

# Orkney Greens' Manifesto: OIC Elections 5 May 2022

## The Orkney Greens' Vision for Orkney

The Orkney Greens were formed in 2014 and shortly afterwards Councillor Steve Sankey was elected as the first Green Councillor to Orkney Islands Council (OIC). Although Steve is retiring at the next election, **we'd like to elect more Green Councillors in May 2022** to make the vision and ambition outlined in this manifesto a reality.

**We'd like your support** to implement crucial policies for Orkney in the next five years to ensure that OIC puts the community first, becomes more open and accountable, and maximises the huge potential of the transition to net-zero. In this manifesto you'll find our vision for Orkney that we're offering you at this election. It includes our policies, ideas, and goals that we think we can make happen in OIC.



**Orkney Green Candidates May 2022 left to right:** Eric Page (East Mainland, South Ronaldsay & Burray), Maia Brodie (Stromness & South Isles), John Ross Scott (Kirkwall East), Helen Woodsford-Dean (West Mainland), Kristopher Leask (Kirkwall West & Orphir).

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## Green Wins in OIC 2017-2022



**Councillor Steve Sankey and Orkney Greens' Co-Convenor (left)** was elected to OIC In May 2017 and in that election, he was one of only two Green candidates. In May 2022 five Green candidates are standing in five Wards, which Steve regards as an optimistic sign.

"I won or helped win a great deal in my term, including:

- An extra **£5.5 million for ferry funding** in 2018 which saved vital cuts to public services elsewhere in Orkney at the time.
- Saved the **St. Margaret's Hope and Cursiter Quarry recycling centres from closure twice** which kept amenities local and protected recycling rates.
- **Kept the Churchill Barriers in the headlines** which as an economic artery into Orkney still requires much expenditure even on basic maintenance.
- **Changed OIC investment practices** such that all decisions now require discussion of Environmental, Governance and Social dimensions through fund managers who are members of the **UN's Principles of Responsible Investment**.
- Helped OIC win a **Climate Change Project Officer** despite serious delays caused by climate change deniers within the Chamber.
- Helped hundreds of constituents with **casework**, each of which was a small piece of a very large jigsaw helping to improve the daily life of people.

All this was essential work, but there's so much more to do. **OIC Councillors need to be much more diverse in age and gender**, and we'd like to break the mould of the current Council Chamber. **Three of our candidates are in their twenties, and two are women**. More Greens are desperately needed in the Council Chamber!"



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## A Green Vision for Orkney

Here is what our five candidates have to say about why they're standing this May:

### Green Candidate Councillor John Ross Scott, Kirkwall East Ward:

"It's possible in the post-election future to imagine a changed OIC with **climate actions at the heart of its decision-making**, and with few decisions taken in



private. We need to implement the many actions required by the declaration of a Climate Change Emergency and the Edinburgh (Biodiversity) Declaration both supported by OIC, and shake-up a culture of backroom decision making and cover-ups. We Greens could become ambassadors for Orkney, making the County truly clean and green, and **putting people at the heart of everything we do.**"

### Green Candidate Helen Woodsford-Dean, West Mainland:

"Many of the elected members of OIC seem **unaware that the climate change emergency is a real and immediate danger.** I view the unfolding



environmental crisis as the main and most immediate threat to our islands. The repercussions are broad and will necessarily cause changes to global and local economies; changes which can already be seen to be affecting social dignity and community in Orkney, not least in terms of housing availability and affordability and a greater visual disparity in wealth."

### Green Candidate Kristopher Leask, Kirkwall West & Orphir:



**"We have a huge opportunity in Orkney to make the most of the transition to Net-Zero.** This is our chance to do things differently, set ourselves up for the coming decades, and make Orkney a more prosperous and sustainable community. But that potential is at risk of being squandered. Additionally, **we are facing a crisis in housing** whereby local people are priced out, and existing housing urgently needs retrofitted. A fresh approach is

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sorely needed to local government in Orkney instead of the constant firefighting and cover-up culture. I strongly believe I & the Orkney Greens can reinvigorate the Councillor ranks who have largely lost the faith of the public."

