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publication for Scotland

Community Ownership in Scotland 2019

9 September 2020



Community Ownership in Scotland 2019

Main Findings

There were 590 assets in community ownership as at December 2019. This is an increase of 28 (5%) from 562 in 2019. All but two of the assets in community ownership are land and/or buildings.

The Highland and Argyll and Bute local authorities together contain 221 assets, 37% of all assets in community ownership.

The 590 assets were owned by 418 community groups and covered an area of 191,290 hectares.

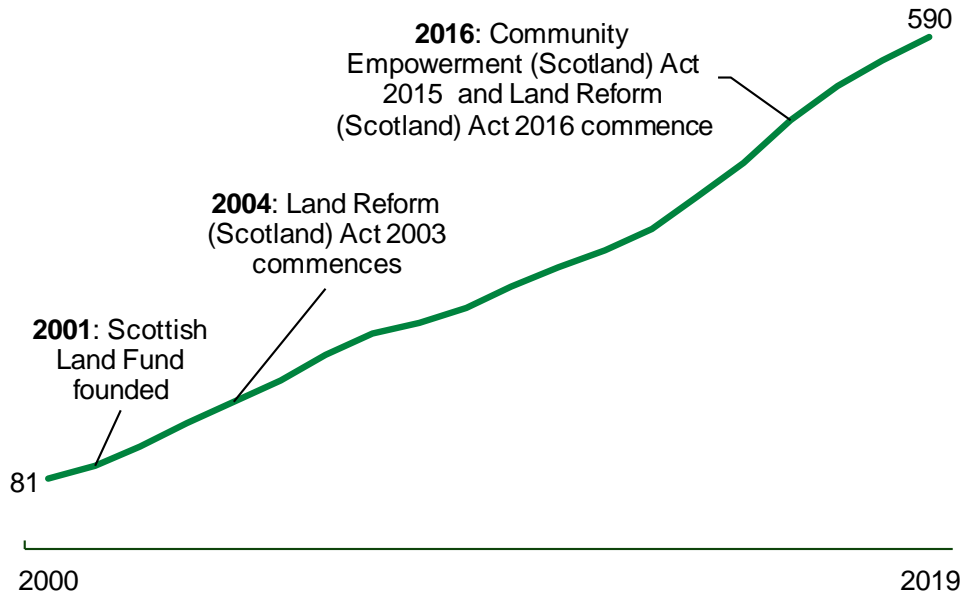
Introduction

There is increased focus on community ownership in Scotland. The Scottish Government asked the [Scottish Land Commission \(SLC\)](#) to review existing community right to buy mechanisms and recommend how best to enable community ownership.

Following the recommendations of the SLC a National Indicator on community ownership was developed and included in the [National Performance Framework](#) in 2019.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the number of title registrations completed in 2020 relating to 2018 and 2019 has been lower than normal. For more information on the effect of this please see the supporting [Methodology](#) report.

A steady upward trend in community owned assets has been seen since 2000



Assets where the transfer date is unknown or earlier than 2000 are included in the total for 2000. This accounts for 4% of the assets in community ownership as at December 2019.

The data for this chart is available in Table 1 of the [Tables and Charts](#) supporting document.



