

# **Island Communities Impact Assessment Screening Keeping The Promise Implementation Plan**

**May 2022**



**Scottish Government**  
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## **Island Communities Impact Assessment Screening**

### **Keeping The Promise Implementation Plan**

#### **Develop a Clear Understanding of your Objectives**

- What are the objectives of the policy, strategy or service?
- What are the intended impacts/ outcomes and how do these potentially differ across the islands?

Just over two years ago the Independent Care Review published The Promise. In February 2020 the Scottish Government signed up to the actions set out within it.

Keeping The Promise requires us to join up across our Government policies and actions and to work with our partners to bring transformational change which places love and relationships at the centre of the experiences and outcomes for every child.

In the two years since The Promise was published we have witnessed the unprecedented impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic. This has affected us all, and for many of our care experienced people, it has made already difficult situations more challenging.

A fundamental shift rather than incremental change is needed. It is critical to the lives of our young people as well as our success as a nation that, as we emerge from a public health emergency, we make sure we build a system that prevents crisis in the lives of children, young people and families, and the care, support and love for our children is at the heart of this system.

In recognising this opportunity, this Implementation Plan shares its ambition and works in harmony with the Scottish Government's Covid Recovery Strategy, our Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-26 and the National Strategy for Economic Transformation. It is also aligned with our strategic approach to education, health, justice, transport and communities.

As we present this Plan as a statement of action and commitment in 2022, we know we will need further engagement and collaboration in the months and years ahead to ensure that our actions bring the change we need to see; to continue to challenge us on where we need to go further; and to look to new actions that we need to take. We know that for The Promise to be kept we must move first and move furthest to enable change for children, young people and families.

Early experiences, including pre-birth, lay the foundation for wellbeing throughout childhood and into adult life, with recognition of the importance of preventing adverse experiences, and availability of relationship-based and trauma-informed approaches. In adopting a holistic approach we must:

- Support our children, young people, adults and families who are care-experienced, recognising that experience of care has an effect on people throughout their lives;

- Support our children, young people, adults and families who we know are at risk of being taken into care, recognising that the right support at the right times will help keep families together and avoid the need for care;
- Support all of our children, young people, adults and families, recognising that if we get the services that everyone uses right then the level of engagement with the care system will be reduced.

Fundamentally, we want to significantly reduce the number of children and young people who are living away from their families. To achieve this ambition, where children are safe and feel loved they must stay with their families; and families must be given support to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties which get in the way. To Although the main objective is that the outcomes of children should not differ across the islands, nor between mainland and island. Differences in geographic approach will be of particular relevance to care experienced people in island communities who have particular challenges in areas such as health and social care. These distinctive issues are contained within the 13 Strategic Objectives of the [National Islands Plan](#).

### **Gather your Data and Identify your Stakeholders**

- What data is available about the current situation in the islands?
- Who are your key Stakeholders?
- How does any existing data differ between islands?
- Are there any existing design features or mitigations in place?

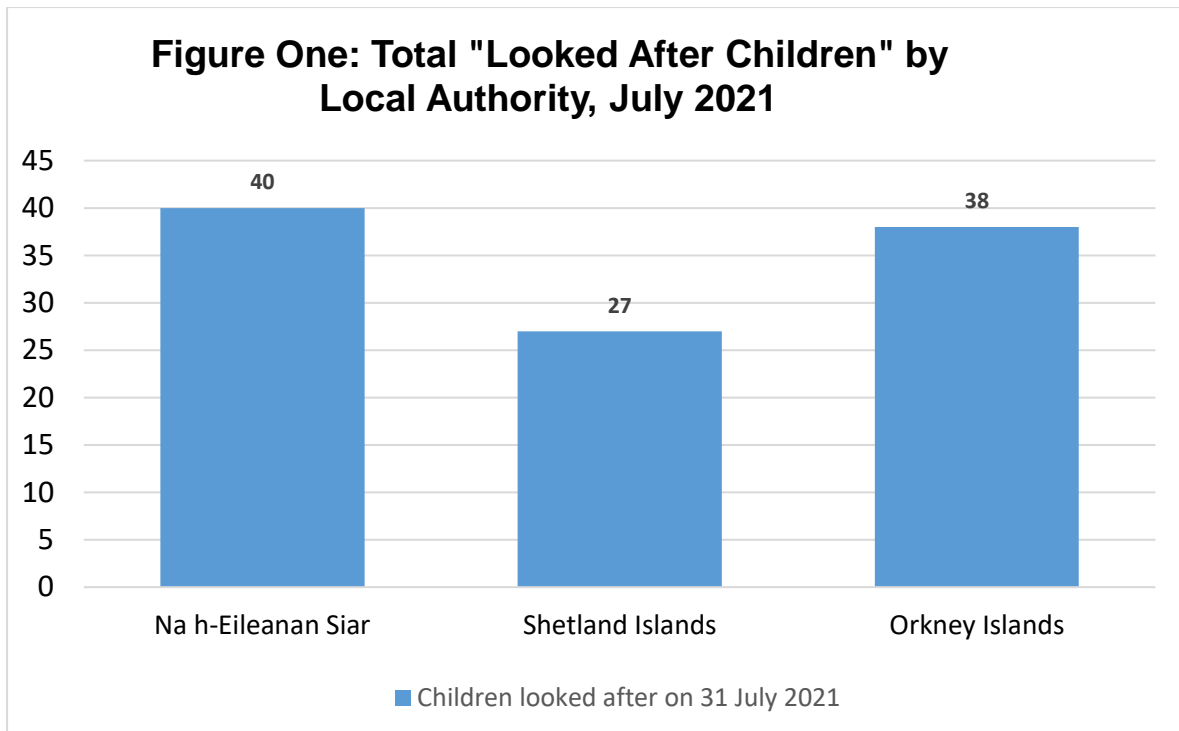
We have assessed a range of data regarding the current situation in the islands, including Children's Social Work Statistics<sup>1</sup> and the Independent Care Review, Evidence Framework, Feb 2017-Feb 2020<sup>2</sup>.

