



National Islands Plan and islands Impact Assessment
SCRA Consultation Response

National Island Plan and Islands Impact Assessment Guidance

Q1. If applicable, which island(s) do you live on or do you relate to?

Comment:

The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) is a national organisation. SCRA operates the Reporter service which sits at the heart of the Children's Hearings System. The Children's Hearings System is Scotland's distinct system of child protection and youth justice. SCRA employs Children's Reporters who are located throughout Scotland, working in close partnership with panel members and other professionals such as social work, education, the police, the health service and the courts system.

Children and families living in any area of Scotland may require to come to a Children's Hearing; and Children's Reporters and members of the children's panel can also live in any are of Scotland.

We will therefore speak more generally in our responses to the questions in this consultation – about the particular difficulties of Island living for children and families and people employed in or volunteering for the Children's Hearing System.

Q2. If applicable, what is good about living on your island? Please state 3 things that you like about living on your island.

Comment:

Not applicable.

Q3. If you've moved away from your island, please tell us why you left (for example, was it for work opportunities or for education)?

Comment:

Not applicable.

Q4. If you've moved away from your island, please tell us what, if anything you miss about island life.

Comment:

Not applicable.

Q5. If possible, please can you give us some examples of good local initiatives / projects / activities, etc?

Comment:

Not applicable.





Q6. 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:

- 1 - Depopulation
- 6 - economic development
- 8 - environmental protection
- 2 - health and wellbeing
- 7 - community empowerment
- 5 - transport
- 3 - digital connectivity
- 4 - fuel poverty
- 9 - land management
- 10 - biosecurity

Do you feel that this list covers all aspects of island life?

Don't know. And we would like to emphasise that we have answered the ranking in terms of giving a national response, and as an agency which provides a national service – not as people who live in an Island Community.

Q7. If you answered no, is there anything else that you believe the National Islands Plan should address?

Comment:

Nothing to add.

Q8. If applicable, are there any specific challenges about living on your island? Please state 3 challenges about living on your island.

Comment:

Not applicable.

Q9. If you've moved away, please tell us about any challenges that you experienced whilst you were living on your island.

Comment:

Not applicable.

Q10. If applicable, what could be done to make living on your island better?

Comment:

Not applicable.





Q11. 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?

Comment:

Not applicable. SCRA would consider the needs for translation and interpretation services from English into Gaelic in the same way we consider other translation / interpretation services. This would mean that translation & / or interpretation would not be guaranteed in every case, but would be assessed on a case by case and a needs basis.

General Questions:

Q12. What should be the main objectives for the National Islands Plan?

Comment:

For SCRA it is crucial that there is an equality of access to services for children and families. The Children's Hearing System in the Island communities should 'look' the same as the system on the mainland and should have access to the supports and the resources that children and families on the mainland can access.

There should also be an equality of access for SCRA staff and for volunteers within the Children's Hearing; to training, to development opportunities and to the terms and conditions of work which are enjoyed on the mainland. The continued provision of service in the Islands can mean that staff work in different ways from those on the mainland – this should be recognised, supported and promoted in a consistent way by SCRA. SCRA needs to recognise that our staff on the Islands require to be as involved and as in touch as staff within mainland office locations. This is a challenge and an expense which has to be recognised and appropriately funded.

To provide the same service experience on the Islands requires additional thought and specific service planning; the cost and time of travel has to be considered as does the training of new staff and the flexible working expectations which will be placed on Island staff. Work loading calculations (if they form part of essential management information within an organisation) should be adjusted to account for Island work patterns.

Q13. What should be the key priorities for the Scottish Government in relation to the National Islands Plan?

Comment:

SCRA would like to see the Scottish Government set clear expectations around service delivery and the funding of this in the Island's Plan.

Q14. What should be taken into account in terms of the functions of relevant authorities within the National Islands Plan?

Comment:

The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) and Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) are both relevant authorities within the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018. For the purposes of our work, equality, fairness and access to





services should be taken into account and protected within the plan. This may include the provision of services from the mainland so may incur additional expense. This should also be included in planning.

Q15. How can we measure outcomes in relation to the National Islands Plan?

Comment:

A clear framework should be developed in order to indicate the intended outcomes of the plan and the way in which these outcomes are to be demonstrated / evaluated.

Q16. 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.

Comment:

No applicable.

Islands Impact Assessment

Q17. 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?

Comment:

Not applicable.

Q18. 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.

Comment:

SCRA has clear and definitive Practice Direction covering all aspects of our work which applies equally to Island communities as to mainland communities. These clear expectations work well and provide a benchmark for us to provide a service but also a benchmark for the quality of our service provision.

Q19. How can Scottish Ministers and other relevant authorities involve island communities in assessments?

online surveys

focus groups

public meetings

paper documents

other (please comment)

SCRA thinks that all of the above methods of community involvement are beneficial and should be used. It could also be that a text message service could be developed and used to give information out within the community as well as gathering views and ideas back in.





Q20. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Comment:

Nothing to add.

Island Communities Impact Assessment - General Questions

Q21. What should be the main objectives for Island Communities Impact Assessments?

Comment:

SCRA think it is crucial that change is considered within the context of the expected impact of that change within an area. Island Community Impact Assessments should focus on entirely on this – and on whether developments will have an impact as a result of the nature of the Island community. For example, new Joint Investigative Interview Training (JIIT) will require those qualified to conduct a Joint Investigative Interview to keep up their practice by carrying out a proscribed number of interviews within a set period of time (100 interviews within 12 months). This will be very difficult in an Island community – and will require those who have to maintain their JII certificate to interview elsewhere.

Q22. 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?

Comment:

SCRA think consideration needs to be given to the way in which Impact Assessment is carried out in organisations and Public Bodies. It is likely that this is done centrally without specific input from those on the Islands. The guidance and templates should make it clear that if specific local Island input is available then it should be sought – and any timescales attached to the submission of these Impact Assessments should be modified to build in this extra layer of information gathering. For the work SCRA do it is likely to take at least an additional 2 weeks to get any assessment to people on the different Islands, to get responses back in and to then collate and present them appropriately.

Q23. What should be taken into account in relation to the reviews of decisions of relevant authorities relating to Island Communities Impact Assessments?

Comment:

The decisions of different relevant authorities should be compared and where there are very different assessments these should be identified so that the reasons for the different views can be discussed. It may be that one relevant authority has access to information which is not available to another – or that one relevant authority has a skewed perspective of a given situation.

Q24. 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 additional comments to make.

SCRA Practice & Policy Team, June 2019.



SCOTTISH

CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION