Dùthchas
Our Place in the Future

Sustainability Profile for North Uist and Berneray

natural CAPITAL

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

1.1 WHAT IS DÙTHCHAS?

Dùthchas – a Gaelic word indicating something that is inherent, inseparable from oneself – is a project aiming to find practical solutions for developing rural areas and their surroundings in a sustainable way. It involves the participation of local people and public authorities, and is co-funded by the EU LIFE Environment Programme, and a Partnership of Scottish Public Agencies.

Three Pilot Areas in Scotland have been selected for the project:
- **North Sutherland**
- **Trotternish in Skye**
- **North Uist and Berneray in the Western Isles**

As a first step of the Dùthchas Project, each of the Pilot Areas completed an Initial Review, whereby local knowledge, impressions and concerns on the cultural, economic and natural aspects of the area were obtained from members of the local community and participating Public Agencies.

1.2 CONTEXT OF THE PROFILE
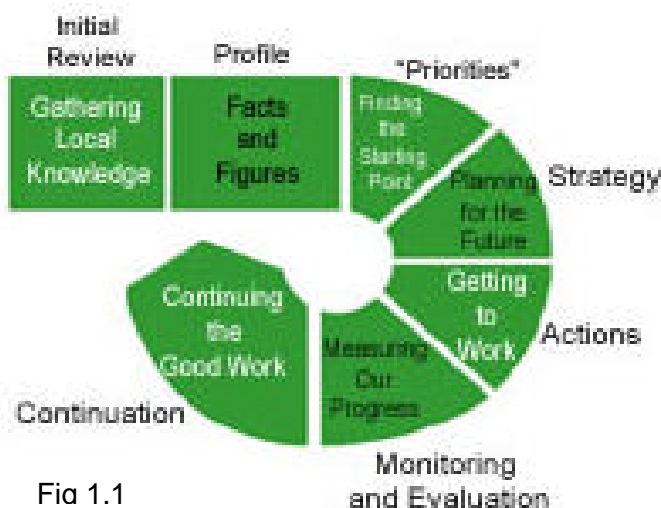
Fig 1.1

The subsequent key stage in the Dùthchas Project process has been the generation of a Sustainability Profile for each of the three Pilot Areas. This stage drew on information generated during the Initial Reviews (from both the community and the agencies) and combined this with relevant quantitative data (made available from the agencies) to build a picture on the current status of each area in relation to key sustainability criteria.

Fig 1.1 illustrates where the profiles fit into the overall Duthchas process.

The aim of the profiles is to bring together community and agency information to establish a baseline from which the progress of the area towards sustainable development can be tracked. It provides a crucial link between the Initial Review and the sustainability strategy development. A vital element of the profiles is the identification of priority issues for each area in relation to sustainability.

1.3 DEFINING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A working definition for sustainable development has been established by the Dùthchas Project Team specifically for use in the project at the local level. Although taking into consideration existing national and international definitions it reflects more the local situation of the Pilot Areas.

The definition is made up of four key goals:
Goal 1 : Making the most of natural and cultural resources without damaging them
Goal 2 : Retaining a viable and empowered community
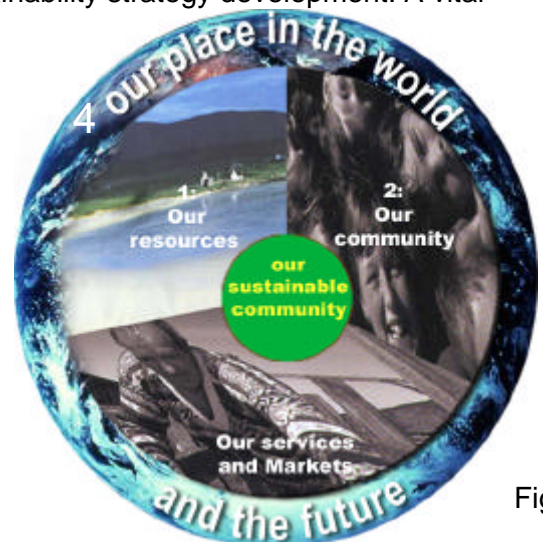
Fig. 1.2

Goal 3 : Reducing problems of remoteness by delivering local needs locally and reducing dependence on external inputs

Goal 4 : Avoiding harmful effects on other people, places and future generations

The four goals and their interrelationship are shown in Fig 1.2. The figure illustrates how the Duthchas definition with its four goals corresponds well to the traditional definitions of sustainable development. The first three goals equate well with the traditional environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainability. Goal 4 demonstrates how sustainability at the local level fits into the overall global picture.

Box 1 : This box brings together a number of statements which appeared in the Dùthchas Newsletter where people from all three Pilot Areas, actively involved with Dùthchas gave personal impressions on the theme of sustainability.

Defining Sustainability

"Duthchas is a project dedicated to giving as many people as possible a say in building a sustainable future for their area"

"Sustainability is a pool of people from the communities as well as the agencies, democratically working through common community goals, to reap a better life and a more reliable reward, in harmony with our natural surroundings"

"For development to be 'sustainable' I feel it must fulfill the whole spectrum of life, and meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of our communities here"

"Everything grows out of the past and if we are to shape the future we must do it from the roots up"

"A sustainable community is one that hangs on its young people"

"One way or another we all have vested interest in maintaining our communities and the land we live in for future generations"

1.4   HOW DO WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

In order to determine what trends are occurring over time with respect to the status of sustainability in the Pilot Areas, it is necessary to establish what the present situation looks like or in other words the "baseline situation". If we are to make the right decisions about what are the best actions to take in order to improve the sustainability of our areas (improve on this baseline) we need reliable information about the state of our communities, our environment, and our economy and the factors which impact on them.

This requires a set of "indicators" or measures, which in practical terms are quantified information which help to explain the current state of things and how this might change over time. It is important to establish indicators that provide us ways of measuring both the current state of our communities, our environment and our economy (so-called "status" indicators) and also ways of measuring our achievements in moving towards our sustainability goals (so-called "performance" indicators)

1.5   HOW THE PROFILES ARE STRUCTURED

In the current Sustainability Profiles we have established a framework, as far as we could, that links a number of indicators to a set of broad objectives that will take each of the areas towards delivering the Four Dùthchas Sustainability Goals. The profiles include a main chapter for each goal and within each are laid out the corresponding supporting objectives together with their respective indicators. This framework together with the results of the Initial Review allows us to build a picture of each area which can act as a baseline for future progress.

Fig 1.3 illustrates the Dùthchas Process and the relationship between the sustainability goals and supporting objectives and the role of indicators in the overall process. It also makes it clear what it is that we are expecting to achieve at each stage in the process.
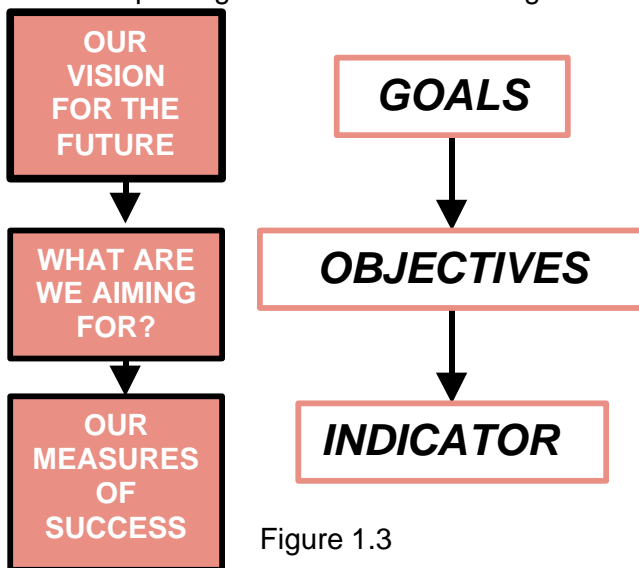
Figure 1.3

USING THE PROFILES IN THE FUTURE

These profiles are a first attempt at describing the three Pilot Areas within a framework that will help each area move towards delivering the Four Duthchas Sustainability Goals. They are based on indicators for which the information was already reasonably accessible.

Whilst researching the information and also during discussions and consultations with the key agencies, it became clear that there may be other more useful indicators which could better describe the status and progress of the areas towards their sustainability goals, but for which there was little if any existing information. Some of these are included as "additional recommended indicators" at the end of each section dealing with an objective, others are presented and discussed in *Appendix* 6

In order to make the profiles, and in particular the performance measurement element more meaningful to each area it would seem appropriate for the Project Area Advisory Groups to shape the profiles further. This could be done by selecting some of the more meaningful indicators, for which there are little or no current data, and undertaking to make the necessary measurements in order to provide the missing information. Profiles could then be monitored and updated annually and thus used as a useful tool for tracking progress.

Goal 1 Making the most of natural and cultural resources without damaging them

Objective 1 Protecting and enhancing natural resources and promoting their values

Key Topics: sea; fresh water; land; air; biodiversity; habitat; landscape; management; stewardship; use; interpretation.

Introduction The inndicators selected aim to provide a picture of the type, significance and quality of the natural resources present, and what is currently happening to protect and enhance these resources. Some of the status indicators identified (eg, air quality) are already at their 'highest' level. If monitoring over time were to show a degrading of their status, this would indicate environmental pressures arising in the Pilot Area.

Status indicators

Coastal Water Quality

The coastal waters of the Highlands and Islands are characterised by generally very high quality, resulting from limited pollution sources. The Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) therefore does not conduct analytical sampling along the coast. Water quality is generally assessed by visual reviews, and considered high unless otherwise signalled. By monitoring any incidents of lowered coastal water quality, it is possible to determine where pressures or pollution increases are occurring within the pilot area. No recent incidents have been reported for the North Uist coastline.

River Water Quality

SEPA operates a classification scheme for river water quality with five levels:
Class A1: Excellent   Class A2: Good
Class B: Fair   Class C: Poor
Class D: Seriously polluted

The class of a river, or segment thereof, is determined by measuring the level of certain parameters (eg dissolved oxygen, nutrient concentrations) in water samples. Most of the rivers sampled in the Highlands and Islands fall under Class A1 or A2. This is an indication of the pristine nature of the area, and the relatively small number of pollutant sources.
SEPA monitors water quality of two surface water systems in North Uist: Scadavay System and Loch Geirean System (both are ranges of lochs). Water quality for both of these loch systems is classified as A1 (highest class), indicating lack of polluting sources in the area.

% of nationally important habitat types
% of nationally important habitat types. The high environmental quality of North Uist is partly represented by the unique nature of some of its habitats, for example the machair close to the coastline. A more general indicator of habitat value is represented by areas of land designated for their conservation value. By monitoring the percentage land cover occupied by national important habitats and by designations, and whether changes occur to these over time, the environmental pressures or improvements in the area can be gauged.

In North Uist, areas of the machair are protected under the North Uist Machair & Islands Special Protection Area, occupying 1731 ha. Other land designations are highlighted below:

Percentage coverage:

Designation	
NNR	557 ha
SPA	2308 ha
Ramsar Site	3606 ha

Air quality The quality of air that we breathe has clear implications for personal health and the quality of our surrounding environment. Local air quality is affected by emissions from road transport, industrial activity, airports, power stations and natural sources. There are few pollution sources which can cause a lowering of air quality standards in the Highlands and Islands as a whole, let alone the North Uist Pilot Area. For this reason, limited air quality sampling occurs. The nearest air quality monitoring station to North Uist is Strath Vaich, run under the DETR National Air Quality Monitoring Programme. Data is collected daily from the station on ozone, sulphur dioxide, and nitrogen oxides.

The data collected to date indicates that the air quality of the Highlands and Islands area is high. The lack of pollution sources combined with the strong winds ensure that air quality is maintained. Monitoring of air quality in the Pilot Areas may be appropriate if known polluting sources were to become established.

Measures of Performance

Interpretative centres represent a structured, managed way of promoting and "making the most" of natural resources, encouraging learning and appreciation on the parts of visitors, whilst protecting the resources. The quality of the interpretative facilities, the number of visitors and repeat visitors, and the information provided can be good indicators of reasoned use of resources. Intensive use of an interpretative centre can potentially result in stress of the associated resources. A review of levels of perceived stress can therefore also be an important measure. To date, information has not been collected in a sufficiently systematic way to permit a measured view of the quality and usage of interpretation centres in North Uist. Information is available on the one main centre in the Balnarald Reserve at Hougharry (see Appendix 1).

Habitat management plans, sponsored by Government and other bodies, are in place to encourage the protection of significant natural resources. By assessing the popularity of these schemes within North Uist, and the area of land affected, it is possible to gain a measure of how well the natural resource is being protected and enhanced. Habitat management initiatives in North Uist are linked chiefly to habitat creation for corncrakes, and habitat protection through ecological farming practices (see Appendix 1).

Additional recommended indicators

- *The area of native woodland cover*

Monitoring the change in areas of native woodland cover and assessing their condition and management provides a good indicator of the value attached to this important natural resource. Data on native woodland cover in North Uist is being sought from The Caladonia Partnership database, which can provide information on the percentage of "semi-natural" woodland.

- *Biodiversity Action Plans*

are being developed with funding from Government sources in the light of the recent EU Habitats Directive, which encourages Member States to increase and diversify the number of species present in certain ecologically significant areas of the country. At this time, no Biodiversity Action Plans have been proposed or are being run in any of the three Pilot Areas. However, the potential establishment of such Plans in the future would be a clear indication of a 'drive' by the Pilot Area to increase its environmental value.

- *The numbers and species of breeding birds*

within the Pilot Areas are an example of the range of biodiversity supported by the local environment. The corncrake is the best studied bird on North Uist. Numbers have been monitored for over ten years, and efforts at recolonisation have been considerable, and have included extensive habitat creation measures.
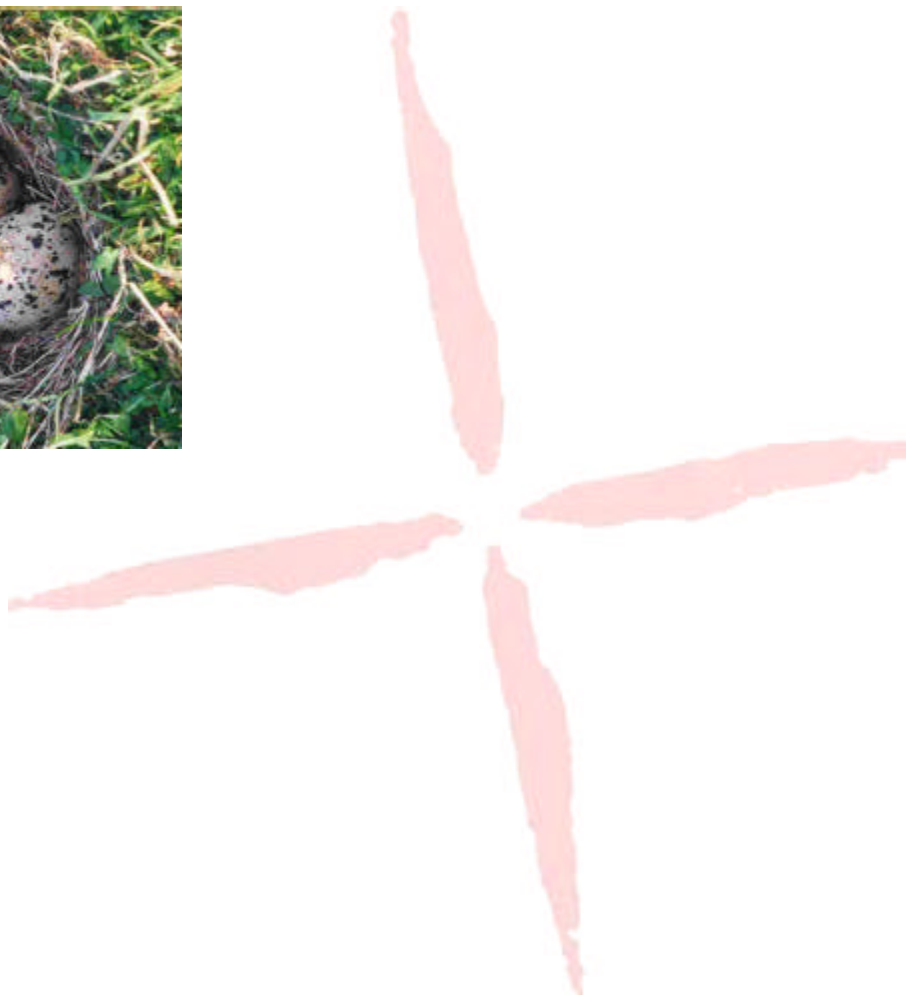
Objective 2: Protecting and enhancing cultural resources and promoting their value

Key Topics: cultural; activities; language; arts; traditions; way of life; sites and monuments; management; use; interpretation.

Introduction   The indicators selected provide an indication of the range of cultural and historic resources present in the pilot areas, and the activities underway to encourage their appreciation.

Status indicators

Number of recorded vs. number of scheduled ancient monuments

Recorded and Scheduled Ancient Monuments are indicators of the cultural and historical heritage of an area. Whereas recorded monuments represent any archaeological or cultural remains that have been located, Scheduled Ancient Monuments fall under specific legislative prescriptive guidelines, which renders them relevant at a National level.

The number of Recorded and Scheduled Ancient Monuments changes constantly, as new excavations occur, and as previously identified recorded monuments are judged significant enough to fall within the 'Scheduled' category. By keeping track of the ratio of the numbers of the two categories of monuments, a measure of the cultural significance of the area is maintained.

North Uist has an unusually high density of archaeological sites, and a rich built heritage. There are 629 known archaeological sites in North Uist, of which 49 are Scheduled Ancient Monuments. An uncertain amount are also 'schedulable', ie of national importance, but not yet protected by law. The remainder are of regional or local importance.

Number of Gaelic speakers as percentage of population.

The Gaelic language and tradition is a key part of the culture within North Uist. Assessing the percentage of Gaelic speakers is one way of measuring its current status. The most recent data is from the 1991 census: 81% of North Uist's population speak Gaelic.

Legend:
- Number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Total Archaeological Sites

49

629
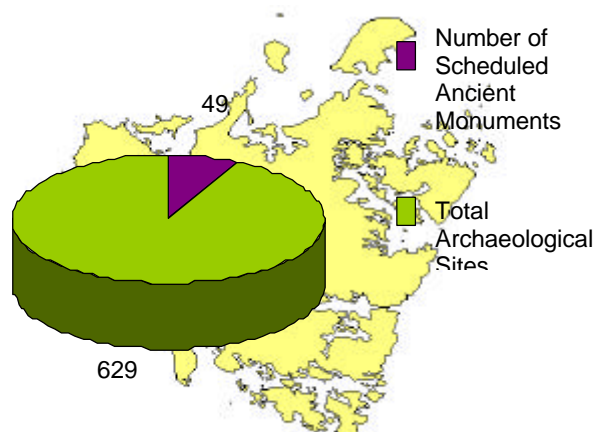
Measures of performance

The number of **events and ceremonies** celebrated by the local community can offer an indication of its cultural vitality. In North Uist, the events range from one-day celebrations to week-long festivals, focusing on cultural aspects of the community (other than the Gaelic language; see below). Although it is difficult to obtain a meaningful measure of this activity that combines both quantity and quality of the events, the available information (see Appendix 1) does indicate activities taking place in many parts of the Pilot Area.

As with 'events and ceremonies' above, the **number and character of Gaelic related initiatives** is an expression of the cultural activity of the area, but clearly focused more on the unique language aspect. Again, although it is difficult to obtain a meaningful measure of this activity that combines both quantity and quality of the events, the available information (see Appendix 1) does indicate activities taking place in many parts of the Pilot Area.

Heritage trails and interpretation centres represent a structured, managed way of promoting and "making the most" of cultural resources, encouraging learning and appreciation on the parts of visitors, whilst protecting the resources. The quality of the interpretative facilities, the number of visitors and repeat visitors, and the information provided can be good indicators of reasoned use of resources. To date, information has not been collected in a sufficiently systematic way to permit a measured view of the quality and usage of cultural interpretation centres in North Uist. The available information does indicate the existence of a number of trails and small centres (see Appendix 1). Most notable are the Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum and Arts Centre and the RSPB reserve at Balranald and associated walks.

Additional recommended indicators

- *Number of interpreted sites and number not yet interpreted*

The number of interpretative sites is a measure of the degree to which cultural resources are promoted. Interpretation can range from the location of a descriptive plaque, to the establishment of a visitor car park, to the development of an interpretative centre and museum. There are a large number of sites on North Uist and available information indicates that many of these have been interpreted to varying degrees. These include, 3 guided walks, a series of information points and interpretative panels, 5 area/topic based leaflets, 3 memorials and 2 interpretation centres (Taigh Chearsabhagh and Balranald Nature Reserve with associated walks).
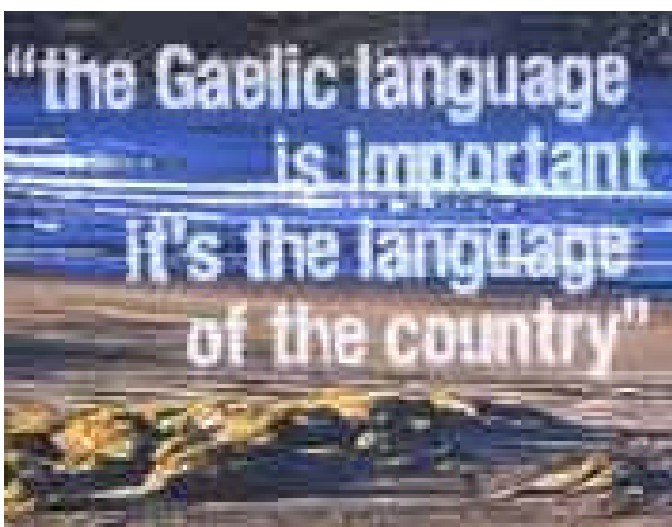
Objective 3: Promoting sustainable and innovative use of natural resources

Key topics: agriculture; fisheries and forestry; game; minerals; energy; tourism; management; use; production; labelling; marketing; support; access to land and natural resources.

Introduction   The indicators related to this objective aim to define the current level of availability of commercial natural resources, and the initiatives in place to develop new uses whilst ensuring that overall use is sustainable.

Status indicators

Proportion of actively managed crofts vs number of absentee crofters.

Crofting provides social benefits to rural areas by creating working communities, offering security of tenancy, and acting as a means for people to remain on the land. Traditional crofting techniques (eg, the use of seaweed as fertilizer) also represent a sustainable use of natural resources. The proportion of active vs inactive crofts can indicate the potential for further growth of crofting communities within an area.

There are 473 crofts in the North Uist Parish, covering approximately 3534 hectares. Of these, 50 are tenured by absentee crofters.

Proportion of land under forestry management.

Only one large wooded area is present on the island, a forested hillside in the western section, on Ben Risary, occupying approximately 6 km^2. This is a coniferous wood likely to consist of commercial imported species. Other areas of woodland are all under 1 km^2.