Assets in community ownership in 2019

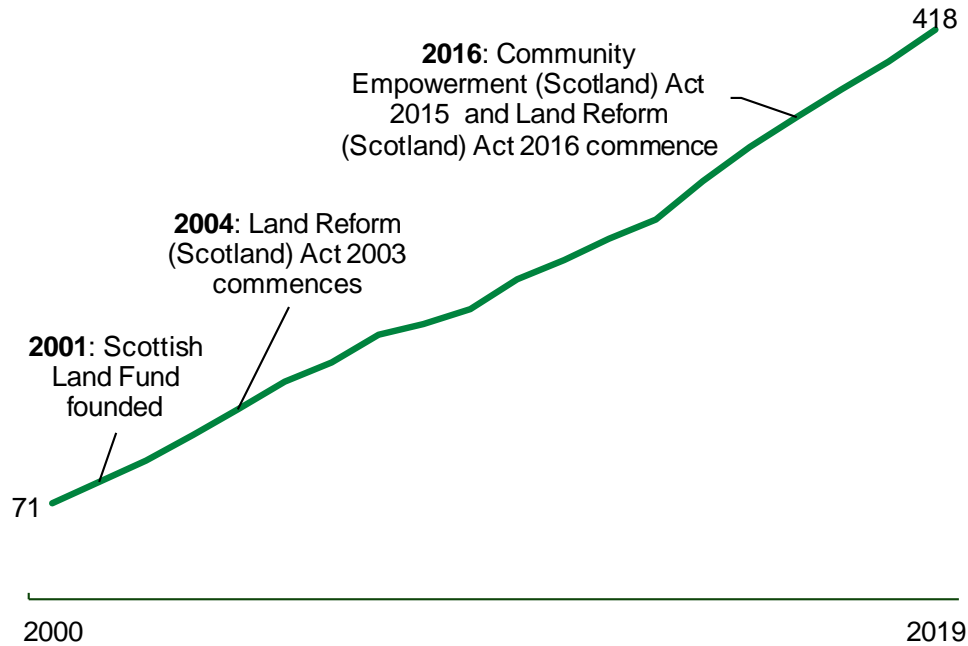
590

The number of assets in community ownership in 2019 was 590, 28 (5%) higher than for 2018. The tables and charts can be accessed [here](#).

There has been an increase in recent years with 509 (86%) being acquired after 2000 and 49% (288) after 2010. The chart shows the initiatives and legislation coming into effect in 2001, 2004 and 2016, which supported community ownership.

Many community ownership schemes receive funding from the Scottish Land Fund (SLF), which was founded in 2001. Further information on the SLF is available [here](#).

Almost sixfold increase in community groups owning assets since 2000



Note the chart does not indicate the number of groups which owned assets during this period. Community groups are excluded where, as of 2019, they no longer own any assets.

The data for this chart is available in Table 2 of the [Tables and Charts](#) supporting document.



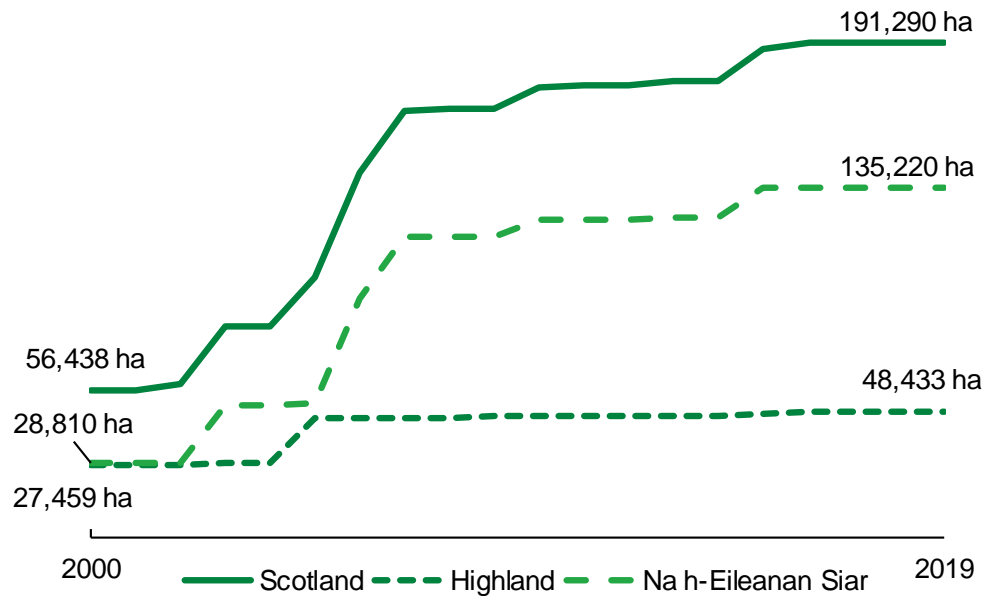
Number of community groups in 2019 **418**

The number of groups who owned assets in 2019 was 418, compared to 71 owning assets since 2000 or earlier.

This trend is similar to that of the number of assets with a steady increase observed from 2000, reflecting that most groups own only one asset.

