



The Children's Living Well Locally Plan for the Westside Mainland, Shetland

2025 Update

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 In 2023, [A Place in Childhood \(APiC\)](#) received funding from [Paths for All's Smarter Choices, Smart Places programme](#), and which was match funded by five Local Authorities to create five children and teenagers 20-minute neighbourhood plans in different neighbourhood contexts across Scotland. The aim of this project was to create children's and teenagers' maps of their local places from their perspective (using experiential mapping) and work with them to identify opportunities for improvement and interventions that deliver cohesive places that meet their needs and reduce unsustainable travel.
- 1.2 **From this work, a plan would be created which could be used to inform decision-making across multiple sectors including infrastructure improvements, transport policy, placemaking, climate change action and community development. The ambition is that the opportunities for local improvement identified by the children and young people will be realised through the alignment of ongoing projects, policy programmes and opportunities for intervention. These opportunities will be unique to the place context which the plan was created to fully reflect of the needs of the children and young people living there.**
- 1.3 In September 2023, APiC travelled to Shetland to work with children living in the Westside of the Mainland to co-create a **Children's Living Well Locally Plans for the area**. The specific resource allocation for the project allowed for the participation of pupils from three schools, which were agreed in consultation with the local authority and schools themselves. These were Aith Junior High School (P6/P7), Happyhansel Primary School (P4-7) and Sandness Primary School (P1-7). The project was completed successfully and the Children's Living Well Locally Plan for the Westside Shetland Mainland was created.
- 1.4 All stakeholders agreed that the plan would benefit further from the inclusion of the perspectives of teenagers and former pupils of the now mothballed Skeld Primary School. APiC was therefore commissioned by Shetland Islands Council to return to Shetland in September 2024 to co-create plans with teenage pupils attending Aith JHS and primary school pupils who lived in Skeld.
- 1.5 This document includes the output of both phases of the work in 2023 and 2024, and serves as the first step in identifying the actions required to ensure that the Westside Mainland meets the needs of its children and teenagers as far as possible. This plan should form part of all initial considerations by stakeholders who are looking to undertake work in the area, to ensure that the needs of children and young people can be met or aligned with at every opportunity. It should be noted that no children and teenagers living on islands off the Westside of the Mainland have been involved in this process so far, but there is wider intention across Shetland to involve further cohorts to make this and other plan as inclusive as possible.
- 1.6 This plan should be considered as a foundational document in understanding the broader place context for the Westside from both a child/teenage and community perspective. This is based on the principle that through understanding and prioritising the needs of children and young people, we can create local places which work better for everyone. This includes the elderly and those with mobility issues, as well as the community at large.
- 1.7 As this document contains actions which are both interdepartmental and cross-sectoral, we would highly recommend that the responsibility for ensuring implementation be led by the relevant elected members. These members would best be supported by an associated working group meeting two or three times a year. The steering group would be convened by a single point of contact and made up of a fluid mix of the relevant local authority officers, community stakeholders and representatives of any other relevant associated organisations. In our experience, such an approach supports ongoing community engagement, a sense of shared ownership and shared accountability to the children. It also closely matches the Council's preferred project management approach, and reduces the risk of actions becoming *siloed* into specific departments and dead ends.

2. The Engagement

- 2.1 The purpose of the engagement was:

- To develop an informed understanding of what young people like and dislike about their place.
 - Understand how they move around and through their place.
 - Identify any barriers to movement; and
 - Identify opportunities to improve their place.
- 2.2 APiC worked with approximately 87 local children and teenagers from Happyhansel Primary (P4, 5, 6 and 7), Sandness Primary (whole school), Aith Junior High (P6 and P7) and all pupils in S3 and a group of former Skeld Primary School pupils (P4, P5, P6 and P7).
- 2.3 During the first phase of the project, **A 1.5-hour Showcase Event and workshop was held on the 14th September 2023** at Happyhansel Primary School. Approximately 5 children from each school involved in the project thus far presented their plans to key stakeholders in the Council and wider community, who have the influence to make some of the priorities and improvements in the plan happen. Attendees can be noted in section 4 of this document and were happy to continue to participate as future working group members for the plan.
- 2.4 This process was repeated for the second phase of the project, with a 1.5 Showcase Event and workshop held on the 24th September 2024 at the Eid Hall. Again between 2 and 7 children and teenagers from each group represented their plan to key stakeholders in the Council and community. Those who had participated in the first phase of the project had the opportunity to reflect changes in their communities and update their plans. Again, attendees can be noted in section 4 of this document and were happy to continue to participate as future working group members for the plan.
- 2.5 This document contains the outputs from both Stages of the Engagement and includes an updated Action Plan and a Policy Map identifying the policy opportunities for utilising the plan to inform the multiple departmental and third-party decisions relating to place, community, and economic development in the Westside.

3. Children's Living Well Locally Priorities for the Westside Mainland, Shetland (consolidated)

- 3.1 Below is a summary of the priorities grouped into themes, with some initial Council and Community stakeholders who we felt would be beneficial to attend the Showcase Event. This is not an exhaustive list and should serve as an overview of the key priorities identified across Aith, Sandness, Skeld and Walls and the Westside as a whole.

3.2 Environmental Priorities

- Plant more trees across the Westside particularly in Sandness.
- Continue to cut back overgrown trees and plants, and maintain Böd Gairdin in Walls.
- Treating Each Other and our environment well.
- More local recycling and reusing of materials.
- Priority References: KA2, HH3, HH8, SA2, WT3.

3.3 Community-based Priorities

- More community events and better promotion of opportunities available.
- Make improvements to our school (and community!).
- Local shops or groceries delivery in Sandness and Skeld.
- Priority References: KA11, A5, HH5, HH6, HH10, SA6, WT4, WT13.

3.4 Transport-based Priorities.

- Improving Access to Aith from Sandness and Skeld via direct bus services.
- Priority References: KA4, KA5, A3, A8, HH4, SA4, SA7, SK5, SK6, WT1, WT8, WT9.

3.5 Housing-based Priorities

- Make sure local people get good houses, especially in Sandness and Skeld.
- Priority References: KA9, SA1, SK1.

3.6 Play and Recreation-based Priorities

- More Opportunities for Older Children (age 10+) and Young People to Have Fun.
- Re-open the Walls pool.
- More cafes and restaurants in the Westside.
- Priority References: KA1, A1, SK4, WT5, WT7, WT10, WT11.

Local Facilities

- Add pavements between certain places in Aith and Walls.
- More Help for Small Businesses.
- Improve our Access to medical care.
- Priority References: KA10, A2, A4, A6, A7, HH1, HH2, HH7, HH9, SA3, SA5, SA8, SK2, SK3, WT2, WT6, WT12.

Communication with Children and Young People

- More communication directed at young people, identifying different things happening in the community
- More opportunities to be involved in community discussions about different actions and activities taking place.
- Stay in touch when activities relating to priorities happen.
- Priority References: KA3, KA6, KA7, KA8.

4. Showcase Attendees and Potential Working Group

4.1 A number of key stakeholders attended the two Showcase Events where the children were able to provide an in-depth overview of their priorities. The attendees have been noted below as the first step in progressing action on the priorities identified in the plan. This may also serve as a way of identifying the relevant members of any future working group who may be responsible for delivering the priorities of the plan in the short, medium and long term.

