



THAW Orkney – Fuel poverty strategy
Summer 2024 edition

Preamble

The 2022 UNRISD report 'crises of inequalities' states that our current climate change, cost of living and health crises are underpinned by social and economic inequalities, which are an integral part of our governance and economic systems. This point is further emphasised through the recent move by the IPCC to focus on aspects of sustainable development and socio-economic barriers to action on climate change.

THAW Orkney has always worked to tackle these underlying inequalities by supporting those households and communities most impacted by high costs of living, in particular those created by energy usage within Orkney. The organisation's work initially focussed on facilitating access to property upgrades and energy advice, but became progressively overtaken by increasing needs around energy supplier advocacy and emergency financial support. This need became even more pronounced during the pandemic years.

However, it has also become more apparent that inequities in the energy system are continuing to increase, with aspects of the energy transition inaccessible to many. In addition, local energy assets, control and planning, including public funding for socio-economic interventions, is increasingly being directed by private organisations and individuals with resources and skills in energy systems (including THAW), rather than through the needs of communities and households. Indeed, the efficacy of any actions to create a fair energy system must clearly address social power and economic resource asymmetries within our current systems, particularly at the local level, whilst also keeping them in relative context to global inequities.

THAW will be continuing to support access to upgrade schemes, energy advocacy and emergency support but, within the wider community, we also need to reassess our current direction and decide on what collective action is needed to achieve a fair energy future for all, not just those in positions of privilege. As an experienced advocate for those voices least heard, we will frame potential directions within this strategy that we hope can facilitate discussions within local assemblies, community and local development.

Context to the strategy

The strategy uses the Sustainable Development Goals, and other related sustainability frameworks, as a starting point. These goals have been used because they not only capture the multiple factors that feed into insecurities for people and communities but also provide monitoring methods for assessing progress towards more resilient communities, both locally and internationally. It is explicitly stated that the goals are interconnected and must be seen within a whole-system context as well as considering specific indicators.

The strategy also considers how we can move from increasing inequalities and exploitative structural injustices to fairer distribution of power and resources and collective action. Drawing on Young's Responsibility for Justice, we must first acknowledge that changing our systems is possible, that everyone has contributed at some level towards injustices and that it is everyone's shared responsibility to contribute to action, particularly those most

privileged by the current system. Young suggests, again echoing recent methods by the IPCC, that we should focus on forward-looking options for change whilst explicitly questioning our current social, political and other power systems. In other words, we need a clear baseline for where we are, to assign greatest responsibility for change to the most privileged but with direction of changes explicitly controlled by those most impacted by social and economic injustice. In practice, this means assuring development funding is directed to projects most integrated with local needs and that local development projects assess households and the progress of interventions by similar metrics to ensure funding is directed fairly and effectively.

Acknowledging the origins of the term from Kimberlé Crenshaw's legal scholarship on race and gender inequalities, the use of intersectional analysis has been advocated by both the Scottish Government and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data for quantifying inequalities. This involves considering the intersection of multiple identities or demographics in people's lived experiences, for example the implications of being black and female within the legal system. Although a multi-factorial analysis across all possible demographics would become burdensome, THAW already uses a simple method to note key demographics that can be implicated in health and wellbeing determinants, therefore allowing clients to be initially prioritised based upon potential inequalities or higher needs. This is of course an assumption that may prove incorrect or be exploited, but we work on a trust-first basis to begin to build up trust with disadvantaged households. We do not want to leave anyone behind and therefore try to have support available for anyone.

Finally, the strategy takes lead from agile methodologies. These focus on short, iterative development that use various methods to critique and improve through showcasing to both internal teams and external stakeholders. The focus of the strategy is therefore not to set in stone a pathway for THAW and the local community to tackle fuel poverty, but as a canvas to be modified as priorities and needs change, or as we learn from new iterations. Therefore, outreach and discussion of the strategy with our clients and community organisations is central to its usefulness, as well as the ability to integrate feedback into our internal and external goals.

THAW Orkney's charitable **purpose** is:

“To work for households in all Orkney communities to reduce levels of fuel poverty and achieve affordable warmth.”

With this purpose in mind THAW's **goals** are to:

*Develop **partnerships**
and processes to ensure
fair planning and
implementation*



Reduce energy inequalities, including health, gender and geographical inequities, by engaging clients in system change

Provide access to energy advocacy for all via effective, accountable & inclusive institutions

Strengthen the means of implementation and partnerships

*In partnership with **all households and community organisations***



End energy poverty in all its forms in Orkney*

Ensure high-quality inclusive and equitable energy efficiency education

Increasing community design and ownership of energy generation/usage

*To achieve **affordable, sustainable warmth***



Ensure access to affordable, resilient, sustainable and modern energy for all

Build resilient energy support infrastructure, promoting inclusive & sustainable innovation

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts through our work to combat fuel poverty**

* This includes food poverty (SDG2), access to water and sanitation (SDG6) and digital poverty (SDG17), as well as inter-relation with health and wellbeing (SDG3) and decent work (SDG8), through partnership work.

** This includes responsible consumption and production (SDG12) and protection of biodiversity (SDG14/15) where relevant.

These goals have been split into suggested time-limited and measurable core targets:

	Reduce energy inequalities, including health, gender and geographical inequities	<p>Target 10.A: Ensure fair distribution of energy support across all isles by 2030</p> <p>Target 10.B: Include intersectional methods across all support services by 2030</p> <p>Target 10.C: Reduce transport poverty 50% by 2030.</p>
	Provide access to energy advocacy for all via effective, accountable & inclusive institutions	<p>Target 16.A: Build an inclusive community-based evidence base on insecurities by 2025.</p> <p>Target 16.B: Integrate open co-design and direct democracy into poverty planning by 2025.</p>
	Strengthen the means of implementation and partnerships	<p>Target 17.A: Implement an Orkney-wide referral system by 2030</p> <p>Target 17.B: Trial alternative options for funding, incl. commons or social finance systems by 2025</p> <p>Target 17.C: Coordinate fuel poverty action plans and ensure targets are met by 2030.</p>
	End energy poverty in all its forms in Orkney	<p>Target 1.A: Reduce energy costs in Orkney to below the national average by 2030</p> <p>Target 1.B: Halve the number of households below 90% of MIS by 2030</p>
	Ensure high-quality inclusive and equitable energy efficiency education	<p>Target 4.A: Train energy awareness advisors in all isles and major groups by 2030</p> <p>Target 4.B: Increase local capacity in NZ housing, community control & distribution by 50% by 2030</p>
	Increasing community design and ownership of energy generation/usage	<p>Target 11.A: Distribute 50% of local energy to direct community use by 2030</p> <p>Target 11.B: Increase community owned energy assets by 50% by 2030</p>
	Ensure access to affordable, resilient, sustainable and modern energy for all	<p>Target 7.A: Distribute 25% of resilient local energy directly to FP households by 2030</p> <p>Target 7.B: Upgrade all possible coal and oil systems for electric heating by 2030</p>
	Build resilient energy support infrastructure, promoting inclusive & sustainable innovation	<p>Target 9.A: Professionalise advanced energy and sustainability support/advice training by 2027</p> <p>Target 9.B: Increase local grants for social innovation in energy</p>
	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts through our work to combat fuel poverty	<p>Target 13.A: Create an inclusive retrofit and replacement pathway for all households by 2025</p> <p>Target 13.B: Reduce CO2 emission in all housing by 80% by 2030</p>

