

# Response ID ANON-WWGG-JQ19-1

Submitted to **National Islands Plan and Island Communities Impact Assessments**

Submitted on **2019-07-26 15:05:51**

## Questions

**1 If applicable, which island(s) do you live on or do you relate to?**

**If applicable, which island(s) do you live on or do you relate to?:**

n/a

**2 If applicable, what is good about living on your island? Please state 3 things that you like about living on your island.**

**What is good about living on your island? Please state 3 things that you like about living on your island.:**

n/a

**3 If you've moved away from your island, please tell us why you left (for example, was it for work opportunities or for education).**

**If you've moved away from your island, please tell us why you left (for example, was it for work opportunities or for education)?:**

n/a

**4 If you've moved away from your island, please tell us what, if anything you miss about island life.**

**If you've moved away from your island, please tell us what, if anything you miss about island life.:**

n/a

**5 If possible, please can you give us some examples of good local initiatives/projects/activities, etc.?**

**If possible, please can you give us some examples of good local initiatives/projects/activities, etc.?:**

The plan for Stromness was awarded the Silver Jubilee Cup, at the Royal Town Planning Institute's Awards for Planning Excellence in 2018. It also won in the Excellence in Planning for a Successful Economy category. The Awards for Planning Excellence are the most established and respected awards in the UK planning industry.

Planners at Orkney Islands Council led a whole-of-council task force to implement the 10-year plan that has transformed the declining town following the community warning Stromness was being 'left behind'.

Over the past 10 years, the plan has resulted in 12 major projects implemented across the town, including new and upgraded public spaces, new shops and businesses and a new primary school. The library was not only rebuilt and moved to a new site – in the centre of the town, at the community's request - to ensure it was accessible to everyone. A new fishing pier was built with European funding, and new business and industrial spaces were allocated near the pier. The council have also begun work for a new international research facility and infrastructure for tidal and wave energy generation.

All this were the result of council planners working closely with the community and involving them from the very start, using a 'blank page approach' to establish the community's key priorities. A draft plan was drawn up, which was then shaped by community events, meetings and surveys, plus well attended community workshops

**6 The Islands (Scotland) Act lists a number of areas that are relevant for islands and island communities. Please rank these in order of priority for you, with 1 being the highest priority.**

**6 - Depopulation:**

**6 - Economic development:**

**6 - Environmental protection:**

**6 - Health and wellbeing:**

**6 - Community empowerment:**

**6 - Transport:**

**6 - Digital connectivity:**

**6 - Fuel poverty:**

**6 - Land management:**

**6 - Biosecurity:**

No

**7 If you answered no, is there anything else that you believe the National Islands Plan should address?**

**5. If you answered no, is there anything else that you believe the National Islands Plan should address? :**

- Climate Change
- Affordable housing
- Environmental enhancement
- Low carbon infrastructure, including renewable energy
- Marine planning
- Land Reform

**8 If applicable, are there any specific challenges about living on your island? Please state 3 challenges about living on your island.**

**If applicable, are there any specific challenges about living on your island? Please state 3 challenges about living on your island. :**

n/a

**9 If you've moved away, please tell us about any challenges that you experienced whilst you were living on your island.**

**If you've moved away, please tell us about any challenges that you experienced whilst you were living on your island.:**

n/a

**10 If applicable, what could be done to make living on your island better?**

**What could be done to make living on your island better?:**

n/a

**11 How do you feel the National Islands Plan should address and respond to the distinctive geographical, natural heritage and cultural characteristics (including the linguistic heritage) of local island communities, including the needs of Gaelic speakers within those communities?**

**How do you feel the National Islands Plan should address and respond to the distinctive geographical, natural heritage and cultural characteristics (including the linguistic heritage) of local island communities, including the needs of Gaelic speakers within those communities?:**

Geographical

The Scottish Islands have unique and broad geographical characteristics. At this time it is unclear as to what spatial elements will be included in the National Island Plan (NIP). It is important that the NIP sets out clear relationship with wider local, regional and national plans and strategies including:

- National Planning Framework 4
- Regional Spatial Strategies
- Local Development Plans including open space strategies and forestry and woodland strategies
- The Land Use Strategy
- The National Marine Plan
- Marine Spatial Plans
- National Infrastructure Plan
- The National Transport Strategy
- Regional Economic Partnerships
- National Energy Strategy

In order to achieve alignment with other plans and strategies, clarity on the production, ownership of and timeframes of the NIP need elucidated. Of particular relevance to the NIP, RTPI Scotland would like to highlight new regional arrangements in the Planning (Bill) Scotland as passed, in which Regional Spatial Strategies (RSSs) have replaced Strategic Development Plans. Provisions for RSSs will allow for a more flexible approach to regional working, intended to be a more relevant and responsive bridge between national and local scale planning. RSSs could provide the most appropriate geographical scale to articulate the future vision of the Scottish islands. RTPI Scotland would wish for further clarity between the intended future relationship of the plans.

When considering the unique geography of Scotland's islands it is important to stress the connection between the marine and terrestrial environments. RTPI Scotland would support the close alignment between the NIP and the outcome of Scotland's coastal change assessment 'Dynamic Coast', due to be completed by the end of 2019. This will evaluate the extent of natural coastal flood protections, the impact of climate on coastal erosion and the use of technology to develop adaptation and resilience plans. This will help inform local authorities when developing any Shoreline Management Plans but will also feed into the formation of any associated Marine Planning Partnerships or Regional Marine Plans.

The sometimes sparsely populated and geographically remote island communities have particular challenges in terms of connectivity. Therefore RTPI Scotland would encourage the NIP to address this issue in the round, considering both digital connectivity and solutions for sustainable forms of active and public transport.

Natural Heritage

The need to protect the beauty and uniqueness of Scotland's natural heritage should be embedded in the NIP. This has strong economic benefits for local communities in terms of supporting the growth of sustainable tourism but can also help achieve national ambitions as set out in the Nature Conservation (Scotland) 2004, the 2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity, Scottish Forestry Strategy and Scotland's Geodiversity Charter. RTPI Scotland would support a more positive approach to landscape design and management, both in the context of designated and non-designated areas. To do so RTPI Scotland would support a NIP that encourages the participation of local communities in the assessment of landscape characteristics and quality, including in the statutory

designation process. This could be undertaken through the community planning process through the production of Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs).

## Cultural Heritage

The Scottish islands have unique and vibrant cultural identities and a wealth of locally and nationally important heritage and archaeological assets. RTPI Scotland would like to highlight provisions in the Planning (Scotland) Bill for Local Place Plans (LPPs). In particular, through the preparation of LPPs, community bodies can identify land and buildings that it considers to be of particular significance to the local community. LPPs should inform and be informed by reviews of LOIPs, Locality Plans and LDPs and associated delivery programmes as part of the planning cycle. In terms of geographical, natural and cultural heritage a clear link between LPPs, LOIPs, Locality Plans, LDPs and the NIP would be of great value to the plan.

## General Questions Section

### 12 What should be the main objectives for the National Islands Plan?

#### What should be the main objectives for the National Islands Plan?:

1. Delivering the national outcomes

As set out by the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework.

2. Adherence to the Place Principle

Service provision has always been a challenge for rural areas. Evolving service provision to be more flexible will be important to address diverse needs and challenges of small communities spread across large geographical areas. The purpose of the Place Principle is to bring together all those responsible for providing services and looking after assets in a place to work and plan together, and with local communities, to improve the lives of people, support inclusive growth and create more successful places. Going forward it is important that true interdisciplinary buy-in from all key stakeholders is achieved.

3. Diversifying and connecting island economic development

Enabling new, better-paid and diverse employment opportunities is a key part of any challenge to island communities. The future of agricultural support is uncertain in a post-Brexit economy which may increase pressure to diversify. Assistance needs to be given to island communities to enable them not only to survive but thrive.

4. Supply of affordable housing

In many of Scotland's islands there are particular issues facing local communities in seeking to increase the supply of affordable housing to support the longer-term sustainability of smaller island settlements.