### Green Candidate Eric Page, East Mainland, South Ronaldsay, & Burray:



**"Orkney is one of the world leaders in renewable power and technologies,** a net-zero carbon footprint goal is very obtainable. The ever-growing climate crisis is impacting our stunning islands with every year that goes by; affecting travel, local agriculture, nature and many more key features of Orkney's economy, combating it now is more important than ever. **I firmly believe that more green Councillors can aid the community in conquering local climate effects and utilise our strengths to build a more efficient future.** Growing up and raising my own family on the island has been one of the most valuable things I could ever have asked for. Visiting family friends all over the island and exploring the amazing scenery has deepened my desire to preserve our amazing islands."

### Green Candidate Maia Brodie, Stromness & South Isles:



**"Orkney deserves passionate, caring Councillors who are connected to the community;** and that is what I will be. Our local businesses deserve more support, we need to engender more community spirit, and we need to work together to ensure that everyone has their needs met and lives in dignity. When shareholders of banks are making millions, they can afford to run a branch in Stromness. **I will therefore work closely with the community to pressurise banks to review their decision to close branches in town.**"

### Greens Stand For:

- Tackling the climate crisis – policies must underpin the priority to reach **net zero in Orkney by 2030.**
- **Community based solutions** to local challenges – a people-centred approach to create a prosperous future based on a **Just Transition.**
- Thinking globally, acting locally. **We will always take an 'Orkney-First' approach** through close liaison with our communities.



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- **Openness and accountability** – and an end to the secrecy prevalent within OIC at present.



### *School Climate Strike, Kirkwall Grammar School, 15 March 2019:*

At the core of our manifesto is the necessity to tackle the **climate crisis** in a way which maximises the opportunities that arise from the transition to net-zero by 2030. Related issues such as **fuel poverty**, **energy prices** and **sustainable transport** need urgent attention which requires ambitious leadership.

Our vision is to **future-proof Orkney** for the 21st Century and take **a new approach to local government**. Orkney has unlimited potential and we're determined that it's not squandered by a lack of ambition, leadership, or an unwillingness to do things differently. With a rapidly **ageing population** Orkney must think about the future. We want to create more opportunities to retain our young folk and tackle barriers to this like **the unavailability of housing**. We'd also like Orkney to attract young people and families to contribute to our island society and economy as residents in a thriving, dynamic community. What follows are our policies, goals, and ambition for the next OIC 2022-2027 administration and beyond.

### **Climate Change and a Net Zero Target by 2030**

Our key priority is to **make Orkney net-zero by 2030 and maximise benefit from the opportunities this will provide**. Moreover, we will ensure that **communities**

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**are at the heart of the transition** to net-zero. This net-zero goal must be the central driving force of the next council administration. The transition to net-zero is exciting, and positive change can happen in many areas from transport to housing. This will make the Orkney economy stronger, greener, and more prosperous by 2030 with new opportunities and benefits at every level in our communities. From tackling fuel poverty and transport emissions, to combating the problem of waste and **developing a circular economy**, the scale of the challenge is large. But by drawing on the world-leading experience and knowledge within Orkney, and **working together**, we can do it. We will:

- **Establish an OIC net-zero team** to manage the huge volume of coordination and planning across all services that the transition to net-zero will involve.
- **Suggest a multi-agency 'Orkney Net-Zero Working Group'** to work together with partners like the Island centre for Net-Zero and communities through a much needed 'Net-Zero 2030' Strategy.
- **Support the Scapa Deep Water Quay** subject to the removal of the LNG proposals to facilitate the Scotwind proposals for renewable energy.
- **Support phase II of the Harbours Masterplan** adding infrastructure which is long overdue for North Isles piers.