All of the woodland on the island falls under the Woodland Grant Scheme (see box).

Number of grant aided woodland schemes.
The following parcels of land are managed under the Grant Aided Woodland Scheme on North Uist:

Parcel no.	km^2 (approx)	Type of trees
510/35/PW9	6	Conifers
030001023	0.8	New planting
510/40/PW9	0.4	New planting (4 separate lots)
510/48/PW9	0.08	New planting
030000002	0.08	New planting
030000116	0.08	New planting (2 separate lots)

Game
Recreational and commercial activities linked to game depend on resource numbers. Red deer figures are maintained for North Uist (see Appendix 1) but data for other types of game, eg grouse or pheasant, are held by private estates and are not publicly available

Minerals
There is no available information regarding minerals specific to North Uist and Berneray at present

Fisheries
North Uist's coastal nature allows fishing harbours and fishing/aquaculture to play a role in the land economy. To date, however, a suitable indicator of fisheries resources (for which data is available) has not been identified.

Measures of Performance

Start-up of "green" projects can be used as a measure of the extent to which natural resources are being used in an innovative way, often through the support of local grants. The available data shows that over the course of 1999, a better business service grant and a New Start grant were given for "green" projects by Western Isles Enterprise (WIE) (for details, see Appendix 1).

Additional recommended indicators

- *Number of organic crofters*

'Organic' agricultural produce – ie, grown according to strict guidelines set by the Soil Association, without synthetic fertilisers or chemical pesticides –has been shown to be a niche product which can be sold at a premium compared to normal produce. The degree to which Pilot Area producers are taking advantage of this market can be monitored over time..
To date, two organic businesses are known in North Uist, one producing organic beef, and the other, organic mutton, lamb and pork.

- *No. of woodlands under the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme*

Woodlands under the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme sets out standard requirements for sustainably managed forestry areas. To date, no information on the above indicator for the Uist area could be obtained from the Forestry Commission, but further requests may result in successful data release.

- *Stocking densities*

The density of cattle or sheep on grazing areas will play a significant role on the status of the land on which they feed. A balance needs to be struck between the carrying capacity of the land and the economic needs of the resident crofters. Monitoring of stocking densities will help determine which way the balance is swinging.

The following grazing stock data from 1996 is available for North Uist:
Sheep: 28,847
Cattle: 2, 197

- *Index of grazing pressure*

Similar to stocking density above, an indicator of grazing pressure can help determine whether an area has reached or surpassed its 'carrying capacity', hence help shape agricultural management activities. Contributions to this grazing pressure can come from diverse sources including deer and sheep. There are many inter-relating factors contributing to grazing pressure and a single satisfactory index has yet to be developed
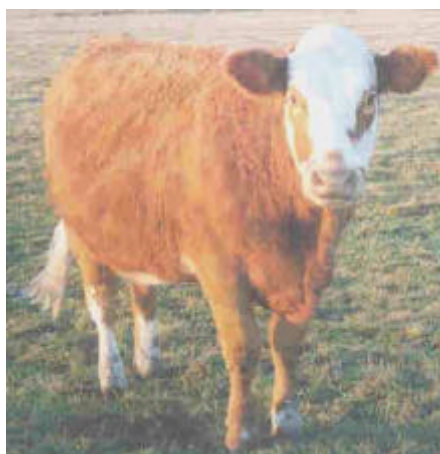
Objective 4: Promoting sustainable and wise use of cultural resources

Key topics: cultural tourism; activities; facilities; projects; products; use; productivity; events; groups; marketing; support.

Introduction   Similar to Objective 3, this objective looks at how, and to what degree, cultural resources in the Pilot Areas are being sustainably managed and used. Because of the dynamic nature of this objective, status indicators also reflect performance, and the two categories are therefore grouped together.

Status/performance indicator

Availability of venues
where cultural activities can occur is an indicator of the potential for cultural events. In general, all Village Halls and some schools within the North Uist Pilot Area get involved in promoting cultural resources to varying degrees (see Appendix 1 for more details).

Use of centres and facilities
Intensive use of an interpretative centre can potentially result in stress of the associated resources. A review of levels of perceived stress can therefore be an important measure.
To date, information has not been collected in a sufficiently systematic way to permit a measured view of the quality and usage of cultural/ heritage interpretation centres in North Uist.

Additional recommended indicators

- *Proportion of historic sites/monuments actively managed*
This reflects the degree of activity in the Pilot Area linked to publicising and exploiting the cultural and archaeological heritage.

- *Adaptive re-use of historic buildings*
This indicator would serve to demonstrate that historic sites or buildings do not necessarily need to be museums, and highlight other successful uses of culturally significant buildings.

Goal 2 Retaining a viable and empowered community

Objective 5: Retaining a balanced and healthy population

Key topics: population total/dispersal; age structure; gender balance; health; population change and support measures; health change and support measures.

Introduction The health and balance of a population is of paramount importance to the economic well being of an area, overall quality of life and to individual fulfilment. The indicators chosen aim to provide a current picture of each area.

Status indicators

Age structure of resident population
The age structure can indicate obvious gaps in the numbers of any one age group. Data for North Uist, from the 1991 census, is shown in the table below and compared to the national population. The largest gap is indicated in the 16-29 age group.

AGE	TOTAL PERSONS NORTH UIST	% NORTH UIST	% SCOTLAND
0-15	358	19.7	20
16-29	341	18.7	21
30-44	376	20.6	22
45-64	406	22.3	19.5
65+	341	18.7	17.5
Total	1822	100	100

% change in populations (trends, 1981-91)
By monitoring percentage change in numbers, a community can assess the situation and where appropriate consider ways of reversing unwanted trends. In North Uist, the trend shows an overall increase in population in the ten years between the last two censuses.
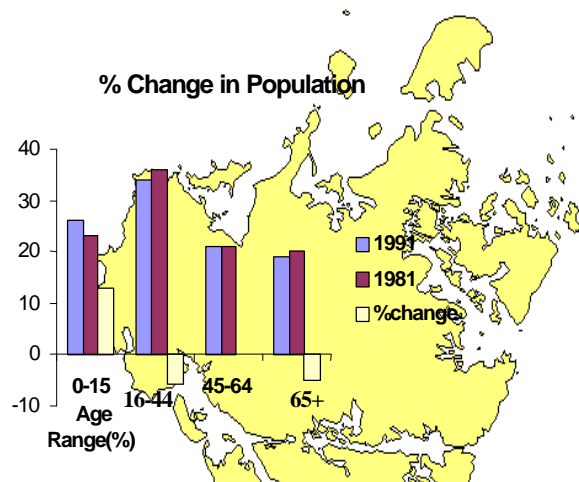
Gender balance in resident population
For growth and viability, a resident population needs to maintain a relatively even gender balance, and a sufficient proportion of women of child-bearing age. The data for North Uist, shown below for 1991, shows the balance to be shifting slightly to an excess of men. In 1991, women of child-bearing age (taken, generally, to be between 16-44) constituted a not so healthy 17.3% of the total female population. This percentage is less than half that of the male population in the same age range (39.4%).

1991 TOTAL PERSONS	MALES 1991	FEMALES 1991
1822	937	885
Percentage:	51.4	48.6

% of working age population

This provides information on the earning potential of a population and hence its economic viability. Data for North Uist from the 1991 census is compared below to data for the Highlands and Scotland as a whole. Working age population is taken to be the age group between 16 and 64. The data indicates that North Uist has a slightly lower % working age population than either Highland in general or Scotland as a whole.

	North Uist	Highland	Scotland
Number of working age population	1123	99,993	2,348,795
% of total population	61.7	62.4	76.3

Measures of performance

The new entrants scheme for crofters provides 'start-up' financial support to encourage the taking up of absentee crofts in the local area. This indicator can serve as a measure of the return of people to the local area, as well as the attraction of young people to crofting .

For North Uist, 3 new entrants under the **Crofts Entrants Scheme** were recorded in 1999. It is, however, unclear whether these were young crofters.

Additional recommended indicators

- *Health Indicator*
  An indicator providing a measure of the health of Pilot Area populations is being sought, but to date none has been agreed on which would be meaningful given the small size of the population considered, and the confidential nature of much health information.
- *Number of initiatives to encourage "young returners"*
  The drain of young people from the Pilot Areas is one of the main concerns voiced by residents. By monitoring the opportunities and initiatives to encourage the return of young people, the effort being made to reverse the trend can be assessed. Examples of initiatives include the Corporate Strategy of the Western Isles Council, which aims to encourage those between the ages of 16-35 (economically active age groups) to remain in or return to the area, by improving the number and range of employment opportunities and reducing unemployment throughout the islands. Original research and community-based research may be required for this indicator.

Objective 6: Supporting community empowerment

Key topics: community-decision making; control of land and natural resources; access to funds; access to information; skills and expertise; community activity; functioning of democratic structures; local groups/activities; changes in land tenure; funding mechanisms; information provision; primary, secondary, tertiary education provision/uptake.

Introduction   The involvement of local communities in decision making and the improvement of local democracy and individual citizen involvement in the local political process, are key features of sustainable development. The indicators linked to this objective reflect the initiatives or ongoing activities aimed at increasing communications and action within communities.

Status indicators

Number of community organisations (societies, clubs, volunteer groups)
This reflects the current activity level within the area, and the opportunities for residents to become involved.
For North Uist, 33 Volunteer organisations were listed by the Uist Council for Voluntary Organisations (UCVO).

Measures of Performance

Community Action Grants are funds made available by the Local Enterprise Companies to community groups, to improve facilities for local people. The degree of funding is indicative of the effort being put into improving the community infrastructure. For the period June 1998-June 1999, a total of six Community Action Grants, amounting to nearly £ 18,000, were provided by Western Isles Enterprise (WIE) for the North Uist area. This represents approximately £10.00 per head of population. By comparison, for the whole of the Highlands and Islands for 1998-99, average Enterprise contributions to Community Action Grants were approximately £1.40 per capita.

The Crofting Township Development Grant Scheme, run by the Crofters Commission, requires local crofters and townspeople to agree together on a funding request to improve the local township. The number of grants awarded is a clear representation of the degree of local interaction, especially between groups who may not otherwise have opportunities for discussion.
For 1999, one new entrant under the Crofting Township Development Scheme was recorded for North Uist, for £13,031 total grant support.

The **number of activities initiated and undertaken** is a reflection of the degree of participation and interaction within the community. North Uist can demonstrate a number of different initiatives undertaken by the community (see Appendix 1). As these become recorded and described, a picture can be built up over years as to the level of community activity and involvement.

Objective 6 continued

Additional recommended indicators

Other potential indicators of the degree of community empowerment, for which no information can be gathered at this time, are listed below. Their community-specific nature requires original research for quantification. Some information on community indicators is also provided in Objective 16.

- *No. of communities taking part in community planning process*
  This shows the degree of local participation in the planning process
- *No. of Grazing Committees meetings/ activities*
  Grazing Committees play a key role in the management and planning of crofting communities. The number of meetings and activities undertaken reflect the degree of activity within the community.
- *Area of land under community ownership*
  This is an indicator of the level of a community's control of its environment.

  In addition, certain indicators linked to other objectives presented in this profile report are also partly related to community empowerment. They include:

- *Access to information, skills and expertise*
  Objective 8 covers availability of essential services
  Objective 11 addresses the availability of Information Technology (IT) links in the Pilot Area.

- *Education provision and take-up*
  Objectives 7, 8 discuss location of schools and fate of school leavers.
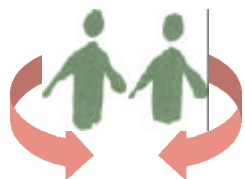
Objective 7: Ensuring equal access to employment

Key topics: employment; levels/age/gender; range of jobs; dispersal of jobs; access to employment; employment training; childcare provision; employment changes and support measures; skill base; Investors in People (IIP); business start-up.

Introduction Work is an enormously important aspect of the lives of individuals, and where this is lacking it can have clear and measurable effects on households and communities. Employment is, therefore, a fundamental requirement for a viable community. Employment structure is also important and reflects historical and present day trends. It will clearly be influenced by the environmental surroundings in particular the natural resources and access to them. The availability and categories of employment, the ease of access to it, and the opportunities to prepare for it, are therefore important indicators to monitor.

Status indicators

% unemployment

is an obvious indicator of economic viability of a community.
Data for North Uist and Bernerary are available from the 1991 census:

Locality	% Unemployment (April 1991)
Bernerary	18
Lochmaddy – Ahmore	11
Grenitote – Griminish	7
Scolpaig – Ardheisker	8
Claddach Kylee – Claddach Carinish	9
Grimsay	8
Average	10.2

% employment levels (by category)

The Dùthchas Pilot Areas are aiming to break free from a focus on seasonal, tourism-related employment, or a primarily agriculturally-based economy. Diversity of employment is an important indicator for the future since this can provide some resilience against recessionary pressures. By monitoring employment categories, and changes in numbers employed in each, the viability of the economic base of the Pilot Areas can be determined.

The information below represents employment data by category for various areas of North Uist. It is important to note that these key statistics from the 1991 Census are based on a 10% sample.

Classification 1991	Berneray	Lochmaddy-Ahmore	Grenitote-Griminish	Scolpaig-Ardheisker	Claddach Kyles-Claddach Carinish	Grimsay	Average
Agriculture	33%	22%	14%	10%	18%	29%	21%
Energy / Water	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Manufact-uring	0%	11%	0%	5%	0%	14%	5%
Construction	0%	22%	14%	14%	0%	0%	8%
Services	67%	45%	72%	71%	82%	57%	66%

% of School Leavers going to University

Legend:
- 1995-1996
- 1996-1997
- 1997-1998
- 1998-1999

X-axis categories:
Found Work, Left Area, College of further education, Higher Education, University, Unemployed, Not known, School Leaver, Youth Trainee, Youth Training Scheme out of area

FATE OF SCHOOL LEAVERS

% of pupils going on to something other than unemployment
By monitoring the fate of local young people upon completion of their secondary studies, it is possible to assess the availability and the take-up of opportunities in the local area.

The Western Isles Career Service maintains information on the fate of all secondary students registered with them from the area. Data on graduates originating from North Uist is illustrated in the following graph.

Measures of Performance

The Local Enterprise Companies are a source of funding for new businesses; the amount of such funding provided for the Pilot Areas serves to measure the entrepreneurial spirit of the area, and the development of new employment opportunities. Five **new start-up businesses** were funded by the WIE New Start initiative in the North Uist area, in the period June 1998-99. This represents 0.003 new businesses per head of population. By comparison, 227 Business Start-Ups were supported by LECs for the Highlands and Islands as a whole between 1998-99: this represents 0.001 new businesses per head of population.

The **Investors in People National Standard** is a practical way in which businesses can improve their performance, by training and developing their employees. A high number of IIP businesses represents a community where employees are provided with opportunities to improve their skills and abilities.
As of August 1999, 173 companies have committed to IIP in the Western Isles. Of these, 11 are in North Uist/Bernerary. By comparison, for the whole of the Highlands and Islands area between 1998-99, 235 companies/organisations achieved IIP recognition.

Additional recommended indicators

Additional indicators of the degree of access to employment, for which original research may be required to obtain viable data, include:

- *Dispersal of employment opportunities*
  A viable community will not concentrate its employment opportunities in one or two key locations, but will ensure that employment, within a variety of categories, is available throughout its area.
- *Availability of child care*
  Child care is an essential requirement to free parents in need of double income for economic viability. The availability of inexpensive, subsidised child care is therefore an important measure.

Objective 8: Ensuring equal access to essential services

Key topics: Housing; utilities (power, telecoms, sewerage etc); services (Post Office, shops, doctors); care provision (child, disabled, elderly); changes, initiatives and support for the above.

Introduction   If access to essential services is limited in any way this tends to create "underprivileged" households or even whole areas. This is a barrier to a sustainable future, which aims to ensure that all members of society have access to those services and opportunities that can allow them to achieve their personal potential. The indicators selected below give an indication of the availability of services, and the ease of access to them.

Status indicators

Rented versus owned homes.
The percentage of home ownership can indicate the degree of stability and security within an area, as well as some indication of the availability of affordable housing. Housing tenancy rates in North Uist and Bernerary were recorded during the 1991 census and are shown in the following graph:

Number of essential services
Certain public services are viewed as 'essential' for a community, and can be used as a benchmark to determine its sustainability. Such services include, GP, post office, food shop, petrol station, recreational facilities, and primary and secondary schools. The information shows that a number of the essential services are very thinly spread across the area (food shops, doctors' surgery) or even missing in some cases (recreational facilities).

Housing Tenure in North Uist and Berneray

Essential Services North Uist and Berneray

Bus frequency per sub-area in each pilot area
Frequent, reliable public transport is a key requirement within the Pilot Areas, especially to facilitate access to essential services that may not be locally available. North Uist is relatively well connected to other parts of the Western Isles, but limited circular routes serve the island itself.

Local Bus Routes

Measures of performance

- **Housing improvement grants**

are available from the local Council, and are most frequently linked to insulation. A measure of the degree of take-up of such grants will give some indication of the effort placed within the Pilot Areas for improving housing facilities. Currently, around 140 households per year (over the last three years) have received housing improvement grants.

- **Integrated transport**

allows ease of connection between different services, eg distinct bus lines; ferries and buses; flights and buses. The degree of integration is a measure of the level and quality of public services available. An integrated transport initiative by the Western Isles Council began in 1996. The initiative aimed to integrate and improve its network of Stage and School Bus Services. As a result, there has been an upturn in passenger transport, and an "overhwelming vote of confidence" in the initiative.

Additional recommended indicators

Other essential services that can serve as indicators of sustainable communities include:

- *Sewerage provisions*   Many of the residents in more remote areas are provided with septic tanks. These may have limitations in certain situations, as external support is required for periodic emptying.

- *Power/Telecommunications*   Although very few if any residences in North Uist are not supplied with electricity and telephone lines, the reliability of these lines may suffer, especially in severe weather, and the distance of some locations from support centres may result in residents being disconnected for some time.

- *Radio/TV Reception*   Remote communities may not be able to obtain clear reception for telecommunication, due to distances from relay points. Radio and television may represent the only links to the 'outside world' in some locations.

- *Care Provision*   Distinct from GP facilities or availability of hospitals, this indicator refllects the availability of visiting nurses or caretakers, aswell as the proximity of nursing homes or care centres. In an area with an increasing percentage of aging population, such services may be considered essential.

Goal 3 : Reducing problems of remoteness by delivering local needs locally and reducing dependence on external inputs

Objective 9: Improving the local market for goods and services

Key topics: local goods; local services; local markets; local retail/wholesale outlets; local marketing schemes: uptake, changes, supports.

Introduction: Some of the issues stemming from the remoteness of the Pilot Areas can in part be addressed by improving the local market for locally supplied goods and services. Greater local provision of local needs also meets other sustainability goals, by reducing transportation needs and improving local employment.

Status indicators

Number of local producers supplying locally and number of local markets/outlets

A focus on selling locally rather than exporting can provide the local community with supplies, whilst decreasing transport costs for producers. At this time, limited information has been obtained on local suppliers for North Uist:

- The Uist Horticultural Association, recently established (summer 1999), produces fruit and vegetables for sale locally. Currently five individual units are involved from North Uist
- To date, local produce is sold to three local hotels, one shop in Clachan, and at North and South Uist games/show. It now plans to start selling produce directly to people, ie setting up a boxing system, and to sell in village halls.

Number of local transport companies

An example of how local transport needs may be serviced by local enterprise, thus providing local employment whilst serving local needs.

The following local haulage/transport companies are known to operate in North Uist:

Location	Companies
Lochmaddy	Aldas Taxi Co (2 taxis and 3 minibuses)
Bayhead	Balranald Taxis
	McDougald Taxis and minibuses
Sollas	two transport companies (one includes haulage)
	one minibus operation
	Mr McDonald lorries/trailers haulage co.
Sollas/Loch maddy	Mr Johnson Haulage Company (spoil from quarry)
Grimsey	Mr MacClain haulage company
Carriers to mainland	Uist Parcel Service
	Lochmaddy Express
	Highland Haulage (based in Inverness but employs locals)

Measures of performance

New start-up businesses servicing local needs will provide a measure of the potential for local needs to be serviced locally, thus reducing transport and import. During the last year, there have been five successful new start-up businesses that focus on local needs (see Appendix 1 for details).

Additional recommended Indicators

- *Number of boxing schemes*

Boxing schemes stimulate local consumption of fresh produce, through direct supply by producers, and are therefore an example of local needs being serviced locally.

- *Percentage of workers whose place of work is within pilot area*

People working locally are maintaining and sharing skills and knowledge within their community, whilst satisfying local needs. This is an effective example of sustainable development.

- *Number of local direct marketing opportunities*

This is an indication of the potential for the growth and development of local businesses and services. Urachadh Uibhist Training Centre, Bayhead, is currently looking to encourage and develop 'niche' market opportunities: Highland Dancing Socks to be sold locally and throughout the Highlands and Islands; Jams and confectionery to be sold locally as no such produce is manufactured in the Western Isles; smoked products other than salmon.

Objective 10: Promoting equal and effective access to goods, services and markets

Key topics: Transport infrastructure; public transport; car ownership; fuel prices/availability; integrated transport links; subsidised transport; changes/initiatives/supports for the above.

Introduction   Because travel is increasingly being taken for granted by individuals and businesses, society is becoming dependent on effective transport systems. This is even more pronounced in remote areas and communities. The degree of public transport availability and how well it is integrated indicates the ease with which goods and services can be accessed. The issue here, in contrast with Objective 8, is accessibility outside the Pilot Area. The challenge here is to meet economic and social needs for access to facilities in ways that do not place unacceptable burdens on the environment.

Status Indicators

Cost of fuel per journey distance to nearest larger town (Inverness)

The nearest largest town where North Uist islanders will go for major shopping activities is Inverness. The shortest journey involves taking the ferry from Lochmaddy to Uig, then driving through Skye to the bridge at Kyle of Lochalsh (approx. 75 km), then on to Inverness (approx. 120 km), for a total of approximately 195 km. The cost of such a journey is compared below to the cost a of a trip to Edinburgh/Glasgow for an inhabitant of the Central Belt (who is likely to be always within about 40-50 km from either city).

The information shows that fuel prices are up to 15p a litre more in North Uist, and that the costs by car to reach the nearest large town are as much as 20 times more expensive, when taking into account distance and additional ferry costs.

	North Uist	Central Belt
Distance Uig – Kyle of Lochalsh (approx)	75 km	
Distance Kyle of Lochalsh – Inverness (approx)	120 km	
Total driving distance to nearest large town (approx)	195 km	40km
Price of unleaded fuel	86.5 p/l	73 p/l
Average value for vehicle efficiency	30 miles/gallon	30 miles/gallon
Conversion assuming imperial gallons (4.55 l)	10.62 km/l	10.62 km/l
Required fuel for return journey to nearest large town	37 l	7.5 l
Cost of fuel for return journey	£32.00	£5.50
Additional cost of ferry journey	70.00	
Cost of Skye Bridge toll	10.00	
Total cost of journey	£112.00	£5.50

Available level of public transport beyond the Pilot Area

Public transport leading outside of North Uist extends along the main 'spine road' from Lochmaddy south to Balivanich and Lochboisdale. The main bus line along this road is the W17, whilst others operate 'feeder services' joining this line.
Most bus lines operate Mondays to Saturdays, and through fares are available on many connecting services. Certain journeys link to/from Berneray and Otternish for ferry connections to Harris.

