



Highlands and Islands Enterprise  
Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean

**Ambitious for Communities**

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**Colonsay  
Community Survey Report  
April 2011**

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Report prepared by:



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## **Section One**

### **Survey Methodology**

#### **Introduction**

These survey results form part of a series of community surveys commissioned by Highlands & Islands Enterprise, HIE. The surveys were undertaken during 2010 and early 2011. The participating communities are all in remote and disadvantaged parts of the Highlands and Islands, termed 'fragile areas'. These communities are receiving a programme of intensive support through HIE's Community Account Management programme. This involves helping communities to take responsibility for planning their future economic and social development.

HIE is developing a measurement framework and outcome indicators for each area, and the 2010/11 survey results will form an important part of the baseline data. The research explores local attitudes and aspirations and it attempts to measure the level of 'community confidence' in each area. The exercise will be repeated some years in the future. These survey findings will be used in conjunction with other desk-based research as well as locally collected data in each community.

#### **Survey Sample**

134 adults on Colonsay were sampled in March/April 2011 using a self-completion postal questionnaire. 94 responses were received (a response rate of 70%). A profile of the survey respondents can be found at the end of this report after the main survey findings. A copy of the questionnaire is provided in the Appendix.

Throughout the report, totals may not sum to 100 either because of rounding or because multiple responses to certain questions were allowed.

## Section Two

### Main Findings

#### About Your Community

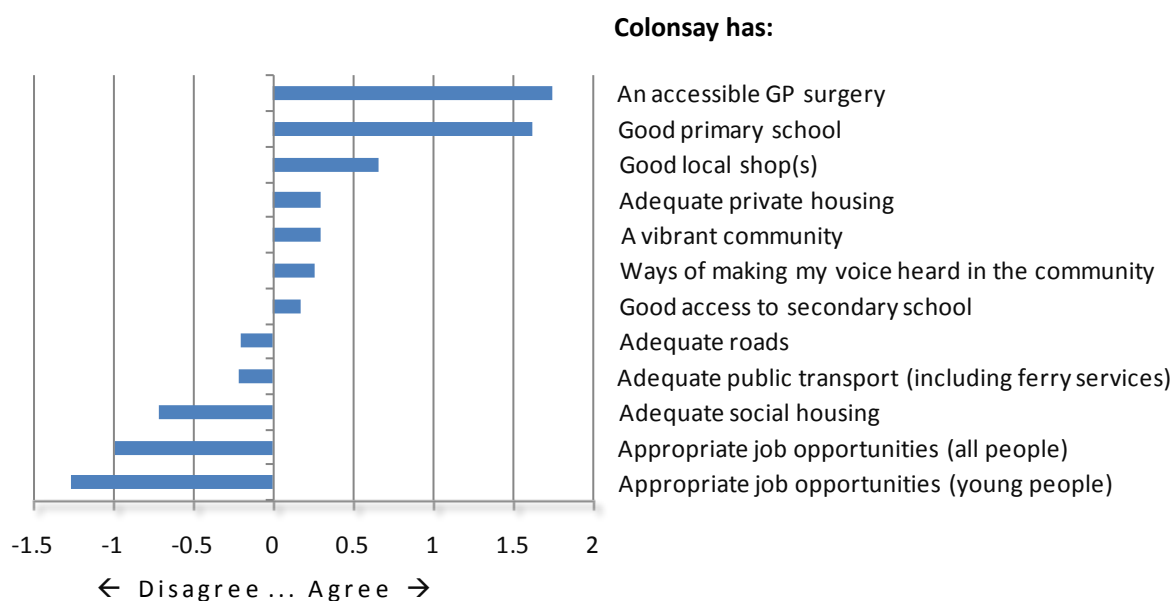
##### About Your Community

Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with a number of statements about their community. For this question and several others throughout the report, responses were converted to a score and displayed in a chart.

