

BIOREGIONS

Investigating Scotland's Bio-economy

By Lateral North
For Alyn Smith MEP



The Greens | European Free Alliance
in the European Parliament



BIOREGIONS

IDENTIFYING SCOTLAND'S LOCAL RESOURCES

Hogg, G., Smith, T., Hinde, D. and Winther, A.M.
(2015).

Bioregions

Lateral North: Glasgow.

LATERAL NORTH

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCOTLAND AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE NORDIC COUNTRIES

1.2 UNDERSTANDING BIOREGIONS: SCOTLAND'S POTENTIAL

1.3 BIOREGIONS CASE STUDIES: IDENTIFYING PRIMARY GOALS OF THE REPORT

1.4 STRUCTURE OF REPORT

2. KEY THEMES

2.1 POPULATION

2.2 INDUSTRY

2.3 FORESTRY

2.4 RENEWABLE TECHNOLOGIES

2.5 TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

3. CASE STUDY DOCUMENTS

01 OBAN

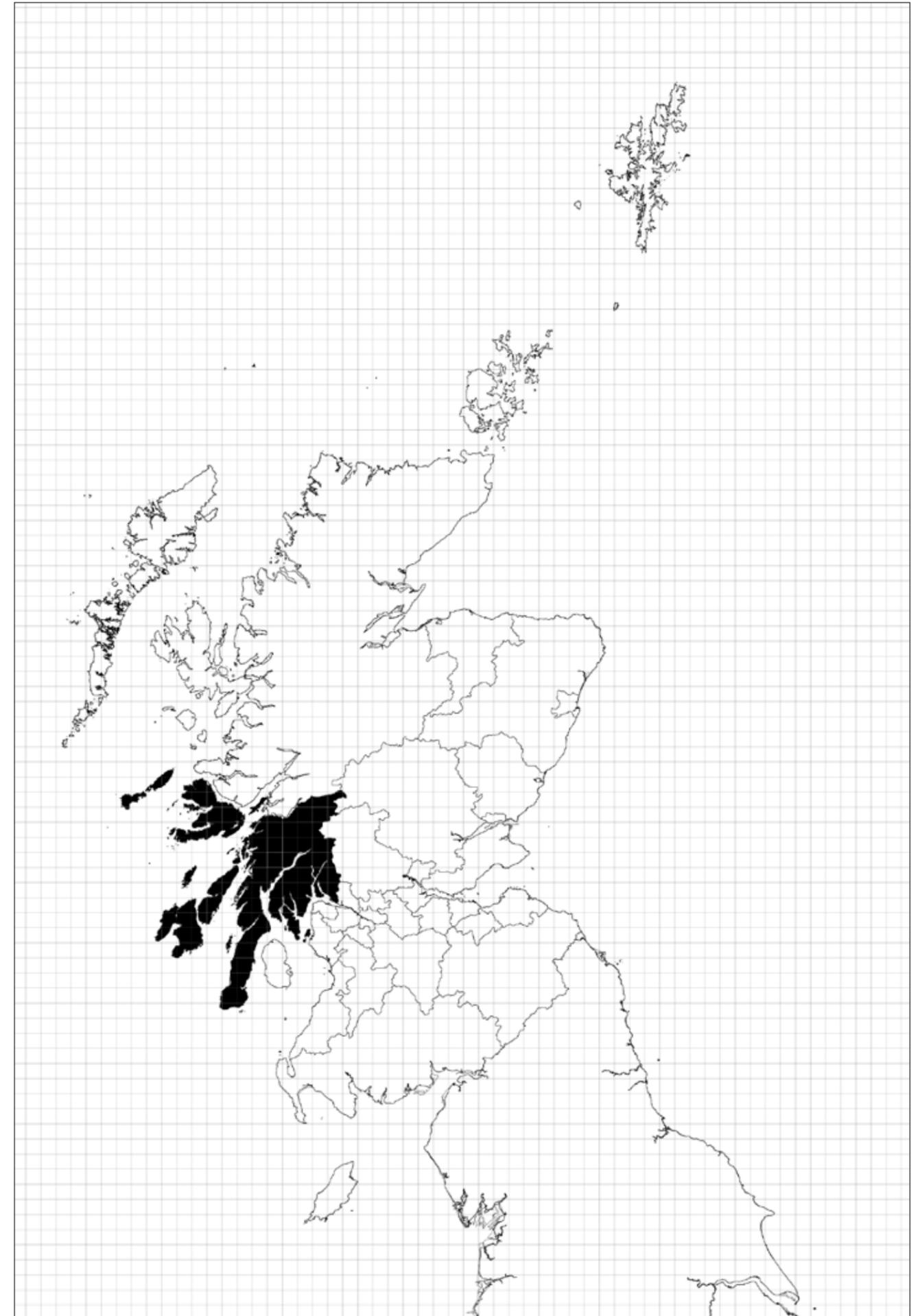
02 DALMALLY

03 TARBERT

04 COLL

4. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

5. REFERENCES



Argyll & Bute
Bioregions



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report by Lateral North investigates a series of case studies throughout the Argyll and Bute local authority as a mechanism to raise awareness of the bioregions model.

In June 2015 Nordregio published a policy brief investigating the Bioeconomy of one region from each of the Nordic countries. The proposal investigates the opportunity to create an initiative which is primarily aimed at “replacing fossil fuels with biofuels and replacing non-degradable products with biodegradable ones” as well as boosting the productivity and product development within agriculture, fisheries, forestry and the chemical industry; creating new jobs in sparsely populated areas by utilizing existing natural resources. The Nordic countries are hailing this idea as a “silver bullet” and believe it will be able to “avert several staggering threats to our societies: economic and demographic decline in rural areas; joblessness and the climate crises”.

The policy brief is part of a larger document which has focussed on developing case studies within each of the Nordic countries investigating the possible integration of the Bioeconomy principle. The policy brief finishes by providing a series of policy recommendations at both a national and regional level to implement the Bioeconomy principle.

SCOTLAND AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE NORDIC COUNTRIES

Commonly regarded as a part of the 'Nordic family' Scotland has traded, been under Norse occupation and once geographically connected to these northern neighbours.

Although Scotland's cultural heritage and natural resource may show striking similarities to the Nordic Countries our local governance strategy is invariably different. Norway, a country of similar population and geography manages local affairs within its 428 municipalities. Similarly, Finland utilises a similar method with 320 municipalities with a degree of autonomy for each. Scotland is divided into only 32 areas designated as local authorities. These council boundaries have been in place since 1 April 1996 and provide services including education, planning and social care.

“Scotland is the most accessible, second most populous, fertile, ethnically diverse and southern part of the Nordic region.” ⁽¹⁾

The concept of 'bioregion' or 'bioeconomy' has become increasingly prevalent in policy communication throughout Europe and in particular the Nordic Countries.

This report by Lateral North looks to raise awareness of the possible opportunities and implications revealed within Scotland from the bioregion model. The study highlights the productive possibilities of the land through utilisation of biodegradable products.

1.1 UNDERSTANDING BIOREGIONS: SCOTLAND'S POTENTIAL

Scotland's 32 council areas have expansive parameters and encompass swathes of rural and urban landscape. What if radical reform within Scotland defined these 'borders' by the productivity of their landscapes and seascapes? Could Scotland activate a bioregion manifesto where individual communities are empowered politically, socially, and economically to generate their own sustainable community relative to the local landscape characteristics?

Could this community empowerment redefine Scotland's identity as a New Northern Nation?

Scotland contains a multitude of natural resources ranging from rich agricultural resources to renewable energy opportunity and flourishing marine environments. Could Scotland develop its existing infrastructure and utilise its proximity to large conurbations, Northern Ireland, the Faroe Islands and Norway to become an accessible nation amongst its Nordic neighbours. Could Scotland redefine its local boundaries in accordance with the land's productivity?

Bioregions could become a series of micro municipalities defined by natural resource and local concern. Bioregions could boost productivity within forestry, fishing, renewable and agricultural industries and create a multitude of jobs for sparsely populated areas throughout Scotland.

TOTAL POPULATION



86,900

2012



75,183

2037

(13.5% Population Decrease)

ELDERLY POPULATION

Over 75



8,827

2012



15,248

2037

(57% Population Increase)

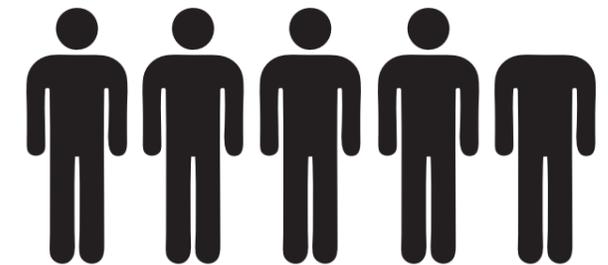
POPULATION DENSITY

Persons per hectare



0.13

Argyll + Bute



0.65

Scottish Average

Source

National Records of Scotland

INTRODUCTION

1.2 BIOREGIONS CASE STUDIES: IDENTIFYING SITE FOR INVESTIGATION

Argyll and Bute is a vast local authority region in the west of Scotland. It includes 23 inhabited islands and its convoluted coastline (3,723km) around islands and peninsulas is longer than the coast of France. Inland much of the island and mainland landmass is mountainous or moorland unsuitable for arable production or development. Approximately 80% of the population is within 1km of the coast. Argyll and Bute is the second largest local authority area in Scotland with the third lowest population density at 0.13 persons per hectare on average. The National Record of Scotland suggest the population of the local authority will decrease by 7.2% over a 25 year period between 2010 and 2035.

As classified by the Scottish Government's Urban-Rural Classification Census 52% of Argyll and Bute's population live in 'rural locations with 96% of the land recognised as 'remote rural' locations. Could the local authority harness the opportunity of this 'remote rural landscape and seascape and the natural resources of this landscape to become more productive and a sustainable bioregion?

The Argyll and Bute local authority is evidently a region within Scotland with diverse challenges and renewable resources, which presents us with interesting opportunities to investigate its full potential.

1.3 BIOREGIONS: IDENTIFYING PRIMARY GOALS OF THE REPORT

A compilation of documents examines a series of communities within the Argyll and Bute local authority. Each case study investigates either a town, rural, coastal or island settlement within the local constituency. This information aims to identify different land characteristics within different contexts and identify the viability of implementing a Nordic governance theme within our communities. This is a tool to engage communities and help to identify productive resources on their own doorstep.

This report will investigate primary productive purpose of the land including: population, energy, food, water, land ownership, tourism, agriculture, infrastructure, telecommunications, industry and governance amongst others.

This report delivers a comprehensive analysis, envisioning the future potential of strategic transformation within Scotland, highlighting what the landscape of Scotland may look like if Bioregions were implemented. The visioning strategy and bioregion analysis provides clear, realistic targets, giving each case study key recommendations for realising their potential for them to pursue their sustainable future visions.

1.4 STRUCTURE OF REPORT

The following report investigates a series of communities throughout Argyll and Bute with specific reference to urban, rural, coastal and island locations.

The document researches the background of each community highlighting individual characteristics of each area including population and employment statistics. These statistics are broken down into easily digestible infographics and mapping strategies as a method to easily compare past and present situations.

A description of the 'bioregion' explores the existing productivity of the land. Lateral North has where possible, engaged with members of the community and in particular local organisations and charities. This research can be utilised as a base to deliver enabling conditions and impeding factors for each community.

The project examines four different types of community within the Argyll and Bute Bioregion: urban; inland rural; coastal rural; and, island.

Argyll and Bute does not have any cities and the largest town is Helensburgh with a population of 15,430. The other four towns (Campbeltown, Oban, Dunoon and Rothesay) are defined as remote small towns, which means that they have a population between 3,000 and 10,000 and over 30 minutes driving time to a settlement with a population of 10,000 or more.

Oban was selected because of its location as a gateway to the island communities, its transport infrastructure and main industries.

Given its coast-line, Argyll and Bute has very few inland rural communities. Dalmally is one of the few communities that is inland. Dalmally grew in population with the building of the railway from Glasgow and acted for many years as a terminus for the west coast line until a connection was built onto Oban. The community developed for forestry and to support the construction of the hydroelectricity station nearby at Cruachan.

There were a wealth of coastal communities to consider for this project. Tarbert was chosen because of its port and location, being at the gateway to the Kintyre Peninsula.

Of the 23 inhabited islands within Argyll and Bute, the Isle of Coll was selected because it is one of the most remote islands and it has significant population, infrastructure, empowerment and connectivity challenges.

The analysis of these four locations gives us insights into the challenges and opportunities for the bioregion of Argyll and Bute. The report concludes with key recommendations for the case study communities, the bioregion and the implementation of bioregions for the whole of Scotland.

690,899

Total Land Area of Argyll & Bute

9%

Total Land Area of Argyll & Bute as a percentage of Scotland's total land

52%

Percentage of Argyll and Bute's population live in areas classified by the Scottish Government as 'rural'

45%

Percentage of Argyll and Bute's population live in areas classified as 'remote rural'

7%

Percentage of Argyll and Bute's population live in areas classified as 'accessible rural'

80%

Percentage of of Argyll and Bute's population live within 1 km of the coast

97%

Percentage of of Argyll and Bute's population live between 0 and 10km of the coast (Scottish Coastal Forum (2002))

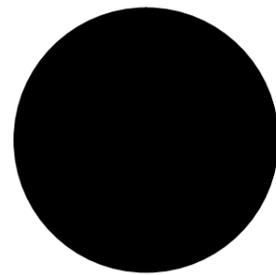
17.4%

Percentage of Argyll and Bute's population (15,889 people) live on islands.

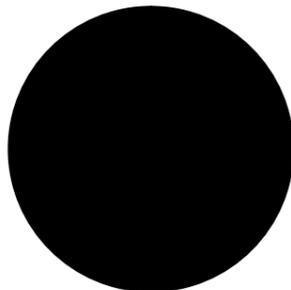
23

Number of inhabited islands in Argyll and Bute.

