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National Islands Plan Implementation Route Map 2022



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Ministerial Foreword



As Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands, I am pleased to present the first revision of the National Islands Plan Implementation Route Map, following its initial publication in 2021.

The Implementation Route Map details how Scottish Government are delivering our priorities over the lifetime of the National Islands Plan. It is designed to be a living document that will be continually updated and adapted, in recognition of the fact that priorities for island communities can change, enabling it to respond to fresh challenges as they arise.

Whilst the original iteration of the Route Map gave us a vision for what success would look like when all the commitments in the National Islands Plan were delivered, the 2022 revision has allowed us to take a more forward-looking and action-focussed approach. You will now find specific, detailed actions that will be taken across Scottish Government in order to deliver on the National Islands Plan commitments and therefore demonstrating how we will continue to contribute to improvements across our islands.

2021 also saw the welcome introduction of our National Islands Plan Delivery Group, who you can read more about in this publication. Our Delivery Group members hold a key role in shaping delivery of the National Islands Plan and will be instrumental in ensuring there is accountability and true collaboration with our island communities. They will also take an active role in reviewing the Route Map to ensure the proposed actions are genuinely delivering on their associated commitments, for island communities.

Our islands are profoundly important and we want them to thrive. The ongoing development and continuous review of the Implementation Route Map provides the basis for continued improvement across our islands in collaboration with stakeholders and most importantly, our island communities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mairi Gougeon'.

Mairi Gougeon MSP

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

Introduction

Within the National Islands Plan, Scottish Government committed to publishing an Implementation Route Map that addresses each of the 13 Strategic Objectives and accompanying commitments listed in the Plan.

Following collaboration with Local Authorities, key stakeholders and island communities, the first National Islands Plan Implementation Route Map was published on 24 March 2021. It was published as a living document in recognition that priorities for island communities can change and we committed to review it regularly to ensure that it continued to reflect the actions required to meet the commitments in the National Islands Plan.

The Implementation Route Map sets out how we will continue to contribute to improved outcomes across our islands, and provides a route map of how we aim to deliver our priorities over the lifetime of the National Islands Plan. The 2022 revision takes a forward looking, action-focussed approach and has been developed in collaboration across Scottish Government to ensure all policy areas with responsibility for delivering the Plan have contributed.

It focuses on **how** each as yet unfulfilled commitment in the National Islands Plan will be delivered over the next three years, giving specific, detailed actions that will be taken across Scottish Government. Commitments that were already fulfilled in 2020/2021 do not feature in this document but you can read more about the actions that have been taken to fulfil them in the respective years' Annual Reports.

The Implementation Route Map will be reviewed monthly by Scottish Government and quarterly by the National Islands Plan Delivery Group (see page 5)

No single organisation or sector can achieve all that we want for Scotland's islands. This Implementation Route Map is for everyone, working for and with our islanders, and many of the actions identified in the National Islands Plan will be undertaken in partnership to improve outcomes for all island communities.

Our Strategic Objectives and Values

The National Islands Plan sets a direction for the Scottish Government and provides a framework for action in order to meaningfully improve outcomes for island communities. The Plan has 13 Strategic Objectives which we will use to direct our work over the coming months and years.



Strategic Objective 1

To address population decline and ensure a healthy, balanced population profile



Strategic Objective 2

To improve and promote sustainable economic development



Strategic Objective 3

To improve transport services



Strategic Objective 4

To improve housing



Strategic Objective 5

To reduce levels of fuel poverty



Strategic Objective 6

To improve digital connectivity



Strategic Objective 7

To improve and promote health, social care and wellbeing



Strategic Objective 8
To improve and promote environmental wellbeing and deal with biosecurity



Strategic Objective 9
To contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation and promote clean, affordable and secure energy



Strategic Objective 10
To empower diverse communities and different places



Strategic Objective 11
To support arts, culture and language



Strategic Objective 12
To promote and improve education for all throughout life



Strategic Objective 13
To support effective implementation of the National Islands Plan

A Fair, Integrated, Green and Inclusive Plan

The four principles of fairness, integration, environmental protection (green) and inclusiveness underpin the National Islands Plan by guiding us and our partners in meeting its ultimate objective – which is to improve outcomes for island communities

A **fair** Plan with wellbeing at its heart will strive towards fairer, healthier, happier communities across Scotland. Its human rights approach will support greater accountability and help ensure that island communities' rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

An **integrated** Plan will promote joined-up services based on a cohesive, place-based and holistic approach to policy and will build economic, social and environmental considerations in an integrated approach to island policy.

A **green** Plan will harness the opportunities of a greener, fairer economy while we work toward ending Scotland's contribution to climate change.

An **inclusive** Plan will promote genuine community empowerment at the local level enabling decisions to be taken as close as possible to where their impact will be felt.

National Islands Plan Delivery Group

To ensure that the National Islands Plan leads to meaningful, positive and sustainable change, there needs to be accountability and ongoing collaboration with our local authority partners, stakeholders and island communities for the duration of the Plan.

Strategic Objective 13 of the [National Islands Plan](#) commits to the establishment of a group to ensure close monitoring of the delivery of the Plan and its accompanying Implementation Route Map.

The National Islands Plan Delivery Group was established in June 2021. It supports implementation of the Plan, delivering on those assurances made under Strategic Objective 13 and ensuring that work is driven forward in a collaborative way that truly involves island communities.

Delivering a fair, integrated, green and inclusive plan requires strong collaboration and partnership and the Delivery Group provides this collaborative working space.

Membership

Membership of the group brings together representatives from island communities, local government, the third and independent sectors, community groups, relevant academics and Scottish Government officials:

- Argyll and Bute Council
- Bòrd na Gàidhlig
- Calmac Community Board
- Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
- COSLA
- Development Trusts Association Scotland
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Highland Council
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland

- North Ayrshire Council
- Orkney Islands Council
- Shetland Islands Council
- Strathclyde Centre for Environmental Law and Governance
- Scottish Futures Trust
- Scottish Islands Federation
- Scottish Government
- University of the Highlands and Islands

The group meets regularly to examine progress and help identify critical priorities in order to work towards meeting the commitments within the National Islands Plan.

The Delivery Group also holds a key role in reviewing the Implementation Route Map on a quarterly basis, including offering guidance on any significant issues which would require changes to be made and ensuring the proposed actions are genuinely delivering on their associated commitments.

Data and Indicators

The extensive 2019 National Islands Plan consultation process highlighted the lack of robust disaggregated socio-economic data available in relation to our islands. The accumulation of better data is key to understanding the specific challenges facing island communities, which in turn will ensure that evidence based decisions and policy are made.

In the absence of objective measures at an islands level, there was a need to produce an alternate source of data that will measure the impact and effectiveness of the National Islands Plan in a consistent way. In 2020, we commissioned the National Islands Plan Survey which allowed us to gather the views of island communities across all of the Strategic Objectives. 20,000 surveys were posted to adult residents of 76 permanently inhabited islands, with options to complete it on paper, online or by phone, and in English or Gaelic. A total of 4,347 people responded to the survey from 59 islands, giving a response rate of 22%.

The [National Islands Plan Survey: Final Report](#) and accompanying interactive [data tool](#) were published on 9 July 2021.

Survey Headlines

- Survey findings highlight that experiences of island life vary considerably by island group and by age groups.
- Respondents feel there is a lack of support for young people to remain, move or return to the islands.
- The data reveals that respondents feel there are a lack of employment, training and higher education opportunities and a lack of childcare options to fit with residents' working patterns.
- Respondents also feel there is a poor variety of housing types, sizes and tenures to meet people's needs and a lack of affordable housing.
- Respondents also have mixed experiences of accessing healthcare services and of speed and reliability of internet connections.
- Some feel there is inadequate infrastructure for the number of tourists their islands attract.

Our aim is to repeat the National Islands Plan Survey at regular intervals to allow us to compare results. The data we gather will support us in measuring the effectiveness of the National Islands Plan across its lifetime, allowing us to identify where more targeted interventions may be required.

Community Resilience in Scotland Islands During the Covid-19 Pandemic

In 2021, we also commissioned Ipsos MORI to produce a series of case studies exploring examples of island community resilience during the Covid-19 pandemic. The initial focus of the project is to understand the range of community initiatives that have been developed on Scotland's islands in response to the pandemic, in order to identify as wide a range of potential case studies as possible.

The [findings from the case studies](#) were published in June 2022 and will be used to develop recommendations for strengthening community resilience across Scotland whilst informing the delivery of the National Islands Plan.

National Islands Plan Research Working Group

National Islands Plan Delivery Group members have recommended development of a research index and establishment of a research working group. This group will be established during 2022 and will help us to ensure that relevant data from our systems of measurement are captured and inform the monitoring of the National Islands Plan.

Measuring Our Progress

Our Annual Report to Parliament includes progress made, through the commitments listed under each Strategic Objective.

We had hoped to launch a virtual National Islands Plan Progress Dashboard in 2021 but paused this work until the revision of the Implementation Route Map had been completed to ensure consistency in approach. Following publication of the 2022 Implementation Route Map, we will now continue the development on the Dashboard, ensuring it also aligns with the [2021 Annual Report](#). The Dashboard will present real time progress towards both our Strategic Objectives and commitments and will be displayed online in an accessible and transparent manner. It will be reviewed and updated on a quarterly basis.