Phase 1 Showcase Event attendees		
Name	Email	Organisation
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Voluntary Action Shetland
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Shetland Library
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	NHS Health Improvement
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	SIC Planning
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	SIC Elected member for Shetland West
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	SIC Education
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Infrastructure, Roads
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	SIC Elected member for Shetland Central
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	HT, Sandness and Happyhansel Primary
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	HT, Aith Junior High School
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Principal Teacher, Sandness Primary School
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	BBC Radio Shetland Reporter

Phase 2 Showcase Event attendees		
Name	Email	Organisation
Peter Mogridge	Peter.mogridge@shetland.gov.uk	SIC Planning
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	SIC Elected member for Shetland West
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Infrastructure, Roads
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	SIC Elected member for Shetland Central
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	HT, Aith Junior High School

			DHT, Aith Junior High School
			BBC Radio Shetland Reporter


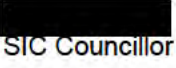
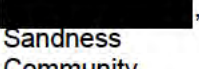
5. Key Priorities and Actions Identified

5.1 Each of the Showcase Events served as an opportunity for the children involved in creating their plans to discuss their key priorities with the stakeholders. Below is a summary of the key actions and next steps identified as part of the Showcases, and further engagement with the stakeholders.

Ref	Priority	Key Contact	Action	Delivery Timescales	Related Priorities
				- Short (less than 6m) - Medium (7m – 18m) - Long (18m+)	
Community & Recreation					
KA1	Expand Play Opportunities for Older Children (10+) Identify and where possible install new play equipment for older children in key community areas across the Westside.	[REDACTED] SIC Parks and Greenspace Team Peter Mogridge, SIC Planning	Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) to be completed to provide overview of play opportunities and need in different areas across the Westside. Programme of Playground upgrades to be communicated and shared with schools and children and young people.	Medium	A1

KA2	<p>Increase Tree Planting Initiatives</p> <p>Plant 200+ trees across the Westside, focusing on school and community spaces. Enhance green spaces and community environment.</p> <p>Secure trees through Woodland Trust and SIC support.</p>	<p>[REDACTED] HT Sandness and Happyhansel Primaries.</p> <p>[REDACTED] – Principal Teacher at Sandness Primary and Sandness Community Development Trust</p> <p>Sandness and Walls Community Council</p> <p>[REDACTED], Amenity Trust</p>	<p>Shetland Amenity Trust (Paul Goddard) and The Woodland Trust might support more tree planting with the children. The schools could link this with existing gardening activities.</p> <p>Completion of tree planting at 3+ key locations between September 2023 and 2024.</p>	Short	SA2, HH8
KA3	<p>Enhance Local Communication for Young People</p> <p>Accountability to implementation of the actions in the plan, and the ongoing communication of these plans, lies with SIC elected members and supported by key officers throughout the Council.</p> <p>Elected members recently visited the children and young people to hear directly about their ideas.</p>	<p>Shetland West and Central Elected Members</p> <p>[REDACTED], HT</p> <p>[REDACTED] HT</p> <p>SIC Communication team</p> <p>[REDACTED] – Education</p> <p>[REDACTED] – Education</p>	<p>Develop a youth-focused element of future communication strategies using radio and digital platforms.</p> <p>Working with key partners and local stakeholders, including the schools to establish a dedicated radio segment and an online community newsletter.</p> <p>Action to raise awareness of these possibilities across the Council and support the roll out of the plan, including within the development of future communication strategies to ensure that opportunities to communicate to children and</p>	Medium	


			<p>young people are taken.</p> <p>Follow up work on the Children's Plans could be an annual update, so that an additional element of the key on the maps becomes 'Things that have Changed', and there is a mechanism for shared accountability between parties.</p>		
KA4	<p>Enhance Accessibility & Safety via Pavement Additions</p> <p>Install new footpaths in Aith and Walls where needed.</p> <p>Footpaths in Walls and Aith can be investigated by the Roads and Infrastructure Team, as they are a safety and accessibility priority for the children.</p>	<p>██████████, SIC Roads</p>	<p>Positive action being taken in relation to the connecting path between Michaelwoods and Eid Shop.</p> <p>Continue to work with Roads and Infrastructure Team to use the plan as evidence to secure funding.</p>	Long	A3
KA5	<p>Improve Bus Transport from Sandness & Skeld to Aith</p> <p>Discussions need to be had with an appropriate party about a bus from Sandness and Skeld to Aith to support access for all ages to school and</p>	<p>██████████ SIC Transport teams</p> <p>Community Development Trusts</p>	<p>Community Development Trusts to continue ongoing work on supporting bus routes between Westside Communities. They can contact appropriate team to discuss transport options</p>	Medium	SA and SK


	community services.				
KA6	Reopen & Maintain Walls Swimming Pool The children want to continue to be involved in discussions around fundraising for swimming pool repairs including putting on events at the local hall.	 HT Local community council and local groups Walls Pool Committee	Develop a fundraising plan which supports participation of local children and young people. Children and young people to be updated on repairs and progress of renovations of the pool.	Short	HH2
KA7	Secure Housing for Local Residents Advocate for increased family housing development in Sandness & Skeld to Supports local population retention.	SIC Housing team  SIC Councillor  Sandness Community Development Trust Peter Mogridge, SIC Planning	Action to make Housing team aware of the plan and the children's priorities in relation to housing and need in the area. Communications about what is happening regarding local housing in the area would be beneficial. SCDT and SIC Planning can assist with contact with SIC Housing.	Long	SA1 and SK1
KA8	Increase Access to Local Shops & Small Business Support Work with local businesses and funding sources to understand local opportunities for improving access to local shops and small businesses in different communities across the area	SIC Economic Development SIC Planning Sandness and Wall Community Council Sandness Community Development Trust	Action to engage with Economic Development and Planning on the content of the plan to secure a supportive policy context for business development and operation in the Westside of Shetland. Key action for relevant stakeholders to be made aware	Long	SA3 and SK2

	including, pop up shops and honesty boxes.		of children's priorities and to engage with schools on changes to the local area.		
KA9	<p>Increase Community Events & Youth Engagement, including host quarterly youth-focused community events.</p> <p>Partner with local organisations and schools for planning and promotion.</p> <p>Improve engagement and communication for young people.</p>	<p>Sandness and Walls Community Council</p> <p>Sandsting and Aithsting Community Council</p> <p>Sandness Community Development Trust.</p>	<p>Community Councils and Development Trusts to be provided with the plan and the priorities for action specific to their region of interest.</p> <p>Opportunity to come in to discuss plans with children and young people welcomed and supported, and updates on key community activities and plans to be shared with children.</p>	Short	A5, HH6, HH9 and SA6

6. Policies, plans and activities relevant to implementation.

6.1 Noted below are a range of policy and plan documents and key groups which can use the plan document as it aligns closely with their aims and objectives. These policy, plans and groups will also be crucial in delivering some of the actions identified in this plan.

