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publication for Scotland

# Community Ownership in Scotland 2021

27 September 2022



# Community Ownership in Scotland 2021

## Main Findings

There were 711 assets in community ownership as at December 2021. This is an increase of 48 (7%) from 663 in 2020. All but 20 of the assets in community ownership are land and/or buildings.

The Highland and Argyll and Bute local authorities together contain 259 assets, 36% of all assets in community ownership.

The 711 assets were owned by 484 community groups and covered an area of 211,998 hectares.

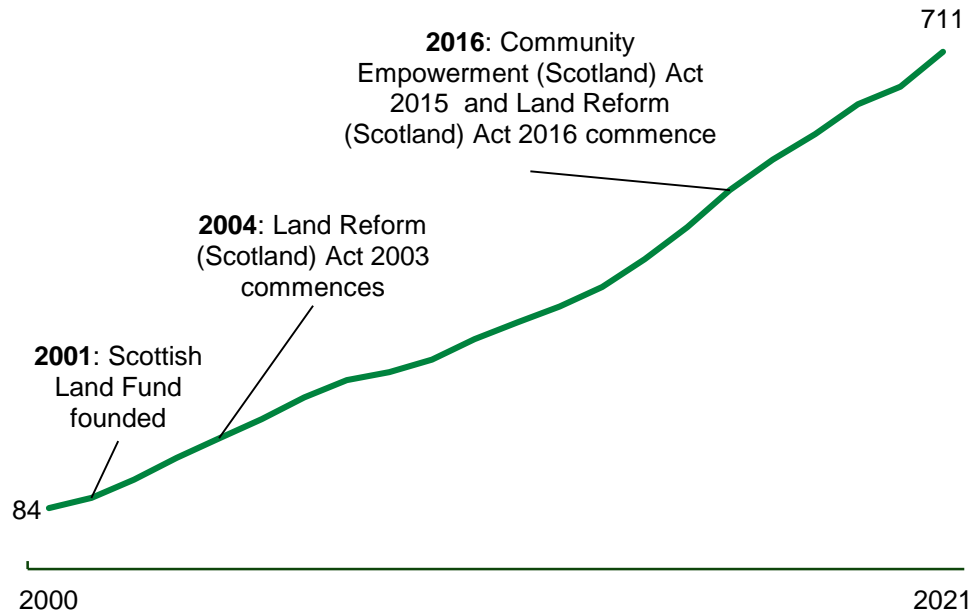
## Introduction

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.

As at December 2021 the performance of the National Indicator on community ownership is improving, as the increase in the number of assets was greater than 3%.