***Orkney could house some 3 GW of offshore turbines, moving us to Net-Zero.***

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## A Just Transition

A **Just Transition** is a top priority nationally and rightly so; the transition to net-zero cannot leave anyone behind. In Orkney, despite producing 130% of our electricity by renewables, we have higher energy costs than almost anywhere in the country, and one of the worst shares of electricity in our overall energy mix. This has led to one of the highest rates nationally of fuel poverty and extreme fuel poverty. The transition to renewable energy should be a prime driver in lowering the costs of all Orkney residents, but it isn't happening quickly enough. Additionally, we welcome the Scotwind announcements for the West and East of Orkney developments. We commit to fighting at every level of government to ensure local people & supply chains benefit from job opportunities and increased investment. We will:

- **Prioritise a Just Transition** and focus pressure from communities at all levels of government to ensure a rapid implementation.
- Support the development of the Scapa Deep Water Quay to **capitalise on the renewable opportunities** afforded by the offshore wind industry around Orkney in the immediate future.
- Press for **public income generated by Scotwind to be given back to local communities** at all levels of government, and for these funds to support sustainable development in Orkney.
- Support the just transition of **Flotta to a hydrogen hub** ensuring workers are re-trained and get new jobs and encourage the advances in sustainable transport – developed in Orkney – for our aviation and transport sector.
- Review OIC's approach to **fuel poverty** and increase the scale of resources and actions available with partners to the level the seriousness of the situation demands.



*The Flotta terminal's future lies as a Hydrogen Hub, part of the Just Transition.*



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## Sustainable Jobs in the Green Economy

The Orkney economy is unique in Scotland. It is stronger and more diverse than most rural economies, but it has significant challenges too. Unemployment may be low, but so are wages in some areas such as the North Isles, and the recruitment and retention of staff remains a serious barrier for many sectors. COVID has had a serious detrimental impact on the hospitality and tourism sectors, and we applaud the recent use of strategic reserves through a Business Hardship Fund to shore up local businesses through this difficult period. **But more is required to support local businesses**, large and small, in the medium/long-term to ensure that future economic growth is both sustainable and benefits our communities. There are potentially large and exciting developments on the immediate horizon, such as the **development of the offshore wind sector** which holds much potential with the need for the installation and servicing of as many as 1,700 offshore turbines producing as much as 3 GW of renewable energy. We are equally supportive of Flotta transitioning to **a Green Hydrogen hub**. We will:

- Prioritise the development of the offshore wind and tidal/wave sectors through the development of the **Scapa Deep Water Quay** to ensure that Orkney benefits from this key part of the green transition ahead.
- Prioritise the skilling up of young people for careers in renewables and related supply chains and re-skill employees in the oil & gas sector as part of a **Just Transition** to green hydrogen and other renewable fuels.
- Work with existing partners such as HIE and the Kirkwall BID to **expand the Orkney workforce** to fill employment gaps and skills shortages.
- **Develop an entrepreneurial hub** of small premises rented on short term contracts at preferential rates to stimulate and support business start-ups.
- Support the growth of **cooperative** style businesses.
- **Foster a positive culture of teamwork and collaboration** between OIC and local businesses. Orkney is at its best when we all work together.

## Towards Carbon-Neutral Transport

**Transport is a significant source of emissions in Orkney** and in need of serious prioritisation within OIC. The Orkney Local Transport Strategy has not been revised since 2007 and our internal ferries are the oldest in Scotland. In particular, the 'short-sea' crossing between Burwick and Gills Bay needs to be reviewed owing to its advantages of a short 8-mile route of only 30 minutes duration and its links with the North Coast 500 route. Future infrastructure must change, and quickly. More progress also needs to be made on EV uptake and infrastructure, whilst the outdated ferries and aircraft that comprise **lifeline services continue to be huge burners of fossil fuels**. Recent progress with the development of sustainable aviation fuels and electric engines for light aircraft are welcome, as are the renewable-powered ferries now running in Norway and other Scandinavian countries. But the change here in Orkney is slow and needs to accelerate. We will:



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- **Replace our ageing ferry fleet** with electric or hydrogen/electric ferries during the next 5 years. OIC must work together with the Scottish Government to formulate an innovative fleet replacement strategy.
- **Review the 'short-sea' crossing** from Burwick to Gills Bay as a potential key feature of Orkney's Local Transport Strategy.
- In partnership with the Orkney Renewable Energy Forum, ensure **Orkney's Electric Vehicle (EV) strategy** accelerates EV use in the county and supports improved charging reliability, infrastructure, and initiatives such as ReFLEX. The electrification of the OIC fleet must be a high priority.
- Work with HITRANS and the Scottish Government to **improve EV charging infrastructure** on the A9 and **develop a better integrated transport link** between the ferries and trains/buses on mainland Scotland.
- Use significant increases to the national **active travel** budget, as secured by the Scottish Greens, to increase Orkney's under-developed active travel infrastructure, including exploring the feasibility of **a cycleway and footpath between Stromness and St. Margaret's Hope, via Kirkwall**, to make walking, cycling and driving safer.
- Develop an **integrated system of internal-ferry passenger travel and bicycle hire** to support local development trusts, alleviate vehicle capacity, and encourage active travel.
- Explore the feasibility of a **light electric railway** from Kirkwall to Stromness, via the World Heritage Site at Stenness, to reduce the presence and impact of tourist coaches from key roads, and upgrade Orkney's infrastructure for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- **Implement a maximum speed limit of 20mph in built-up areas** to make Orkney's roads safer for all users and reduce fuel consumption.



*Greens have won free transport for Orkney's Under-22s but our buses need to be electrified.*

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## Housing

**Housing is one of the most critical issues in Orkney.** The provision of housing is a crucial element of sustaining any community, but particularly so in island communities. At present there are **capacity constraints** on building new houses, and problems with the supply of both private and leased properties. There is a waiting list of over 800 people in the social housing sector, and seasonal conflicts with supply due to tourism demand in the private sector. We know that people and students who wish to move to Orkney to work or study struggle to find housing. We will:

- Prioritise housing in the next local plan to **increase supply** and support innovative sustainable housing which is carbon neutral.
- Housing developments should incorporate **greenspace, community areas, local amenities, colour, and active travel** measures.
- Support further development of **co-housing projects** for older residents in the local plan such as the pioneering development in St. Margaret's Hope.
- **Make it easier to build**, especially in rural areas where land is comparatively cheaper, in the next local development plan.
- Develop **student housing** in Stromness and Kirkwall in association with Heriot Watt, Robert Gordon, UHI, and other universities.
- **Scope the potential for district heat networks** in Orkney to provide even lower cost heating not at upfront cost to individuals as is the case with heat pumps
- We will implement the **short-term let licensing** and regulatory powers shortly to be available to OIC to balance the needs of young people and other employees who cannot access housing, with the needs of the tourism sector.
- Green Ministers and MSPs have pledged to **improve tenants' rights** within the lifetime of the current Parliament, and we will liaise with colleagues to ensure that such legislation is island-proofed and benefits Orkney tenants.

## Caring for our Community

The Scottish Government has recently consulted on the setting up of a new **National Care Service** which in principle we support. Orkney has the most rapidly ageing community in Scotland, and one in four of us have a long-term medical condition requiring ongoing medical or social care. It's therefore vital that **we attract and retain carers**, both in a family or professional context, and we are particularly anxious to attract young people into this most rewarding of careers. **Two new care homes** have been or are opening shortly in Stromness and Kirkwall, and Green Councillors have backed these proposals.

**Carers need to be paid and valued more**, and we will help to ensure that the National Care Service does just that when set up, whilst protecting local accountability in our islands. We need **a Care Service tailored to our islands**, and not one that has been designed in Edinburgh. Green Councillors sit on Integrated Joint Boards, and Green Ministers in Government will help to ensure that these developments materialise. We will:

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- **Prioritise increasing the pay and contract stability of carers**, to help to attract and retain new and existing people into this most satisfying of careers.
- Help to ensure that a National Care Service in Orkney is **tailored to our island needs with attractive terms and conditions of employment**.
- **Support the 'Hope Co-housing' co-operative** and other innovative 'care in the community' initiatives.

### Towards Carbon-Neutral Agriculture

OIC has very limited influence over the agriculture sector with most policies being the responsibility of the Scottish Government. However, this sector is critically important to the Orkney economy, and we want to support it to reduce carbon emissions and **lead the way nationally within the sector**. We believe that OIC can take more of a leadership role supporting sustainable farming methods and promoting local produce to grow a circular economy. Farmers need to be supported towards transition to **more sustainable and less carbon intensive methods**. We will:

- Advocate practical prescriptions within Orkney to **reduce the carbon footprint of agriculture** such as the greater use of clovers as natural fertilisers, no till methods when appropriate, and use of additives to livestock food to reduce methane emissions.
- Support the agronomy institute to grow and **develop sustainable farming methods specific to Orkney** as well as their work in establishing vertical farming as part of the current Islands Deal.
- **Maximise local produce consumed in Orkney** to develop local supply chains and create a circular economy. This will **reduce food miles**, stimulate local businesses, and improve access to high-quality locally grown food.
- Instigate regular meetings between the agricultural sector and key Councillors and officials to track progress on **developing a local circular economy** and appoint a Councillor to spearhead this goal.
- Review the provision **of mobile abattoir facilities** in Orkney.