Timescales

On the following pages you will find the as yet unfulfilled commitments from the National Islands Plan with specific actions assigned to each of them, demonstrating how Scottish Government envisage they will be met over the lifetime of the Plan.

Each action has been given an indicative timescale for delivery where appropriate as follows:

Short: One-two years

Medium: Two-five years

Long: Over five years

Many of the commitments within the National Islands Plan have an ongoing nature to them, and therefore assigning a timescale for fulfilment is not always appropriate. For these commitments, they are marked as **'ongoing'**. Each year in the Annual Report, we will update on what work has taken place during the year for these commitments.

National Islands Plan Implementation Route Map 2022

Strategic Objective: 1 – Population

Address population decline and ensure a healthy, balance population profile

Partners: Local Authorities, Island Communities, Scottish Islands Federation, Crofting Commission, Scottish Crofting Federation, Youth Scotland, Rural Youth Parliament, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Convention of the Highlands and Islands (CoHI), Scotland’s Rural College, University of the Highlands and Islands, James Hutton Institute, Robert Gordon University, Young Islanders Network, Crofting Township Grazings Committees, National Farmers Union for Scotland.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Identify islands where population decline is becoming a critical issue in order to ensure that these islands have their needs addressed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retaining and attracting young people is one of the key objectives of the Islands Growth Deal. Both the Scottish and UK Governments will each invest up to £50m in the Deal. The Islands Growth Deal will be delivered over 10 years from Full Deal being signed. We will work with island communities, local authorities and stakeholders to develop Island Profiles. This work will seek to develop easily accessible profiles providing demographic, economic, and locally identified and developed data for each island. A small number of test profiles will be developed and delivered in 2022. The learning from this work will help shape how the Island Profile concept may be scaled up and delivered across islands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long Term Short Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Develop an action plan to support repopulation of our rural and island communities and work with partners to test approaches using small-scale pilots</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategic plan aimed at providing the policy framework to enable population retention and repopulation across rural and island communities. This work will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping levers currently used by Scottish Government (strategies, funding, planning regulations) and the limitations of our approach at present; • Setting out current engagement with key partnerships (Convention of the Highlands and Islands, Convention of the South of Scotland, COSLA); • Commissioning research and evidence building to mainstream population, depopulation, and repopulation across government policy in future. • The 2021-22 Programme for Government, contained a commitment to ‘develop a Rural Visa Pilot proposal, to support people to move to and work in our rural communities, submitting a proposal to the UK Government in 2022’, to facilitate migration to rural and remote areas impacted by depopulation, in a way which best meets the needs of the communities affected. A short-life working group is being established, comprising a range of local, regional and national stakeholders, to collaboratively input into the development of pilot proposals, and the Scottish Government plans to submit these proposals to the UK Government and the Migration Advisory Committee during Summer 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term • Short Term Develop proposals for Rural Visa Pilot Scheme

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Work with young islanders to identify actions to encourage them to stay on or return to islands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Young Islanders Network Project provides the opportunity for island residents aged 5-25 to highlight the issues facing them, and develop a network that will help to address these. We will continue to work with the Young Islanders Network to identify actions that would encourage young people to stay on or return to islands. • Work on the Student Retention project is continuing. Student Retention aims to encourage students to remain in Scotland (and rural locations/move to islands or highlands) after completing study – this applies to any students from Scotland or the rest of the UK. Working with young islanders would help us develop our understanding of what would make them want to stay or return after study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term • Ongoing
<p>Ensure that policies aim to retain and attract Gaelic speakers to live and work in Gaelic speaking island communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of Island Communities Impact Assessments will support this process following the 2022 update to the ICIA Guidance and Toolkit • Quarterly meetings are established between the Gaelic and Scots Team, the Islands Team and Bòrd na Gàidhlig to support this process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing
<p>Work with the Crofting Commission to encourage a healthy turnover of croft tenancies on our islands to create opportunities for new people into crofting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commission has expanded its Residency and Land Use team and, as a result of this, will be increasing its work in addressing absenteeism and bringing crofts back into active use. • The Commission has also created Crofting Development roles, and has employed officers in the Western Isles who will engage with crofting communities and grazings committees to encourage active croft use and identify opportunities for new entrants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing

Strategic Objective: 2 – Sustainable Economic Development

Improve and promote sustainable economic development

Partners: Local Authorities, Island Communities, Scottish Islands Federation, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, Creative Scotland, Creative Scotland's RFOs (Regularly Funded Organisations), Youth Scotland, Marine Scotland, Scottish Forestry, Forestry and Land Scotland, Crofting Commission, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Fisherman's Federation, Visit Scotland, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Tourism Industry, University of the Highlands and Islands, Third Sector Interfaces, Crown Estate Scotland.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Identify key actions to drive inclusive and sustainable economic growth on islands such as community-run businesses, e-commerce and digitally enabled island-based businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DigitalBoost programme is our national business digital engagement programme which offers digital support to SMEs including workshops, 1-2-1 advice, health checks, online guides and tutorials. • We will establish a Digital Productivity Fund focused on supporting business to improve firm-level productivity through the adoption and successful integration of new and advanced technologies. • We will develop joint programmes of action to increase digital understanding and adoption in sectors where business models have been transformed rapidly due to new technology. • To ensure that the National Islands Plan leads to meaningful, positive and sustainable change, there needs to be ongoing collaboration with our island communities for the duration of the Plan. We will continue to consult and collaborate with our island communities on a regular basis. • We will continue to work with teams delivering the projects of the recently published National Strategy for Economic Transformation in ways that maximise benefits for island communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Medium Term • Ongoing • Long Term • Ongoing

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Explore how best to ensure the needs of islands are met within emerging regional economic partnerships including the Convention of the Highlands and Islands (COHI).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All island Local Authorities are active members of, and their needs well represented at, CoHI. LAs across the H&I region are currently discussing whether a Regional Economic Partnership would provide additional value to existing partnerships. Scottish Government will continue to engage with and support them as required. • Ongoing work with Highlands and Islands Enterprise to develop understanding of the issues faced and how the Talent Attraction and Retention Programme, Skills Recognition Scotland, and Student Retention project can positively impact repopulation efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing
<p>Tailor business and community support for island communities to ensure products and services are fit for purpose, accessible and effective. This will include exploring new and innovative models and working with national providers to consider how programmes can better address needs of island communities and businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SG has committed to growing Community Wealth Building (CWB) in Scotland as a practical approach to delivering on our wellbeing economy aims. SG has supported five pilot areas, including the Western Isles, to develop bespoke CWB action plans. Alongside this pilot work, the Scottish Government committed £3m to advance CWB across the Ayrshire region, through Ayrshire Growth Deal. The 2021 Programme for Government and the recent NSET confirmed our plans to introduce legislation on Community Wealth Building during this Parliamentary session. The legislation we plan to introduce will attempt to address blockages identified within the areas leading the implementation of CWB, and support further embedding of this approach across Scotland. A Bill Steering Group, chaired by the Minister for Public Finance, Planning and Community Wealth, has been established and contains representation from a range of public, private and third sector stakeholders, including Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and North Ayrshire Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Work in partnership to support strategic projects which deliver sustainable economic growth in the islands, e.g. Orkney Research and Innovation Campus and Stornoway port developments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the Islands Growth Deal, in which both the Scottish and UK Governments will each invest up to £50m, we will be investing in local people, projects and priorities in partnership with the island authorities and UK Government to spread the benefits of inclusive economic growth across the Orkney, Shetland and the Outer Hebrides, increasing opportunities for all. • We will continue to work with stakeholders to support the development of a local energy plan for Islay, which is being developed for consideration as part of the Argyll and Bute Rural Growth Deal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long Term • Long Term
<p>Drive the many socio-economic opportunities arising from the 2019 Science and Innovation Audit report ‘Maximising Opportunities for the Marine Economy in the Highlands and Islands’ as well as enhance those arising from growth deals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several projects are being taken forward as part of both the Islands Growth Deal and the Argyll and Bute Growth Deal that have a strong focus on the Marine Economy. Both the Scottish and UK Governments will continue to work closely with partners in both deals to develop these projects to the benefit of coastal communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long Term
<p>Display leadership in the public sector by demonstrating that jobs and careers can be successful on islands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Dispersal aims to demonstrate that work can be carried out from most locations. Plans to form a Workforce Dispersal working group are being discussed, initially looking at SG workforce and how jobs can be undertaken from across Scotland. This work has been supported through engagement with the CoHI Population Working Group, who presented a paper at the October 2021 CoHI meetings setting out policy considerations and suggested locally-led population initiatives for discussion. Scottish Government will continue to engage and reflect on this emerging work • Ongoing development of a Talent Attraction and Retention Programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Promote a thriving business environment that allows individuals to pursue a wide range of economic opportunities on islands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As is the case across Government, much of our work to support island economy sectors is mainstreamed and lies across many policy areas and as such we will continue to collaborate to ensure that the needs and interests of islands are served. • We will continue to ensure that new and revised policies, strategies and services are island-proofed by supporting colleagues with their duty to conduct Island Communities Impact Assessments – which play a critical role in supporting and developing sustainable economic development on islands. • Our Programme for Government makes a number of commitments to support Scotland’s rural economy. These commitments reach across a wide range of sectors from agriculture to tourism, fishing and connectivity. • In addition to mainstreamed business support, our Islands Programme will continue to support capital investment over the lifetime of the National Islands Plan (NIP), by supporting a range of areas, including tourism, infrastructure, innovation, energy transition and skills. In order to ensure that this investment provides best value for our island communities, whilst supporting them in their economic recovery, the framework for the Islands Programme is underpinned by the principles of place-based community wealth building, whilst also reflecting the four key pillars of the NIP to ensure it promotes a fair, integrated, green and inclusive approach to island policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long Term • Ongoing • Short Term • Medium Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Create and promote apprenticeships and job opportunities for young islanders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HM Inspectors are producing a report for Scottish Government in 2022 to evaluate Foundation Apprenticeships. This will identify what is working well, highlight any barriers to implementation, and make recommendations regarding aspects for improvement. The review of Modern Apprenticeship provision was paused in 2020/21 in response to the pandemic and will recommence in 2022. On completion this process will build on the evidence base for how apprenticeships can support pathways to positive destinations in our island communities. • Work on the Student Retention project is continuing. Student Retention aims to encourage students to remain in Scotland (and rural locations/move to islands or Highlands) after completing study – this applies to any students from Scotland or the rest of the UK. Working with young islanders will help to develop our understanding of what would make them want to stay or return after study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term • Ongoing

