



Argyll and Bute: A good place to live, work and play?

**Local report on the Single Outcome Agreement
consultation in Tiree**

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SUMMARY

This is a report on the recent consultation exercise by the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) in Argyll and Bute designed to identify priorities at local level and inform the Delivery Plans of the ten-year Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2013-23. This exercise was undertaken across Argyll and Bute. The focus of this report is on findings within the Oban, Lorn and the Isles (OLI) area. The Argyll and Bute wide report is available online¹

Recent census data demonstrated that the population of Argyll and Bute had declined by 3.4%. Population change within OLI is +5% with significant local variation. This coupled with the recognition that a successful economy is critical to a thriving Argyll and Bute has led to the overarching outcome for the SOA: 'Argyll and Bute's economic success is built on a growing population'.

The consultation was entitled: **Argyll and Bute - A Good Place to Live, Work and Play?**" and comprised an online survey and 15 events across Argyll and Bute with four held in the OLI area.

The findings in OLI highlighted local concerns with employment, housing, land ownership issues, transport links, more support for small business, mobile and broadband connectivity. In Tiree specific issue arose relating to sustaining high quality secondary school provision and electricity connections. Although the overall population for the area has increased, there is significant variance across the area and consultations were held in Oban, Tiree and Mull to gather a good cross-section of views to inform the overall report.

The data from this and the full Argyll and Bute wide report will feed into the strategic Population Summit, to be held later in the year, to consider ways of addressing the population decline in Argyll and Bute.

¹ <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/good-place-live-work-and-play>

BACKGROUND

In August 2012 Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership agreed to annual consultations on the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) to ensure communities had a say in how the Partnership can achieve its outcomes.

The figures from the census of 2011 were published and highlighted Argyll and Bute as the highest area in terms of percentage population decline, and this was seen as the greatest challenge for all community planning partners. The census data for Oban, Lorn and the Isles confirms a population increase over 2001 to 2011. Detail below:

Total population change within Multi-Member Wards (2001-2011)

Admin Area	Area	Population 2001	Population 2011	Percentage change
OLI	Oban North and Lorn	9,651	9,744	+1.0%
OLI	Oban South and the Isles	9,513	10,248	+7.7%
	Argyll and Bute	91,306	88,166	-3.4%

Although the overall population has increased across Oban, Lorn and the Isles, an exception is Tiree, where the population has fallen by 15% over the period 2001 to 2011. In contrast, Mull, Argyll and Bute's third largest island by population, has shown an increase of 133 people (+5%) and Tiree's nearest neighbour, Coll has seen a population rise of 19%.

Island populations (1981 to 2011) (Source 2001 and 2011 Census)

	Usual residents			
	Usual residents 1981	Usual residents 1991	Usual residents 2001	Usual residents 2011
Bute	7,311	7,354	7,228	6,498
Islay	3,792	3,538	3,457	3,228
Mull	2,197	2,678	2,667	2,800
Tiree	760	768	770	653
Seil	424	506	560	551
Jura	228	196	188	196
Luig	157	179	212	195

			Usual residents	
	Usual residents 1981	Usual residents 1991	Usual residents 2001	Usual residents 2011
Coll	131	172	164	195
Lismore	129	140	146	192
Iona	122	130	125	177
Gigha	153	143	110	163
Colonsay	133	98	108	124
Easdale	32	41	58	59
Kerrera	38	39	42	34
Ulva	13	30	16	11
Oronsay	3	8	5	8
Erraid	-	-	8	6
Innis Chonain	1	16	1	5
Inchtavannach	4	4	3	3
Shuna (Luìng)	7	1	1	3
Gometra	4	-	5	2
Danna	7	1	5	1
Elean da Mheinn	-	-	--	1
Lunga (Luìng)	3	2	7	
Davaar	4	-	2	-
Sanda	-	-	1	-
Torsa	-	1	-	-

In August 2013, the first stage of Argyll and Bute's Single Outcome Agreement was approved by the Scottish Government. This included:

Principal outcome:

“Argyll and Bute’s economy is based on a growing population”

To achieve the principal outcome a set of supporting long-term outcomes were agreed:

- 1. The economy is diverse and thriving**
- 2. We have an infrastructure that supports sustainable growth**
- 3. Education, skills and training maximises opportunities for all**
- 4. Children and young people have the best possible start**
- 5. People live active, healthier and independent lives**
- 6. People live in safer and stronger communities**

In order to achieve these outcomes, a delivery plan has been developed for each of the six outcomes.

The community consultation was designed to enable local communities to inform the content of delivery plans for each of these outcomes in addition to contributing to setting and achieving localised outcomes.