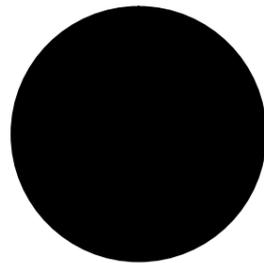
POPULATION BY ADMINISTRATIVE AREA



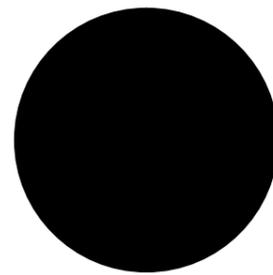
Bute & Cowal
21,821



Helensburgh & Lomond
25,434

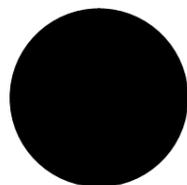


Oban, Lorn & the Isles
20,321



Mid Argyll, Kintyre & the Islands
21,714

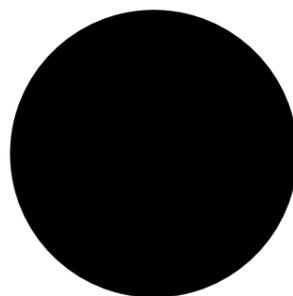
PERCENT OF TOTAL LAND AREA



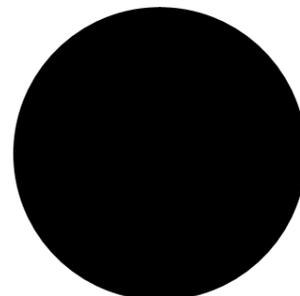
Bute & Cowal
14.9%



Helensburgh & Lomond
6%



Oban, Lorn & the Isles
38.8%



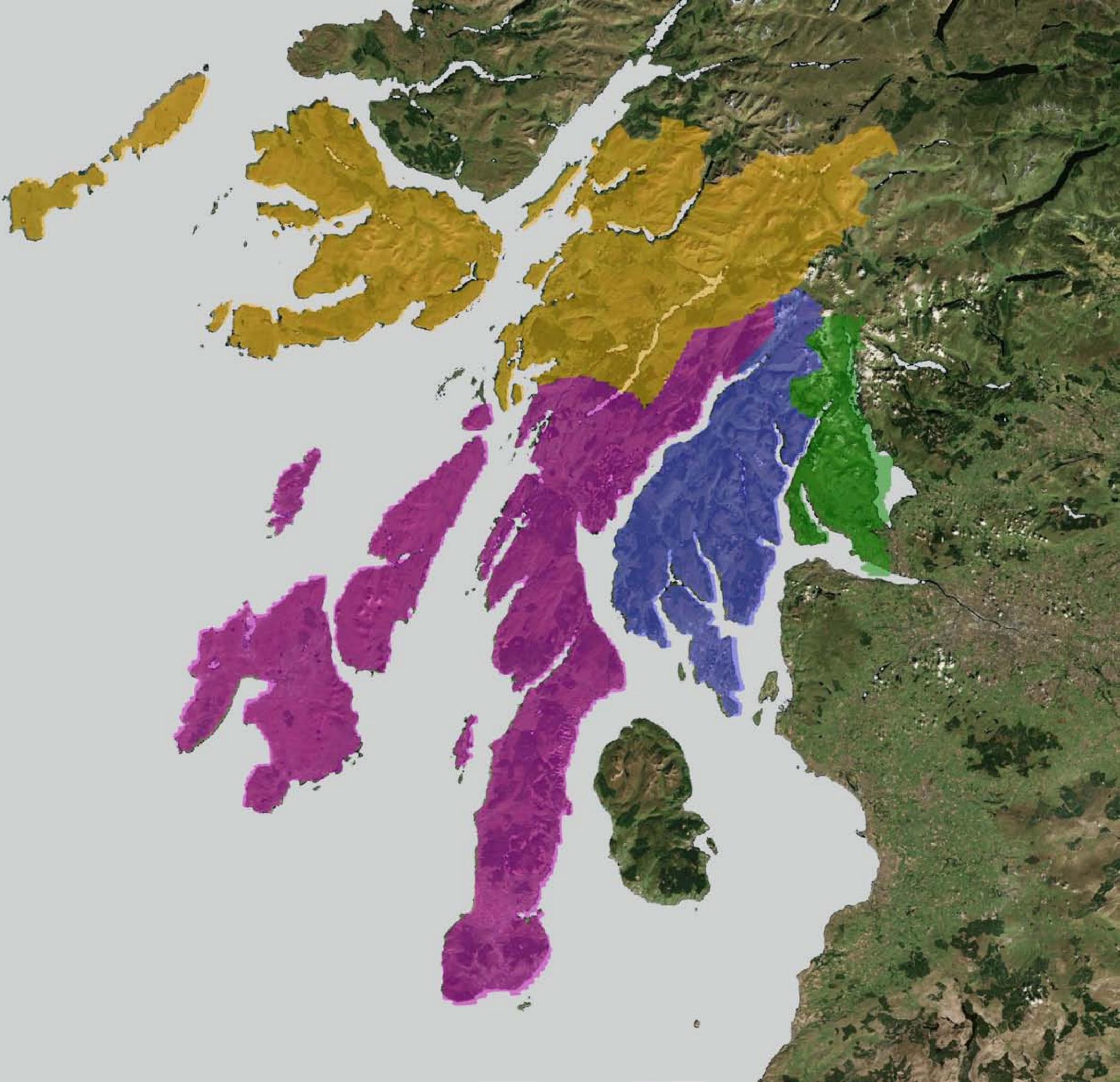
Mid Argyll, Kintyre & the Islands
40.3%

ARGYLL & BUTE HAS A LONGER COASTLINE THAN FRANCE.

Argyll and Bute's coastline is 3,723km in length.

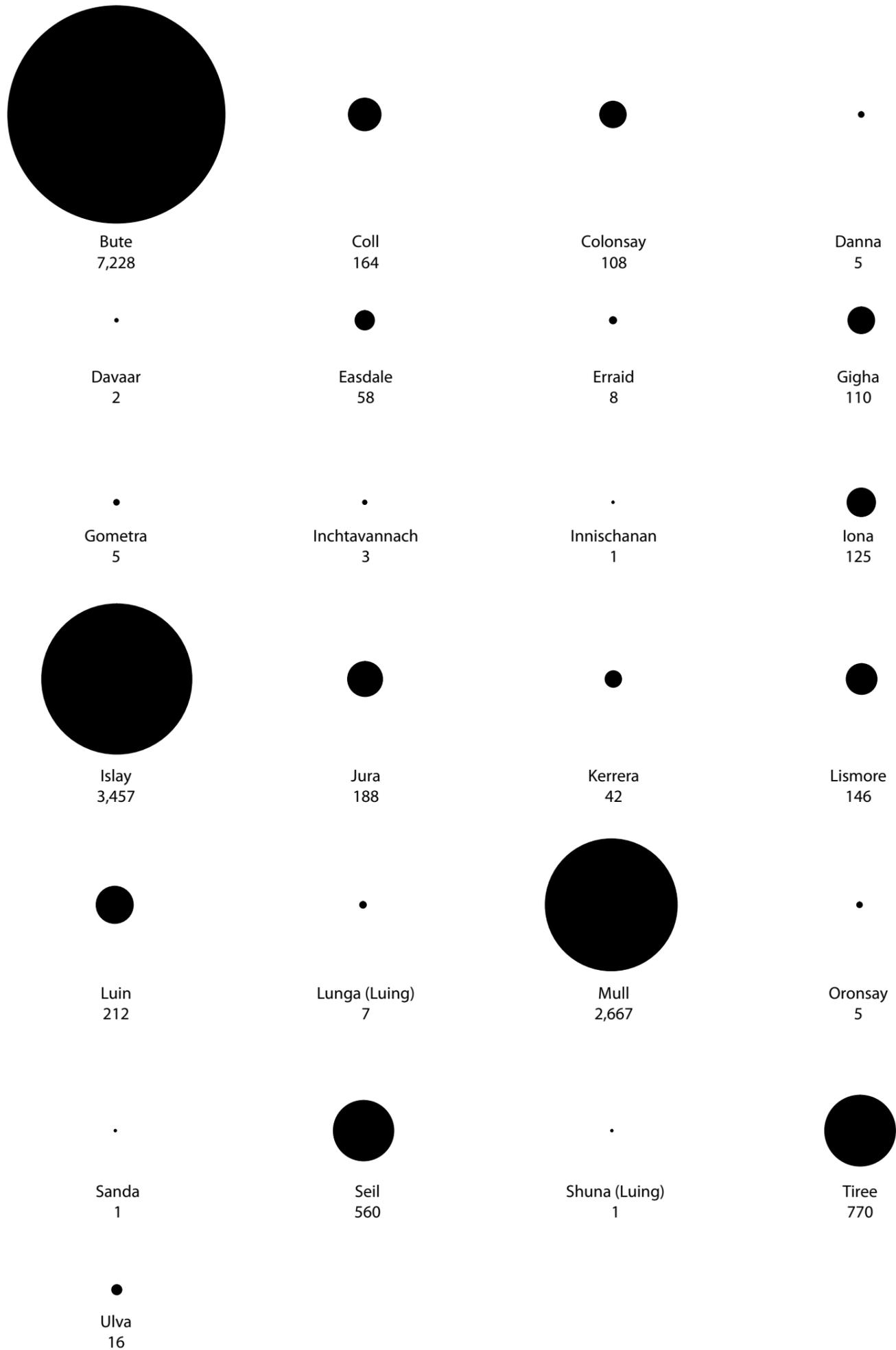
France's coastline is 3,427km.

Argyll & Bute
Administrative Areas

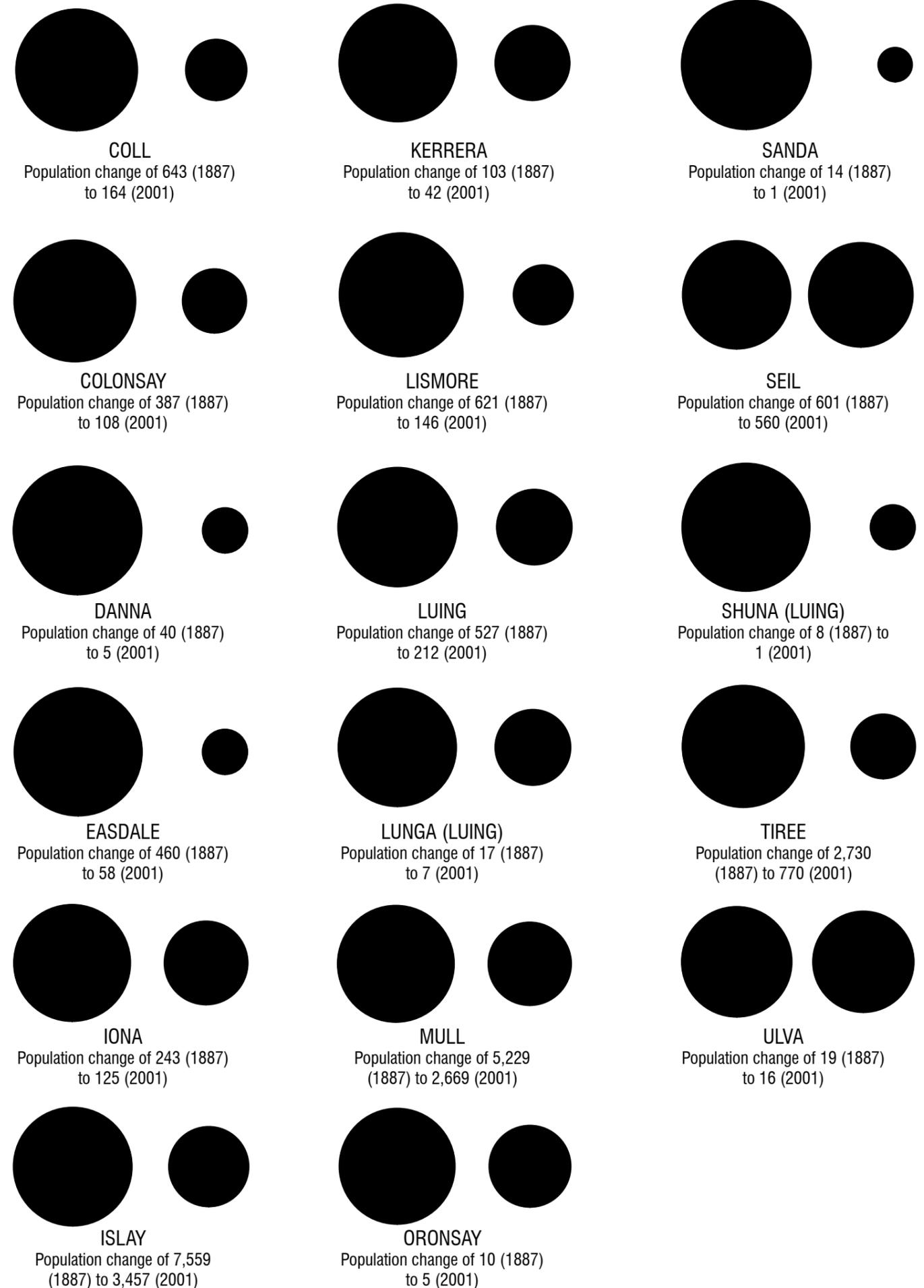


-  Oban, Lorn & the Isles
-  Mid Argyll, Kintyre & Islay
-  Bute and Cowal
-  Helensburgh & Lomond

