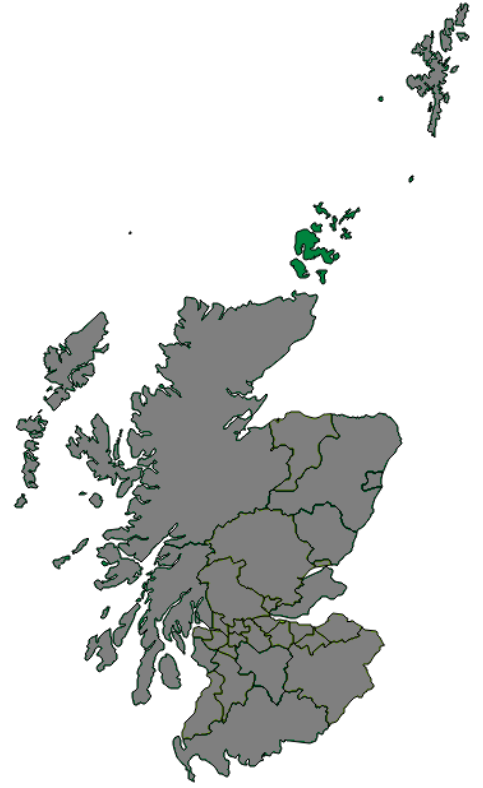


# Scottish National Islands Plan Survey (2020)



## Spotlight on differences between Orkney Mainland and Orkney Outer Isles

**Orkney Mainland:** Burray, Mainland of Orkney, South Ronaldsay

**Orkney Outer islands:** Eday, Egilsay, Flotta, Graemsay, Hoy, North Ronaldsay, Papa Stronsay, Papa Westray, Rousay, Sanday, Shapinsay, Stronsay, Westray, Wyre



Photo credit: Mark Foster

**RESAS**

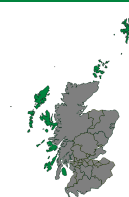
Rural & Environmental Science  
and Analytical Services



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

# National Islands Plan Survey

## Orkney Mainland and Outer Isles



### 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 Orkney mainland and outer isles 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 the Inner Hebrides and Outer Hebrides
- Scottish National Islands Plan Survey (2020) Spotlight on differences between Shetland Mainland and Shetland Outer Isles

### What do we recommend?

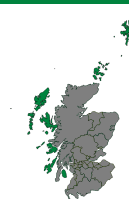
Life is considerably different in each island group and different age groups also have distinct experiences of island life. Any recommendations or policies should recognise this and be tailored to each island group and the different age groups within them.

### 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.

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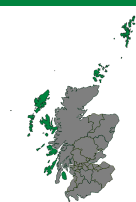
- Scottish National Islands Plan (2020): Demographic differences between people living in the Scottish islands
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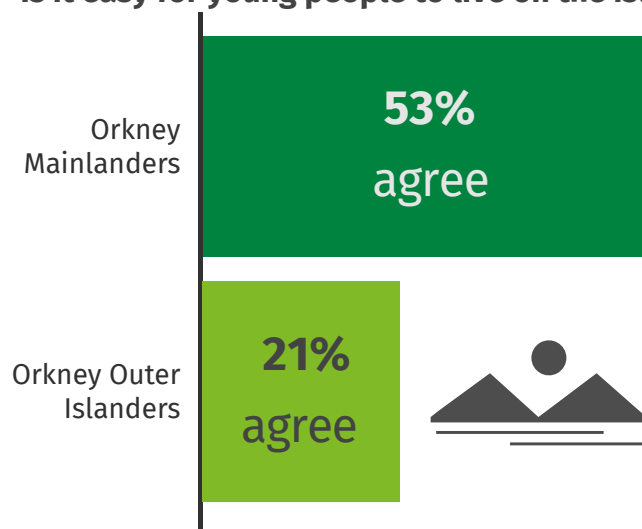


### 1) Population

Whilst around half of Orkney Mainlander respondents (54%) agree that there is a variety of housing sizes and tenures to meet people's needs, only 24% of Orkney Outer Islanders feel this way.

Fewer Orkney Outer Islanders agree that it is easy for young people under 40 to live and work on the island compared to almost half of Orkney Mainlander respondents.

Is it easy for young people to live on the island?

