

WEST HARRIS TRUST



143

people now live on the land,
up from 119 in 2010

6

affordable homes were
built for rent in partnership
with Hebridean Housing
Partnership

2

wind turbines (one
50kw and one 100kw)
and a 100kw hydro
installed

Pontoon

and shorebase
installed in 2014

Mixed tourist
business
development

in a former school
building purchased
for office use in 2014

500m²

community enterprise
centre will open in
2017

63%

of people are now
economically active,
up from 58%

West Harris Trust bought over 17,000 acres of land from the Scottish Government in January 2010. The population was declining and there was only one child under five in the community, leading to the closure of the primary school.

Due to the beautiful location, much of the local housing had been bought for use as second homes and holiday homes. The only guaranteed income that came from the land when it was bought was £1800 per year in croft rents.

The Trust has focused on reversing depopulation, which was threatening the viability of the community and it set itself the target of increasing economic activity and increasing the population to

130 in 2015 and 170 in 2020.

The community enterprise centre Talla na Mara, which means the "Centre by the Sea" and looks out onto the Sound of Taransay, will include a community venue, restaurant, gallery space, three offices, four business units, facilities for motorhomes and an EV charging point. Ten new full-time jobs have been created as a result of the centre being built.

The Trust's future plans include renovating the school to create more business space and tourist facilities such as camping pods. They also plan to construct four to six more affordable housing units.

"It has given hope for the future that the local community will be something more than a holiday home resort in 20 years' time. For the first time the community is shaping its own future."