Number of ferry landings at nearest ferry port

   The two main ferry ports in North Uist are:
   - Lochmaddy for ferries to Uig on Skye (three ferries per day in each direction, except Sundays)
   - Otternish for ferries to Harris (6-7 per day in each direction, with seasonal changes)

State of local roads (Grades A, B, C, U)
This is a representation of ease and cost of access to greater markets. In North Uist, local roads are classified below. Information on single vs double track roads in the area is not readily available.

Category	Length (km)	Length of double track (km)
A865	approx. 67	2.7
A867	10	7.8
B893	7.48	1.5
Other roads (incl. 3 C roads)	68.86	

State of Local Roads

Key

— A Road
— B Road
— C Road
— Approximate area and length of double track
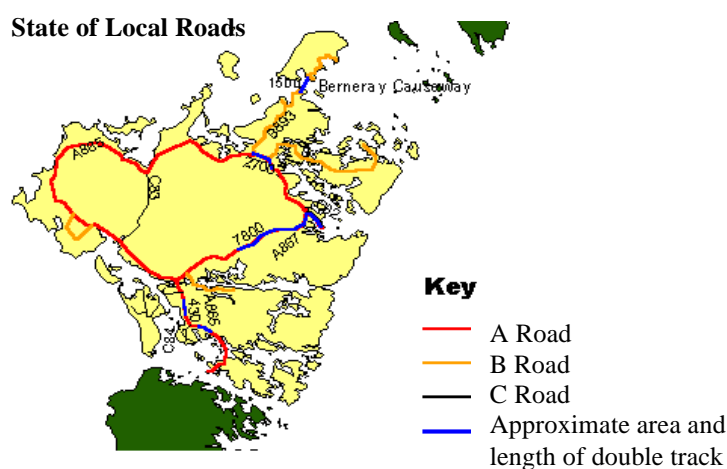
Measures of performance

Degree of implementation of local integrated transport planning initiative (see description under Objective 8)

Additional recommended indicators

- *Degree of integration between public services*
  The frequency of buses and trains to centres such as Aberdeen and Inverness provides a more sustainable form of access to greater markets and wider resources. The ease of transfer from one transport system to another, through designed connections, maximises the availability of transport to the community. Both of these pieces of information require some local research.
- *Car-sharing schemes*
  Organised car-sharing schemes can render transport available to people who may not own cars. Many such schemes may be informal and it may therefore be difficult to obtain information about them.

Objective 11: Providing an adequate Information Technology (IT) resource

Key topics: IT infrastructure; access to IT; training for IT; levels of use; levels of skill; levels of awareness.

Introduction   The use of IT is rapidly becoming recognised as an effective way of accessing information and communicating from remote areas, and is regarded as a key means by which people and communities can fulfil their potential. IT connection, availability and use can breach distance and allow access to information and markets. Availability of IT facilities to the local community, and courses to increase usage, are therefore key indicators.

Status indicators

Number of IT centres
Urachadh Uidhist IT Training Centre is currently located in WIE units in Bayhead, on North Uist. The Uisteach IT training centre is on Benbecula; it has been offering courses for three years, including computing at all levels, free computer courses for unemployed and internet access.

One Further Education Centre is at Lionacleit, with full IT training and connections with UHI/LCC. Due their close proximity to the pilot area these are also considered relevant.

Measures of performance

Provision of IT training courses available, and IT training requested will both provide some indications of how well North Uist is developing and promoting its IT training resource.
At Urachadh Uidhist, Bayhead, 51 people from North Uist have attended part-time/evening courses, mostly in computing, over the past 6 months. Uisteach, Benbecula currently has approximately 6 people/businesses enrolled in courses. Due to increasing competition Uisteach tends to offer a more specialised service, including a mobile training unit that has attracted approximately 15-18 participants from North Uist in the past year.

The level of IT usage in North Uist is reported to be very high. The Telecommunications infrastructure is good with all exchanges having a digital capability. The ICT Advisory Service maintains a Skills Register of people who wish to be involved in ICT related work as either teleworkers or office based service providers. For North Uist there are 43 people on the register.

Additional recommended indicators:

• *Number of users of local IT centres*
• *Number of community web sites*
• *Number of business web sites*
• *Extent of ISDN access*

The first three indicators provide information on the degree to which a Pilot Area is taking advantage of IT as a resource. The fourth reflects the ease of access to IT facilities in the area. Original research or IT searches may be the means to obtain this information.

Objective 12: Reducing reliance on imports and subsidies

Key topics: imported goods; imported services; imported skills; levels of public subsidy; changes in levels of imports/use; uptake of subsidy; initiatives to reduce levels of imports.

Introduction Heavy reliance on imported goods together with imported skills and services tends to reinforce the disadvantages of living in remote areas, and is usually reflected in the higher cost of living. This is further reflected in the levels of public subsidy. The goal of the indicators for this objective is to assess the current degree of reliance within the Pilot Area, and monitor changes and potential decreases over time.

Information on this topic is scarce, especially with regards to levels of imported goods and skills. Original research is will be needed to generate essential data that is needed to carry out a full assessment of this topic.

Status indicators

The amount of **Eu funding** provided to local areas comes in a variety of forms, including pan-Highland grants, and area-specific grants. LEADER grants and Objective 1 grants are specific categories of EU funding, administered by the Local Enterprise Companies, that play an important role in the local economy.

The following EU funding were provided to the Western Island Council, but are not specific to North Uist, and it is unclear for what purposes the money was eventually used. Clarification on the destination of EU funds within North Uist would help determine their viability towards sustainable development.

Western Isles ERDF Award - £34,424,978
Western Isles Eligible Costs - £80,499,573
Western Isles Total Costs – £87,862,930

Numerous other pan-Highland projects funded by the EU may also affect the area.

Measures of performance:

- **Level of skills import**
- **Level of goods import**

Although difficult to monitor, these indicators can provide a clear picture of the degree to which a Pilot Area is dependent on external inputs. The level of skills import is a reflection of the professional expertise that is required locally but cannot be obtained among the local work force. Similarly, the numbers and types of goods imported may indicate the limitations of local agriculture, climate, or manufacturing facilities

Additional recommended indicators:

- *Number of crofters taking up agricultural subsidies*

The main source of subsidy in the area is the Scottish Executive for Rural Affairs Department (SERAD), via agricultural grants. Information on grants given to individual crofters or in specific sub-areas of Scotland is considered confidential and is not available.

Goal 4   Avoiding harmful effects on other people, places and future generations

Objective 13: Supporting the wise use of energy

Key topics: renewable energy; energy efficiency: changes, initiatives, support for the above.

Introduction   Energy enables people to provide for their well-being, health and safety and is a key factor in the local economy. The production and use of energy has the potential to have a significant impact on the environment at both a global as well as local level. There is a need, therefore to focus on improvements in efficiency and conservation as a means of implementing our sustainability goals. Renewable energy sources (wind, sun, wave, biomass and water) offer additional opportunities if these are pursued where it is technically, economically and environmentally sensible to do so.

Although limited activities are currently occurring in renewable energy in the Dùthchas Pilot Areas, by monitoring the suggested indicators over time, improvement trends can be established.

Status indicators

Number of renewable energy projects
There are currently no renewable energy projects on North Uist. A study undertaken by Scottish Hydroelectric plc et al in December 1993 reviewed the potential renewable energy resource in Scotland. According to the study results, for the Western Isles as a whole, the following *theoretical* renewable energy resource was identified:

Form of energy	Resource available at less than 10p/kWh (discounted at 8% over 20 years)
Wind	5324
Hydro	4.0
Wave	93

After taking account of planning, environmental and practical issues, the theoretical renewable energy resource in the Western Isles is estimated at 600-1000 MW (resource at less than 10p/kWh, discounted at 8% over ten years). Renewable resources, specifically wind power, therefore would seem to be worth pursuing in the Western Isles.

It is obvious that wind power is the most promising and significant source of renewable energy to pursue in North Uist.
The feasibility of connecting a renewable electricity source into the existing transmission and distribution system must also be accounted for when considering a renewable project.

Measures of performance

Use of electricity from renewable resources indicates a sustainable approach to energy consumption. At this time it is impossible to disaggregate **the percentage of power from renewable resources** provided to the North Uist Pilot Area specifically. Data on fuel mix use during 1997/98 for Scottish Hydro-Electric (country-wide) is shown below:

Fuel Source 1997/98	Mix (%)
Gas	53
Nuclear	20
Renewables	14
Coal	12
Oil	1
Total	100

Since Scottish Hydro-Electric is the principal supplier of electricity in North Uist, it may be possible to extrapolate these values, very generally, to the Pilot Area.

The **level of investment in insulation** in private houses reflects the Housing Improvement Grants provided by the local Council and gives some indication of energy efficiency measures being taken by individual householders. (See Objective 8)

Objective 14: Promoting waste minimisation and management

Key topics: waste management; waste minimisation; recycling; levels of activity; changes, initiatives, support for the above.

Introduction   The traditional view of waste as being "refuse to dispose of" has been changed in enlightened sustainable communities. There is now an increased recognition that the disposal of waste can harm other people and places and create a liability for future generations. In addition, the actual commercial and economic value of recyclable waste is becoming recognised. The following approach, known as "the waste hierarchy", is being introduced.

- *reducing the amount generated in the first place*
- *reusing waste items*
- *recovering and recycling waste*
- *disposal of residual wastes safely*

Recycling may not be a viable option in remote areas of the Highlands and Islands at this time, as the limited volumes which may be collected may not be sufficient to justify travel and transport by recycling operators. Similarly, the siting of a dedicated recycling plant in the local area may not be economically viable if not enough waste is generated locally.

The indicators selected here reflect activities which may be ongoing to minimise or recycle waste, and to raise awareness levels in the local area. To date however, it is understood that relatively little is occurring in the area of waste recycling or minimisation. Indicators are therefore recommended only at this time. The Highlands and Islands Waste Network, recently established to support local community initiatives, may provide feedback on future activity.

Recommended status indicators

- *Quantity of waste by material type*
- *% of waste going to each of the waste hierarchy options (above)*
- *Distance travelled by waste*

Measures of performance

- *Number of waste minimisation schemes and successful waste minimisation initiatives*

Such schemes are likely to be sponsored by the local Council or by volunteer bodies. Waste minimisation may be more appropriate than recycling as a goal for remote areas. There is no waste segregation being undertaken at source in the Western Isles, other than a limited amount of packaging segregation that is carried out occasionally by local co-op stores. The segregated cardboard is returned to the mainland on vehicles that bring supplies in to the shops.

HIE Waste is an EU funded Pan-Highland initiative. To date there have been several enquiries from potential projects in the Western Isles, however none have been developed as yet.

- *Number of recycling centres within and in proximity of the Pilot Area*

Recycling centres are represented on the one hand by bottle banks and newspaper recycling points; and on the other by actual recycling plants which collect the waste and re-process it for re-use. Other recycling centres may include scrap metal yards and composting facilities.

With regards to recycling points, these do not need to be present within the Pilot Areas, as long as they are within a reasonable distance, or at locations also offering other services. The Western Isles Council operates facilities for the recycling of waste oil and refrigerant gases, and is currently looking in the feasibility of developing facilities for waste paper. Within the Western Isles, a private contractor is responsible for breaking up scrap cars and other metal, baling the scrap and transporting it off the island for processing. Due to the current downturn in scrap value a reduction in demand for this material has occurred. Informal composting schemes may be ongoing on individual crofts.

No clothing / bottle banks are currently presents on any of the islands. However, the Western Isles Council are considering the viability of glass recycling with a view to crushing and using the material locally. Also, a number of charities organise collections for clothing.

Additional recommended Indicator

- *Ratio of quantity of material minimised to quantity of wastes disposed, by waste type*

Although difficult to obtain, this information would provide a good indicator of the degree of awareness and waste minimisation activity occurring in the Pilot Areas.

Objective 15: Supporting 'green' business and community initiatives

Key topics: green produce; green business; green labelling; product development; environmental management systems; awareness raising.

Introduction   Businesses are recognising that positive environmental resource management together with the support of ethical practices can bring substantial economic benefits. Such benefits are attractive irrespective of the size of business, although the process of achieving them can be complex and some smaller enterprises may require assistance. In recent years there has been a rapid increase in so-called "green" or "environmentally friendly" products which has become a significant growth industry. The involvement of business in the move towards a more sustainable future is absolutely crucial.

'Green' initiatives may still be relatively novel within the Pilot Areas, but their monitoring over time will be vital to determine the drive towards a more sustainable future.

Status indicators

- *No. of green labelled products/services available*

Green products/services may reflect recyclable content, organic origin, low energy consumption and other design parameters for preventing or minimising environmental impact or damage caused by the product/service. Available information on such products in North Uist – including organic produce – was presented in Objective 3 of this profile.

Measures of performance

- **Number of businesses meeting the Green Tourism Business Scheme requirements**

The Green Business Tourism Scheme provides three levels of environmental achievement for tourist facilities, visitor centres and hotels. Businesses can aim for any of the three levels to improve their environmental standard and attract environmentally-conscious tourists.
There are no hotels or guest houses on North Uist under the Scottish Tourist Board Green Tourism Scheme.

- **Number of "green" initiatives sponsored by Lecs**

 A number of "green" initiatives are being considered under the Western Isles Structure Plan that may also affect North Uist. In addition, Environmental Renewal grants are provided by the LECs to fund projects which repair and renew the local physical environment. See earlier description under Objective 3 of such projects for North Uist.

Other categories of "green" grants, for example habitat management grants provided by SNH and RSPB, are described in Objective 1.

Additional recommended indicators

- *Number of fair trade products available*
These are typically produce from developing countries which have been grown, processed and exported within an ethical economic framework.

- *Number of 'green' initiatives*
Any initiative reflecting environmental concern

- *Number of businesses meeting green/ethical standards*
Such standards include EMAS, the European Eco-Management and Audit Scheme; and International Standard ISO 14001 for Environmental Management Systems

- *Number of woodlands achieving the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme*
The UK Woodland Assurance Scheme grants recognition to forest areas managed in an environmentally appropriate fashion.

Objective 16: Promoting co-operation with other communities

Key topics: co-operative initiatives; inter-community links; rural-urban links; trans-national links; information exchange; national/international exchanges; awareness raising.

Introduction   Around the world, communities are recognising that becoming more sustainable can be accelerated through sharing ideas and experiences and exchanging "know how". Promoting co-operation also fosters stronger communities, by allowing groups to recognise ways for improving mutual benefits and reducing harmful effects on each other. Community co-operation increases the democratic base for fighting common issues, thus ensuring mutual empowerment.

The indicators proposed here aim to determine the degree to which communities within the Pilot Areas interact with each other, and with external bodies. To date, very limited date is available on these indicators. Original research and inter-community discussion would help in data collection

Status/performance indicators

- *Number of inter-community meetings*
- *Number of inter-community initiatives*

Many local community councils and other community groups, both voluntary and more formal, participate in periodic inter-community meetings to discuss issues that reach beyond local boundaries. There are two local Community Councils within the pilot area; Berneray Council and North Uist Council. Both councils meet once every 2 months and there have been a number of inter-community initiatives (see Appendix .1)

- *No. of study visits/conferences attended*

These are opportunities for communities to learn and communicate beyond their local areas.

APPENDIX 1:
SUSTAINABILITY DATA

Chapter 1

Goal 1: Making the most of natural and cultural resources without damaging them

Objective 1: Protecting and enhancing natural resources and promoting their value

Key topics considered in this objective: sea, fresh water; land; air; biodiversity; habitat; landscape; management; stewardship; use; interpretation.

The indicators selected aim to provide a picture of the type, significance and quality of the natural resources present, and what is currently happening to protect and enhance these resources.

Status indicators

- *Coastal water quality*
  The coastal waters of the Highlands and Islands are characterised by generally very high quality, resulting from limited pollution sources. The Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) therefore does not conduct analytical sampling along the coast. Water quality is generally assessed by visual reviews, and considered high unless otherwise signalled.

  By monitoring any incidents of lowered coastal water quality, it is possible to determine where pressures or pollution increases are occurring within the Pilot Area. No recent incidents have been reported for the North Uist coastline.

- *River water quality*
  SEPA operates a classification scheme for river water quality with five levels:
  - Class A1: Excellent.
  - Class A2: Good
  - Class B: Fair
  - Class C: Poor
  - Class D: Seriously polluted.

  The class of a river, or segment thereof, is determined by measuring the level of certain parameters (eg dissolved oxygen, nutrient concentrations) in water samples. Most of the rivers sampled in the Highlands and Islands fall under Class A1 or A2. This is an indication of the pristine nature of the area, and the relatively small number of pollutant sources.

  SEPA monitors water quality of two surface water systems in North Uist[1]:

  - Scadavay System, a range of lochs close to the centre of the island, north of the A867. Sampling is from the A867, approximately 1 km south of Struth Mor
  - Loch Geirean System, a range of lochs just north of Loch Scadavay, and to the south of the A865. Sampling is at a road bridge on the A865, approximately 3km east of Sollas.

  Water quality for both of these loch systems is classified as A1 (highest class), indicating lack of polluting sources in the area[2].

  Sources: [1]e-mail from Lucy McLeod, SEPA Western Isles, September 1999. [2]phone conversation with Keith Beethan, SEPA Western Isles, 19 October 1999.

- *% of nationally important habitat types*

  The high environmental quality of the Pilot Areas is partly represented by the unique nature of some of their habitats, for example in North Uist, the machair close to the coastline. A more general indicator of habitat value is represented by areas of land designated for their conservation value. By monitoring the percentage land cover occupied by nationally important habitats and by designations, and whether changes occur to these over time, the environmental pressures or improvements in the area can be gauged.

  In North Uist, areas of the machair are protected under the North Uist Machair & Islands Special Protection Area, occupying 1731 ha. Other land designations are highlighted below:

  Special Protection Areas[1] :
  Monach Isles, 577 ha
  North Uist Machair & Islands: 1731 ha

  National Nature Reserve[1, 2] :
  Monach Isles, 577 ha

  National Scenic Areas[1]:
  Northern part of North Uist falls within the South Lewis, Harris and North Uist NSA

  Ramsar Sites[1]:
  Loch an Duin, 3606 ha

  Special Area of Conservation[2]:
  Loch nam Madadh marine SAC, Lochmaddy

  Sources:
  [1] *Uists and Benbecula Local Plan (maps show location of designated areas); NG references available for SSSIs.*
  [2] *Fax from Andrew Stevenson, Natura Project Officer Uist & Barra, Scottish Natural Heritage, 10/9/99*

- *Air quality*

  There are few pollution sources which can cause a lowering of air quality standards in the Highlands and Islands. For this reason, limited air quality sampling occurs.

  The nearest air quality monitoring station to North Uist is Strath Vaich, run under the DETR National Air Quality Monitoring Programme. Data is collected daily from the station on ozone, sulphur dioxide, and nitrogen oxides.

  Although geographically quite distant from North Uist (it is approximately 40 km northwest of Inverness) Strath Vaich can be considered representative of much of the Pilot Area. The station is on rural, remote moorland approximately 500 m from the nearest inhabited dwellings and approximately 150 m from the nearest road, used only for access. The surrounding area is open and remote. Air quality data from this station is therefore considered representative for the Pilot Area.

  Raw air quality data is available for the station for every day over the last few years. The most recent aggregated data report is for 1996. Exceedence statistics for 1996 are presented below. The only pollutant of concern was shown to be ozone, and this only in terms of vegetation protection.

  - All recorded nitrogen dioxide one-hour average concentrations for 1996 were below the 150 ppb 'low' standard set by the DETR .The nitrogen dioxide levels did not breach the EC Directive on air quality, and did not surpass the WHO guidelines.

- Similarly for sulphur dioxide, no exceedences of the DETR limits or the WHO guidelines were reported. All readings of 15-minute average concentrations of sulphur dioxide were below the 100ppb 'low' air pollution band set by the DETR.

- With regards to ozone, the health protection concentration (8-hour average) of 55ppb set by the EC Directive was surpassed on 6 days in 1996. The vegetation protection concentration daily average of 32 ppb was surpassed on 213 days in 1996.

  The data indicates that the air quality of the Highlands and Islands area is high. The lack of pollution sources combined with the strong winds ensure that air quality is maintained. Monitoring of air quality in the Pilot Areas may be appropriate if known polluting sources were to become established.

  Source: AEAT National Air Quality Monitoring Programme website, www.aeat.co.uk/netcen/report96

Measures of performance

- *Number, success and quality of interpretative facilities relating to conservation/environment;*
- *Quality of promotional material*
- *Trends in visitor numbers*

Interpretative centres represent a structured, managed way of promoting and "making the most" of natural resources, encouraging learning and appreciation on the parts of visitors, whilst protecting the resources. The quality of the interpretative facilities, the number of visitors and repeat visitors, and the information provided can be good indicators of reasoned use of resources.

Intensive use of an interpretative centre can potentially result in stress of the associated resources. A review of levels of perceived stress can therefore also be an important indicator. Although this is difficult to measure at this time, it may be appropriate at a later date.
The main interpretation centre on North Uist linked to natural resources is the Balnarald Nature Reserve, at Hougharry. The Visitor Centre at the reserve provides interpretative displays in English and Gaelic, and is equipped with car park and toilets. The Reserve features in the Western Isles Interpretation Strategy, and is highlighted as a major tourist attraction in the Western Isles. 38 guided walks were held at the reserve in 1999. The reserve receives 5-6,000 visitors per annum[1].

WIC has European funding for a programme of coastal access development. This will include interpretative panels, including one for Berneray and one for Hosta, North, Uist[2].

In 1998 SNH commissioned a study into the possible development of further unmanned interpretative centres in the Uists[2].

Sources: [1]RSPB Community Newsletter for the Uists and Barra, April 1999; fax from Gwen Evans, RSPB Conservation Officer for Uists and Barra, 24/9/99
[2]Fax from Helen McDonald, Southern Isles Amenity Trust Project Manager, September 1999

- *Land under habitat management*
  A number of habitat management plans, sponsored by Government and other bodies, are in place to encourage the protection of significant natural resources. By assessing the popularity of these schemes within the Pilot Areas, and the area of land affected, one can obtain a measure of how well the natural resource is being protected and enhanced.

  Habitat management initiatives in North Uist are linked chiefly to habitat creation for corncrakes, and habitat protection through ecological farming practices.