THE ISLANDS



THE ISLANDS Population Change



Argyll & Bute
Bioregions Case Studies



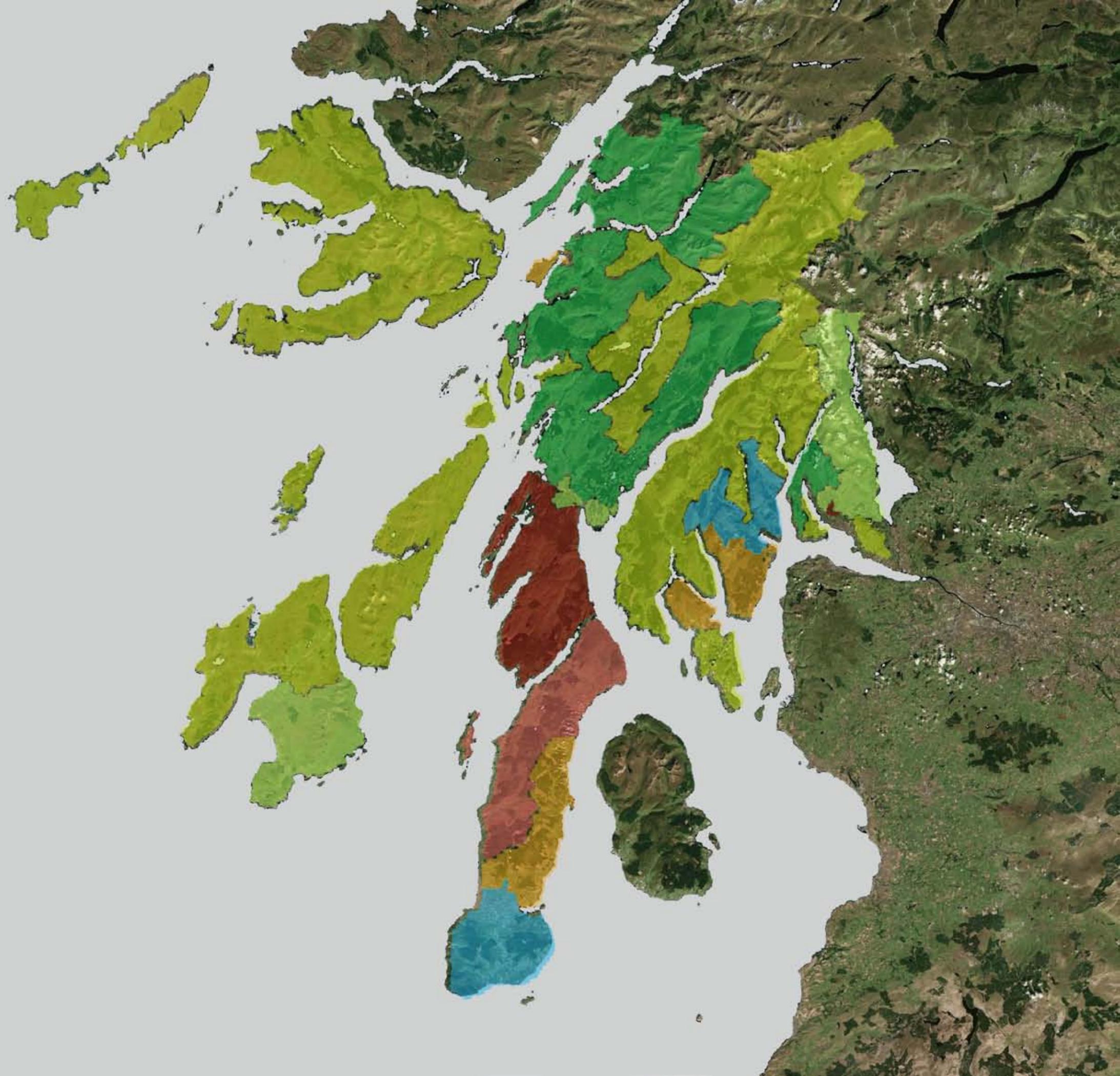
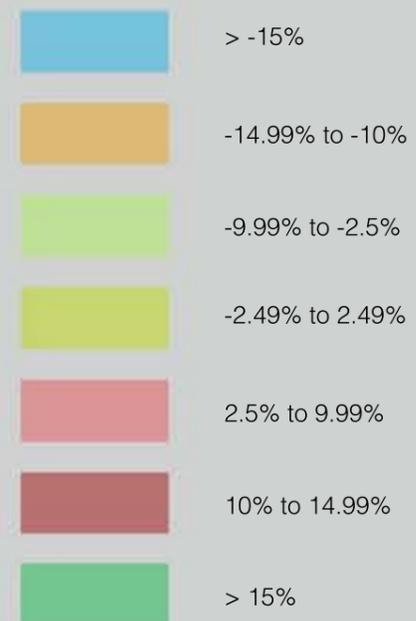
Isle of Coll

Oban

Dalmaly

Tarbert

Argyll & Bute
Population Change 1991 - 2001



POPULATION

This report will explore the past, present and projected future population of each of the Argyll and Bute communities. With a significant population decrease expected over the next 25 years, can Argyll and Bute reverse the predicted trend by utilising the local context more productively. Can the 96% of 'remote rural' land with Argyll and Bute as identified by the Scottish Government be managed sustainably to generate greater prosperity for neighbouring communities?

A series of infographics and mapping strategies will investigate the changing population patterns of the region and identify particular community.

- Ardishaig
- Bowmore
- Campbeltown
- Cardross
- Dunbeg
- Dunoon
- Garelochhead
- Helensburgh
- Innellan
- Inveraray
- Kilcreggan
- Lochgilphead
- Oban
- Port Bannatyne
- Port Ellen
- Rosneath
- Rothesay
- Tarbert
- Tighnabruaich
- Tobermory



Argyll & Bute
Key Population Centres



INDUSTRY

The Bioregions report will reference a series of employment statistics produced from various government reports as well as future opportunities for industries within the region which would exploit the productive landscapes and seascapes throughout the region.

The research will be represented through a series of infographics to clearly represent the trends of each community.

Recommendations delivered by the report should continually reference opportunities for the community and the inevitable impact on employment through industry.



FORESTRY

Forestry is particularly prevalent with Argyll in comparison with other regions in Scotland. Land topography and climate conditions are ideal for timber crops within the local authority. The report will highlight the effect that forestry has had on particular communities and whether this has been enhanced or not in recent years.

Mapping the timber crops within the Argyll region and devise methods for increasing production is also closely related to employment, industry and the population as a whole.



RENEWABLE ENERGY

Renewable energy with Argyll and Bute has significant potential both on and off shore. Can communities harness green energy sources to financially and ethically empower their households.

Bioregions will map and statistically analyse renewable opportunity available for communities and the local authority including tidal and wind power.



TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

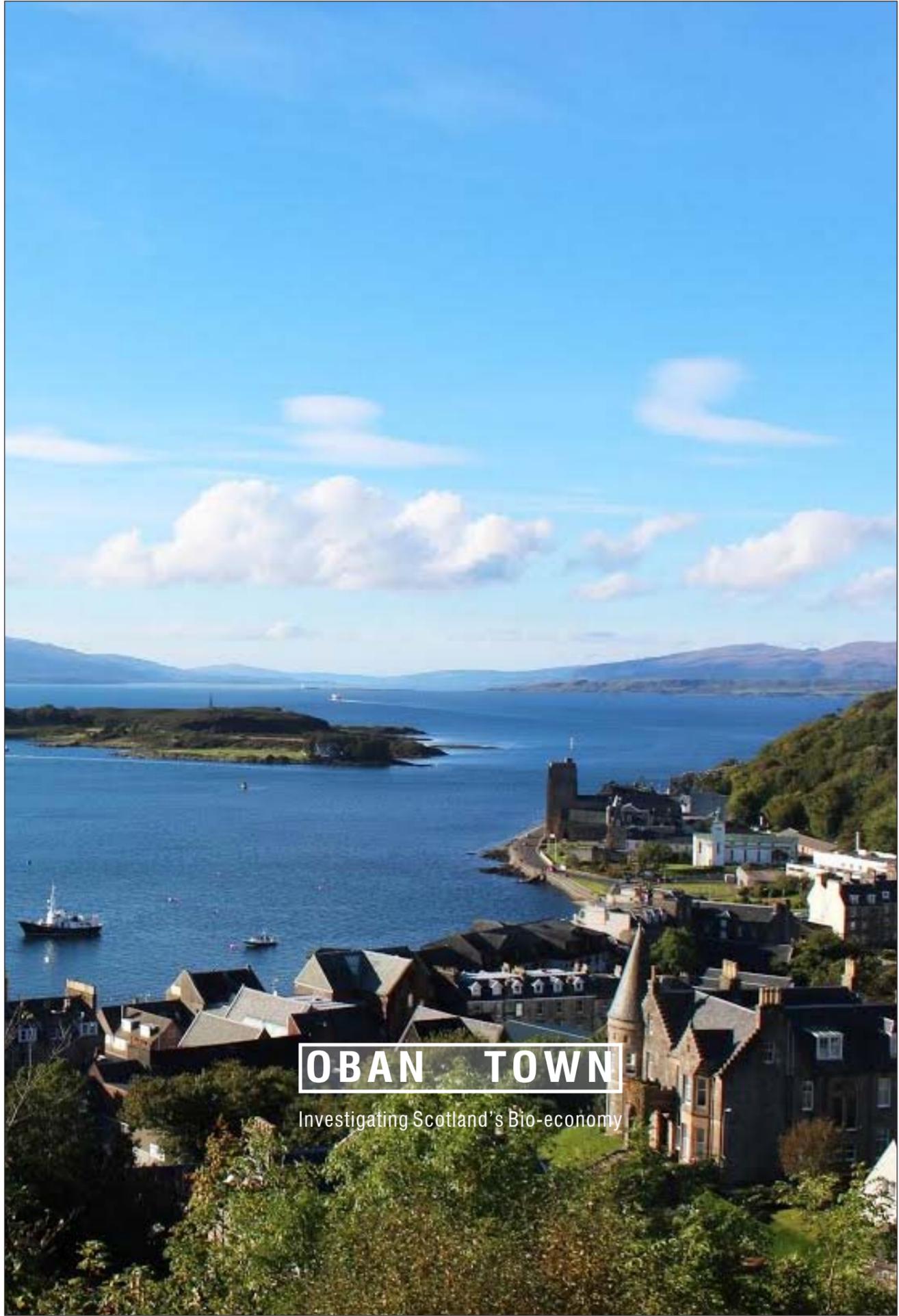
This report will examine the existing condition of infrastructure through mapping strategies and statistical analysis. The study will investigate current infrastructural characteristics in communities throughout the Argyll and Bute region. Each case study will explore local constraints and opportunities ranging from road and rail to ferry links.

Recommendations will be delivered within each of the communities on how a re-imaging of these routes can be considered. For many of the communities within Argyll and Bute ferries act as key lifeline resources and one of the main questions posed by this report is to ask whether there is adequate ferry links to connect up communities throughout the region as well as to the rest of Scotland.



Argyll & Bute
Ferry Links





OBAN TOWN

Investigating Scotland's Bio-economy

CONTENTS

CASE STUDY 01 - OBAN TOWN

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Urban Areas And Towns
Oban Background

1.2 CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

Description Of Bioregion

1.3 ENABLING CONDITIONS

1.4 IMPEDING FACTORS

1.5 RECOMMENDATIONS



URBAN AREAS AND TOWNS

Argyll and Bute is a local government region of western Scotland. The region has no major cities or centres of population but consists of a wide range of small towns, villages, and clusters of rural housing on both the islands and mainland coastline. These homes and their amenities also occupy a variety of topographies, landscapes and seascapes. Stretching from the Mull of Kintyre, in sight of Northern Ireland, to the bottom of the central Highlands, the region is the second largest local authority within Scotland by area, at 6,909 sq km. Only the Highland Council area is larger, yet Argyle and Bute has the third lowest population of any local government territory, with just 0.13 residents per hectare on average.

Helensburgh, in effect a suburb of Glasgow, is the largest town in the council area by some margin with 14,000 residents, and has very different social and economic needs to the rest of Argyll and Bute. The terminus of Glasgow's commuter rail network, Helensburgh is classed as an 'Other Urban Area' by the government, whereas the four other main towns in Argyll and Bute - Campbeltown, Oban, Dunoon and Rothesay - are classed as "Remote small towns". This is due to both their size and their difficulty of access, with all reachable from Glasgow and Scotland's urban core only via long drives or ferry rides. For this reason none of the towns are classed as "Accessible Small Towns". Despite its small population and rural character, these small towns still make up 48.4% of the population of Argyll and Bute. This study focuses particularly on Oban, a fishing and tourism town which serves as a transit point to the Western Isles as well as an important local hub for commerce and services.

OBAN BACKGROUND

Oban (An t-Òban, or 'The Little Bay' in Scottish Gaelic) is only the third largest settlement within Argyll and Bute, with just over 8,000 residents or 11 per cent of the district's population, yet is widely recognised as the region's major centre. Located

at the southwestern extreme of the Highland and a magnet for tourists, the town can claim to be one of the more successful peripheral centres in Scotland with its own newspaper and cultural and sporting events, as well as being an important hub for the local islands. Ferry services to the Islands of Mull, Barra, Coll, Tiree and the Uists are an important stimulus in the local economy, employing locals and bringing people to the town. It is also the terminus of a branch of the West Highland Line, a globally recognised rail journey that draws tourists from all over the world.

Despite these positive factors and a prime location, there are a number of endemic issues in the town, including below average access to education, healthcare and skilled jobs compared to towns of similar size throughout Scotland. Symptomatic of this is the reliance on the tourism industry where many people have only seasonal work or have relatively low pay [2].

Along with Fort William further north, Oban is the only town of more than 5000 inhabitants on the mainland of Scotland's west coast. It sits in a protected harbour on the Firth of Lorn, a long inlet following the contours of Scotland's mountains. The bay is protected by the privately owned island of Kerrera to the West, whilst the suburban island of Lismore and the Morvern peninsula lie to the North of the town. Most travellers to and from Oban must enter the town through the Pass of Brander, a narrow path through the mountains used by the main road and rail links from Glasgow. This lack of transport access is another inhibiting factor in the development of the town.

These relative advantages and disadvantages make Oban a highly appropriate location for the case study investigating Urban Areas and Towns within the context of Bioregions, exploring how holistic approaches to Argyll and Bute as a bioregion can lessen the impacts of the shortfalls and challenges in traditional urban planning.



CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

POPULATION

8,180

Population (2010-based Settlement Estimates)

4,000

Number of Households

DESCRIPTION OF BIOREGION

Oban is an old town, but until the 19th century was little more than a coastal village whose main links were with the sea and surrounding islands. The transformative arrival of the railway and coastal steamers in the late 1800s however made Oban both a transit point and a destination in its own right. At the height of its Victorian expansion an ill fated project to establish a spa, 'the Hydro', in the town raised hopes it would become a resort of choice for the wealthy and the construction boom that occurred from the 1880s has defined the architecture of the town.