Organisation	Sector	Policy/Plans/Strategies	Lead Contact	Alignment/Opportunity
Shetland Islands Council	Planning	Local Development Plans		This Plan can contribute to the aims of the LDP through identifying key priorities and actions which support the LDP objective of supporting better access across the Islands, supporting sustainable and active transport solutions, such as by foot, cycle and public transport, and enabling people to access services, employment and other opportunities. The Plan provides a direct insight as to what the key issues of place are across the Westside for children and teenagers and can serve to provide deeper focus as to the key planning issues which exist in the area, including planning for recreation needs, housing, sustainable transport, community development, economic growth, biodiversity and sustainability
		Plan Shetland (the next LDP)		The Plan provide a foundation for ongoing engagement with children and teenagers to establish further insights as to key issues relating to

				<p>the Westside as a place which Plan Shetland can address. This would also align with duties under the most recent Planning (Scotland) Act which requires the Planning Authority to consult with children and young people on the Proposed Plan document, or another appropriate stage of plan development.</p>
		Local Place Plans		<p>The Plan provides a rich and detailed picture of place from the perspectives of children, including how each place relates to each other in the broader context of a rural area. We consider that this Plan can serve as a strong foundation from which any Local Place Plan can be built.</p>
		Play Sufficiency Assessment		<p>The Plans identify that some play areas and other spaces where play takes place require some additional interventions to make them the best they can be. This includes diversification and upgrading of equipment, supporting accessibility and further maintenance. This plan can serve as an evidence base to inform the context of how children feel about the places they play in the local area, including the play parks, but also places like beaches, Bòd</p>

				Gaidins, Michaelswood and piers.
	Roads	Roads Planning Priorities		
	Transport	Shetland Transport Strategy 2022-2042 Development		<p>The Plan identifies key issues relating to pavements, public transport and active travel which can be utilised as a starting point for conversations with children and the community about the key interventions required to support active lifestyles and private vehicle journeys as far as possible. Examples include opportunities for pavements between key local sites such as Michaelswood and the local shop in Aith, and the health centre and local shop in Walls. The children in Sandness outlined the value in having a regular direct bus to Aith from Sandness.</p>
		Shetland Transport Strategy Refresh 2018-2028		
		Shetland Active Travel Strategy 2021-2026		
	Housing	Local Housing Strategy 2022-2027		<p>The Plan identifies housing as a key issue for children in the area of Sandness, with the recognition that there is limited stock available, meaning people either have to move away from the area, or live in housing which does not meet their needs. This Plan contributes to the evidence base which supports the Vision and aims of the Local Housing Strategy which includes improving housing access and reducing inequality. The need for local</p>

				housing to secure the long-term success of rural communities whilst balancing the service provision and understanding is complex. The views of all members of the community are important to understand this in full.
Amenity Trust	Planting	Tree Planting		The Plan identifies the children's ambition for further tree planting in each of their areas, acknowledging the benefits of tree planting for biodiversity, shelter belts and for recreation and enjoyment.
	Böds	Böds		
Sandness Community Development Group		Funding to explore development opportunities: tree planting, renewables, housing, children's play facilities		The Plan identifies several key issues from the children of Sandness which have overlaps with ambitions for the Sandness Community Development Group. The Plan can serve as a positive starting point for ongoing conversations with the local children about the key issues identified in their plan, as well as serving as an opportunity to integrate their voice and participation into local community action on the key issues of the area.
Community Councils	Sandsting and Aithsting CC and Sandness and Walls CC	Ongoing meetings		The Plan identifies several local considerations and actions which would be best realised by the local community and associated community councils. The information contained in the plan provides a rich source

				of evidence to inform local decision making and prioritisation.
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7. Conclusion and next steps

- 7.1 The aim of this document is to provide a starting point for anyone engaging in place-based projects in the Westside of the Mainland, to gain an understanding of the perspective and ambitions of the children living across the area. The Plan outlines the priorities for action and seeks to actively identify opportunities for alignment with additional ongoing projects policy development.
- 7.2 This plan also serves as a starting point for long-term engagement with children and teenagers living in the area, with opportunities to revisit the plans in years to come to identify changes in the area and update priorities. Furthermore, the creation and implementation of the plan offers stakeholders a legacy for communication and engagement with children and teenagers to support their participation in decision-making that affects their lives, and aligns with the Council's duties under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 The following appendices provide each school's plan for their specific area which consists of a map and a list of priorities drawn together by the participating pupils. The maps provide an outline of the tour designed by the participants and contain information in relation to their experiences of the area. The maps can be used to provide depth and context to the priorities identified by the children and teenagers and provide insight as to the experience of growing up in the different areas of the Westside. There is also a map of the Westside as a whole which contains other important places to the participants which may not have been located in their place.
- Aith Junior High School P6/P7 – Local Living Plan - 2024 update
 - Happyhansel School P6/P7 – Local Living Plan – 2024 update
 - Sandness School – Local Living Plan - 2024 update
 - Skeld School Pupils - Local Living Plan - 2024 update
 - Westside Teenagers – Local Living Plan
 - Important Places in the Westside and beyond

Aith JHS P6/P7's Local Living Plan

What we think of the local area

Key What's Important / Good? What's Missing / Could be Better? Things to Change



We like putting rocky stones down by the shore and seeing swimming.



We like the harbor, but we can't go in there. Lots of people have boats in Aith.



The playground is good and sometimes it gets a bit boring so we get bored.



The charity shop is important to the community and we like the staff there.



The point of view of school on the beach is not good.



The harbor is a good place for the community to meet and talk.