# 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 9% of the assets in community ownership as at December 2021.

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



## Assets in community ownership in 2021

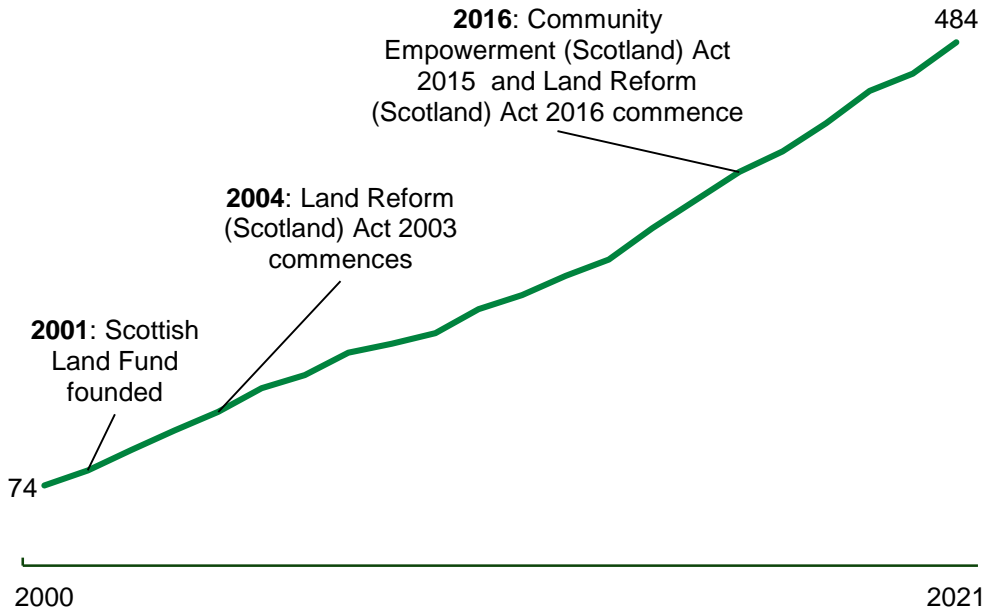
711

The number of assets in community ownership in 2021 was 711, 48 (7%) higher than in 2020.

There has been an increase in recent years with 627 assets (88%) being acquired after 2000 and just over half of assets (395) acquired 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 on the [Community Fund](#) website.

# More than sixfold increase in community groups owning assets since 2000



Number of community groups in 2021 **484**

The number of groups who own assets in 2021 was 484, compared to 74 groups in 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.

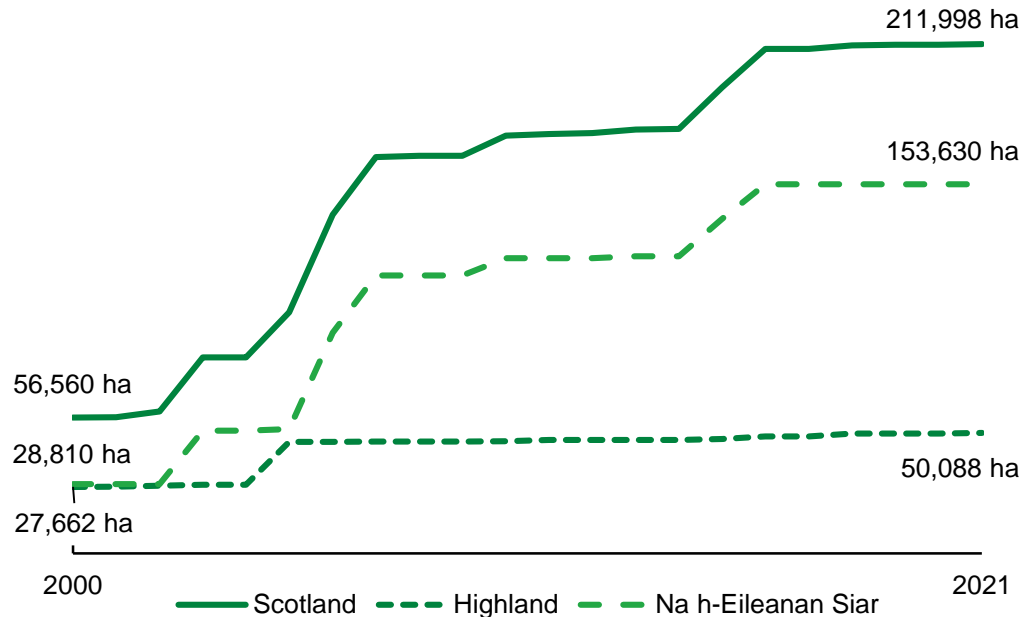
There are 118 groups which own more than one asset; the most assets owned by a single group is 13. The local authorities with the most community groups are Highland (123, 25%) and Argyll and Bute (56, 12%).

Note the chart does not indicate the number of groups which owned assets during this period. Community groups are excluded where, as of 2021, they no longer own any assets.

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



There is approaching four times as much community owned land compared to 2000



Area in community ownership in 2021 211,998 hectares

The area of land in community ownership has increased by 155,439 hectares compared to 2000.

