



A 'VISION FOR BERNERAY' – COMMUNITY SURVEY

On behalf of the Bays of Harris Buyout Steering Group, a 'Vision for Berneray' questionnaire has been created to gain the views of the community for the future of our island.

With the buyout of the Bays of Harris Community Estate edging closer, the Community Council believes it is important for members of the community to have their say, to establish priorities and to find areas where there is broad agreement. These types of consultation were last carried out in 2016 and 2019 – and a lot has happened in the intervening years.

How are we going to manage/preserve/develop and improve the island of Berneray? The intention is that by having a 'Vision' we will be better placed both to develop and implement specific plans, in accordance with the Vision, both now and once the buyout is complete.

By way of an update on progress with the buyout, we are currently waiting for the estate owner to conclude their valuation. Following this, it is expected there will be a period of negotiation before a final purchase price is agreed. From that point the final purchase, 95% funded by the Scottish Land Fund, will be expected within a few months. At that point there will also be elections across the Estate for new board members (including Berneray representatives). Note: Only members of Bays of Harris Community Estate will have a vote, so it is really important that you become a member! If you have not joined up already, you can do so here: <https://www.baysofharris.org/membership-form-pdf/>

The following questions fall under the topic headings which were established during the previous consultations as being of key importance. Please note the open-ended question at the end, as there may be new things that are important to you, or aspects that we have not thought of. By all means continue on a separate sheet of paper if you wish.

Please return your completed questionnaires by Monday 5th May to the box in the Shop.

Alternatively, you can scan or photograph your questionnaire and email to: berneraycommunitycouncil@gmail.com

Or if you wish to download a digital version, you can do so at: <http://www.isleofberneray.com/community-council.html>

Please include your name and email address at the end of this questionnaire. This is just so that we know the responses are coming from 1) eligible residents (on electoral role), 2) part-time residents, and/or 3) businesses. Comments will be anonymised before being placed in the public domain.

1. Social, Health and Wellbeing

What sort of community events, activities or projects could help boost people’s health and wellbeing?

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How frequently do you enjoy recreation in our natural environment, eg. walk/run/cycle around the island/on the beach/up the hill?

[circle as appropriate]

- Regularly
- Occasionally
- Never

2. Culture, Heritage and Gaelic

Berneray’s strong ‘community feeling’ is a key attraction of living here.

[Circle as appropriate] Agree/Disagree/Don’t know

Promotion/encouragement/use of Gaelic language is important to me.

[Circle as appropriate] Agree/Disagree/Don’t know

Promotion and preservation of our local history is important.

[Circle as appropriate] Agree/Disagree/Don’t know

Do you have any further thoughts on how to strengthen and improve the social and cultural aspects of our community?

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3. Environment and Land

The natural environment of Berneray is regarded by many in the community as a key reason for living here. As well as providing benefits for health and enjoyment, it is of great importance culturally and is also relied upon by crofters, tourists and tourism businesses. How can the natural environment of Berneray be better managed and/or protected?

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Do you have any further thoughts of how we can encourage locals and tourists to care and take action to safeguard our natural habitats and wildlife?

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4. Tourism

Tourism brings significant income to island businesses and community groups, through the shops, galleries, catering businesses, holiday lets, hostels, campsite, hall and harbour facilities. Most tourists come to Berneray because of the island's renowned nature, landscape, scenery, cultural/heritage features, as well as the friendly community and traditional/rural feel of the place. These same special characteristics are also enjoyed by the Berneray community for life, work and recreation. If tourism is to be developed, how can this be done sustainably? Should it be controlled in some way?

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5. Housing

The population of Berneray is largely determined by the number of houses, their occupancy, availability of property for rent, availability and affordability of property for sale and availability of, and eligibility for, social housing.

Do we need more social housing for rent in Berneray?

[Circle as appropriate] Agree/Disagree/Don't know

Should we be looking to attract more families and young people to the island? If so, how?

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6. Employment and Business

How can we encourage the various elements of the local economy to grow?

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7. Community Ownership

What benefits would you like to see delivered by community ownership not covered elsewhere in this questionnaire? If income is generated from the estate, what would you prioritise it being spent on?

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8. Any other thoughts?

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9. Are you a...

[tick as applicable]

- Permanent resident (on the electoral role)?
- A Berneray-based business ?
- Part-time resident?

10. Would you be available/interested in a follow-up meeting in the Hall?

[delete as applicable] Yes/No

Name

Email address (so that we can provide updates) but paper copies can also be provided

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Comments will be made anonymous before being put in the public domain.