

Torrison and Kinlochewe Community Development Plan

2023 - 2028

draft

Image courtesy of: [stevecarter.com](https://www.stevecarter.com)

**Plana-gnìomh Coimhearsnachd
Thoirbheartan is Ceann Loch Iù**

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About the plan

02

Welcome to the Torrison & Kinlochewe Community Development Plan. This plan:

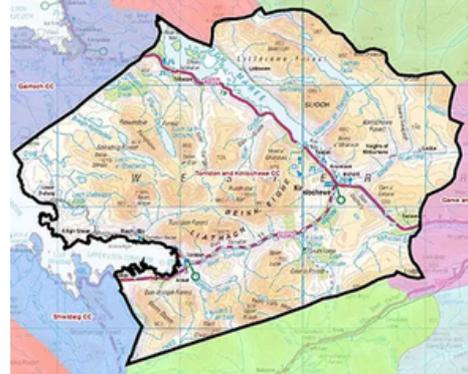
- **Sets out what we will do over the next five years** to protect the things we like about the Torrison and Kinlochewe area, make improvements and ensure it is sustainable for future generations.
- **Is community-led:** community consultation means everyone has had the opportunity to have a say in shaping the plan.
- **Gives a snapshot** of how the community feels at this time and what our priorities should be for moving forward.
- **Helps us respond** to gaps in facilities and services, including by addressing fragility highlighted by Covid-19.
- **Identifies partner organisations** who can work with us to develop ideas and take projects forward.
- **Gives evidence of community support** for projects we wish to pursue.
- **Is intended to be dynamic.** It will change over time as further actions are required to progress projects, also as needs and views change within the community.

160 PEOPLE - NEARLY 50% OF THE POPULATION - RESPONDED TO OUR SURVEY, FROM ACROSS THE AREA AND REPRESENTING A GOOD CROSS-SECTION OF THE POPULATION



03 About the plan

The plan covers the Torridon and Kinlochewe Community Council area. This extends from Balgy to Slattadale and includes the villages of Kinlochewe, Fasaig, Annat, Wester Alligin, Inveralligin and Diabaig.



Our vision is to invest in the future of our community whilst maintaining and enhancing our natural and wild environment.

The plan will guide our work and be used to:

- Increase awareness of the area's needs with relevant public bodies.
- Help raise funding to take projects forward.
- Inform a Local Place Plan to be developed under new Scottish legislation.
- Shape our discussions and encourage partnerships with other organisations so our plans can be integrated and complementary.
- Provide a framework whereby progress can be assessed on key priorities.

What we have done

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The plan was developed by an action group made up of a partnership of the following organisations and groups: Torridon and Kinlochewe Community Council, Torridon and District Community Association, Community Out West Trust, Kinlochewe Hall, Wester Ross Biosphere and some community members who weren't representing groups.

It will be delivered by a wider group of individuals, community groups, third sector organisations, local businesses and public sector partners.