- The corncrake habitat creation scheme run by the RSPB is currently undergoing on seven areas within the Balnarald Reserve, covering 2.4 ha, and on an additional eight areas (3.1 ha) elsewhere on North Uist. [1]

- Natura 2000 management Scheme for corncrakes, run by SNH, was offered on the North Uist Machair & Islands Special Protection Area. Four crofters have entered this scheme, for an area of 7.07 ha, for which they were paid for positive management for corncrakes. [2]

- Many crofters within the Special Protection Area have entered the Scottish Executive Rural Affairs Department (SERAD) Machairs of Uist and Benbecula Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) Scheme. This provides grants for positive management of the Machairs, ie: crop rotation that includes planting of seaweed on the dunes after rye or oat crop, to hold the sand in place and to re-fertilise the soil. [3]

- The ESA Scheme also covers wetland areas and grassland areas, where farmers manage their stock to prevent or reduce grazing, so as to allow bird life to thrive. Similarly, no drainage of wetlands is undertaken, and farming activity is restricted during bird breeding periods. [3]

- Over the rest of the island, the SERAD Countryside Premium Scheme (CPS) is available. In North Uist, only one crofter is currently operating under the scheme, which requires a reduction in stock numbers over moorland to allow regeneration. [3]

Sources:
[1] *fax from Gwen Evans, RSPB Conservation Officer for Uists and Barra, 24/9/99;*
[2] *fax from Andrew Stevenson, Natura Project Officer Uist & Barra, Scottish Natural Heritage, 10/9/99*
[3] *Conversation with John Martin, SERAD office, Balivanich, Benebecula, 19/10/99*

Additional recommended indicators:

- *% , condition and increase over time of native woodland cover*
- *No., area and % of woodland coming into active management*
  The area of native woodland cover (versus imported fast-growing commercial conifer species) within a given Pilot Area is an indication of the presence and availability of a high quality, unique habitat. Monitoring the increase in such areas, and assessing their condition and their management, provides a good indicator of what is considered to be a significant natural resource.

  Data on native woodland cover in North Uist is being sought from The Caledonia Partnership database, which can provide information on the percentage of "semi-natural" woodland.

- *Implementation of local Biodiversity Action Plans*
  Biodiversity Action Plans are being developed with funding from Government sources in the light of the recent EU Habitat Directive, which encourages Member States to increase and diversify the number of species present in certain ecologically significant areas of the country. At this time, no Biodiversity Action Plans have been proposed or are being run in any of the three Pilot Areas. However, the potential establishment of such Plans in the future would be a clear indication of a 'drive' by the Pilot Area to increase its environmental value.

- *Trends in breeding bird populations*
  The numbers and species of breeding birds within the Pilot Areas are an example of the range of biodiversity supported by the local environment.

  The corncrake is the best studied bird on North Uist. Numbers have been monitored for over ten years, and efforts at recolonisation have been considering, and have included extensive habitat creation measures. Trends in numbers of calling males recorded on North Uist and Bernerary are provided in the graph below.

Number of calling male corncrakes on North Uist and Berneray
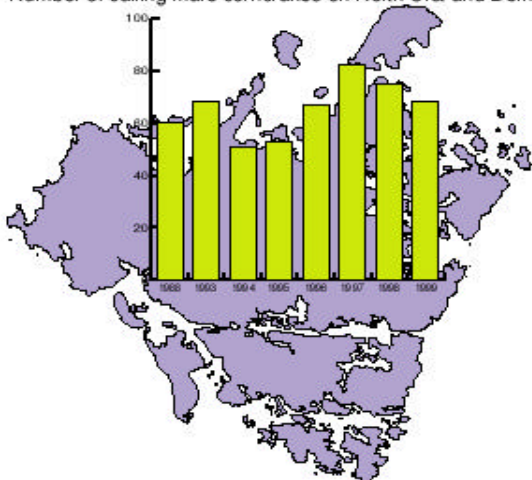
Source: conversation with Gwen Evans, RSPB, North Uist, 14/10/1999.

Objective 2: Protecting and enhancing cultural resources and promoting their value

Key topics considered in this objective: cultural activities; language; arts; traditions; way of life; sites and monuments; management; use; interpretation.

The indicators selected provide an indication of the range of cultural and historic resources present in the pilot Areas, and the activities underway to encourage their appreciation.

Status indicators

- *Number of recorded vs. number of scheduled ancient monuments*

Recorded and Scheduled Ancient Monuments are indicators of the cultural and historical heritage of an area. Whereas recorded monuments represent any archaeological or cultural remains that have been located, Scheduled Ancient Monuments fall under specific legislative prescriptive guidelines, which renders them relevant at a National level.

The number of recorded and scheduled ancient monuments changes constantly, as new excavations occur, and as previously identified recorded monuments are judged significant enough to fall within the 'Scheduled' category. By keeping track of the ratio of the numbers of the two categories of monuments, a measure of the cultural significance of the area is maintained.

North Uist has an unusually high density of archaeological sites, and a rich built heritage. There are 629 known archaeological sites in North Uist, of which 49 are Scheduled Ancient Monuments. An uncertain amount are also 'schedulable', ie of national importance, but not yet protected by law. The remainder are of regional or local importance.

Source:E-mail from Mary MacLeod, 17 September 1999
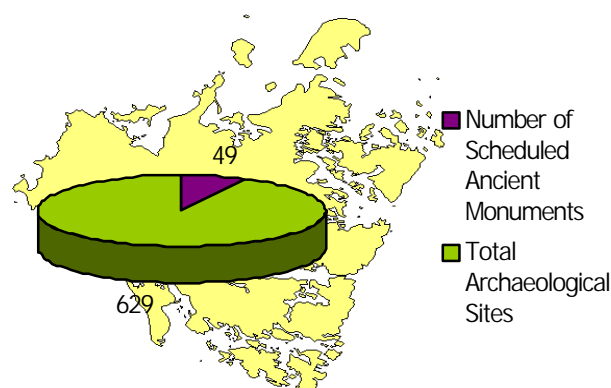
- *Number of Gaelic speakers as percentage of population*
  The Gaelic language and tradition is a key part of the culture within North Uist. Assessing the percentage of Gaelic speakers is one way of measuring its current status. The most recent data is from the 1991 census: 81% of North Uist's population speak Gaelic
  Source: Letter from Keith Brae, 1991 Census, European and Development Services, WIC 20/10/99
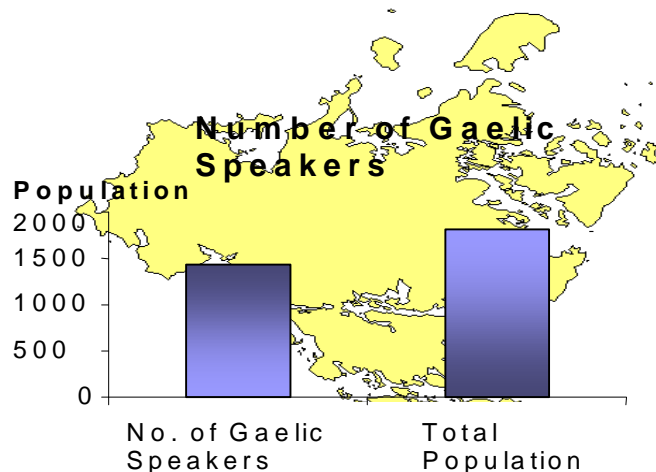
Measures of performance

- *Number of events and ceremonies celebrated by the local community*
  The events range from one-day celebrations to week-long festivals, focusing on cultural aspects of the community (other than the Gaelic language). They offer an indication of the cultural vitality of a community. In North Uist, the following events were reported:

1. The Tuition Festival (Feis Tir A' Mhurain) – celebrated over one week during Summer.   The festival has a strong Gaelic thread and predominately involves the younger members of the pilot area. Includes music, drama, accordion, photography, spinning, keyboard and piping. Evening events include piping and bardachd evening, ceilidh, childrens ceilidh and musical night[1].
2. Millenium celebrations are currently being co-ordinated by a Berneray based community group.[1]
3. Lochmaddy Boat Festival – yacht racing, music, barbecues, fun and games. Various venues, North Uist (June).[2]
4. North Uist Highland Gathering – Traditional events (June).[2]
5. Sollas/Grenitote Centenary Celebrations 1999 – various venues, North Uist.[2]
6. Sail Hebrides Maritime Festival – Various venues, Western Isles (August).[2]
7. Hebridean Celtic Festival – celtic music extravaganza with fringe events such as pub sessions and a festival club. Various Venues, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis (July).[2]
8. National Poetry Day – various venues, Western Isles (October)[2]
9. Feis Tir an Enorna – week log festival of music drama and art, celebrated annually.[3]
10. Gaelic Mod – local festival of Gaelic song, music, dance and art.[3]
11. Guy Fawks Night and Halloween.[3]
12. North Uist Highland Games – one of the main social events in North Uist, held annually.[3]
13. North Uist Agricultural Show – another of the main social events, held annually. Show of crofters livestock and produce i.e home baking, vegetables and crafts.[3]
14. North Uist Sheep Dog Trials – held annually.[3]
15. Berneray week – a week long event, with walks, talks, dances and ceilidhs.[3]

Sources: [1] Conversation with Mr Donald William Morrison, Arts Development Officer, Western Isles Council, September 1999
[2]The Macallan 'What's On', HI Arts, Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn 1999 editions
[3]Fax from Anne Sheperd, SNH Area Officer, Uist and Barra, 17/9/99

- *Number and character of Gaelic related initiatives*
  As with the 'events and ceremonies' indicator above, this is an expression of the cultural activity of the area, but focused more on the unique language aspect. The following initiatives have been reported for North Uist:

  1 **Feis Tir an Eorna:** week long festival of music, drama and art held annually.[1]
  2 **Lochmaddy Boat Fest:** 2-day event with raft race, yacht race, boat trips, dances etc.[1]
  3. **Gaelic Mod:** local festival of Gaelic song, music, dance and art.[1]
  4. Weekly visit from Gaelic music instructor at primary schools, as part of curriculum.[2]
  5. Paible School Playgroup: 'Croileagan' for pre-school aged kids: opportunities to learn Gaelic.[3]

  Sources: ([1]) Fax from Anne Shepherd, SNH Area Officer, Uist and Barra, 17 September 1999
  ([2])Letter from Catherine M Dunn, Assistant Director, Education and Leisure Services, Western Islands Council, 20 September 1999.
  ([3]) Phone conversation with Donald William Morrison, Arts Development Officer, WIC (September 1999)

- *Number and description of heritage trails/interpretation centres*
  This is another indication of the effort placed on maximising the value of cultural heritage, and ensuring its promulgation among the community and visitors.

  Three heritage trails exist on North Uist with environmental and historical associations (leaflets available):
  1 **Langass Walk,** comprises Barpa Langass (chambered cairn), standing stones and natural environment[1]
  2 **Sponish Walk,** from Taigh Chearsabhagh, Lochmaddy to light chamber (environmental art work) at Sponish, passing tidal rapids[1]
  3 **Bernerary Walk,** covers archaelogical sites and natural environment[1]

  "Your road through the Isles[3]" (Cuairt troimh na h eileanan); a series of information points constructed throughout the area (leaflets available)

  Memorials[3]; The Berneray Giant
  Sollas/Grenitote memorial to 100 years of crofting
  Claddach Kirkibost memorial to the first air ambulance

  Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum & Arts Centre, Lochmaddy is run in partnership between North Uist Historical Society and Uist Arts Association. Approximately 20,000 people per year use the building. [2]

  Balranald Nature Reserve (RSPB), unmanned centre with guided walks and leaflet. Summer warden[3].

  Sources: [1] Fax from Anne Shepherd, SNH Area Officer, Uist and Barra, 17 September 1999
  [2] fax from Helen McDonald, Southern Isles Amenity Trust Project Manager, September 1999
  [3]fax from Isabell MacDonald, Western Isles Enterprise, 28 November 1999

Additional recommended indicators

- *Number of interpreted sites and number not yet interpreted*
  The number of interpretative sites is a measure of the degree to which cultural resources are promoted. Interpretation can range from the location of a descriptive plaque, to the establishment of a visitor car park, to the development of an interpretative centre and museum. There are a large number of sites on North Uist and available information indicates that many of these have been interpreted to varying degrees. Theses include, 3 guided walks (Langrass, Sponish and Berneray), a series of information points and interpretation panels, 5 area/topic based leaflets, 3 memorials (The Berneray Giant, Sollas/Grenitote memorial to 100 years of crofting, and Claddach Kirkibost

memorial to the first air ambulance), and 2 interpretation centres (RSPBs Balranald Nature Reserve and Taigh Chearsabhagh).

Objective 3: Promoting sustainable and innovative use of natural resources

Key topics considered in this objective: agriculture; fisheries and forestry; game; minerals; energy; tourism; management; use; production; labelling; marketing; support; access to land and natural resources.

The indicators related to this objective aim to define the current level of availability of commercial natural resources, and the initiatives in place to develop new uses whilst ensuring that overall use is sustainable.

Status indicators

- *Proportion of actively managed crofts vs number of absentee crofters*
  Crofting provides social benefits to rural areas by creating working communities, offering security of tenancy, and acting as a means for people to remain on the land. Traditional crofting techniques (eg, the use of seaweed as fertilizer) also represent a sustainable use of natural resources. The proportion of active vs inactive crofts can indicate the potential for further growth of crofting communities withinan area.
  There are 473 crofts in the North Uist Parish, covering approximately 3534 hectares. Of these, 50 are tenured by absentee crofters.

Source: letter from J Kerr, Crofters Commission, 15 September 1999; fax from Dorothy Hamilton, Crofters Commission, 5/10/99.

- *Proportion of land under forestry management*
  Only one large wooded area is present on the island, a forested hillside in the western section, on Ben Risary, occupying approximately 6 km^2. This is a coniferous wood likely to consist of commercial imported species. Other areas of woodland are all under 1 km^2.

  Much of the woodland on the island falls under the Woodland Grant Scheme (see below).

- *Number of grant aided woodland schemes*
  The following parcels of land are managed under the Grant Aided Woodland Scheme on North Uist:

Parcel no.	km^2 (approx)	Type of trees
510/35/PW9	6	Conifers
030001023	0.8	New planting
510/40/PW9	0.4	New planting (4 separate lots)
510/48/PW9	0.08	New planting
030000002	0.08	New planting
030000116	0.08	New planting (2 separate lots)
030061654	2.6 (ha)	New planting (Sponish)
030001651	55 (ha)	New planting (Carinish)

Source: letter and maps from Bryce Reynard, Forestry Commission, 17 September1999.

- *Fisheries*
  North Uists coastal nature allows fishing harbours and fishing/aquaculture to play a role in the land economy. However, to date a suitable indicator of fisheries resources (for which data is available) has not been identified.

- *Game*
  Recreational and commercial activities linked to game depend on resource numbers. Red Deer figure are maintained for North Uist (see below), but data for other types of game, eg grouse or pheasant, are held by private estates and are not publicly available.

  North Uist Red Deer totals, 1995/96:

MALES	FEMALES	CALVES
205	331	134

  Source: fax from Alan Corrigan, Deer Commission for Scotland, 19 November 1999

- *Minerals*
  There is no available information regarding minerals specific to North Uist and Berneray at present

Measures of performance

- *Start-up of "green" projects*
  This can be used as a measure of the extent to which natural resources are being used in an innovative way, often through the support of local grants. Available "green" grants for habitat management are described under Objective 1. Additional grants may include:

  - 'Environmental Renewal' grants provided by the Local Enterprise Companies (LECs); these are related to the costs of removal of dereliction, the improvement of amenity, enhanced landscaping and associated environmental improvements.
  - business start-up grants from the LECs for green projects.

  The degree of uptake of such grants indicates the activity level with regards environmental issues already existing in the area.
  No Environmental Renewal assistance was given to North Uist area over the course of 1999, but the following LEC grants were awarded:

  - Better Business Service Grant of £550 for a farming project, February 1999
  - New Start grant for Market Gardening business, April 1999

  Source: 'Accountability through Opennes' Reports for June 1998-99 provided by Mairi MacIver, Western Isles Enterprise, 23 September 1999.

Additional recommended indicators

- *Number of organic crofters*
  'Organic' agricultural produce – ie, grown according to strict guidelines set by the Soil Association, without synthetic fertilisers or chemical pesticides –has been shown to be a niche product which can be sold at a premium compared to normal produce. The degree to which Pilot Area crofters are taking advantage of this market can be monitored over time.

  To date, two organic businesses are known in North Uist, one producing organic beef, and the other, organic mutton, lamb and pork
  Source: Fax from Anne Shepherd, SNH Area Officer, Uist and Barra, 17 September 1999

- *No. of woodlands under the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme*
  Woodlands under the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme sets out standard requirements for
  sustainably managed forestry areas. To date, no information on the above indicator for the North
  Uist area could be obtained from the Forestry Commission, but further requests may result in
  successful data release.

- *Stocking densities*
  The density of cattle or sheep on grazing areas will play a significant role on the status of the land
  on which they feed. A balance needs to be struck between the carrying capacity of the land and the
  economic needs of the resident crofters. Monitoring of stocking densities will help determine which
  way the balance is swinging.

  The following grazing stock data from 1996 is available for North Uist:
  Sheep: 28,847
  Cattle: 2, 197

  Source: Uists and Benbecula Local Plan, 1998

- *Index of grazing pressure*
  Similar to stocking density above, an indicator of grazing pressure can help determine whether an
  area has reached or surpassed its 'carrying capacity', hence help shape agricultural management
  activities. Contributions to this grazing pressure can come from diverse sources including deer and
  sheep. There are many inter-relating factors contributing to grazing pressure and a single satisfactory
  index has yet to be developed.

- *Number of "green" labelled products/services*
  Such products/services would relate to natural resources activities, and may include:
  - organic labelled croft produce
  - Green Tourism Scheme
  - ecotourism or activity holidays
  - farm holidays
  To date, these activities are limited, but can be monitored over time as an example of sustainable
  use of key resources in the Pilot Areas.

- *Number of organic fish farming projects*
  Similar to organic produce, but still a relatively new concept, organic fish farming products would
  represent fish aquaculture without use of chemical pesticides or synthetic food additives, and with
  certain water flows and maximum cage densities. As for organic produce, such products can yield
  greater value in the market place.

Objective 4: Promoting sustainable and wise use of cultural resources

Key topics considered in this objective: cultural tourism; activities; facilities; projects; products; use;
productivity; events; groups; marketing; support.

Similar to Objective 3 above, this objective looks at how, and to what degree, cultural resources in the
Pilot Areas are being sustainably managed and used. Because of the dynamic nature of this objective,
status indicators also reflect performance, and the two categories are therefore grouped together.

Status/performance indicators

- *Number of venues promoting cultural resources*
  Availability of venues where cultural activities can occur is an indicator of the potential for cultural events. In general, all Village Halls and some schools within the North Uist Pilot Area get involved in promoting cultural resources to varying degrees. Below is a list of identified venues.

  1. Island Crafts, Cnoc Ard, Grimsay[1]
  2. Taigh Chearsabhagh Art Centre and Museum, Lochmaddy[1]
  3. Community Halls, to varying degrees

  Source: The Macallan 'What's On', HI Arts, 1999

- *Use of centres and facilities*
  Intensive use of an interpretative centre can potentially result in stress of the associated resource. A review of levels of perceived stress can therefore be an important measure. To date, information has not been collected in a sufficiently systematic way to permit a measured view of the quality and usage of cultural/heritage interpretation centres in North Uist.

Additional recommended indicators

- *Proportion of historic sites/monuments actively managed*
  This reflects the degree of activity in the Pilot Area linked to publicising and exploiting the cultural and archaeological heritage.

- *Adaptive re-use of historic buildings*
  This indicator would serve to demonstrate that historic sites or buildings do not necessarily need to be museums, and highlight other successful uses of culturally significant buildings.

Chapter 2

Goal 2   Retaining a viable and empowered community

Objective 5: Retaining a balanced and healthy population

Key topics considered in this objective: population total/dispersal; age structure; gender balance; health; population change and support measures; health change and support measures.

The health and balance of a population is of paramount importance to the economic well being of an area, overall quality of life and to individual fulfilment. The indicators chosen aim to provide a current picture of each area.

Status indicators

- *Age structure of resident population*
  The age structure can indicate obvious gaps in the numbers of any one age group. Data for North Uist, from the 1991 Census, is shown in the table below and compared to the national population. The largest gap is indicated in the 16-29 age group.

AGE	TOTAL PERSONS NORTH UIST	% NORTH UIST	% SCOTLAND
0-15	358	19.7	20
16-29	341	18.7	21
30-44	376	20.6	22
45-64	406	22.3	19.5
65+	341	18.7	17.5
Total	1822	100	100

Source: Census data obtained from Keith Brae, European and Development Services, WIC 20/10/99

- *% change in populations (trends, 1981-91)*
  By monitoring percentage change in numbers, a community can assess the situation and where appropriate consider ways of reversing unwanted trends. In North Uist, the trend shows an overall increase in population in the ten years between the last two censuses.

STATISTICAL AREA	1981 CENSUS	1991 CENSUS	% CHANGE 1981-1991
Lochmaddy to Achmore	483	391	-19.0
Grenitote to Griminish	183	165	-9.8
Grimsay	204	215	5.4
Scolpaig to Ardheisker	400	423	5.8
Berneray	133	141	6.0
Claddach Kyles to Claddach Carn	400	480	20.0
Total	**1803**	**1815**	**+0.7**

(Slight discrepancy in number of total population compared to table above probably results from inconsistency in boundaries when disaggregating into individual villages)

% Change in Population
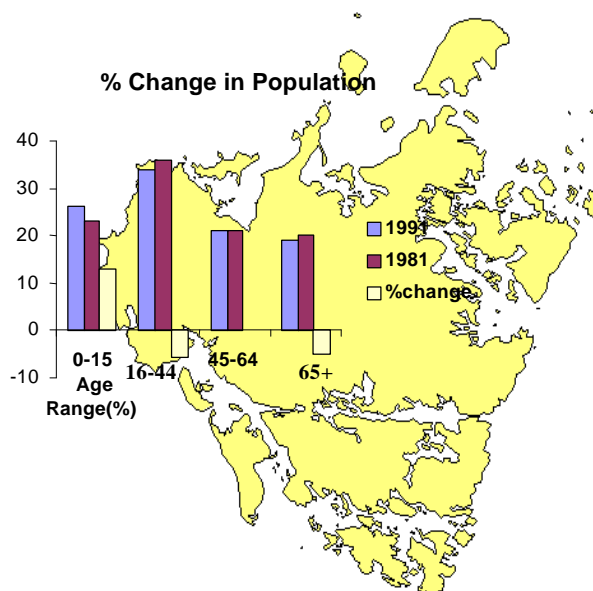
Source: Population Change Western Isles 1901-1991, European and Development Services, WIC 20/10/99

- *Gender balance in resident population*
  For growth and viability, a resident population needs to maintain a relatively even gender balance. The data for North Uist, shown below for 1981 and 1991, shows the balance to be shifting slightly to an excess of men.

1991 TOTAL PERSONS	MALES 1991	FEMALES 1991
1822	937	885
Percentage:	51.4	48.6

Source: 1991 Census, European and Development Service, WIC

The percentage of women of child-bearing age (taken, generally, to be 16-44) within the Pilot Area (in reference to the whole female population) is 17.3%. This is less than half that of the male population in the same age range (39.4%).

The percentage for each age group in terms of the whole population is shown in the chart below, based on 1991 census figures:

Age	Female %	Male %
0-15	10.2	9.4
16-29	8.7	10
30-44	8.7	12
45 + Retired	10.7	11.7
Retired +	10	8.6

Source: Census data obtained from Keith Brae, European and Development Services, WIC 20/10/99

- *% of working age population*
  This provides information on the earning potential of a population, hence its economic viability. Data for North Uist from the 1991 census is compared below to data for the Highlands and Scotland as a whole. Working age population is taken to be the age group between 16 and 64.

	North Uist[1]	Highland[2]	Scotland[2]
Number of working age population	1123	99,993	2,348,795
% of total population	61.7	62.4	76.3

Source: [1]Census data obtained from Keith Brae, European and Development Services, WIC 20/10/99; [2]North Sutherland Pilot Area Profile, Highland Council (undated)

Measures of Performance

- *Uptake of young crofters to new entrants scheme*
  The new entrants scheme for crofters provides 'start-up' financial support to encourage the taking up of absentee crofts in the local area. This indicator can serve as a measure of the return of people to the local area, as well as the attraction of young people to crofting .

  For North Uist, 3 new entrants under the croft entrants scheme were recorded in 1999, for a total of £13, 940 grant support. It t is unclear whether these were young crofters.
  Source: communication from J Kerr, Crofters Commission, 15 September 1999.

Additional recommended indicators

- *Health Indicator*
  An indicator providing a measure of the health of Pilot Area populations is being sought, but to date none has been agreed on which would be meaningful given the small size of the population considered, and the confidential nature of much health information.

- *Number of initiatives to encourage "young returners"*
  The drain of young people from the Pilot Areas is one of the main concerns voiced by residents. By monitoring the opportunities and initiatives to encourage the return of young people, the effort being made to reverse the trend can be assessed. Examples of initiatives include the Corporate Strategy of the Western Isles Council, which aims to encourage those between the ages of 16-35 (economically active age groups) to remain in or return to the area, by improving the number and range of employment opportunities and reducing unemployment throughout the islands. Original research and community based research may be required for this indicator.
  Source: Western Isles Structure Plan, Western Isles Council, 1998

Objective 6: Supporting community empowerment

Key topics considered in this objective: community-decision making; control of land and natural resources; access to funds; access to information; skills and expertise; community activity; functioning of democratic structures; local groups/activities; changes in land tenure; funding mechanisms; information provision; primary, secondary, tertiary education provision/uptake.

The involvement of local communities in decision making and the improvement of local democracy and individual citizen involvement in the local political process, are key features of sustainable development. The indicators linked to this objective reflect the initiatives or ongoing activities aimed at increasing communications and action within communities.

Status indicators

- *Number of community organisations (societies, clubs, volunteer groups)*
  This reflects the current activity level within the area, and the opportunities for residents to become involved.

  For North Uist, 33 Volunteer organisations were listed by the Uist Council for Voluntary Organisations (UCVO).
  Source: fax from Helen Forbes, UCVO, 15 Sept 1999.

Measures of Performance

- *Number and amount of LEC provided Community Action Grants*
  Community Action Grants are funds made available by the Local Enterprise Companies to community groups, to improve facilities for local people. The degree of funding is indicative of the effort being put into improving the community infrastructure.

  For the period June 1998-June 1999, the following Community Action Grants were provided by Western Isles Enterprise (WIE). This represents approximately £10.00 per head of population[1]:
  1. Research and establishment of Iron Age Interpretation, Berneray £833
  2. Centenary celebrations for Grenitote Townsip, £3,723
  3. Erection of memorial site, Sollas Township Grazings Committee, £4,212
  4. Develop craft facilities, Uist Craft Producers, £3,500
  5. Develop feis activities, Ealain Tir a'Mhurain, £1,984
  6. Develop existing riding facilities at riding school, Uist Community Riding School £3,000

  By comparison, for the whole of the Highlands and Islands for 1998-99, average Enterprise contributions to Community Action Grants were approximately £1.40 per capita.[2]

  Source: [1]Accountability through Opennes' Reports for June 1998-99 provided by Mairi MacIver, Western Isles Enterprise, 23 September 1999.
  [2] Highland and Islands Enterprise 8th Report, 1998-99.

- *Number of Crofting Township Development Grants awarded by Crofters Commission*
  The Crofting Township Grant Scheme requires local crofters and townspeople to agree together on a funding request to improve the local township. The number of grants awarded is a clear representation of the degree of local interaction, especially between groups who may not otherwise have opportunities for discussion.

  For 1999, one new entrant under the Crofting Township Development Scheme was recorded, for £13,031 total grant support
  Source: letter from J Kerr, Crofters Commission, 15 September 1999

- *Number of community initiated projects*
  The number of activities initiated and undertaken is a reflection of the degree of participation and interaction within the community. In North Uist, the following activities were identified; it is likely however that this represents a partial list.

  1. Lochmaddy Community Hall successful in receiving funding from Scottish Halls Improvement Programme[1]
  2. Carnish Community Hall on waiting list for Scottish Halls Improvement Programme[1]
  3. Art Gallery at Lochmaddy is a partnership between Arts Association and the Local History Society[1]
  4. 'Island Project': (sponsored by Art Gallery) take groups of artists camping on uninhabited islands to study, paint, sculpt[1].
  5. Millenium celebrations: Bernerary group has been organised to co-ordinate celebrations[2]
  6. Project to renovate Claddach Kirkibost Old School by a group called Urachadh Uibhist, to provide creche and nursery, IT training, experimental kitchen and craft workshop3.

  Sources: Phone conversations with [1]Emma Beetham, Sports Development Officer, WIC; and [2]Donald William Morrison, Arts Development Officer, WIC (September 1999).
  ([3]): fax from Helen McDonald, Southern Isles Amenity Trust Project Manager, 16 September 99

Additional recommended indicators

Other potential indicators of the degree of community empowerment, for which no information can be gathered at this time, are listed below. Their community-specific nature requires original research for quantification. Some information on community indicators is also provided in Objective 16.

- *No. of communities taking part in community planning process*
  This shows the degree of local participation in the planning process
- *No. of Grazing Committees meetings/ activities (recommended)*
  Grazing Committees play a key role in the management and planning of crofting communities. The number of meetings and activities undertaken reflect the degree of activity within the community.
- *Area of land under community ownership*
  This is an indicator of the level of a community's control of its environment.
  In addition, certain indicators linked to other objectives presented in this profile report are also partly related to community empowerment. They include:
- *Access to information skills and expertise*
  Objective 8 covers availability of essential services
  Objective 11 addresses the availability of Information Technology (IT) link in the Pilot Area.
- *Education provision and take-up*
  Objectives 7, 8 discuss location of schools and fate of school leavers.

Objective 7: Ensuring equal access to employment

Key topics considered in this objective: employment: levels/age/gender; range of jobs; dispersal of jobs; access to employment; employment training; childcare provision; employment changes and support measures; skill base; Investors in People (IIP); business start-up.

Work is an enormously important aspect of the lives of individuals, and where this is lacking it can have clear and measurable effects on households and communities. Employment is, therefore, a fundamental requirement for a viable community. Employment structure is also important and reflects historical and present day trends. It will clearly be influenced by the environmental surroundings in particular the natural resources and access to them. The availability and categories of employment, the ease of access to it, and the opportunities to prepare for it, are therefore important indicators to monitor..

- *Employment: levels/age/gender*
  Range of jobs; dispersal of jobs; access to employment; employment training; childcare provision; employment changes and support measures; skill base; Investors in People (IIP); business start-up.

  Work is an enormously important aspect of the lives of individuals, and where this is lacking it can have clear and measurable effects on households and communities. Employment is, therefore, a fundamental requirement for a viable community. Employment structure is also important and reflects historical and present day trends. It will clearly be influenced by the environmental surroundings in particular the natural resources and access to them. The availability and categories of employment, the ease of access to it, and the opportunities to prepare for it, are therefore important indicators to monitor.

Status indicators

- *% unemployment*

  This is an obvious indicator of economic viability of a community. Data for North Uist and Bernerary are available from the 1991 census:

Locality	% Unemployment (April 1991)
Bernerary	18
Lochmaddy – Ahmore	11
Grenitote – Griminish	7
Scolpaig – Ardheisker	8
Claddach Kylee – Claddach Carinish	9
Grimsay	8
Average	**10.2**

Source: 1991 Census Results: Statistical Areas, Western Isles Council.

- *% employment levels (by category)*

  The Dùthchas Pilot Areas are aiming to break free from a focus on seasonal, tourism-related employment, or a primarily agriculturally-based economy. Diversity of employment is an important indicator for the future since this can provide some resilience against recessionary pressures. By monitoring employment categories, and changes in numbers employed in each, the viability of the economic base of the Pilot Areas can be determined.

  The information below represents employment data by category for various areas of North Uist. It is important to note that these key statistics from the 1991 Census are based on a 10% sample.

Classification 1991	Berneray	Lochmaddy-Ahmore	Grenitote-Griminish	Scolpaig-Ardheisker	Claddach Kyles-Claddach Carinish	Grimsay	Average
Agriculture	33%	22%	14%	10%	18%	29%	**21%**
Energy / Water	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**0%**
Manufact-uring	0%	11%	0%	5%	0%	14%	**5%**
Construction	0%	22%	14%	14%	0%	0%	**8%**
Services	67%	45%	72%	71%	82%	57%	**66%**

Source: 1991 Census data, European and Development Services, WIC 20/10/99

- *Number of adult training facilities*

  Skills training can be vital as preparation for employment, and can provide increased opportunities. Lews Castle College on Benbecula (Colaisde Bheinn na Faogla) represents the UHI facility for the Western Isles. Adult training courses are available at the College.

  IT courses are provided by Uisteach in Benbecula, who have been offering courses for three years, including:[2]
  - computing at all levels
  - free computer courses for unemployed
  - internet access. [2]

  Urachadh Uibhist is a training centre currently located in WIE units at Bayhead, North Uist. It provides IT training in the North Uist area. [3]

  Source: [1]fax from Gordon Wells, Lews Castle College, 17/9/99
  [2]conversation with Catherine and David Muir, Uisteach, Benbecula, September 1999.

[3]*fax from Donnie Morrison, Western Isles ICT Advisory Centre, 10/9/99*

In addition, adult training is provided by WIE sponsored Special Skills Training Grants for short courses, aimed at enhancing career and job opportunities. The following grants were awarded at North Uist between June 1998-99:

- Certificate of Competency, 1 person, Grimsay (June 1999)
- Staff training, 1 person, Lochmaddy, April 1999
- LGV Training, 1 person, N Uist, December 1998

Source: 'Accountability through Opennes' Reports for June 1998-99 provided by Mairi MacIver, Western Isles Enterprise, 23 September 1999.

- *% of school leavers going to university/further education*
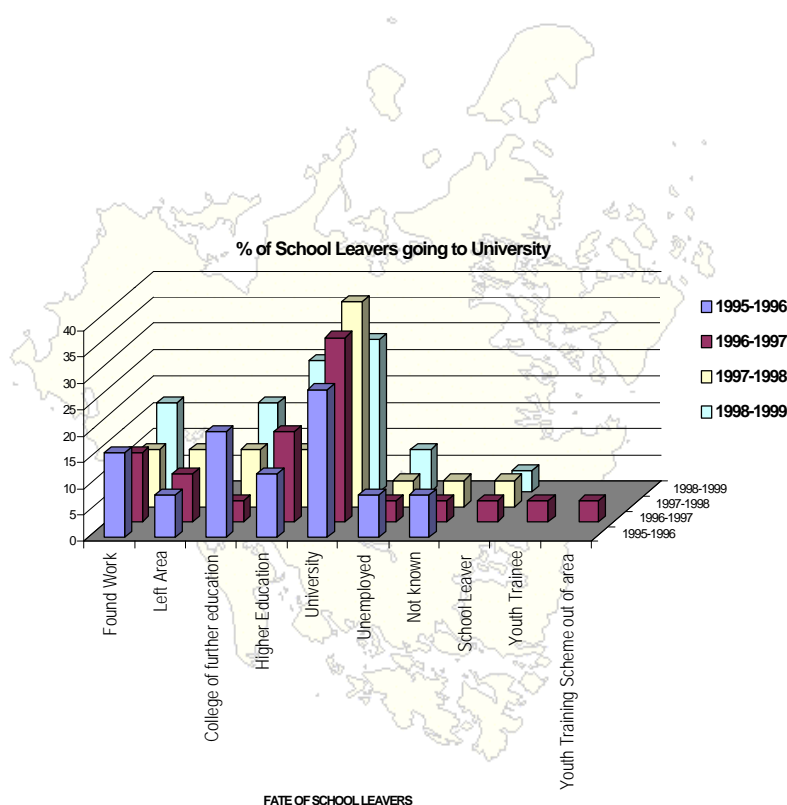
- *% of pupils going to something other than unemployment*
  By monitoring the fate of local young people upon completion of their secondary studies, one can assess the availability and the take-up of opportunities in the local area.   The Western Isles Career Service maintains information on the fate of all secondary students registered with them from the area. Data on graduates originating from North Uist is provided in the table below:

Fate	1995/6		1996/7		1997/8		1998/9	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Found work	4	16	3	13	2	11.1	4	17
Left area	2	8	2	8.7	2	11.1	0	
College of Further Education	5	20	1	4.35	2	11.1	4	17
Higher education	3	12	4	17.4	2	11.1	6	25
University	7	28	8	34.8	7	39	7	29
Unemployed	2	8	1	4.35	1	5.5	2	8
Not known	2	8	1	4.35	0		0	
School leaver	0		1	4.35	1	5.5	1	4
Youth trainee	0		1	4.35	1	5.6	0	
Youth training scheme out of area	0		1	4.35	0		0	
Total	25	100	23	100	18	100	24	100

Source: Fax from Ken Galloway, Western Isles Career Service, 7 October 1999

Measures of Performance

- *Number of new start-up businesses and grants allocated*
  The Local Enterprise Companies are a source of funding for new businesses; the amount of such funding provided for the Pilot Areas serves to measure the entrepreneurial spirit of the area, and the development of new employment opportunities.

  The following were funded by the WIE New Start initiative in the North Uist area, in the period June 1998-99[1]:

  1. Market gardening at Bernerera, April 1999
  2. Kildonan Café, North Uist, October 1998
  3. Renta Drive, Grimsay, August/September 1998
  4. Hebridean Kitchen, Locheport, August/September 1998
  5. Establish Self-Catering Accommodations, Lochmaddy, August/September 1998

  This represents 0.003 new businesses per head of population. By comparison, 227 Business Start-Ups were supported by LECs for the Highlands and Islands as a whole between 1998-99: this represents 0.001 new businesses per head of population[2].

  Source: [1]'Accountability through Opennes' Reports for June 1998-99 provided by Mairi MacIver, Western Isles Enterprise, 23 September 1999. [2] Highlands and Islands Enterprise 8th Report, 1998-99.

- *No of Investors in People (IIP) recognitions per area*
  The Investors in People National Standard is a practical way in which businesses can improve their performance, by training and developing their employees. A high number of IIP businesses represents a community where employees are provided with opportunities to improve their skills and abilities.

  As of August 1999, 173 companies have committed to IIP in the Western Isles. Of these, 11 are in North Uist/Bernerary. By comparison, for the whole of the Highlands and Islands area between 1998-99, 235 companies/organisations achieved IIP recognition.

Additional recommended indicators

Additional indicators of the degree of access to employment, for which original research may be required to obtain viable data, include:

- *Dispersal of employment opportunities*
  A viable community will not concentrate its employment opportunities in one or two key locations, but will ensure that employment, within a variety of categories, is available throughout its area.

- *Availability of child care*
  Child care is an essential requirement to free parents in need of double income for economic viability. The availability of inexpensive, subsidised childcare is therefore an important measure.

Objective 8: Ensuring equal access to essential services

Key topics considered in this objective: housing; utilities (power, telecoms, sewerage etc); services (Post Office, shops, doctors); care provision (child, disabled, elderly); changes, initiatives and support for the above.

If access to essential services is limited in any way this tends to create "underprivileged" households or even whole areas. This is a barrier to a sustainable future, which aims to ensure that all members of society have access to those services and opportunities that can allow them to achieve their personal potential. The indicators selected below give an indication of the availability of services, and the ease of access to them.

Status indicators

- *Rented vs owned homes*
  The percentage of home ownership can indicate the degree of stability and security within an area, as well as some indication of the availability of affordable housing.
  Housing tenancy rates in North Uist and Bernerary were recorded during the 1991 census and are shown below:

Housing Tenure	*%*
Owner occupied	67
Local Authority rented	18
Private rented	12
Other	3

Source: Uists and Benbecula Local Plan, 1998 (1991 census data).
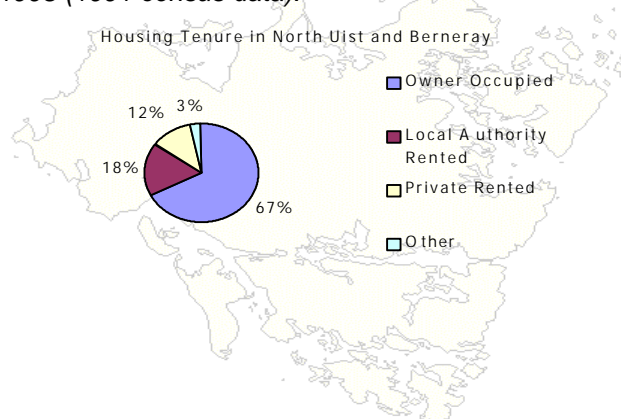
Housing Tenure in North Uist and Berneray

- *Number of essential services*

  Certain public services are viewed as 'essential' for a community, and can be used as a benchmark to determine its sustainability. Such services include, GP, post office, food shop, petrol station, recreational facilities, and primary and secondary schools.

  The information shows that the number of essential services are very thinly spread across the area (food shops, doctors' surgery) or even missing in some cases (recreational facilities)

Number of essential services per sub-area in each pilot area

Sub-Area	Doctor's Surgery[1]	Post Office[2]	Food Shop[3]	Petrol Pump[4]	Primary Schools[5]	Recreational Facilities[6]
Lochmaddy	1		1	1	1	
Bernerary	0	1			1	
Sollas	0	1			1	
Bayhead	0	2	1	1		gymnasium football pitch (poor condition) small swimming pool Basketball court
Carinish	0	1			1	

There is only one secondary school in North Uist, at Paible (Bayhead), two years only. [5]

Essential Services North Uist and Berneray

Petrol Station
Doctors
Post Office
Primary School
Recreational Facilities

Sources:
1   Conversation with Dr Watt, Western Isles Health Board, 28 September 99
2   Landranger OS Map No. 18
3-4 Conversation with Catriona McCuish, Duthchas Pilot Area Coordinator, North Uist, September 1999
[5]Fax from Nora Murray, Education Department, Western Island Council, 1/10/99
[6] Conversation with Emma Beetham, Sports Development Officer, WIC, September 1999

- *Bus frequency per sub-area in each pilot area*

  Frequent, reliable public transport is a key requirement within the Pilot Areas, especially to facilitate access to essential services that may not be locally available.

  The following bus services, within and connecting to the pilot area, are available:
  W15 (Post Bus): 4 O – 5 R, 6 days a week[1]
  W16: 5 O – 5 R (partial routes, different days) [1]
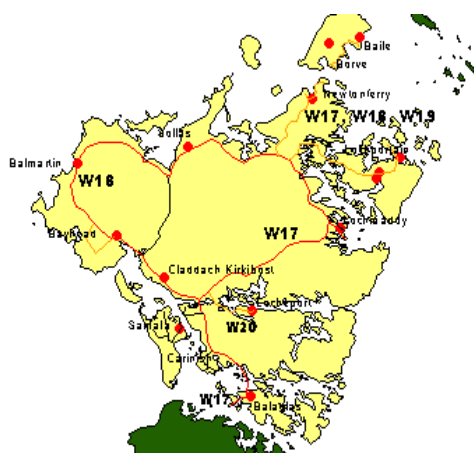 W17: 15 O, 14 R, partial routes, 6 days a week; [2]
  W18: 10 O, 6 days a week; 12 R, different times; partial routes. [2]
  W19: 14 round trips (some partial routes), 6 days a week; 6 O, partial route; 10 R, partial route, different days. [2]
  W20: 5 O: MWF; 4 O: TT 2 O: S (partial routes) [2]
  W21: 4 R, partial routes, MTWTF; 2 R, Sat[2]
  W22: 11, partial round routes, 6 days a week[2]

Sources:(^{1}) Bus Services on the Uists and Barra Timetable, Summer 1994; (^{2})North Uist Bus Time Table, Summer 1999.

Measures of performance

- *Housing Grant take-up*
  Grants are available from the local Council for housing improvements, which are most frequently linked to insulation. A measure of the degree of take-up of such grants will give some indication of the effort placed within the Pilot Areas for improving housing facilities.

  Over a three-year period, 428 homes in Uist have received energy efficiency measures, including loft insulation, draught proofing, pipe and tank lagging, replacement or new tank jackets, energy light bulbs and energy advice tailored to each individual home. Grant assistance was provided by Scottish Hydro-Electric, Department of the Environment, Transport and Regions (Home Energy Efficnecy Scheme) and the Local Council.

  Source: fax from Alison Campbell, Taigh Blath, 16 Sept 1999.

- *Degree of implementation of local integrated transport planning initiatives*
  Integrated transport allows ease of connection between different services, eg distinct bus lines; ferries and buses; flights and buses. The degree of integration is a measure of the level and quality of public services available.

  An integrated transport initiative by the CNES began in 1996. The initiative aimed to integrate and improve its network of Stage and School Bus Services (there are no commercial bus services). The initiative was reviewed for progress in 1999, and a report published by the Transport Co-ordination Officer, CNES. The review showed a 'remarkable upturn in passenger carryings, and an overhwelming vote of confidence', and the CNES has endorsed a re-tendering exercise over winter 1998/99, with three- or five-year contracts having commenced in April 1999. The bus service provided by the Council operates a fleet of 13 coaches and midibuses.

  Source: Les Watson, Transport Co-ordination Officer, WIC, 1999, "Bus Services in the Western Isles"

Additional recommended indicators

Other essential services that can serve as indicators of sustainable communities include:

- *Sewerage provisions* - Many of the residents in more remote areas are provided with septic tanks. These may have limitations in certain situations, as external support is required for periodic emptying.

