



# Future Direction and Strategy Document 2023 - 2033



*From the community  
For the community*

**SUMMARY**

## Rousay Egilsay and Wyre

Although Rousay, Egilsay & Wyre are often bundled together, each island has its own distinctive character and charm.

Rousay is home to acres of moorland, steep hills, and cliffs, whereas both Egilsay and Wyre offer a more traditional Orcadian landscape of green fields and fertile farmland. Much of Rousay has been officially designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The northwest coast in particular has a range of exciting cliff formations as well as a rich variety of wildflowers. Special seaspray-covered soils harbour a wide range of plants.

Rousay is one of the more accessible of the Orkney islands, reached by a 25-minute ferry journey from Tingwall on Mainland. The island is best known for its rich archaeological remains, including three fine excavated chambered cairns in the south, and, in the west, Mid Howe cairn - the largest of all stalled cairns, and a well-preserved and beautifully situated broch. The interior of the island is undulating moorland, home to a bird reserve, whilst the coastline has some fine cliff-scenery with arches and blow holes.

Rousay is the largest of the three and is full of archaeological attractions. Indeed, it's known as the 'Egypt of the north' thanks to its collection of more than 166 sites of archaeological interest and an important crofting history, the three islands provide as rich a spectrum of settlement as can be found anywhere in Northern Europe. A mile-long stretch on the southwest coastline showcases some incredible locations, including the Iron Age Midhowe Broch, the 5000-year-old Midhowe Chambered Cairn – housed in an imposing hangar – and the excavations at Swandro.

Rousay Egilsay & Wyre Development Trust is the development organisation for the three islands and are home to a community of approximately 260 people. These residents worked together to form our Development Trust in September 2006, with a view to tackling our local issues and improving the quality of life for those living in our communities. Our aim, broadly, is to help our three beautiful islands to be both vibrant and sustainable.

Rousay Egilsay and Wyre were defined as "becoming threatened" evidenced by

- Population decline
- Below average economic activity
- An ageing population
- Reliance on inward migration

## VISION AND MISSION

The organisation has become a highly successful Community Development Trust.

Core to this is a strong set of Vision, Mission, and Values.

**REWDT Vision:** Three vibrant, self-sustainable islands.

**REWDT Mission:** Supporting our community to achieve its ambitions, and promoting a healthy, happy, and vibrant community.

**REWDT Values:**

- Ambition
- Responsibility
- Communication
- Fairness
- Achievement

The organisation has established a very strong set of overall aims and objectives:

- The advancement of community development, including the advancement of urban/rural regeneration
- The advancement of education
- The advancement of citizenship
- The advancement of environmental protection or improvement
- The provision of recreational facilities or the organisation of recreational activities, with the object of improving the conditions of life for those whom the facilities or activities are primarily intended, including the provision, maintenance and/or improvement of public open space and other public amenities
- The advancement of the arts, heritage, culture, or science
- The relief of those in need by reason of age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship, or another disadvantage
- The prevention or relief of poverty
- The relief of unemployment.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“It is important to have a Development Plan, not only to provide a clear communication to the residents of the three islands of the path we are following, but also as an essential document required by external funders when it comes to grant funding”. *Stuart Williams Trust Manager.*

The successes of the projects that have been implemented to date have given REWDT a very solid foundation to build upon. These include the purchase of Trumland Estate, the management and deliverables from the turbine, robust health and wellbeing projects in place and more youth-oriented activities. The development plan enables REWDT to build on these successes.

Lessons have been learned from projects that have been undertaken, and the aim now is to develop the assets and enable them to start to become sustainable and surplus revenue generators in their own right. Trumland Estate being one of these key future revenue generating projects.

There is a realisation that a post turbine plan must be considered. However, this is not a world post turbine, it is a world post a change in the income generation of the turbine. The reality is that at some point additional expenditure will be required to be spent on the turbine to replace the key components and this will allow an extended life. Once these refurbishments are completed, there are two possible options with regards to the turbine and the energy it produces. Firstly that, albeit at a lower level, future revenues will still be generated and continue to come in and be used for the good of the community. Secondly, that the energy produced is harnessed directly by the community and utilised locally either to directly reduce locals' energy costs or more likely to offer a revenue generating opportunity.