The consultation process

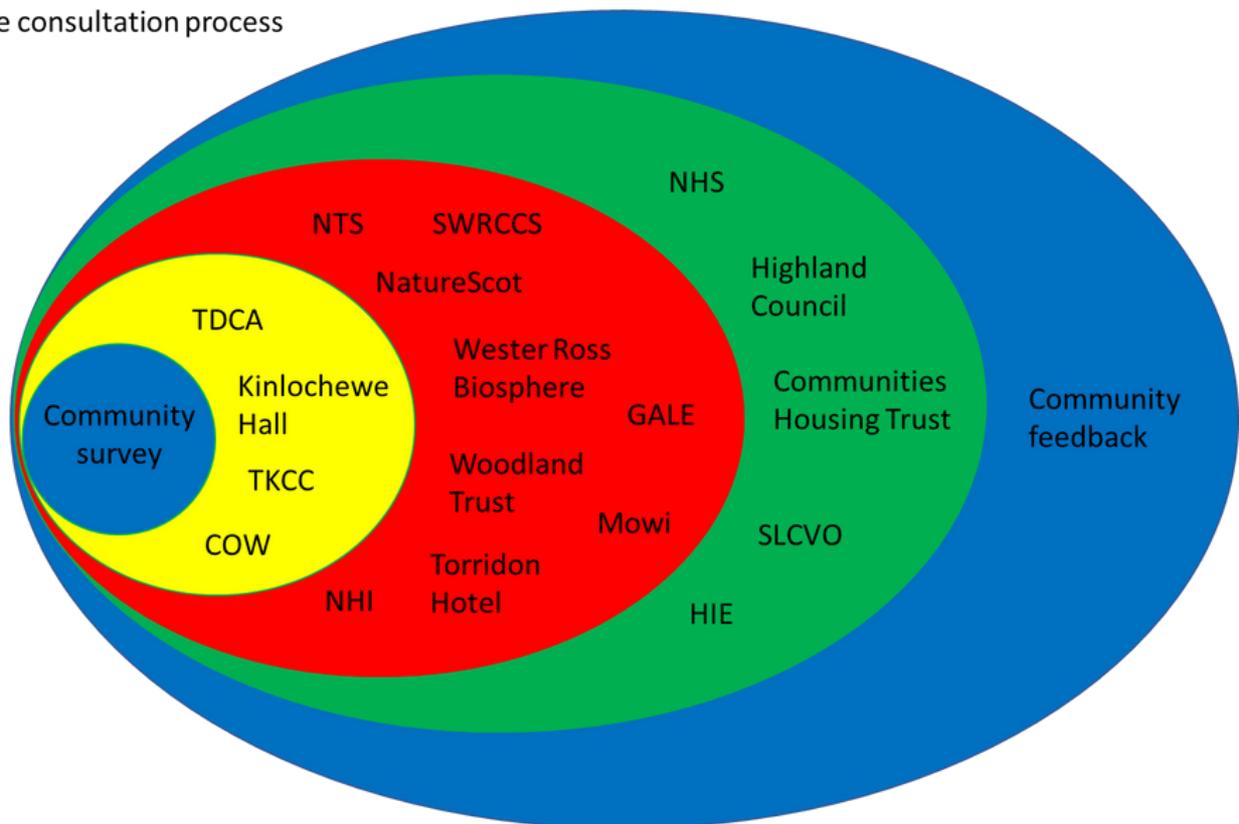
- In November/ December 2021, we consulted with the community by means of a survey.
- The survey took place during the Covid-19 pandemic when face to face opportunities were limited. It was therefore mainly online, with paper copies available for anyone who needed them.
- In April 2022, we shared the results of the survey with the community in a summary report. Visit www.tkcc.scot for a copy of this.
- We analysed the results of the survey to understand key priorities.

05 What we have done

The consultation process (continued)

- We spoke to community groups, public sector agencies, businesses and other stakeholders to come up with actions to address the priorities.
- We produced a draft plan and invited partner organisations to comment and suggest how they could help deliver the actions.
- In March 2023, this final draft plan is being put back to the community for comments, to be amended as necessary before it is published.

The consultation process



COW	Community Out West Trust
GALE	Gairloch and Loch Ewe Action Forum
HIE	Highland and Islands Enterprise
NHI	North Highland Initiative
SLCVO	Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations
SWRCCS	South West Ross Community Car Scheme
TDCA	Torridon and District Community Association
TKCC	Torridon and Kinlochewe Community Council

About the area

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TORRIDON AND KINLOCHEWE IS AN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY, DESIGNATED A UNESCO BIOSPHERE RESERVE

Located within the Wester Ross area of Scotland, the area covers approx 653 sq. km or 252 sq. miles. It is sparsely populated with a population of around 311 people*. It falls within the Highland Council area and is classed as a very remote rural community under the Scottish Government's Urban Rural classification.