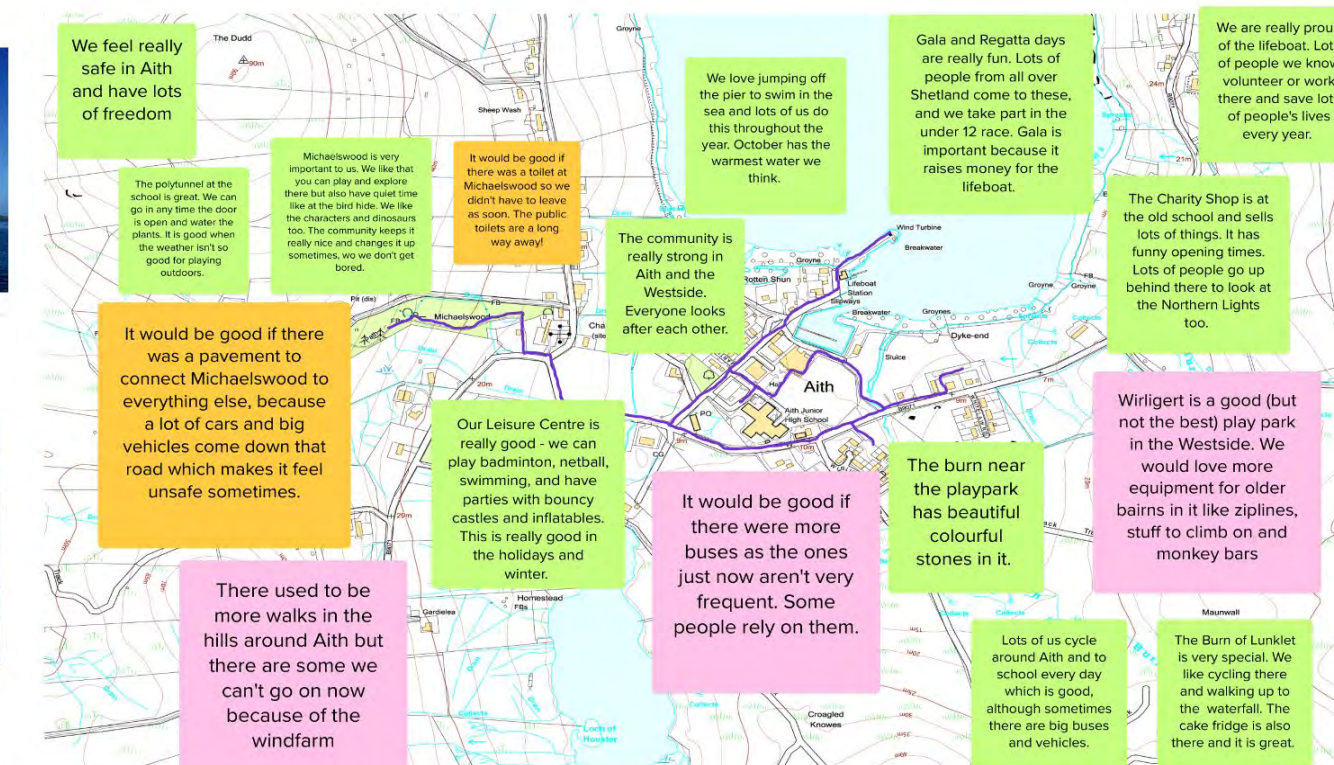
We like to go on boats and go to the cove and fishing in Aith.



The harbor is really important to Aith. Lots of the community work there and it saves lots of money.



We like the playground at the school.



The harbor is good when there is stuff on, like boats and gala day. There is a stage which we like.



Michaelwood is very important to us in the community. It is fun and has lots of art, nature and places to play. All signs are in.



Aith is a good place to live because it has a pavement which makes it easy to walk and cycle safely.

OUR LOCAL LIVING PRIORITIES - UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2024:

We reflected on our priorities at the Showcase event and agreed that they were still relevant to Overall, we feel that Aith is a very good place for children and young people to grow up, with lots of things to do and places to spend time. We feel safe here and have a lot of freedom.

Taking everything we looked at on our walk, and from talking about what Aith and the Westside would need if it was an island, that couldn't access the rest of the mainland, we feel that there are a few things which could be done to make Aith even better. We then decided which we thought were the most important, and these became our priorities. You can read these below in order of importance.

OUR PRIORITIES:

A1. Think about Improving the Play Park for Older Bairns - We love the playpark, but we would love a zipline and a climbing wall, especially as we get older.

A2. Protect the Great Things in Aith - because it has got lots of fantastic things to do and see like Michaelswood, the Pier, Playpark, the Hall, Leisure Centre and lots of good local walks. We also have a lot of freedom.

A3. Add a Pavement to the Road up to Michaelswood - There are quite a lot of cars, and no pavement for us to keep safe on the road to Michaelswood. We have to stand on the verge but there are fences and ditches and sometimes there's not enough space. We want to be able to move around more easily. Hopefully there is a new pavement coming soon.

A4. Put in a Public Toilet close to Michaelswood - There is a public toilet in Aith but it is quite far away from Michaelswood, especially if you don't have a car and you're a peerie bairn. It would be good if there was a toilet there so we didn't have to leave Michaelswood as soon.

A5. More weekly community events - like bingo, youth club and fish and chip nights in the hall.

A6. More cafes and restaurants in the Westside - would be good because it is nice to have places to eat and spend time. Lerwick is quite far away!

A7. New place for the bonfire- We used to have a space at the start of the peat track but people have put rubbish on it so we need to find somewhere new for it.

A8. Better road at the peat hill- The peat hill road to the windmills needs to be improved and the potholes need to be fixed so people can use it for walks and cycling.

Happyhansel Primary School Local Living Plan

What we think of the local area

Key What's Important / Good? What's Missing / Could be Better? Things to Change



We're really pleased to have local public toilets as they make it easier to get out and about. The community cleans them, and sometimes we join our parents/carers while they do it.



Our local swimming pool has been closed for 3 years, and we miss it. It was a really good one.



Our war memorial commemorates the local people who died in WW1 and WW2. We're glad we have this in our community to pay our respects.



Waas Hall is really important for all our local events and birthdays.



This is The Trinkie



The shop has most of everything we need. It stops us needing to go to other places all the time, and we really like the owners!



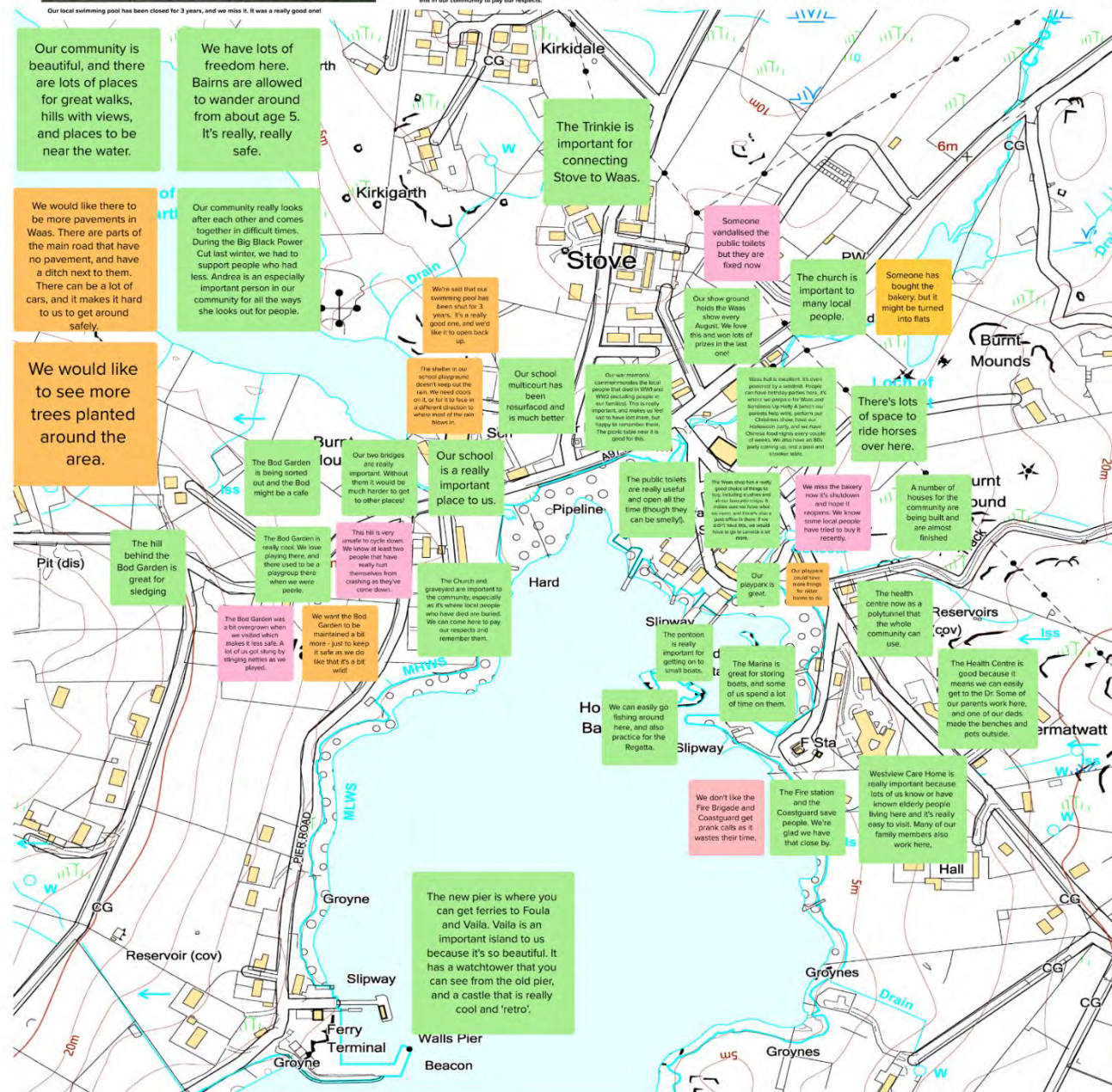
The Bod Garden is really good. We love playing here, but it would be safer without so many nettles and low hanging branches.



