looking to move forwards.

Good economic opportunities for young people.

The leaders of our community to be bold, fair, have a huge dollop of common sense and are not afraid to take action or challenge decisions which are detrimental to the overall wellbeing of individuals or of the community as a whole.

Public services to continue rather than be repeatedly cut back.

To make Harris feel more inclusive and more open!

Access to essential services, de-centralisation of services to Stornoway and Tarbert, job security

To feel that we live in a supported community and environment rather than a playground for the rich.

Transparency and appropriate consultations from all organisations regarding matters which affect members of the Community

A sustainable place to live with access to good quality services and jobs.

A community which works together for the benefit of everyone.

I believe that Harris has an incredible range of resilient and skilled people with a 'glocal' mindset (think global, act local) who could build a really strong, thriving, self-sustaining, resilient economy given appropriate support - infrastructure, coordination, pump-priming funds.

Integrated development plan for Leverburgh Pier and surrounding area and businesses.

Specific requests: Vet services, Chemist, a Hotel Chocolat outlet, a local gourmet health mushroom supplier, a bakery, a borrow-my-doggie scheme.

Transport and Infrastructure

A reliable and frequent ferry service.

Better public transport to allow evenings to be active.

Better infrastructure for visitors and less hatred of such a HUGE income source.

Better ferry and flight links.

Affordable, reliable, and sustainable transport links, including better ferry timetables more geared to island life, and better maintained roads.

More reliable ferry service and better roads

More frequent buses throughout Harris.

A better infrastructure and economic development in general.

Consideration of a fixed link/causeway across the sound of Harris that could be combined with tidal generation of electricity.

Reliable transport links

Better transport infrastructure ie ferry connectivity and inter island links

Better roads, local waste disposal facilities.

An increased level of road repairs and bus links for the Bays of Harris and recognition of the fragility of the community and neglect of infrastructure.

Affordable and reliable transport links within the islands and to the mainland.

A joined-up transport would be lovely

Look at our islands infrastructure first and deal with that before looking at large projects.

Better internal and external bus and ferry services/connections

My community is detached from Harris' 'population centres' and therefore needs good transport links.

Better public transport links – More frequent bus services and connections between communities to reduce car dependency. Community minibus and programme of training drivers

Housing

More quality and affordable housing.

More housing

Enough accommodation **for young people, particularly families;**

Seasonal accommodation for staff

A reduction in the number of holiday or second homes being built by people who don't live here permanently.

A cohesive plan for housing residents and perhaps a more thoughtful approach to holiday only properties.

Affordable housing prices for homes to purchase- not just social housing.

More affordable accommodation in South Harris

Development of affordable, **energy-efficient** housing to help retain young people and families on the island.

Affordable homes for young folks and hopefully their young families. Young people to be prioritised for housing.

Stopping the klondykers exploiting the west coast.

Hhp housing for families!!!

Enough houses for locals to be able to stay living on the island.

Housing and croft usage to be regulated and restricted to dissuade/stop crofts and house being bought only for second homes and guest houses.

Less second homes/self catering accommodation and more housing for people who live here all

Crofting reform to ensure that crofting land is used for crofting purposes and not sold as “real estate” to provide housing plots to the highest bidder.

Ban on building new holiday and second homes. More than 50% of houses in south Harris are holiday homes.

Some sort of scheme whereby houses for sale have to be offered to people who want to live here and not for holiday homes.

Better housing conditions (currently HHP tenant).

More housing is needed not just in Leverburgh and Tarbert

To have villages come back to life with affordable residential housing, especially for young people. To have maybe 6 to 8 houses built in different areas and not all in one spot. Also to help young islanders build on their croft or helping them to buy their own home.

Crofters actively obeying the rules of having the privilege of being a crofter. Strenuous action taken to monitor new crofters who buy into our community purely for their own financial long term gain. Also a limit to the number of crofts a person(s) may own. That is not fair or right.

Less empty/partially lived in homes.

To be the primary focus of any development. Homes for young people and young families should be a priority.

Hhp houses for families.