Oban itself has a relatively dense core running up a steep hillside from the harbour. The town is encircled by a railway line and characterised by housing facing the sea arranged on a series of small, steep lanes. Much of the housing in central Oban was built in the Victorian period when its status as a holiday town grew after the arrival of the railway, today forming a backbone of the tourist industry in the form of hotels, hostels and rental homes.

In the centre of the town is a main street, which runs the length of the harbour and up the hill a short distance from the railway station. Here there are a number of bars and retail businesses, as well as a tourist-focused shopping outlet and a ferry terminal. Immediately behind the town centre is a large supermarket, and a smaller discount supermarket as well as a hardware retailer and a number of other industrial units.

Over 25 per cent of people in Oban live in some form of social housing, and some form of deprivation is experienced by the majority of residents, including those in work.

Once public employment in education and healthcare is removed, by far the largest share of jobs can be found in accommodation (18pc) and retail (14pc), showing the town's reliance on tourism and as a regional hub. Manufacturing contributes to just 1 per cent of employment in the area, but a higher than average amount of people (6 per cent) work in the transport sector. Caledonian Macbrayne, the public ferry company, has one of its major bases in the town and a unit of train staff are also based out of Oban railway station. Railway employment is not as high as it had previously been, in part due to the decline in freight traffic and economisation of working practices. Although Oban had previously been a centre of the fishing industry, only a fraction of the town's population are engaged in fisheries work due to changing practices and a move toward larger vessels. A notable source of other skilled jobs are scientific and technical posts associated with the marine base of the Northern Lighthouse Board and the Scottish Association for Marine Science.

Until the 1960s Oban was also the terminus of a local railway

line to Ballachulish to the north, closed due to increased competition from road transport. The trackbed of the line, including the impressive Connel Bridge, is still largely intact and has potential to form a new low-carbon transport corridor for goods and people. In the past plans have existed for reopening and extension to Fort William, and from there up the Great Glen to Inverness. This would rapidly improving connectivity in the Highlands and reduce road use between the main settlements of west coast.

Road transport to Oban has improved in the last decade thanks to Scottish Government initiatives, but both main routes to the town from both the east and south are subject to closures due to landslides and bad weather. There is also a small airport at Connel, immediately to the north. This is a hub for intra-regional transport by providing lifeline air services to the islands of Coll and Tiree but its passenger numbers are minimal in comparison to those carried by road, rail and ferry.

Its position as a transport nexus and marine location means that in recent years Oban has attempted to brand itself as both 'Gateway to the Isles' and the 'Seafood Capital of Scotland', offering tourists and particularly people from Glasgow the chance of a short break and to engage with the region's natural assets.

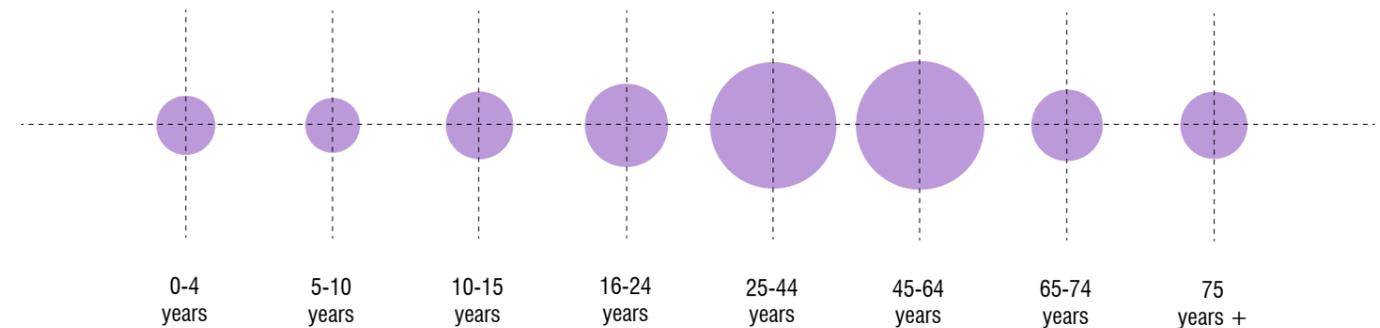
The most outstanding feature within Oban is McCaig's Tower, a classical folly built by a local benefactor as a job creation scheme. The Tower is 10 minutes hard walk uphill from the centre of the town and provides spectacular views over the town and onto the neighboring islands, and is also a venue for weddings and public events.

The town is also home to a respected Scots whisky distillery, built in 1794. The business is owned by multinational drinks giant Diageo, with large volumes of the product being exported via the conglomerate's international supply chains. There is a potential for whisky and other export goods to leave the town by sustainable transport - for many years Oban was a railfreight hub before the industry was privatised.

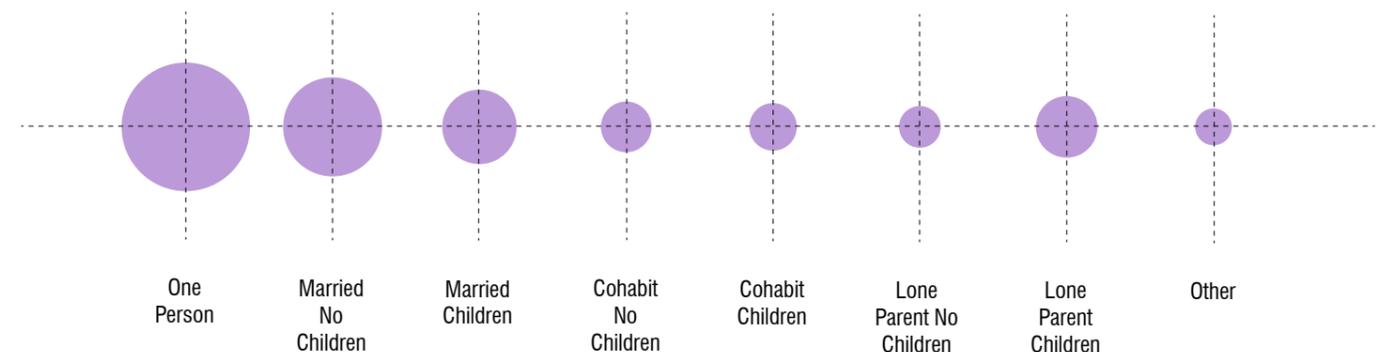
Although the distillery does not employ significant numbers of people it acts as a means to draw tourists to the town, acting as a 'rainy day' activity in the tourist season. 70 per cent of those in work in Oban are in full time jobs, with the remaining 30 per cent rely on part time and season work. This includes those working for public agencies such as the local ferry company and tourism bureau.

The Scottish Government classes Oban as being an 'independent' town, having amenities which allow it to serve its own needs but also with a degree of economic sustainability. Without more professional or manufacturing jobs though it will

Demographics Population Age



Demographics Household Composition



Sources:

- <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/info/population-where-we-live>
- <http://www.usp.scot/Town?mainTownName=oban>

CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

continue to be dictated by seasonal tourist demand and is still very much a service-based economy. Unlike other areas of Scotland it has benefited relatively little from innovations in renewable energy, forestry and small-scale manufacturing.

Politically Oban is split down the middle - half the town sits in a council ward with the Islands of Kerrera, Mull and Iona, but the other half is grouped with the mainland north of the town. Both these wards elect councillors to Argyll and Bute council, headquartered in Lochgilphead 40 miles south. There is no town council, but there is a community council without any executive power.

The harbour - around which most other functions of the town are directed, was founded in 1713 but does not have any overall ownership structure with a division of property. The harbourfront is public but the passenger pier is the property of the Scottish Government. At present large boats visiting the port must anchor in the bay and use tenders to reach the shore.

Surrounding the town there are several large spruce plantations. The Forestry Commission has significant holdings in the local area alongside privately held land, but both types of land suffer from biodiversity issues due to the uniform nature of the forestry. Economic development in the town is highly dependent on the willingness of landowners to cooperate.

The local leisure centre is community run as a social enterprise and provides a potential model for local enterprise where council-funded services or commercial undertakings are not profitable. Other community enterprises include the Lorn Origins Rural Food Network (LORN), which seeks to give local producers access to markets and promote local produce. The local economy is heavily integrated with the islands of Mull and Lismore, both of which rely on Oban for retail and basic services.

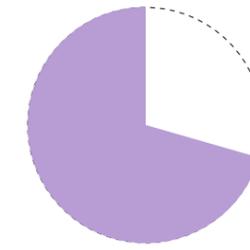
There is little food production in Oban itself due to a shortage of agricultural land and relatively little large-scale farming. The majority of local food production is related to the local fishing

industry and smaller working boats, with sheep and cattle farming also featuring to a limited degree on the surrounding peninsula and neighbouring islands. Jackson's butcher in the centre of the town is a craft butcher. Apart from venison, which is sourced from the larder on the Isle of Seil, meat is sourced from distant places. The beef is produced in the area, for example on Islay or Dalmally, but before the cattle are slaughtered they are sent to the Carse of Stirling (70 miles away) to be finished (fed on lush grazing). They are then slaughtered at the abattoir in Dunblane, before making their return journey as carcasses to Oban. Even though the beef sold in Oban is locally produced, it has incurred around 180 food miles before it is sold to the consumer. Animals that are not finished in the central belt may not incur such food miles, if the abattoir on the Isle of Mull, which is 20 miles by road and sea, is used. There are two fishmongers which source fish and seafood locally. The Sea Food Hut and many other restaurants in the town pride themselves as sourcing local fish and seafood. There is also the Feochan Mhor Smokehouse at Kilmore, which serves Oban.

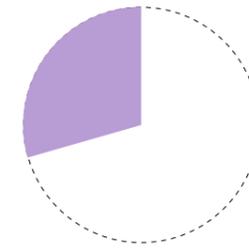
The town is a cultural centre too, with a Cathedral, the Corran Halls theatre and concert venue and a well-attended Highland Games each summer. In nearby Taynuilt there is also a prestigious dance school, Ballet West. The town currently lacks a purpose-built theatre space, and the local Rare Breeds Park designed to showcase wildlife closed in 2008. The cinema that had closed reopened in 2012 as a community enterprise.

Large scale transition investment in infrastructure has been minimal at a time of increased pressure on public spending - the local Phoenix Cinema received Climate Challenge Fund grants to improve its energy efficiency and act as a community hub, and the local hall on Lismore was subject to similar work. The town and region has been granted some EU LEADER funding to improve broadband connectivity. In 2014 the town hosted the first ever Scottish Rural Parliament as a means of discussing the issues affecting Oban and similar communities outside of central Scotland, though the parliament itself has no power to legislate.

EMPLOYMENT

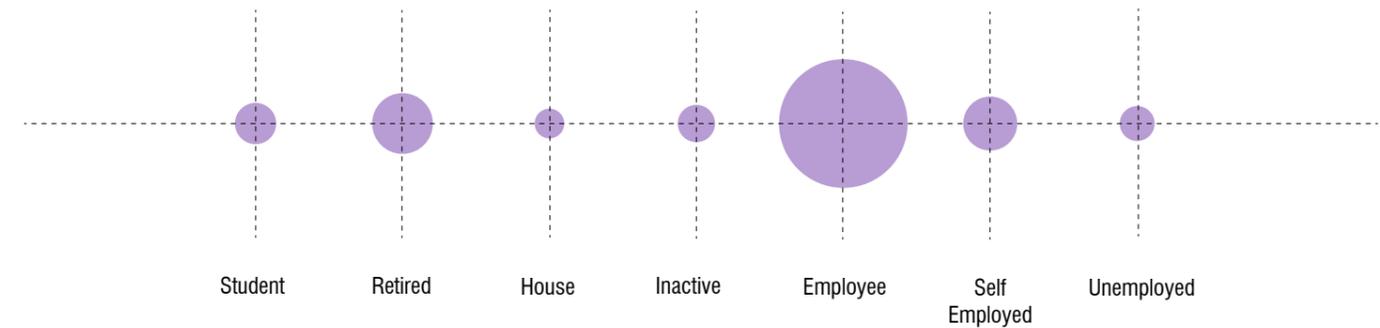


Full Time Employment
70.3%

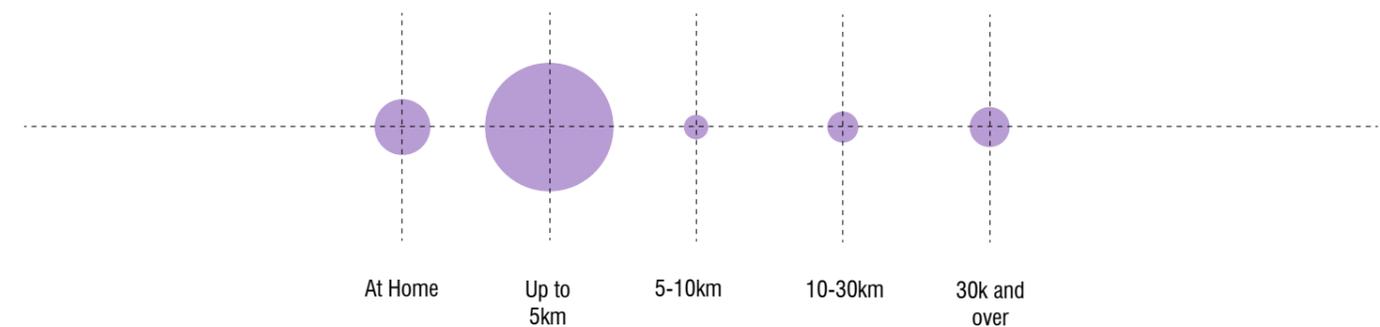


Part Time Employment
29.7%

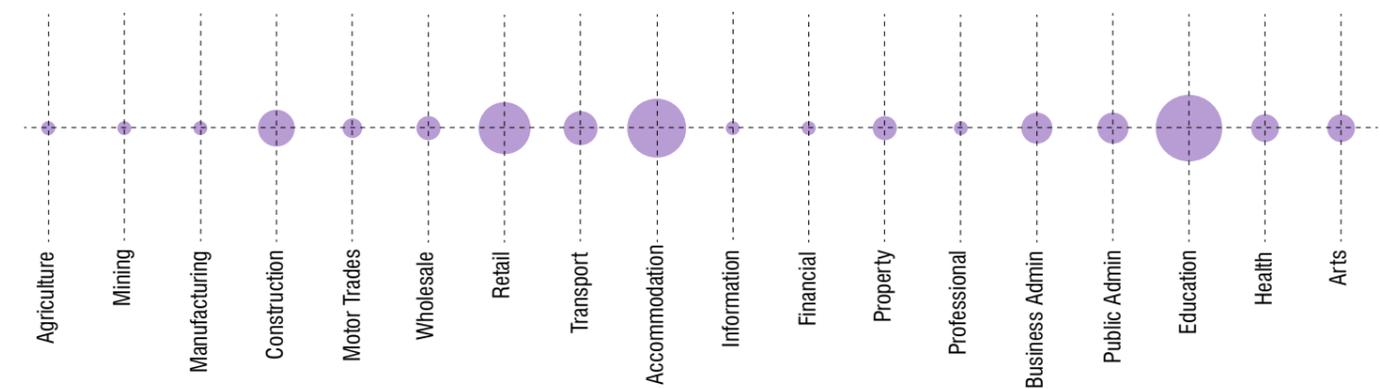
Employment Occupation (aged 16-74)



Employment Distance to Work



Employment Distance to Work



Sources:

- <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/info/population-where-we-live>
- <http://www.usp.scot/Town?mainTownName=oban>

ENABLING CONDITIONS

Oban is the transport hub for the Hebrides “the Gateway to the Isles” as the port connecting the islands to mainland Scotland. With train and road links, the community is well-placed. However, these transport links are under-developed and services, such as train connections to Glasgow, are relatively infrequent. Onward travel to the Isles is by ferry and tunnel systems that feature in many Nordic countries have not been developed.