And include several goals and targets for partnership work:

Goal 2	End food poverty	Target: Support innovation by foodbank and other partners
Goal 6	Ensure access to clean water and sanitation	Target: Support clients to access WASH support
Goal 17	End digital poverty	Target: Support clients to access digital resources/learning
Goal 3	Improve health and wellbeing	Target: Improve collaboration with health services
Goal 8	Decent work through partnership work	Target: Support access to training, education and advocacy
Goal 12	Responsible consumption and production	Target: Integrate sustainable supply chains into project work
Goals 14/15	Protection of biodiversity	Target: Integrate nature-based solutions into project work

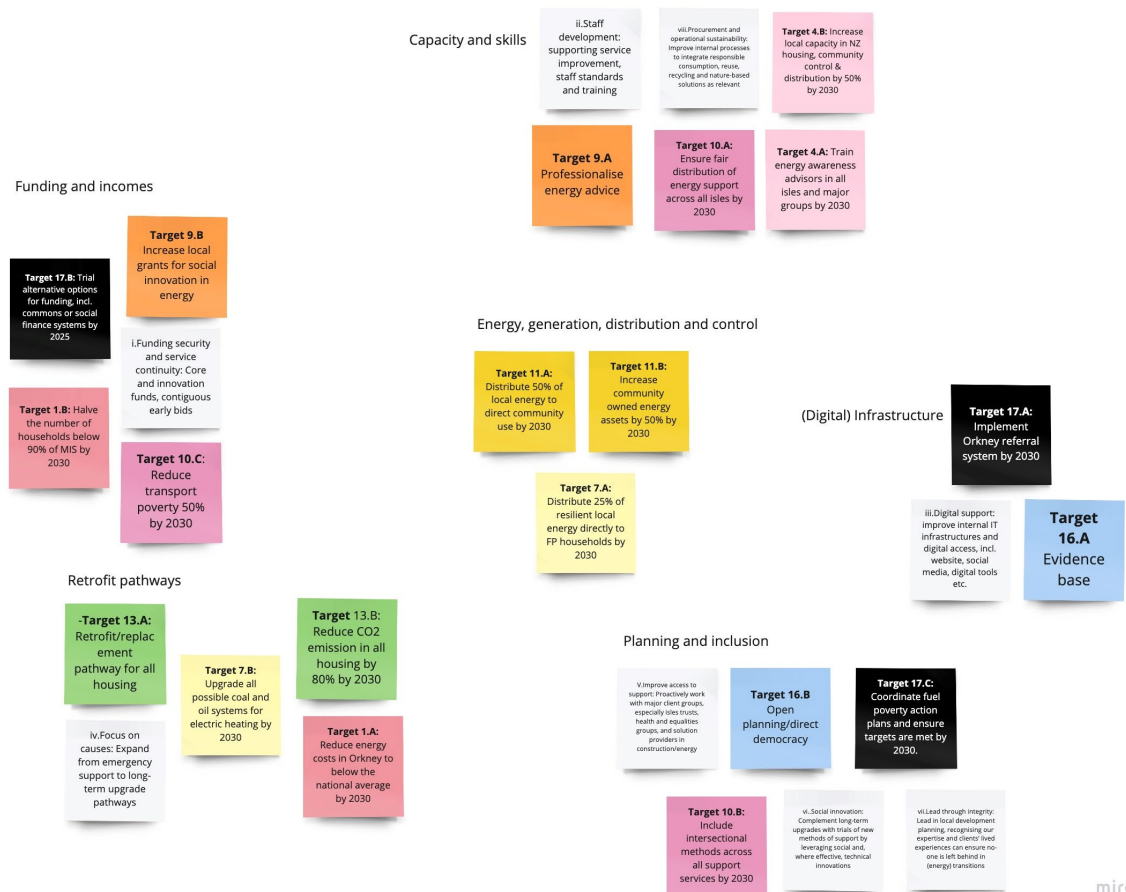
THAW Internal development goals

THAW also has internal operational needs that link in with wider goals:

- i. Funding security and service continuity: Core and innovation funds, contiguous early bids and keeping referral partners updated on service changes.
- ii. Staff development: supporting service improvement, staff standards, training, staff wellbeing and organisation governance.
- iii. Digital support: improve internal IT infrastructures and digital access, incl. website, social media, digital tools etc.
- iv. Focus on causes: Expand from emergency support to long-term upgrade pathways
- v. Improve access to support: Proactively work with major client groups, especially isles trusts, health and equalities groups, and solution providers in construction/energy
- vi. Social innovation: Complement long-term upgrades with trials of new methods of support by leveraging social and, where effective, technical innovations
- vii. Lead through integrity: Lead in local development planning, recognising our/our partner's expertise and clients' lived experiences can ensure no-one is left behind in (energy) transitions. Monitor/educate/report for-profit organisations impinging on basic services/rights and equities, as required.
- viii. Procurement and operational sustainability: Improve internal processes to integrate responsible consumption, reuse, recycling and nature-based solutions as relevant

Defining actionable priorities

The goals and targets described above often over-lap and, as they focus on high-level goals, require practical methods of implementation. We have therefore grouped them together to provide 6 suggested actionable priority areas:



The priority areas are:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Planning and inclusion | (Access, social innovation & leadership) |
| 2. (Digital) Infrastructures | (Digital support, Access) |
| 3. Retrofit pathways | (Focus on causes) |
| 4. Funding and incomes | (Service continuity, Innovation) |
| 5. Energy generation, distribution & control | (Causes, Access, Innovation, Leadership) |
| 6. Capacity and skills | (Staff development, Procurement) |

Priority 1 – Planning and inclusion

Supporting evidence-based, co-designed plans to tackle household insecurity

1. **Evidence base** through participation: Collating evidence on wider insecurities as well as inequalities of practice and provision, especially from lived experience.
 - 1.1. **Open participation:** Be led by citizens, communities, grassroots practitioners and local contractors who understand the issues with current processes. Encourage direct input into actions and decisions, with a focus on geographically remote and hard-to-reach groups.