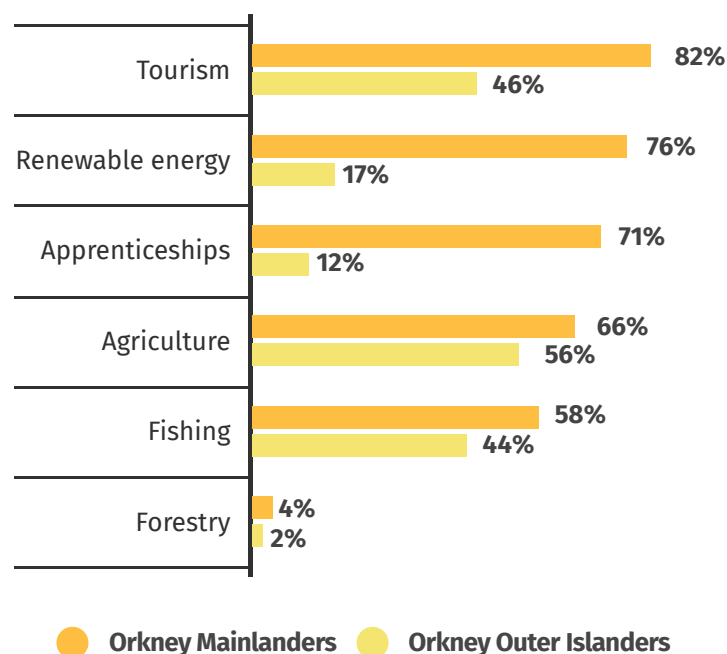


### 2) Jobs

57% of Orkney Mainlanders perceive that there is a good array of jobs to suit interests, skills, and ambitions, whilst only 14% of Orkney Outer Islanders feel this way.

Responses indicate that perceptions of job opportunities differ between Orkney Mainland and Orkney Outer Isles. Tourism and renewable energy have the highest perceived opportunities for Orkney Mainlanders, whilst agriculture, fishing and tourism have the most perceived opportunity for Outer Islanders.

Agree that there are job opportunities in...

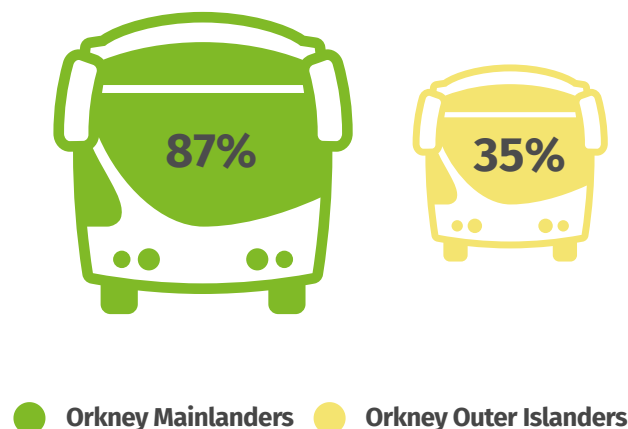


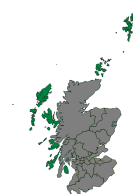
### 3) Transport

Respondents from Orkney Outer Isles are less positive about public transport according to all measures.

Only 35% live within walking distance from a bus. This is compared to 87% of Orkney Mainlanders.

Live within walking distance of the bus





### 4) Housing

Whilst perceived house availability is higher for Orkney Mainlanders there remains a substantial proportion of respondents reporting a lack of housing.

Of the perceived available housing, only around a third of Orkney Mainlanders (35%) and Orkney Outer Islanders (33%) agree that there are affordable options.



**54%** Orkney Mainlanders agree there is a variety of housing available to meet local needs



**24%** Orkney Outer Islanders agree there is a variety of housing available to meet local needs

### 5) Fuel Poverty

72% of Orkney Mainlanders and 68% of Orkney Outer Islanders believe that heating bills have increased in the past year.

In both regions there is a small proportion of respondents who could not afford to keep their house warm over the past year.

Energy efficiency schemes have been accessed by 14% of Orkney Mainlanders and 19% of the Orkney Outer Islanders.

Could you afford to heat your home in the past year?



**8%**  
Disagree



**10%**  
Disagree

● Orkney Mainlanders ● Orkney Outer Islanders

### 6) Digital

Most respondents have access to the internet. However, whilst 65% of Orkney Mainlanders agree that their connection was reliable, only 35% of Orkney Outer Islanders feel this way.

A large discrepancy exists in relation to mobile signal, with a significantly larger proportion of Orkney mainlanders having good signal in their homes and in their local area.

Good mobile signal in the home



**78%**

Orkney Mainlanders



**27%**

Orkney Outer Islanders

# National Islands Plan Survey

## Orkney Mainland and Outer Isles



### 7) Health

The majority of respondents agree that they can access a GP. However, access to mental health services is low for both Orkney Mainlanders (24%) and Orkney Outer Islanders (19%).

The majority of respondents are positive about the accessibility of sport facilities. However, respondents are less positive about affordability.



