

# Torrison and Kinlochewe Community Development Plan

2023 - 2028



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

# Plana-gnìomh Coimhearsnachd Thoirbheartan is Ceann Loch Iù

# 01

## Contents

### Page

About the Plan	02
What We Have Done	04
About the Area	06
Prioritising Actions	10
Summary of Key Actions	12
Delivering the Plan	14
Key Actions in Detail	16
Acknowledgements	20

# About the plan

# 02

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

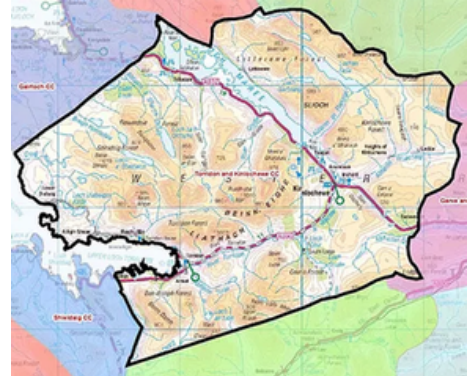
- **Sets out what we will do over the next five years** to protect the environment and things we like about our area, make improvements and ensure it is sustainable for future generations.
- **Is community-led:** community consultation means everyone has had the opportunity to have a say in shaping the 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 on key priorities can be assessed.



# What we have done

# 04

The plan was developed by an action group made up of the following organisations and groups: Torridon and Kinlochewe Community Council, Torridon District Community Association, Community Out West Trust, Kinlochewe Hall, National Trust for Scotland, 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

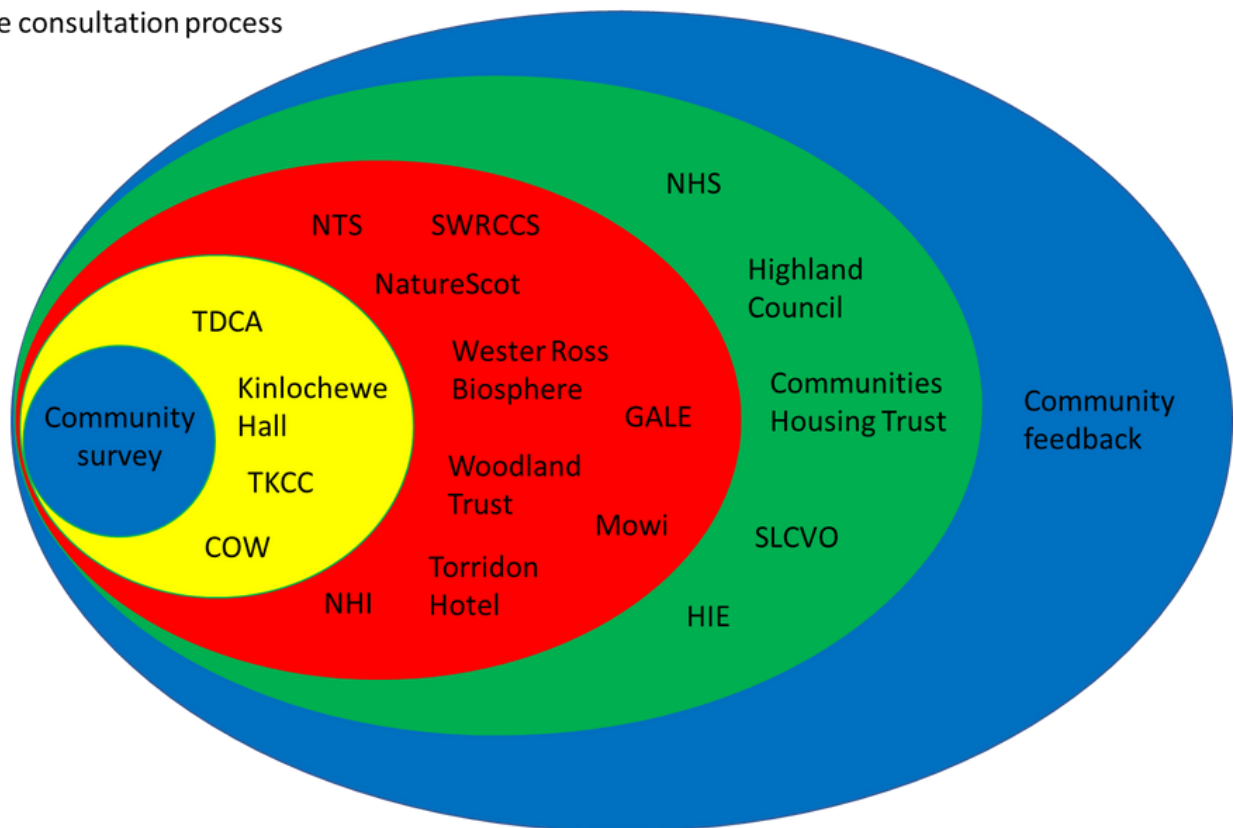
- In November/ December 2021, the action group consulted with the community by means of a survey.
- The survey took place during the Covid-19 pandemic when face to face opportunities were limited. It was therefore mainly online, with paper copies available for anyone who needed them.
- In April 2022, we shared the results of the survey with the community in a summary report. Visit [www.tkcc.scot](http://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, a final draft plan was put back to the community for comments and was amended as necessary before this version was published.