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Ensure that skills provision is agile and responsive to future demand and enables individuals to take up opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2019 Future Skills Action Plan (FSAP) sets out Scottish Government’s ambition that people across Scotland should have access to high quality skills support throughout their working life. Since the Plan’s launch, socio-economic conditions have changed greatly and while some of the trends and actions set out in FSAP have been delayed, others have been accelerated. SG have now progressed into a second phase of the plan, allowing us to take stock of labour market changes and emerging economic challenges, and to align closely with the National Strategy for Economic Transformation. • The Skills Action Plan for Rural Scotland (SAPRS) sets out our partnership approach to developing the skills and talent needed to make sure that Scotland’s rural and islands economy and communities continue to flourish and grow. It is a joint initiative supported by Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Government, stakeholders and partners. An evaluation of the SAPRS is currently underway; it will be published in 2022. This will help inform what future action is needed to drive forward coordination and delivery of skills across Scottish rural and islands communities. • We have set up a Commission to undertake a review of learning for Scotland’s land-based and aquaculture sectors – from early years to adulthood – to provide opportunities and qualifications through school, college, university and work-based learning including apprenticeships, for more people, and specifically more women, to work with and on the land, particularly in green skills. The Commission will provide independent, evidence-based advice and recommendations to Scottish Ministers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Medium Term • Long Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Build on Scotland's National Marine Plan to ensure that fishing and other economic activities stemming from the sea provide increased opportunities for island communities, but at the same time that they are pursued in a sustainable manner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A statutory review of Scotland's Marine Plan was published in March 2021 which found that whilst the plan remains effective, national and global developments point to a need to update and replace. Scottish Ministers have considered the findings of the Review, including the recommendation to update the National Marine Plan, and all feedback received from stakeholders on the Review. We anticipate making a formal announcement on the outcomes of the Review shortly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term Announcement on outcome of the Review. • Long Term Update of National Marine Plan.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Ensure that sustainable land use including agriculture and forestry continues to provide jobs and opportunities to island communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the green recovery, Scottish Forestry is doubling its recruitment of Assistant Woodland Officers, and Forestry and Land Scotland is doubling the number of opportunities for young people (including modern apprenticeships) creating an additional 25 jobs for young people. The Scottish Government will continue to encourage forestry companies to support new jobs on islands. • The Crofting Commission received additional funding in 2020/21 which enabled it to appoint four permanent Crofting Commission staff in the Western Isles. The Commission intends to review this in the future, with a view to considering further Commission positions in other island crofting areas. The new officers will liaise with crofting communities to encourage croft occupancy, working with assessors, landlords and townships to encourage opportunities for new entrants, and encourage active croft use and management of common grazing land. The Commission has also expanded its Residency and Land Use team, in order to increase its work in addressing absenteeism and bringing crofts back into active use. • The Scottish Government continues to provide support to help sustain croft businesses. Officials continue to consider potential changes to the Crofting Agricultural Grant Scheme, which include widening the scope of activity which can be grant supported. • SDS will shortly undertake a review of the Agriculture Modern Apprenticeship and seek industry input to develop and future proof the qualification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing • Short Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Agriculture Reform Implementation Oversight Board (ARIOB) was established in August 2021 to contribute to Scottish Government's work to implement policy reform, incorporating the relevant recommendations of the farmer-led groups to cut emissions across agriculture, support the production of sustainable, high-quality food, and design a new support system and approach. The Board are helping to develop the National Test Programme, which will support and encourage farmers and crofters to learn about how their work impacts on climate and nature, including offering financial support to carry out carbon audits and nutrient management plans, establishing a clear baseline and options for action for all who participate. Our Vision for Agriculture was published on 02 March 2022 and outlines our aim to transform how we support farming and food production in Scotland to become a global leader in sustainable and regenerative agriculture. This commitment will sit at the heart of a robust and coherent framework to underpin Scotland's future agriculture support regime from 2025 onwards. A new Scottish Agriculture Bill will be brought forward in 2023 to replace the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and deliver on the vision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long Term Long Term Framework. Short Term Agriculture Bill.
<p>Work with relevant partners and stakeholders to make tourism more sustainable and less seasonal, and encourage development of a year-round offer across a wider range of islands that delivers economic, environmental and social benefits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support the long-term recovery of Scotland's tourism and hospitality industry, the Scottish Government established its Scottish Tourism Recovery Taskforce (STRT) in June 2020. Phase One of the Tourism Recovery Programme is well underway. Alongside implementing Phase One, officials have been working with Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group to co-produce plans for a Phase Two of recovery (2022-23 and 2023-24) and we are now considering the best approaches to support Phase Two recovery work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Ensure that crofting continues to provide jobs and opportunities to island communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Scottish Government continues to provide support to help sustain croft businesses. Officials continue to consider potential changes to the Crofting Agricultural Grant Scheme, which include widening the scope of activity which can be grant supported. • The Crofting Commission received additional funding in July 2020 which enabled it to appoint four permanent Crofting Commission staff in the Western Isles. The Commission intends to review this in the future, and, if successful, can consider further positions in other island crofting areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing
<p>Deliver the Islands Passport initiative, which will promote the opportunity to visit a wider range of Scotland's inhabited islands, encouraging visitors throughout all seasons and by public transport, thereby delivering economic opportunities for island communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on delivering the Islands Passport Initiative is led by Scottish Government's delivery partner, HITRANS, alongside wider stakeholder engagement. Scottish Government have continued funding of this project in 2021-22, bringing our total support for the project to £200k. The project officially launched in 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Work with the food and drink industry to leverage its economic potential and explore options for sharing some of its benefits with island communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The three-year Food and Drink Sector Recovery Plan was launched in November 2020 and has so far received £10m from Scottish Government to support the programme, with industry also committed to raising £3m in private sector funding to support the programme through to 2023. The plan does not provide direct financial support to businesses but is wrap around holistic support identified by Industry themselves and contains 50 actions to support all sectors of Scotland's food and drink industry, including Island communities to recover from Covid-19 and mitigate the impact of Brexit. Moving forward we will be working with the industry in refreshing Ambition 2030 as the sector adapts to the changing operating landscape post pandemic and Brexit. This work will, as the Recovery Plan before it, underpin the sustainability of the sector and the jobs it creates, especially in remote, rural and island communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium Term
<p>Seek to expand the range of economic, social and environmental benefits that island communities derive from forestry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Forestry will continue to work with a range of partners to increase the use of forests and woodlands on the islands to help improve people's health, well-being and life changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
<p>Review Scotland's National Planning Framework to ensure sufficient flexibility for island interests, including in how best to meet housing need.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The draft National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) was laid in the Scottish Parliament in November 2021 for scrutiny and is also available for public consultation until 31 March 2022. We are working towards laying a final version for the Scottish Parliament's approval in Summer 2022. The draft NPF4 proposes land use planning policies on key issues supporting island and coastal communities' lives, such as: engagement, local living, housing, spaces and places, rural and coastal policies, health and wellbeing and connectivity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Reflect the National Islands Plan and relevant regional perspectives in the review of the National Planning Framework and preparation of National Planning Framework 4.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The draft NPF4 was laid in the Scottish Parliament in November 2021 for scrutiny and an online consultation ran until 31 March 2022. The aims and priorities of the National Islands Plan are reflected in the draft NPF4 in the spatial strategy and supporting policies including for: engagement, local living, housing, spaces and places, rural and coastal policies, health and wellbeing and connectivity. We are working towards laying a final version for the Scottish Parliament's approval in Summer 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Term
<p>Ensure that legislation and policy relating to early learning and childcare is appropriately island-proofed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Scottish Government will continue to engage with island stakeholders in the development of Early Learning and Childcare policy and legislation, including conducting an Island Communities Impact Assessment where appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
<p>Ensure that opportunities to develop the wellbeing of the Gaelic language and increase the number of speakers and users are considered as part of sustainable economic development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to explore and develop a broad range of opportunities that promote and support the Gaelic language across Scotland and operating across a number of sectors. These functions all have a significant economic impact, through direct employment and attracting visitors while simultaneously supporting grassroots, community language use and the wellbeing of the Gaelic language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
<p>Support women in agriculture on Scottish islands to succeed, including encouraging their participation in the Women in Agriculture Development Programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will deliver Islands-specific Women in Agriculture Development Programme courses during 2022 and will continue to promote online and in person training provision to women in Scottish islands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short term Islands specific courses. Ongoing Promotion to island communities.
<p>Work with relevant local authorities to develop regional food and drink action plans to support growth of the sector on islands, including a focus on the vital Whisky sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to engage with sector leads across Scottish Government and their industry stakeholders on the Working with Business Action Plan to identify actions that could be taken to help mitigate the effects of labour market shortages on businesses and to help stimulate economic recovery. We will continue to feed this information into the ongoing development of the Talent Attraction and Retention programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>To work with relevant local authorities to encourage take up of Food For Life accreditation to help stimulate local sourcing in public sector settings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We continue to support the delivery of the Food for Life Programme with a focus on school meals, and the Soil Association are targeting all Scottish local authorities to encourage them to apply for accreditation through the scheme. Through a process of education, and relationship building, delivery of the program is progressing steadily, and there are currently 18 councils who now hold FFL accreditation; this includes Orkney and Shetland who achieved bronze level accreditation in 2020/21 and 2021/22 respectively. Our support this year includes increased funding for a Public Sector Expansion Pilot in Glasgow to bring fresh, local and sustainable meals to new public sector settings across the city, with the aim of taking learnings from that and scaling up the programme in other areas of Scotland. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing

Strategic Objective: 3 - Transport

Improve transport services

Partners: Local Authorities, Island Communities, Highlands and Islands Airport Ltd, Hitrans, Visit Scotland, Calmac Community Board, ZetTrans, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Ensure that existing and future transport-related policies, strategies and services are fully island-proofed so that they truly meet the needs of island communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will do an Island Communities Impact Assessment for any relevant actions which we are considering including in future strategies and policies and will undertake further consultation with Highlands and Islands stakeholders on specific topics where required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
<p>Engage with local authorities, island communities and transport operators in developing regulations and guidance for the bus services provisions of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, which aim to enable local authorities to better respond to local needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the completion of consultation late 2021, Transport Scotland will continue working with partners on the implementation of the bus provisions in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019. The consultation analysis was published 11 March 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Working with partners.
<p>Produce a long-term plan and investment programme for new ferries and development at ports to improve resilience, reliability, capacity and reduce emissions to give confidence to island communities on our ongoing commitment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Scottish Government's Infrastructure Investment Plan (February 2021) reinforced the National Islands Plan commitment to a 'long term plan and investment programme' which will be taken forward in 2022 with the aim of publication by the end of the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Term December 2022.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
Develop a new Ferries Plan that will meaningfully contribute to delivering the outcomes of wider Scottish Government strategies as set out in the National Transport Strategy and this National Islands Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will prepare the Islands Connectivity Plan (ICP) as the successor to the Ferries Plan 2013-22. We will develop objectives based on supporting delivery of NTS2 and the National Islands Plan, and develop proposals to meet those objectives which represent value for money. This work is currently programmed for 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Term December 2022.
As part of the next Ferries Plan, review the impacts of Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) and consider future ferry fares policy options that will meet the needs of islanders and support island economies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RET Evaluation report published in March 2021 will inform the upcoming fares review being conducted as part of the Islands Connectivity Plan (ICP) that will be set in the context of NTS2 and NIP. This work is currently programmed for 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Term December 2022.
Also as part of the Ferries Plan, review and promote integration between ferries and other modes of transport on the mainland and islands, with a view to better facilitating the use of active, public or shared transport for all or part of journeys to and from islands in an affordable and accessible manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will be a strand of work undertaken as part of the Islands Connectivity Plan and the Strategic Transport Projects Review. This work is currently programmed for 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Term To be reported on in the Islands Connectivity Plan in December 2022.
For the Clyde and Hebrides ferry services, develop and introduce a new booking, reservation and ticketing system, with Smart Ticketing capability, to replace the existing system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first of three phases of this project is expected to go live in October 2022. A second phase of functionality delivery will start immediately after, and a third phase which will include smart and integrated ticketing will follow. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium Term The delivery of the Action is in three phases, with the first phase delivering around the start of March. Timing for the other phases are not yet clear.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Determine strategic transport investments from our island communities through STPR2 – which will also inform Transport Scotland’s Ferries Plan 2.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STPR2 will inform transport investment in Scotland for the next 20 years. Due to Covid-19 we revised the STPR2 programme and are now taking forward a two-phase approach to the reporting of recommendations for future transport investment opportunities. Phase 1 recommendations and associated impact assessment progress reports were published in February 2021. Phase two will contain further recommendations and will complete STPR2. These will be reported in Autumn 2022. • We launched a consultation on the second draft Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) Summary Report, which sets out draft transport recommendations for the next 20 years, on 20 January 2022. Consultation responses will inform the final STPR2 Report, which will be the evidence base for future spending decisions on strategic transport investment by Scottish Ministers up to 2042, and will inform the development of future transport investment delivery plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term • Short Term Consultation closes on 15 April 2022.
<p>Work in partnership with local authorities and communities to improve walking and cycling infrastructure, the design of place and access to bikes, facilities, promotion and education to make walking and cycling the most popular choice for shorter everyday journeys including as part of multi-modal journeys.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TS and Paths for All colleagues will work with Cycling UK to agree further grants for the Rural Connections Project through the Paths for All Open Fund Grant. • Work with Sustrans to re-open the Places for Everyone on-line portal in 2022 to allow Island communities to make applications for walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure¹. • We will work with Sustrans to agree that they provide embedded officers for both Orkney and D&G to support those local authorities with active travel strategies and projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term • Short Term • Ongoing

¹ To note: this is a demand-led programme and applicants need to make the approach to Sustrans.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Explore the potential to reduce the need to travel by using the planning system to promote places which bring people and services together.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The draft National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) includes a new policy on local living including the principle of 20-minute neighbourhoods which connect people to a range of amenities and services close to home and recognises that it is a flexible approach that can vary across the country and settlements to suit the context. We are working towards laying a final version of NPF4 for the Scottish Parliament's approval in 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Term
<p>Subject to requirements as set out in the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Service and the Northern Isles Ferry Service contracts, we will always strive to improve, where necessary and possible, issues relating to freight and will engage proactively with operators, communities and stakeholders as appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We intend to undertake a full review of general fares policy (including freight fares) through the Islands Connectivity Plan, which will set out the long-term ferries strategy from 2023. This will allow for a holistic view of fares across all services and networks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium Term

Strategic Objective: 4 – Housing

Improve housing

Partners: Local Authorities, Island Communities, Scottish Islands Federation, Rural Housing Scotland, Scottish Land Commission, Shelter Scotland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Communities Housing Trust, Rural and Islands Housing Association Forum, Tighean Innse Gall, local Housing Associations.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Ensure that the regulation of short-term lets takes account of the unique circumstances of island communities and make special provision for them where required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term lets licensing scheme will deliver national consistency on safety standards, and autonomy for local authorities to add further conditions in response to local needs and concerns. • We consider that the legislation is appropriate for the whole of Scotland, including island and rural communities, and offers considerable flexibility to local authorities on how it is implemented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term Local authorities must have licensing schemes open to receive applications by 1 October 2022. • Medium Term Existing hosts and operators must have made an application by 1 April 2023. All short-term lets will be licensed by 1 July 2024.
<p>Make best use of all housing stock including derelict properties and options for compulsory purchase.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through Housing to 2040 we have committed to take a range of actions to help bring empty homes back into use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Improve access to homes for people looking to settle in, or return to, island communities. In collaboration with local authorities and relevant stakeholders, we will examine the full range of options to do this, making best use of our existing homes and new supply</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through Housing to 2040 we have committed to take action so that rural and island communities have access to high-quality, affordable and market housing which has been planned alongside the economic and physical infrastructure and helps people to live, work and thrive – and we will help to stem rural depopulation. • Since publication of Housing to 2040, the Scottish Government has made a commitment to develop a Remote, Rural & Islands Housing Action Plan to meet the housing needs of, and retain and attract people to, those communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long Term • Short Term Publication of plan.
<p>Ensure that the impact on Gaelic-speaking communities is considered as housing policies are developed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is expected that Local Housing Strategies will evidence how the development of outcomes have been influenced by community engagement and consultation to deliver national priorities, plans and targets, and how the Place Principle² is being used to deliver change within communities and achieve desired outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing

² The Place Principle aims to promote a shared understanding of place, and the need to take a more joined-up, collaborative approach to services and assets within a place to achieve better outcomes for people and communities in which they live. The Place Principle is not prescriptive – rather, it encourages and enables local flexibility in responding to issues and circumstances in different places.

Strategic Objective: 5 - Fuel Poverty

Reduce levels of fuel poverty

Partners: Local Authorities, Island Communities, Scottish Islands Federation, Shelter Scotland, Local Energy Scotland, Community Energy Scotland, Home Energy Scotland, Housing Associations.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Review how delivery schemes can work better locally and review funding for island communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The successor to the Warmer Homes Scotland scheme is currently undergoing procurement, to go live 2023. As part of scheme design, an eligibility working group has been formed which is reviewing ways in which eligibility levels and processes could be changed to better target support at fuel-poor households. This will take cognisance of the particular issues affecting households in remote and island communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium Term
<p>Produce an Island Community Impact Assessment (ICIA) on the final Fuel Poverty Strategy, ensuring that representatives from island local authorities are fully involved in its development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the 2021/22 Programme for Government we committed to publishing the Fuel Poverty Strategy by the end of 2021. We are committed to continuing to take full account of the special circumstances faced by those living in island areas and will be undertaking a further Island Communities Impact Assessment specifically on the Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Term Delivered during 2022.