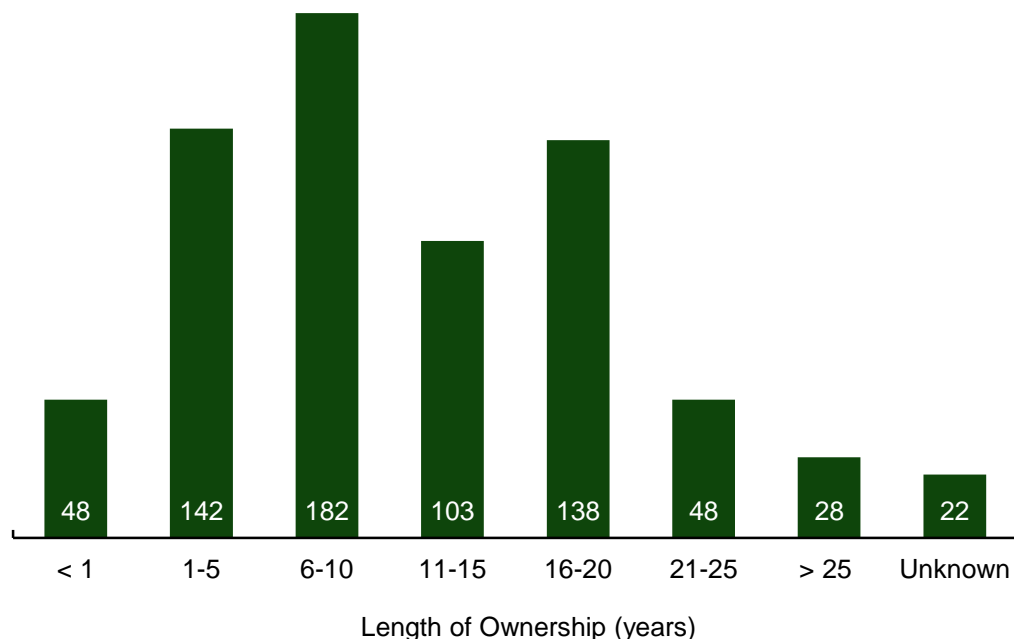
There are considerable differences in the increase in area from year to year, due to the purchase of a small number of very large estates. These large estates are located in Na h-Eileanan Siar and Highland.

The area in community ownership in the rest of Scotland has also started to increase. In the last ten years the area of community owned land in the rest of Scotland has increased by almost 70%.

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 2021 was 211,998 hectares, an increase of 252 hectares from 211,746 hectares in 2020.

# Just over half of assets have been owned for 10 years or less



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](#).