Houses for younger people to stay in so the population doesn't continue to age and shrink

Health, Social Care and Childcare

More childcare

Starting with childcare as a matter of urgency.

A place where needs of vulnerable are taken care of.

Accessible health services and dental services need more development and capacity to sustain the existing population, adequate childcare facilities to support families.

Cheaper health care

I am concerned about how ready available illegal drugs can be acciand used in our community, more education

I would like **easier access to health care**. I appreciate I live at the very south end, but the drs hours make it hard to access as I'm not a morning person and the fact we have to go to Stornoway for an ultrasound - I had to go to hospital on two separate occasions to complete my gyne consult - I've never heard of a gyne not having access to ultrasound or a GP. Having more services based in Tarbert on a rotational basis for non urgent referrals would be ideal - during the hospital at home trial they managed to send nurses all this way for one patient (that's another issue entirely as I rang the hospital as the patient was uncomfortable in the evening with his catheter and they said they where too far away to do anything until the morning - no much help if you are supposed to be recieving hospital level care at home). And yes I understand I choose to live distance from the hospital in a rural location so there is limits; I just think so poor decisions have been made by the health board which make it riskier then ness; like discharging patients too early on pilot schemes.

Childcare is needed

Accessible healthcare

More care facilities

There needs to be an even spread of services for all groups, young, old and those in the middle too.

Culturally sensitive care services, with Gaelic-speaking staff, to support the well-being of our aging population and families.

Childcare should be one of the main topics. These islands need young people and parents who have time to go to work.

Leverburgh Play Park redeveloped with new equipment installed.

Childcare - **full time nursery provision guaranteed**.

Digital connectivity

Reliable internet.

Improved and reliable internet for work, education, and working from home to support remote based roles which will help diversify the local economy.

I believe Harris has the potential to be a model of using the new **remote/digital workplace** as a way to **attract young working people** (who wouldn't want to live in this beautiful place and still be able to work in a wide range of professions?!) Such a population influx would strengthen the local economy, rebalance the islands's age-profile and therefore keep public facilities - especially schools - alive and thriving.

Good and inexpensive internet service which is not extortionate to connect to.

Proper digital connection

The fibre to households has allowed hybrid working which has vastly improved individuals work life balance.

Wouldn't mind fibre broadband, or even a **mobile phone signal**. Either would be good.

Full digital links.

Education and free time activities

Better education for our children

Finding tradespeople

Sustainable future for young people. With the best education system

The golf course and other facilities to be open on a Sunday.

Education at all stages is vital, from nursery to adult learning. Opportunities for lifelong learning, particularly in Gaelic and traditional skills, I would love to see prioritized.

Improved sports facilities - ie all weather surface that would enable groups locally to access outdoor space all year round. "

Thriving schools.

Play Park for our children.

More focus on the young and resources for them ... can't believe I'm actually saying this but more than just the old favourites like football!

Education to be based on **people's abilities**. The best opportunities for the young people to get modern apprenticeships from secondary age.

To continue to have access to the amazing facilities and school that is currently here

Outdoor spaces that can be used in most weathers - in terms of playparks but also more **accessible walks** where appropriate, and the continued support of members of the community to become more fully established in island life.

Good education is needed

Quality education

Access to high quality education from aged 3

Opportunities for a **healthy lifestyle** (sports, outdoor walks, play parks etc)

Library services.

Career progression

More **social opportunities** in South Harris

Everyone I speak too wishes for the hogmanys of years gone by and burns suppers etc so more targeted events not just quizzes etc (which are great, I love that we are really starting to see the events calendar refill); there's something about community eating together, I guess.

There is **nothing for young people here outside of school**. Why should they want to stay? What are we, older generations, offering them?

Art, Culture, Music and Gaelic language

A continued focus on **Gaelic music, literature, storytelling, and arts** to strengthen Harris's role as a cultural beacon within the Gaeltach.

A connected, Gaelic-speaking community where language and traditions are celebrated and passed down. I want to see strong support for intergenerational activities, Gaelic learning programs, and projects that ensure Harris remains a vibrant part of the Gaeltachd.