Strategic Objective: 6 – Digital Connectivity

Improve digital connectivity

Partners: Scottish Government, Local Authorities, Scotland 5G Centre, Ofcom, UK DCMS, Internet Service Providers, Openreach, Mobile providers, HIE, SDS, Island Communities

Commitment	Action	Timescale
Deliver a step change in the quality of digital connectivity across the islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Scottish Government is investing £384m in the R100 North lot contract which covers the majority of Scotland's inhabited islands. • The Scottish Government will provide BT with an updated intervention area (the list of addresses eligible for public sector subsidy) which we have recently consulted upon. • 16 new subsea cables will be delivered through the North lot contract providing gigabit-capable, future-proofed, resilient connectivity for those islands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term • Medium Term • Medium Term
Mandate the delivery of gigabit-capable connectivity to selected island locations, through the R100 programme, with many other island communities to benefit once contracts are finalised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The R100 contracts, alongside our SBVS, will ensure that anyone who requires a superfast broadband connections can have one. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
Call on the UK Government to prioritise early investment in Scotland's islands as part of their plans for full fibre roll-out by 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to engage with UK Ministers to ensure Scotland receives its fair share of the project gigabit funding and early investment in Scotland's islands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Call on Ofcom to address the issues faced by island communities when designing telecoms regulation and policy. We also committed to convene a meeting with Ofcom and island representatives to explore how regulatory levers (such as spectrum auctions) could improve both mobile and broadband coverage on the islands and ensure that the needs of islands are represented to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in UK national policy development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to work with island partners including local authorities, communities and business to gather evidence of, and demonstrate needs of islands in regard to mobile and broadband coverage. • We will convene a meeting with Ofcom to present a report on island engagement on needs in order to inform telecoms regulation and policy design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Medium Term
<p>Through the Scotland 5G Centre, building on the 5G RuralFirst trials currently taking place on Orkney, and working with partners including Ofcom, we committed to develop rural 5G use cases to address the rural digital divide using 5G technology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the Scotland 5G Centre, we will continue to monitor the progress of the pan-island testbed 5G network trials (including fixed wireless access and spectrum sharing) and key 5G and Internet of Things (IoT) use case applications (including energy and food & drink), and explore how the trial's outputs and lessons learned can be mainstreamed and help inform policy in addressing the rural digital divide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
<p>Work with local resilience partnerships and telecoms providers to encourage them to focus on resilience of data links to and from the islands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SG Islands Team will continue engaging with relevant resilience partnerships and, through this engagement, will identify any challenges to resilience of data links to and from the islands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Develop a digital skills programme designed by island communities to meet their needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will engage with island communities to understand digital skills needs. • Learn from existing programmes being delivered in the island communities and support their implementation across the islands. • Engage with education providers, agencies and local authorities to understand more of what skills programmes are being implemented across the islands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term • Medium Term • Medium Term
<p>Extend the availability of coding clubs and community-based digital inclusion programmes across the islands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn from existing programmes being delivered in the island communities and support their implementation across the islands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term

Strategic Objective: 7 - Health, Social Care and Wellbeing

Improve and promote health and wellbeing

Partners: Scottish Government, Local Authorities, TSIs, Community Planning Partnerships, Young Islanders Network, NHS Scotland, Local Health Boards, Royal College of Midwives, Sport Scotland, Active Schools, Scottish Sports Council, Samaritans Scotland, Scottish Women's Aid, Age Concern Scotland, Public Health Scotland, Scottish Drugs Forum, Alcohol Focus Scotland, Alcohol Information Scotland, Island Communities

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Work with NHS Boards, Local Authorities and Health and Social Care Partnerships to ensure that there is fair accessible health and social care for those on islands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of Scotland's islands are attached to Integration Authorities which serve the specific needs of those island communities. Integration Joint Boards will continue to work closely with Health and Social Care Partnerships to ensure each island is recognised within their unique circumstances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
<p>Identify and promote good practice, especially as regards the improvement of services in islands and other remote areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to implement the recommendations from the 'Shaping the Future Together: Remote and Rural General Practice Working Group' report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Support the extension of NHS Near Me/Attend Anywhere, and other digital health initiatives, to reduce unnecessary travel and enable more care to be delivered on Islands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS Near Me has been implemented and is being utilised across every Health Board in Scotland with upwards of 1.3m appointments undertaken using the platform since early 2020. This continues to provide greater flexibility, whilst supporting remote working, reducing the need to travel and promoting greater access to specialist services. We also continue to support people to manage their condition from home with new digital platforms established for things like blood pressure and Covid-19 monitoring being rolled out across the country. This project is a first step in understanding how we create our own services which can be tailored to meet the needs of the Scottish population • Procurement of a 'once for Scotland' digital solution for the education and management of type 2 diabetes is being considered. • SG Digital Transformation Service (DTS) will undertake a research and service design project into type 2 diabetes and weight management services which will identify patient needs, the gaps in current services and how these can be addressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Short Term • Medium Term
<p>Work with stakeholders to develop propositions for a national centre for excellence in remote, rural and island health and social care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the 2022 Programme for Government we have committed to ensuring that our islands and rural areas are not left behind as we work to improve health services by creating a centre of excellence for rural and remote medicine and social care, with scoping work starting this year. We will continue to scope and engage with stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term Scoping work to conclude September 2022. • Long Term Delivery of the actual centre itself.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Work with stakeholders to ensure that we develop a plan to adequately support the ageing population of island communities so that they remain active, connected, engaged and have access to suitable, quality opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration Authorities will continue to work closely with their communities to develop strategic plans for delivery of health and social care services most suitable to the specific needs of their communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
<p>Support relevant local authorities to plan and develop sports facilities on the islands that respond to the needs of communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sportscotland will continue to engage strategically with local authorities (through their capital planning processes) and Islands communities with regards to opportunities to deliver improved local facility provision for sport and physical activity. sportscotland and the Islands team are continuing to have discussions with Orkney Islands Council regarding strategic facilities investment that would deliver improved local facility provision in preparation for the 2025 Orkney Island Games and beyond. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Medium Term
<p>Work with Orkney Islands Council and other partners to use the hosting of the 2023 Islands Games by Orkney to strengthen sports development on the island.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sportscotland will continue to support Orkney Islands Council, Orkney Islands Organising Committee and local sports associations to add value to Orkney hosting the (rescheduled) 2025 International Island Games through the development of the local infrastructure of people, places and pathway opportunities. sportscotland will continue work with the Community Sport Hub Officer and with the Orkney Islands Games Organising Committee to deliver a needs-based programme of education and development for coaches and volunteers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium Term Medium Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Work with our partners to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take steps to assist with promoting equality and meeting people’s different needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As highlighted in A Fairer, Greener Scotland: Programme for Government 2021-22, we aim to ensure that all eligible children who are victims or witnesses to abuse or violence will have access to a ‘Bairns’ Hoose’ by 2025. That means the services they need will all be available via a coordinated approach designed to reduce the number of times children have to recount their experiences to different professionals. Children below the age of criminal responsibility, whose behaviour has caused harm, will also have access to the services it will provide. Bairns’ Hoose – based on an Icelandic model ‘Barnahus’ – will bring together services in a ‘four rooms’ approach with child protection, health, justice and recovery services all made available in one setting. A new National Bairns’ Hoose Governance group is currently being established and will consider issues around implementation in rural and island settings. The new Scottish Child Interview Model for Joint Investigative Interviews is being introduced nationally from 2021 to 2024 and will be seen as the ‘justice room’ of the Bairns’ Hoose. The National JII Governance Group has established the Remote and Islands Joint Investigative Interviewing Implementation Subgroup in recognition that a particular focus on the implementation challenges in remote and island contexts will help realise our shared ambition that all children in Scotland have access to the Scottish Child Interview Model for joint investigative interviewing where this would best meet their needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium Term All eligible children in Scotland to have access by 2025. Medium Term National rollout by 2024.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will remain committed to investing in interventions which provide evidence of being able to change the attitudes of offenders. We will expand the availability of the Caledonian System. This is an internationally recognised behavioural change programme for perpetrators of domestic abuse which involves working with the whole family to reduce the risk of harm to women and children. We will progress work over the next two years to support the national rollout of the system, with the aim of making it available to all 32 Scottish local authorities by the end of the parliamentary term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium Term
<p>Address any equality, health and wellbeing related data gaps that exist in respect of, for example, women and girls, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment and sexual orientation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Women's Aid published the findings from their Participating-in-Equally-Safe-in-the-Highlands-and-Islands consultation. We will be working with partners on how to implement the recommendations following the report. A priority of the Delivering Equally Safe Fund is working with those in remote or island communities. The fund will run from October 2021 to September 2023. Additionally, the Scottish Government has committed to an independent strategic funding review to look at how national and local specialist services for women and children experiencing gender-based violence are commissioned and funded across Scotland, which will commence in 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium Term Short Term Short Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Consider our consultation on out of school care through which we have gathered views from parents on the challenges of accessing childcare and range of activities for school age children in island communities. Responses to our consultation will, together with continued engagement, inform development of a future strategic framework which will be published before the end of this parliamentary term.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are currently developing potential rural childcare projects in island communities which aim to explore models of delivery that can provide the flexibility required by the local workforce, including women in agriculture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term
<p>Ensure that health, social care and wellbeing services are available through the medium of Gaelic to support Gaelic speaking island communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS Highland commitments to Gaelic are outlined in its Gaelic Language Plan, 2017-2022. • NHS Western Isles is currently revising its Gaelic Language Plan and will submit it to Bòrd na Gàidhlig soon. NHS Western Isles commitments to Gaelic will also be set out in its Gaelic Plan when approved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Short Term
<p>Align our ambition to eradicate child poverty with the Plan by continuing to work with island local authorities and health boards to build on their understanding of child poverty in their areas – helping to focus efforts on lifting families out of poverty and mitigating against its damaging impact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We published the second Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan in March 2022. The Plan outlines the transformational actions we will take alongside our delivery partners – including island local authorities and health boards – to deliver on our national mission to tackle child poverty. • Island local authorities and health boards will continue to be required to produce Local Child Poverty Reports under the terms of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017, and the work with national partners set out below will continue to help to inform local action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long Term Delivery of the Plan. • Short Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Work alongside national partners, continuing to share good practice identified across Scotland which could be applicable to child poverty in our island communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to work with national partners to ensure knowledge and good practice is shared and to support and improve local responses to tackling child poverty, including in our island communities. • The SG Islands Team committed to working closely with Child Poverty colleagues to adapt the wider measuring framework for island policy delivery - ensuring that evidence is robust and aligns with and forms part of the work and reporting being led by the Tackling Child Poverty Unit and led by the new Tackling Child Poverty Development Plan (March, 2022). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing
<p>Work with islanders to contribute, where we can, to the creation of a fairer, healthier, happier nation for all of Scotland by supporting the work of the group of Wellbeing Economy Governments (WEGo).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We continue to learn and collaborate with other countries and organisations to create an economy that supports our island communities, aiming to ensure that they have access to opportunities that deliver local growth and wellbeing through tackling inequalities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
<p>Work with our partners to consider a range of options to ensure that adequate mental health care is available, whilst taking into consideration the uniqueness of our island communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have committed to reviewing the Mental Health Strategy 2012-2027 at its halfway point in 2022. Reviewing the Strategy also provides us with an opportunity to systematically review all of our other existing commitments and make sure that our policies around rural mental health are current and appropriate for those living throughout rural and island areas in Scotland. • We will continue to work with the National Rural Mental Health Forum to ensure to understand the emerging needs of island and rural communities around Covid-19 recovery and in particular to share community-based solutions to support good wellbeing. This will look at the role of place and future Community-Led Development opportunities to support resilience in our Communities in partnership with others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term Review of Mental Health Strategy. • Ongoing