## New assets in community ownership in 2021

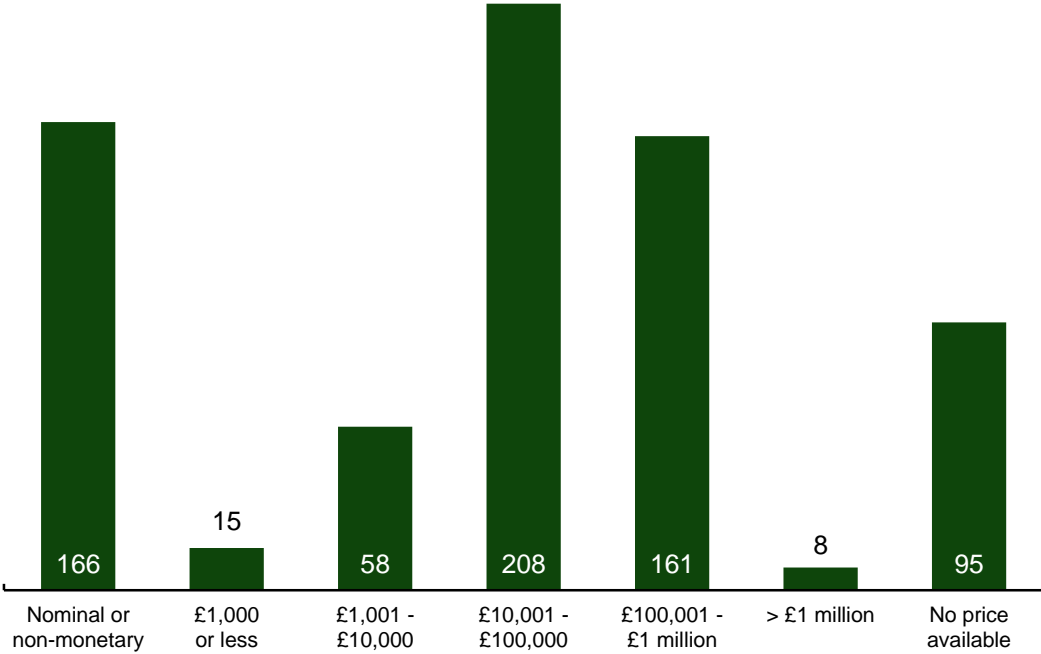
48

Of the community owned assets in 2021, 372 were acquired in the last ten years, with 28 (4%) acquired more than 25 years ago. A fifth of assets were acquired between one and five years ago, with 7% acquired in the last year.

There were 22 assets (3%) 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 that are not on the Land Register.



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



The most common price category was £10,001-£100,000 with 208 assets.

To give a fair comparison over time all purchase prices have been converted to 2021 prices.

Excluding non-monetary transactions and nominal amounts, a total of £4.0 million was paid for the 48 assets acquired in 2021.

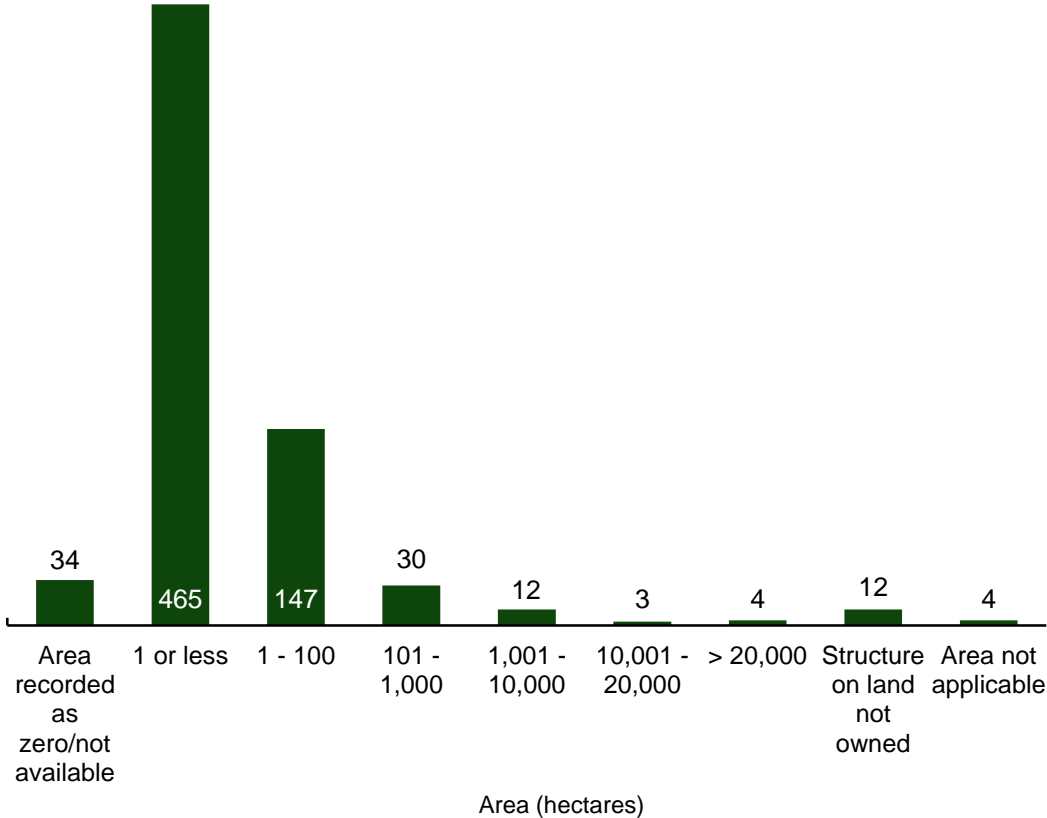
The price of an asset can range from its market value down to a nominal sum paid or a non-monetary transaction. Most prices have been verified against the Land Register.