Oban has a history of community enterprise with the purchase and management of the Atlantis Leisure Centre, the cinema and the launch of the Oban voucher scheme, which provides a cash-free trading mechanism and forcing tourists and locals alike to acquire goods from within Oban.

There is potential to exploit the food brand of Oban, similar to Loch Fyne, and build on the success of local businesses sourcing locally caught fish, such as the Seafood Hut and the Kilmore smokery.

Oban with its infrastructure has the ability to be a historical and cultural centre for the region. This should encompass the Gaelic language and heritage, which at present is under-represented in the community.

IMPENDING FACTORS

Although Oban has a community plan, the plan is not based on a clear strategic and sustainable community vision. For example, key issues such as improvements to the train service, provision of wet weather facilities, improved broadband speeds, mobile phone network coverage, housing and employment issues were considered to be out of scope of the plan. These issues are still real and need addressing, but appear to be overlooked by the community as they feel that these problems are beyond the scope of what can be tackled by the community of Oban.

The lack of a town council and the Community Council having a primary focus on planning matters only (for reporting rather than decision-making) means that there is a lack of empowerment and ability to realise goals and aspirations in the community. Unlike Tarbert, sustainability goals do not appear to be such a priority within the community.

Despite the local meat and fish production the majority of food consumed is being sourced from the UK-wide supermarket chains and logistics supply. There is little local fruit and vegetable production.

There is a lack of development of renewable technologies

within the area both commercially and for community benefit.

There is no landscape management strategy for the combined goals of biodiversity, carbon capture, local amenity, renewable resources and food production.

Oban swells in visitors during the summer months creating seasonal employment which does not necessarily suit locals who may want year-round employment and the economy is dependent on tourism.

The voice of the people of Oban is muted by: inadequate reflection on and dissemination of the stories of the cultural legacies and injustices of the past; and, insufficient engagement and power to even envision, let alone transform, Oban into the truly sustainable heart of the west of Scotland.

Despite Oban’s location as the “gateway to the Isles” its locality, poor public transport and remoteness from cities of >100,000 people restrict development opportunities as well as access to goods and services that are only available in larger towns and cities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Community envisioning and masterplanning for a sustainable and green future for Oban needs to be a priority. This community engagement activity must have the necessary community structures for the community to manage its future strategically. This implies that relying on the goodwill of volunteers is insufficient and that such endeavour requires support and funding from outwith the community. The pier regeneration project needs to be progressed and meet the needs of the community. . Local perspective. Reference newspaper. Note the pier is not mentioned in the main text?.

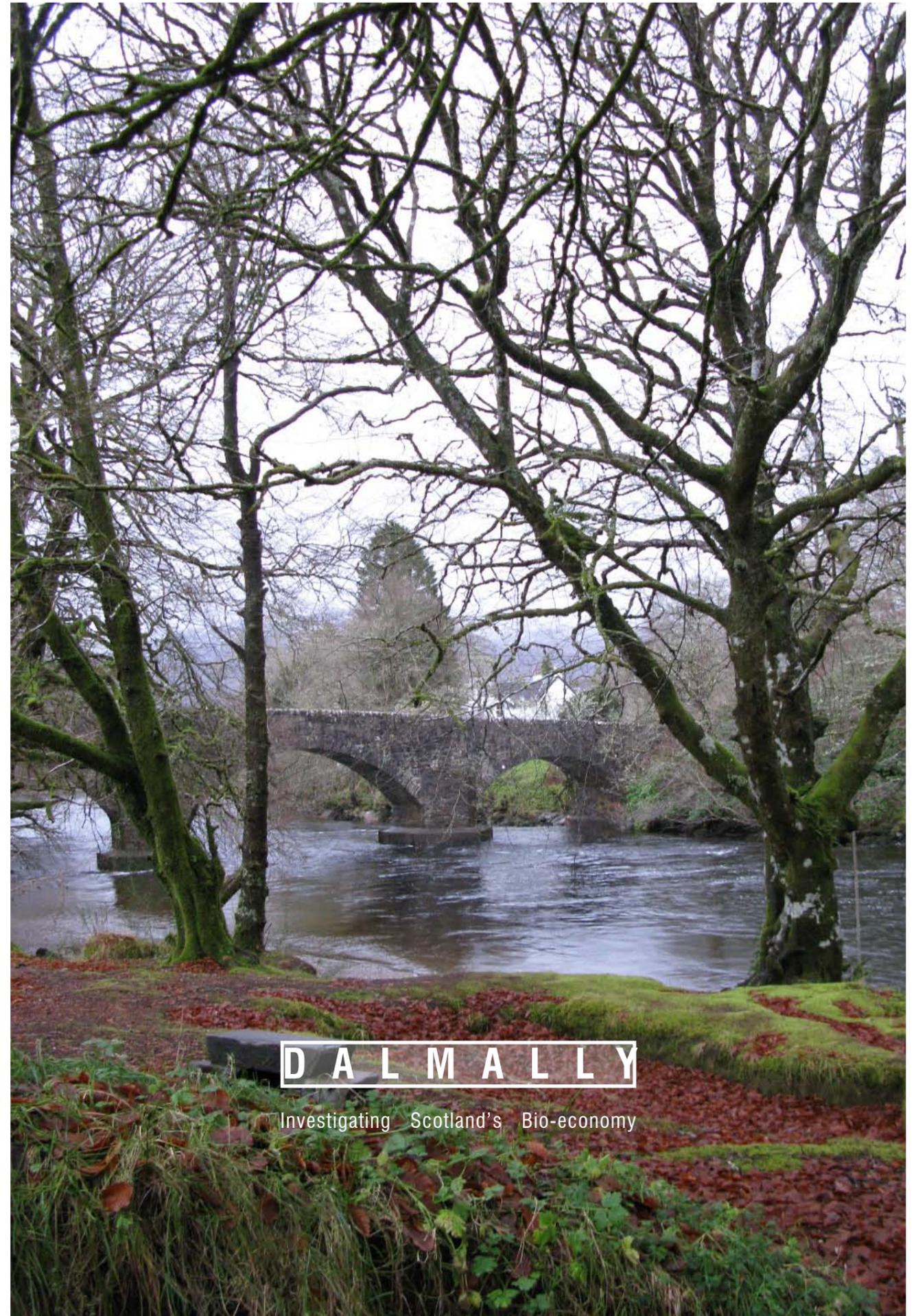
Further development plans for urban areas within argyll and bute. Community visions of possibilities. How to facilitate this with current organisations? Need for development trust to engage community. Governance need for change. Community

empowerment bill and how Oban might benefit from this.

Land management within an extremely tight setting. Opportunity to imagine connecting Oban to lismore and kerrera in future through tunnels/ferry links/infrastructure to expand town around bay. Invoke Nordic model.

Address cultural opportunities through art and design initiatives. Access to tourist sites such as mccaig tower enhanced to cater for tourists. Cultural events through seasonal year with stalls for local food/crafts/music/etc. Utilise Oban's location and infrastructure to create a historical and cultural centre for the region. This should encompass the Gaelic language and heritage, which at present is under-represented in the community.





DALMALLY

Investigating Scotland's Bio-economy

CONTENTS

CASE STUDY 03 - DALMALLY

1.1 INTRODUCTION
Rural Communities

1.2 CASE STUDY OVERVIEW
Description Of Bioregion

1.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1.4 ENABLING CONDITIONS

1.5 IMPEDING FACTORS

1.6 RECOMMENDATIONS



RURAL COMMUNITIES

Dalmally is a small village located just off of the main Crianlarich to Oban road at the eastern end of Loch Awe in Argyll and Bute. The original terminus of the Callander and Oban railway in the 1880s before the port was reached, it is a crossing point on the River Orchy as it flows down Glen Orchy and into Loch Awe.

The village is similar to many other communities across the Western Highlands and Argyll, sitting at the head of a loch where there is some pasture and at a river and road crossing. It is not an historically significant place, only coming into being in the 1780s when local landowners made improvements to local military roads. There has though been habitation on the site for many centuries, most notably in the form of Kilchurn Castle on the Loch shore and the local church in various forms.

Despite cutbacks the railway continues to play an important role in the village and Glen Orchy and brings in tourists from the central belt, a function similar to many other communities in the Highland regions of Scotland for whom rail services are vital. The village can accurately be described as a linear community, stretched out along a main street with a number of homes and businesses placed on it. This is also similar to many other villages in the more remote inland areas of Scotland. With a population of 585, around forty per cent of whom do not live in the village itself, Dalmally is a good example of a typical small settlement that is a significant centre for a larger area, hence its inclusion in this study.

DESCRIPTION OF BIOREGION

Dalmally (Dail Mhàilidh) owes its modern size and prominence to the presence of the main Crianlarich to Oban trunk road and railway line, both of which enter the lower western end of Glen Orchy and run through the village before crossing the River Orchy where it enters Loch Awe. The road was originally

a military route, itself built on the route of a cattle road, to enable quicker movement of government forces around the region. It was subsequently upgraded over the years and is today a two lane highway in its entirety. It has recently been subject to further upgrades on the stretch between Dalmally and Tyndrum.

Its position on transport routes as well as its picturesque location have made it an important destination for local tourism, including visitors to the castle at Kilchurn on the fringes of the village. It acts as a centre for commerce, being the largest centre of population between Crianlarich and Taynuilt. It is also important for the homes and small communities on the southern side of Loch Awe in accessing services.

The village is reachable by road from three directions - from the north a B road runs down Glen Orchy to the east side of the village, and long distance buses and private motorists use the main east-west route on the A85 road. The railway station is unmanned but has a semi-frequent service to both Oban and Glasgow

The village is part the council ward of Oban North and Lorn, a multi-member constituency of Argyll and Bute. The only forum of government local to Dalmally is the Glenorchy and Innishail Community Council, run along the lines of the local church parish for historical reasons. The organisation has no formal power but can raise local issues with politicians and facilitate consultations.

To the west of the village is the settlement of Loch Awe and the Cruachan pump storage station, sitting in the shadow of Ben Cruachan, Argyll and Bute's highest peak at 1126 metres. The hill is a draw for outdoor tourists, and as the hill is not part of a larger range can claim to be a destination in its own right. Another notable local peak is Ben Lui, though many visitors do not climb the local hills and drive from site to site. The Cruachan hydro station is a tourist destination too, offering



CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

guided tours of the facility.

The economy in Dalmally is highly seasonal, reflected in the makeup of the local businesses. Previously prominent in the village was a large hotel catering to coaches of tourists and owned by a coach touring company. The closure of the hotel means a reduction in the number of overnight visitors to the village.

The village is in the bottom 10% of communities in Scotland for geographical access to services. However, the village scores highly in other areas; it is in the top 20% for employment and crime; and top 30% for wealth and education.

There is also a local store, a Post Office and chemist, and a GP's surgery. Other businesses in the village include a craft start-up in the local railway station making felted clothing. The local cattle auction markets holds regular sales events and is central to the organisation of the annual Dalmally Agricultural Show, allowing local farmers to showcase their produce and celebrate local agriculture. There is also a community hall available for use by local businesses. and for leisure activities, funded and run by the Dalmally Community Company social enterprise. A significant part of the community development was a grant by the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund

The newly opened Lagganbuie Farm Shop also sells vegetables produced in its polytunnel and eggs from its hens. The owners plan to build an abattoir, as currently any locally produced food has to be sent either to the Isle of Mull, Perth or the central belt (Dunblane or Glasgow) for slaughter. They also hope to raise and sell their own pork for local consumption. Local venison and farmed fish are sold through a large commercial smoker, Inverawe, at Taynuilt, twelve miles from Dalmally. One complaint is that a lack of local support and strict legislation on food production prevents smaller local agricultural businesses from setting up.

Education provision in the area consists of the local state-run Dalmally Primary School, situated off the main road, which provides classes for children up to the age of 12. Secondary education is not available in the local area, and students must travel to Oban by train.

Land ownership and use in the local area is dominated by sheep farming, stalking and forestry. The Forestry Commission maintains extensive commercial spruce holdings, though the Dalmally Community company is in the process of purchasing the local Kinachreachan forest for community use. The Forestry Commission controls land use in both Glen Orchy and Glen Lochy, and expansion of the village and its economy relies on the cooperation of the government agency.