***Sustainable farming links food production to biodiversity enhancement as with this AECS prescription.***



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## Educating for a Just Transition

Young Orcadians should get the best education possible and be well equipped to take on future life opportunities at home or elsewhere. We'd like education linked to a **Just Transition** and to see a greater collaboration with the renewable energy sector and other sustainable industries. We'd also push for **young people and parents to be given a meaningful role in the governance of education** in Orkney as has been the norm across Scotland for years. Additionally, we support the expansion of current outdoor education programmes and encourage further local nature-based learning such as currently undertaken by the Orkney Native Wildlife Project. We will:

- Work with nurseries, schools, colleges, and universities in Orkney to promote greater collaboration and partnerships to **develop and deliver courses for the net-zero economy and society**.
- We will explore **undergraduate renewable energy courses** via Heriot Watt University, the University of the Highlands and Islands and others to create local pathways into the industries of the future.
- **Review the model of governance** for Orkney college with less OIC influence and the development of a more collaborative and community-oriented model.
- Mandate companies which bid for substantial OIC contracts through procurement policies to **provide modern apprenticeships, and graduate placements to young local people**.
- Expand and develop the existing **career service** to better support young Orcadians plan for their future.
- **Review OIC governance structures** to ensure that a student and a parent are co-opted to the Education Committee, and that an elected Councillor is appointed as OIC's 'Young People Champion' who attends all Youth Forum meetings and liaises with schools and Parent Councils.

## Communities and Local Place Plans

Orkney has a good record in funding Community Councils and indeed won a national award for their role in supporting communities during COVID. We'd like to go further and propose a **Community Rejuvenation Project** where we put money back into communities to clean up community areas, develop green spaces, and maintain existing paths and signs which are looking worse for wear. **Local Place Plans** are community led plans to be introduced under new planning legislation. These local initiatives have great potential to enable us to think differently in Orkney about some of our most important spaces. We will:

- Initiate a **Community Rejuvenation Project** in partnership with Community Councils to create new shared green spaces, clean up existing paths and signs, and develop joined up walking circuits across Kirkwall and elsewhere to promote an active lifestyle including more public play parks.
- **Review Community Council operations** to deploy more powers and resources locally to implement projects by new **Local Place Plans**.

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- OIC should designate **Liaison Officers for social housing schemes** across Orkney to promote community involvement in Council services and higher amenity standards through the incoming Local Place initiatives.
- Investigate the **further pedestrianisation of Kirkwall** at peak times in the tourist season to give a pleasant car-free space for locals and tourists alike.

### Towards A Circular Economy

OIC is currently reviewing its entire Waste Services section and is proposing to build a new waste treatment and recycling centre on the old abattoir site at Hatston. We are supportive of this proposal as it will modernise general waste operations and make recycling obligations more efficient and cost effective, leading to higher recycling rates. Waste operations need to be set in a holistic context of **reduce, reuse and recycle**, and coupled to **a zero-waste and circular economy**. We will:

- Conduct a **circular economy assessment** to identify where we are producing waste, how we can reduce waste, and where we can integrate that waste back into a circular local economy.
- Establish **local grants for audits** of existing or new businesses to help facilitate a circular local economy.
- Encourage and improve the use of local facilities such as **Household Waste Recycling Centres** to make it easy for households to reuse and recycle.
- **Assign a Councillor to take lead on developing a circular economy** and championing sustainability.