Of the 116 assets not on the Land Register, 94 do not have price information available. For the remaining 22 assets, prices have been taken from the original source.

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.

# Four assets comprise 52% of the land area in community ownership



Assets one hectare or less in size } 65%

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

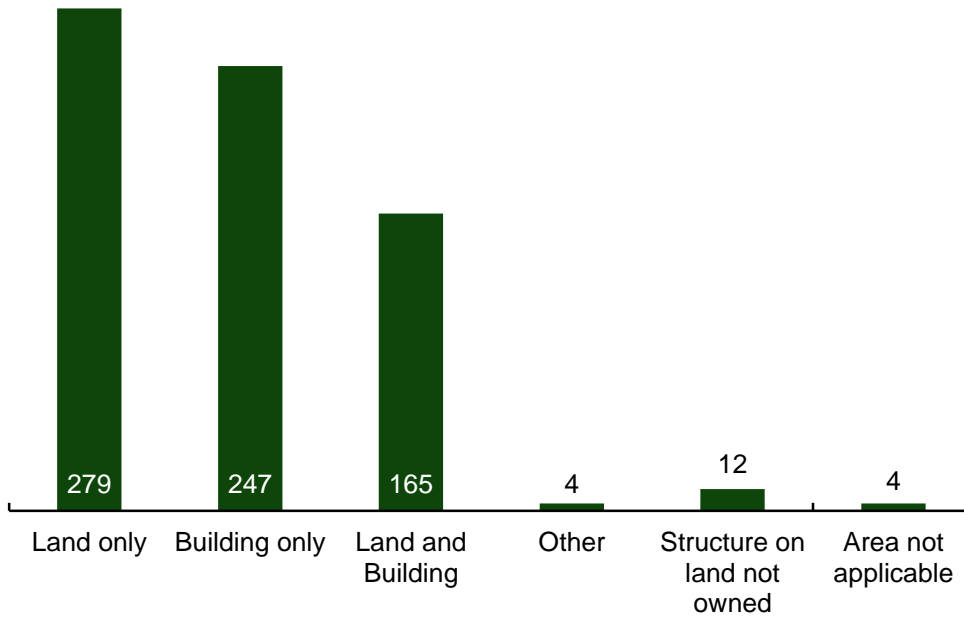
By contrast 65% of assets have an area of one hectare or less, with a combined area of less than 0.05% of the total area. This reflects that most of the land area in community ownership has been acquired in the form of whole estates.

The assets with the area recorded as zero or not available are recorded on the paper based General Register of Sasines, where area figures are not readily available, and it has not been possible to find the area from another source.

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 48 assets which came into community ownership in 2021, 28 were buildings, seven consisted of land and buildings and 13 were land only.



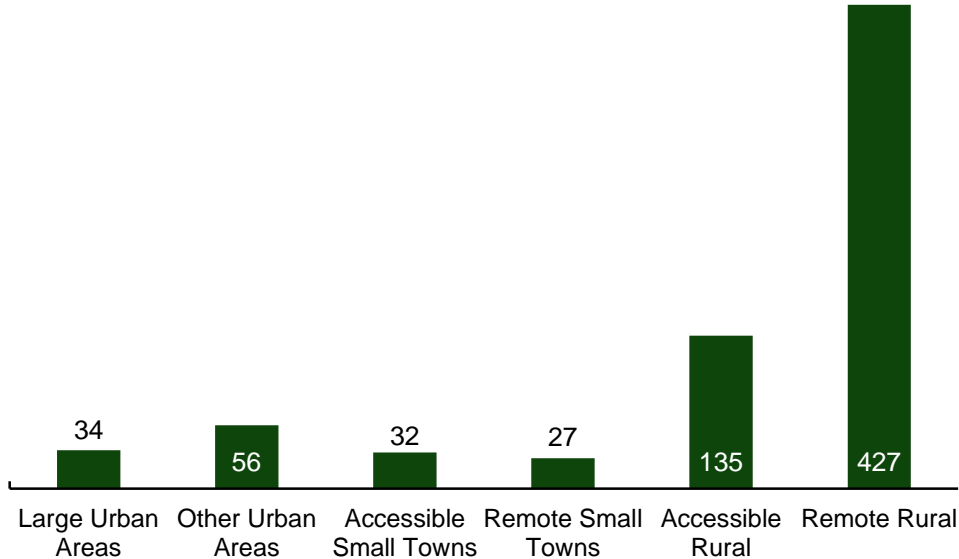
Community owned assets which are exclusively land 279