The consultation process



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

# About the area

# 06

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

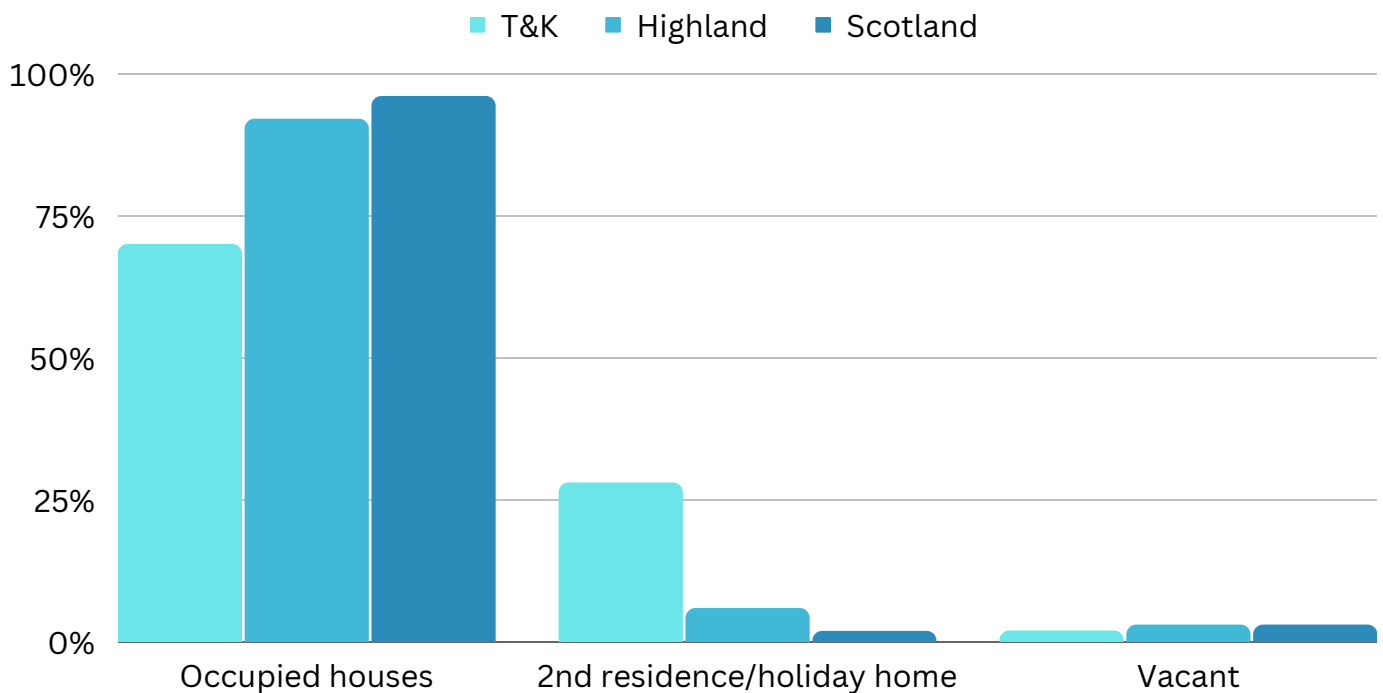
Located within the Wester Ross area of Scotland, the area covers approx 653 sq. km or 252 sq. miles. It is sparsely populated with a population at the last census of 311 people. It falls within the Highland Council area and is classed as a very remote rural community under the Scottish Government's Urban 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 difficult conditions. In summer, total journey times by car to Inverness (up to 75 miles) and Dingwall (up to 58 miles) are up to 120 minutes and 90 minutes respectively. In winter, these journeys can take considerably longer.