There are 89 groups which owned more than one asset; the most assets owned by a single group was 13. The local authorities with the most community groups are Highland (106, 25%) and Argyll and Bute (52, 12%).

There is more than three times as much community owned land compared to 2000



The data for this chart is available in Table 3b of the [Tables and Charts](#) supporting document.

The area of land in community ownership in 2019 was 191,290 hectares, an increase of 102 from 191,188 hectares in 2018.

Area in community ownership in 2019 | 191,290 hectares

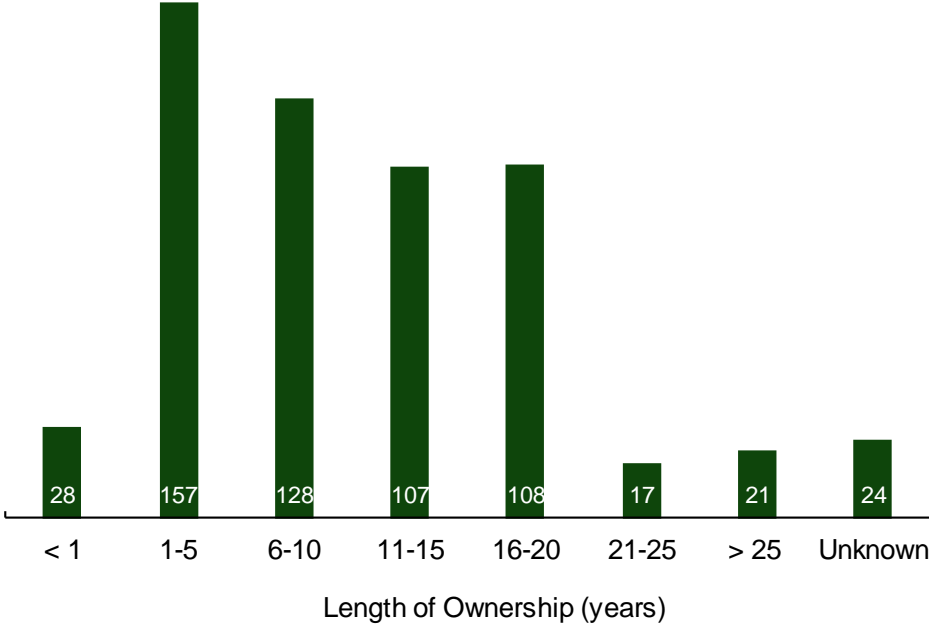
The area of land in community ownership has increased by 134,852 hectares compared to 2000.

There are considerable differences in the increase in area from year to year, due to the purchase of a small number of very large estates. These large estates are located in Na h-Eileanan Siar and Highland.

The area in community ownership in the rest of Scotland has also started to increase recently, comprising 63 of the 102 hectares which came into community ownership in 2019.



Over half of assets have been owned for 10 years or less



New assets in community ownership in 2019 28

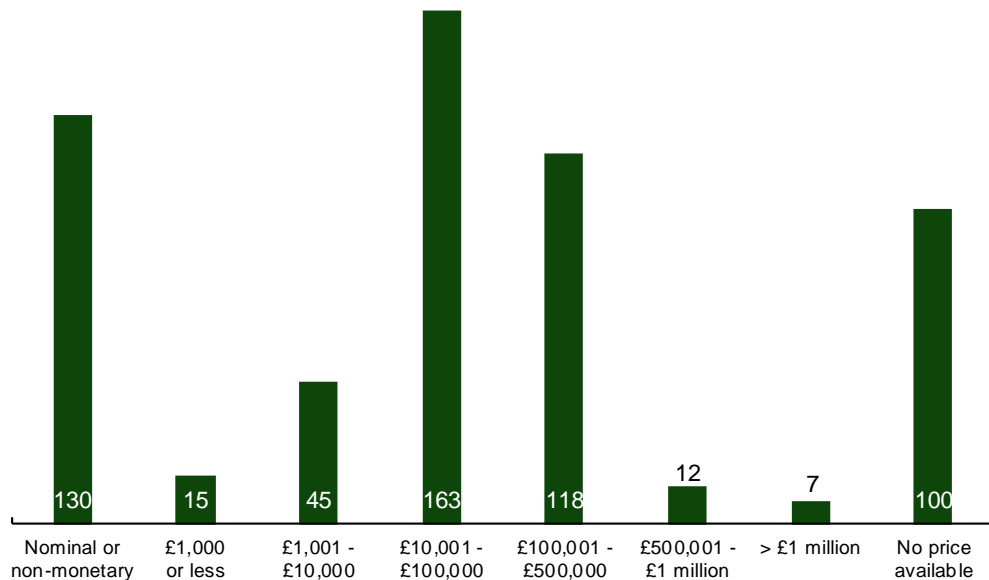
Of the community owned assets in 2019, 313 were acquired in the last ten years, with 21 (4%) acquired more than 25 years ago. Just over a quarter of assets were acquired between one and five years ago, with 5% acquired in the last year.