5. Contribution towards Scottish Government's environmental targets

Increasing sustainability in the context of climate change whilst conserving and enhancing island landscapes to ensure food security, environmental protection and access to nature for society is a key challenge.

### 13 What should be the key priorities for the Scottish Government in relation to the National Islands Plan?

#### What should be the key priorities for the Scottish Government in relation to the National Islands Plan?:

- Collaborative coproduction with a range of stakeholders, across public sector, local communities and the private sector
- Alignment with other policy and relevant plans
- Devising measurable targets which are outcomes focused
- Ensuring effective resourcing is available to prepare, monitor and deliver the plan

### 14 What should be taken into account in terms of the functions of relevant authorities within the National Islands Plan?

#### What should be taken into account in terms of the functions of relevant authorities within the National Islands Plan?:

- How to ensure a culture of partnership working and collaboration is nurtured
- How the plan will be monitored
- The deliverability of the plan, including production of action plans and delivery programmes
- Resources available and current capacity of relevant authorities.
- Further policy guidance
- The Place Principle

### 15 How can we measure outcomes in relation to the National Islands Plan?

#### How can we measure outcomes in relation to the National Islands Plan?:

RTPI Scotland supports the monitoring and performance frameworks that measure the success of interventions beyond the usual performance related metrics in local government, such as evaluating the quality of places as an outcome. RTPI Scotland would like to highlight a recently launched research project to measuring the outcomes of planning. RTPI Scotland are extremely interested in working with Scottish Government to support the development of new statutory annual performance reports in planning, but more broadly, how social, economic and environmental outcomes could be added to local authority monitoring processes without adding undue burden to officers.

### 16 If you have any further comments or points that you think should be taken into account in the development of The National Islands Plan, please state these below.

If you have any further comments or points that you think should be taken into account in the development of The National Islands Plan, please state these below.:

No comment.

## Island Communities Impact Assessment

### 17 Can you name any policies, strategies or services that don't work very well for your island? Why do you feel they don't work well?

Name one policy or law you can think of that doesn't work very well for your island because the impact on the island was not properly assessed?:

No comment

### 18 On the other hand, can you name any policies, strategies or services that DO work well for your island? Please tell us what it is about these that works so well.

On the other hand, can you name any policies, strategies or services that DO work well for your island? Please tell us what it is about these that works so well. :

The Place Standard tool has been used to great effect in Shetlands to facilitate engagement, community empowerment and corporate dialogue, resulting in place-based actions. Due to its broad scope the Place Standard tool produces a wide range of information which is useful to inform service provision across the public private, community and voluntary sectors. In Shetland, the survey results produced from consultation events that took place in 2016 provided evidence for the Main Issues Report, the Making Places initiative and masterplanning engagement. It also influenced a range of policies and strategies including:

- LOIP
- LDP
- Shetland Local Housing Strategy,
- Shetland Transport Strategy
- Shetland Islands Health and Social Care Partnership Joint Strategic Commissioning Plan

### 19 How can Scottish Ministers and other relevant authorities involve island communities in assessments?

Online surveys, Focus groups, Public meetings, Paper documents, Other

If you answered other, please specify: :

The Place Standard Tool

The Place Standard Tool has been jointly designed by NHS Health Scotland, the Scottish Government and Architecture & Design Scotland and allows to assess places based on 14 questions which are answered on a 1 to 7 scoring system. This tool enables discussions around a place to be structured and can outline the strengths and weaknesses of a place. This tool is now also available online and as an app which allows communities and individuals to assess a place anywhere at any time. The tool should be regarded as a conversation starter which can inform the plan making process. However in does not in itself allow communities to influence decision making.

Charrettes

In 2011/2012 Charrettes were introduced by the Scottish Government and defined as "an interactive design process, in which the public and stakeholders work directly with a specialised design team to generate a community vision, masterplan and action plan". This process can take places over several weeks. Since 2011, 48 charrettes have been funded by the Scottish Government and additional funding was released for the 2016/2017 period. Moving forward, outcomes from Charrettes and Place Standards Tools could contribute towards the evidence base by which Local Places Plans (LPPs) are drafted.