Despite the hydro, wind and biofuel resources in the area, fossil fuels remain the predominant heating source in the properties in Dalmally. Electricity feeds into the national grid, rather than direct to the community, and wood is exported to England for processing and production of chipboard. Housing stock is generally mixed to poor quality, the majority with poor or very poor energy efficiency and only a few new houses which are well insulated.

The forests around Dalmally are largely plantations, meaning that they are not reflective of the area's original biodiversity. Most local farming activity is small scale due to a lack of grazing land, though the upland areas are home to both wild deer and sheep.

There are no community owned renewable energy projects, but the community does have a modest income from some of the commercial developments in the form of "community benefits" (compensation for loss of amenity / community development potential). There is no benefit accrued from the Ben Cruachan development (despite the Ben Cruachan hydroelectric scheme being the biggest pump storage in Britain), but two new hydroelectric schemes (in Glen Lochy) are due to pay community benefit payments of £5,000 per MW of installed capacity. This, together with a low level benefit payment (£1,000 per MW installed capacity, shared between seven communities) from a large windfarm further along Loch Awe, will create approximately £25,000/annum of income for the community. This is insufficient to fund any significant community projects (the Dalmally Community Centre), but the community trust hopes to be able to use this money for feasibility studies and other such preliminary investigations.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

“Historically, forestry was the main employer with 25% of the village working in the sector and the Forestry Commission built many of the houses for these workers.”

Interviews with four Dalmally residents

This file is compiled from interviews from four different village residents.

Employment in the village is varied. *“Most people have jobs. A lot travel up to Tyndrum to work there.”* (Tyndrum is 11 miles away). There are a few tradesmen (joiners and plumber), who advertise in the post office. Historically, forestry was the main employer with 25% of the village working in the sector and the Forestry Commission built many of the houses for these workers.

“There was a forestry office in the village and a mini-bus used to run the workers to the site. There would be about 16 in the bus. Eridine...” (which is further south along Loch Awe) *“... was built to provide housing for the foresters”*. The Forestry Commission closed its Dalmally office, centralised its operation, laid off its staff and now uses contractors with specialised new equipment (forwarders, etc.) to carry out the work. *“The forest resource has been badly managed. The timber, lodge pole pine, isn’t worth very much. It’s all knotty and the timber goes south, I think, to be processed. Some logs are loaded onto the train at Crianlarich – you can see the depot and loading there. From here though all the logs have to go up the hill by the road.”*

“A few work in the railway. Mary’s Meals, the charity providing school lunches, is the biggest employer. It employs six or

seven people in the village. Many work in the tourist industry in Tyndrum; others work in Oban, or at the Ben Cruachan power station.” Ben Cruachan is the larger of the two pump stored hydroelectric schemes in Scotland and is owned by Scottish Power.

There is a post office, pharmacy, shop and doctor’s surgery. *“There’s no pharmacist in Dalmally. The pharmacist today is doing holiday cover. He’s come from Balloch today.”*

The closure of the Highland Heritage hotel has had a big impact. The business is for sale and no one has come forward to buy it. The owner worked hard to build up his business and did a lot of the work himself. Now he’s ready to retire. *“Mind you, there wasn’t much for people staying at the hotel. There’s nowhere to go and not much to see if you’re staying there and not on a tour. The tour buses used to go from here down to Edinburgh and back in a day. Some people used to complain of being on a coach for 10 hours a day”*. That’s the problem with having a hotel here – if you’re running a tour business you need to have several different bases near the different sites to provide variety for the clients.

“The reduction in coach tours has had an effect on the community. But the employment rates tend to be high. Those who don’t have jobs don’t stay. Young people leave to go to college or to find work. The gift shop has been hit hard, as it was the only place the tourists had to go. They even opened on Christmas day as there was nothing else to do. They had

a captive market.”

There is nowhere to get a cup of coffee here. No café. But when the hall was built one of the villagers started a community café two days a week. *“The trouble was no one supported and it was always the same few running it. We went up there for lunch whenever it was open, but in the end they closed it. Now the only place is the take-away pies at the farm shop or you might get something at lunchtime at the Glenorchy Lodge Hotel.”*

There are two hydroelectricity developments being built at the moment. *“The developers are being good they are giving us the Scottish Government rate of £5,000 per MW for the hydroelectricity. There’s a total of 3.5MW. That means £17,500 going to the Dalmally Community Company. The Community Company has its own development plan approved by the Community Council. We don’t have a plan as such for spending the benefit money, but we’ll issue small grants to people who want to apply for it. We want to build a playing field adjacent to the community centre and a tourist viewpoint at Kilchurn Castle. We’re waiting for the final touches for the projects and waiting for people to apply for grants. But the money is not enough. It won’t go very far. The community centre cost £1.5million. The £17,500 will supplement the existing fund and fund the preliminary work for big projects, feasibility studies and the like. Setting up a company costs £500. It’ll fund repairs to village facilities. We get a share of the benefits from the windfarms on Loch Awe, but the*

Green Power one at Carraig Gheal only pays £1,000 per MW. The Carraig Gheal windfarm benefit is divided between five community councils so only £7,000 goes to Dalmally. There is another windfarm in planning just now.”

“One of the communities have installed solar thermal (in a community building) but the withdrawal of the subsidy means that no other communities can do it.”

The Forestry owns the land in Glen Lochy – up Strone Hill. Tilhill (they’re a private forestry company) own the land at the back of the village. *“The Glen Strae estate is owned by people who live in Surrey. They have a farm manager. He has about 400 head of sheep and 100 Highland cattle and do deer stalking.”*

The impediments to community development are the transport system and lack of employment. *“Dalmally’s electoral roll is 360. There’s not enough people to support local industry. Lack of employment means that we don’t attract employment. There’s the felt-making business at the station but the clients for what she produces are outwith the village. It’s too expensive for people here.”*

“Dalmally used to be all forestry and railway. Most folk live here and work locally. The young ones go away. Small industrial units are needed. There are no unemployed here as they don’t stay if they are.”

ENABLING CONDITIONS

The renewable energy resources in this area are abundant and many are already being utilised to reduce carbon emissions of energy production. Community benefit payments, although spartan, do provide funds for feasibility studies and small community projects, which may otherwise struggle with funding from external sources.

The area is rich in resources for food production. Entrepreneurs, such as the owners of Lagganbuie Farm Shop, are transforming food production in Dalmally. Even though this enterprise is run on a very small scale, these agents of change have created new local supply chains and demonstrate the feasibility of local food production which has long since vanished. Not only is Lagganbuie demonstrating the viability of chicken and pork farming, Inverawe is one of the leading fish farms and smokeries in Scotland and the deer population provides a source of local meat. A new community orchard will provide fresh fruit throughout the summer and the autumn. Such enterprises demonstrate the long-term potential for local food production in the area.

The Inverawe brand for food could be utilised similar to the Loch Fyne area branding as a quality label for food and tourism. The public ownership of the forestry resource around Dalmally may enable more active community involvement with decisions on its management. However, at present, there is no drive within the community to do so.

Local enterprise, such as the Mary's Meals charity, and the Cruachan hydroelectric station and the railway, provide employment opportunities, which are less reliant on tourism, in what is otherwise a remote glen.

IMPENDING FACTORS

Dalmally has no community development plan, no plan for addressing carbon emissions, and no overarching strategic vision for its future. Management of community assets tends to be reactive, such as achieving benefit payments for renewables rather than creating community owned renewable assets. The forms of local governance operating from council headquarters in Lochgilphead is distant and may not necessarily prioritise the needs of Dalmally, which is close to the border with Stirlingshire just outside the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park.

Global food supply chains continue to dominate the consumption of locally produced food. Sourcing of food requires many food miles with weekly or monthly trips to Oban or Glasgow to supply a household in Dalmally. Meat produced in Dalmally has to be exported for processing before it can be consumed; sheep and cattle for example are sent directly to slaughter in central belt abattoirs or are "finished" in lowland areas beforehand. Only venison can be processed locally, but this is an under-utilised local resource. The majority of fish farmed in Loch Awe is processed locally in Taynuilt, but is distributed and consumed across Britain.

The renewable resources in Dalmally are being exploited by large commercial operations with little benefit to the local communities. There is an increase in trade for local business during construction, but the lasting benefit is minimal.

A major barrier to reducing dependence on fossil fuels, which are presently integral to transport and energy consumption, is infrastructure related to transport, housing, energy supply and forestry management. Although the railway provides an alternative to using a car, large volumes of goods cannot be

carried on the train, so that supermarket shopping has to be done by car. The train services are still relatively infrequent with only six trains each way per day. WITH some trains being run using minimal staff, they present a safety concern for lone travellers. The majority of housing needs extensive and expensive retro-fitting before the buildings can be energy efficient and almost all the heating systems in Dalmally depend on fossil fuels. This means that the houses cannot easily switch to local biofuels or renewable electricity, even if they were available. The forestry is managed for distant sawmills rather than local sawmills or biofuels (forestry products are hauled on lorries to Crianlarich, from where they travel by train to sawmills in southern Scotland and the north of England). The electricity generated from the abundant renewables is fed into the national grid rather than providing electricity direct to the local communities. There is no direct benefit from these large renewable energy developments to the local community. The effort involved in producing food on a small scale is much higher than the retail value of the food produced. This means that the labour is either unpaid or low pay and prevents people entering into food production. Risks of production and small market further reduce the incentives for these types of enterprise.

The lack of industrial units for small businesses is an impediment to local enterprise. Combined with a lack of affordable housing, this means that people are less likely to move to Dalmally to start new businesses. Employment is high, but lack of opportunities means that those unemployed tend to move away from the area.

Distances to markets for goods and services and employment for residents make Dalmally a less attractive place to live.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Every community should have a strategic, sustainable and “green” community action plan, developed and delivered by trained local community development officers. These positions should be a mix of paid and volunteer posts, to overcome volunteer fatigue and to create opportunity for skills development and meaningful employment. These plans should be owned and managed by a newly formed community governance structure that has at least the powers of the development trusts and community councils combined and is formed of democratically elected members. Decision-making

should be by consensus and through extensive community engagement and participation.

A detailed analysis of the potential for farm / small-holding / croft- scale sustainable, and preferably, organic agriculture should be undertaken, together with a strategy formulation for reducing dependence on remote supermarkets and the global food commodity supply chain.

Greater funding and support for small rural enterprises and

making land available for these enterprises and / or small industrial units should be a priority.

Transformation of public transport and inter-community connectivity is necessary.

A new, interventionist and community supported form of land management is required to deliver greater volumes of renewable resources for the benefit of biodiversity, capturing carbon and the community. The rural landscape is under-

utilised, under-managed and less biodiverse than its true potential. Sheep grazing and stalking limits biodiversity and prevents creation of woodland assets. There is potential at lower levels to cultivate areas for vegetable and fruit production.





T A R B E R T

Investigating Scotland's Bio-economy

CONTENTS

CASE STUDY 01 - TARBERT

1.1 INTRODUCTION
Coastal Communities

1.2 CASE STUDY OVERVIEW
Description Of Bioregion

1.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1.4 ENABLING CONDITIONS

1.5 IMPEDING FACTORS

1.6 RECOMMENDATIONS



COASTAL COMMUNITIES

Tarbert is a small town in Argyll and Bute, situated on the mainland but sharing many of the issues faced by island communities in the region. It faces eastward onto Loch Fyne, a sea loch which begins on the western side of the Isle of Arran and runs inland northward. Tarbert is an important local centre as well as an access point to the Kintyre peninsula thanks to a car ferry running from the town across Loch Fyne to Portavadie, allowing access to the nearby island of Bute and eventually to Glasgow. Although it has a population only slightly above 1000 people, Tarbert is classed as a remote village that functions as a centre for local services and as a tourist destination. It does though have fewer jobs than the Scottish average for its size, making it an interesting study in how to tackle such difference using the region's own potential over reliance on visitors and external investment.

Tarbert is not considered to be one of the main small towns of Argyll and Bute, with both Oban to the north and Campbeltown to the south being larger. It is typical of a number of small towns on Scotland's west coast that grew up around the sea and fishing trade but remain difficult to access by land. The region is best known internationally for its seafood export businesses, including Loch Fyne kippers, but struggles economically in other areas due to its relative isolation. This makes Tarbert a prime case study for intervention and recontextualisation within a bioregion.

DESCRIPTION OF BIOREGION

Tarbert dates back to at least the 1300s when its castle was first constructed, but has been a centre of population and activity for much longer. It lies in a small inlet off of Loch Fyne, East Loch Tarbert, with the town running around the bay in a style common to other Scottish port towns. The harbour at Tarbert is tidal and so cannot be used by larger vessels at low tide, but fishing boats and the local Caledonian Macbrayne ferry dock further down the harbourfront. There

is also a further pier suitable for larger vessels which serves pleasure cruises and charters, making the town a destination for daytrippers.

More recently a marina for private sailing and cruisers has been constructed in the middle of the bay, attracting money to the town. The main A83 road runs along the back of the town and along its waterfront, forming a stop on long distance coach services and the main artery for people travelling from the island of Jura and Islay to Glasgow.

The local landscape is characterised by low, open hillsides and the back of the town rises slightly to a summit that separates East Loch Tarbert from the much larger West Loch Tarbert on the Atlantic side of the Kintyre peninsula. The name Tarbert is an English transliteration of a Gaelic term for crossing or transit point, found in many places across Scotland where a short strip of land separates two bodies of water. The narrow size of the Tarbert crossing gave it historical significance, functioning as a portage point but also as an obstacle to people travelling up and down the Kintyre peninsula. All traffic from the Mull of Kintyre northward passes through the town. This has contributed to the general development of Tarbert as an important point for the local service sector with GP surgeries, a local secondary school (Tarbert Academy) with attached primary school, and a small supermarket along with other stores meeting local needs. Tarbert is also at the start of the Kintyre Way, an 87 mile (140km) long distance walking route.