Target 16.B: Open planning and direct democracy
ACTION: Develop outreach materials/visits that encourage input from clients/public
 - 1.2. Collect **local evidence** on *all socio-economic inequalities*; (fuel) poverty is multi-factorial and cannot be tackled only through energy efficiency.

Target 16.A: Evidence base
ACTION: Develop an evidence base on local insecurities
 - 1.3. **Map and plan:** Understanding gaps in tackling (fuel) poverty and creating evidence-based strategy through open consultation
Target 17.C: Coordinate fuel poverty action plans
ACTION: Develop an evidence base on poverty support highlighting gaps in service
ACTION: Co-develop a (fuel) poverty action plan through community input
 - 1.4. **Integrate poverty strategies**, monitoring and actions across all domains of insecurity and inequality alleviation, especially for households with complex issues (homeless, addiction etc.)

Target 10.B: Integrate intersectional methods
ACTION: Integrate the fuel poverty action plan into a wider insecurity plan
 - 1.5. **Advocating for change:** Push for action, with support of people and communities, across all insecurities and inequalities, including redistribution of finance, knowledge and benefits and community ownership of assets from development projects:

Target 9.B: Increase local grants for social innovation
*ACTION: Develop **project-based funding** bids for social innovations across priorities.*

Priority 2 – (Digital) Infrastructures

Supporting a free and effective advice service provision

2. Improve **basic services infrastructure:** resource and information sharing across multiple support sectors
 - 2.1. **Data trust:** create community owned infrastructure to allow regulated and secure collection of local (personal) data to create a local evidence base.

Target 16.A/17.C.: Evidence base and ensure planned targets are met
ACTION: Develop a community-based architecture to collect & monitor shared data
 - 2.2. **Orkney referral system:** create a community-led referral system to simplify and improve data sharing between third-sector, health and statutory bodies
Target 17.A.: Implement an Orkney-wide referral system
ACTION: Develop a community-based referral system governed by a data trust
 - 2.3. **THAW 2.0:** create a digital and technology strategy for THAW to improve processes and access for clients, including social media, as well as integrate energy and construction innovations into options for client support.

Internal iii: improve internal IT infrastructures and digital access

ACTION: Develop and enact a THAW digital strategy

- 2.4. **Service Gaps:** Advocate for or initiate action to coordinate development of additional basic service where gaps have been found (e.g. digital, voice in planning etc.)

Target 17.C: Coordinate fuel poverty action plans

ACTION: Create an action plan following review of gaps in services

Priority 3 – Retrofit and Replacement Pathways

Supporting equitable property improvement that is free or affordable

3. Funding for whole-house, tenure agnostic assessment, repair and energy efficiency upgrades with worst first (e.g. incl. income, efficiency and impacts of other intersectionalities)
- 3.1. **Property assessment** and analysis: target properties with the lowest efficiency first and assess financial/social viability of interventions to reach a high efficiency level (B+)
- Target 16.A/internal iv: Evidence base*
- ACTION: Create targeted maps of current housing stock energy efficiency*
- ACTION: Fund and signpost additional energy efficiency/retrofit assessments, including follow-up assessments for monitoring*
- ACTION: Fund, install and analyse sensors for envelope and usage testing, including staff training and client education (energy, temp/humidity, heat loss, air-tightness)*
- 3.2. **Envelope improvement:** Where viable, support or access funds for repair and upgrades to properties to reach a high efficiency level (B+)
- Target 13.A/B: Create an inclusive retrofit/replacement pathway for all households*
- ACTION: Support access to upgrade schemes and bid for gap-filling funds, e.g. for repairs and maintenance, incl. water leaks and draughtproofing*
- ACTION: Gap-fill funds and supply chain for ventilation measures (incl. Air-air)*
- 3.3. **Heating and control:** Upgrade heating systems and controls to simple to use but smart
- Target 13.A/B: Create an inclusive retrofit/replacement pathway for all households*
- ACTION: Gap-fill heating system upgrades*
- ACTION: Assess options for and fund whole house control systems where applicable*
- 3.4. **Alternatives for unviable properties:** Develop options for replacement, rehoming or down-sizing for clients with hard-to-treat properties that are financial unviable for upgrade.
- Target 13.A/B: Create an inclusive retrofit/replacement pathway for all households*
- ACTION: Develop and trial a low-cost emergency housing concept for most difficult cases (e.g. end-of-life, remote, no assets)*
- ACTION: Work more closely with housing associations to support rehoming options*
- 3.5. **Track progress of retrofitting:** Assess household and population wide impacts of support on cost and climate impacts.
- Target 1.A/7.B: Create an inclusive retrofit/replacement pathway for all households*
- ACTION: Assess progress based upon assessments (as above)*

Priority 4 – Funding and incomes

Support access to finance to ensure minimum income and living standards

4. Creating flexible gap-filling grant funds, including income support and working with social finance providers
 - 4.1. **Basic services funding:** Ensure continuity of service across all basic services by coordinating and planning joint funding bids

Target 17.C/internal i: coordinate funding through partnership planning to ensure continuous service
ACTION: Coordinate core and innovation fund bids
 - 4.2. **Flexible funds and partner services:** Creating access to gap-fill funds or partner services supporting access to basic needs

Target 10.C/Partnership targets: transport, food, water, health, work, digital
ACTION: Advocate for or initiate financial support for basic human rights/needs, including those required for access and income
ACTION: Advocate for or initiate support for low-cost, low emission public and private transport, especially for remote households
 - 4.3. **Income:** Work with partners to assess income deficits in relation to the Minimum Income Standard and gap-fill incomes

Target 1.B.: Halve the number of households below 90% of MIS
ACTION: Map income-gaps across Minimum Income Standard categories
ACTION: Support expenditure reduction and develop funds for short-term gap-filling local households below MIS
ACTION: Advocate for changes to local/national policy towards a wellbeing/social solidarity economy.
 - 4.4. **Social finance innovation:** Trial novel methods for household financial support, in particular community-led financing or alternative currency models that shift from debt-orientated systems to investment in community-owned assets.

Target 9.B/17.B: Increase local social innovation grants/trial alternative fund options
ACTION: Increase innovation and development work

Priority 5 - Energy generation, distribution and control

Ensure access and affordability of net-zero technologies

5. Energy control and distribution: Improve household energy monitoring, control and grid links
 - 5.1. **Household control:** Directly intervene in off-peak and smart meter upgrades to ensure adequate control systems are in place for all properties

Target: 11.A/7.A Distribute resilient local energy directly to communities and fuel poor households
ACTION: Fund, build capacity and educate households on low-tech demand-control system options to utilise local/national renewable generation
ACTION: Integrate demand-control systems with monitoring assets (Priority 3)
 - 5.2. **Off-grid heating:** Explore off-grid heating solutions for households requiring higher levels of resilience, particularly on the outer isles.