- *Power/telecommunications* **-** Although very few if any residences in North Uist are not supplied with electricity and telephone lines, the reliability of these lines may suffer, especially in severe weather, and the distance of some locations from support centres may result in residents being disconnected for some time.

- *Radio/TV Reception* **-** Remote communities may not be able to obtain clear reception for telecommunication, due to distances from relay points. Radio and television may represent the only links to the 'outside world' in some locations.

- *Care Provision* **-** Distinct from GP facilities or availability of hospitals, this indicator reflects the availability of visiting nurses or caretakers, as well as the proximity of nursing homes or care centres. In an area with an increasing percentage of ageing population, such services may be considered essential.

Chapter 3

Goal 3   Reducing problems of remoteness by delivering local needs locally and reducing dependence on external inputs

Objective 9: Improving the local market for goods and services

Key topics considered in this objective: local goods; local services; local markets; local retail/wholesale outlets; local marketing schemes: uptake, changes, supports.

Some of the issues stemming from the remoteness of the Pilot Areas can in part be addressed by improving the local market for locally supplied goods and services. Greater local provision of local needs also meets other sustainability goals, by reducing transportation needs and improving local employment.

Status indicators

- *Number of local producers supplying locally and number of local markets/outlets*
  A focus on selling locally rather than exporting can provide the local community with supplies, whilst decreasing transport costs for producers. At this time, limited information has been obtained on local suppliers for North Uist:

  - The Uist Horticultural Association, recently established (summer 1999), produces fruit and vegetables for sale locally. Currently five individual units are involved from North Uist[1].

  - To date, local produce is sold to three local hotels, one shop in Clachan, and at North and South Uist games/show. It now plans to start selling produce directly to people, ie setting up a boxing system, and to sell in village halls. [2]

  Source: [1]fax from Anne Shepherd, SNH Uist & Barra, 17 September 1999; [2] conversation with Mara McFail, Uist Horticultural Association, September 1999.

- *Number of local transport companies*
  An example of how local transport needs may be serviced by local enterprise, thus providing local employment whilst serving local needs.

The following local haulage/transport companies are known to operate in North Uist:

Location	Companies
Lochmaddy	Aldas Taxi Co (2 taxis and 3 minibuses)
Bayhead	Balranald Taxis McDougald Taxis and minibuses
Sollas	two transport companies (one includes haulage) one minibus operation Mr McDonald lorries/trailers haulage co.
Sollas/Lochmaddy	Mr Johnson Haulage Company (spoil from quarry)
Grimsey	Mr MacClain haulage company
Carriers to mainland	Uist Parcel Service Lochmaddy Express Highland Haulage (based in inverness but employs locals)

Source: conversation with Catriona MacCuish, Duthchas Pilot Area Coordinator, North Uist; October 1999

The following bus routes have been identified for N. Uist. Note that all bus routes are operated in an integrated fashion by the Council. There are no independent bus companies, only subcontracted bus operators (total of 11). It is unclear at this time which bus companies are local to the island.

- W15: Post Bus
- W 16: A Lindsay
- W17: A Ferguson, Grenitote Travel, Hebridean Coaches, Lindsay Coaches, MacDonald Coaches, Post Bus, W MacVicar
- W18: A Ferguson, MacDonald Coaches, J MacCuish, Grenitote Travel, Post Bus.
- W20: John Macquarrie, Royal Mail Post Bus
- W21: Ian MacDonald, Royal Mail Post Bus
- W22: Macdonald Coaches, W MacVicar, Royal Mail Post Bus

Source: Summer 1999 North Uist Bus Timetables (provided by WIC)

Measures of performance

- *Number of new start-up businesses servicing local needs*
  This indicator measures the potential for local needs to be serviced locally, thus reducing transport and import.
  The following were funded by the WIE New Start initiative for the period June 1998-99:

  - Market gardening at Berneray, April 1999
  - Kildonan Café, North Uist, October 1998
  - Renta Drive, Grimsay, August/September 1998
  - Hebridean Kitchen, Locheport, August/September 1998
  - Establish Self-Catering Accommodations, Lochmaddy, August/September 1998 (not necessarily servicing local needs)

  Source: 'Accountability through Opennes' Reports for June 1998-99 provided by Mairi MacIver, Western Isles Enterprise, 23 September 1999.

Additional recommended indicators

- *Number of boxing schemes*
  Boxing schemes stimulate local consumption of fresh produce, through direct supply by producers, and are therefore an example of local needs being serviced locally

- *Percentage of workers whose place of work is within pilot area*
  People working locally are maintaining and sharing skills and knowledge within their community, whilst satisfying local needs. This is effective example of sustainable development.

- *Number of local direct marketing opportunities*
  This is another indication of the potential for the growth and development of local businesses and services.
  Urachadh Uibhist Training Centre, Bayhead, is currently looking to encourage and develop 'niche' market opportunities: Highland Dancing Socks to be sold locally and throughout the Highlands and Islands; Jams and confectionery to be sold locally as no such produce is manufactured in the Western Isles; smoked products other than salmon.

  Source: conversation with Ada Campbell, Urachadh Training Centre, Bayhead, North uist September 1999

Objective 10: Promoting equal and effective access to goods, services and markets

Key topics considered in this objective: transport infrastructure; public transport; car ownership; fuel prices/availability; integrated transport links; subsidised transport; changes/initiatives/supports for the above.

Because travel is increasingly being taken for granted by individuals and businesses, society is becoming dependent on effective transport systems. This is even more pronounced in remote areas and communities. The degree of public transport availability and how well it is integrated indicates the ease with which goods and services can be accessed. The issue here, in contrast with Objective 8, is accessibility *outside* the pilot area. The challenge here is to meet economic and social needs for access to facilities in ways that do not place unacceptable burdens on the environment.

Status indicators

- *Cost of fuel per journey distance to nearest larger town (Inverness)*
  The nearest largest town where North Uist islanders will go for major shopping activities is Inverness. The shortest journey involves taking the ferry from Lochmaddy to Uig, then driving through Skye to the bridge at Kyle of Lochalsh (approx. 75 km), then on to Inverness (approx. 120 km), for a total of approximately 195 km. The cost of such a journey is compared below to the cost of a trip to Edinburgh/Glasgow for an inhabitant of the Central Belt (who is likely to be always within 40-50 km from either city).

	North Uist	**Central Belt**
Distance Uig – Kyle of Lochalsh (approx)[1]	75 km	
Distance Kyle of Lochalsh – Inverness (approx)[1]	120 km	
Total driving distance to nearest large town (approx)	**195 km**	**40 km**
Price of unleaded fuel[2]	86.5 p/l	73 p/l
Average value for vehicle efficiency[3]	30 miles/gallon	30 miles/gallon
Conversion assuming imperial gallons (4.55 l)	10.62 km/l	10.62
Required fuel for return journey to nearest large town	37 l	7.5 l
Cost of fuel for return journey	**£32.00**	**£5.50**
Additional cost of ferry journey	70.00	
Cost of Skye Bridge toll	10.00	
Total cost of journey	**£112.00**	**£5.50**

The information shows that fuel prices are up to 15p a litre more in North Uist, and that the costs by car to reach the nearest large town are as much as 20 times more expensive, when taking into account distance and additional ferry costs.

Sources: [1]Road Atlas Great Britain, AA 2000
[2]conversation with shop owner, Bayhead
[3]conversation with AA representative, Basingstoke

- *State of local roads (Grades A, B, C, U)*
  This is a representation of ease and cost of access to greater markets. In North Uist, local roads are classified as follows:

Category	Length (km)	Length of double track (km)
A865	approx. 67	2.7
A867	10	7.8
B893	7.48	1.5
Other roads (incl. 3 C roads)	68.86	

Source: Letter and map from Donnie Johnson, Technical Services, Western Island Council, October 1999.

- *Available level of public transport beyond the Pilot Area*
  Public transport leading outside of North Uist extends along the main 'spine road' from Lochmaddy south to Balivanich and Lochboisdale. The main bus line along this road is the W17, whilst others operate 'feeder services' joining this line.
  Most bus lines operate Mondays to Saturdays, and through fares are available on many connecting services. Certain journeys link to/from Berneray and Otternish for ferry connections to Harris.

  W17: 15 O, 14 R, partial routes, 6 days a week; [2]

  Source: North Uist Bus Time Table, Summer 1999.

- *Number of ferry landings at nearest ferry port*
  The two main ferry ports in North Uist are:
  - Lochmaddy for ferries to Uig on Skye (three ferries per day in each direction, except Sundays)
  - Otternish for ferries to Harris (6-7 per day in each direction, with seasonal changes)

Measures of performance

- *Degree of implementation of local integrated transport planning initiative*
  (see description under Objective 8 above)

Additional recommended indicators

- *Degree of integration between public services*
  The frequency of buses and trains to centres such as Aberdeen and Inverness provides a more sustainable form of access to greater markets and wider resources. The ease of transfer from one transport system to another, through designed connections, maximises the availability of transport to the community. Both of these pieces of information require some local research.

- *Car-sharing schemes*
  Organised car-sharing schemes can render transport available to people who may not own cars. Many such schemes may be informal and it may therefore be difficult to obtain information about them.

Objective 11: Providing an adequate Information Technology (IT) resource

Key topics considered in this objective: IT infrastructure; access to IT; training for IT; levels of use; levels of skill; levels of awareness.

The use of IT is rapidly becoming recognised as an effective way of accessing information and communicating from remote areas, and is regarded as a key means by which people and communities can fulfil their potential. IT connection, availability and use can breach distance and allow access to information and markets. Availability of IT facilities to the local community, and courses to increase usage, are therefore key indicators.

Status indicators

- *Number of IT centres*

   Urachadh Uidhist IT Training Centre is located currently located in WIE units in Bayhead, on North Uist. The Uisteach IT training centre is on Benbecula; it has been offering courses for three years, including:

   - computing at all levels
   - free computer courses for unemployed
   - internet access. [2].

   One Further Education Centre is at Lionacleit, with full IT training and connections with UHI/LCC. Due their close proximity to the pilot area these are also considered relevant[3].

   IT facilities and training courses are available at the Lews Castle College (Colaisde Bheinn na Faogla) in Benbecula. A GSVQ in Information Technology is planned to run with a minimum of eight students. An evening class programme is also planned for the college, including IT[1].

   Source: [1]fax from Gordon Wells, Lews Castle College, 17/9/99
   [2]conversation with Catherine and David Muir, Uisteach, Benbecula, September 1999.
   [3]fax from Donnie Morrison, Western Isles ICT Advisory Centre, 10/9/99
   Source: Fax from Donnie Morrison, Western Isles ICT Advisory Service, 10/9/99

Measures of performance

- *Provision of IT training courses available, and IT training requested*

   Urachadh Uidhist, Bayhead: in the past 6 months 51 people from North Uist have attended part-time/evening courses, mostly in computing[1]
   Uisteach, Benbecula currently have approximately 6 people/businesses enrolled in courses. Due to increasing competition Uisteach tends to offer a more specialised service, including a mobile training unit that has attracted approximately 15-18 participants from North Uist in the past year[2]
   Further Education Centre, Lionacleit - approximately 25 full-time students / 10 part-time and open learning students are currently enrolled. Mr Gordon Wells of Lews Castle Collage estimates that around 1/3 of all students are from the pilot area[3]

   The level of IT usage in North Uist is reported to be very high. The Telecommunications infrastructure is good with all exchanges having a digital capability[4]. The ICT Advisory Service maintains a Skills Register of people who wish to be involved in ICT related work as either teleworkers or office based service providers. For North Uist there are 43 people on the register[4].

   Sources:[1]Conversation with Ada Campbell, Urachadh Uibhist Training Centre, Bayhead North Uist, September 1999

Additional recommended indicators

- *Number of users of local IT centres*
- *Number of community web sites*
- *Number of business web sites*
- *Extent of ISDN access*

The first three indicators provide information on the degree by which the Pilot Area is taking advantage of IT as a resource. The fourth reflects the ease of access to IT facilities in the area. Original research or IT searches may be the means to obtain this information.

Objective 12: Reducing reliance on imports and subsidies

Key topics considered in this objective: imported goods; imported services; imported skills; levels of public subsidy; changes in levels of imports/use; uptake of subsidy; initiatives to reduce levels of imports.

Heavy reliance on imported goods together with imported skills and services tends to reinforce the disadvantages of living in remote areas, and is usually reflected in the higher cost of living. This is further reflected in the levels of public subsidy. The goal of the indicators for this objective is to assess the current degree of reliance within the Pilot Area, and monitor changes and potential decreases over time.

Information on this topic is scarce, especially with regards to levels of imported goods and skills. Original research is needed to generate essential data that is needed to carry out a full assessment of this topic.

Status indicators

- *Amount of EU funding*
  EU funding provided to local areas comes in a variety of forms, including pan-Highland grants, and area-specific grants. LEADER grants and Objective 1 grants are specific categories of EU funding, administered by Local Enterprise Companies, that play an important role in the local economy

  The following EU funding were provided to the Western Island Council, but are not specific to North Uist, and it is unclear for what purposes the money was eventually used. Clarification on the destination of EU funds within North Uist would help determin their viability towards sustainable development:

  - Western Isles ERDF Award - £34,424,978
  - Western Isles Eligible Costs - £80,499,573
  - Western Isles Total Costs – £87,862,930

  Numerous other pan-Highland projects funded by the EU may also affect the area.
  Source: List of EU funded initiatives from Highland and Islands Partnership Programme, 29/9/99.

Measures of performance

- *Level of skills import*
- *Level of goods import*

  Although difficult to monitor, these indicators can provide a clear picture of the degree to which a Pilot Area is dependent on external inputs. The level of skills import is a reflection of the professional expertise that is required locally but cannot be obtained among the local work force. Similarly, the numbers and types of goods imported may indicate the limitations of local agriculture, climate, or manufacturing facilities.

Additional recommended indicators

- *Number of crofters taking up agricultural subsidies*
  The main source of subsidy in the area is the Scottish Executive for Rural Affairs Department (SERAD), via agricultural grants. Information on grants given to individual crofters or in specific sub-areas of Scotland is considered confidential and is not available.

Chapter 4

Goal 4   Avoiding harmful effects on other people, places and future generations

Objective 13: Supporting the wise use of energy

Key topics considered in this objective: renewable energy; energy efficiency: changes, initiatives, support for the above.

Energy enables people to provide for their well-being, health and safety and is a key factor in the local economy. The production and use of energy has the potential to have a significant impact on the environment at both a global as well as local level. There is a need, therefore to focus on improvements in efficiency and conservation as a means of implementing our sustainability goals. Renewable energy sources (wind, sun, wave, biomass and water) offer additional opportunities if these are pursued where it is technically, economically and environmentally sensible to do so.

Although limited activities are currently occurring in renewable energy in the Dùthchas Pilot Areas, by monitoring the suggested indicators over time, improvement trends can be established.

Status indicators

- *Number of renewable energy projects*
  There are currently no renewable energy projects on North Uist. A study undertaken by Scottish Hydroelectric plc et al in December 1993 reviewed the potential renewable energy resource in Scotland. According to the study results, for the Western Isles as a whole, the following *theoretical* renewable energy resource was identified:

Form of energy	Resource available at less than 10p/kWh (discounted at 8% over 20 years)
Wind	5324
Hydro	4.0
Wave	93

  After taking account of planning, environmental and practical issues, the theoretical renewable energy resource in the Western Isles is estimated at 600-1000 MW (resource at less than 10p/kWh, discounted at 8% over ten years). Renewable resources, specifically wind power, therefore would seem worth pursuing in the Western Isles.

  Source: Scottish Hydro-electric plc , Scottish Power plc, Department of Trade and Industry, Scottish Office, Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, An assessment of the Potential Renewable Energy Resource in Scotland; December 1993.

Measures of performance

- *% of power from renewable sources*
  Use of electricity from renewable resources indicates a sustainable approach to energy consumption.

  At this time it is impossible to disaggregate the percentage of power from renewable resources provided to North Uist specifically. Data on fuel mix use during 1997/98 for Scottish Hydro-Electric (country-wide) is shown below:

Fuel Source 1997/98	Mix (%)
gas	53
nuclear	20
renewables	14
coal	12
oil	1
Total	**100**

Source: Scottish Hydro-Electric Environmental Report, 1998

As Scottish Hydro-Electric is the principal supplier of electricity on North Uist, one can extrapolate these values, very generally, to the Pilot Area.

- *Level of investment in insulation (private houses)*
  This indicator reflects the Housing Improvement Grants provided by the local Council and gives some indication of energy efficiency measures being taken by individual householders. The information was provided for North Uist in relation to Objective 8, as a reflection of housing condition.

Objective 14: Promoting waste minimisation and management

Key topics considered in this objective: waste management; waste minimisation; recycling; levels of activity; changes, initiatives, support for the above.

The traditional view of waste as being "refuse to dispose of" has been changed in enlightened sustainable communities. There is now an increased recognition that the disposal of waste can harm other people and places and create a liability for future generations. In addition, the actual commercial and economic value of recyclable waste is becoming recognised. The following approach, known as "the waste hierarchy", is being introduced.

- reducing the amount generated in the first place;
- reusing waste items;
- recovering and recycling waste;
- disposal of residual wastes safely.

Recycling may not be a viable option in remote areas of the Highlands and Islands at this time, as the limited volumes which may be collected may not be sufficient to justify travel and transport by recycling operators. Similarly, the siting of a dedicated recycling plant in the local area may not be economically viable if not enough waste is generated locally.

The indicators selected here reflect activities which may be ongoing to minimise or recycle waste, and to raise awareness levels in the local area. To date however, it is understood that relatively little is occurring in the area of waste recycling or minimisation. Indicators are recommended only at this time, because of the lack of activity.

Recommended status indicators

- *Quantity of waste by material type*
- *% of waste going to each of the hierarchy options (above)*
- *Distance travelled by waste*

Measures of performance

- *Number of waste minimisation schemes and successful waste minimisation initiatives*
  Such schemes are likely to be sponsored by the local Council or by volunteer bodies. Waste minimisation may be more appropriate than recycling as a goal for remote areas. There is no waste segregation being undertaken at source other than a limited amount of packaging segregation that is carried out occasionally by local co-op stores. The segregated cardboard is returned to the mainland on vehicles that bring supplies in to the shops.

  HIE Waste is an EU funded Pan-Highland initiative. To date there have been several enquiries from potential projects in the Western Isles, however none have been developed as yet.

- *Number of recycling centres within and in proximity of the pilot area*
  Recycling centres are represented on the one hand by bottle banks and newspaper recycling points; and on the other by actual recycling plants which collect the waste and re-process it for re-use. With regards recycling points, these do not need to be present within the Pilot Areas, as long as they are within a reasonable distance, or at locations also offering other services. The Western Isles Council operates facilities for the recycling of waste oil and refrigerant gases, and is currently looking in the feasibility of developing facilities for waste paper. Within the Western Isles, a private contractor is responsible for breaking up scrap cars and other metal, baling the scrap and transporting it off the island for processing. Due to the current downturn in scrap value a reduction in demand for this material has occurred.

  No clothing / bottle banks are currently presents on any of the islands. However, the Western Isles Council are considering the viability of glass recycling with a view to crushing and using the material locally. Also, a number of charities organise collections for clothing.

  Source: Letter from Mr Alasdair MacEachen, Assistant Director Uist and Barra, Environmental Services department, WIC 17/9/99
  Letter from Mairi Maciver, Property and Environmental Projects Officer, Western Isles Enterprise, 23/9/99

Additional recommended indicator

- *Ratio of quantity of material minimised to quantity of waste disposed, by waste type*
  Although difficult to obtain, this information would provide a good indicator of the degree of awareness and waste recycling activity occurring in the Pilot Areas.

Objective 15: Supporting 'green' business and community initiatives

Key topics considered in this objective: green produce; green business; green labelling; product development; environmental management systems; awareness raising.

Businesses are recognising that positive environmental resource management together with the support of ethical practices can bring substantial economic benefits. Such benefits are attractive irrespective of the size of business, although the process of achieving them can be complex and some smaller enterprises may require assistance. In recent years there has been a rapid increase in so-called "green" or "environmentally friendly" products which has become a significant growth industry. The involvement of business in the move towards a more sustainable future is absolutely crucial.

'Green' initiatives may still be relatively novel within the Pilot Areas, but their monitoring over time will be vital to determine the drive towards a more sustainable future.

Status indicators

- *No. of green labelled products/services available*
  Green products/services may reflect recyclable content, organic origin, low energy consumption and other design parameters for preventing or minimising environmental impact or damage caused by the product/service. Available information on such products in North Uist – including organic produce – was presented in Objective 3.

Measures of performance

- *Number of businesses meeting the Green Tourism Business Scheme requirements*
  The Green Business Tourism Scheme provides three levels of environmental achievement for tourist facilities, visitor centres and hotels. Businesses can aim for any of the three levels to improve their environmental standard and attract environmentally-conscious tourists.

  At this time, There are no hotels or guest houses on North Uist under the Scottish Tourist Board Green Tourism Scheme
  Source: ([1]) List of Green Tourism Business Scheme Members, 2 September 1999.

- *Number of green initiatives sponsored by LECs or other bodies*
  A number of Green initiatives are being considered under the Western Isles Structure Plan that may also affect North Uist. In addition, Environmental Renewal grants are provided by the LECs to fund projects which repair and renew the local physical environment. See earlier description under Objective 3 of such projects for North Uist.

  Other categories of "green" grants, for example habitat management grants provided by SNH and RSPB, are described in Objective 1.

Additional recommended Indicators

- *Number of fair trade products available*
  These are typically produce from developing countries which have been grown, processed and exported within an ethical economic framework.

- *Number of 'green' initiatives*
  Any initiative reflecting environmental concern

- *Number of businesses meeting green/ethical standards*
  Such standards include EMAS, the European Eco-Management and Audit Scheme; and International Standard ISO 14001 for Environmental Management Systems

- *No. of woodlands achieving the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme*
  The UK Woodland Assurance Scheme grants recognition to forest areas managed in an environmentally appropriate fashion.

Objective 16: Promoting co-operation with other communities

Key topics considered in this objective: co-operative initiatives; inter-community links; rural-urban links; trans-national links; information exchange; national/international exchanges; awareness raising.

Communities around the world are recognising that becoming more sustainable can be accelerated through sharing ideas and experiences and exchanging "know how".
Promoting co-operation also fosters stronger communities, by allowing groups to recognise ways for improving mutual benefits and reducing harmful effects on each other. Community co-operation increases the democratic base for fighting common issues, thus ensuring mutual empowerment.

The indicators proposed here aim to determine the degree to which communities within the Pilot Areas interact with each other, and with external bodies. To date, very limited date is available on these indicators. Original research and inter-community discussion would help in data collection

Status/performance indicators

- *Number of inter-community meetings*
- *Number of inter-community initiatives*
  Many local community councils participate in periodic inter-community meetings to discuss issues which reach beyond local boundaries. Joint initiatives may result, depending on the issues at hand.