Strategic Objective: 8 – Environment and Biosecurity

Improve and promote environmental wellbeing and deal with environmental security

Partners: Scottish Government, Local Authorities, Island Communities, HIE, SEPA, Nature Scot, National Trust for Scotland, RSPB, Scottish Wildlife Trust, Scottish Land and Estates, Scottish Land Commission, Forestry and Land Scotland, Scottish Forestry, Marine Scotland, Calmac Coastal Community Network, VisitScotland, NFUS.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
Protect island biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Islands Plan Annual Report 2021 sets out a series of projects that are currently supporting this commitment and will continue to support island biodiversity going forward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
Address biosecurity in a holistic and integrated manner as a means not only to contribute to environmental wellbeing, but also to contribute to sustainable economic development on Scottish islands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to undertake island specific projects where required to address biosecurity in an integrated manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
Work with island communities to explore how they can contribute to the circular economy through small-scale pilots for example supporting local food production.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero Waste Scotland has embedded an officer within Highlands and Islands Enterprise to develop a strategic approach to driving the circular economy across island communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
Develop work with the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy's Non-Native Species Action Group to increase public information around minimising particularly high-risk invasive species movements on islands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will consult with the Non-Native Species Action Group and NatureScot on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> which species should be included; and how raising public awareness may be best achieved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Term 2022-23.

Work with island partners to design solutions that address climate change through nature based solutions with multiple benefits including, for example the protection and restoration of peatlands and salt marshes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scottish Government will continue to support collaboration with island partners to ensure nature-based solutions are used to tackle to continued threat of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing
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Strategic Objective: 9 – Climate Change and Energy

Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation and promote clean, affordable and secure energy

Partners: Scottish Government, Local Authorities, Island Communities, SEPA, Scottish Land Commission, Forestry and Land Scotland, Scottish Forestry, Marine Scotland, Zero Waste Scotland, Local Energy Scotland, Community Energy Scotland, European Marine Energy Centre, Strathclyde Centre for Environmental Law and Governance, DTAS, VisitScotland, HIE, NFUS, Sustrans and ZetTrans, Climate Action Hubs, NatureScot, National Trust for Scotland, Crofting Commission.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Work with island communities to support their climate change aspirations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will support the development of one or more community climate action hubs across our islands, empowering communities to identify the actions that are most appropriate to their needs and provide support in their local areas. They will help groups to take advantage of funding opportunities, and promote collaboration between projects. • The Programme for Government states that we will identify at least three of our islands to progress towards becoming fully carbon neutral by 2040. We are taking this ambition even further, aiming to support six islands to progress towards being fully carbon neutral by 2040. • A report will be published on the Carbon Neutral Islands Project in summer 2022. This will set out the islands that will be part of the project. We will consult with communities to understand local impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term • Long Term • Short Term
<p>Work with island communities to look at alternative solutions to managing waste, particularly in respect of Scotland’s Circular Economy Strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This year’s Programme for Government committed us to the development of a route map to achieving our recycling and waste targets for 2025 and beyond. This is in development for consultation later this year which will include consideration of the impact on island communities. We are also committed to bringing forward a Circular Economy Bill and will undertake an Island Communities Impact Assessment as part of this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
Work with local authorities to help them work towards their statutory targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work has yet to be progressed in relation to this commitment but will be considered and actions defined during 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
Work towards creating net zero emission islands and providing global climate change leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will publish a report setting out the steps we will take to support six islands in becoming carbon neutral as part of the Carbon Neutral Islands Project. Community consultation and relevant impact assessments will be completed to allow for the implementation phase of the project to begin in 2022. • We will publish an Islands Energy Strategy in 2023 setting out approach to decarbonisation for Scotland's island communities, ensuring that our their differing needs and priorities are reflected, and that renewables solutions implemented promote resilience, enhance sustainability and meet energy needs now and in the future. The Strategy will support the delivery of actions outlined in our Heat and Buildings Strategy Island Communities Impact Assessment including the Carbon Neutral Island's commitment and review of the evidence base and options for an 'islands uplift' across our delivery programmes as part of our commitment to provide additional support for rural and island homes for heat and energy efficiency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term • Short Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Put in place resilient adaptation plans on islands that are at greater risk from climate change linking these strongly with development plans for those islands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamic Coast 2, which identifies lengths of coastline at risk of erosion from the sea, was published in August 2021. This work considers how future sea level rise could further exacerbate coastal erosion and erosion-enhanced coastal flooding. We are encouraging councils to prepare coastal change adaptation plans using evidence from Dynamic Coast. A new budget to help councils plan for and take action to adapt to coastal change will be distributed to councils in their general capital grant settlement from 2022-23. • Continued engagement through the Adaptation Scotland Programme with the Island Community Planning Partnerships, local authorities and support of the development of climate impact assessments and adaptation plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term • Ongoing
<p>Work closely with island partners, the network owner and all other key stakeholders to deliver existing proposals for electricity transmission links to mainland Scotland.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to engage closely with island local authorities and industry to assess the risks and opportunities as Scottish island wind projects approach this year's Contract for Difference (CfD) allocation round. • Scottish Ministers will continue to make clear to Ofgem that its decisions on island links must take the net zero imperative more fully into account, and incorporate a more flexible approach to what are vital strategic investments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
<p>Work with Resilience Partnerships and energy providers to encourage them to focus on the resilience of islands' energy supply networks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Scottish Government Energy Networks Strategic Leadership Group will continue to be an influential forum for discussing the development of Scotland's energy networks. • We await the outcomes of draft business plans submitted to Ofgem in December which will influence our approach to the coming year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Short Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Work with transport-related stakeholders to have the most energy-efficient and climate-friendly transport services possible across the islands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Scotland has consulted on developing an aviation strategy (closed 21 January 2022). The responses will help us to determine how the Highlands and Islands commitments noted can be progressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ We have committed to decarbonising scheduled flights within Scotland by 2040. ◦ Aim to create the world’s first zero emission aviation region in partnership with Highlands and Islands Airports. ◦ Exploring the potential for the purchase of zero/low emission aircraft. ◦ Continue to examine the scope for utilising hybrid and low carbon energy sources in the public sector marine fleet as part of our vessel replacement programme. ◦ Additionally, as part of the Islands Connectivity Plan, we will explore and consult on pathways to zero/low emission ferry transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term Report from Aviation Strategy consultation. • Long Term The aviation strategy consultation will help us to determine the actions needed to deliver the Highlands and Islands commitments, which are to be realised by 2040 at the latest.
<p>Continue working to unleash the potential of renewable energy as both a way to mitigate climate change and as a driver of sustainable and inclusive economic growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Energy Strategy Just Transition Plan will be published in 2022. This will take a whole-systems view of how the energy sector must evolve to drive our transition to net zero. The document will also set out what is needed to deliver a just transition for the sector, in line with the principles laid out in our National Transition Planning Framework, published in September 2021. The Plan will also consider how, for example, the islands’ abundant renewable energy resources can further contribute to meeting Scotland’s climate commitments whilst supporting strong local economies, and addressing existing social and economic inequality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term Publication of Plan.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
Work with communities, crofters, farmers and landowners to expand forests and woodlands on the islands, recognising wider land-use objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Forestry will continue to support sustainable woodland creation on the islands through the Forestry Grant Scheme. • Scottish Forestry will also continue to work with a range of partners including the Woodland Trust and Point and Sandwick Trust to deliver the Croft Woodlands Project, which covers all islands, including Argyll and Arran, providing advice and support for crofters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Medium Term
Put the themes of meeting emissions targets and adapting to the effects of climate change at the heart of the preparation of National Planning Framework 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) sets out a vision for more sustainable locations and types of development in Scotland to achieve net-zero. It includes five action areas across the country and is clear that our north and west coast and islands will be at the forefront of efforts to reach net zero. It is supported by radically improved and new planning policies to help reach net-zero emissions and adapt to climate change, including for flood risk, coastal vulnerability, temperature change and infrastructure resilience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term
Support the adaptation of Scotland's aquaculture and fishing industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to ensure Island fishing representatives contribute to the development of annual fisheries negotiations strategy and priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
Work with a range of stakeholders to develop an action plan to improve resilience to properties at flood risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to work with stakeholders to deliver the Living with Flood action plan, which was reviewed in 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
Work with local authorities to strengthen recycling and food waste services in island communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued development of route map for Scotland's waste and recycling targets to 2025 and beyond, which will include an Island Communities Impact Assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Work closely with key stakeholders to ensure that the voices of islanders are fully heard, achieving a just transition to net-zero, and that islands benefit from the many opportunities associated with a green and sustainable economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will engage on a draft Islands Energy Strategy setting out approach to decarbonisation for Scotland's Island communities. • We are committed to publishing a Just Transition Plan as part of the refreshed Energy Strategy – it will involve extensive engagement with those likely to be impacted by the energy transition, including in the islands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term Winter 2022-23. • Short Term 2022.