Fishing has always been an important component of the local economy, but as elsewhere has been hit by the prevalence of large scale trawling. The fishing industry is increasingly linked to the tourist industry as demand for local products with Loch Fyne origin grows, but overall catch numbers are small. In the past there had been a sizeable herring industry. Boats registered to Tarbet carry a 'TT' registration and generally fish within a day's sailing of the port due to their limited size,

CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

POPULATION

1,179

Population (2010-based
Settlement Estimates)

603

Number of Households

landing fresh catches. Nevertheless, fish landed in Tarbert carry the local brand and provide a valuable commodity for local restaurants and shops.

Land around Tarbert is a mixture of forest and open moorland, with the trees consisting largely of sitka spruce on plantations and clusters of older natural forest. The hills are important local aquifers and provide groundwater for the local population. The Forestry Commission already have trails to encourage tourists to access their land on both sides of East and West Loch Tarbert. North of Tarbert beavers have been reintroduced to Knapdale forest, but they have not spread further towards the town.

Employment at present is relatively stable, with 75 per cent of those in work in full time jobs (i.e. non seasonal), but only ten per cent work in professional or managerial roles. There are also an abnormally high number of people with no educational qualification at all, at 30 per cent. This is similar to post industrial towns such as Harthill in North Lanarkshire. Overall deprivation levels are slightly lower than in urban Scotland, but Tarbert is still more deprived than towns of a similar size elsewhere in the country.

Large-scale environmental investment in Tarbert is low but the Tarbert and Skipness community trust has succeeded in attracting some funding, including Climate Challenge Fund money, as part of its 'Big Green Tarbert' programme. This initiative is now over but has sought to increase interest in local produce and stimulate the local economy. Importantly the Tarbert and Skipness Community Trust have undergone a detailed community planning process; the community plan was recently reviewed in November 2015 and this plan will

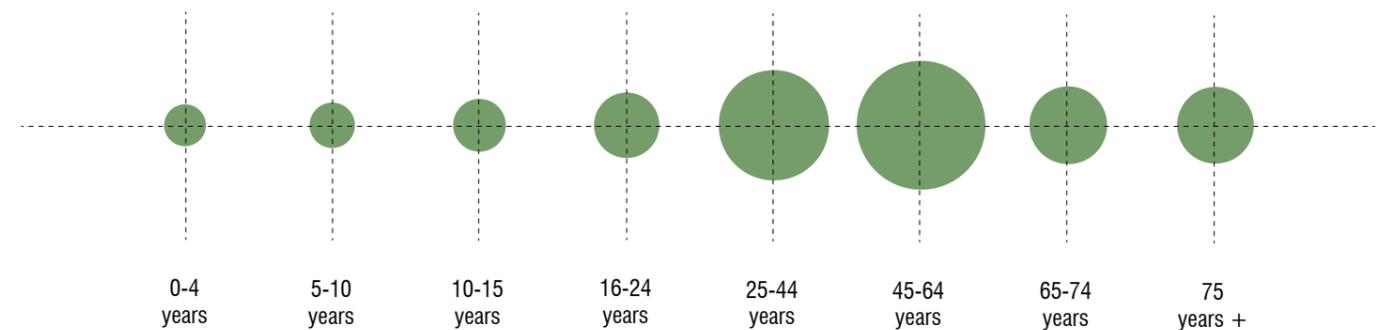
set the stage for further community developments in the next five years.

Tarbert Harbour Trust, founded in 1912, manages the harbour and secured £500,000 in funding from the Coastal Communities Fund to upgrade a harbour pontoon. This is the first stage in significant upgrades to the harbour, which include new shower, toilet and laundry facilities and a new visitor and heritage centre.

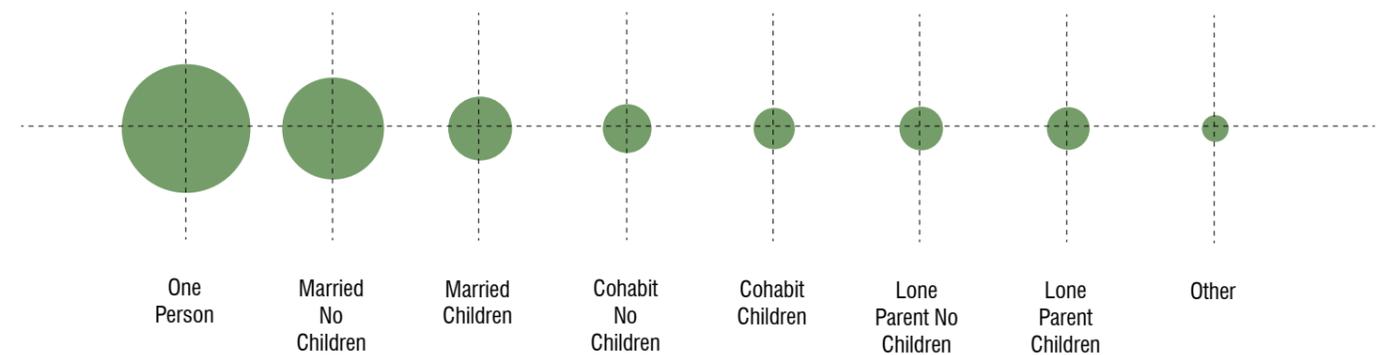
Travel time to Tarbert is still slower than to some islands, with no nearby rail links. Despite being only 46 miles from Glasgow, Tarbert is over three hours by car or public transport from the city.

Sron Doire wind farm is a community owned wind farm financed through the Renewable Energy Investment Fund. The turbine, named "The Dooker", went live in October 2015. The windfarm was funded by a Renewable Energy Investment Fund loan (a Scottish Enterprise / Scottish Investment Bank loan). The Tarbert and Skipness Community Trust have also taken control of Tarbert Castle. The trust have a whole range of strategic objectives and their current projects include developing the Claonaig Bunkhouse, creating a heritage project in partnership with Tarbert Harbour Authority, developing the local White Shore Path and utilising the Old Tarbert Library for local people. The community is actively and strategically engaged in managing its future sustainably. In November 2015 the Tarbert and Skipness Community Trust had their annual planning meeting which was well attended and there is a will in the local community to change the village on economically and environmentally innovative ways.

Demographics Population Age



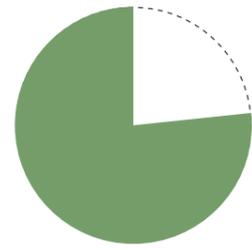
Demographics Household Composition



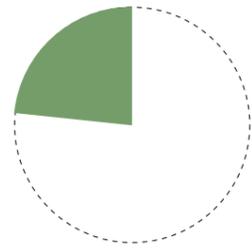
Sources:

- <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/info/population-where-we-live>
- <http://www.usp.scot/Town?mainTownName=oban>

EMPLOYMENT

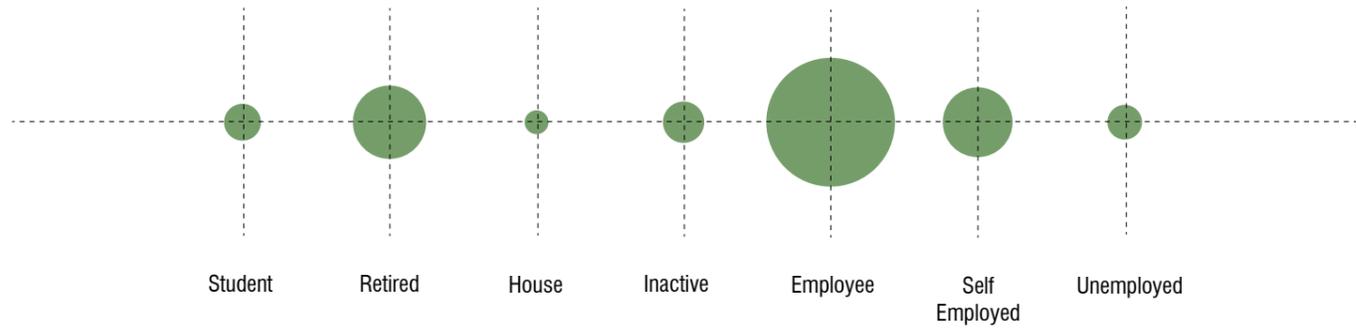


Full Time Employment
76.7%

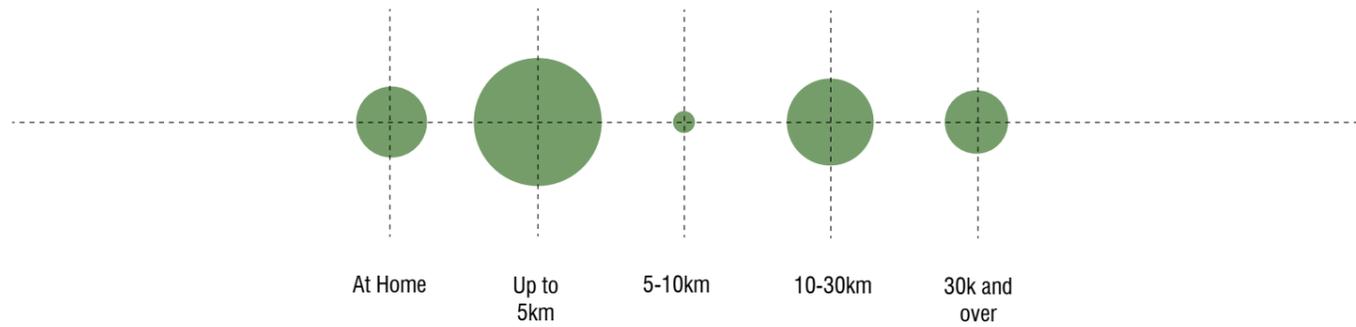


Part Time Employment
23.3%

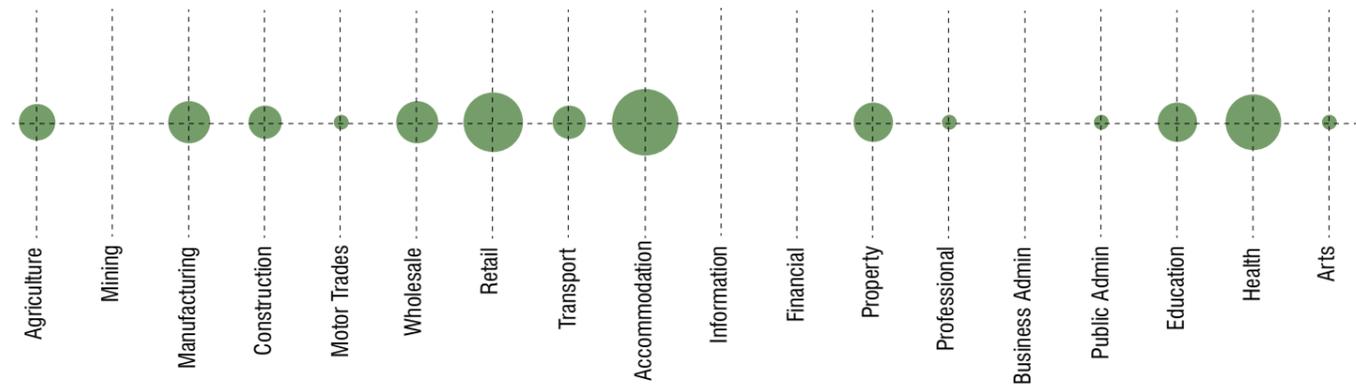
Employment Occupation (aged 16-74)



Employment Distance to Work



Employment Distance to Work



Sources:

1. <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/info/population-where-we-live>
2. <http://www.usp.scot/Town?mainTownName=oban>



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

“ People commute across the Clyde (not just in Tarbert) to fish and work because there is no affordable housing for families in the region.”

Interview with Chair of Tarbert Development Trust Bob Chicken.

Loss of population is the biggest issue. There is a lack of government action on this so we are left picking up the pieces. As far as I'm aware No other part of the UK, even in Scotland, is as bad as Argyll and Bute. Lack of jobs, poor infrastructure; inappropriately sized housing and poor services are the key issues creating this falling population.

We have a number of voluntary groups. Tarbert is a lovely place. Clearly we feel it should attract more visitors, so we've grown from three festivals to seven or eight and made major improvements to the village centre and harbour. We also need to develop a more diverse economy. We developed the community plan five years ago and we want to make it a living plan.

One of the key areas is business development, but engaging with local businesses is hard going. What we need is to get businesses working together and build a marketing plan for the area. A small number of businesses are very enthusiastic but with others it's like pulling teeth.

The Castle as a community owned site is very successful. The Harbour Trust is another community organisation. The

Harbour Trust together with the Community Council and Community Trust have expanded the leisure side of the harbour and there are now 50% more berths in the marina, creating new areas for tourism.

One of the bigger problems is careers and jobs. One of our biggest exports is young people. Fishing is in decline at the moment. It used to employ young men straight from school. New legislation is likely to make it even worse with the new Marine Protected Areas. The Clyde Fishermen's Association and the Scottish Government had an agreement over fishing areas and boundaries for the protected areas, but there has been pressure from environmental lobbies to extend the protected areas to restrict dredging and trawling. But there's been no socio-economic study. The analysis so far has focussed on how many fishing jobs will be lost, not the wider socio-economic impacts.

Affordable housing for the families is also a problem. People commute across the Clyde (not just in Tarbert) to fish and work because there is no affordable housing for families in the region. Housing associations are not building three and four bedroom houses. The big four bedroom houses in Tarbert are often left to family when older owners move on or die. But the families don't necessarily want to live in Tarbert. They can either rent it locally or rent it as a holiday home. The taxation

is much stricter for private rental to locals than holiday lets, so families tend to go down the holiday home route rather than local rental. I moved away for a while and rented our house as a holiday cottage and as a domestic let. We made more money in renting our house as a holiday home for six months of the year renting it locally for the whole year. There is a need for affordable three and even four bed houses. There is new affordable housing but all the new ones are two bedroom not three bedroom houses. The Tarbert Community Trust is considering this.