The area contains a number of small settlements and is in the top 10% of areas in Scotland that are furthest from services (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020).

Most key services are provided in Inverness and Dingwall, access to which for many involves travelling large distances by single track roads, often through inhospitable conditions. In summer, total journey times by car to Inverness (75 miles) and Dingwall (58 miles) are up to 120 minutes and 90 minutes respectively. In winter, these journeys can take considerably longer.

*Taken from 2011 census data. Will be updated when 2022 census data is available.

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About the area



There are 154 houses in the Torrison and Kinlochewe Community Council area.

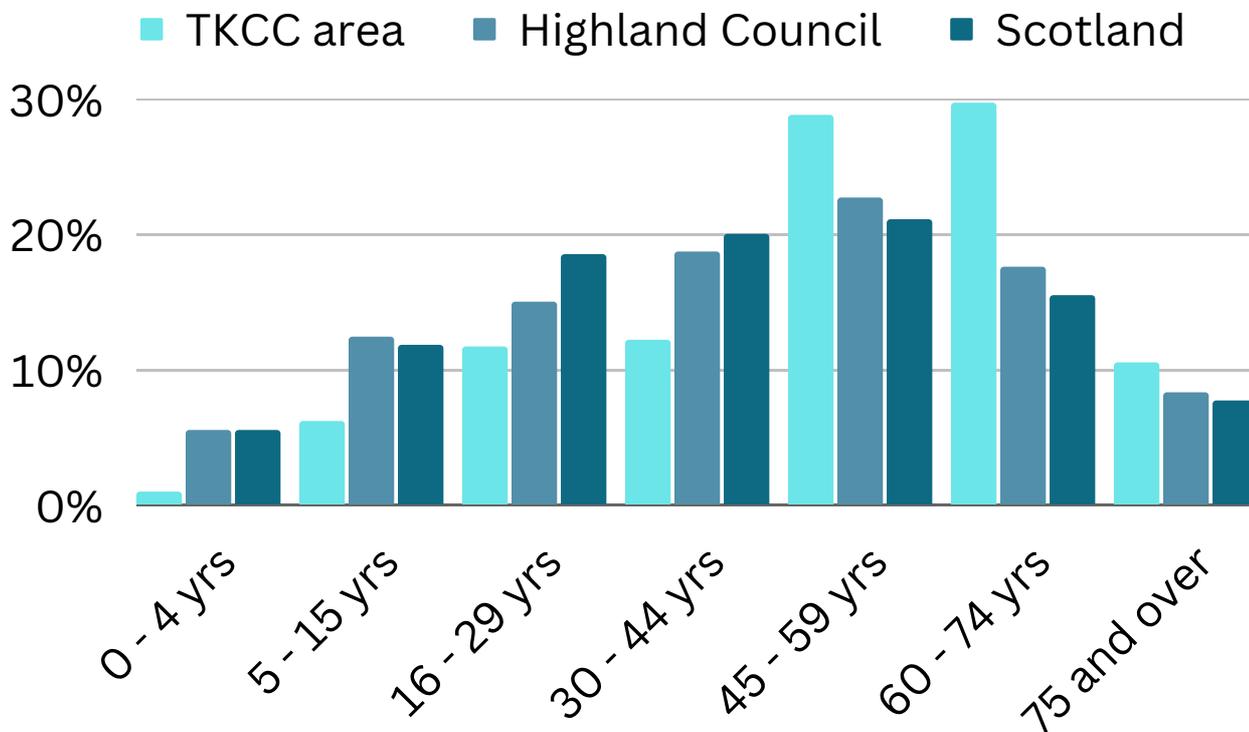
The majority of properties are registered as occupied primary residences, although the area has a far higher proportion of 2nd residences/ holiday homes than the regional or national average.

Of those living here permanently, 70% live in owner occupied homes, a figures that rises to 82% among retired people*.

*Taken from 2011 census data. Will be updated when 2022 census data is available.

