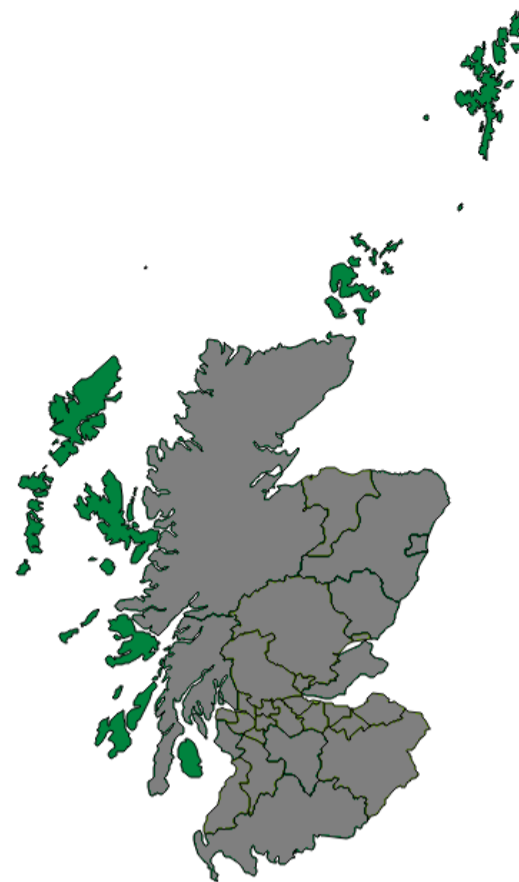


National Islands Plan Survey 2020



Headline Findings

Published July 2021

The National Islands Plan Survey gathered information from 4,347 people from 59 islands with a view to help the Scottish Government improve people's lives in Scotland's islands. Responses were based on perceptions of islands life prior to the COVID-19 pandemic



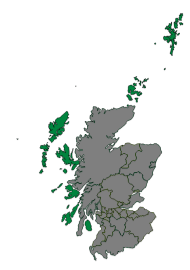
Photo credit: Miles Welstead

RESAS

Rural & Environmental Science
and Analytical Services



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Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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1)

Population

The majority of respondents indicate that they are likely to remain on the islands for the next five years.

Less than one third agree that it is easy for young people to live on the islands.

A quarter agree that young people are supported to live on the islands.



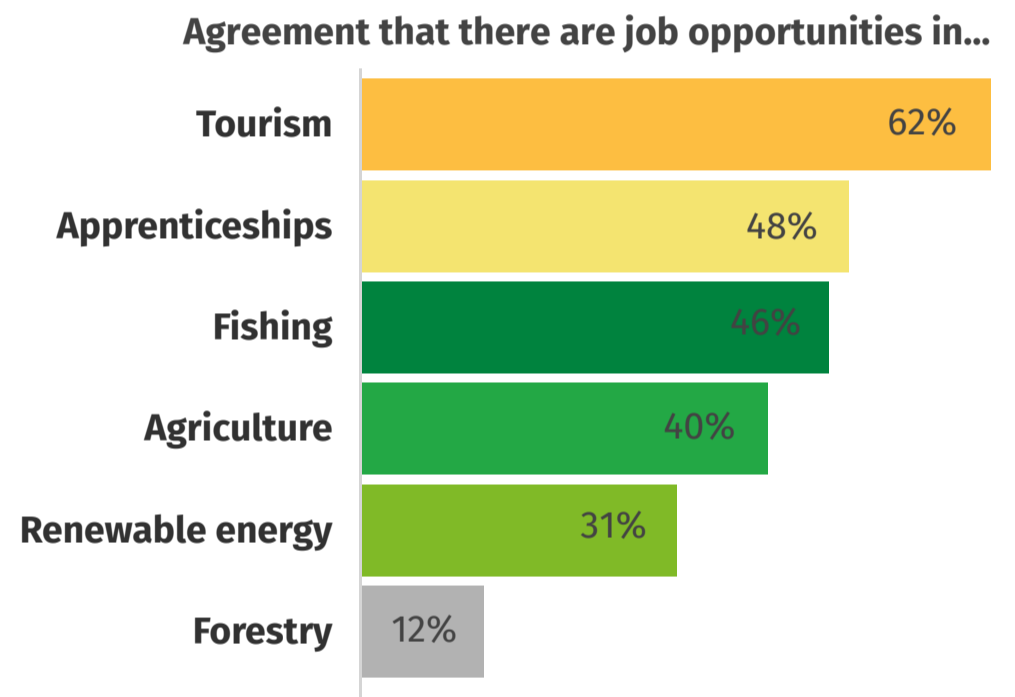
2)