  There are two local Community Council within the pilot area; Berneray Council and North Uist Council. Both councils meet once every 2 months.
  Source: Conversations with Joan MacCuish (Berneray Community Council) and Lachlan m MacLeod (North Uist Community Council), September 1999

  There are a number of inter-community initiatives. These include Duthchas[1]; Uist Council for Voluntary Organisations[1]; General Committee addressing the issue of the inclusion of Mink on North Uist[1]; Athletics Club[2]; Feis Tir An Eonra (children's summer festival)[2]; Sailing Club[2]; Taigh Chearsabhagh Art centre and Museum[2]; North Uist Historical Society[2].

  Sources: [1]Conversation with Lachlan M MacLeod, North Uist Community Council, September 1999
  [2]Conversation with Catriona MacCuish, Duthchas Pilot Area Co-ordinator, September 1999

- *No. of study visits/conferences attended.*
  These are opportunities for communities to learn and communicate beyond their local areas.

APPENDIX 2 :
GAP ANALYSIS - RELATIONSHIP WITH SUSTAINABILITY

1   INTRODUCTION

This Appendix presents an overall review of the profile findings and discusses them with reference to the findings of the Initial Review. In *Section 2* the Goals are reviewed in turn and the section highlights where there appear to be gaps in achieving the sustainability objectives that make up each of the four goals. The gaps are then presented in *Section 3* as priority issues with the key findings being divided into what might be considered as "Sustainability Challenges" and "Sustainability Opportunities". In *Section 4* the issues are arranged as suggested "Sustainability Topics" for consideration by the Programme Area Advisory Groups as a basis for selecting priority topics to take forward in their Strategies.

The methodology used to review the profiles, identify the gaps and select the priority issues is given in *Appendix 3 Methodology*.

2   REVIEW OF SUSTAINABILITY GOALS AND SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1   *Making the most of natural and cultural resources without damaging them*

Objective 1   Protecting and enhancing natural resources and promoting their value

Status

Overall the evidence from the available information confirms that coastal water, river water and air quality are currently all of the highest category in the North Uist area.

In North Uist the unique nature of some of its habitats partly represents the high environmental quality of the area, for example the machair close to the coastline. The areas of land designated for their conservation value are also significant and include the Loch nam Madadh marine Special Area of Conservation near Lochmaddy, 557 ha of the Monach Isles protected under the National Nature Reserve, 3606 ha protected under the Ramsar Site, and a total of 2308 ha classified as Special Protection Areas (1731 ha of which are machair). Also, the Northern part of North Uist falls within the South Lewis, Harris and North Uist National Scenic Areas. Only one large wooded area is present on the island, occupying 6km^2, and this is a coniferous wood most likely to consist of commercial imported species. The area supports some of the most important populations of nesting waders in the British Isles, and the corncrake is the best studied bird on North Uist. Numbers have been monitored for over ten years, and efforts at recolonisation have been considerable, including extensive habitat creation measures by Scottish Natural Heritage and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

This all supports the emphasis placed in the Initial Review on the quality of the fresh air, beaches, wild birds, machair and animals and also the recognition of the importance of the sea.

Performance

In terms of promoting the value of the area evidence suggests that the main interpretation centre on North Uist is linked to natural resources (Balranald Nature Reserve). The reserve, located at Hougharry, includes a Visitor Centre equipped with car park and toilets, and provides interpretative displays in both English and Gaelic. In 1999
38 guided walks were held. The reserve features in the Western Isles Interpretation Strategy and is recognised as a major tourist attraction, receiving 5-6,000 visitors per annum. Efforts to promote the value of the area also include a programme of coastal access development, for which the Western Isles

Council has received European funding, and the possible development of further unmanned interpretative centres following a study commissioned in 1998 by Scottish Natural Heritage.

Active habitat management does currently take place on North Uist. It includes:
- the corncrake habitat creation scheme run by the RSPB on seven areas within the Balranald Reserve;
- the Natura 2000 management scheme for corncrakes run by SNH and currently involving four crofters;
- the Scottish Executive Rural Affairs Department (SERAD) Machairs of Uist and Benbecula Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) Scheme;
- the SERAD Countryside Premium Scheme (CPS).

Active woodland creation and management is also taking place within the Millenium Forest Project. This is part of the Millenium Forest of Scotland Project funded by Lottery money. The Southern Isles Amenity Trust has been actively supporting the project in North Uist over the last six months where two areas (a 2.4 ha area in Sponish and a 132 ha area at Carinish) are being planted with mixed native broad leafed trees. After a period of 5 years the local Community Grazing Committee will take the woodland on and public access will be guaranteed.

Gaps

Possible areas for further action could be:

- Increasing further the areas of land under active habitat management, encouraging some diversification where appropriate.
- Initiating a local area Biodiversity Action Plan, currently absent for the local area but which would take a strategic look at protecting and enhancing the already very valuable populations of wild birds, animals and plants.
- Consider further ways of promoting and interpreting the natural resources in a sustainable way that capitalises on the unique features (cross-cut with Green Tourism Initiatives – see Objective 15).

Objective 2   Protecting and enhancing cultural resources and promoting their value

Status

North Uist has an unusually high density of archaeological sites (629 of which 49 are Scheduled Ancient Monuments), and a rich built heritage. There is a strong recognition of the importance of traditional culture, with 81% of the population speaking Gaelic and numerous events and ceremonies celebrated by the community throughout the year which highlight the cultural vibrancy of the area.

The evidence again supports the recognition in the Initial Review that the pilot area has an abundance of historic sites and a cultural tradition that the community could take advantage of to help preserve, interpret and promote.

Performance

Although difficult to obtain a meaningful measure of the quality and usage of cultural interpretation centres on North Uist there appears to be a very high degree of activity promoting culture, for example the Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum and Arts Centre received approximately 20,000 visitors in 1998. There are also a number initiatives (playgroups, music instruction, music, drama , dance, art and sporting festivals) promoting Gaelic language and tradition.

There are 3 heritage trails on North Uist with environmental and historical associations.

Gaps

Possible areas for further action are:

- Explore the potential for more specific heritage trails, events or venues where traditional arts, music and crafts can be further developed.. Is there scope for a major heritage/arts theme trail?
- Collect and record more systematic information on the proportion of historical sites in North Uist that have undergone some degree of interpretation

Objective 3   Promoting sustainable and innovative use of natural resources

Status

With regard to agriculture the information demonstrates that crofting is active (only 10% are absentee crofters), but there was little evidence of diversification of crofting into for example organic production or other sustainable non-agricultural activity, which could be exploited further.

Information suggests that there is a high shellfish / aquaculture / fisheries potential but there was little readily accessible quantified information to measure or assess how well the resource is being sustainably managed. Historically there have also been other industries based on the marine resources such as use of seaweed.

 All woodland on North Uist falls under the Woodland Grant Scheme. Evidence suggests that while the one large wooded area present on the island is coniferous (likely to consist of commercial imported species), there has been a shift from coniferous to native woodland planting encouraged by the Millenium Forest Scheme.

The status and potential for renewable energy is dealt with under Goal 4, Objective 13.

Crofting and its potential was identified in the initial review as a way of sustainably managing the land and this is supported by information collected for the profile. Evidence collected so far also supports the emphasis put on marine fisheries as an important resource for sustainable use and management.

Performance

There is little quantified information on numbers and status of organic crofters or information relating to other sustainable non-agricultural activities that crofters could move into. Similarly there was no information on sustainable fisheries management initiatives, shellfish farming or organic fish farming.

The uptake of "green" grants does not appear to be significant, with no 'Environmental Renewal' assistance given to North Uist area over the course of 1999. Two business start-up grants for green projects were awarded by Western Isles Enterprise in 1999.

Gaps

Possible areas for further action:

- Crofting initiatives offer potential in areas such as organic products, "healthy meats", and other sustainably managed products(see also Goal 3 Objective 9).
- There is clearly a lot of scope for developing marine resource opportunities (linked also to Goal 3 Objective 9);developments with seaweed, shellfish and organic fish farming as well as fish stock

protection and management all offer possibilities. In the case of the latter, in particular, there is a lack of information to establish an effective indicator/measure at present.

Objective 4 Promoting sustainable and innovative use of cultural resources

Status/Performance

There was found to be quite a lot of overlap with Objective 2 in the case of this Objective. Again, there appears to be a lot of activity with regard to Gaelic pursuits and a significant quality of venues promoting cultural resources (Taigh Chearsabhagh Art Centre and Museum).

A general lack of information for some of the proposed indicators was evident.
However from events calendars and discussions with local representatives of, for example, the Western Isles Council, it was evident that there were events celebrating local arts and music. It was also evident that for example, many of the village halls and some schools get involved in promoting cultural resources. There did not appear to be sufficient information to establish the proportion of historic sites and monuments that are actively managed

Gaps

Possible areas for further action:

- It would be a great advantage if an efficient way of gathering and putting together the relevant information was developed so that a clearer picture of the effectiveness of the area in celebrating and promoting its cultural resources could be established.
- An assessment of how sustainable current management activities are for some of the key historic sites would also be helpful particularly for planning future developments.

GOAL 2 Retaining a viable and empowered community

Objective 5 Retaining a balanced and healthy population

Status

The age structure of North Uist is tilted towards a higher proportion of older people. The highest proportion of the population is the 45-64 age bracket (22.3%) while the 16-29 year olds nevertheless represent a significant 18.7% of the population. Between 1981 and 1991 the population appears to have shown an increase of around 0.7% Gender balance is around 50% male/female.

No effective indicator (at this stage) could be established for health.

The evidence so far obtained supports the concerns raised in the Initial Review over the loss of young people from the area and of a trend tending to show an overall decline in the population.

Performance

There was little information relating to initiatives aimed at encouraging "young returners" or any other measures that might help to retain young people (see also Objective 7).

The lack of an effective health indicator together with no clear information on current measures being taken to support a healthy population make it difficult at this stage to measure the overall performance of the area in meeting this objective.

Gaps

Possible areas for further action could be:

- Establishing an effective health indicator and a way of determining trends.
- Establishing some key initiatives to encourage young returners into the area.

Objective 6   Supporting community empowerment

Status

There was little if any formal information available on levels of decision making and control of land and natural resources. Much of the information was anecdotal. With regard to the number of community organisations, North Uist appears to be very active with 33 groups listed by the Uist Council for Voluntary Organisations. The indications are therefore that communities enjoy a high degree of participation and are interactive.

The evidence supports the view in the Initial Review that the communities are generally strong with a caring, friendly community spirit.

Performance

Again there was little available information on how involved communities are in the planning process or the extent to which any land is under the ownership of the community.

There was however evidence of take-up of LEC provided Community Action Grants and Crofting Township Grants.

Gaps

Possible areas for future action could be:

- Exploring ways of involving communities more in the local planning process (*eg* transport planning, land use planning and community planning).
- Recording the community's level of involvement in the planning process / decisions taken.
- Publicising more information about access to funds, information, and skills (see Objectives 7 and 8).
- Recording information about land under community ownership at a more local level.

Objective 7   Ensuring equal access to employment

Status

In North Uist 61.7% of the population is economically active. This is consistent with general Highland trends, though lower than for the rest of Scotland, and could reflect the areas relative success at retaining its younger population.

Most employment tends to cluster around the agriculture/forestry/fishing or "other services" sectors. There appears to be quite a significant number of new start-up business within the past year (5 as indicated by assistance from WIE)

There is one local IT training centre located at Bayhead, North Uist (Urachadh Uibhist). All other adult training courses are available from Lews Castle College and Uisteach on Benbecular.

The evidence tends to support the conclusion in the Initial Review that lack of employment is a significant problem in the area. In particular again the retention and provision of employment for younger people is a problem.

Performance

Figures available from the Western Isles Career Service indicate that the majority of school leavers either go to University, further education, higher education, or employment.

Given that there appear to be a number of adult training courses there is the need for a better assessment of the proportion of available adults taking advantage of such courses.

Gaps

Possible areas for further action could be:

- Improving employment opportunities for both younger and older adults.
- Better information and tracking of the uptake of adult training.
- Initiatives to retain or attract back younger people (see also Objective 5)
- Initiatives to provide local skills training
- Develop "local" adult training facilities ?

Objective 8 Ensuring equal access to essential services

Status

Essential services appear to be scattered across the pilot area, as opposed to being concentrated in any particular community. There is a general lack of basic services within each sub-area, such as doctor's surgeries (1), food shops (2) petrol stations (2) and recreational facilities. There is only one two year Secondary School on the island (Bayhead).

Public transport is available throughout the area but there may still be a need to target transport further on current need habits of the community. Issues such as accessibility and time-tabling of ferries and better integration of flights is still a problem.

The evidence confirms the concern expressed in the initial review over the availability of certain essential services, in particular shopping and recreation/sporting facilities, and also over accessing these with effective public transport (see also Objective 10 on access issues).

Performance

The Western Isles Council began an integrated transport initiative in 1996, targeting stage and school bus services. In 1999 the initiative received a positive review, indicating that progress has been made. By all accounts there appears to be a good bus system.

Gaps

Possible areas for further action are:

- Improve existing essential services.
- Review the needs of remoter communities and increase the number of locally accessible essential services, such as petrol stations and GP's.
- Improve and expand recreational facilities.
- Ensure the initiatives to focus transport on local needs continue to progress.
- Better integration of buses, ferries and flights.

GOAL 3 Reducing problems of remoteness by delivering local needs locally and reducing dependence on external inputs

Objective 9 Improving the local market for goods and services

Status

There was generally very little if any quantified information available on the degree to which local crofts or other producers (forestry, fisheries) were supplying produce locally.
Neither was there quantified information on local service provision or local markets and marketing opportunities.

Performance

There was evidence to suggest that recent new business startups focusing on local markets have been successful (5 on record).

While much of the information gathered has been anecdotal, North Uist appears to be active in addressing the improvement of the market for local goods and services. There has been the establishment of the Uist Horticultural Association and a developing market for local produce.

Data suggests that the community has been active in setting up a local transport role for servicing local needs.

Gaps

Possible areas for further action could be:

- There is an urgent need to gather information and establish the extent of the local market for locally produced products and how well it is being targeted.
- There needs to be continued support of the Uist Horticultural Association and more emphasis on possible cooperative ventures, local markets and local distribution centres.

Objective 10 Promoting equal and effective access to goods, services and markets

Status

The evidence supports the view in the Initial Review that there is a cost issue in travel to and from the island (approximately £32 cost of fuel per journey distance to Inverness). Available information indicates that fuel costs are disproportionately high for people living in the pilot area.

Data also indicates that roads are generally of poor quality with the largest proportion being single track.

The data supports therefore the feeling of remoteness outlined in the Initial Review, confirms the higher travel costs and accentuates the transportation issues, such as roads, fuel costs, ferry services and ferry connections (see Objective 8).

Performance

This relates again to the need for an integrated transport plan and a coordinated effort to tackle the many transport related issues. There is a sustainability challenge posed here in so far as on the one hand we don't necessarily wish to promote the car and embark on major road building programmes and yet there is a clear need to tackle the "remoteness" factor and provide a more "level playing field" for the communities in this area (in terms of cost, road facilities, ferry services and connections etc).

Gaps

Possible areas for action could be:

- Prioritise certain critical roads for improvement.
- Progress the integrated transport initiative.
- Consider possible options for improving ferry and airport links.

Objective 11 Providing an adequate information technology (IT) resource

Status

Evidence indicates that the level of IT usage on North Uist is quite high. The telecommunications infrastructure is good, with all exchanges having a digital capability. There is one local IT training centre in Bayhead (Urachadh Uibhist) and 3 IT centres within close proximity of the pilot area (Lionacleit and Benbecular). Part-time, full-time, open learning and evening courses are offered in computing and the internet.

Performance

Available data indicates that North Uist is taking advantage of IT opportunities. There is a market for cottage based telecentres.

Gaps

Possible areas for further action:

- The use of IT could be a powerful tool to tackle some of the issues connected with the "remoteness" factor.
- More publicity and use of the IT facilities.

Objective 12   Reducing reliance on imports and subsidies

Status/Performance

Apart from an indication of the EU funding made available to the pilot area there was no information made available that could provide data on the levels of imported goods, services or skills. There was also no information available on the levels of public subsidy.
In the absence of so much data it was also difficult to establish any realistic performance indicators on which to base the delivery of this objective.

The initial review noted the dependence of the pilot area on imports and cited this as a key issue that needed addressing.

Gaps

Clearly this whole area needs a lot more work done on it. If the objective is to reduce the reliance on imports we need to establish:

- How are we going to measure it?
- How do we start to reduce it?

Progress with this objective ties in with Objective 9.

GOAL 4 *Avoiding harmful effects on other people, places and future generations*

Objective 13   Supporting the wise use of energy

Status/Performance

Although there are currently no renewable energy projects in the pilot area a recent study by Scottish Hydroelectric indicates that wind and wave power are the most promising and significant renewable energy source to pursue.

No detailed information is available on the percentage of power derived from renewable sources within the pilot area but on general data for the Western Isles given by Scottish Hydroelectric (the main provider in North Uist) it is likely to be around 10 – 15%.

In terms of energy efficiency within households, the data indicates that 428 homes have received energy efficiency measures over a three year period. Such measures are frequently linked to insulation.

Gaps

Possible areas for future action could be:

- Consider a possible community/utility business joint venture to explore locally supplied renewable energy.
- Promote and raise awareness as to the simple energy efficiency measures that can be taken at home.

Objective 14   Promoting waste minimisation and management

Status/performance

Data suggests there is some consciousness and emphasis on waste minimisation. The Western Isles Council operates facilities for the recycling of waste oil and refrigerant gases, and is currently looking into developing facilities for waste paper. A private contractor facilitates the processing of scrap cars and other metals, off the island.

There are no clothing / bottle banks currently present, however charities are active in organising collections for clothing.

According to available information there is limited waste segregation being undertaken at source.

Gaps

Possible areas of action for the future:

- There is a need to raise awareness on waste management and minimisation in order to progress initiatives to deal with the issue.
- Although recycling may not be a viable option (although this needs confirming) it would be possible to set up initiatives such as segregation, composting and looking at reduction at source.

Objective 15   Supporting "green" business and community initiatives

Status/Performance

The available data indicates generally little activity specifically on "green" product initiatives. With respect to the service sector no tourism facility has achieved the Green Tourism Business Award.
The uptake of "green" grants appears to be small. There are two organic businesses known on North Uist.

The Initial Review recognises the potential for developing niche "green" products when considering crofting developments and the sustainable use of other resources (see also Objective 3)

Gaps

Possible actions that could be taken in the future:

- There is a lot of potential for exploring the development of "green" organic produce from the area (see Objective 3).
- There is a lot of potential for developing "green" niche products.

Objective 16   Promoting co-operation with other communities

Status/Performance

There was no quantified data available giving either the number of inter-community meetings or the number of inter-community initiatives. There was generally little information on any exchange visits or initiatives promoting the exchange of information.

Anecdotal information indicates that communities do interact. The level of interaction between communities in North Uist and Berneray has increased since the opening of the causeway in April of this year (1999). A number of inter-community initiatives are currently underway.

Gaps

Possible areas where action could be taken:

- Consider organising some local inter-community meetings to share ideas on sustainability challenges and opportunities as a way of "kick-starting" co-operation and collaboration.
- Use experiences within the Dùthchas project to launch collaborative initiatives.

3   PRIORITY ISSUES

From the preceding section a number of gaps in achieving the sustainability goals have been identified. This section highlights the key findings by dividing them into what might be considered "problem areas" or **sustainability challenges** and **sustainability opportunities**. They are grouped together with the principle findings from the initial review, where appropriate, which are shown in brackets in italics next to the corresponding finding from this study.

3.1   PROBLEM AREAS – SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES

- **Goal 2 –** Initiatives to encourage young returners (*Declining, aging population)*
- **Goal 2 –** Involving communities more in local planning process
- **Goal 2 –** Improve employment opportunities for young and older adults (*Lack of employment*)
- **Goal 2 –** Improve transport links/infrastructure through integrated transport plan and focus on local needs (*Transport links/high costs*)
- **Goal 3 –** Address access to essential services in some localities (*Community centre/recreational facilities*)
- **Goal 3 –** Progress integrated transport initiative – road improvements/rail links? (*Transport links/costs/state of roads/infrastructure*)
- **Goal 3 –** Establish indicators and performance measures to help reduce imports (*Dependence on imports*)

3.2   SUSTAINABILITY OPPORTUNITIES

- **Goal 1 –** Initiatives to promote further the unique natural environment in a sustainable way (*beaches, shoreline, sea, scenery, flora/fauna*)
- **Goal 1 –** Explore scope for more heritage trails linked to historic sites and traditional arts and music (*Cultural resources*)
- **Goal 1 –** Consider the diversification of crofting particularly organic products (*Environmentally friendly or organic crofting*)
- **Goal 1 –** Consider initiatives that focus on the sustainable use of marine resources (*Sealife/fisheries*)

- **Goal 3 –** Establish local markets for local products and consider cooperative ventures (*Sale of local products*)
- **Goal 4 –** Consider a project to explore renewable energy from wind power, possible joint venture with utility business?
- **Goal 4 –** Raise awareness on waste minimisation and explore strategies to minimise waste
- **Goal 4 –** Investigate potential for "green" products in general and promote more green tourism initiatives (*Promoting local products*)

4 NORTH UIST SUSTAINABILITY TOPICS

4.1 THE TOPICS

From the Initial Review	*From the Profile*

Goal 1: making the most of natural and cultural resources without damaging them	
Beaches, shoreline, sea, scenery, flora/fauna	***Natural environment/ interpretation (nature trails)***
Cultural resources	**Traditional arts and music**
Environmentally friendly or organic crofting	***Sustainable landuse***
Sealife/fisheries	***Sustainable use of marine resources***

Goal 2: Retaining a viable and empowered community	
Declining, aging population	***Retaining young people***
....	**Local involvement with Planning**
Transport links/high costs	*Integrated transport plan*

Goal 3: Reducing problems of remoteness by delivering local needs locally, and reducing dependence on external inputs	
Community centre/recreational facilities	***Essential services***
Dependence on imports	**Reduce imports**
Sale of local products	**Local markets and business**

Goal 4: Avoiding harmful effects on other people, places and future generations	
....	***Renewable energy***
....	**Waste reduction**
Promoting local products	***"Green" business***

4.2   SUSTAINABILITY TOPICS – IDEAS FOR SHAPING TOPICS

Key ideas originating from the initial reviews and profiles

Goal 1   - Natural environment
- Increase areas of land under active habitat management
- Shift more from SERAD to SNH support
- Local area biodiversity action plan
- "Green" tourism initiatives

Goal 1   - Traditional arts and music

- Collect/record information on cultural resources not fully recorded
- Scope for heritage trails and guides linked to sites/traditions undeveloped
- Build on traditional skills, music and language

Goal 1   - Sustainable land use

- Organic crofting
- Sustainable non-agricultural activities
- Increased forestry developments – native woodlands (convert existing conifer forest to native woodlands?)