Nearly 40 percent of community owned assets are just land (279), with a just over a third (247) just buildings and 165 land and buildings.

Most assets will fall into the category of land, buildings or both. There are four assets categorised as 'Other' which are either piers or slipways. The four non-land based assets are a ferry, a small boat, a single car transporter 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.

# Six out of ten community owned assets are located in remote rural areas



Community owned assets in remote rural areas in 2021 427

Remote rural areas contain 60% of community owned assets and 98% of community owned land. A further 135 assets (19%) are in accessible rural areas, comprising just over 1% of the land area.

While 21% of assets (149) are located in urban areas, these assets only comprise less than 1% of the area in community ownership.

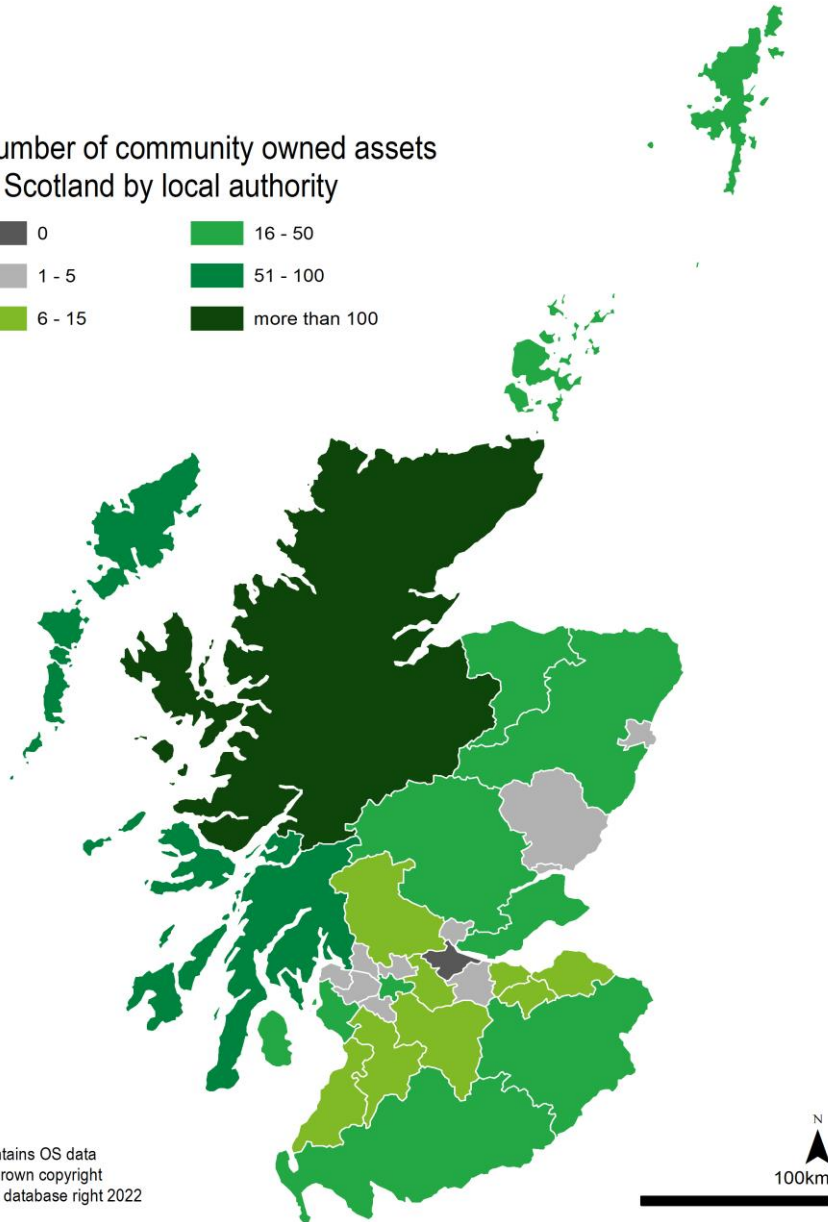
The Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification is assigned according to the address/location of the asset. Assets with large areas may straddle multiple classes. Further information on the [Classification](#) can be found on the Scottish Government website.

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

Of the 48 assets which came into community ownership in 2021, 27 were in remote rural areas and six in accessible rural areas. The remaining 15 were spread across urban areas.

# Community ownership is spread across almost all local authorities

Number of community owned assets in Scotland by local authority



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## Community owned assets in Highland and Argyll and Bute 259

The local authorities with the most community owned assets currently recorded are Highland (165) and Argyll and Bute (94); Falkirk is the only local authority with no community owned assets currently recorded.

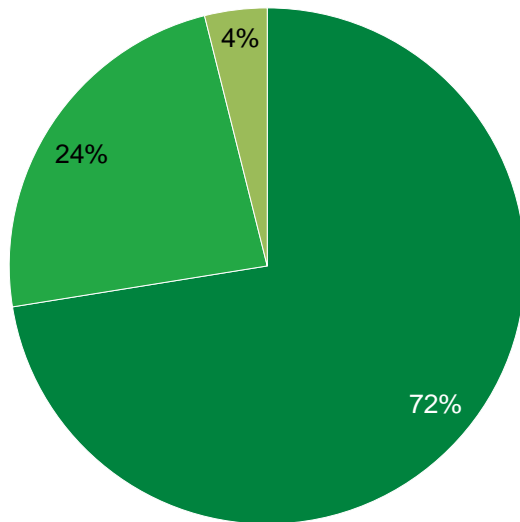
The map shows that there are fewer community owned assets across the central belt. The map also illustrates that the majority of community owned assets are in rural areas.

The map is available from the [Asset by Local Authority Map supporting document](#). The distribution of assets by local authority is available in Table 11a of the [Tables and Charts supporting document](#).

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



Percentage Share of Community Owned Land



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

A breakdown of the area by all local authorities is available in Table 11a of the [Tables and Charts supporting document](#). Additional geographical breakdowns are available in Tables 12, 13 and 14.

Community owned land in Highland and Na h-Eileanan Siar 203,719 hectares

While community ownership is spread across most local authorities, most of the land area is located within Na h-Eileanan Siar (72%) and Highland (24%).

For Highland its share of the land area is approximately equal to its share of number of assets (165, 23%) and community groups (123, 25%).

By contrast Na h-Eileanan Siar has 68 assets (10%) and 35 community groups (7%). This is a reflection that all four of the largest assets (above 20,000 hectares) are located within Na h-Eileanan Siar. Over half of the land area in Na h-Eileanan Siar is now community owned.

# Community Ownership in Scotland 2021

## Glossary

### Community Group

This term means a group where membership is open to a local community, any membership fee is only a nominal amount, 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 2021

## 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 user guide can be found accompanying this report: <http://www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781804357354>

For more information on the data in this publication please contact Martin McNicoll: [CommunityOwnershipStatistics@gov.scot](mailto:CommunityOwnershipStatistics@gov.scot)

## Data sources and more information

### Data tables and charts

The data used to create the charts in this publication are available online in the accompanying spreadsheet. <http://www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781804357354>

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