Jobs

Young people aged 18 to 35 are more positive about job availability

50% of respondents disagree that there are jobs available to suit interests, skills, and ambitions.

Less than half of respondents agree that there are services available to help people find and keep jobs.



3)

Transport

Attitudes towards transport varied between island regions and respondent age groups. In particular, Orkney and Shetland mainlanders responded more positively to bus availability than the outer islanders.

38% of respondents agree that making connections between different forms of transport is easy.



66%

agree that mainland ferry services run when they need it



55%

agree that mainland flights run when they need it



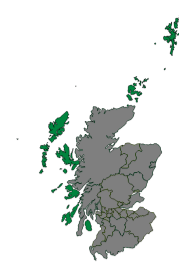
44%

agree that local bus services run when they need it



25%

agree that roads and paths are safe for cycling



4)

Housing

Respondents indicate low rates of satisfaction with housing availability and affordability on many of the islands

Almost three quarters of respondents (71%) agree that there is a high proportion of local holiday lets and second homes on the islands.



5)

Fuel poverty

78% of people aged over 65 agree that heating bills have increased in the past year, compared to 69% of 18 to 35 year olds.

The majority of respondents agree that they can afford to heat their own home, however, a significant minority (8%) could not and some had to choose between food and heating.



73%

agree that their heating bills have increased in the past year



13%

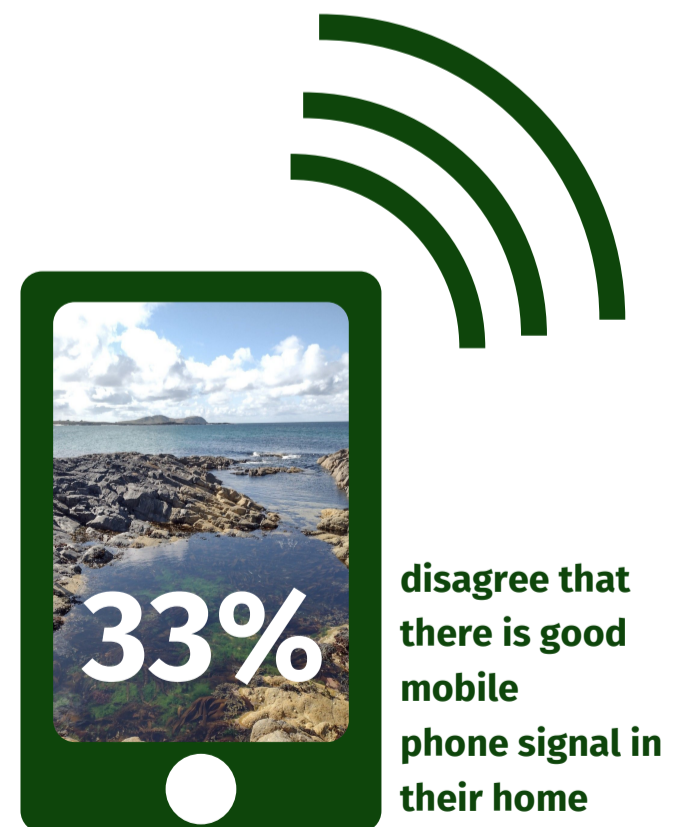
indicated that they could not afford to heat their home in the past year

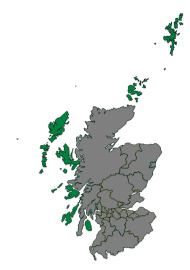
6)

Digital

The majority of respondents (96%) could access the internet from home. However, speed and reliability of internet connections are an issue for many, particularly in Orkney outer isles and Shetland Outer isles.