**Figure 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

An average score was derived based on the following five-point scale:

<u>Response</u>	<u>Score</u>
"Agree strongly"	+2
"Agree"	+1
"Neither agree nor disagree"	0
"Disagree"	-1
"Disagree strongly"	-2

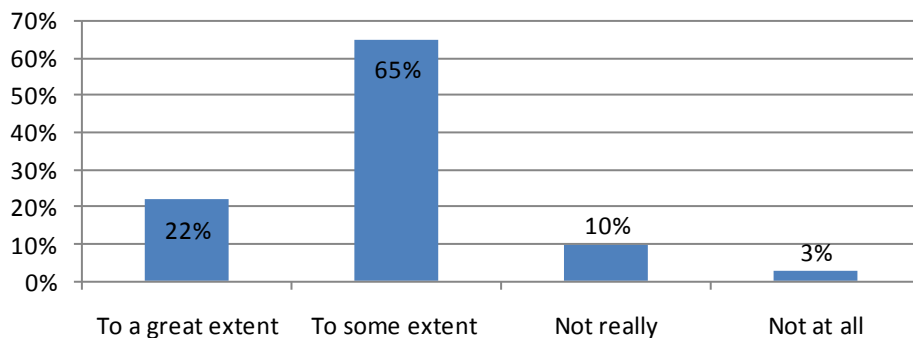


*An accessible GP surgery and a good primary school* were the statements with which respondents were most likely to agree.

Respondents were least likely to agree with the statements about *adequate social housing* and *job opportunities (especially for young people)*.

Note that the statements about secondary schooling and GP surgery relate to access to these services and do not attempt to reflect satisfaction with quality.

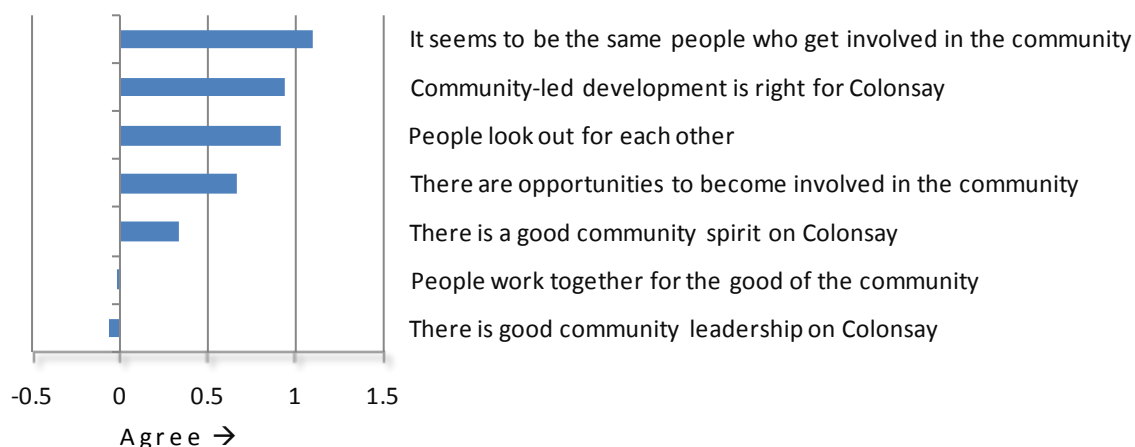
**Figure 2: Overall, to what extent do you feel part of the community?**



87% of respondents felt part of their community to a ‘great extent’ or ‘some extent’. The sense of belonging to a community was higher among working people and people who were actively involved in community groups and activities.

**Figure 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

Figure 3, below, adopts the same five point scoring system (+2 to -2) as outlined earlier at Figure 1.



Five of the seven statements were met with varying degrees of agreement and received a positive score. There was mild disagreement with two of the statements. Longer term residents were least likely to agree with the statement about *good community leadership on Colonsay*.

Respondents were asked to indicate which statement best reflected their involvement in local groups.