Of equal importance is that the Trust builds its core team, Board, and structures for the future. A new Trust manager has been employed and has hit the ground running. The ability to have a dedicated individual to develop current and future programmes of work and develop these as part of wider strategy is key to future success. The Board is very strong and robust. The skill set is established and extensive.

The Pier Restaurant Site is an asset that currently awaits final resolution to the oil spill, and then through public consultation the use of that facility will be established. This should be an opportunity to establish a facility for all the community. The restoration of the Pier Restaurant Site would very much enhance the perception of REWDT by the community.

Fears exist within the community regarding the future of the Taversoe and the Post Office and Shop. Both are key to the long-term viability of the community and therefore depending on circumstances, there could be a role for the REWDT in helping to secure the future of these key resources. Irrespective of the outcome, all projects must be very well communicated with the community.

Tourism will be a distinct island revenue generator and future key to sustainability. Therefore, by use of the assets available, including the Trumland Estate and The Pier Building, the Trust must look at projects that will encourage people to visit and spend on the island, developing the island communities as an attractive leisure destination. One such a project would be the opportunity to develop a marina, which could be an enabler of bringing additional visitors and tourism revenue to the local economy. Developing immediate facilities at The Pier will provide a point of contact for those visiting the local community.



REWDT must not merely invest in programmes of work, they must utilise the funds they have to invest in themselves. They need to be seen as well as known, have a visible presence and contactable not just by email but face to face. The development of a temporary office / visitor information point and possible small café at The Pier would be an excellent first step.

The final item is the future role of the REWDT. While they will continue to own, manage, and develop assets, some of their resources should also be used to help develop others, becoming a facilitator and enabler for other groups. REWDT should continue to develop its role as a communities' anchor organisation, acting as the point of contact for others to develop their own programmes and projects.

The workshop / survey undertaken on REWDT received general support for all the categories, from housing development to the marina proposals and developments at Windbreck and Trumland Estate.

- The highest levels of support were for enhancing the conservation value and access and interpretation at Trumland Estate.
- The area's most valuable assets were its natural and cultural heritage, including the sense of community
- There was strong support for more social activities to promote that sense of community
- People highlighted the vital role of the Shop/Post Office
- The Trust's work to promote social inclusion through activities like the Triangle Club was welcomed.
- There is a need to maintain vital public services (health and education) on the island
- Housing, in particular for young people, is an important issue
- There were specific concerns about transport to the islands, between islands and within the islands
- There are concerns about the loss of The Taversoe, and café and eateries were consistently raised as an issue
- The Pier Restaurant Site offers considerable opportunities for development
- A marina would be a valuable addition to the island, and more work needs to be done to clarify its prioritisation.

This report details the outcomes of a series of workshops run by the Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust (REWDT) on the 24th / 25th March 2023. The workshops aimed to engage the community in an open and transparent dialogue about its needs and REWDT's role in supporting the communities' aspirations.

Overall, the workshops demonstrated considerable support for the Trust's activities and its role in supporting the local community. It validated some actions (the Pier Building, the Marina. Housing), identified specific programmes to take forward (Trumland Estate) and noted concerns about transport and access to public services that REWDT can address in its long-term planning.

