



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Scottish Government Consultation: [National Islands Plan Review](#)

Submitted: November 2023

Consultation Questions

1. How much would you say you know about the current National Islands Plan?

I know a lot about it

2. Has the current National Islands Plan affected your life in any way?

Not Answered

3. Has the effect of the current National Islands Plan on your life been positive, negative or not at all?

Not Answered

4. What are your views on the content of the current National Islands Plan?

Positive

Please explain your answer:

Creative Scotland is the funding, development and advocacy body for the arts, screen and creative industries. We recognise that Art, language, culture and creativity are integral to Island life. In relation to this Creative Scotland works closely and has longstanding professional relationships with many Island communities, cultural organisations, and individual artists.

Creative Scotland welcomed the introduction of the National Islands Plan. It has helped raise awareness of the Islands and in particular the unique circumstances, challenges, and opportunities that island communities face, especially in relation to accessing opportunities to participate in and attend cultural and creative activities.

The Creative Industries makes a key economic contribution to Scotland's economy, including that of the Islands. Employment in the Creative Industries growth sector stood at 78,000 in 2021. Gross Value Added for the Creative Industries growth sector was estimated at £4,440.2 million in 2021, an increase of 1.7% compared to 2020 (£4,366.4 million). In March 2022, there were 13,285 registered enterprises operating in the Creative Industries growth sector, representing 7.6% of all registered business in Scotland. We have found the National Islands Plan to be a powerful advocating tool for the Island Communities, ensuring their unique circumstances are considered when national bodies and organisations are creating new policies and services to help alleviate barriers and exclusion for island communities. In addition, it has enabled the unique circumstances of Island Communities to be better considered when projects and organisations are applying for funding.

Internally and externally for Creative Scotland, the plan has helped us advocate further for our support and development of Islands cultural and creative endeavours.

5. In your opinion, has the current National Islands Plan made progress towards achieving its Strategic Objectives

Q5 - Strategic Objective 11: To support arts, culture and language:

Satisfactory progress

6. There are 13 Strategic Objectives in the current National Islands Plan. What is your opinion on the number of strategic objectives?

Just right

Please explain your answer:

Creative Scotland feels that the number of Strategic Objectives addresses a wide number of areas which affect life on Scotland's islands. We particularly welcome the inclusion of Arts, Culture and Language as a Strategic Objective, acknowledging the importance that this has for island life and culture.

7. There are 134 commitments in the current National Islands Plan. What is your opinion on the number of commitments?

Just right

Please explain your answer:

Creative Scotland believes that the commitments under SO 11, Arts, Culture and Language are appropriate and cover the critical aspects of ensuring that cultural life and heritage can flourish across the Islands. We have found these commitments useful in guiding our work when undertaking Island Impact Assessments and they give a clear direction for this SO.

8. Overall, what do you think worked well in the current National Islands Plan?

The statutory obligation to carry out Islands Communities Impact assessments has led to further considerations of the specific needs of island communities in relation to arts and culture.

The focus on climate change and net zero in relation to island communities in the Plan is welcome.

9. Overall, what do you think could have worked better in the current National Islands Plan?

Not Answered

10. Do you think there should be a new plan for the Scottish Islands?

No

Please explain your reasons:

Creative Scotland welcomed the creation of the Island Plan and believes that overall, it makes a difference to nurturing cultural life on Scotland's Islands.

Whilst we believe that the foundations of the plan are strong, we would encourage some modifications as suggested in our answer for question 11.

11. What would you like to see in any future or revised National Islands Plan?

Refresh the current National Islands Plan but keep the same format

Please explain your answer:

In a revised document it would be positive to see more focus on the empowerment and support for Community Organisations, Community Landowner Trusts, and cultural and creative organisations to carry out creative and cultural projects/initiatives within and for their own communities. Creative Scotland receives a growing number of applications from such organisations looking to carry out community and participatory arts projects.

Dualchas is a powerful Gaelic word and term which encapsulates and embodies heritage, culture, tradition, language and connection to place. More support for organisations, communities and Gaelic development officers and individual artists to creatively explore and respond to the culture would also support other strategic objectives including population retention and wellbeing.

We would recommend that Scots should be given parity with Gaelic in any plan, and both languages given due consideration in relation to the culture, heritage and creativity of all island communities. We recommend that any future plan ensures that it reflects the requirements of the upcoming Scottish Languages Bill. The Plan should also include reference to Intangible Cultural Heritage of island communities.

Cultural and Heritage Tourism would also benefit from having some further focus and encouragement for those working in this area to work in collaboration with communities, community land trusts, local cultural organisations, and island creative practitioners to ensure that culture and heritage are being represented appropriately. We believe that is important that engagement, and interactions, with the culture of island communities are of benefit to the community, and address issues of mis- representation and extractive practices.

We also consider it important that Island communities are empowered to represent, creatively explore, celebrate, and promote their culture, language, and creativity, ensuring the legacy of the culture and traditions and enabling and nurturing a contemporary culture to grow and innovate.