**Table 1: Involvement in Local Community Groups in the last 12 months**

Level of involvement	%
Committee member / office holder of a community group and actively involved	26
Committee member / office holder, but with limited involvement	3
Actively involved but not a committee member / office holder	13
Aware of community groups but not involved	54
Not aware of any community groups	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

42% of the sample were actively involved with the community in some way. The remaining 58% of people were either aware of community groups but did not take part, or were not aware of any community groups. Working people in the 45-60 age bracket were most likely to be office holders.

30% of respondents indicated that they would like to be more involved in their local community, and a further 31% said they were not sure. Both these groups were then asked what would encourage them to become more involved in their community.

**Figure 4: What do you think would encourage you to become involved / more involved in your local community?**



Note: multiple responses were accepted.

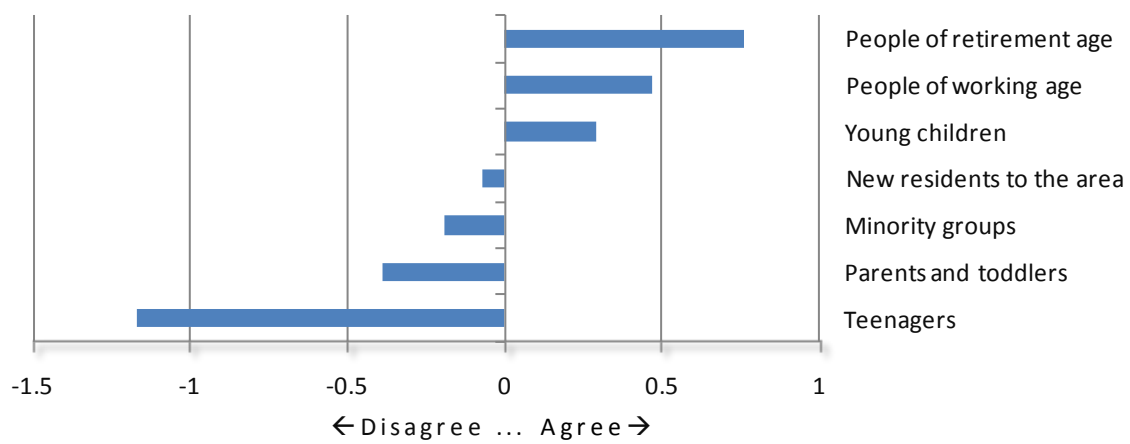
Two other comments were made:

- if sections of the island weren't so negative about change
- willingness of Colonsay Estate to become involved in the community

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which their community caters for certain groups, as reported below in Figure 5. A mean score was derived based on the following scale:

<u>Response</u>	<u>Score</u>
“To a great extent”	+2
“To some extent”	+1
“Not really”	-1
“Not at all”	-2

**Figure 5: To what extent do you feel your community caters for the following groups?**



Respondents felt that Colonsay catered well for *people of retirement age* and *working age*, but much less well for *parents and toddlers* and especially *teenagers*.

**Attitudes to Minorities**

77% of respondents thought that their community readily accepts people of differing faiths (9% did not, and a further 14% did not know).

11% of respondents considered themselves to be part of a minority group.

**Disabilities**

14 individuals (15% of the sample) considered themselves to have a disability.

A summary profile of all respondents to the survey is provided at the end of this report in Table 5.

## Moving Away

12 respondents (13% of the sample) indicated that they were thinking about moving away from Colonsay in the foreseeable future, i.e. within the coming three years.

Those who were thinking about moving away were then asked what would be the main reasons for leaving Colonsay.