31% disagree that there is good mobile phone signal in their home and 33% disagree that there is a good signal in their local area.





7)

Health

Most agree they could easily access a hospital, dentist and pharmacy but responses were less positive on the Orkney outer isles and Shetland outer isles.

Most respondents agree that there are places where they can go to take part in sports and physical exercise, but not all agree that these facilities are affordable.



Places available for sport and exercise



Sports facilities are good quality and maintained



Sports facilities are affordable

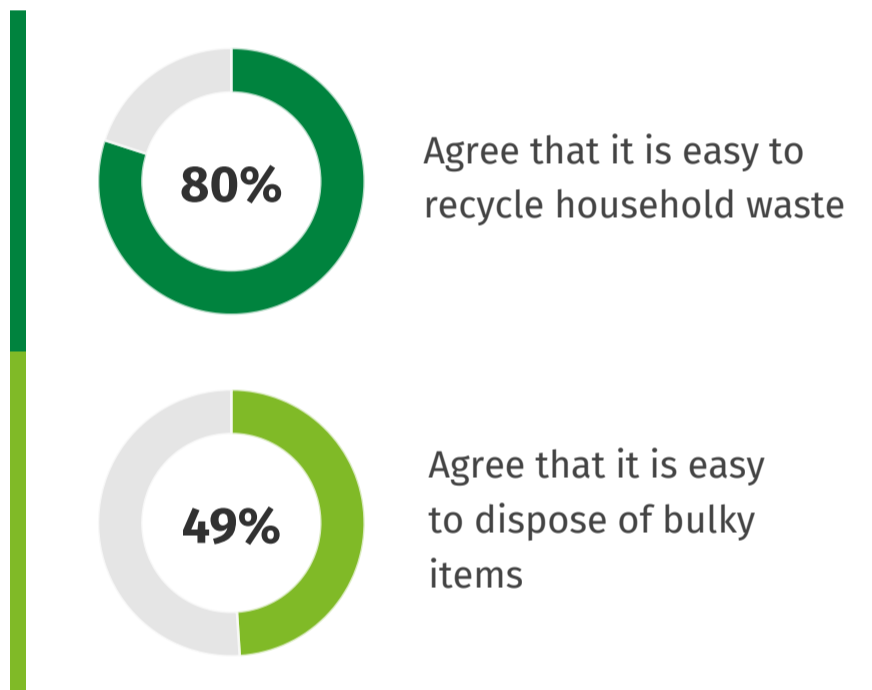
8)

Environment

Respondents largely feel positive about their local environment.

Nearly all agree that the air quality is good, that they see a lot of wildlife and have green and blue (water) spaces within a 5-minute walk of their home.

Recycling facilities are available, however, some responses indicate that it is hard to recycle bulky items.