Goal 1   - Sustainable use of marine resources

- Developments with seaweed
- Fish stock protection/management
- Shellfish developments
- Organic fishfarming

Goal 2   - Young returners

- Initiatives to encourage young returners
- Training opportunities
- Availability of Information Technology (IT)
- Use of IT to maintain network of school leavers

Goal 2   - Local involvement with planning

- Involvement with development control
- Input to transport planning
- Involvement with land use planning
- Involvement with community planning
- Crofting Township Grants

Goal 2   - Integrated transport plan

- Transport services
- Focusing on need
- Accessibility of ferries
- Better integration with flights

Goal 3   - Essential services

- Needs of remoter communities

- Recreational needs/facilities
- Only one GP practice
- Food shops – travel implications
- day care; affordable housing

Goal 3   - Reduce imports

- Reducing reliance
- Establishing clear measures
- Status of imported goods, services, skills

Goal 3   - Local markets

- Establish size of market
- Co-operative ventures
- Local distribution
- Local service provision
- Resource availability

Goal 4   - Renewable energy

- Feasibility of wave power (possibly wind?)
- Joint venture with utility company
- Other alternatives

Goal 4   - Waste reduction

- Raising awareness
- Segregation, composting schemes
- Recovery, re-use, recycling options

Goal 4   - "Green" business

- Green Tourism Business Scheme
- Agricultural/horticultural products
- Fishery products
- Organic produce
- Indigenous crafts

APPENDIX 3 : METHODOLOGY

1   INTRODUCTION

This appendix which describes in broad outline the methods used in developing the Sustainability Profiles and supporting documents is divided into three main sections.
Section 2 deals with how the guiding framework for the profiles was devised and discusses the terms used such as "Goal", "Objective", "Criteria" and "Indicators".

Section 3 goes on to describe the methods used for researching and collecting the data used.

Section 4 describes how the "Gap Analysis" was carried out and a methodology for selecting priority topics for the Strategy Groups.

2   DEVELOPING THE FRAMEWORK

2.1   GOALS

The framework for the profiles was based on the Dùthchas definition of sustainability provided in the original brief for the programme of work. This definition was put together by the Dùthchas Project Team following the Initial Review work. It is based on concepts developed during the Initial Review and thus has a very local "feel" to it but at the same time there were great efforts to make sure that it "nests" well with existing national definitions.

The definition consists broadly of four key "goals":

- 1. Making the most of natural and cultural resources without damaging them.
- 2. Retaining a viable and empowered community.
- 3. Reducing problems of remoteness by delivering local needs locally and reducing dependence on external inputs.
- 4. Avoiding harmful effects on other people, places and future generations.

2.2   OBJECTIVES

Stemming from the Dùthchas Project vision , therefore, these goals provide the broad framework on which to structure the profiles. At this stage, however, they are still too broad for providing the more detailed framework that is necessary to give the profiles the detail they will need. The goals were therefore divided further into a series of underlying "objectives". Four objectives were developed for each of the four goals giving 16 underlying objectives altogether. The objectives were selected from a consideration of the Initial Review findings, evaluations of objectives and criteria developed within previous studies done within the HIE Sustainable Development Project, consideration of a variety of sustainability reference documents and consultation with the Dùthchas Project Team and Partners.

The objectives are given in *Figure 1*.

Figure 1. Objectives developed within the four sustainability goals

GOAL 1: Making the most of natural and cultural resources without damaging them

Objectives:

- Protecting and enhancing natural resources and promoting their value
- Protecting and enhancing cultural resources and promoting their value
- Promoting the sustainable and innovative use of natural resources
- Promoting the sustainable and innovative use of cultural resources

GOAL 2: Retaining a viable and empowered community

Objectives:

- Retaining a balanced and healthy population
- Supporting community empowerment
- Ensuring equal access to employment
- Ensuring equal access to essential services

GOAL 3: Reducing problems of remoteness by delivering local needs locally and reducing dependence on external inputs

Objectives:

- Improving the local market for goods and services
- Promoting equal and effective access to goods, services and markets
- Providing an adequate information technology resource
- Reducing the reliance on imports and subsidies

GOAL 4: Avoiding harmful effects on other people , places and future generations

Objectives:

- Supporting the wise use of energy
- Promoting waste minimisation and management
- Supporting "green" business and community initiatives
- Promoting co-operation with other communities

2.3   INDICATORS

Having established the framework around the four key sustainability goals with their associated objectives there was a need now to establish the measures or indicators that would be used to judge:

- the position of the pilot areas in terms of their current state of "sustainability";
- the current performance of the pilot areas in terms of delivering the four sustainability goals.

It was decided therefore that two types of measure or indicator would be needed:

- so-called "status" indicators that would act as a measure of the current state of the pilot area , as a "snapshot" in time and would act to establish a baseline situation;
- indicators that could be used as a measure of "performance" with particular reference to how well an area was delivering a particular objective within the four goals.

In practice a very large number of potential status and performance indicators were generated. These clearly needed to be refined down to a manageable number that could be used practically to generate profiles that would be meaningful, relatively simple, practical to use, but that could also be further refined and developed in the future as more information became available or was generated. The following set of criteria were used in the selection process for indicators:

- relevant data/information must be available;
- indicators needed to be truly "sustainable" where possible (*ie* should have a degree of integration to include an environmental, economic and social dimension if possible). In practice many of the status indicators tended to reflect one of the dimensions but these can be replaced by more appropriate indicators/measures where they exist and when the data becomes available;
- indicators need to be specific, measurable, trackable and easily understood.

The overall framework is illustrated in *Figure 2*.

3   RESEARCHING METHODS

For each of the 16 objectives a step by step process was used to research out and compile the information needed to build up the profiles.

STEP 1 SCOPING THE OBJECTIVE

- Identify the obvious parameters linked with the selected Objective – using Objective 1 as an example:

    Objective 1 - *"Protecting and enhancing natural resources and promoting their value."*
    Key topics to consider: **Status:** sea, fresh water, land, air, biodiversity, habitat, landscape
    Performance: management, stewardship, use, presentation.

- Identify measures/indicators linked to these parameters

    Objective 1 – *'Status indicators'* measure the current status of a given area in relation to "protecting and enhancing natural resources and promoting their value";

    Examples : coastal water quality, river water quality, air quality, percentage of nationally important habitat types.

    Objective 1 – *'Performance indicators'* measure the performance of a given area in relation to "protecting and enhancing natural resources and promoting their value";

Examples: interpretative facilities relating to conservation/environment (number, success and quality of the facility, quality of promotional material, trends in visitor numbers), the amount of land under habitat management.

STEP 2 SOURCING THE DATA/INFORMATION

- Identify data sources from which information can be sought. These may include the main regulatory bodies or local authorities (such as SEPA, SNH, Highland Council), public agencies (such as HIE, the Local Enterprise Companies), agencies such as the Crofters Commission and the Tourist Boards, local communities (such as community councils) and from local people and local knowledge.

   Task 1 Contact chosen source (telephone)

   - introduce yourself, the project, and the area for which you are seeking information

   - discuss the indicators/measures selected and determine whether additional or more appropriate indicators/measures may be available
   - confirm this source can best provide the necessary data,
     if not, request suggestions regarding more appropriate data sources

   - request relevant information and indicate a time-scale.

   Task 2 Follow-up your initial request in writing (e-mail, fax, letter)

   - re-iterate who you are and the project/ area for which information is being sought.

   - define the boundaries of the area/ indicator for which you are seeking information

   - clearly and concisely re-state your request (what piece of information you are seeking)

   - re-state the time frame you are working within and assert a date by which information must be received (or negotiate a compromise date if necessary)

   - provide the source with address / fax number / e-mail address to which information must be sent

   - Follow-up written request with phone calls, when necessary (to ensure request is being fulfilled)

   - Receive information

   - Contact source and confirm information has been received.
     Thank source for their help.

STEP 3 INCORPORATING THE INFORMATION

Having received the information it will have arrived in a fairly "raw" state and will need to be incorporated into the profile in a form that is clear, succinct, understandable and relevant to either the status indicator or measure of performance that is being developed.

Ideally numeric data is best incorporated into a graph, chart or figure which in time can be updated to illustrate trends in the particular measure that is being considered.

In some cases where data collection is at an early stage there may be no alternative but to provide descriptive summaries of the information, until "harder" more statistically valid data has been collected. Trend analysis will only be possible with data that has been collected over a number of years.

4   GAP ANALYSIS METHODS

4.1   ASSESSING THE GAPS

The gap analysis was essentially a qualitative assessment of the extent to which each of the pilot areas was delivering the 16 objectives which underlie the 4 sustainability goals. This was carried out in 3 simple stages:

STAGE 1   Describing the current status

Here under each of the main objective headings the current status was briefly evaluated and summarised and referenced back to the findings in the Initial Review.

STAGE 2   Assessing the current performance

Here with reference to the measures or indicators selected for assessing performance a qualitative assessment of performance in achieving the objective was made.

STAGE 3   Identifying the gaps

Here in view of achievements made in performance and with reference to some of the more "sustainable" indicators, judgements were made as to where the key gaps for more effective delivery of the objectives might be and of what actions should be taken to accelerate the move towards sustainability.

4.2   IDENTIFYING PRIORITY TOPICS

Having identified where some of the key gaps were in achieving the objectives, the next stage was to prioritise these into a more manageable number that could be used as a basis for selecting topics for the Strategy Groups to focus on.

In practice for each of the pilot areas around forty gaps or topic areas were identified in the gap analysis studies. It was decided that these should be reduced to around a dozen topic headings to facilitate the PAAGS in ultimately carrying forward around five topics for the Strategy Groups to work on.

A crude scoring method was devised to help prioritise the topics. The forty topics suggested by the gap analysis were each scored for the following:

- did they offer an environmental benefit;
- did they offer an economic benefit;
- did they offer a social benefit;
- had they been highlighted in the Initial Review.

Each was given a point if they scored in any of the categories and the topics with the highest scores were the ones selected. There had to be a reasonably equal spread of topics within the 4 main sustainability goals.

In practice many of the topics for the Strategy Groups to work on were still reasonably broad ranging so to accompany the table of recommended topics a number of additional aspects that might help to shape the topic were included.

APPENDIX 4 : BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. 1999. <u>RSPB Community Newsletter for the Uists & Barra,</u> April 1999.

Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar. 1993. <u>1991 Census Results: Statistical Areas.</u>

APPENDIX 5:
ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED
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APPENDIX 6 :
PROPOSED INDICATORS

The following table documents all proposed indicators recorded during consultation exercises relating to the Area Sustainability Profiles. The indicators highlighted in bold italics were included in the Profiles (in varying formats).

Objective 1

Protecting and enhancing natural resources and promoting their value

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
PAC Skye		• Level of community awareness and pride • Number of school initiatives on the local environment • Wildlife diversity • Infrastructure relating to landscape and coastal use • Level of investment in marketing
Forestry Commission	• Condition of woodland through sound management	• Number, area, % woods coming into active management
SEPA		• ***Numbers served by biological or better treatment/ septic tank/ no treatment*** • ***SEPAs River Classification Scheme***
Scottish Tourist Board		• ***Quality of interpretative facilities*** • ***Number of repeat visitors to interpretative facilities/ level of consumer satisfaction*** • ***Intensity of use of site/ any level of perceived stress***
Scottish Natural Heritage	• Drinking water quality • Standing water quality • ***Breeding bird population*** • Quality of uplands habitat in Trotternish • Quality of species rich grasslands in Trotternish • Relationship between area of quality habitats/ landscapes worthy of designation and the total area • % of native woodland cover in relation to previous cover/ predicted cover/ land capability	• Income from environmental management payments (total value) • ***Success and quality of interpretative facilities***
Scottish Native Woods	• ***% native woodland cover and condition***	

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
RSPB Sutherland	• ***Air quality*** • Soil quality • ***Water quality*** • Habitat condition - % of designated land in favourable condition and condition of land outwith protected areas -–is it sustainably managed? • ***Biodiversity – performance of key species/ number of species increasing/ decreasing*** • Quality of promotional material • ***Quality of visitor infrastructure (all aspects)***	• Air quality – is the air getting cleaner • Water – free of sewage/ other pollutants • Key species – not declining in numbers or contracting in range • Designated areas in favourable condition • ***Habitat management and habitat restoration projects*** • Damaged habitat returned to favourable condition • Number of crofters/ farmers managing land under agri-environment schemes (e.g. Rural Stewardship Scheme, Peatland Management Scheme) • Total area of land managed under these sort of schemes • Uptake of any species work proposed in a Local Biodiversity Action Plan • ***Uptake of any individual Species/ Habitat Action Plans*** • Visitor numbers increasing without damage to infrastructure/ natural heritage • Number of visitors who cite natural/ cultural heritage and environment for visiting the area Focus attention on: • Suitability of the area to support visitors • Impact of visitor facilities • Impact of visitors on quality of experience/ lives of local people/ natural heritage • Value of tourism to the local economy
Highland Council	• ***Number of interpretative facilities/ provisions***	
The Wildlife Trust		• ***% increase in native woodland cover*** • Expansion of key woodland types identified within Habitat Action Plans

Objective 2

Protecting and enhancing cultural resources and promoting their value

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
PAC Skye	• *Number of recorded sites and monuments* • *Presence of indigenous community and/ or tradition bearers* • *Number of interpreted sites and number not yet interpreted*	• *Number of Gaelic related initiatives (e.g. the croileagain, feisean, Gaelic learners' opportunities)* • *Number of people who speak Gaelic to a near fluency level* • *Number of projects in community ownership* • Level of archaeological investigation (excavation, field survey etc.) • Level of investment in marketing
Forestry Commission		• *Number of Gaelic related initiatives including Government, agency and NGO publications in bi-lingual format*
Scottish Tourist Board	• % of accommodation sector which is locally owned/ independent • % of which has membership of local Area Tourist Board	
NTS Society of Antiquities	• *Number of 'nationally important' monuments*	
Historic Scotland	• *Total number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments plus those monuments listed on a non-statutory register awaiting consideration for scheduling* • Extent of deterioration of Scheduled Ancient Monuments over (recent) time • The number of sites which are of cultural/ social/ historical significance to the community, despite national criteria (measure local vs national perspective) • The number of accessible sites which are of cultural/ social/ historical significance	

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
Highland Council	• ***Number of interpretative facilities/ provisions***	
Sabhal mor Ostaig	• ***Breadth of opportunity for use/ hearing of Gaelic***	

Objective 3

Promoting sustainable and innovative use of natural resources

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
PAC Skye	• Tonnage of prawns • Tonnage of velvet and brown crabs	• ***Uptake of young crofters to new entrant's scheme*** • Number of crofters entering the Countryside Premium Scheme • Area of land under community ownership
Scottish Natural Heritage	• Fuel consumption per head for transport/ heating etc • Ranger services • LA21 groups • Time spent on environmental education within schools	
RSPB Sutherland	• Use of water – how much? For what? Agriculture: • Loss of habitat to farming/ forestry – how much have we got? How fast is it going? • Is current agriculture sustainable (intensification etc) • Crofting – number of sheep/ number of cattle/ are of in-bye managed/ area of hay grown/ area of root crops grown/ number of Common Grazings in machinery rings, in agri-environment schemes/ ***number of crofts***	Agriculture: • Use of pesticides • Use of inorganic/ organic fertilisers • Waste management on farms • ***Number of sheep/ cattle (stocking densities)*** • Crop selection • Management practices on farms • ***Dependence on agricultural support mechanisms*** • Agri-environment alternatives • Value of crofting/ farming to local economy • ***Organic farming*** - level of subsidy available to organic producers/ proportion of consumers buying organic

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
	occupied/ number of crofters actively managing the land (e.g doing some of the above) *Fisheries:* • Impact of hunting/ fishing on wild population • Coastal fisheries – number of boats/ number of fishermen/ number of lobster/crab landed/ number of shellfish farms • Impact of sea fishing on wild fish populations • Freshwater fisheries – river catches of Salmon and Sea Trout/ loch catches of Brown Trout (number of rod days/ number of fish caught/ size and age class)/ predator control – number of Cormorants, Red-breasted Mergansers and Goosanders shot • *Game – annual cull figures for Red Deer/ Deer numbers (estimates)* Forestry: • Number of people/ communities involved in managing woodland • Use/ management of existing woodland • Number of forestry related jobs (planting, woodland management, extraction/ timber processing) • Minerals – peat (e.g. number of people cutting peat at a parish or grazings level)	• *Stocking densities* – condition of habitat to determine if it is over grazed or undergrazed/ *index of grazing pressure* Forestry: How is timber crop performing? Added/ local value/ benefits to environment • Habitat loss to forestry • Balance of native vs non-native planting – changes • Use of pesticides – increasing/ decreasing • Use of fertilisers • *Forest management* (roads, fences, drainage) • Value of forestry to local economy Fishing: Is current level sustainable? Is fishing impacting on fish populations/ natural heritage? • Impact of fishing on wild fish populations – how are they performing? • Impact on fishery management on wild populations • Value of fishing to local economy – increase/ decrease Fin-fish farming: Is current level sustainable? Fresh and marine management practices • Use of chemicals/ feed etc • Impact of escapees • Impact of management on safety/ quality of product • Value to local economy Shell-fish farming: • Management practices

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
		• Impact on landscape/ wildlife • Value of shell-fish to local economy • ***Availability of resources to set up "green" projects/ number of applications made/ proportion of successful applications*** • ***Number of local initiatives which are using local natural products (e.g. dairy, honey, fish, shellfish, game, lamb, beef, wool, wood etc)***
The Wildlife Trust		• ***Index of grazing/ browsing*** • Number of deer per 100ha • ***Density of sheep/ cattle within a given area***
Forest Enterprise		• ***Grazing pressure indicator*** • Number of grant aided woodland schemes • ***Number of certifications under the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme***
Sabhal Mor Ostaig	• Area of land/ number of crofters producing crops/ number of cattle	

Objective 4

Promoting sustainable and wise use of cultural resources

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
PAC Skye	• Percentage of schools offering Gaelic medium education • Number of active musicians and artists in the community	• ***Number of events which have a distinctive flavour*** • Number of people who are computer literate • Number of specialist/ distinctive tourism opportunities (e.g. real experiences - such as activity holidays, learning step dancing, Gaelic, fishing etc.) • Level of Gaelic use as a marketing tool • Use of Gaelic in software packages, and also level of software which acknowledges Scottish surnames and

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
		place names
		• Number of products which have emanated from the locality
Forestry Commission		• Number of active/ specialist broadcasts/ + articles in the press
Scottish Museums Council		• Level of volunteers/ community members involved in individual cultural projects
Historic Scotland	• *Proportion of historic sites/ monuments actively managed to the benefit of the sites/ monuments*	• Use of cultural resources by schools/ students
NTS Society of Antiquities		• *Adaptive re-use of cultural resources* • Number of sites/ monuments compromised or damaged

Objective 5

Retaining a balanced and healthy population

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
PAC Uist	• *% elderly cared for by/ in the community*	
PAC Skye		• *Resources available to distance learners* • Number of community-led classes relating to *health*
Forestry Commission	• *% breeding females*	•
Scottish Homes		• *% change in total population – both population size and age distribution* • *% change in population of working age (16-65)*

Objective 6

Supporting community empowerment

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
PAC Skye	• Level of resources in community ownership (forests, lochs, minerals etc)	• ***Number and amount of LEC provided Community Action Grants*** • Relationship between community groups
PAC North Sutherland	• Proportion of local people employed by agencies/ decision-making bodies to work in the area. And proportion of workers "imported" • Number of business start-ups with agency support; quantity of this support; associated benefits	• Proportion of ideas that come out of the community for their own development and how many of these are fulfilled • Extent to which the community members volunteer time/ donate money to local causes • Local response to external pressure e.g land designations, superquarry • How much of the money being spent on environmental measures directly benefits the community, and how much goes to absentee landowners • Level of community influence on land use management
Forestry Commission		• ***Number of societies, clubs etc***
Highland Council	• Number of landowners within each Pilot Area • Average land tenure • Number of land holdings below a certain size	• Number of articles in local press relating to community projects and local involvement
Sabhal Mor Ostaig	• ***Amount of activity within Grazings Committees (meetings)***	
Scottish Homes		• ***Number of communities taking part in community planning process***

Objective 7

Ensuring equal access to employment

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
PAC Skye	• *Number of educational establishments*	• *% of school leavers going to university and/or further education* • Level of school rolls • *% of workers whose place of work is in the locality in question*
Highland Council		• *Grants allocated for business start-up*
Scottish Homes		• *% of pupils going on to something other than unemployment* • *% of employees in Investors In People (IIP) organisations* • *% employment in tourism and primary sectors*

Objective 8

Ensuring equal access to essential services

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
PAC Skye	• Frequency of health services including clinics • Level of accessibility for disabled and adherence towards social inclusion	
Highland Council		• *Absolute number of elderly people requiring residential care who are not cared for within their local community*
Scottish Homes		• Levels of BTS properties in the area • Tenure of properties • Number of empty/ second/ holiday homes in the area

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
		• *Rental levels* • Number of homeless/ hidden homeless • Waiting list information • *Accessibility - % population within 10 minute drive time from 5 key services (GP/ petrol/ Post Office/ food shop/ primary school)*

Objective 9

Improving the local market for goods and services

Objective 10

Promoting equal and effective access to goods, services and markets

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
PAC Skye	• *links between public services*	

Objective 11

Providing an adequate IT resource

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
PAC Skye	• *Number of courses available to resident population* • *Public awareness of the availability of IT training*	
Highland Council		• *Provision of IT training requested - provided*

Objective 12

Reducing reliance on imports and subsidies

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
PAC Skye		• Number of crofters involved in research projects for diversification
Scottish Homes		• *Level of external subsidies (reduction can indicate vulnerability)*
Scottish Ornithologist Club		• *Number of crofters taking up environmental subsidies*

Objective 13

Supporting the wise use of energy

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
Forestry Commission		• *Number of woodlands achieving UK Woodland Assurance Scheme certification*

Objective 14

Promoting waste minimisation and management

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
SEPA	• Quantity of material recycled compared to waste disposed of in the area/ elsewhere	• *% waste recycled* • *Number of successful waste minimisation initiatives (vs those promoted by Councils which may include unsuccessful ones)*

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
		• ***Amount and type of waste recycled***
Scottish Natural Heritage	• Number of landfill sites • Waste tonnage per head	
Highland Council		• Total number of waste minimisation schemes • Tonnage of domestic waste put to landfill

Objective 15

Supporting 'green' business and community initiatives

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
Highland Council	• Number of businesses with ISO 9000 certification • Number of businesses with ISO 14001 certification	

Objective 16

Promoting co-operation with other communities

Organisation	Proposed Condition Indicators	Proposed Performance Indicators
Highland Council		• ***Number of study visits and conferences attended***
Historic Scotland	• The number of positive initiatives as a ratio to the number of meetings • Number of person-hours spent in ***inter-community meetings***	