About the area

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The local population is made up mainly of "working age" (16 - 64 yrs) people, with less than 7% of the population aged under 16. 29% of the population is aged over 65*. This is higher than the regional and national averages.

26% of the population is employed in accommodation and food services activities (e.g. hotels, holiday lets, cafes, restaurants and shops)*.

The area is served by primary and nursery school provision in Shieldaig and Gairloch. The high school and FE college are based in Gairloch. Transport is provided for primary and secondary stages but not for nursery.



*Taken from 2011 census data. Will be updated when 2022 census data is available.

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About the area



The Torridon and Kinlochewe area includes the majestic mountains of the National Trust for Scotland's Torridon Estate, as well as the Ben Eige National Nature Reserve. It contains over 20 miles of coastline around Loch Torridon. The area offers a range of outdoor activity opportunities such as hiking, climbing, mountain biking, water sports, fishing, shooting and stalking. There is a rich history and opportunities for heritage and cultural exploration. The area is part of the North Coast 500 tourist route and sees a high level of tourist traffic.

90% OF THE POPULATION OWN 1 OR MORE VEHICLES*. PUBLIC TRANSPORT IS SUPPLEMENTED BY THE SOUTH WEST ROSS COMMUNITY CAR SHARE SCHEME

The majority of the population (79%) have fair or good health*. However, 9% of the local population have a limiting long-term health condition and 10% of the local population are providing unpaid care for a family member or friend*. GP services are available in Torridon; the nearest District General Hospital is in Inverness.



Tha Gàidhlig aig
14% den
choimhearsnachd*

14%
of the community
speak Gaelic*

There are a number of community owned and/or managed facilities and services across the area:

- Kinlochewe Village Hall
- Kinlochewe Community Toilets
- Torridon Community Centre
- South West Ross Community Car Scheme

*Taken from 2011 census data. Will be updated when 2022 census data is available.

Prioritising actions

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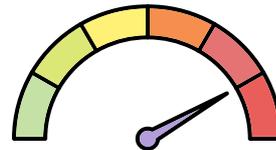
Lots of fantastic ideas came out of the community survey. In order to evaluate these, the action group split the possible actions into 4 themes:

- **People**
- **Place**
- **Tourism**
- **Travel**



We gave each idea and possible action a score based on:

- **Community support**
- **Environmental sustainability**
- **Financial sustainability**



We used the scores to revisit the overall list and removed those ideas and possible actions that had a low or no score, leaving a list of high and medium priorities.

A list of removed ideas and possible actions has been retained and can be revisited later.

We then looked at the high and medium priority list and rationalised it further to make it easier to manage. Linked ideas and actions were combined - for example, wild camping and camper van management go together, as do tree planting, community forests and nurseries - and these now come under: People, Place, Transport and Tourism Management.

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Summary of key actions

The following key actions emerged out of the prioritisation process as the most important to be taken forward. [See page 14 for more details.](#)

Place



- More affordable housing – a clear priority for many.
- Re-purpose Torrion primary school – a resource to be used.
- Community broadband – some pockets of need still exist.
- Community composting and access to allotments and local food production – work has started but more needs to be done.
- Better managed green spaces, including community forestry and tree planting, development of plant nurseries, better management of invasive species and protection of native species.
- Less environmentally damaging aquaculture.

People

- Day and evening classes and sports facilities – past provision will be reviewed and future needs surveyed.
- School holiday/ out of school activities – work will be done with Shieldaig and Gairloch schools and transport possibilities assessed.



Transport

- Better transport links are needed, especially to Inverness, Achnasheen and Gairloch.
- Roads – repairs, parking and signage all need improvement.
- EV charging points – Torrion now has but still needed in Kinlochewe.



Tourism Management

- More public toilets and chemical waste disposal facilities are badly needed.
- Community run campsite in Torrion - a feasibility study will be the first step.
- Wild camping and campervan management – a strategy could link this with improved facilities.



