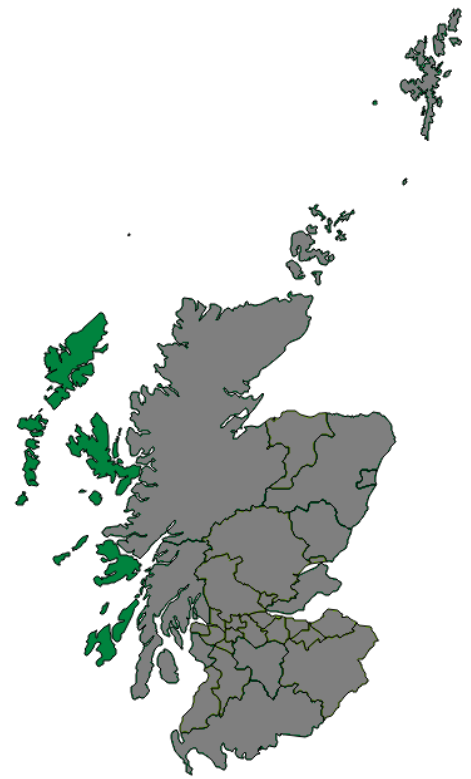


# Scottish National Islands Plan Survey (2020)



## Spotlight on differences between the Inner Hebrides and Outer Hebrides

**Inner Hebrides:** Coll, Colonsay, Easdale, Gometra, Iona, Islay, Isle of Gigha, Isle of Mull, Jura, Kerrera, Lismore, Luing, Oronsay, Seil, Tiree, Ulva, Canna, Eigg, Eilean Tioram, Isle of Ewe, Isle of Raasay, Isle of Skye, Muck, Rona, Rùm, Sanday, Soay

**Outer Hebrides:** Baleshare, Barra, Benbecula, Berneray (North Uist), Eriskay, Grimsay (North), Grimsay (South), North Uist, South Uist, Sunamul, Vatersay, Great Bernera, Isle of Lewis and Harris, Scalpay



Photo credit: Julia Welstead

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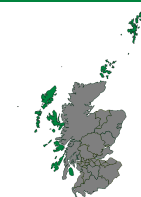
Rural & Environmental Science  
and Analytical Services



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

# National Islands Plan Survey

## Inner and Outer Hebrides



### What is the report about?

The Scottish Government developed Scotland's National Islands Plan (2019) following the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018. The National Islands Plan Survey (*National Islands Plan Survey Final Report*) gathered data with a view to collecting information about people's lives against which we'll measure the effectiveness of the Plan.

The National Islands Plan Survey collected data from October 2020 - January 2021 from 4,347 people from 59 islands. Responses were based on perceptions of island life prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. This publication reports on the findings for the Hebrides only and is part of a series of short reports.

### Where can I find out more?

An interactive data explorer can be found here: [Scottish National Islands Plan Survey \(2020\): results explorer \(shinyapps.io\)](https://shinyapps.io/scottish-national-islands-plan-survey-2020/). This allows you to explore the data by island region, age group, gender, household income, long term health condition, and household type.

There are three other publications in this series of four. They include:

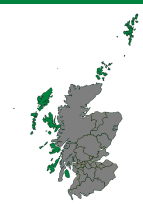
- Scottish National Islands Plan Survey (2020) Spotlight on demographic differences between people living in the Scottish islands
- Scottish National Islands Plan Survey (2020) Spotlight on differences between Orkney Mainland and Orkney Outer Isles
- Scottish National Islands Plan Survey (2020) Spotlight on differences between Shetland Mainland and Shetland Outer Isles

### What do we recommend?

Life is considerably different in each island group and different age groups also have distinct experiences of island life. Any recommendations or policies should recognise this and be tailored to each island group and the different age groups within them.

### Acknowledgements

We'd like to thank all of the survey respondents for sharing their time and experiences. The James Hutton Institute conducted the Scottish National Islands Plan Survey on behalf of the Scottish Government. We'd also like to thank all the organisations and individuals involved for their work in developing and analysing the survey, including Miles Welstead (Scottish Government / Scottish Graduate School of Social Science Internship). The views expressed in this report are those of the researchers and do not necessarily represent those of the Scottish Government or Scottish Ministers.