A parallel online survey was undertaken with over 500 responses across Argyll and Bute, including 95 from the OLI area. In addition, a Youth Consultation was undertaken on 23rd and 24th of November 2013 by Argyll and Bute Youth Forum, attended by 50 young people, including 10 from OLI. Full details of these findings can be found in the main Argyll and Bute report².

Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership is grateful to Education Scotland for its support in part-funding this consultation process, which in turn meets the recommendations of the strategic guidance on Community Learning and Development.

² <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/good-place-live-work-and-play>

Workshop Findings

Introduction

Many of the key Argyll & Bute wide issues were reflected in Oban, Lorn and the Isles.

Noteworthy comments include that islanders on Tiree feel peripheral to public sector decision making (interest in forming a community council on the island has been expressed since the event and elections are scheduled). It was suggested that one response to the population decline would be to form a short term partnership of agencies and organisations tasked with working with islanders to address actions required to attract and retain the population of Tiree. Questions were also raised as to why Argyll and Bute are not eligible for Special Islands Needs Allowance and examples of good practice in the Western Isles cited.

A brief description of the main headlines from the Argyll and Bute wide perspective followed by detail on local issues and priorities within the Tiree consultation follows.

A full Argyll and Bute wide report has been submitted to the Community Planning Partnership Management Committee and an Oban, Lorn and the Isle report has been prepared for the Area Community Planning Group³

Outcome 1 - The economy is diverse and thriving

Argyll and Bute

Four main issues were raised in Outcome 1 workshops:

- Enabling (small) businesses / start-ups
- Promoting Argyll and Bute
- Housing
- Land ownership

Tiree

Key areas raised in Tiree were around the economy, support for small business and land ownership issues.

Topic	Issue	Potential Solutions
Community Plan	Population is significantly declining on Tiree	Tiree should have a local plan for CPP partners to invest time and energy for a specific period to help support the island – short, intense, co-ordinated support. Need more detailed data gathered for the island to inform actions to tackle decline
Small Business Development	High rates and rent Lack of suitable premises Regulations as barriers to business development (particularly in regard to Tiree and Mull, where the perception is that planning does not take	More targeted support at early stages More affordable business units in key localities e.g. tank farm development was originally scheduled to have workshops. More flexible use spaces to be used as workshops/offices etc. Financial incentives such as rent caps, rates relief, start-up grants.

	account of local circumstances)	
Promoting Argyll and Bute	Need to attract people to the area – potential residents and businesses	<p>Communications to get positive message across</p> <p>Need to promote the area according to its strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a place to stay • For its lifestyle • For its scenery • Good education • Good place to bring up children • Safe place <p>Need infrastructure to keep people once they come</p>
Housing	<p>Affordability</p> <p>Conflict between permanent residences and holiday homes</p> <p>Shortage of housing</p> <p>Range of house types available (numbers of bedrooms)</p> <p>Lack of tenure choice, (particularly Tiree)</p>	<p>Change the Council Tax regime</p> <p>Initiatives to encourage new housing</p> <p>Grants</p> <p>Different ranges of size options</p> <p>Tied housing (e.g. for teachers on Tiree); key worker housing</p>
Employment	<p>Transport costs for slaughtering</p> <p>Costs mean meat doesn't come back from mainland to be sold on the island</p>	<p>Initiatives to support these areas</p> <p>Better transport links to slaughterhouse on Mull (suggestion came from Mull)</p>
Employment	Tourism	<p>Promote high end Tourism</p> <p>Improve attractions and physical fabric of the area to make Argyll and Bute more appealing</p> <p>Local produce mentioned in Tiree and Mull – initiatives to support local branding and sales</p> <p>Need for wider range of provision and upgrade of existing service facilities</p> <p>Community Hotel that could operate as a conference facility / hospitality training provision</p>
Employment	Young people struggling to find work that will support them	Support employers to take on apprentices and encourage young people to see the opportunities.

	Salaries earned don't match the costs needed to live	
Land Ownership (Island workshops including Mull and Tiree)	Estates control what can be done. Council and community can plan, but land owners can prevent implementation of plans.	Community buy outs, Land Release. Council should lobby Scottish Government about land reform review.
Shopping	Lack of Choice – only the Co-Op now No butchers any more Postage / transport costs prohibitive for online shopping	Community owned shop Infrastructure improvements to reduce slaughtering costs and encourage local meat to be sold here Increase range of local produce for sale

Outcome 2 – We have an infrastructure that supports sustainable growth

Argyll and Bute

Four main issues were raised in the Outcome 2 workshops:

- Transport,
- Broadband and internet
- Mobile coverage
- Electricity / grid

Tiree

In addition, transport issues were seen as having knock-on effects with regard to Tourism, Accessing health care (see integrated transport, below) and costs to businesses, both in terms of direct costs and in terms of their failure to recruit people. Ferries were identified as a key issue on Tiree and Mull. Comments were made in Tiree regarding a document Hi-Trans have produced that they feel includes a lot of detail about Barra but very little about Tiree. Participants from Tiree therefore fear that their needs, which are not the same as those for Barra, will not be adequately accounted for.