Delivering the plan

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A lot of hard work has gone into developing this plan and we want to make sure the key actions are delivered. Where possible, we have identified groups and organisations to drive them forward. We have also indicated where progress has already been made.

At present, many of the actions are feasibility studies and will require further consultation, so this plan isn't the end of you having your say! Results of the feasibility studies will be shared with the community and will help to determine next steps. The plan will then be updated accordingly.

It is intended that a development officer will be appointed to assist with the actions and making projects happen. Initially, the development officer will be employed by the TDCA and their role will include identifying sources of grant funding, and applying for funding as necessary. They will ensure the community is kept actively involved and work with us to update the plan as necessary.

Members of the action group will work closely with the development officer and monitor progress of the plan. They will need partners to provide updates on the actions they are responsible for, including successes and barriers to progression. Depending on decisions made on taking forward priorities, one or more new development companies may need to be formed at some point.



13 Delivering the plan

The community will be kept up-to-date with progress on the plan through the TDCA newsletter and existing social media. Reviews will be provided at least annually, these will include any proposed new actions that may call for further community consultation and/or amendments to the plan.

Ongoing community engagement will be essential. If this community development plan is to make a real impact, we believe there needs to be a collective team effort with everyone in the community working together. Residents, community groups, businesses, landowners, public sector agencies and other stakeholders – together we can do it!



Key actions in detail

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What needs to change	Why	What action will we take	Who	When	Challenges
PLACE					
More affordable housing is needed	Evidence from survey is this is a major problem that limits long-term sustainability of communities.	A comprehensive plan to increase the stock of affordable housing will be developed. This will include investigating how empty or underused buildings can be re-purposed.	The action group/sub committee in conjunction with Communities Housing Trust	2023	High market prices, lack of good government policy
Re-purpose Torridon primary school and playpark	Help provide a solution to things identified as community needs. Bring playpark back into use or look at alternative sites.	A feasibility study for a community asset transfer (CAT) will be undertaken – potential funding through the Coastal Communities Fund	Consultant to be appointed	Feasibility study to be undertaken in 2023, proposals will follow	Finding long-term funding for proposed solution and/or generating sufficient revenue to make viable
Recycling hub and improved waste management	Strongly supported in survey. Evidence that items go to landfill due to complexities/distance to travel to be able to recycle.	A feasibility study will be undertaken to establish how best to do this and where facilities could be sited	Development Officer	2023	Finding a site – most land in private ownership. Unlikely to be income generating.
Community broadband/better 4G	Encourage people to live and work in area	A survey will be undertaken to establish what further work is required. Negotiations will be undertaken with 4G and broadband providers	Development Officer	2023	
Community composting / access to allotments and local food production	Address food poverty, reduce food waste going to landfill and food miles; high level of support from survey	Sites for polytunnels and for composting will be investigated and a plan drawn up	For Kinlochewe, NaturesScot are progressing allotment scheme. For Torridon, Development Officer will work with Highland Council, Torridon Hotel, National Trust for Scotland and potentially others.	2023	Finding a site and funding

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Key actions in detail

What needs to change	Why	What action will we take	Who	When	Challenges
PLACE					
Better managed green spaces including community forest/ tree planting / nurseries, better management of invasive species/ protect native species	Over 80% of survey respondents supported re-forestation (83%) and protection of local species (89%)	A broad environmental improvement plan will be developed. This will include organising open meetings for interested parties to share current projects and challenges; raising awareness of ongoing activity; and communication with private landowners to see what projects they have underway.	Development Officer will work with Highland Council, National Trust for Scotland, Woodland Trust and NatureScot	2023 for plan, which will then have timelines for specific actions	Plan will identify
Less environmentally damaging aquaculture	Problems with seabed and loss of marine life	Work with Mowi, Bakkafrost and NatureScot to understand regulations and develop strategies to improve things	Action group/ sub-committee	Ongoing	Difficult to work with big business
PEOPLE					
Day and evening classes and sports facilities	Improve well-being. Existing opportunities were seen by majority of survey respondents (61%) as being poor or very poor.	Past efforts to provide these will be reviewed. A survey will then be undertaken to investigate what is needed. Existing facilities will be better promoted. Link with Shieldaig will be explored.	Development Officer	2023	Low usage of existing or new facilities may make cost benefit prohibitive
School holiday/ out of school activities	71% of people within this category rated existing activities poor or very poor	Work will be undertaken with Kinlochewe Hall, Shieldaig and Gairloch Schools to explore what can be done, what is already happening, including improving access through better transport provision.	Development Officer	2023	Finding long-term funding, including for transport, given remote locations.