There were 24 assets (4%) where the year of ownership is unknown or currently unavailable. It is likely that these are longstanding community owned assets as it is more difficult to find the year of ownership for older records.

Length of ownership is calculated using the year an asset was transferred to community ownership. Should a transfer date later come to be known or changed from its current value, the data will be revised.

The data for this chart is available in Table 4 of the [Tables and Charts](#) supporting document.

Prices paid for community owned assets range from no cost or a nominal amount to over £1 million



The most common price category was £10,000-£100,000

163 assets

To give a fair comparison over time all purchase prices have been converted to 2019 prices.

Excluding non-monetary transactions and nominal amounts, a total of £3.1 million was paid for 25 assets acquired in 2019.

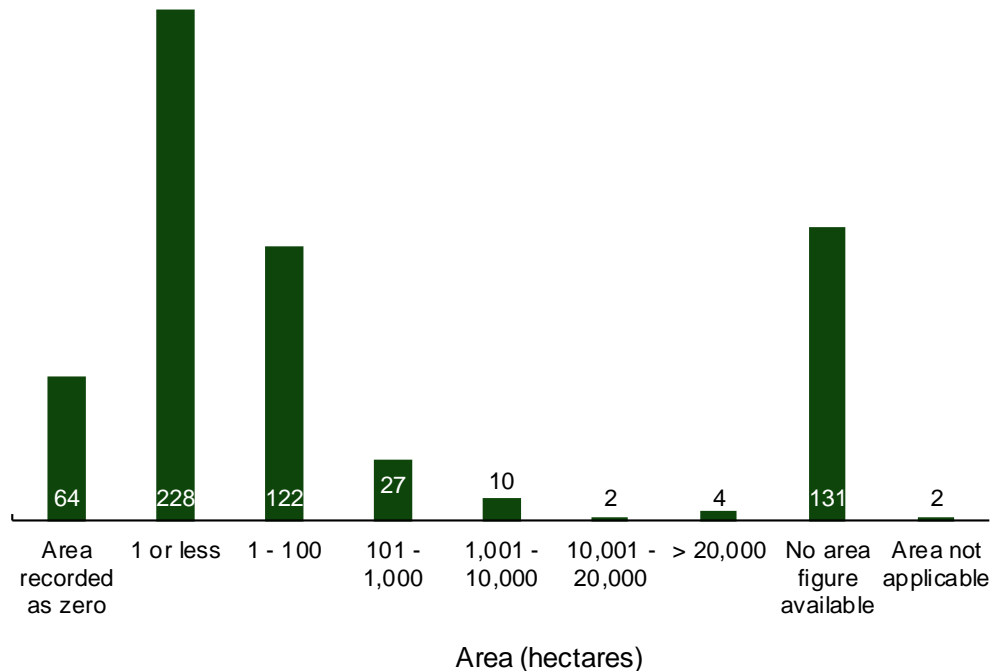
The data for this chart is available in Table 5 of the [Tables and Charts](#) supporting document.

The non-monetary category consists of a variety of legal processes by which an asset can be transferred without money being exchanged, e.g. a gift or legacy. Prices under £100 are taken to be nominal.

The price of an asset can range from its market value down to a nominal sum paid or a non-monetary transaction. Most prices have been verified against the Land Register.

Of the 114 assets not on the Land Register, 93 do not have price information available. For the remaining 21, price has been taken from the original source.