Target: 10.A/7.A/11.A/11.B Distribute resilient local energy directly to FP households and communities and increase renewable energy assets & support in the isles.
ACTION: Trial off-grid solutions e.g. combining storage heaters with PV generation.

- 5.3. **Community energy infrastructure:** Fund private lines, local control and storage systems to reduce reliance of properties and or transport on national grid energy provision.
Target: 10.A/7.A/11.A/11.B Distribute resilient local energy directly to FP households and communities and Increase community owned energy assets
ACTION: Develop local lines and energy dumps to community assets e.g. DT car shares, community buildings or local distribution to nearby households
ACTION: Develop novel governance methods to share local energy generation/usage benefits to reduce costs across whole communities rather than individual properties

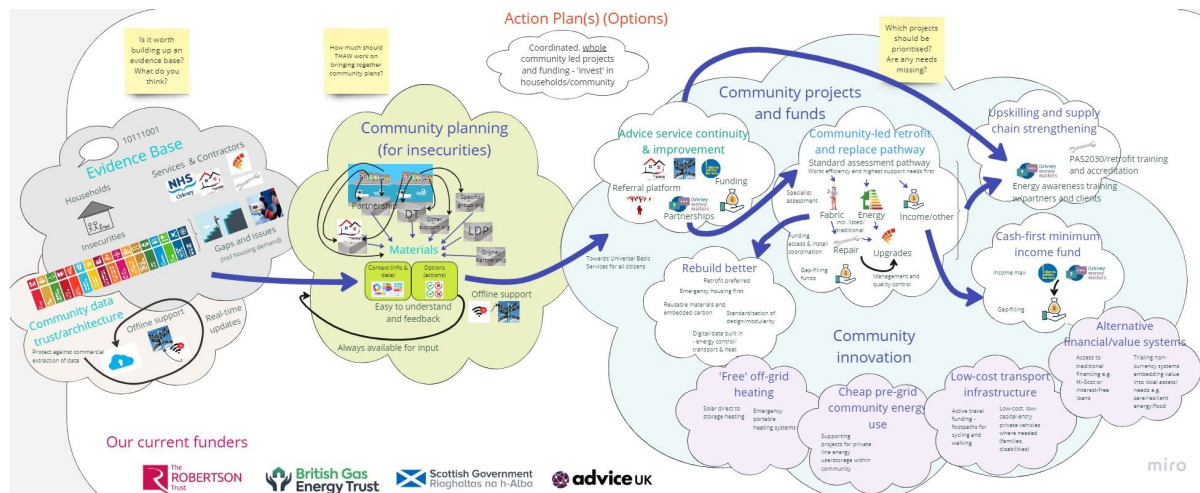
Priority 6 - Capacity and skills

Support supply chain capacity and free access to energy education, skills and knowledge

6. Build up capacity and skills for an inclusive energy transition in Orkney and beyond
- 6.1. **Professional development and Education:** Develop professional development pathways and community educational materials, supporting energy advice development on the isles where required (as directed by Priority 1).
Target: 9.A/4.A/10.A/internal ii: Professionalise advanced energy and sustainability support/advice with support/access for all isles and major groups
ACTION: Improve and share a development pathway for staff and external volunteers to improve professional training and skills in energy awareness.
- 6.2. **Supply chain and planning:** Support contractor upskilling, increase capacity and develop sustainable procurement:
Target: 4.B Increase local capacity in NZ housing, community control & distribution
ACTION: Proactively fund local contractor certification, upskilling and supply chain development to support the energy efficiency, meter and transport goals
ACTION: Coordinate construction supply chain management (incl. QC)
ACTION: Work with local development planning to balance affordable new builds with retrofitting and retirement of old stock across all tenancies and all areas
ACTION: Improve internal processes to integrate responsible consumption, reuse, recycling and nature-based solutions as relevant
- 6.3. **Policy, research and education:** Engage with decision-makers, universities, colleges and schools to integrate THAW's practical experience into policy, research and education.
Target: 4.B Increase local capacity in NZ housing, community control & distribution
ACTION: Where collaborations will support our goals, collaborate with universities on digital/technical research, methods of assessment/monitoring and other topics
ACTION: Contribute to local education and courses that encourage energy awareness
ACTION: Contribute to local/national consultations and planning (Priority 1)
- 6.4. **Global knowledge exchange:** Build global links with relevant international organisations and remote rural communities for knowledge exchange.
Target: 17.C Coordinate fuel poverty action plans and ensure targets are met by 2030
ACTION: Where collaborations will support our goals or improve skills and knowledge, build global links with international organisations and projects

Action plan

The actions suggested within the priorities above have been grouped together into distinct or connected projects that can be scoped for future bids. These have been shared publicly for comment on a Miro board (<https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVM0EJKOA=/>):



As it is public, anyone is invited to critique or modify the rich picture of the Miro board.

The actions and project groups can then be developed into potential funding streams. They have been placed in order of priority, either from urgency or if one action is dependent upon prior completion of another action. Core funding is central to all other actions, whilst community leadership is needed ensure wider impact and sustainability. Once in place, these can lead to additional needs including retrofit pathway development, capacity building and new financial support mechanisms.

POTENTIAL FUNDING STREAMS:

From the priorities and visualised action plan some potential funded projects can be developed. These need to consider spheres of control, i.e. if THAW is **able to do**, *have influence* or have interest in actions required in each stream; this can then be used to build up partnerships as required.

1. Core Funding (including related evidence base)

Advice service continuity and improvement, through core funding bids, is required to enact all other potential projects. This stream is tightly connected to evidence base development, community planning and organisational strategies, allowing bids to be integrated with the needs of communities and local organisations.

Coordination actions:

1.5. Project-based funding bids across priorities

4.1./4.4. Coordinate core bids/social innovation and development bids

2. Community Planning Funding (including related evidence base)

Participative outreach and strategy development are key to ensuring ownership, efficacy and therefore impact of any potential project work. This therefore feeds into the core funding stream to create strong, sustainable, co-developed community projects.

Local collaborative actions:

1.1. Develop participative outreach materials

1.3./1.4. Co-develop FP action plan-> insecurity plan through community input:

Plan for service

2.3./6.2. THAW digital strategy/THAW internal processes for responsible consumption

6.1./6.3. Contribute to local energy awareness education

Local/national strategy actions:

6.2. Local development planning for retrofitting & retirement of stock

3.4. Work with housing providers on rehoming

5.3. Governance to share local energy benefits to reduce costs

6.3. Contribute to local/national consultations and planning

4.3. Advocate for policies towards wellbeing/social solidarity economy.

3. Technical Capacity and Solutions funding

This funding is central to long-term action on fuel poverty, but is dependent upon the first two funds to ensure base capacity and legitimacy respectively. Although lumped into a single stream, there are many areas of technical capacity that require development; many are

related in some way to domestic property upgrades, but it is also important to ensure technical capacity within wider support services.

A priority for housing is capacity development; although we have some assessment, repair, install and coordination capacity in Orkney, there is not enough capacity and insufficient coordination for current needs. Upskilling could grow the local supply chain and improve retrofit assessment and coordination. This includes developing capacity in electrical monitoring and control systems to ensure access to cheaper energy sources. This capacity can be used within an integrated housing repair, retrofit and replacement service.

A priority for support services is to improve access and integration. Solutions such as digital referral systems and technical support and energy awareness within communities can help widen the impact of their work. Mapping gaps and overlaps in support services could also point to the need for better integration and capacity building, including the potential for 'General Practitioner' training to encourage access across a wider spectrum of household support than energy/money.

Supply chain/advice capacity development

Many supply chain issues will be beyond the control of THAW, but we can encourage good practice and contractor engagement through commissioning of installations within a clear pathway. This can include encouragement of accreditation where it would benefit our clients.

There would also be a benefit for capacity building within the advice and support sector to simplify and facilitate referrals between organisations.

Coordination actions:

6.2. Supply chain gaps - Gaps in contractor/supply chain provision

6.2. Fund contractor upskilling

6.2. Coordinate construction supply chain management (incl. QC)

6.1. Professional/community development pathway in energy awareness/sustainability.

2.2. Community-based referral system, data trust governed

Property retrofit/replacement pathway

Related to the improvement of the supply chain, it is within THAW's position to improve property assessment as well as seed fund repair and improvement services where there are limited options available locally.

Within this area it will be important to explore options for low-tech monitoring and control systems within properties and how these might be integrated with renewable generation. The disconnect between local generation and its use is a potential area for reductions in energy costs for clients but is fraught with technical and governance issues. One method to avoid community sharing of energy is to fund small private generation systems; this may be prohibitively expensive, except perhaps in edge cases where retrofitting is untenable and energy generation is more feasible than rebuilding.

Rebuilding is a potential option in situations where retrofit or energy generation is not cost-effective. In this situation a community owned new build, with affordable rent and an option for purchase within the community mandate model could be a relatively fast way to respond to households below tolerable standard that are unable to move into LA/OHAL social housing.

Finally, an area that needs further development is the reduction of transport costs, including both methods to reduce one-off trip costs in rural area but also to have options for active travel. Subsidising access to low carbon private transport or development of new paths for long distance active travel could provide more options for households.

Coordination actions - Assessments:

3.1. Energy efficiency/retrofit assessments & follow-up

3.1. Fund, install, analyse sensors (energy, temp/humidity, heat loss, air-tightness) including staff training

Coordination actions - Repair & upgrade fund access:

3.2. Access to upgrade schemes and gap-filling funds – repairs

5.1. Integrate demand-control systems with monitoring

3.2./5.3. ventilation & Air-air/other heating systems gap-fill

3.3. Funds for whole house control system

5.1. Fund, build, educate - low-tech demand-control systems

5.2. Trial off-grid - storage heaters & PV generation

Coordination actions - New build replacement:

3.4. Low-cost emergency new builds

Coordination actions - *Wider energy systems:*

4.2. Low-cost, low emission public and private transports

5.3. Private lines and dumps

Coordination actions - Retrofit monitoring:

5.5. Track retrofit progress from (re-)assessment

4. Financial Support funding

Income/other support pathways (Cash-first and psycho-social support) are within the services of other agencies and therefore not the main focus of THAW. However, as a primary agency involved in poverty alleviation in Orkney, our client's experiences and challenges can provide a good evidence base for inputting into cash-first and other types of intervention. THAW has focussed on psycho-social interventions (support for clients, education and advocacy), with some gap-filling funding for installations and more recent voucher-based cash support. These people-orientated interventions should still be our main focus (eg through community planning and development of referral systems) but we also know that sometimes the only barrier is a failure of income or welfare support. In these situations,

especially where child poverty or end of life care is involved, it is important to have options to directly support households.

Coordination actions:

4.2. Financial support for basic needs:

4.3. Advice and funds for gap-filling households below MIS

4.2. (Advocacy for improved levels of benefits)

5. Evidence Base Funding

An evidence base provides greater legitimacy for key activities as well as providing context for community planning. Although key to all the other streams, funding specific work on data and evidence collection has been placed as a low priority. THAW's main strengths are in practical action and its primary purpose is to direct support its clients. Evidence base development, however, may be supported through external organisations, including development trusts and universities. Again, the multi-factorial aspect of energy poverty suggests that research would need to explore a wide rather than narrow evidence base.

Research and development actions:

6.3. Collaborate with universities on digital/technical research, assessments/monitoring

6.4. Global links with international organisations and projects

1.2. Evidence base on insecurities

4.3. Map income-gaps across MIS

3.1. Targeted maps of housing energy efficiency

1.3. Evidence base on support services (incl. map of gaps)

2.4. Action plan following review of gaps in services

Community-based data collection and architecture actions:

2.1. Develop a community-based architecture to collect & monitor shared data

Current/future funding streams:

	Action	Spring 2024	Current/future bids
1	Core Funding	-BGET – 2 ESAs 0.5 Admin, 0.4 manage. until Mar 2026 -2 ESA (COLTF/Nat Lot) until March 2025	-Redress – 2 ESAs 0.5 management -Robertson – 1-2 ESAs
2	Community planning funds	-0.5 outreach until Mar 24 (Advice UK)	-Position within above bids -Advice UK cont. funds?
3	Technical/capacity funding	All until March 24: -Flexible repairs/installs (LACER) -Funding development (OMM) BGET 2026 funding -Energy Assessment Training	Assess/repair/install funds: -Other capital funds? New build funds: SLF, RIHF, OIC RHF, OIC CDF, OIC Crown Estate, SHNZHF (with social housing) Redress: -Innovation - supply chain dev/retrofit officer & Property data role -Main – Isles ESA roles Other: -Off-grid/pre-grid/transport?
4	Financial support funds	-Electricity vouchers (various) -Flexible fund (cash restricted)	-Vouchers/flexible fund – core funds & OMM/cash first? -Minimum income fund?
5	Evidence base funding	-Funding development (OMM)	-Wider Sustainability GP/data role?