Strategic Objective: 10 – Empowered Communities and Strong Local Partnerships

Empower diverse communities and different places

Partners: Scottish Government, Local Authorities, Island Communities, Scottish Islands Federation, Scottish Community Development Centre, Community Land Scotland, Development Trust Association Scotland, Scottish Land Commission, Marine Scotland, Youth Parliament, Youth Scotland, COSLA, Crown Estate Scotland.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Take forward the Local Governance Review with COSLA in order to create a system of local democracy that will be inclusive and improve people's lives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our 2021-22 Programme for Government confirms that we will conclude the review and take forward its recommendations within this parliament. Further engagement with local government, wider public services and communities will take place as part of this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term
<p>Support participatory processes aimed at providing island communities with a strong voice in the implementation of the Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to work with the National Participatory Budgeting Strategic Group in supporting the implementation of Participatory Budgeting (PB) and building capacity across Scotland to ensure best possible practice. We will work with the group to deliver on the new PB Strategic Framework with a particular focus on health and wellbeing, education, housing and climate justice guided by the Framework's indicators for success. • We will continue to work in partnership with COSLA to help local authorities reach the target of having at least 1% of their budget subject to participatory budgeting, giving local people a direct say in how almost £100m will be spent. • Scottish Government acknowledge that in order to ensure that the National Islands Plan leads to meaningful, positive and sustainable change, there needs to be ongoing collaboration with our island communities for the duration of the Plan. We will continue to consult and collaborate with our island communities on a regular basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing

Commitment	Action	Timescale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The implementation of the National Islands Plan is supported by both the Islands Strategic Group and the National Islands Plan Delivery Group. The Islands Strategic Group was established to ensure greater involvement of the relevant councils in helping design solutions to the challenges islanders face, whilst the Delivery Group ensures that work is driven forward in a collaborative way that truly involves island communities. We will continue to work closely with both of these groups on delivery of the National Islands Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
<p>Explore ways to strengthen the voice of island communities whilst capturing the differences between islands in local and national decision-making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work has started to review the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 – a 2021 Programme for Government commitment – where we will be consulting people on community empowerment mechanisms, and explore how communities can be more actively involved in public sector outcomes. Scottish Government acknowledge that in order to ensure that the National Islands Plan leads to meaningful, positive and sustainable change, there needs to be ongoing collaboration with our island communities for the duration of the Plan. We will continue to consult and collaborate with our island communities on a regular basis. The implementation of the National Islands Plan is supported by both the Islands Strategic Group and the National Islands Plan Delivery Group. The Islands Strategic Group was established to ensure greater involvement of the relevant councils in helping design solutions to the challenges islanders face, whilst the Delivery Group ensures that work is driven forward in a collaborative way that truly involves island communities. We will continue to work closely with both of these groups on delivery of the National Islands Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Term Ongoing Ongoing

Commitment	Action	Timescale
Working with island communities and local authority partners in the development and introduction of a Transient Visitor Levy Bill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work paused at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic will be recommenced in 2022, when the policy development work completed to date will be carefully reviewed alongside renewed stakeholder engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term
Explore ways in which to empower and support island communities to enhance their resilience by developing local initiatives and plans in partnership with Scotland's Emergency Responder organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have commissioned research looking at Community Resilience in Scotland's Islands during Covid-19 and will publish this in 2022 with a view to disseminating learning from this. • The Resilient Communities team is currently scoping a project to establish a baseline of community resilience activity and is working with island stakeholders to ensure that the perspective of island communities is built into the project design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term • Short Term
Ensure that policies and plans relating to the Scottish Crown Estate are appropriately island proofed and that any manager of a Scottish Crown Estate asset supports implementation of the National Islands Plan as appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Crown Estate Scotland Unit team will work with potential new managers, on a case-by-case basis, to ensure that their transfer and/or delegation proposals have completed an Islands Impact Assessment and take into account the National Islands Plan as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing (Applications for a transfer and/or delegation may be received at any point throughout these indicative delivery timescales.)

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Ensure that Gaelic speakers in island communities are encouraged and supported to represent themselves through the medium of Gaelic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SG Gaelic & Scots team has prepared the new Scottish Government Gaelic Language Plan. The Plan has an open offer to engage through the medium of Gaelic. In addition, Scottish Government are happy to take written requests in Gaelic. The Scottish Government's manifesto commitments also include providing more services through Gaelic and extending opportunities to use Gaelic in everyday situations and formal settings. As part of the process for developing the next iteration of the SG Gaelic Language Plan, the Gaelic & Scots team is liaising with various island-based SG offices to discuss what further provision they can make for Gaelic. The three local authorities of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Highland Council and Argyll & Bute all have Gaelic language plans in place, have Gaelic medium education and have Gaelic development officers to promote and support the use and learning of Gaelic. • In 2022, Education Scotland will publish, a revised Gaelic Language Plan, 2022-2027. This is part of HM Inspectors' five-year strategy for Gaelic Education, which also impacts on islands. As part of this, HM Inspectors will continue to provide specialist evaluations of how well establishments and settings are performing in a range of key areas. We provide this specialist evaluation for Gaelic Medium Education and for islands contexts. We will also take forward new high-level aims to support Gaelic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Short Term Publication of Plan. • Ongoing Continued provision of specialist evaluations.

Strategic Objective: 11 – Arts, Culture and Leisure

Support arts, culture and language

Partners: Scottish Government, Local Authorities, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Creative Scotland, Fèisean nan Gàidheal, Comunn na Gàidhlig, An Comunn Gàidhealach, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Historic Environment Scotland, National Youth Orchestra, HIE, VisitScotland, Event Scotland, Creative Scotland, RFOs, National Lottery, Island Communities.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Invest in our cultural and historic resources, to ensure that islanders are encouraged to engage with, and participate in, arts and culture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many continuing projects such as Ceolas, Fèisean nan Gàidheal, An Comann Gàidhealach, the Heritage Forum and centres such as Lanntair, Kildonan Museum, Taigh Chearsabhagh, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Urras Oighreachd Gabhsainn contribute to this objective. • Working with partners, EventScotland will continue to raise Scotland’s reputation as the perfect stage by supporting and securing a portfolio of events and developing the events industry. EventScotland will continue to maintain constant awareness/alignment with wider Scottish Government and VisitScotland initiatives that focus on the islands. • ‘Themed Years’ present a unique collaborative platform for a number of partners to work in closer collaboration to achieve shared goals and generate stronger partnership working to deliver sustainable economic development in the linked sectors of culture tourism and events. The Scotland’s Year of Stories 2022 Open Events Fund, administered by EventScotland, has been designed to support new, creative event proposals and programming that will provide high profile content, created especially in response to the 2022 Themed Year opportunity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing

Commitment	Action	Timescale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Scotland's Year of Stories 2022 Community Stories Fund was deliberately designed to support organisations and community groups to take part in and celebrate Scotland's Year of Stories 2022, spotlighting the unique stories that matter to them with new, creative events, activities and programming. This recognises that it is important that local communities across Scotland are given the chance to tell their own story and discuss their experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
<p>Support, develop and promote the creative talents of islanders, and ensure that the culture of Scotland's islands has a wide audience both nationally and abroad.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many continuing projects such as Ceolas, Fèisean nan Gàidheal, An Comann Gàidhealach, the Heritage Forum and centres such as Lanntair, Kildonan Museum, Taigh Chearsabhagh, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Urras Oighreachd Gabhsainn contribute to this objective. Working with partners, EventScotland will continue to raise Scotland's reputation as the perfect stage by supporting and securing a portfolio of events and developing the events industry. EventScotland will continue to maintain constant awareness/alignment with wider Scottish Government and VisitScotland initiatives that focus on the islands. The £322,000 Treòir Voar Virr programme is funded jointly by the National Transition Training Fund and through the Islands Programme, which supports delivery of the National Islands Plan. We know how challenging the pandemic has been for our artists and that while recovery has begun, with more creative and cultural opportunities opening up, there is still a long journey ahead and incomes are still affected. This programme helps artists, particularly those living on our islands, to contribute to the wider economic and social recovery for communities, which have been impacted by Covid-19 and Brexit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Support all of Scotland's indigenous languages and dialects in ways that are relevant to the communities where these are spoken.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Island Communities Impact Assessments will support this process following the 2022 update to the Guidance and Toolkit. Quarterly meetings are established between the Gaelic and Scots Team, the Islands Team and Bòrd na Gàidhlig to support this process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Ongoing
<p>Ensure that the commitments in this plan are informed by and aligned with the commitments in the National Gaelic Language Plan, working closely with Bòrd na Gàidhlig.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Gaelic and Scots team has prepared the new Scottish Government Gaelic Language Plan. This is currently out for public consultation after which the final draft, outlining the Scottish Government's alignment with the National Gaelic Language Plan, will be prepared. We will continue to work closely with Bòrd na Gàidhlig as members of the National Islands Plan Delivery Group which was established to oversee implementation of the National Islands Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium Term Ongoing
<p>Ensure that the effect on Gaelic language development is considered from the outset in island-specific policies and initiatives and that these link to statutory Gaelic language plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Island Communities Impact Assessments will support this process following the 2022 update to the Guidance and Toolkit which now includes consideration of impact on Gaelic speaking communities. The new SG Gaelic Language plan with corporate service aims to ensure the equal prominence of Gaelic and encouragement to use Gaelic in communications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Ongoing

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Work with public authorities and community groups in increasing the use and visibility of Gaelic in Gaelic speaking island communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Gaelic & Scots team has prepared the new Scottish Government Gaelic Language Plan. This contains corporate service and aims to ensure the equal prominence of Gaelic in SG logo and branding, the prominence of Gaelic signage in SG offices, and encouragement to use Gaelic in our public communications and corporate publications. Other SG agencies, such as Social Security Scotland, provide bilingual material relating to their services and discussions are ongoing with island based SG offices to increase their Gaelic provision. A number of Gaelic development officers are located in island communities with the aim of increasing the use and learning of Gaelic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
<p>Work with relevant authorities to improve Gaelic provision for Gaelic speaking island communities in delivering their functions and services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Gaelic & Scots team has prepared the new Scottish Government Gaelic Language Plan. This contains corporate service aims to ensure the equal prominence of Gaelic in SG logo and branding, the prominence of Gaelic signage in SG offices, and commitments to use Gaelic in our public communications and corporate publications. Other SG agencies, such as Social Security Scotland, provide bilingual material relating to their services and discussions are ongoing with island-based SG offices to increase their Gaelic provision. The Faster Rate of Progress Initiative and COHI also have a role here and Gaelic is emphasised in these gatherings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
<p>Support approaches that promote the sustainable management of the historic environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Place in Time: Scotland's 10-year strategy for the Historic Environment, sets out a vision of how our heritage can be understood, valued, cared for and enjoyed. The Strategy will be reviewed in 2022. Historic Environment Scotland will soon release a Green Recovery Statement, which sets out how the historic environment delivers as part of a 'Green Economy'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Term Short Term

Strategic Objective: 12 – Education

Promote and improve education for all throughout life

Partners: Scottish Government, Local Authorities, Island Communities ,UHI, Heriot Watt University, Robert Gordon University, Scotland’s Rural College, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, e-Sgoil, SDS, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Comann nam Pàrant, Local colleges, Young Scot, Creative Scotland, Youth Theatre Arts Scotland, Youth Scotland.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Work with UHI, the University of Aberdeen, Heriot-Watt University, Robert Gordon University and other education providers to ensure a broad range of options are available to young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDS is working to support the development of the Islands Growth Deal TalEntEd Islands Programme in partnership with UHI, Robert Gordon University, Herriot Watt, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Orkney Islands Council, Shetland Islands Council and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. The TalEntEd Islands programme will create opportunities for education, skills, entrepreneurship and commercialisation which will help respond to demographic challenges and the outmigration of young people from the Islands, drive an increase in sustainable green jobs, and fast-track Island decarbonisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
<p>Support UHI as it deepens collaboration with island partners to promote learner pathways, innovation and industry/employer engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UHI Islands Strategy Director will continue to work closely with the SG Islands Team through a collaborative, solution-focussed approach that seeks to maximise the opportunities that arise through overlapping work streams, such as UHI projects associated the Islands Growth Deal and Islands Programme investment. Critically this work interconnects as a result of shared priorities, identified through both the Islands Strategy and the SG’s National Islands Plan. • Ongoing work on Student Retention and Talent Attraction and Retention programmes to support students to stay, including linking with employers, especially those with skills shortages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing

Commitment	Action	Timescale
Ensure that young people are given the same opportunities to access education as young people on mainland Scotland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Scotland will continue to lead and support on education recovery in light of Covid-19 recovery. • HM Inspectors are engaging with establishments to gather evidence for national thematic reports on recovery education, wellbeing and outdoor learning. Island schools, including those that deliver Gaelic Medium Education, are part of these thematics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Short Term
Continue to support and promote Gaelic medium education at all levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of projects and initiatives are in place to promote and support Gaelic medium education at all levels. This involves SG, a number of local authorities, public bodies and Gaelic organisations. We will continue to support Northern Alliance working group for Gaelic to support collaborative improvement. • We will continue to use evidence and independent evaluation to celebrate success, support improvement and raise standards in Gaelic Medium and Learner Education; taking forward the scrutiny objectives of HM Inspectors' Corporate and Gaelic Language Plans bespoke to island contexts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing
Work with all island authorities to scope potential projects that could benefit from successive phases of the new £1 billion Learning Estate Investment Programme which runs until 2026.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The £2 billion Learning Estate Investment Programme prioritises schools in need of updating, as identified by local authorities, to ensure rapid progress where most required and will benefit around 50,000 pupils across Scotland. All projects will be announced and funding allocated by 2026. • Phase three of the Learning Estate Investment programme will open to local authorities in 2022, and successful projects will be announced before the end of 2022. Any bids for funding from island authorities, through Phase three of the Learning Estate Investment Programme, will be given careful consideration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term • Short Term

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Increase our collective efforts to improve the educational outcomes of children living in poverty by continuing to support island authorities/schools plans to raise attainment through Scottish Attainment Challenge programmes such as Pupil Equity Funding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Scotland will continue to collaborate with island authorities to improve educational outcomes of children living in poverty. Five Attainment Advisors work with local authority central staff and individual schools to continue to improve the use of data, identify need and develop appropriate interventions to close the poverty related attainment gap. Joint cross-island professional learning has taken place to develop skills in data use and how to make best use of the Pupil Equity Funding. • HM Inspectors will continue to share practice using social media campaigns, dedicated sections within Scotland Learns newsletters, webinars and inclusion within thematic reports and other publications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing
<p>Consider the needs of adult learners in our island communities as we develop our adult learning strategy for Scotland.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will engage with adult learners in our island communities to identify how we can remove barriers to learning as we start to deliver the Adult Learning Strategy for Scotland. • An Island Communities Impact Assessment will be undertaken ahead of the publication of the new Adult Learning Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term • Short Term

Strategic Objective: 13 – Implementation and Measurement of the National Islands Plan

Support effective implementation of the National Islands Plan

Partners: Scottish Government, Local Authorities, Island Communities, National Islands Plan Delivery Group, Islands Strategic Group.

Commitment	Action	Timescale
<p>Develop indicators applicable to each Strategic Objective in collaboration with Scottish Government agencies, local authorities, island communities and relevant island socio-economic actors based on the SMART criteria and building on the National Performance Framework and Sustainable Development Goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further research is being undertaken to gather the necessary data in order to set the baselines for our measurable outcomes. Scottish Government Islands team are currently developing a research index and research working group to ensure that relevant data from our systems of measurement is captured and informs the monitoring of the National Islands Plan. This will include working in collaboration with policy colleagues across Scottish Government, our local authority partners and island community stakeholders to identify pre-existing island statistics to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort. • We will work with island communities, local authorities and stakeholders to develop Island Profiles. This work will seek to develop easily accessible profiles providing demographic, economic, and locally identified and developed data for each island. A small number of test profiles will be developed and delivered in 2022. The learning from this work will help shape how the Island Profile concept may be scaled up and delivered across islands. • We will undertake a further iteration of the National Islands Plan Survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term • Short Term Test profiles. • Long Term Learning and possible scaling up. • Short Term

Work with island communities to ensure that the Plan is widely promoted and understood by all sectors of society	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will continue to consult and collaborate with our island communities on a regular basis.• We will continue to support the Islands Strategic Group to allow us to work closely with our local authority partners on delivery.• We will continue to support the National Islands Plan Delivery Group to ensure that work is driven forward in a collaborative way that truly involves island communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing• Ongoing• Ongoing
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