***Reduce, Re-use, Re-cycle. Centres such as at the 'Hope are crucial local amenities, much-valued by local communities.***

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## Sustainable Tourism

Tourism is important to Orkney and pre-COVID attracted some half a million visitors each year contributing £50 million+ to the local economy. For years now however the policy of mass growth has gone unchecked and urgently needs revision to ensure sustainable management. Tourism growth has been sudden and massive for Orkney, with many communities subsequently feeling overwhelmed. Greens will encourage **sustainable tourism** which supports, instead of overwhelms, the local community. We will push for a review of the capacity and scale of tourism, including the social and environmental costs. Furthermore, **stronger environmental controls on the impact of cruise ships** on the sea, air quality, and on communities, is urgently needed. Likewise, so is better infrastructure to support tourism, such as road maintenance, public toilets, visitor information hubs, and waste disposal facilities. We will:

- With local partners ensure that the **Orkney Tourism Strategy** develops a long-term plan for the sustainable development of tourism in Orkney including careful management of tourist volume to optimise cruise vessel visits and day tours.
- Introduce **green requirements for visiting cruise liners** and work towards the elimination of climate and environmental damage arising from port calls by visiting vessels.
- Investigate ship, passenger excursion, visitor and resident experiences of tourism, as well as any infrastructural and locational impacts.
- Ensure that the **World Heritage Site** in the Heart of Neolithic Orkney is managed well and sustainably and supports the long-term development and security of archaeology research in Orkney.
- Engage with communities to produce local Place Plans that **manage tourism sustainably**.
- **Consult local views on and the potential of a 'tourist tax'**, the power to implement which will soon be available to OIC. These **funds should be ring fenced for investment in local community infrastructure and initiatives** so that the benefits of tourism reach all sectors of the Orkney community.



***Sustainable tourism ensures visitor numbers are proportionate to the capacity of sites.***



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### Fix the Nature Emergency

Biodiversity losses in Orkney, like the rest of Scotland, have been staggering. Not so long-ago Orkney held more seabirds than any other county in the UK. In the last few decades, we have lost 90% of our kittiwakes and Arctic terns, such that a fraction of these and other species remain. Despite this, **OIC opposed the designation of Special Protection Areas for our seabirds** in Orkney! In 2010 stoats arrived in Orkney and have since posed considerable threats to our native Orkney vole and breeding wader populations, whilst our wildflower and wetland habitats have become reduced to fringe areas around farmland and coasts. We will:

- **Manage our marine areas sustainably**, support the Regional Marine Plan for Orkney waters and ensure that the Orkney's Special Protection Areas are designated quickly.
- Establish more **wildflower verges and spaces** to save money, create wildlife corridors, and add habitat, colour and invertebrates to our local areas.
- Support the **Orkney Native Wildlife Project** to ensure that it succeeds in its aims of eradicating stoats from Orkney through working with communities.
- Review the Orkney Local Biodiversity Action Plan to **ensure recovery of key habitats and species** including national rarities such as the Great-yellow bumblebee.



*We must manage our marine areas sustainably to protect our native wildlife.*

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## Support Arts & Culture

**Arts & cultural activities play a key role in making our communities inclusive, diverse, and exciting places to live.** They are crucial to attracting potential employees to Orkney and for providing new opportunities for locals. We strongly believe that whilst they are currently publicly championed, they are currently under supported by OIC. **Arts venues** like the Pier Arts Centre and **local festivals** such as the Orkney Folk Festival, St Magnus International Festival and Orkney International Science Festival, that bring in thousands of visitors to the county each year, should be encouraged to thrive and grow. **Museums and archive and library services** should also be supported and promoted including the newly modernised Scapa Flow Visitors Centre at Lyness. We will:

- **Provide leadership to the arts and culture sector** which lacks an overall strategy and direction. Our arts and culture sector is a significant economic and social asset which requires adequate funding and support to grow and develop potential.
- **Review grants** currently offered in this sector and increase financial support each year in line with inflation. This will support local festivals of all sizes grow such as the Orkney Folk Festival, St Magnus International Festival, or Orkney Rocks, and cultural assets like the Pier Arts Centre.
- **Free music tuition** in schools should be maintained and **more support given to theatres.**
- **Direct funding in the World Heritage Site Gateway Centre** towards the long-term sustainable management, preservation, and study of archaeology in Orkney.
- Develop more cultural and educational links through the **Arctic Council and other forums** and its member states.