Community Planning and Local Place Plans

Community planning brings together public bodies and communities to improve public services by establishing Community Planning Partnerships, Local Improvement Outcome Plans and Locality Plans. Currently in the Planning (Bill) Scotland provisions have been retained for LPPs. These community led plans will be recognised and supported in the community planning and spatial planning systems. RTPI Scotland believes that linking community planning and Local Place Plans with spatial planning will improve community's access to information and therefore capability of producing robust, informed plans. Community plans will then be able to inform local development plans and regional strategies and associated delivery programmes, and vice versa. Ultimately LPP will allow communities to direct land uses. It is therefore important for landowners to get involved in the allocation of land and delivery of LPP. The opportunity to share key engagement stages during the preparation of community and development plans so that they are seen by the public as one process was identified in RTPI research on linking community planning and spatial planning. This proposal would position community participation in spatial planning more sustainably as it would be integrated with action to involve communities in a range of plans and initiatives affecting their places including the NIP.

### 20 Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Is there anything else you would like to tell us?:

No comment

## Island Communities Impact Assessments: General Questions Section

### 21 What should be the main objectives for Island Communities Impact Assessments?

What should be the main objectives for Island Communities Impact Assessments?:

- To ensure that decision making is aligned with the objectives as set out in the National Island Plan and cross Scottish Government strategies and plans

- To allow for the effective delivery of public services.

**22 What do you think needs to be considered in the guidance and templates which will be developed to support the carrying out of Island Communities Impact Assessments by relevant authorities?**

**What do you think needs to be considered in the guidance and templates which will be developed to support the carrying out of Island Communities Impact Assessments by relevant authorities?:**

Any resourcing implications and current capacity of relevant authorities need to be considered. Research by RTPi Scotland has shown that planning departments have seen disproportionately large cuts to their budgets in last ten years when compared to other local authority departments. Since 2009 they have seen a 25% decrease in planning staff and a 40% real term cut in budgets. In order to ensure undertake effective ICiAs, the relevant authority need effectively resourced and engaged in skills.

Guidance should be clear and integrated with other processes and strategies, both current and expected. In the Planning (Scotland) Bill there are a range of additional assessments which will need carefully considered when producing guidance for ICiAs as many have direct implications for the objectives for the NIP and ICiAs. This includes, for example, provisions for assessment of environmental effects and health effects of major development.

**23 What should be taken into account in relation to the reviews of decisions of relevant authorities relating to Island Communities Impact Assessments?**

**What should be taken into account in relation to the reviews of decisions of relevant authorities relating to Island Communities Impact Assessments?:**

Any review system will have resource implications. Existing mechanisms in the planning system which can be adapted to include ICiAs. For example Local Design Panels, Local Review Bodies, Monitoring Reports, Actions Plans and the appeal system. Close cooperation with the Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA) will be beneficial to ensure an effective framework for the reviewing process is.

**24 If you have any further comments or points that you think should be taken into account in the development of Island Communities Impact Assessments, please state these below.**

**If you have any further comments or points that you think should be taken into account in the development of Island Communities Impact Assessments, please state these below.:**

No comment.

**About you**

**What is your name?**

**Name:**

Robbie Calvert, Policy and Practice Officer at RTPi Scotland

**What is your email address?**

**Email:**

Robbie.calvert@rtpi.org.uk

**Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?**

Organisation

**What is your organisation?**

**Organisation:**

RTPi Scotland

**The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:**

Publish response with name

**We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?**

Yes

**Evaluation**

**Please help us improve our consultations by answering the questions below. (Responses to the evaluation will not be published.)**

**Matrix 1 - How satisfied were you with this consultation?:**

Very satisfied

**Please enter comments here.:**

**Matrix 1 - How would you rate your satisfaction with using this platform (Citizen Space) to respond to this consultation?:**

Very satisfied

**Please enter comments here.:**