Key actions in detail

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What needs to change	Why	What action will we take	Who	When	Challenges
TRANSPORT					
Better transport links to Inverness, Achnasheen and Gairloch	Not enough provision of public transport, especially to Achnasheen to link with train; important for those without private transport	Better information will be provided on existing underused services eg perhaps a composite timetable would be useful. Investigate the possibility of a community minibus/ dial a bus/ taxi/ car service. Awareness of SWRCCS to be improved.	Action group/ sub-committee and Development Officer will liaise with SWRCCS on better information & awareness of all options. SWRCCS currently looking at options for a community minibus service	2023	Long-term funding for a community scheme
Roads – repairs, parking and signage	Over 70% of respondents rated the current state of roads and road repairs as poor or very poor	Work will be undertaken with TKCC to see what can be done to advocate effectively with Highland Council and local councillors for improved maintenance of roads, this could include a social media campaign. Some problems could be alleviated by better signage or smarter parking.	Action group/ sub-committee	Ongoing	Ensuring this is a Highland Council priority at a time of funding constraints
EV Charging points	Service for the community, income generation, attract more visitors, paves the way for more electric vehicle use	TDCA charging point at Torridon Community Centre due for completion soon. Options for provision at Kinlochewe will be explored.	Action group/ sub-committee will discuss with Kinlochewe organisations (COW, NatureScot, Village Hall). If needed, Development Officer will take forward further work	2023	Complex and potentially time consuming. Need to identify site.

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Key actions in detail

What needs to change	Why	What action will we take	Who	When	Challenges
TOURISM MANAGEMENT					
More public toilets and chemical waste disposal facilities	77% of respondents supported the idea of more community run toilet facilities	Discussions will be held with COW about plans for Kinlochewe. Link in with NTS and Highlife Highland plans for facilities in Torridon (see also next item)	Development Officer	2023	Some organisations potentially doing their own thing. Need to coordinate effectively to reduce duplication of resources.
Community run campsite in Torridon	77% of respondents agreed with the idea, or agreed subject to detail	A feasibility study will be undertaken as the first step. This will also cover chemical waste disposal and improved toilet facilities in Torridon. The facilities to be offered at the new NTS visitor centre will be taken into consideration.	Development Officer	2023	Some organisations potentially doing their own thing. Need to coordinate effectively to reduce duplication of resources.
Wild camping and campervan management	76% of respondents stated this had a negative impact	Reach out to Highland Council Ranger Service, NatureScot and National Trust for Scotland and work with them to develop a strategy for tackling these issues. Links in with potentially providing better/ more formal campervan facilities.	Action group/ sub committee to initiate	2023	Rangers have few (if any) powers of enforcement but can help educate

Acknowledgements 18

This community-led plan has been produced by the Torridon and Kinlochewe Community Development Plan Action Group, all of whose members volunteered their time and energy.

Invaluable support has been provided by the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) and Wester Ross Biosphere.

Thanks to stevecarter.com for the cover photographs.

We are extremely grateful to everyone in the community who completed the survey. Also everyone who attended the launch events and who is providing feedback on this final draft of the plan.

Finally, a great big thank you goes to the following people for all their help with putting the draft together:

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