## Support Leisure & Sport

Leisure time will continue to be important in the post Covid era and so it is essential that the sustainability of public leisure and cultural services is maintained and expanded. These community facilities are at the heart of villages and towns across Orkney and have a critical role to play in **supporting physical, mental and social health and wellbeing.** Active Life activities, walking and cycling should continue to be encouraged not just in our towns and villages but in the open countryside. Green space in our communities should be connected to health initiatives, and social prescribing should be encouraged by GPs. Priority will also be given to the development of **more play parks** like those developed recently at Arcadia and Papdale. **Sports development** in the lead up to the 2025 Island Games and as a legacy afterwards is essential. We will:

- Support the creation of an arterial **cycleway and walking path from Stromness to St. Margaret's Hope via Kirkwall** funded through active travel resources won by Green MSPs.
- Priority will be given to the **development of play parks and green spaces** through Local Place Plans.

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- **Support health and social prescribing** by GPs to link active lifestyles and green space provision.
- **Partnerships between charities and OIC** will be strengthened and digital development across culture and leisure improved.
- **Increase support for the Pickaquoy Centre Trust** in its *Active Life* programme and development with local clubs and athletes, and in particular support the delivery of the Island Games in 2025.

### Reform Openness and Accountability in OIC

**Public trust in OIC has hit an all-time low.** We strongly believe that an overhaul of policies regarding public relations would help to rebuild public trust in OIC and help develop a good working relationship between OIC and local communities. **Elected Councillors are barometers of local communities** who understand the challenges they face and are ideally placed to advise about solutions and new initiatives. With **more Green Councillors**, we will:

- **Overhaul how OIC informs and engages with the public** to ensure people are well informed on what OIC is doing, and that OIC is transparent in how it behaves and can be held to account.
- **Re-evaluate every Council service** to ensure that it is accessible and easy-to-use for members of the public. This includes **commissioning a new OIC website** to replace the inaccessible and severely outdated current one.
- **Promote collaboration with external partners and a culture of helpful friendly service** within OIC to ensure the public receive the best service they can.
- Ensure Councillors are supported to **take leadership** of their remits and assign spokespeople to lead on key policy areas. This is common elsewhere in political councils and ensures that Councillors are providing leadership, being accountable for OIC decisions, and for setting the agenda, rather than these responsibilities being carried out by the officials.
- **Significantly improve the data OIC collects on local statistics.** Orkney is considered to be 'data poor' across a range of areas, as recently highlighted by a study of the Orkney economy carried out by the Fraser of Allander Institute. This makes it hard to make informed decisions and for the public to effectively hold decision makers to account.
- Review how OIC operates to **make the role of Councillor more accessible for under-represented groups like women and young people.** For example, investigating practices such as set 3-day weeks, blended meetings, on-line or remote meetings, and greater support for those with parental/caring responsibilities.
- **Introduce a Question and Answers session** at the start of each full council meeting and an Open forum at the close that allows the public to ask questions of their Council.



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## Finally, Your Green Team

The Scottish Green Party has **seven MSPs** in the Scottish Parliament, including **two Ministers** within the Scottish Government.

**Lorna Slater MSP**, a Green Minister, has extensive experience in Orkney from her work with Orbital Marine Power and along with **Highlands & Islands Regional MSP Ariane Burgess** strongly support our vision. They recognise both the challenges for Orkney, such as housing and fuel poverty, but also our enormous potential as a leader of the transition to Net-Zero. Our candidates, if elected, will liaise with our Green Parliamentarians to **always secure the best possible deal for Orkney** and make sure Orkney's voice is heard at Government level.



*Green Minister Lorna Slater MSP (left), the Orkney Greens campaigning in Finstown with Ariane Burgess MSP (centre), and Highlands & Islands' Ariane Burgess MSP (right).*

**To achieve these aims we need you to support our Green candidates at the Council elections on 5 May 2022:  
VOTE GREEN FOR CHANGE!**

All photographs except the two MSPs by Mark Woodsford-Dean and Steve Sankey.

Promoted by Pete Morrison on behalf of the Scottish Green Party, at 19b Graham Street, Edinburgh, EH6 5QN. Published by Steve Sankey, Gerraquoy, St. Margaret's Hope, Orkney KW17 2TH.