Power and barrier analysis

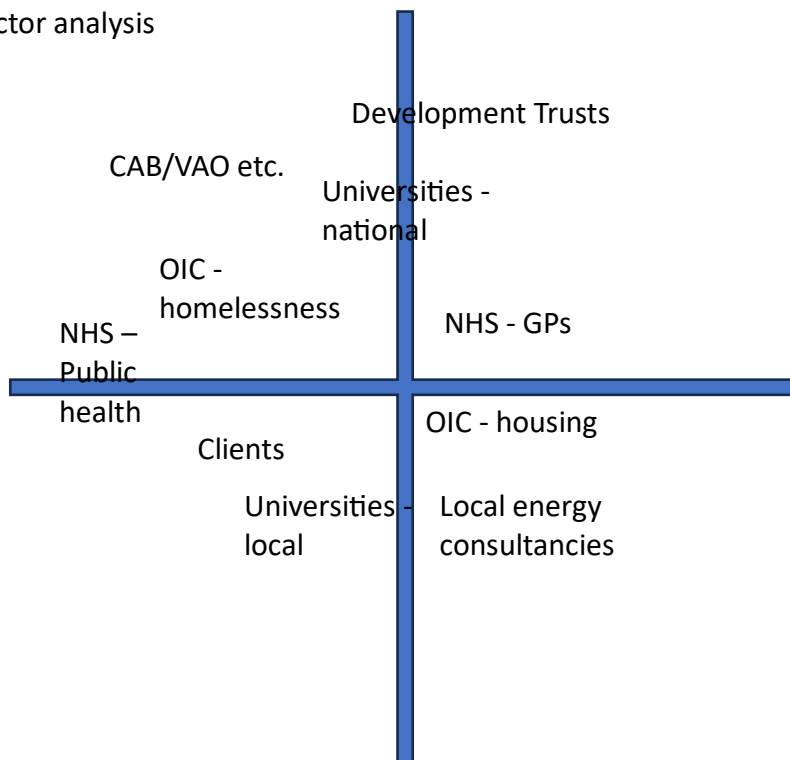
-Stakeholder/actor analysis

POSITIVE
INFLUENCE WITH
SIMILAR PURPOSE,
VALUES, AND
CULTURE

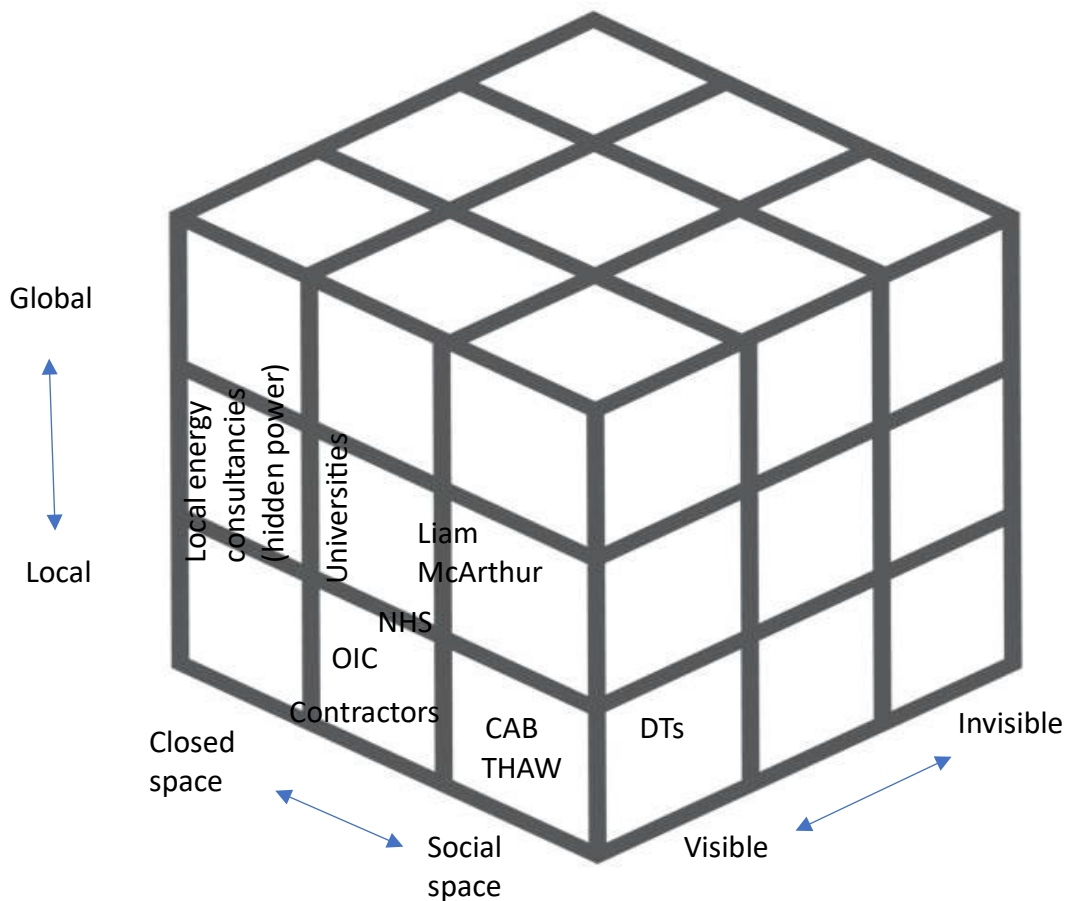
POSITIVE
INFLUENCE WITH
DIFFERENT
PURPOSE, VALUES,
AND CULTURE

WEAK INFLUENCE
NOW – BUT
POTENTIAL FOR
FUTURE
COLLABORATION

NEGATIVE
INFLUENCE – HOW
TO COUNTER,
MITIGATE, OR
PERSUADE?



-Powercube



Power and barrier analysis details:

THAW

THAW itself has become a powerful stakeholder in many of our client's lives. By progressively improving our service and providing increasing levels of (financial) support, we have an increasing power imbalance and can be seen in a patriarchal light. However much we try to avoid this imbalance by encouraging clients to choose their own path and avoiding restrictive criteria for eligibility, we can still hold a significant level of power over some of our clients. Methods to avoid this power imbalance further could include greater transparency and clarity over our processes as well as asking for direct input into our service design at all stages, with clear actions in response to inputs and feedback to clients after considering suggestions. Another option would be to offer to automatically enrol new clients as members, with participative forums/voting rights on our strategic direction or other decision-making.

THAW clients

There is no one type of THAW client. Our clients run across all types of personality, socio-economic position and other demographic features. Thus, some are highly privileged whilst others have very little agency; although THAW attempts to find a balance between not being bullied by those that expect support immediately whilst also finding ways to reach out to those who are not comfortable to seek support, it is a difficult balance to find. Similarly, some clients may have wealth or assets that they have not disclosed, whilst others have several additional challenges that they are reticent to discuss. Our philosophy is to provide support when it is asked for in the first instance and trust that the ask is genuine; we do have checks to avoid external and internal fraud, but these are initially very light touch and only deployed if an advisor deems it necessary. Again, although there is purposely little resistance in initial enquiries, we use graded assessments as a method for access to longer-term support.

