

Part 3 – Community Consultation summary (Feedback on DRAFT LPP)

Feedback from exhibited posters

Tarbert Library

- Paths: Good idea to improve walking/hiking paths
- Schools: Great to see measures proposed to reduce speed
- Fish market: Fantastic idea for tourists and locals – Can't wait
- Water taxi: Fantastic idea for tourists and locals – Can't wait
- Housing: Needs housing affordable for families but also single people
- Local Produce: Grow project is great. Need more Crofters producing veg & fruit. There is scope for more local food. Maybe transport service that picks up local products and redistributes them. Would need online system to see what is available each week; (greens, eggs, meat, veg, fruit, fish) and people can order. Maybe central pick-up point in each village/or area to save time/money (once or twice a week)
- Gaelic: More teachers/carers/nursery workers needed that actually have a good level of Gaelic.
- Transport: Times are quite limiting going/coming to Stornoway, Leverburgh, Tarbert.
- Archaeology: More use of heritage/display
- Outdoor sports facilities: (Free, of course) Like an outdoor gym with fixed bike, obstacle course, to balance, hang, steps etc. (Could have a rain shelter: Roof, but sides open)
- Professional staff: For sports, culture, music. Not everything should be voluntary, some things should be provided by professionals.
- New walking path to extend the Urra circuit (Limit walking on road)
- Minibus service for events for elderly or people without cars: Great idea. Maybe something you can book.
- The Hebridean way should have a path beside the main road, so cyclists/walkers can get off the road.
- A museum, gallery, cinema, music space, community centre with café that is open every day and not just for specific events. Where the community comes together. NOT on a voluntary basis but a professional venue. (See Taigh Chearsabhair Museum)
- The sports centre is great, but more variety would be nice. Regular Yoga, Tai Chi classes, Martial arts. Traditional sports to have Highland Games (Amber toss, Hammer throw, Sheaf toss) Could be an annual event to draw people.
- More facilities for camper vans
- Extra camping grounds in the summer
- Projects to rebuild natural habitats for more wildlife. Could attract eco-tourism, similar to Woofers, where people come, work for free for accommodation/food.
- Innovative elderly care with more supported living that provides care, but also healthy activities, brain training, music therapy, chair yoga, movement therapy, bowling, etc.

Tarbert Former Primary School

- Infill for business units and houses in Tarbert West
- Connection (paths) between Urgha and Ardhasaig
- Improvement to footpath (Tarbert North)

Talla Na Mara

- I love this
- Resurface road to Seilebost school
- Coastal path for cyclists and walkers, West Harris coastline.
- Well-marked hill paths for walkers e.g. Coffin road
- Enclosed area for dogs to run safely: Dog park
- Create ultra running events around Harris

Leverhulme Hub

- Excellent piece of work
- Good to see future plans being shared with the community, and people being encouraged to

Feedback via comments on website

- Brompton bike hire unit on the Touch-down Tarbert area.
- Left luggage lockers in Tarbert?
- I think this plan needs to be significantly reduced and condensed, with more focus on the projects that were already listed on the Harris Plan previously, which are achievable, and focusing on things like the upgrading of current playparks, more focus on sensible housing solutions (and perhaps a look into HHP's methods of allocation), better road signage, better public bin provision, etc.
There are some good suggestions on this plan and some that are unachievable, and slightly ludicrous. I recognise that this was a lot of work and it seemed to have used every single comment given to it, but perhaps it needs to be further filtered by all the member organisations of the Harris Forum.
- Leverburgh Harbour looks the opposite of a welcoming entrance to Harris.
The scrap yard is now just a rubbish dump and is expanding. Because of the health problems of the owner and the very low scrap prices it doesn't look like that's going to change.
The RNLI Lifeboat Station no longer exists, and the containers in which it was housed will probably end up at the scrap yard sooner than we would like.
The harbour urgently needs a concept that attracts it into a welcoming place, for sailors to stay but fishermen also to work."
- Formal coach parking required at Rodel and Horgabost for the cruise buses
- A Pharmacy in Tarbert to bolster the existing medical services and give access to medicines 6 days a week
- A Mens Shed to engage the increasingly aged population
- More retail space in Tarbert

- Formal parking area in West Loch Tarbert, where there can be info panels and encouragement to walk into the village
- More approved stopping places for campervans like the places on the Luskentyre road - stay for a donation (as there are not enough campsites/aires)
- Pay to park in the main carpark in Tarbert during the summer"
- And you've done the same again at Northton - "Huisinis" is in the label
- You've copied & pasted bullets from Huisinis for Luskentyre without changing the names
- Has rising sea levels been taken into account in all the planning?
- There will be no RNLI lifeboat in Leverburgh from September 2025. So why having an RNLI training academy? The space would be ideal for business units that can be rented out.
- horticultural for Leverburgh
- I would like to see for the whole boundaries Leverburgh 30mph. Currently the single track road is 40mph from the entrance in the village (coming from Northton). 30mph only starts at The Bothy
- Have a cafe open in the evening - a place for teenagers to go along with tourists and adults. Lack of activities for teenagers in Harris.
- Traffic calming measures in Tarbert - proposed planted kerb extensions will require ongoing maintenance - install speed humps instead.
- The first three houses of Cuidhtinis at Cnoceisgain township on the North side of the Quidinish peninsular appear to have been omitted, as has the access road.
- As far as I can see both in the local and national island plans no mention of infrastructure improvement has been mentioned, much as it might be implied by economic development etc.