Topic	Issue	Potential Solutions
Transport - Buses	Bus is ring and ride only	Would it be possible to establish a small scheduled service with ring and ride being available outwith this?
Transport - Air	No Oban link to Glasgow / Edinburgh Cost Lack of freight service from Oban airport There is a fear on Tiree that the needs of the island will be neglected in favour of those of Barra. (This relates to the type of aircraft.)	

Transport - Ferries	<p>Cost and reliability of the ferries</p> <p>Timetabling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scheduling of ferries <p>Road Equivalent Tariff</p>	<p>Advance notice of the timetable to allow for business and events planning. (Tiree particularly wanted timetables to be published a year in advance)</p>
Integrated Transport	<p>Transport services do not link up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on access to other services e.g. health services. 	<p>Council should review whole transport structure</p>
Transport - Roads	<p>State of roads</p> <p>Lack of education about cycling and driving on single-track roads (on Tiree and Mull)</p>	<p>Improve the quality of repairs (Mull and Tiree participants felt quality of patching inadequate)</p> <p>Increase awareness raising / education on ferries for drivers and cyclists visiting the islands</p>
Transport - Rail	<p>Train service from Oban – Glasgow is too slow</p>	
Renewables	<p>Growth of renewables impeded by infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underwater cabling (Tiree) 	<p>Need for newer, bigger, underwater electricity cable to / from Tiree</p>
Electricity	<p>Limit to capacity and reliability of cabling and supply (Tiree)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electricity connection unreliable • Regular repairs required • Power surges 	<p>Need for newer, bigger, underwater electricity cable to / from Tiree - Initial high costs may be offset by long-term repeat repair costs.</p>
Broadband	<p>Slow roll out and patchy coverage hindering small business growth and inbound mobility</p> <p>Increasingly, services are being accessed via the internet</p>	
Mobile Phone Signal	<p>Very poor coverage (Ross of Mull and Tiree) hindering small business growth and inbound mobility</p>	<p>Identifying alternative models – e.g. Coll is getting a new phone mast which the Trust will maintain</p>

Outcome 3 - Education, skills and training maximises opportunities for all

Argyll and Bute

Main issues raised in the Outcome 3 workshops:

- Barriers to accessing education, skills and training opportunities
- Secondary education, particularly with regard to where this leads and how it relates to future careers
- Access to, and availability of, further and higher education
- Skills gaps between the workforce and job opportunities
- Need for apprenticeships, career progression and work experience opportunities

Tiree

The secondary school was seen as essential to island life, especially the retention of families on the island.

Topic	Issue	Potential Solutions
Secondary Education	Difficult to recruit teachers Limited range of subjects Lack of accommodation for teachers Secondary education is geared to getting pupils into university, and not to preparing them for trade / employment.	Provision of tied accommodation Could children from Coll hostel in Tiree? Better links needed between school and businesses
Further Education	Limited, or no, opportunities so people move away to access education. Predominance of part time contracts within the sector. Unqualified staff teaching. Numbers to run courses	Wider user of video conferencing Increased use of distance learning, with mentor support being provided.
Lifelong Learning	Provision of adult education has been reduced in the area. University of the Third Age not operating in all areas.	U3A operating in Oban, Mull and Coll
Skills & Training	Apprenticeships	Support for businesses to take on apprentices and awareness raising among young people of the benefits of taking up a place.

Outcome 4 - Children and young people have the best possible start

Argyll and Bute

The discussions in the workshops appear to have concentrated on childcare issues and the lack of activities and facilities for children and young people.

Main Issues raised in Outcome 4 workshops:

- Childcare
- Facilities and Activities
- Volunteering
- Engagement with Young People

Topic	Issue	Potential Solutions
Childcare	<p>Lack of childcare is a barrier to employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generally ▪ Wraparound ▪ After school care. <p>Cost of childcare</p> <p>Regulations put people off</p>	Assist development of locally owned childcare facilities
Facilities	<p>Somewhere for youth to 'hang out'</p> <p>Sports facilities</p> <p>Play parks</p> <p>Soft play (Tiree, where it appears that equipment has already been bought, but there is nowhere to use it.)</p>	
Activities	<p>Youth clubs / groups (all areas)</p> <p>Activities for children who are not 'sporty'</p>	
Access to Extra Curricular Activities	Rural residing children have difficulty in accessing, lack of transport	Open classes to adults in addition to children (as was previously), website dedicated to car sharing
Partnership working	Lack of joined-up thinking between the local authority and partners	

Outcome 5 - People live active, healthier and independent lives

Argyll and Bute

Areas highlighted in the Argyll and Bute report include the needs of specific groups, the value of social interaction and issues relating to access, most of which were also raised in the OLI area.