**96%** of Orkney Mainlanders  
**83%** of Orkney Outer Islanders agree that there are places to take part in sports and physical exercise

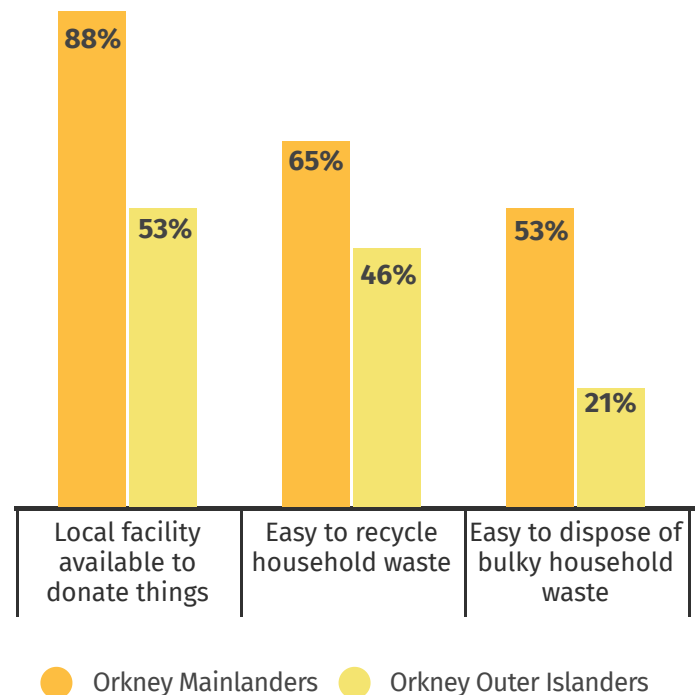


**63%** of Orkney Mainlanders  
**50%** of Orkney Outer Islanders agree that sports facilities are affordable

### 8) Environment

Almost all respondents in Orkney agree that the air quality is good. High proportions of respondents also agree that wildlife is in abundance and that there are green or blue spaces in close proximity to their homes.

However, responses indicate that some people, particularly Orkney outer islanders, find it difficult to recycle household waste, responsibly dispose of bulky items such as white goods and furniture, and donate things to local facilities.



### 9) Climate change

The vast majority of respondents buy food from local sources and a high proportion also use LED light bulbs in the home.

More than a third of Orkney Mainland respondents have installed equipment to generate renewable energy for use in their home, whilst 22% of Orkney Outer Islanders have done the same.



**84%** Orkney Mainlanders  
**91%** Orkney Outer Islanders buy food from local sources



**36%** Orkney Mainlanders  
**22%** Orkney Outer Islanders generate their own renewable energy



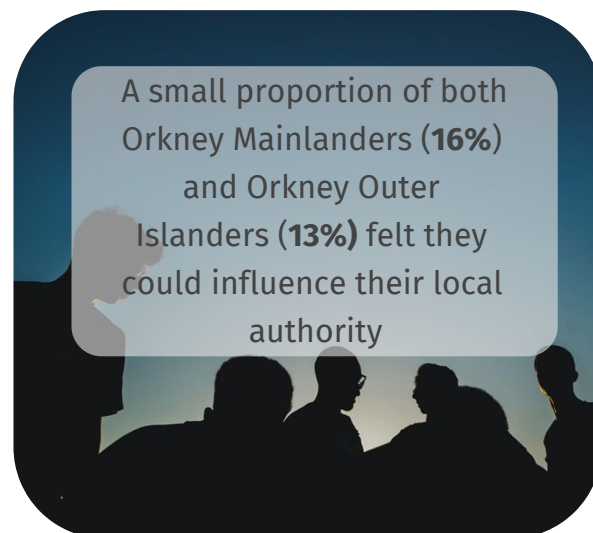
**5%** Orkney Mainlanders  
**8%** Orkney Outer Islanders use an electric/hybrid car



### 10) Community empowerment

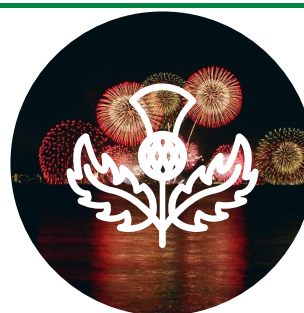
**In both regions, the degree to which respondents feel they can influence local authorities, health boards, housing associations, or government was low.**

However, there are more positive responses when it comes to community led organisations, with 29% of Orkney Mainlanders and 47% of Orkney Outer Islanders agreeing that they can influence decisions made by their community council.



### 11) Culture and language

**78% of Orkney Mainlanders agree that there is investment in cultural and historic places, whilst only 56% of Orkney Outer Islanders feel this way.**



Orkney Outer Islanders also have fewer positive responses when it comes to support and nurture for islander's creative talents.

### 12) Education

**High proportions of both Orkney Mainlanders (94%) and Orkney Outer Islanders (81%) agree that children have access to good quality primary school education.**

Outlooks differ significantly between regions on accessibility to education, with Orkney Mainlanders feeling that they have more access to college qualifications, university degrees, and professional training.

**75% Orkney Mainlanders**  
**60% Orkney Outer Islanders** agree that they could access college education



**58% Orkney Mainlanders**  
**47% Orkney Outer Islanders** agree that they could access university education



**59% Orkney Mainlanders**  
**36% Orkney Outer Islanders** 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)