The Marina is where local people keep our boats. Some of us have really good boats down here, which we can use for fishing and exploring.



Some of us take part in the Walls and Sandness Regatta and really love it.



The Health Centre means we can easily see a doctor



Our Play Park is really fun. We enjoy coming here to play, though the equipment is mostly for young bairns and we're starting to grow out of it.



Quite a few people keep chickens around here, and we saw some on our walk next to the playground. We can get fresh eggs locally, which is great!



We're really pleased to have a Coast Guard and Fire Station in Waas. They keep everyone safe.

OUR LOCAL LIVING PRIORITIES – UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2024:

Quite a lot has happened in our community over the last year, so we have updated our priorities to reflect these changes.

Below are the priorities which we thought were the most important. You can read these below in the rough order of importance.

OUR PRIORITIES:

HH1. Improve the school shelter– Add a door or reposition it to avoid rain coming in.

HH2. Reopen Walls swimming pool – We are aware that the community is working on this, and it's a top priority to continue fundraising.

HH3. Continue improvements to the Böd Garden – A community group is working on improving and maintaining the garden and develop it further, potentially adding a café.

HH4. Add a pavement to the road leading to Böd Garden and Westview Care Home – This would really help us walk and cycling around the village more easily.

HH5. Enhance care opportunities for each other – We would like to learn more skills about how we can take care of each other as a community, so we don't need to travel as far when we need help. This could be like first aid training and show gratitude to healthcare workers.

HH6. Hold more events at Walls Hall for young people – Organise more activities, including arts and crafts, to engage young people who would like to participate.

HH7. Monitor local energy supply in case of future power cuts – Be prepared for power cuts and support each other like we did during the big snow.

HH8. Plant more trees in the Westside – In areas where the landowner approves, focusing on green spaces like playparks.

HH9. Include more activities for older children in Westside – Add adventurous play equipment like a zipline and create more volunteering opportunities.

HH10. Create more opportunities to learn Shetland dialect– this could take place at school or be a club or activity people could attend.

Sandness Primary School's Local Living Plan: What we think of the local area

Key What's Important / Good? What's Missing / Could be Better? Things to Change

What's Important / Good?

- We love Sandness beach. There are loads of things we can do here, and it's very beautiful.
- We like how the barn cats across the beach, though it can be hard to get across without waders.
- There are lots of beautiful views around Sandness, because of the sea, Burns, Nils, and Loch.
- During the snow and the power cuts last year, it was really difficult to get what we needed.
- Some of us enjoy fishing, creeling, and exploring on boats. Papa Stout has some amazing caves to explore, and Boustla is another great place to go.
- There is campervans and caravans visiting Melby but there is sewage coming out the pipe between Melby and Norby which isn't good.
- The Loch of Norby is really pretty.
- We have a lot of freedom to explore Sandness, and it's nice, quiet and safe. Burns can walk to school by themselves from P3, and we all get out and about on our bikes a lot.
- We like Turrie Field because it grows lots of food and is an important place in the community.
- Sandness Hill is good to climb. It's not too difficult and we've done it with the school. Some of us have also been up with our families, and you get a really good view. There are also Heatherberries to pick!

What's Missing / Could be Better?

- The closest shop to Sandness is Walls, which is about a 20 minute drive or hour cycle. It can be difficult to get things we need easily because of this.
- A small shop in Sandness would help us get what we need without so much travel. Even a mobile shop would be good.
- We think too many people drive short distances that they could cycle instead.
- We think there are too many second homes in Sandness, but it can be difficult for people who want to live here all the time to find good houses.
- We don't have a direct bus to Aith.
- Our school playground is really good. There are things to climb, and we have lots of toys to use at break. We're hoping we might get a swing soon from the Tesco Fund.
- The Mill is really important to our community. Lots of people work there and a local family owns it. It's famous for the chocolate cake to make once. You can buy coffee, water from the well in Lerwick.
- We play at the Shendale Burn a lot. You can wade under the bridge, play games with sticks, and slide down the banks. It's way bigger than you think, and it leads to our old secret grotto (that isn't a secret anymore). We used to go on picnics there.
- Some of us don't like the impact of the big wind farm on our views, and they have other environmental impacts we're concerned about.
- Some of us are pleased that Shetland is going to be making much more renewable energy with the big wind farm.

Things to Change

- It can be hard to see the dog on our walk, and we really like to get him. We like going in the Doggy Pond, which is why we call it that.
- We see Drina the dog on our walk, and we really like to get him. We like going in the Doggy Pond, which is why we call it that.
- It's important for us to get to Aith, but the road can be really busy and it takes a long time. We think a double track road at the busiest points would help!

Other Photos and Captions:

- We love the views of and off our cliffs, and also being able to see Papa Stout from the shore.
- The Doggy Pond is important for us to swim in.
- The Loch of Norby is really beautiful. You can swim in it, but it's cold.
- We discovered a dead Dogfish washed up on the beach. We found it really fascinating.
- The Mill is really important for people's jobs, but also important for providing wood to make clothes for people.
- The Shendale Burn is a really important place for play. We love it here.
- Our playground is really fun, and we can use it after school and at the weekends as well. We look forward to hopefully getting a swing, and some of us would also like a slide.
- This is Sandness Hill. It's fun to climb and you get really great views of Shetland from the top.
- We like wandering around the community, but need to remember to keep out the way of the cars on the road.
- We enjoyed seeing one of our family's chickens on the walk.

OUR LOCAL LIVING PRIORITIES- UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2024:

Overall we feel that Sandness is a very good place for children and young people to grow up. We have amazing beaches, views, and it feels calm and quiet here. We feel safe and have a lot of freedom. We still feel the same way in 2024.