## What will the future look like in ten years' time?

- The Trust are far more visible within the community. They are accessible by offices at the Pier and the Board has stronger governance and reporting, showing this to the community via improved communication and celebrating their success by promoting projects they have completed.
- A vibrant community. An additional number of families have moved to Rousay, Egilsay & Wyre at homes at the Johnstone Road and through refurbishing older houses/buildings as they become available.
- REWDT is now the anchor organisation supporting other local groups to grow, thrive and develop. REWDT support them not only with funds but with programme development and direction.
- Trumland Estate being fully managed, and its assets are now being utilised for the community and tourist alike. A robust management process is in place and peatland is now not just part of the scenery, but through carbon credits delivering an annual financial return.
- The turbine has been fully refurbished and has now an extended life of a further twenty years. It now produces a lower, yet still substantial income level.
- A marina now exists, which attracts a wide range of new visitors to the area
- Through negotiation with the ferry operators there is now a larger ferry during peak summer periods, increasing accessibility to the islands
- The Pier Restaurant Site has been fully refurbished and hosts several local projects alongside the visitor electric car and bike hire, as well as hospitality and retail to serve residents, visitors, and marina users. It is now a very welcome stop off for visitors looking for information on the island. They can pick up guides that allow them to take the mapped-out visitor tours where they are able to journey through the heritage, natural assets and to the Trumland Estate.
- Youth services have been further developed with additional services in place. Funding has continued and as the population ages, partnerships have enabled even greater support to the elderly care programmes and a focus on Alzheimer's and Dementia. This has been supported through REWDT's funding and support to attract new specialist staff to the island. New housing assisted in that recruitment process. The school has also benefited with a slight increase in the number of children attending.
- As a result of new industrial units and a targeted economic support function of REWDT, two new businesses have started and now export goods to the rest of the region and wider Scotland.

# Strategic Development from 2023 – to 2033



## Summary Development Plan

The development plan lays out the strategic priorities, these have been developed through the research of the previous business plan, and understanding the successes achieved. Through discussion with the Trust Manager and other members of the Trust Board the development needs were identified. Community consultation then provided direction and prioritised action plans.

#	Development Plan		Delivery Start Date
0	Overarching Development Plan	The future reduction in income from the Turbine, this is causing concerns over how additional income can be generated to continue the work of REWDT. The overall development plan addresses these concerns.	Start planning now

1	<u>Support and encourage strong, vibrant community groups</u>		
1.1	- Developing Community Groups	Asset Based Community Development. Residents could be supported to discover their inner flair, skills and interests.	By end of 2024.
1.2	- Grant Funding	The grant programme has been a success. Need to develop greater governance and budgeting.	By end of 2023.
1.3	- Housing / strategic land acquisition	There is a need to develop further housing stock and the acquisition of strategic land. Asset mapping of possible land and assets.	2024
1.4	- Enabling Anchor Organisation	REWDT should be the local anchor organisation to enable and facilitate others into the development of their own groups and ambitions.	2024
2	<u>Strengthen engagement with our community members</u>		
2.1	- Communication	Strengthen communication and engagement with community members is a core aim.	By end of 2023
2.2	- Visibility	REWDT need to be accessible at a community focal point, where the community can come to; a meeting place.	July 2023
2.3	- Chair and Board	There needs to be greater stability in the length of time the Chair is in post (current one year) to provide longer-term vision and to develop the process as to how the Chair is elected and why they are correct for that role.	Start 2024
2.4	- Reporting and Meetings	A new dashboard reporting system will be designed and implemented	2023
2.5	- Budgeting	Include long-term planning, what does 5 – 10 years look like. ( REWDT and REWIRED ).	2023
3	<u>Support and encourage economic development within the community.</u>		
3.1	- Economic Development	Encourage more start up business, and support apprenticeships, understand skills and work with external agencies to develop the local economy.	2024
3.2	- Marina	Based on evidence gathered during the research, a marina development will bring social and economic benefits.	2025
3.3	- Eating Out	The reduction in options for eating out is high risk per the research and a plan for future eating places on the island should be considered.	2026
3.4	- Tourism	There is a need for a fresh start for a tourism plan, to map all tourism opportunities, develop a tourist information point, have an infrastructure to support those visitors and attract them to spend money.	2023
3.5	- Car Club	Develop the Car Club and make it available to tourists and visitors.	2023 / 2024
4	<u>Support the community through the growth of the wellbeing and care provision</u>		