# 07

## About the area



There are 154 occupied houses in the Torridon and Kinlochewe Community Council area.\*

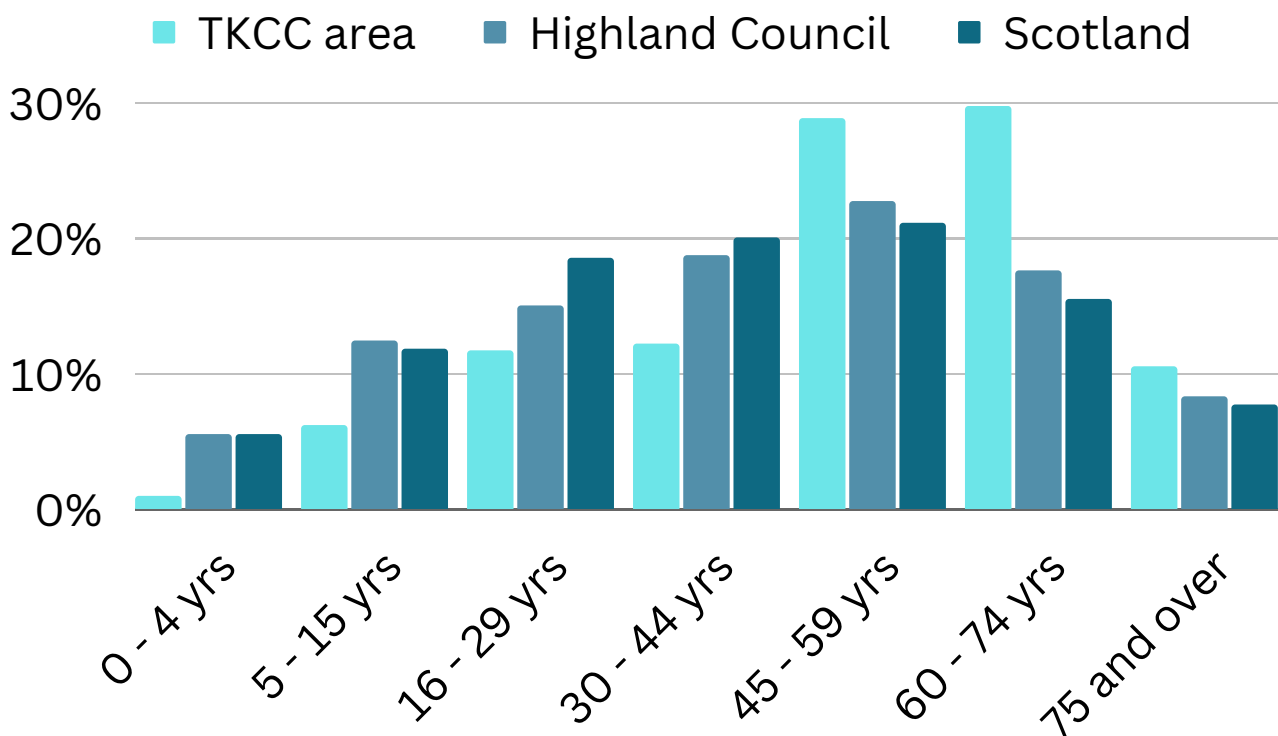
The majority of properties are registered as occupied primary residences, although the area has a far higher proportion of 2nd residences/ holiday homes than the regional or national average.\*

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

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

# About the area

# 08



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.