Four assets comprise 58% of the land area in community ownership



Assets one hectare or less in size 39%

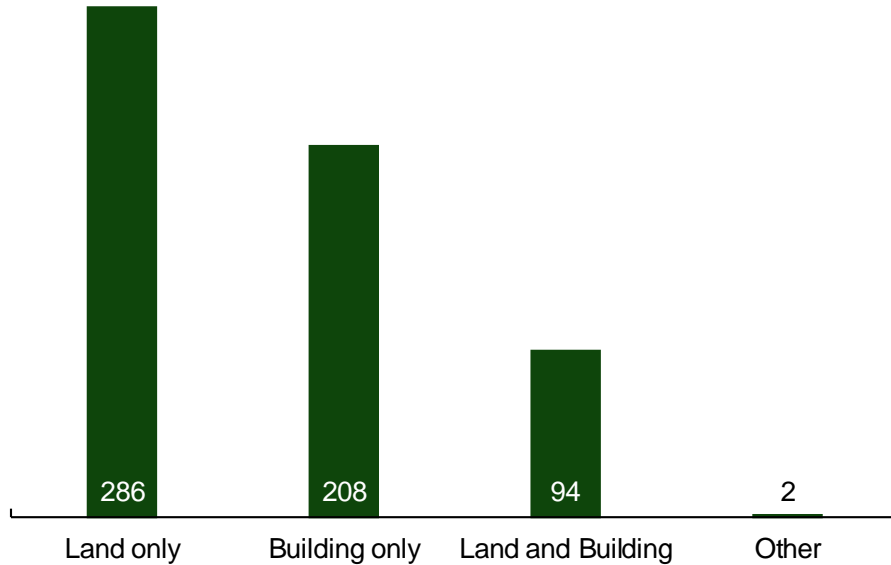
More than half of the land in community ownership is comprised of four assets, each greater than 20,000 hectares.

By contrast 39% of assets have an area of one hectare or less, with a combined area of less than 0.1% of the total area. This reflects that most of the land area in community ownership has been acquired in the form of whole estates.

The assets with the area recorded as zero are likely to be where the area is small, e.g. a building. No area figure available means a figure has not been found; it may not necessarily be small.

The data for this chart is available in Table 6 of the [Tables and Charts](#) supporting document.

Almost all community owned assets are land and/or buildings



The data for this chart is available in Table 7 of the [Tables and Charts](#) supporting document.

Of the 28 assets which came into community ownership in 2019, 18 were buildings, seven were land and three consisted of land and buildings.

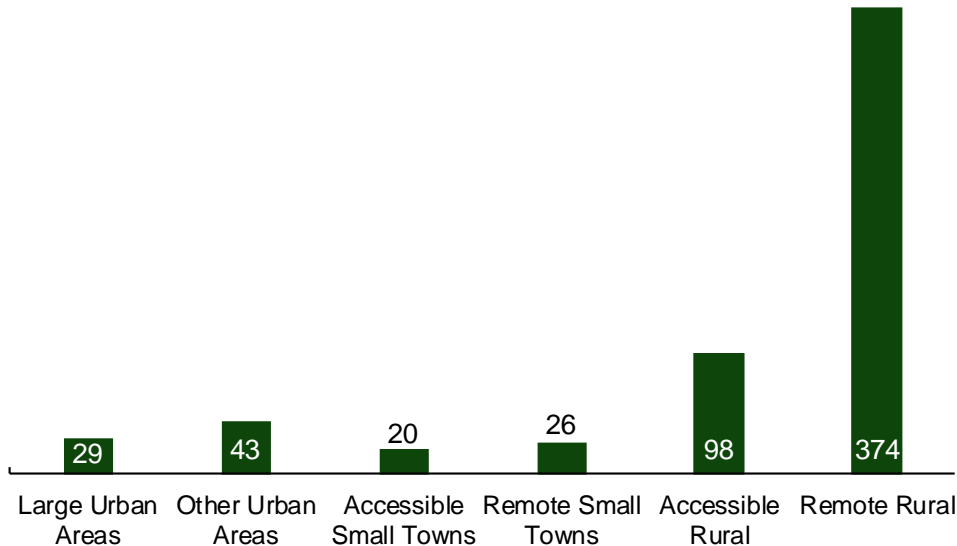
Community owned assets which are exclusively land 286

Nearly half of community owned assets are exclusively land (286), with a just over a third (208) exclusively buildings and 94 land and buildings.