### 1) Population

**On average Inner Hebrideans have lived on the island for 30 years, compared to 38 years for Outer Hebrideans.**

Just over 85% of respondents in both regions indicated that they plan to stay on the island for the next 5 years.

10% of Inner and 18% of Outer Hebrideans feel that it is easy for young people to live on the island.



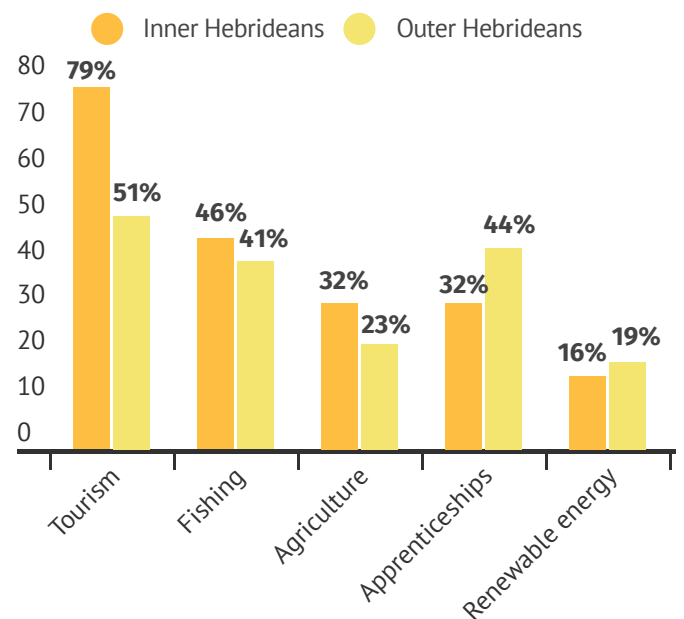
### 2) Jobs

**Only 16% of Inner and 19% of Outer Hebrideans felt there was good availability of jobs that suit different interests and ambitions.**

Perceptions of the types of jobs available differed significantly between Inner and Outer Hebrideans, however the tourism sector rated highest for both regions.

45% of Outer Hebrideans feel that there are services available to help them find and keep a job, whilst only 31% of Inner Hebrideans feel this way.

Agree there are job opportunities in...

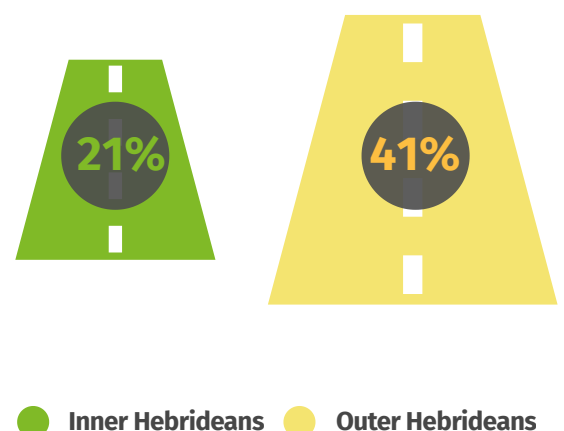


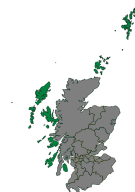
### 3) Transport

**69% of Inner and 83% of Outer Hebrideans have access to a bus within walking distance of their home.**

Whilst 27% of Outer Hebrideans feel that the roads, paths and pavements are in good condition, only 8% of Inner Hebrideans feel this way. Furthermore, only 21% of Inner Hebrideans feel safe using the roads compared to 41% of Outer Hebrideans.

Proportion of those who feel safe using the roads, paths, and pavements





### 4) Housing

**Perceptions of the availability of housing in different types, sizes and tenures that meets people's needs is higher for Outer Hebrideans (45%) than Inner Hebrideans (21%).**

Of the perceived available housing, under a quarter (19%) of Inner Hebrideans feel that it is affordable, compared to 37% of Outer Hebrideans.



**21%**

Inner Hebrideans agree there is a variety of housing available to meet people's needs



**45%**

Outer Hebrideans agree there is a variety of housing available to meet people's needs

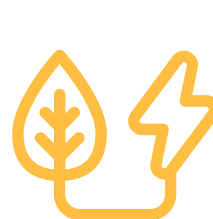
### 5) Fuel Poverty

**67% of Inner and 72% Outer Hebrideans believe that their heating bills have increased in the past year.**

In both regions a third of responders feel that their home was uncomfortably cold over the past year. Perceptions are similar on heating affordability with 76% of Inner and 71% of Outer Hebrideans feeling that they can afford to keep their house warm.

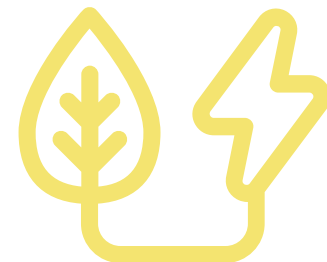
Use of energy efficiency schemes differed between the island regions.

Respondents who have received help from an energy efficiency scheme



**8%**

Inner Hebrideans



**18%**

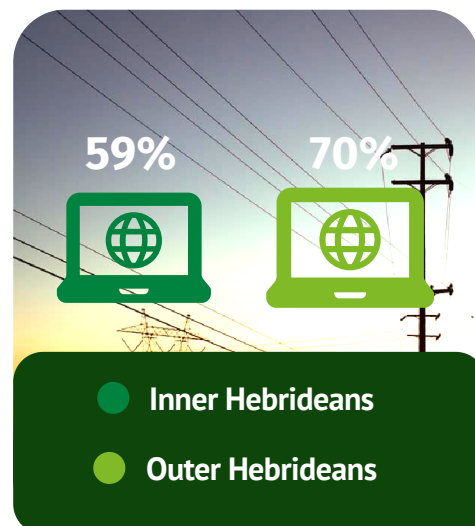
Outer Hebrideans

### 6) Digital

**96% of Inner and 94% of Outer Hebrideans have access to the internet. However, whilst 70% of Outer Hebrideans feel their internet is fast enough, only 59% of Inner Hebrideans feel this way.**

This trend extends to other types of connectivity, with just over half of Inner Hebrideans feeling they have good mobile signal in their home, compared to 65% of Outer Hebrideans.

Agreement that the internet is fast enough



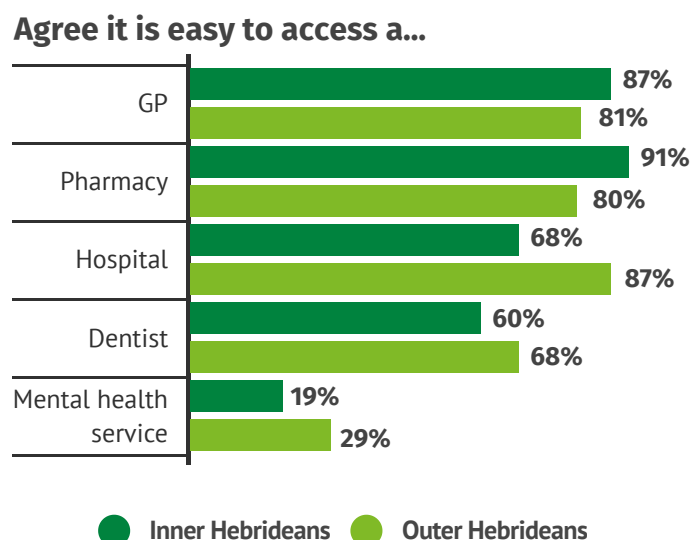




### 7) Health

**In both regions access to healthcare is perceived to be relatively high, except for access to mental health services.**

86% of Outer Hebrideans feel that there are places in which they can exercise and play sport, compared to only 74% of Inner Hebrideans. Outer Hebrideans are also similarly more positive about the quality and affordability of these services.