**Table 2: What would be the main reasons for leaving?**

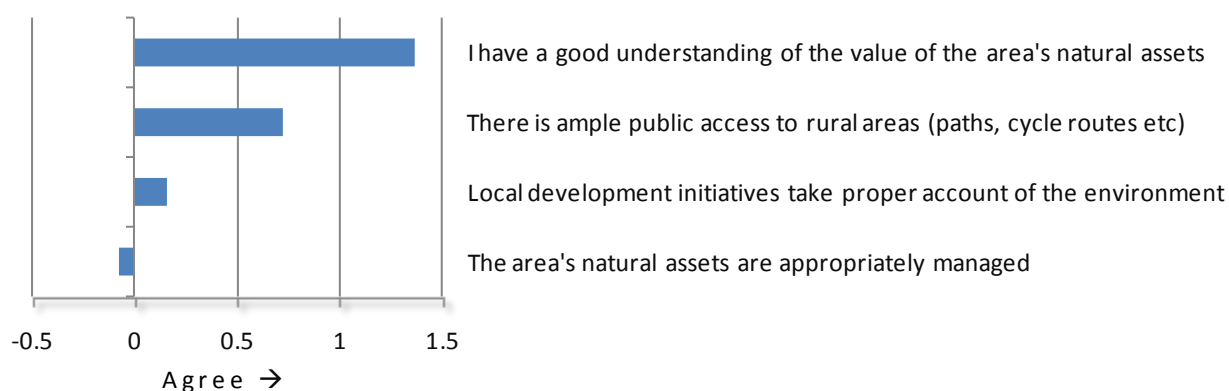
Reason	Number of Mentions
Employment elsewhere	6
Better quality of life	5
To be closer to family	5
Education / training	3
Better climate	2
More affordable property	2
Cost of living too high due to freight on essentials	1
Health / require assisted living	1

Note: multiple responses were accepted.

## Environment

A series of four questions sought respondents' views about the environment and land management, including common grazing (where relevant), woodlands, paths, the shoreline and other public spaces. The responses are summarised in Figure 6, below using the same five point +2 to -2 scoring system as before.

**Figure 6: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**



Three of the four statements attracted a positive score, ie. a higher level of agreement than disagreement, most notably *understanding of the value of the area's natural assets*.

**The Future of Colonsay**

Respondents were asked two general questions about their community as a place to live. Overall, 84% were satisfied with Colonsay as a place to live. There was a positive correlation between satisfaction and age.

**Table 3: How satisfied are you with Colonsay as a place to live?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>
Very satisfied	40
Fairly satisfied	44
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14
Fairly dissatisfied	2
Very dissatisfied	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

When asked about the future, 54% of the sample felt “very optimistic” or “somewhat optimistic”. The sense of optimism was higher among people who were actively involved in the community.

**Table 4: How optimistic or pessimistic are you about the future?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>
Very optimistic	15
Somewhat optimistic	39
No strong feeling	23
Somewhat pessimistic	22
Very pessimistic	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

### **Priorities for Development**

Respondents were also asked to outline the most important developments or changes they would like to see over the coming years on Colonsay. These comments are provided separately from this report. The comments covered a range of themes, the main ones being:

- More employment opportunities
- More affordable / social housing
- Various business / enterprise suggestions
- Landscaping / garden at the village hall
- More community social events
- Various environmental improvements
- Investment in renewable energy
- Lower travel and freight costs
- Ferry timetabling improvements
- Local public transport / mini-bus / taxi service
- The need for initiatives to attract individuals and families to Colonsay
- Community land buy-out
- Sheltered housing for the elderly

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**Table 5: Profile of Survey Respondents**

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<b>Gender:</b>	Male	44%
	Female	56%
<b>Under 18s in Household:</b>	Households with under 18s	15%
	Households without under 18s	85%
<b>Family units in household:</b>	One family unit	84%
	More than one family unit	16%
<b>Age of respondent</b>	16-24	7%
	25-34	3%
	35-44	7%
	45-60	31%
	Over 60	53%
<b>Time in community:</b>	Fewer than 5 years	29%
	6 to 20 years	28%
	Over 20 years	44%
<b>Ties with community:</b>	Always lived here	16%
	Family from here but time lived away	24%
	Moved into the area – partner from here	18%
	Moved into the area – other reasons	42%
<b>Working status:</b>	Working (full or part-time)	45%
	Retired	44%
	Other non-working	11%
<b>If working:</b>	One paid job	38%
	More than one paid job	62%
<b>If working:</b>	Periods away from home	20%
	Mostly at home	80%

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