Taking everything we looked at on our walk, and from talking about how Sandness and the Westside could be a better place to live, we feel that there are a few things which could be done to make the place even better.

We then decided which we thought were the most important, and these became our priorities. You can read these below in the rough order of importance.

OUR PRIORITIES:

SA1. Make sure Local People get Good Houses - we think **a small number of new council homes should be built to help people who want to live here** but can't find anywhere to stay. We don't think this needs to be lots, and it's important they are affordable for people who want to live here all the time, and that they don't become more second homes.

SA2. Continue to plant more Trees – More trees have been planted in the local community (about 700 trees!) and we would still like more to be planted in Sandness. We know that the climate can make it hard to grow big trees, but we think we could plant more trees around and about Sandness. This is good for the environment, and we like how they look.

SA3. Think about Setting up a peerie Local Shop - We don't want Sandness to have a big shop and get really crowded, but we do want to **be able to get the bits and pieces we need day to day without travelling so far**. It takes a peerie while to get to the shop at Walls, and even longer to get to Lerwick. In the winter, this can be more difficult, too. We would also like to be able to get more of our own local food, like fish.

SA4. Improve our Access to Aith - we're really pleased to have lots of freedom to walk and cycle around Sandness by ourselves, but lots of leisure activities and clubs are in Aith. **We don't mind that we have to travel to get there, but it can take a really long time as the road is long and it can be very full of buses after school**. We think the road to Aith should be double track between Bixter and Aith, so we have more freedom to go there for things. A bus would also really help.

SA5. Improve our Access to Doctors - the closest health centre is in Walls, and it's open limited hours. We would like there to **either be a more local doctors surgery, or for the health centre in Walls to be open more hours**. If we have a health problem outwith the health centre's opening hours, we end up needing to be driven 45 minutes to Lerwick, and then wait even longer to get seen.

SA6. Continue to have Community Film Nights at the Hall – There has been more **local community film nights** in the hall and we have really enjoyed these and want them to continue.

SA7. Encourage People to Cycle More - We think there are **too many people that get in the car for short journeys when they could cycle**. It will be better for the environment and people's health if they cycled those journeys instead.

SA8. Bring a Clothes Shop to Lerwick - we can only buy our clothes online or at Tesco at the moment. We think it would be helpful to have more local choice.

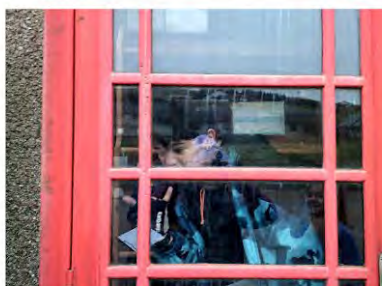
Skeld Pupils' Local Living Plan: What we think of the local area

Key

What's Important / Good?

What's Missing / Could be Better?

Things to Change



We feel like Skeld is forgotten about by other people in Shetland

We would like more families with children to move to Skeld so the school could open again

The school should open up again for different uses. We have lots of ideas.

We would enjoy more events for bairns during the summer.

Skeld really needs a shop! The closest shop is Bixter which is quite far, especially if you don't a car.

The nature and environment in Skeld is very special. The sunsets here are amazing.

Sand Beach path has washed away so it is difficult to get there now.

We really like the honesty box at the Caravan Park, and it is helpful if we need essentials but can't make it to the shop.

It would be good if there were bigger slides and things to climb for older bairns at the playpark

Sand Beach path needs to be repaired soon so everyone can access the beach easily again

We love watching the wildlife from Leonard's hide at the marina. The painted stones and shells are awesome.

We loved the Skeld school and the play ground there. We have happy memories of the school

Graveyards are important places as its where we can go to remember people. They can be sad sometimes but they are very important to protect.

We like seeing all the wildlife around the Laxa Burn.

Skeld school was too small for many of us in the end - there were only 4 pupils when it closed.

Sand Gairdins is an amazing place. So many different spaces to run around. It is so cool to see the frogs. We like to have picnics here and play games.

Sand Gairdins is also good because it is really clear what the rules are for playing there

We like the events held in Skeld like the Regatta, the Flower Show and Sunday Teas in the hall

Reawick Beach is great for finding shells and stones. Its one of the best beaches in the Westside.

Reawick Beach is great for swimming because there aren't as many jellyfish.

We love going off on boats and seeing the coast



OUR LOCAL LIVING PRIORITIES:

Overall we feel that the Skeld is a good place to be, with lots of things to do in nature and people we enjoy seeing. We have quite a lot of freedom to explore and the community is really friendly. However, we also feel that Skeld is a bit forgotten, and we want other people to see how much it has to offer. Below are our priorities for action for making Skeld a better place for our whole community.

OUR PRIORITIES:

SK1. Attract more people to live in Skeld - We think that Skeld is a great place to be, but that not everyone realises because they don't know much about the area. We would like to promote it for all the wonderful nature and wildlife it has to offer, and how great a place it is for bairns to grow up because it's calm; got lots to explore; and the community is friendly and welcoming. There are a few ways we think would help do this such as make sure there are more homes available for people to live in (but not loads more - we don't need Skeld to be a town); have more fun activities available beyond just the Marina; promote good day trips to the area; and help people get here through some more buses to Lerwick and Aith. We think the Council needs to be better at recognising what our community needs and supporting us to make it happen.

SK2. Open a Shop in Skeld - Linked with the above, we think a shop would make Skeld a better place to live. It would only need to be about the size of the Bixter shop and sell essentials, but it would be a huge improvement as Bixter is quite far, and Lerwick is about 45 minutes away. We recognise that we might need to attract more people to live in Skeld before a shop would make enough money to keep running. One idea is that the Skeld Böd could be turned into a shop.

SK3. Reopen Skeld School and use it for other things in the meantime - We understand why the school closed, but we're really sad about it. It has loads of great facilities and was easy for us to get to. We would like it to reopen, and this might be possible if more families move to the area. In the meantime, it could be used for lots of helpful things and all the equipment is still inside.. Our ideas include a play group/centre; sports and activity clubs; a Nature Centre, and meeting/relaxation space. We think the community could run something great if the council lets us.