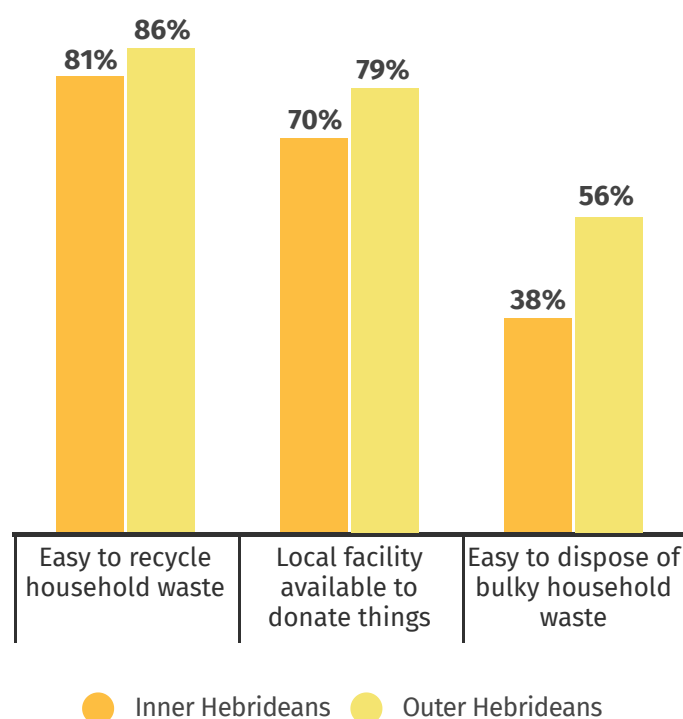


### 8) Environment

**Just under two thirds of both Inner (59%) and Outer Hebrideans (66%) agree that the environment is clean and litter free.**

The vast majority (over 85%) of respondents also indicate that they see lots of wildlife and that the air quality is good.

Responses indicated that almost half of Outer and over 60% of Inner Hebrideans find it difficult to dispose of bulky waste such as white goods and furniture.



### 9) Climate change

**The majority of respondents from the Inner and Outer Hebrides buy food from local sources and an even higher proportion use LED light bulbs in the home.**

Few respondents have had equipment installed to generate renewable energy for use in their home, and even fewer use an electric/hybrid car.



**76% Inner Hebrideans**  
**73% Outer Hebrideans**  
buy food from local sources



**11% Inner Hebrideans**  
**10% Outer Hebrideans**  
generate their own renewable energy



**3% Inner Hebrideans**  
**2% Outer Hebrideans**  
use an electric/hybrid car



### 10) Community empowerment

**65% of both Inner and Outer Hebrideans feel that there is a strong sense of community. Around 80% of respondents in both regions feel that they belong to the community.**

74% of Inner and 81% of Outer Hebrideans feel that there are physical spaces where people in the community can come together.



### 11) Culture and language

**Only 36% of Inner Hebrideans agree that there is investment in cultural and historic places, whereas 59% of Outer Hebrideans think this.**

Fewer Inner Hebrideans think there is support and nurture for islander's creative talents (40% versus 54%).



### 12) Education

**83% of Inner and 85% of Outer Hebrideans agree that children have access to good quality primary school education.**

Outlooks differ between regions on access to education. Higher proportions of Outer Hebrideans feel that they have access to college qualifications, university degrees, and professional training.

**61% Inner Hebrideans**  
**69% Outer Hebrideans**  
agree that they could access college education



**50% Inner Hebrideans**  
**57% Outer Hebrideans**  
agree that they could access university education



**38% Inner Hebrideans**  
**49% Outer Hebrideans**  
agree that they could access professional training



#### Resources

[Scottish National Islands Plan Survey Final Report \(2020\)](#)

[Scottish National Islands Plan Survey \(2020\) Visual summary of headline findings](#)

[Scottish National Islands Plan survey questionnaire \(2020\)](#)

[Scottish National Islands Plan Survey \(2020\): results explorer \(shinyapps.io\)](#)