4.1	- Wellbeing	The ultimate aim is to grow well-being provision. Support recruitment of specialist care staff.	2023 onwards
5	<u>Provide a vibrant community through the development of existing assets and identification of new assets and projects</u>		
5.1	- Trumland Estate Land and Boardwalk	The development of Trumland Estate for walking, enabling access to the wildlife for the tourist and to be a true visitor attraction as well as improved grazing rights.	2023 onwards
5.2	- Windbreck	The main opportunity includes using the land for the development of social housing, possibly for larger families, or small economic workshops and increase amenities. This would form part of the wider asset mapping and strategic acquisition considerations.	2028
5.3	- Ferry	The ferry was sized to meet the islands need when it was built 37 years ago, but that was for a different era. Therefore, REWDT must use its influence to support an enhanced ferry service.	2024
5.4	- Environmental	There is the need for a broad energy programme to support the wider community. Low energy impact training for REWDT staff.	2024
5.5	- The Pier Restaurant Site and surrounding areas	A business plan is required for the refurbishment or rebuild of the Pier Restaurant Site. This should be viewed in conjunction with any marina development plans.	2024

## SUCCESS OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS

The previous development plan for REWDT was completed in 2011. The following provides an overview of what has been achieved to date, compared to what was planned to be delivered.

At this point it should be said that REWDT should be incredibly proud of all that has been delivered and the enhancements made to their community to ensure a vibrant and longer-term sustainability for the islands.

The organisation has delivered a wealth of programmes and projects to benefit the wider community over the period since the last development plan in 2011.

The following provides an overview of the current perceptions of residents, taken from a recent survey.

<b>The vision of the Trust from 2011 to 2025</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Enhanced local care for our elderly	Dementia care has met the demographic need.  The dementia project commenced in July 2021, and is funded by the Life Changes Trust, which itself is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.
Enhanced local care for our elderly	The Trust continue to subsidise the cost of services provided by Crossroads and Age Scotland Orkney's Here2Help service, which has reduced the cost of these services to residents.
Improved facilities for our youngsters	A youth worker has been brought in and this will be sustained.
Improved facilities for our youngsters	Brinian Play Park, The play park at Johnston's Road on Rousay continues to be enjoyed by REW and visiting children.
A balanced population of all ages	The population has not increased as hoped.
Vibrant economic activity	The purchase of Trumland Estate Land 700ha.
Funding	Grants Programme Award grants to individuals and community groups, in line with REWDT's Charitable Aims.
Vibrant economic activity	The Heart of Rousay Project and Viewpoint at Kingarly Hill completed.
Vibrant economic activity	The Pier Restaurant Site has been purchased.
Housing	This has progressed with planning started on two social houses.
Transport	Bike Shelter has been built
Transport	Introduction of the Car Club and the purchase of the Nissan Leaf Electric Vehicle.
Transport	There is now a limited Sunday service with three services as opposed to five.
Self-sufficiency in energy, resources, and vital services.	REWired, a company which maintains the community wind turbine.
Self-sufficiency in energy, resources, and vital services.	Hall Turbines Two 6kW turbines on Rousay and Wyre (One on each island) continue to generate an income for REWDT.
Self-sufficiency in energy, resources, and vital services.	Heat Smart Orkney (HSO) was formed but has now completed their project.
Community	Allotment Association & School Garden built,
Community	A swimming pool was considered, funded by a lottery. However, demand for it was not sufficient.

Workshops run by the Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust (REWDT) on the 24th / 25th of March 2023.

## Executive Summary

The report details the outcomes of a series of workshops run by the Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust (REWDT) on the 24<sup>th</sup> / 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2023. The workshops aimed to engage the community in an open and transparent dialogue about its needs and REWDT's role in supporting the communities' aspirations.

Over the three sessions, 43 people attended, about a quarter of the island's households. Using a set of interactive posters designed with support from CJM Project Financial Management Ltd, people were asked a specific set of questions about Trust activities, the most important assets on the islands and their future aspirations.

The specific REWDT plans received general support for all the categories, from housing development to the marina proposals and developments at Windbreck and Trumland Estate.

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