The preservation and revitalization of Gaelic must be central to the Local Place Plan. This includes increasing opportunities for Gaelic-medium education, adult learning, and promoting Gaelic in public life, signage, and events.

To have **island traditions and our history** kept, as that is what makes Harris a beautiful island. As an island we do have to move with the times, but not at the cost of traditions or island history. Would love to see a purpose built museum in Harris.

For my family, I hope for opportunities to continue working and to engage with Gaelic language, with our cultural traditions, heritage and natural environment. Personally, I would like to see Harris continue to develop sustainably, ensuring a strong community for future generations while preserving the landscapes and traditions that make Harris home. I would like to be part of a living Gaeltachd that values and preserves the Gaelic world view, language and culture. I want Gaelic to thrive as a living language. I want everyone to have opportunities to learn and use Gaelic daily.

To live and work in Harris. For the **traditions, culture and history of Harris to be valued** and not just there as a show for the tourists or to be got rid of for the increase in money.

More events in Gaelic.

To retain as much of possible the customs and heritage which has been handed down from our forefathers.

Support for industries such as crofting, fishing, drystone walling, sailing, and craft industries including Harris Tweed and knitting.

Natural surroundings and our landscape

Increased focus on **wildlife conservation**.

For people to **stop littering**.

Maintaining a deep connection to our natural surroundings

Protection and promotion of Harris's unique environment while balancing development needs.

Preserve dark sky and quiet areas (i.e. without streetlights or wind turbines).

Sustainable and care for the natural surroundings

Assurances on **sustainable solutions for the environment**.

A healthy environment, in all aspects, for people to live and thrive in.

More picnic areas/benches.

Play park for Leverburgh.

Cleaner pavements

For community members to stop littering (especially alcohol vessels).

A healthy environment **respecting the needs of both residents and wildlife**.

Residents not taking the landscape for granted.

A **tidier place** to stay. Parts of it are an eyesore especially the Leverburgh ferry area.

Fuel poverty

Initiatives to **reduce heating costs** through renewable energy schemes and insulation programs.

Cheaper electricity

Lower living costs

Housing with **affordable heating**. My kitchen for the last two days has been at 12 deg. Can't afford to run electric heating.

Lower living costs.

Climate change and renewable energy

Consideration of a fixed link/causeway across the sound of Harris that could be combined with **tidal generation of electricity**.

Explore opportunities to **develop partnerships with power generation** which deliver **community wide benefits** in the form of **reduced electricity bills**.

Sustainable **green energy** benefitting communities.

Community wind turbines which provide electricity directly to the community in which they're situated.

IF more renewable energy is required, the community must be the beneficiary of any profit and not multinational corporations. Cheaper energy should be available through any further schemes, and a balanced assessment of destruction of the local environment compared to any benefit.

Cheaper electricity

Affordable green energy.

Thought to the future challenges being brought by climate change.

Tourism

Fewer motorhomes

To go back to being an island that families wish to visit and not a bucket list destination.

Better facilities for tourists (restaurants, car parking, toilets).

Ways of **minimising the disruption** that the large numbers of tourists who come to island cause. Compensation/Taxing/Dissuade the damage done to the roads by more vehicles being here during tourist season and the lorries used to build guest house/second homes.

Tourism is, in my view, taking the wrong course both for Harris and the Islands and Highlands with an inundation of troublesome, low-spending motorhomes. Having recently been lucky enough to experience a very top-end accommodation facility on the mainland I am even more convinced that this would be the way to go for the future of Harris: making the island a luxury destination for high spenders who seek unspoiled landscapes and **top-class provisions**.

Motorhomes and the **infrastructure** they demand create a tacky, messy, cluttered environment and deter visitors who would put far more investment back into the community.

Management of tourism

Better **education for tourists** - i.e the amount of dogs off lead on the machair and beach disturbing sheep and birds, not parking on the grass & not coming off the road to squeeze past but reserve or allow the other to etc.

Less disruption caused by tourists/tourist industry. Less focus for most infrastructure and facilities on tourist and put locals first.