As at 31 July 2021 14,946 children in Scotland were Looked After or on the Child Protection Register – 1.5% of Scotland's under 18 population. As shown in figure one below, 105 children were located in the Island Communities. Although an additional 1,149 children were located in Highland, Argyll and Bute and North Ayrshire, data for these locations cannot be disaggregated therefore, it is not clear how many looked after children are specifically from island communities within these local authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> [Supporting documents - Children's Social Work Statistics, Scotland 2020-21 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [ICR Evidence Framework v2-1.pdf \(carereview.scot\)](#)



Source: Children's Social Work Statistics, 2020-21, Scottish Government<sup>3</sup>

Key stakeholders include The Promise Scotland, COSLA, the care community and a range of third sector bodies. We will continue to assess this plan consulting with others. We will consult with the Promise and COSLA through the Promise Collective. This group will be convened as a strategic forum to ensure alignment of all Scottish Government funded delivery and improvement initiatives that are working to Keep The Promise.

The Promise Collective will focus on data and evidence at national, local and individual levels, working to identify sources to supplement the wellbeing outcomes and national indicators and link local data, information and evidence with national frameworks where appropriate.

### Consultation

- Is there any information already gathered through previous engagements?
- How will you carry out your consultation and in what timescales? Public meetings/Local Authorities/key Stakeholders
- What questions will you ask when considering how to address island realities?
- Separate consultation events for Island communities/Local Authorities?

Between 2017 and 2020, the Independent Care Review heard the experiences of over 5,500 care experienced infants, children, young people, adults and members of

<sup>3</sup> [Children's Social Work Statistics 2020/21 \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

the paid and unpaid had of Scotland's 'care system', and their vision for making Scotland the best place in the world to grow up.

The Independent Care Review Evidence Framework<sup>4</sup> (Feb 2017-Feb 2020), is a tool which we have drawn on to help navigate the huge amount of research, data and evidence collation undertaken by the Care Review. Combining this with the findings published in the Scottish Government Promise Implementation Plan, a number of issues have been uncovered where we will focus our policy efforts.

- The framework highlights particular difficulties gathered from the care review engagement, where recruitment and retention of social work staff, foster carers and kinship carers was also in flux and was discussed by all interviewees, the majority of which thought it a situation unlikely to be resolved in the short term. This created substantial issues in many areas, particularly for both rural communities on the mainland and for those working on the islands.
- Within the Promise Implementation plan, we know that by addressing the generic and structural challenges associated with living somewhere, including in our rural and island communities where the costs of living are higher, will help to address and alleviate poverty
- The Promise also affirms that upholding children's rights is crucial for those children who have been placed into the care system. This must be done as a matter of course and must not operate simply in response to legal action. It is important to recognise that sometimes things go wrong and all care experienced children and young adults must have access to justice, legal remedies such as appeals, reviews and judicial reviews. This should be equally accessible for children living in rural communities.

## Assessment

Does your assessment identify any unique impacts on island communities? (Further detail in the Guidance): We have to seek advice on this from policy leads

- Demographic
- Economic
- Gaelic
- Social
- Does your assessment identify any potential barriers or wider impacts?
- Are there mitigations already in place for these impacts raised?