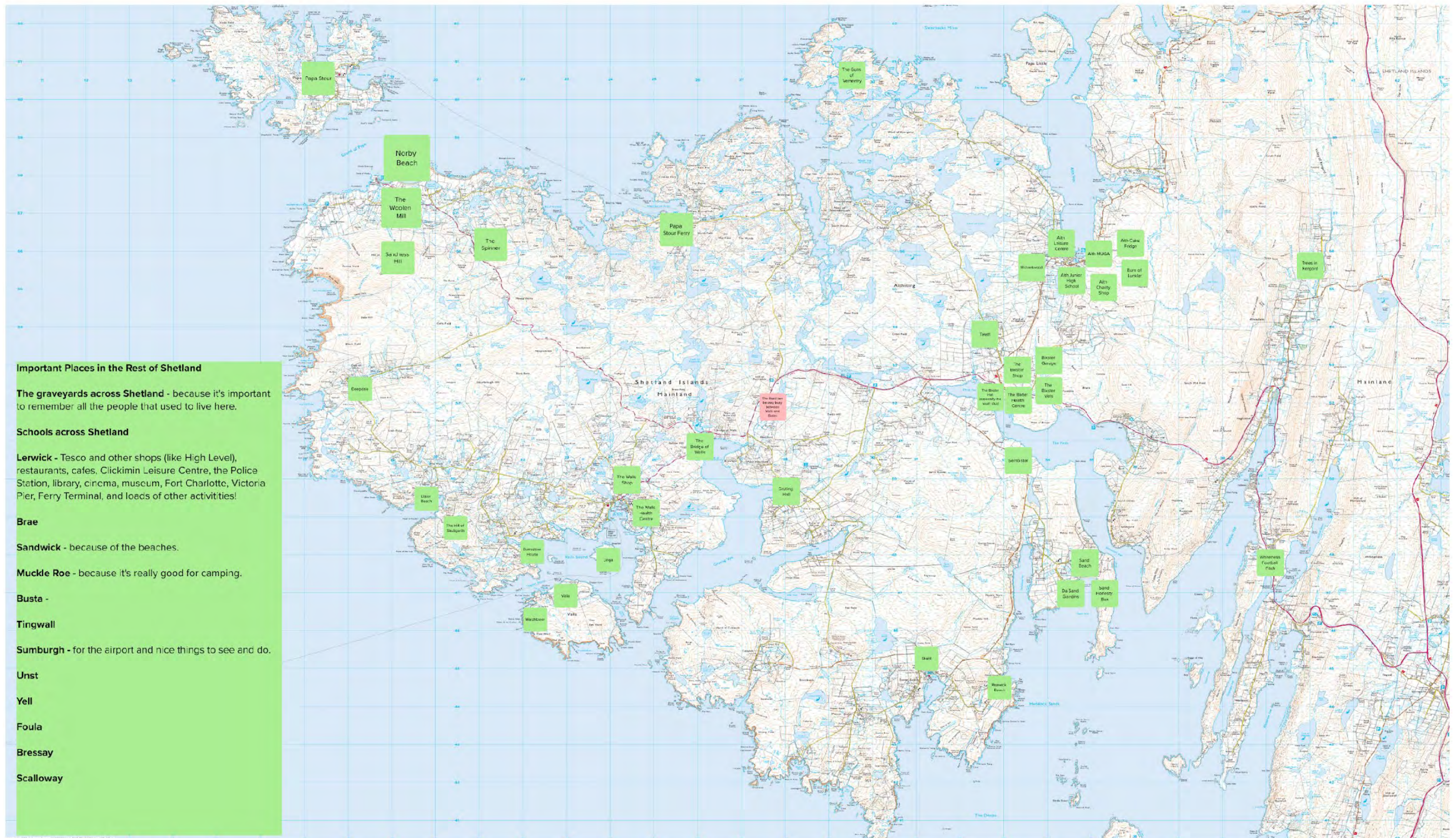
SK4. Better Play Opportunities for Older Bairns - We love our play parks but they get boring when you get older. More swings, big slides, and a zipline would improve the local play park for us. Other opportunities we would like is to have a Bike Trail ANYWHERE in Shetland (as there currently isn't one at all); and a better netball court at school. More things for older bairns would also support our ambition for people to come and visit or stay in Skeld. Also we could cut back the blackberry bush at the "rocky road" path and improve the path so it was less slippery in bad weather.

SK5. Fix the Crumbling Path down to Sand Beach - Sand beach is really popular and beautiful but too dangerous for many to visit just now. We would like the Council to help the community fix it. A longer term solution to the problem could be to build a solid set of steps.

SK6. Build a bigger Car Park at Reawick Beach - During the Summer, the car park is completely full and cars back up. There is plenty of space on the beach, but people have to leave. A bigger car park would help.

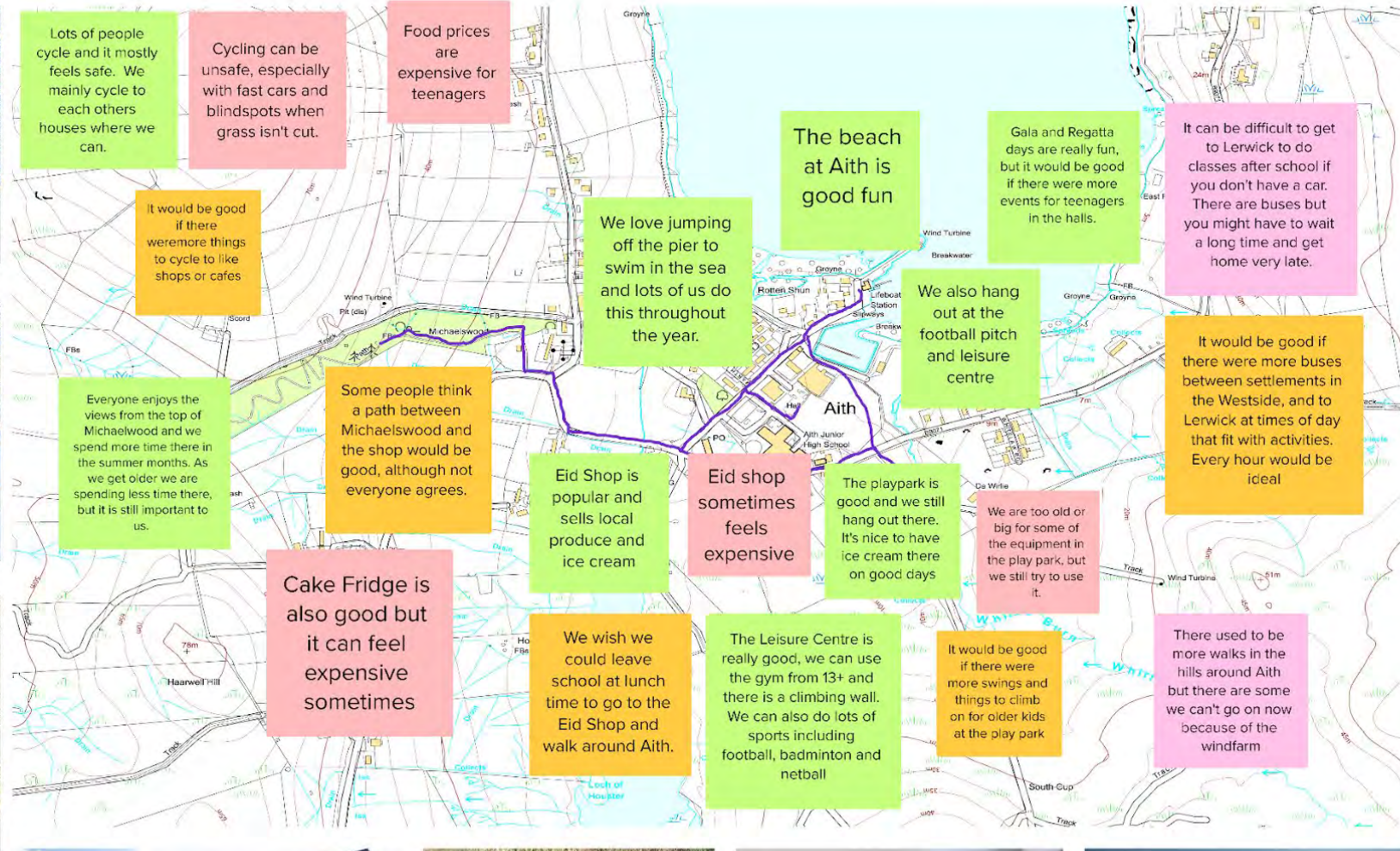
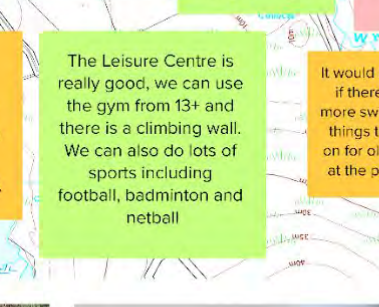
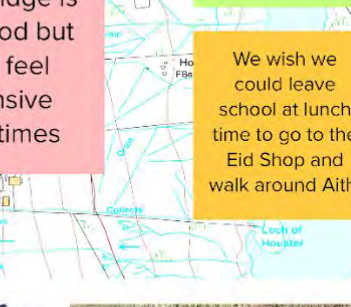
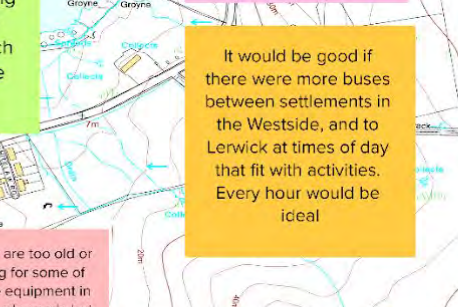
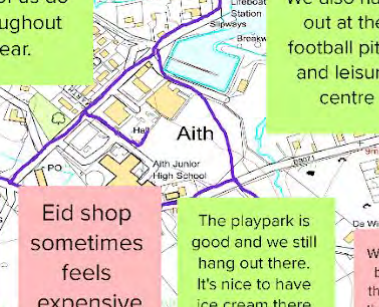
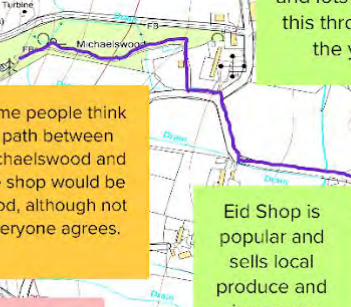
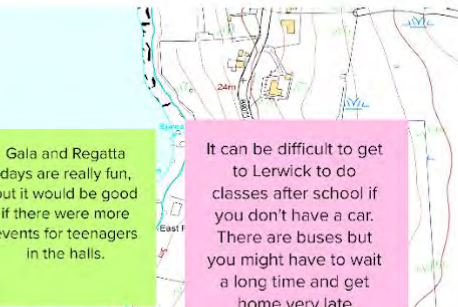
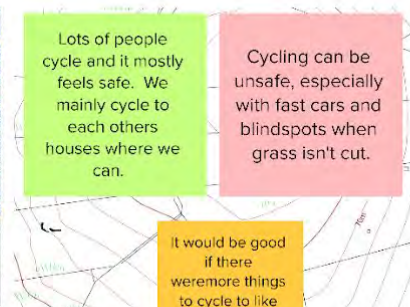
SK7. Protect our Beautiful Natural Places - We want people to care more about the environment and places of Skeld. It is important that our place and buildings are taken of. It is disappointing when we see dog poo and rubbish, like we did on our tour.