Tiree

The majority of comments from the area workshops fall into two broad categories:

- Access to Health Services – difficulty in accessing a range of appropriate health services in certain rural localities.
- Healthier Lives – Initiatives to help residents stay healthy

Topic	Issue	Potential Solutions
Access to health service	Transport <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Travelling to and from hospitals is time consuming and difficult	
Employment in Health	Gaps in provision <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dentistry services• Podiatry• Day-care for vulnerable adults	
Healthier Lives	Physical activities	Develop more local activities for all age groups There is a need for more transport to enable people to access activities The cost of both the activities themselves and of transport to access them can deter people from being active There is a need for activities other than sports

Outcome 6 - People live in safer and stronger communities

Argyll and Bute

General agreement across Argyll and Bute and in OLI that the area was safe and secure with a vibrant third sector. This was generally acknowledged to be a significant strength in developing programmes to encourage inbound migration

Tiree

Very few community safety issues were identified in Tiree with the feeling that it is a very safe place to live - discussions focussed more on what makes a strong community.

Topic	Issue	Potential Solutions
Policing	Police provision varies according to shifts etc and it is difficult to recruit “specials”	
Stronger Communities	Access to activities	Support for volunteers Community Council needed
Community Cohesion	Fragile Rural communities suffering from depopulation	Short term working group formed to address depopulation issues affecting the island.

Conclusion

The consultation highlighted the participants' wish to prioritise developing the economic potential of Argyll and Bute through harnessing the strengths of our rich natural resources and heritage.

Main points related to:

- Supporting small to medium enterprises through a range of measures including additional support at the early stages, especially through the provision of more suitable and flexible premises.
- Transport connectivity, relating to economic development and access to services. A range of needs and services were suggested.
- The importance of consistent, quality broadband provision and improved mobile phone signal to support business and personal needs.
- The provision of secondary school education on the island is seen as essential to retaining families.

Challenges include how to ensure our health service meets the need of a geographically dispersed ageing population and pressures on local education provision as demographics alter.

Encouraging new ways to listen to local communities aspirations, for example through the recognition and formal adoption of local Community Plans, presents its challenges not least in areas such as planning, yet may also provide the resources to our rural communities to thrive. There was general recognition that young people seeking wider experiences may move out of the area and more should be done to both encourage those who wish to stay or who may be considering returning as they progress through different stages of their lives.

Developing a range of practical incentives designed to encourage inbound mobility and provide the appropriate infrastructure to retain people in the area includes housing challenges, economic development and service provision that Community Planning Partners, working together to maximise resources and co-ordinating forward planning, can address.

Appendix 1

Consultation events occurred in four locations across Oban, Lorn and the Isles as follows:

Tiree Workshop in partnership with TCDT	Sat 1 February	2.00 - 5.00pm	An Talla, Crossipol
Oban Workshop	Tue 4 February	2.00 - 5.00pm	Corran Halls, Oban
Oban Debate	Tues 4 February	6.30 - 8.30pm	Corran Halls, Oban
Mull Workshop in partnership with MICT	Mon 10 February	1.30 - 4.30pm	Craignure Hall, Criagnure

The attendance at events was as follows:

Location	Dates	Attendance		
		CPP	Third Sector/Community	Total
Tiree	01 February 2014	6	35	41
Oban	04 February 2014	24	32	56
Mull	10 February 2014	16	27	43
Oban, Lorn and the Isles – Question Time Event	04 February 2014	26	9	35

The online survey responses were as follows

Area	No of responses
Oban, Lorn and the Isles	95

EVALUATION OF EVENTS

In order to assess how participants felt about the events, and how the consultation processes might be improved in future, evaluation of events were carried out. At 8 of 9 workshop events, PowerPoint voting was used, and results are as follows:

Results of PowerPoint voting evaluation at workshops

	Important	Quite important	Not really important	Not important at all
How important do you think it is that we hold events to discuss issues like this with the community?	74%	18%	6%	2%
	Comprehensive	Adequate	I would have liked more information	I didn't receive any information
How would you rate the information you received prior to the event?	6%	39%	32%	23%
	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor
How would you rate the opportunities to discuss issues in the workshops?	36%	52%	10%	2%
	Better than I expected		As I expected	Less than I expected
Did the event meet your expectations?	39%		52%	9%
	Excellent	Good	Not very good	Poor
How would you rate the event overall?	18%	72%	9%	2%
	Important	Quite important	Not really important	Not important at all
How important is it that we provide you with a summary of the points raised at the event?	80%	14%	5%	1%