# 09

## 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. The history is rich and there are 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

\*Figures taken from 2011 census data. Will be updated when 2022 census data is available.

# Prioritising actions

# 10

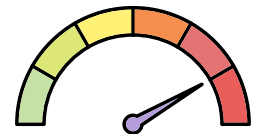
Lots of fantastic ideas came out of the community survey. In order to evaluate these, the action group split the possible actions into 4 themes. These were initially: Place, People, Travel, Tourism. After further analysis, the themes are now:

- **Place**
- **People**
- **Transport**
- **Tourism Management**



Each idea and possible action was given a score based on:

- **The level of community support**
- **Whether it could have a positive impact on the environment, or at the least a neutral effect**
- **Whether it could be financially sustainable**



We used the scores to revisit the overall list and removed those ideas and possible actions that had a low or no score. We also removed those that would be too difficult to take on at this stage.

This left a list of high and medium priorities. We then rationalised this 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.

# 11

## Prioritising actions



After engaging with partners to get their input, we took the proposed actions back to the community for comment. This gave rise to more great ideas which we evaluated in the same way as those that came out of the survey.



A list of removed ideas and possible actions has been retained to be considered again when the plan is reviewed and is available on request.



# Summary of key actions

# 12

The following key actions emerged out of the prioritisation process as the most important to be taken forward. See pages 16 - 19 for more details.

## PLACE

- More affordable housing - a clear priority for many.
- Re-purpose Torridon primary school - could address several priorities.
- Community broadband - some pockets of need still exist.
- Community composting, 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

- Increase capacity to deliver actions - employment of project/ development officer(s) will reduce community's reliance on volunteers.
- Day and evening classes and sports facilities - past provision will be reviewed and future needs surveyed.
- School holiday/ out of school activities - discussions will be held with Shieldaig and Gairloch schools and transport possibilities assessed.



# 13

## Summary of key actions

### TRANSPORT



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

### TOURISM MANAGEMENT

- More public toilets and chemical waste disposal facilities - badly needed.
- Possible community takeover of the campsite in Torricon - a feasibility study will be the first step.
- Wild camping and campervan management - a strategy could link this with improved tourism facilities.



# Delivering the plan

# 14

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 the actions forward. We have also indicated where progress has already been made.

A key priority will be to engage one or more project or development officers. They will:

- assist with the actions and ensure we can reduce our reliance on volunteers who have limited time to make projects happen.
- help to design projects, identify sources of grant funding and apply for funding as necessary.
- recognising the current financial climate, work with members of the action group to identify opportunities for projects to generate revenue in order to ensure their long-term sustainability.



Initially it is intended that a development officer will be engaged by the Torridon District Community Association.

# 15 Delivering the plan



Members of the action group will work closely with the development officer and monitor progress of the plan. The community will be kept informed through newsletters, existing social media and at community council meetings. Reviews will be provided at least annually and these will include any proposed new actions that may call for further community consultation and/ or amendments to the plan. Depending on decisions made on taking forward priorities, one or more new organisations may need to be formed at some point.

At present, many of the actions are feasibility studies. The results of these will be shared with the community for further consultation and the plan will then be updated.

We intend to work with others both within and outwith the Torricon and Kinlochewe area. This will be to share ideas and resources, learn from experiences and, where appropriate, to try and maximise the potential benefits for our neighbours as well as for our own community.



**ONGOING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WILL BE ESSENTIAL. IF THIS PLAN IS TO MAKE A REAL IMPACT 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

# 16

What needs to change	Why	What action will we take	Who	When	Challenges
<b>PLACE</b>					
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	Action group in conjunction with Communities Housing Trust	2024	High market prices, lack of good government policy
Re-purpose Torridon primary school and look at options for playpark	Help provide a solution to things identified as community priorities.  Strong feedback that there should be a playpark	A feasibility study for a community asset transfer will be undertaken – potential funding through the Coastal Communities Fund	Consultant to be appointed	Feasibility study to be undertaken in 2023, to include consideration of ideas from community consultation. Proposals will follow 2023/2024	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 recycle	A feasibility study will be undertaken to establish how best to do this and where facilities could be sited	Development Officer	2024	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	Unknown at present
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 make plan with Highland Council, Torridon Hotel, National Trust for Scotland and maybe others	2023 for plan, which will then have timelines for specific actions	Finding a site and funding