Important Places to us in the Westside, and beyond, Children's Map



Aith JHS S3's Local Living Plan: What we think of the local area

Key What's Important / Good? What's Missing / Could be Better? Things to Change



Our Priorities for Local Improvement

Overall we feel that the Westside is a good place to be, with lots of things to do in nature and people we enjoy seeing. However, we also feel that our freedoms and opportunities to socialise are more limited than we'd like. Below are our priorities for action, in rough order of importance.

OUR PRIORITIES:

WT1. An Improved Westside Bus Service that Meets our Needs - It can be hard for us to see our friends, get about, and attend clubs without an adult taking us in a car. We would like to have more independent freedom to get between settlements - particularly from Sandness - and onwards to Lerwick where there are more clubs and things to do. A circular bus that runs every 1-2 hours and connects to Lerwick is one suggestion we have for improving many opportunities for local young people (and other people without cars). A bus to Burrafirch would also improve accessibility. Finally, better bus shelters would protect us from the bad weather we experience a lot! To do this, there needs to be more funding for public transport in Shetland.

WT2. More Places to Eat in the Westside - We would like there to be a café or sit-down restaurant we can go to with friends. We would like a range of foods (Bakery, Chinese food, Indian food, fry-ups, fish and chips, Crumbl Cookie!), but it's most important that it's somewhere young people can afford to go, get to, and ideally that it employs local young people. One suggestion is Brig o' Walls,

WT3. Improve the Play Parks for Teenagers - We love the playpark, but we would love a zipline, monkey bars, more big swings, and a climbing wall. There are many good places for teenagers to just play across the Westside, but Skeld probably has the best one at the moment.

WT4. More Community Events aimed at Young People - Some of us are keen to see more events where we can meet up with each other, and other young folk in Shetland. We can feel a bit isolated and would like a disco / party or concert at one of the community halls or more youth groups.

WT5. Allow Aith JHS Pupils to go to the Eid shop at lunchtime - Some of us feel this would greatly increase our enjoyment of school, and we know other high schools are allowed out to visit local shops. We will keep bringing this up with the pupils council, so that we can have choice in what we want and drink.

WT6. Introduce a Shop in Skeld and Sandness - We think that this would really help the local population get essentials and drive less; be a place to sell local produce; and also encourage more people to live and visit the areas. In Skeld, the primary school or old cheese factory (it has a big car park and a big building for it) could be used, or a building down at the Marina. We think this

might help reopen our primary school. We need to find some funding to help it get setup.

WT7. Build a Skatepark in the Westside - Shetland only has one Skatepark, and think another in the Westside would be very good for young people. Aith would be our favoured location, and it would create another good place for young people to meet and have fun.

WT8. Add a Pavement to the Road up to Michaelswood - There are quite a lot of cars, and no pavement for us to keep safe on the road to Michaelswood. We have to stand on the verge but there are fences and ditches and sometimes there's not enough space. We want to be able to move around more easily.

WT9. Introduce Bike Lanes on the Roads - This would make cycling feel safer for people who aren't as confident., particularly the main road to Walls It would increase young people's freedom, but also speed up journeys for cars and buses so everyone gets where they need to be more easily.

WT10. More Places to Ride our Quadbikes - This is something many of us really enjoy, but there aren't many places we can do it freely.

WT11. Improve our Leisure Centre Access - We would love to see a leisure centre open in Sandness, and for the Walls pool to reopen.

WT12. More Job Opportunities for Young People - We would like to have more places to work. A cafe or restaurant would be an ideal opportunity for this.

WT13. More Funding for Local Schools - We know that schools budgets are really constrained. However, we would like to have more school trips, better play parks, and an improved netball court at Aith JHS.

Important Themes Across The Westside (and Beyond), Teenagers Map