Most assets will fall into the category of land, buildings or both. The two assets categorised as 'Other' were a ferry and salmon fishing rights for a river.

There may be a degree of subjectivity in how categories have been assigned, e.g. a building with a very small area of land. The classification of an asset may also change after a community group takes ownership.

More than six out of ten community owned assets are located in remote rural areas



The data for this chart is available in Table 8 of the [Tables and Charts](#) supporting document.

Of the 28 assets which came into community ownership in 2019, 15 were in remote rural areas, seven were in accessible rural areas with six in urban areas, referred to as the rest of Scotland.

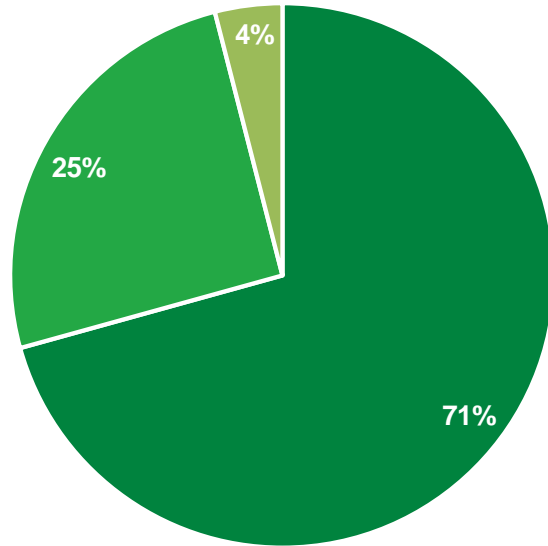
Community owned assets in remote rural areas in 2019 374

Remote rural areas contain 63% of community owned assets and 98% of the land area in community ownership. A further 98 assets (17%) are in accessible rural areas, comprising just over 1% of the land area.

While a fifth of assets (118) are located in the rest of Scotland, these assets only comprise 0.5% of the area in community ownership.

The Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification is assigned according to the address/location of the asset. Assets with large areas may straddle multiple classes. Further information on the Classification is available [here](#).

The vast majority of community owned land is in Highland and Na h-Eileanan Siar



■ Na h-Eileanan Siar ■ Highland ■ Rest of Scotland

A breakdown of the area by all local authorities is available in Table 10 of the [Tables and Charts](#) supporting document. Additional geographical breakdowns are available in Tables 11, 12 and 13.

Community owned land in Highland and Na h-Eileanan Siar 183,653 hectares

Community ownership is spread across most local authorities, but most of the land area is located within Na h-Eileanan Siar (71%) and Highland (25%). Only Falkirk has no currently identified community owned assets.

For Highland its share of the land area is approximately equal to its share of number of assets (135, 23%) and community groups (106, 25%).

By contrast Na h-Eileanan Siar has 59 assets (10%) and 34 community groups (8%). This is a reflection that all four of the largest assets (above 20,000 hectares) are located within Na h-Eileanan Siar.

Community Ownership in Scotland 2019

Glossary

Community Group

This term means a group where membership is open to a local community, the group has a defined aim of benefiting the local community and is non-profit making.

The specific legal status of groups can vary, dependent on the scale of the projects they wish to undertake. Only groups actually owning assets are included in this report.

Asset

This term is used to describe areas of land, buildings and anything else of substantial value a community group may own. This is to reflect that it is not just areas of land that can bring benefits to a community.

Transfer Date

This is the date at which a community group took ownership of an asset, either by purchase or as a gift, legacy or other non-monetary transaction.

Community Ownership in Scotland 2019

Data source

This data has been collected from a variety of sources: bodies providing funding to community groups to purchase assets, details of asset transfers from relevant public sector organisations and directly from community groups. The data has been collated and quality assured against the Land Register held by Registers of Scotland

A full methodology report can be found accompanying this report.

<https://www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781800040120>

For more information on the data in this publication please contact Martin McNicoll:

communitylandstatistics@gov.scot

Data sources and more information

Data tables

The data used to create the charts in this publication are available online in the accompanying spreadsheet.

<https://www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781800040120>

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