Again, this can be seen as a power imbalance since we require clients to reveal their personal information to access more support. We could further emphasise that all questions are optional (except for any evidence required to access external funds) and, again, make the process clearer from the outset. We have a notice regarding abusive behaviour towards our staff, but the protocol in such a situation could be made more transparent; in general, most clients understand they will no longer receive support if they intimidate our staff.

THAW partners

Again, there is not one type of THAW partner organisation. We work with hierarchical, management-heavy, uncompromising groups as much as agile, small, chaotic groups. There does appear to be a cultural divide between those groups working to represent and advocate on behalf of households and those working to develop external services for use by households; some services can be very structured and rigid with a culture of process-driven efficiencies, whilst advocate groups are more likely to work more flexibly. Of course, it is a spectrum between these extremes, but these cultural differences can also appear highly gendered, with a more feminine culture in work related to care and wellbeing, and a more masculine culture within groups working on planning and practical interventions. THAW

focusses on care and wellbeing foremost towards support with practical interventions and does not see this work as engendered.

However, there is a power imbalance caused by a bias in larger-scale funding distribution towards infrastructure projects that do not consider psycho-social factors, equities or intersectional analysis. For example, the Redress grant scheme focusses primarily on qualitatively wide distribution of short-term energy advice which, although important, is much less effective than long-term person-centred support that is backed up by practical and/or financial support.

Similarly, large-scale, publicly funded infrastructure projects are more likely to be developed by the local authority than large-scale social support interventions. Agencies that may not follow this trend are the NHS, which successfully inhabits the middle-ground between these extremes but with a primary focus on care, and Education, which again focusses on person-centred development. These partners are most likely to be safer for avoiding power imbalances.

Universities and local consultancies also tread a fine balance between these extremes but seem more likely to focus on physical changes and highly specialised areas of interest rather than wider community, household and personal support, with some notable exceptions. As holders of specialist skills, they often have hidden power that is not publicly visible and may not be transparent in their activities or motivations. There is also a clear revolving door between the public, university and consultancy sectors which implicitly blocks non-university, non-privileged, non-technical backgrounds from access to power. These partners are therefore more difficult to read and are riskier as partners.

Community groups and umbrella organisations may have less financial power, but are often more representative of local households and democratic processes. However, the distributed nature, small size/capacity, insecure funding and often disparate motivations and cultures of these organisations make them more difficult to work with over long periods. However, beyond direct household interactions, anchor organisations can provide a more direct connection to clients in more remote areas.

Gender analysis

Please note this was drafted by the IDL who is a privileged, white, middle-aged male. It is likely therefore be completely incorrect. Hopefully someone more qualified will update the analysis as the work continues.

Current situation:

- The status of women and their ability to exercise their human rights;

There is a clear gender gap in poverty levels, pay-gaps and in power structures. Although women are nominally able to exercise their human rights, there are clear signs of discrimination against women, including unacceptably high levels of domestic abuse, unequal distribution following relationship breakdowns and unequal responsibility for unpaid care.

- The gender division of labour and workload of women;

Women on average are paid less than men, with higher levels of part-time work.

- Access to and control over resources of women as compared to men (including mobility);
No data and some signs of equal access and control in some households, but equally multiple signs of unequal control due to domestic abuse.

- Influence of women in decision-making at household, community and society levels (as compared to men);

As stated, there are significantly fewer women in positions of power in larger organisations within Orkney, except within the NHS or within self-employment.

- Self-determination of women over their body, reproduction and sexuality;
No data has been researched.

- Social beliefs and norms about gender roles: what women and men should and should not do and be; images of women in society;

Although there appear to be some positive gender norms locally within agriculture and improving gender roles within engineering, this is primarily restricted to professional roles and is much less prevalent at the contractor level. Similarly, there appear to be quite strong traditional gender norms within local culture, even though there is also a culture of more open acceptance overall. Social norms can therefore be quite fluid and are very dependent upon context and the people involved. That said, there are signs of an often unspoken backlash against contemporary gender roles.

- Violence against women;

The presence of a long-term service within a small community is a sign that domestic violence levels are unacceptable. Violence outside the domestic setting is less obvious, but more information needs to be sought.

- Organisational capacity of women and representation of women's interests. NB When we speak of 'women' and 'men': who do we mean? Which women, which men?

There are often strong representations of 'women' within professional situations, especially within consultancies and highly specialised work, with self-organisation prevalent. There are also multiple created spaces within local situations that provide means for representation. Similarly, there are more male-orientated groups that may be less welcoming and therefore self-select against female members. Again, all of these groups typically favour highly skilled and educated people, even though the groups do actively create events that are open to the wider public. There is a clear lack of representation for more disadvantaged groups, typically because there is no established motivation for self-organisation, a small population from which to draw support and the influence of time-poverty, lower educational levels and other poverty premiums on more disadvantaged groups.

Problem analysis and mapping of the underlying Theory of Change:

- How is the desired change formulated? How do women benefit from this change and is it significant for them? Are the targeted group, participants, and end beneficiaries, defined explicitly in terms of gender?

The desired change is formulated around people-focussed, partnership-based change towards reducing energy inequalities, with gender as a key intersectionality. Although women are not explicitly written into the problem, priorities are developed through feedback and experiences of clients, and there are a higher proportion of female clients. We wish to improve affordable warmth through energy efficiency and other support; this can benefit all members of a household. Our work is, however, focussed more on those with the least access to support, of which we have found there to be higher proportions of women. Our work does also consider designs and leverage points that are suggested to have more relevance to women. The designs and methods do therefore explicitly consider gender, but there is the potential for further disaggregated feedback to ensure these are actually beneficial.

Are the assumptions about the causal relationships between actions and intended outcomes valid for women? Is the objective as relevant for women as it is for men?

Most of the actions are related to provision of an improved property upgrade service through hand-holding support where needed. This should be gender agnostic, but this is an assumption and may not hold especially due to the forementioned gender bias within trades. An explicit gender-focus on trade-upskilling and capacity development should be part of any work in this area, although this is designated as an area of influence rather than action for THAW; therefore THAW should advocate for greater gender equity in this area.

What specific women's needs are addressed? Are these made explicit?

None in particular – this could be improved.

Assumptions and resources:

- What assumptions are being made by the intervention about gender roles, and the gender division of access to and control over resources, workload and decision-making?
- No assumptions are made during intervention, although staff are sensitive to safeguarding signs. Typically it is always assumed that a client must have a safe space to reveal sensitive information, whatever their gender. This can include offering a different gender of advisor when required. Similarly, within power analyses, men are assumed to have greater privileges or access to power and potentially less understanding of social inequalities. Control of

decisions that may be more gender sensitive (the majority within the context of poverty) is therefore preferred to be led by female staff with lived experience where possible, with a preference for supportive roles from male staff. Although this may be incorrect, it avoids unconscious bias or support of inappropriate or false gender norms.

- What specific programme strategies are included to enhance women's access to and decision-making power over resources?

This could be further developed to explore what participative methods would better support women's access. Some work on this has begun, including collaborations with health and education settings to support wider access, which may support women's access.

Outcomes and benefits

- What are the outcomes - bearing in mind unintended outcomes - in the sense of benefits of this intervention?

A gender analysis of the defined actions would be beneficial to ensure that they do not cause unintended or gender-adverse outcomes.

Strategic gender interests






- Does this intervention address women's strategic gender interests?





Depending upon the specific view of strategic gender interests there is either a focus from confrontational emancipation to wider systemic actualisation and enabling. Although acknowledging the need for protest and advocacy, THAW's primary purpose is enabling and pathway support. This is therefore true of our approach to gender interests, with more focus on strategic leverage and soft power than direct attack. To some extent mutual enabling should have explicit potential to address women's strategic gender needs. For example, acceptance of our clients' views are necessary to enable our work, but we can also validly disagree with these views even if we accept them; indeed, extreme views seem often borne out of lack of care and exclusion. We support those that are not socially accepted, including men who directly restrict female agency; again, we bias towards greater female support but will not refuse support to those that need it. A more effective way to combat such issues may be to provide development opportunities for better cultural norms for men, following the work of Bell Hooks, but this is again outwith our primary work-area. We can however advocate for this where related to our education and outreach work.

Appendix 1 – THAW Core Target indicators and measurement

-Indicator selection (relevant measurable?)

Combined with the goals and targets this can provide an over-arching theory of change.

	Target	Indicators	Data source(s) – <i>not in place</i>
	Target 1.A: Reduce energy costs in Orkney to below the national average by 2030 Target 1.B: Halve the number of households below 90% of MIS by 2030	Indicator 1.A: Cost gap between average Orkney and national energy bills (target <= 0) Indicator 1.B: Household income (target = 90% of MIS)	Indicator 1.A: Client fuel costs (THAW), national average fuel costs (ScotGov) Indicator 1.B: Household income (THAW), demographic (THAW), MIS (Loughborough University)
	Target 7.A: Distribute 25% of resilient local energy directly to FP households by 2030 Target 7.B: Upgrade all possible coal and oil systems for electric heating by 2030	Indicator 7.A.1: Community owned generation per year. Indicator 7.A.2: Load used by FP clients from local generation per year. (target = 25% of B.1.1) Indicator 7.B: Percentage of coal/oil systems (target < 10%)	Indicator 7.A.1: Community owned generation (CES) Indicator 7.A.2: Client fuel costs (THAW), Property assessment (THAW) Indicator 7.B: Property assessment (THAW)
	Target 10.A: Ensure fair distribution of energy support across all isles by 2030 Target 10.B: Include intersectional methods across all support services by 2030	Indicator 10.A: Percentage of clients in geographic areas correlated against population (target <20% deviation) Indicator 10.B: Percent of services including intersectional assessment (target 100% by 2030)	Indicator 10.A: Client numbers (THAW), Geographical populations (ScotGov) Indicator 10.B: Count of assessments with intersectional parameters (THAW)
	Target 4.A: Energy awareness support available across all isles and major groups by 2030 Target 4.B: Increase local capacity in NZ housing, community control & distribution by 50% by 2030	Indicator 4.A: Explicitly funded staff time divided by number of isles and major support groups (target average 10% FTE by 2030) Indicator 4.B.1: Number of retrofit professionals in Orkney Indicator 4.B.2: Number of household renewables/smart control installers (both divided by baseline 2023, target 150%)	Indicator 4.A: Staff time (THAW), <i>list of major groups/isles</i> (THAW) Indicator 4.B.1: Qualified assessors/coordinators (Elmhurst/MCS) Indicator 4.B.2: <i>List of local smart control/renewables installers</i> (THAW)
	Target 11.A: Distribute 50% of local energy to direct community use by 2030 Target 11.B: Increase community owned energy assets by 50% by 2030	Indicator 11.A: Community-used generation divided by community-owned generation per year (target 150%) Indicator 11.B: Number of community owned assets divided by 2023 baseline (target 150%)	Indicator 11.A: Community-used generation (CES), Community owned generation (CES) Indicator 11.B: Community owned gen. & assets (CES)

	<p>Target 16.A: Build an inclusive community-based evidence base on insecurities by 2025.</p> <p>Target 16.B: Integrate open co-design and direct democracy into poverty planning by 2025.</p>	<p>Indicator 16.A: Creation of a joint evidence base through CPP (target complete by 2025)</p> <p>Indicator 16.B: Percentage of client feedback responding with 'collaboration' or 'empowerment' with regards to participation (target 75%)</p>	<p>Indicator 16.A: Cost of living tracker (COLTF)</p> <p>Indicator 16.B: Feedback forms (THAW)</p>
	<p>Target 9.A: Professionalise advanced energy and sustainability support/advice training by 2027</p> <p>Target 9.B: Increase local grants for social innovation in energy</p>	<p>Indicator 9.A: Creation of a standard professional development pathway for local employees (complete 2027)</p> <p>Indicator 9.B: Innovation grants confirmed against 2023 baseline (increase 200%)</p>	<p>Indicator 9.A: Annual report (THAW)</p> <p>Indicator 9.B: Annual report (THAW)</p>
	<p>Target 17.A: Implement an Orkney-wide referral system by 2030</p> <p>Target 17.B: Trial alternative options for funding, incl. commons or social finance systems by 2025</p> <p>Target 17.C: Coordinate fuel poverty action plans and ensure targets are met by 2030.</p>	<p>Indicator 17.A: Completion of an Orkney-wide referral system by 2030 (target complete)</p> <p>Indicator 17.B: Completion of an innovation project in alternative finance by 2025 (target complete)</p> <p>Indicator 17.C.1: Inclusion of a THAW priority in >75% of OIC and local trust development plans (target >75%)</p> <p>Indicator 17.C.1: Number of sub-indicators on target for 2030. (Target >75%)</p>	<p>Indicator 17.A: Cost of living tracker (COLTF)</p> <p>Indicator 17.B: Annual report (THAW)</p> <p>Indicator 17.C: Annual report (THAW), Development and fuel poverty plans (OIC and local trusts)</p>
	<p>Target 13.A: Create an inclusive retrofit/replacement pathway for all households by 2025.</p> <p>Target 13.B: Reduce CO2 emission in all housing by 80% by 2030</p>	<p>Indicator 13.A: Completion of an inclusive retrofit/ replacement pathway by 2025. (target complete)</p> <p>Indicator 13.B: Total emissions of households at final contact divided by total at first contact (target 80% reduction)</p>	<p>Indicator 13.A: Annual report (THAW)</p> <p>Indicator 13.B: EPC levels pre/post installs (THAW, national database)</p>