# 17

## Key actions in detail

What needs to change	Why	What action will we take	Who	When	Challenges
<b>PLACE</b>					
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; and raising awareness of ongoing activity	Development Officer will work with Highland Council, National Trust for Scotland, Woodland Trust, NatureScot and private landowners	2023 for plan, which will then have timelines for specific actions	Plan will identify
Positive action to repair seabed and reverse loss of marine life	57% of survey respondents wanted less environmentally damaging aquaculture	Work with Mowi, Bakkafrøst and NatureScot to understand regulations and develop strategies to improve the marine environment	Action group	Ongoing	Difficult to work with big business
<b>PEOPLE</b>					
Increase capacity in the community	Strong feelings expressed in survey that volunteers do not have time to maximise the potential of this plan on their own	Engage project/ development officer(s)	Action group will seek funding for post and conduct interviews	2023	Grant funding is tight. If person is not local, accommodation may be difficult
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	Review and survey 2024	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 Highlife Highland 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

# 18

What needs to change	Why	What action will we take	Who	When	Challenges
<b>TRANSPORT</b>					
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 possibility of a community minibus/ dial a bus/ taxi/ car service. Awareness of SWRCCS to be improved	Action group and Development Officer will liaise with SWRCCS on better information & awareness of all options  SWRCCS currently looking at options for a community taxi/ minibus service	Ongoing	Long-term funding for a community scheme
Roads – repairs, traffic calming 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	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	Torridon Community Centre now has charging points.  Options for provision at Kinlochewe will be explored	Action group will discuss with Kinlochewe organisations (COW Trust, NatureScot, Village Hall). Development Officer will take forward further work if necessary	2023	Complex and potentially time consuming. Need to identify site

# 19

## Key actions in detail

What needs to change	Why	What action will we take	Who	When	Challenges
<b>TOURISM MANAGEMENT</b>					
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 Trust about plans for Kinlochewe. For Torridon, link in with National Trust for Scotland and Highlife Highland plans for facilities	Development Officer	2023/24	Some organisations may not be aware of everything that's going on across the area. Need to co-ordinate effectively to reduce duplication of resources
Revitalise campsite in Torridon	77% of respondents agreed with the idea of a community run site, or agreed subject to detail	A feasibility study for a community asset transfer 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 National Trust for Scotland visitor centre will be taken into consideration	Development Officer	2024	Need to coordinate effectively to avoid duplication of facilities
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 to initiate	2023	Rangers have few (if any) powers of enforcement but can help educate



# Acknowledgements 20

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

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

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

A great big thank you goes to the following people for all their help with putting this plan together:

Alpin Stewart, Andrew Carnes, Caroline Hamilton, Caz Austen, Chris Johnson, Chris Smith, Dan Rose-Bristow, David Allan, Donald MacDonald, Dot Ferguson, Doug Bartholomew, Douglas Gibson, Eleanor Kennedy, Glyn Meredith, Jane Carpenter, Jane Dick, Janet Miles, Jennifer MacPherson, Jo Ford, Julie Wileman, Karen Twist, Ken MacDonald, Kevin Wood, Laura Macdonald, Laura Reid, Lorna Taylor, Louise Gray, Louise Pearson, Malcolm Turner, Marie McIlwraith, Maria Leslie, Mary Peart, Mat Webster, Morven Taylor, Natasha Hutchinson, Nico Bacon, Pam Stevenson, Paul Bolton, Pete Meredith, Peter Fenton, Richard Cockburn, Richard Munday, Robin Jamieson, Rohaise Rose-Bristow, Sally Cook, Sharon McLean, Stephen MacIntyre, Stewart Macpherson, Stuart MacPherson, Will Boyd-Wallis, Zoe Hudson.

Finally, many apologies if we have inadvertently left anyone off this list. You know who you are - thank you!