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<sup>4</sup> [ICR Evidence Framework v2-1.pdf \(carereview.scot\)](#)

Understanding the rural and island dimension of The Promise is very important. The needs of our care experienced people in these communities may not be as well understood as they are in more urban settings.

This calls for a set of distinct actions to support the rural dimension and we will continue to 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, as set out in our National Islands Plan (2019). We will also continue to identify and promote good practice to enable the improvement of services in rural Scotland and across Scotland's islands.

We know that by addressing the generic and structural challenges associated with living somewhere, including in our rural and island communities where the costs of living are higher, will help to address and alleviate poverty. An example of tailored support that can assist with living costs includes Discretionary Housing Payments for which care experienced young people, or their families, finding it difficult to meet their housing costs, may apply to their Local Authority. These can be awarded to provide help with housing costs for those on Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit

The Place Standard tool provides a simple framework to structure conversations about place. It allows you to think about the physical elements of a place (for example its buildings, spaces, and transport links) as well as the social aspects (for example whether people feel they have a say in decision making). The tool provides prompts for discussions, allowing communities to consider all the elements of a place in a methodical way. The tool pinpoints the assets of a place as well as areas where a place could improve.

The Place Standard tool empowers communities including children and young people in shaping the future of their places, helping to address issues such as child poverty, social isolation and wellbeing. A Children & Young People's Version is currently being piloted and will be launched in spring 2022. The Place Standard will support children and young people to collaborate and co-create person-centred communities with the wrap-around support that suits each unique local context. This approach will be pivotal in providing the support that people need, when they need it and will be of critical importance to our rural and island communities.

### **Is a full Island Communities Impact Assessment required?**

You should now determine whether, in your opinion, your policy, strategy or service is likely to have an effect on an island community which is significantly different from its effect on other communities (including other island communities). To form your opinion, the following questions should be considered:

- Are there mitigations in place for the impacts identified and noted above from stakeholders and community consultations? (If further ICIA action is not required, complete the section below and publish).

- Does the evidence show different circumstances or different expectations or needs, or different experiences or outcomes (such as levels of satisfaction, or different rates of participation)?
- Are these different effects likely?
- Are these effects significantly different?
- Could the effect amount to a disadvantage for an island community compared to the mainland or between island groups?
- If your answer is 'no' to the above questions, please complete the box below.
- If the answer is 'yes', an ICIA must be prepared and you should proceed to Step 5.

The implementation plan does not sit in isolation from the wider Programme for Government and the existing work which is underway across the Scottish Government, The Promise Scotland and other third party organisations. This plan sets out how our commitments align with the delivery of the Scottish Government's broader agenda which includes the objectives outlined in the Covid Recovery Strategy, the Programme for Government, the National Planning Framework, and the Child Poverty Delivery Plan.

Each underlying policy will present various situations and mitigations individually. The plan is an eight year programme of work setting out a particular direction of travel which encompasses a broad range of programmes and policies. As this work develops in different policies there are a whole variety of impact assessments which will be required within specific policy areas.

The Implementation Plan identifies commitments across multiple portfolios which both individually and collectively support change and ensure Scotland is the best place to grow up where children are loved, safe and respected so that they can reach their full potential. We know that each individual has different characteristics and circumstances which means how they access the care system will also vary. Our intention is that their care experience and outcomes should not be dissimilar across the islands, nor between mainland and islands, otherwise we will not have kept our Promise to the children of Scotland.

### **A full Islands Community Impact Assessment is NOT required**

In preparing the ICIA, an opinion has been formed that the Implementation Plan itself is NOT likely to have an effect on an island community which is significantly different from its effects on other communities (including other island communities).

Reason for not completing a full Islands Communities Impact Assessment: The Promise identifies a 10 year programme for change. This Implementation Plan sets out, in one place, the range of actions across the different parts of Government that

contribute both collectively and in some part individually to Keep The Promise and it is the first stage of our route map to 2030.

As the different parts of the plan are taken forward, development of various impact assessments, including the development of ICIA's will be required for specific policy areas. These impact assessments will be produced by individual policy leads to ensure that there is a comprehensive assessment of any potential impact on island communities.

**Screening ICIA completed by** Mairi Longmuir

**Position:** Economic and Policy Lead, Keeping the Promise

**Signature:** Mairi Longmuir

**Date completed:** 4 May 2022

**ICIA authorised by** Gavin Henderson

**Position:** Deputy Director, Keeping The Promise

**Signature:** Gavin Henderson

**Date completed:** 4 May 2022





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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

The Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-80435-427-8 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, May 2022

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA  
PPDAS1080342 (05/22)

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