



The Stornoway Trust

Strategic Action Plan 2021-2027

1. Introduction

The Stornoway Trust is Scotland's oldest community landlord, gifted by Lord Leverhulme and created by Deed of Trust in 1923. Its role is the stewardship of a 69,000-acre estate which is home to almost 11,000 people, and which includes the Parish of Stornoway and a small portion of the Parish of Lochs. The estate incorporates 40 townships, over 1300 crofts, 200 allotments, farmland and the Lews Castle Grounds in Stornoway.

The ten elected Trustees who govern the Trust are non-executive and are elected currently for a six-year period. The Trustees are responsible for setting Trust policy and the Strategic Development Priorities for the Trust. The decisions and policies are implemented by the Estate Factor and a team of committed staff who undertake the day-to-day management of the estate.

In January 2021, the Trustees undertook a facilitated strategy process to set out the Vision, Mission and Strategic Development Priorities for the Trust. All Trustees, and the Factor and Principal Officer, of the Trust were involved in the strategy development process, either in attendance at the facilitated workshops or with the ability to comment, challenge or feed in any additional points to the outputs from each workshop, which then formed the basis for the following workshop.

The output of the strategy process is this document – an agreed Strategic Action Plan for the Trust which sets out the ambition for the Trust to 2027. The Strategic Action Plan seeks to maintain a balance between the ambition for the strategy period, and in maintaining and building on the legacy of the Trust for the future. It provides a strategic framework to allow current and future Trustees to make decisions and allocate resources against the agreed Strategic Development Priorities of the Trust.

The Strategic Action Plan is both an internal and external document – providing a robust framework to inform and guide the Trust's annual business planning and reporting, and to inform the structure and operation of the Trust; and to allow the Trust to proactively engage with different stakeholders and partners to achieve the ambition for the Trust and to maximise the positive difference and impact the work of the Trust makes to Stornoway and the Western Isles.

2. The Vision for Stornoway Trust

The ambition for Stornoway Trust to 2027 is as follows:

- To be an ambitious and visionary Trust, highly regarded for its strong governance aligned to the Deed of Trust and OSCR requirements, and its proactive and positive engagement with key stakeholders and the community.
- To remain a financially robust and sustainable Trust, generating an annual surplus and sustainable income streams from renewables and the Castle Grounds and facilities, to allow on-going investment in the Strategic Development Priorities and Assets of the Trust for the benefit of the community.
- To maximise the use and income from the Trust land and assets in providing a range of sustainable housing, energy efficiencies and employment opportunities for the community of the Estate.
- To continue to build a valued relationship with the crofting community, and to deliver a successful Archives project, and Trust Centenary Celebrations.
- A Trust which is representative of, and trusted by, the community it serves – with Trustees and staff all committed to the collective ambition set out in the Strategic Action Plan, and a Trust structure, fit for purpose and aligned to the Strategy for the Trust.

3. The Mission Statement of Stornoway Trust

We shall work together as a team to manage, protect and maximise the full potential of the Stornoway Trust Estate and its assets for the benefit of the community, always acting in accordance with the Deed of Trust.

4. The Values of Stornoway Trust

- To provide a great place to live, work and volunteer, where people are inspired to be the best that they can be.
- Our Trustees are accountable stewards of the Estate, democratically elected to uphold the Deed of Trust.
- To always seek to preserve and advance the Estate and its environment and assets with the appropriate project choices.
- To promote community development, regeneration and engagement, both directly and indirectly, to achieve the objectives and potential of the Trust.

5. The Strategic Development Priorities for Stornoway Trust 2021-2027

In order to achieve the ambition for Stornoway Trust to 2027, the Trustees have agreed the six agreed Strategic Development Priorities for the Trust as follows:

1. The maintenance and development of the Castle Grounds
2. Crofting Administration and Services
3. Enterprise, Business and Tourism Development
4. Realising the Renewables Opportunity
5. Sustainable Land Management, Environment and Land Use
6. Culture & Heritage

Each of the six Strategic Development Priorities complement and build on the current operation of the Trust, but provide a renewed focus for the Trust, and the principal objectives set against each Priority for the next three-year business planning cycle 2021-2024 are set out below.

5.1 The maintenance and development of the Castle Grounds

- Create a costed Development Plan for the Castle Grounds to ensure that the Trust is able to meet its maintenance obligations, whilst working and jointly investing with Partners to develop and widen the use and accessibility of the Grounds to the community and visitors.
- Identify and develop income generation opportunities, including an appropriate charging structure for the commercial use of the Grounds, to re-invest in the maintenance and improvement of the Grounds and the facilities provided.
- Maximise the commercial and employment opportunities of the Trust assets within the Castle Grounds, for example the Woodlands Centre.

5.2 Crofting Administration and Services

- Engage with the Crofting Townships to help build and support the development capacity of the crofting community, and to explore and inform the Townships around housing and infrastructure development opportunities.
- Create a sustainable model of advice and support for the crofting community, allowing for suitable charging if significant Trust resource is required to help resolve more detailed enquiries or issues brought to the Trust.
- Continue to improve the Trust administration of Crofting Townships.
- Advocate and represent crofting interests and issues at local and national policy level as an established community landlord.

5.3 Enterprise, Business and Tourism Development

- Consider and take forward as appropriate, and as part of the Steering Group, the recommendations from the feasibility study commissioned to look at the development opportunities to the west of Stornoway on non-croft land.
- Take a more active development partner role in projects where appropriate, as well as providing the land asset, to maximise the benefit to the Trust, and the economic and community benefits each project brings.

- Establish a working and sustainable sawmill operation on the Estate, and work with partners to develop training placements for young people.

5.4 Realising the Renewables Opportunity

- Work with the Trust's partners to achieve the key milestones of securing a successful outcome for the section 19 wind farm application and the next Contract for Difference bidding round in 2021, ultimately leading to the successful establishment of the interconnector cable to the mainland.
- Consider other potential renewable opportunities presented by the West Stornoway Feasibility Study.

5.5 Sustainable Land Management, Environment and Land Use

- Engage with the Community Planning Partnership, and seek to take on a more active role within the Rural Housing Strategy to contribute fully to the island ambition for housing provision and land use.
- Alongside the existing Trust land put forward for planning for housing through HHP, work with HHP to look at the opportunity to service selected Township sites and bring them back into active community and housing use.
- Become more energy efficient as a Trust across our properties and operations.

5.6 Culture & Heritage

- Develop and implement the plans for the Trust Centenary successfully, engaging with key partners, and using the Centenary both to celebrate the history of the Trust but also to provide a strong platform for the future.
- Complete the development, and further digitise and promote the Archives project.

6. Management & Monitoring of the Strategic Action Plan

Progress towards the overall ambition for the Trust, and the development and delivery of the key objectives under each Strategic Development Priority, will be overseen by the Trust, and monitored and reported on a six-monthly basis.

The key success measures for the Strategic Action Plan will be:

- The Trust has an improved financial position, and is able to re-invest successfully into the Estate, and the delivery of the Strategic Action Plan.
- The Trust is well-regarded by both partners and stakeholders, and the wider community, for the positive impact it delivers.
- The Trust is able to show consistent progress and delivery against each of its Strategic Development Priorities.
- The Trust maintains low staff turnover and high levels of staff satisfaction.

In addition to the creation of the Strategic Action Plan 2021-2027, the staff structure and operation of the Trust has been reviewed by the Trust Structural Review Subgroup, to ensure the Trust structure is fit for the future, and it has an effective and efficient governance and operating model to deliver the Strategic Action Plan successfully.