Feedback via email

Email 1 (08.08.2025)

I wish to provide feedback on the Local Plan for Scalpay, recently illustrated in the 'De tha dol?'. As we go forward, I think the priority for Scalpay is the issue of sheep/livestock management. Before anything else can be considered for the good of the community, this must take precedence.

A new moorland fence must be replaced/ erected as a matter of urgency so livestock can be moved to traditional summer grazing each May, as it used to be.

I am aware that the community currently has 'open township' status. Perhaps this needs to be revisited.

I don't think matters can be addressed internally by the community, therefore it's advisable that an external assessor is appointed or the Crofting Commission gets involved.

The issue has been a 'running sore' in the community for some years now and must be dealt with.

Only then can new and exciting projects be considered.

Thank you

Email 2 (11.08.2025)

Extracts from Bays Business Plan

- Assist Leverburgh regeneration programme, particularly marina improvements and expansion
- Restore Macleod's Gunnery (Berneray)
- Support re-thatching and re-purposing of Blackhouses (Berneray)
- Assist in creation of memorial for Paisley Sisters (Strond)
- Preserve and promote conservation areas / scheduled monuments (Ruisgarry / Northton)
- Refurbish Bays Community Centre (new floor, boiler, potential conservatory)

Further suggestions

- Extend map to include Berneray. I know this isn't a quick or easy task, but apparently the Bays landowner wanted to keep this island during recent negotiations but they Bays Buyout have convinced them to include it within the sale. Importantly, Berneray want to be seen as part of the Bays of Harris so including them with the map could promote identity and a sense of cohesion / help realise collective goals of the Bays of buyout goes ahead.
(Has been discussed internally and decided not to do without consultations in Berneray first)
- Push for proper plan of Leverburgh Marina to be developed. This could be a wonderful area. Possibly include proper RNLI hub?
- Define common grazings on the map? This could come in time, but would help identify potential areas for development.
- Develop Bays Community Centre into more of a hub. Include food bank (coordinated with mini-bus service) and small community shop.
- Opportunity for food banks at mini-bus hubs - Bays and Sielebost?
- Invest in Stockinish marina. Most of our local day boats use this port. Would be nice to see better services there. Need to ask locals about what's needed. We can do this.
- Invest in Flodabay marina / boat slip.

Email 3 (14.08.2025)

- The Community Centre in Tarbert is already quite a multi functional space, with lots of different activities throughout the year and a huge range of groups using it, but there is always room for improvements.
- Holding exhibitions within the CC was looked at a few years ago, but due to insurance purposes, the volume of bookings and the type of space there is, it would unfortunately not work.
- Having a very busy calendar and with some events being private or age specific, unrestricted access wouldn't be possible. Additional requirements like someone manning the building, extra cleaning hours/volunteering.
- Rotating monthly ceilidhs is an excellent idea, however, due to falling numbers at local events and the high cost of bands, volunteers etc it's again just not viable.

Email 4 (15.08.2025)

The result, as published at <https://www.dethadolharris.com/post/one-step-further-with-our-local-place-plan-for-harris-part-ii> and in the monthly magazine, give a really clear and coherent account. The careful listening that underlies this presentation, and the detailed analysis behind the resulting report, is a powerful model for the future. I hope that all of the relevant authorities pay close attention to the outcomes that have been captured.

For me, the points that need to be foreground above all are:

1. The challenge of providing facilities of all kinds that will enable the community to come together and collaborate in strengthening its own wellbeing. This includes both maintaining excellent bus services so that people can readily travel and physically gather for activities of all kinds, and supporting the creation of communal resources such as horticultural facilities that promote mutual engagement across the resident population. We are so widely spread out - fewer than 2000 people in almost 200 square miles - that keeping a sense of 'community' can be very hard. We need to be supported to maintain our sense of togetherness!
2. Strengthening internet provision. The world of work is going to change rapidly in the coming years - more and more of it will be digital in one way or another. But Harris has a clear opportunity here. I would go further: it's the ONLY such opportunity I can see for Harris to tackle the threat of long-term economic and population decline. With a growing proportion of the population working from home, the fact that this island can offer working professionals the most glorious environment from which to undertake that work should be a real selling point! It should be a way to diversify and strengthen the island economy, reducing the reliance on tourism; bring younger professional people and their families to Harris, helping to sustain institutions like schools and shops and the wider permanent workforce; and reducing the over-concentration on tourism that threatens to unbalance so many aspects of island life, especially housing. Speaking of which...
3. Finding ways to sustain a healthy balance in the property market, so that the interests of both permanent residents and visitors can be adequately addressed. I have been here nearly 9 years now, and every year the clamour for housing for islanders gets louder and louder, with an inadequate response. This plan shows an awareness of this issue: for me, it should go further and push harder for more housing development that squarely faces this issue.

I hope that feedback of this kind can help to strengthen your arm in making the case for these kind of developments. Regardless, I think the plan is an excellent piece of work that reflects local concerns very well, and deserves to be extremely carefully evaluated by the relevant authorities. Thank you.



Feedback via phone

Phone call 1 (12.08.2025)

- Bring sports pitch in Leverburgh back up to standard

Phone call 2 (21.08.2025)

- Information to communities like follow up on meetings from charities and local organisations for their information.
- Some things are not coordinated
- Ferry service needs improvement
- Maybe good to have a course available where people can learn how to challenge the government and the local council
- Transport: It needs service in the evenings
- There is no place for young people, that has to change.