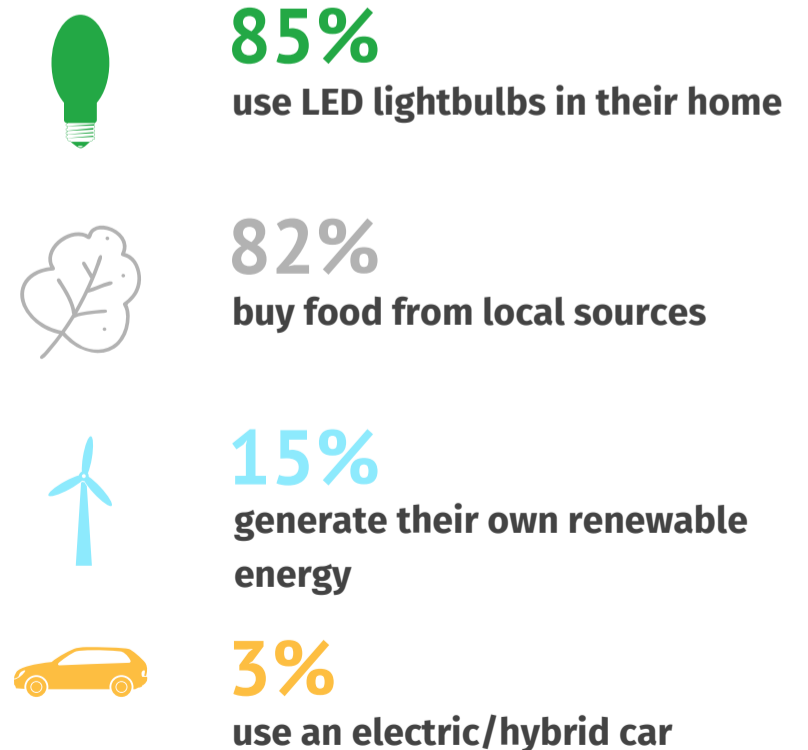


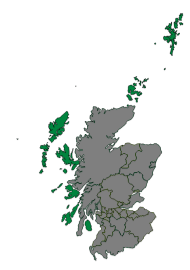
9)

Climate change

High proportions engage in environmentally friendly behaviours, notably buying food locally and generating their own renewable energy.

Proportions of those who have installed equipment to generate their own renewable energy are highest in Orkney Outer Isles and Orkney Mainland.





10)

Community empowerment

Islanders, particularly young islanders, have a high sense of empowerment within their own communities.

Island residents generally have a strong sense of community but agreement with this varies from 64% in Lewis and Harris to 81% in Shetland Outer Isles.



11)

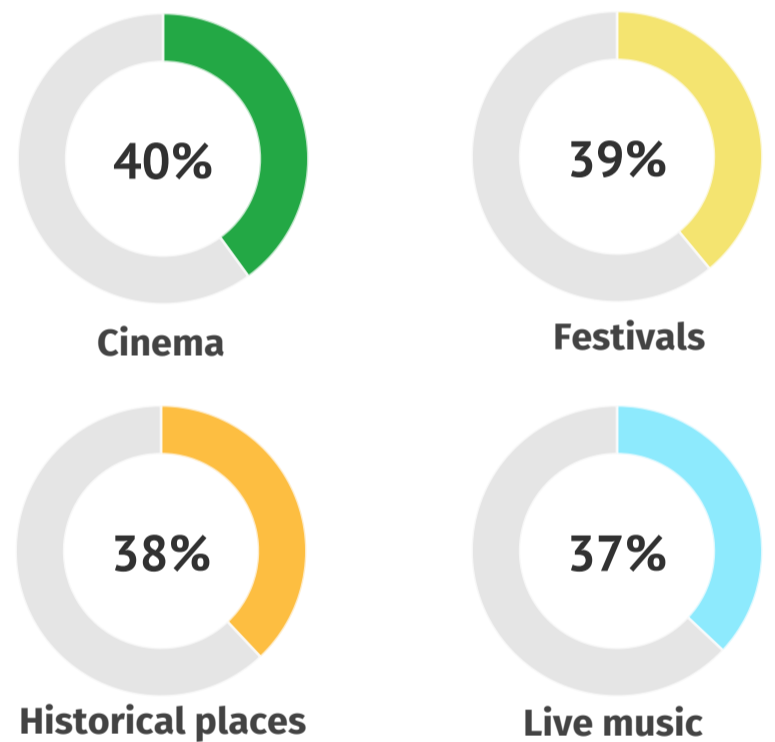
Culture and language

Experiences of culture and language vary considerably across island groups, age groups and genders.

60% agree that there is investment in cultural and historic places.

Proportions of Scottish Gaelic speakers varied by region. 59% of speakers agree that there is support for them to live and work in their community

Most popular cultural events



12)

Education

Most agree that children living there have access to good quality primary and secondary school education.

Agreement rates with respect to college and university education and professional qualifications are lower. More positive perceptions were found among those living in island groups with small towns.



69%
agree that they could do a college qualification in a subject of their choice



54%
agree that they could do a university degree in a subject of their choice



49%
agree that they could access professional training

The main report can be found: <https://www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781802011166>