The Trust have bought shares in a local windfarm. A 1/12th share should bring us £30,000-£40,000 per annum after the loan is paid off. We also receive community benefit from other wind turbines of £22,000 per annum. For families this can be a very remote place to get services and it's a slow road especially with the A83 Rest and Be Thankful being shut so often. We're two and a half hours from Glasgow. Maternity (ultra-sound screening) and kidney dialysis have been taken from Campbeltown and centralised in the Glasgow area. It's too far to travel three or four times a week for dialysis and there are many people in Campbeltown who need it.

We're trying to develop walks. The Kintyre Way is the only community managed long distance walk, but it struggles with funding for it. Funds come from the local authority, the

Coast Community Fund and windfarms, but they are always struggling for money. Somehow they pull it off.

Tarbert is a tourism economy. The Trust wants to build on that but also to diversify into other areas. We need better broadband and mobile, as we want people to be able to conduct internet business from the area (modern crafting). We are still trying to get Vodafone to sort out the mobile network.

There is very little crofting because there never has been any crofting. Now modern day crofting is people running craft industries and small businesses from their own homes. BUT we need transport, communications and fair prices. We are charged 5-15% more for our electricity in Rural Areas compared to more urban areas. The Trust is pursuing communal fuel purchasing. We did this with business usage of LPG in the 90's. There are very few with solar power. Some people have biomass but boilers are very very expensive. They have transport costs on top for installation. The Trust is all volunteer run. There are a number of retired people with skills and enough younger people with families who are motivated to make this reasonably effective. Big Green Tarbert was run a few years ago. It had some effect. It ran for two years increasing energy efficiency in homes, it worked reasonably well but it was sometimes difficult to get people to sign-up for it.

The trust is also doing a feasibility study on a bunkhouse in Skipness. There's a bunkhouse in Campbeltown that's operated with door entry codes and it's unmanned. We're thinking of doing something like that.

We're trying to make the Kintyre Way, indeed the whole area, more cycle friendly. There is a kayak school. It's more a part time business at the moment but is having some success and looks like it could take off. They work very closely with the West Loch Shores holiday park. We are currently looking at developing a 6 mile walk around the village which takes in the West Loch Tarbert community. If you want you walk from the park to the village you have to go on the main A83 which has no path at the moment.

Our biggest project is to get a community hub to employ people to assist the Trust with developing projects, offer advice and further improve community participation. We're trying to buy into the old library building. We're bidding now. For financing, the Growing Communities Fund could help until the windfarms funding comes in 2017. We're also talking to other village trusts including the Harbour Authority about sharing the use of the hub and its staff.

We're trying to find other long term jobs. Young people in

tertiary education only come back to Tarbert when they retire. For those who don't go to University, there aren't many opportunities. There is Argyll College, but it is very limited, although they try to accommodate the remote areas.

Some businesses support SVQ training locally rather than having to travel, we'd like to see more involved, but we don't have the infrastructure to support small businesses. We need a balance of service and light industry as well as the traditional industries of fishing, forestry and farming. We have so many projects going on now. It's difficult to maintain it. We always have to be aware that our progress relies on the enthusiasm of volunteers who have to fit this work in with their other priorities. We have to plan for that.

The Castle have their own Trust. They have done lots of work on it with landscaping and paths. They are doing archaeological work on it now. It's hooked people's imagination locally. They are now landscaping for short walks. That's how we see these things now – we kick start a project and then they go on. If we get it right Tarbert will have a great future. It's the ability to take a strategic view whilst grubbing around in the gutter for funding.

Even our Windfarm funding comes with rules and requirements

which does add to our workload and creates more workload. It is also the case that we are only one take-over away from losing this funding, if the new developer is not enthusiastic about community benefit. Some also stipulate that we can only save money for a short period of time. Some of the funding restricts us to 10% of income for administrations, so volunteers in the community have to do some of the administration as well as run the projects. Government organisations don't seem to trust communities to do things.

The cuts are making life very hard. Campbeltown want to provide kidney dialysis locally. The NHS have agreed to it, but the community have to pay for it. For the antenatal ultrasound the NHS have agreed to sort out local ultrasound, but it will be three years before they can staff it. And the Tarbert GP practice is doing ok but others in remote and rural Argyll are struggling to get GPs, but we are relatively lucky to have a good practice here in Tarbert.

We buy groceries at the Co-operative, the Fishermen's Co-operative and a small green grocer. There's Tesco Metros and bigger Co-ops in Campbeltown and Lochgilphead. It's not that far to Lochgilphead so that's where people tend to go.

The bus services aren't great. There are four a day to Glasgow

plus a local service to Lochgilphead, but the commuter bus has stopped to both towns (Campbeltown and Lochgilphead). I don't know what you would do if you wanted to work an eight hour day in either Campbeltown or Lochgilphead.

You just can't do an eight hour day in the town and live in Tarbert if you don't have a car. There is a plan to look at the feasibility of buying a community bus but that's unlikely to be employed for regular bus services.

ENABLING CONDITIONS

Tarbert has a history of community-led enterprise, shown by the management of the harbour, acquisition of the castle, development of the play area, and development of “the Dooker” wind turbine. This release of community capacity encourages further community-led enterprise, providing that volunteers are adequately supported and their endeavours are recognised. Participation in the regular community planning process means that a significant proportion are engaged and motivated to create a better future for the community, and see themselves as part of the process of change.

The community owned wind turbine will provide a significant financial income to the community once the debt is paid off.

There is a market for local fish production, supported by local restaurants and businesses. This is important to maintain credibility and to promote the globally recognised local brand. Tarbert is merely one community in the Loch Fyne region brand for seafood but an important port.

There are opportunities for wildlife tourism and to build on the “green” tourism image of Tarbert. Beavers in Knapdale provide one such opportunity.

Tarbert is well-placed to be a transport hub with its closeness to Kennacraig ferry terminal and Skipness for those going to Bute, Islay and Colonsay.

IMPENDING FACTORS

Historic over-fishing has led to the demise of most of Tarbert’s fishing potential. Nevertheless, Tarbert is still an active fishery and fishing is managed in line with government quotas.

Tarbert’s remoteness from Glasgow and lack of public transport are severe limiting factors for the development of the community.

Although there are a number of trades, employment in Tarbert in tourism and hospitality is seasonal and dependent on visitors.

Housing and infrastructure in Tarbert are major impediments to Tarbert becoming a carbon neutral community that uses renewable resources for its energy needs. Extensive retro-fitting of the housing stock is required to provide adequate insulation to reduce energy demand and to fit renewable energy heating systems.

Although there are Forestry Commission areas of land adjacent

to the community, there is a lack of local exploitation of the biofuel resource and management of forestry for the benefit of the local community. Further development of biofuels would need to be linked into overhaul of the housing stock.

Tarbert would benefit from longer term planning and is hampered by the lack of similar plans across the Argyll and Bute region.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Create a region-wide planning and community development process that addresses the strategic long term sustainability of all communities in Argyll and Bute. Successes and difficulties experienced in Tarbert should form a basis for extending planning processes.

Development of biofuels and forest resources for the local community is desirable. Integrated Amenity and diverse land management strategies are key to encouraging biodiversity and reducing impact.

Continue to promote the Loch Fyne brand as a guarantee of quality foods and extend the range of foods produced into fruits and vegetables and other meat products.

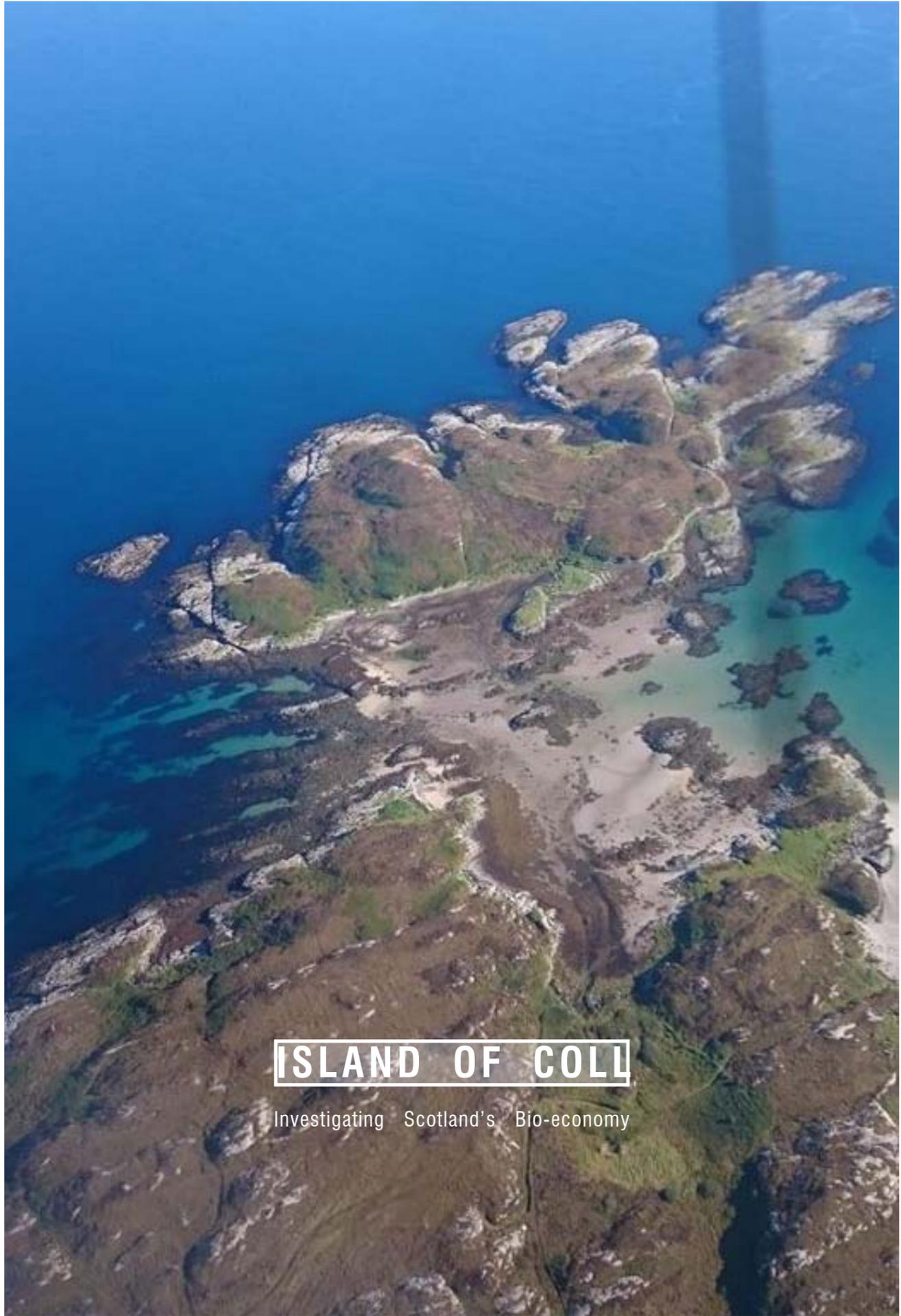
Increase and extend the range of local food production and investigate ways in which products produced in the supermarket food chain can be better integrated into local supply pathways, to increase local food consumption and reduce the travel miles associated with food purchasing in distant locations.

Continue community development of renewable energy resources, developing greater self-sufficiency and moving towards managing energy demand and supply at a community level..

As with the majority of communities in Argyll and Bute, the poor quality (in terms of energy efficiency) of housing stock and the lack of domestic installations of renewable technologies create significant challenges in addressing the needs for carbon emission reduction.

Land and fisheries management should focus on management strategies for sustainable renewable resource use (extracting only at the rate of replenishment) for local consumption or for income for the community as a whole and biodiversity management.





ISLAND OF COLL

Investigating Scotland's Bio-economy

CONTENTS

CASE STUDY 04 - ISLE OF COLL

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Urban Areas And Towns
Oban Background

1.2 CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

Description Of Bioregion

1.3 ENABLING CONDITIONS

1.4 IMPEDING FACTORS

1.5 RECOMMENDATIONS



ISLAND COMMUNITIES

Coll is an island located west of Mull in Scotland's Inner Hebrides, part of the local government area of Argyll and Bute. Known for its pristine coastline and open landscape of sand dunes, small clusters of houses and rocky high ground, it is one of the more remote of Scotland's inhabited islands in terms of accessibility. A long island covering 100 km sq of land at high tide, it shares many of the characteristics common to island communities on both Scotland's West Coast and in the Northern Isles, including limited access to services, land ownership issues and a sensitivity to population change.

Between 2001 and 2011 the population of Coll increased from 164 to 195, a change of 19%. Within the same time period the total number of resident households also increased but only by 9%. This has run counter to a population decline across smaller islands and makes Coll an interesting case study of where such communities have made decisions that have had an impact on economic and demographic trends. Like many islands in the West, Coll has also historically been part of the Gaelic language area. This further complicates development issues as understanding of local culture and the impact of outside influence and population can become a contentious question. This is another reason why Coll is illustrative of the wider developmental debates and conflicts in the west of Scotland.

DESCRIPTION OF BIOREGION

Coll is part of the larger archipelago of the inner Hebrides, and is defined largely, but not entirely, by its relationship with the sea. The main forms of economic activity on Coll and its neighbours relate to tourism, fishing and small scale agriculture and crofting.

The island is adjacent to the lower and flatter island of Tiree, running roughly parallel with the Great Glen fault line from south-west to north-east but further north. Coll and Tiree are

geologically similar to the Outer Hebrides and Isle of Skye. A raised ridge runs along the centre of the island, but the landscape is otherwise flat with development concentrated at the shoreline. The northern end of the island is slightly wilder in appearance, with moorland and a number of small ponds and bodies of water in bog habitats, known as Lochins.

The economic centre of Coll is Arinagour, a village located slightly inland of the main ferry pier where passengers and freight arrive from Oban. Coll is relatively low-lying and rocky, with sandy beaches and large areas of semi-farmed land. Cattle are allowed to roam, and the local farming industry and 'wild' ecosystem are more heavily integrated than elsewhere in Scotland.

The agricultural land of Coll and neighbouring Tiree is a prime feeding site for Barnacle Geese and Greenland White Fronted Geese. The island is largely treeless, though this is not a natural phenomenon and there is potential for reforestation as a means of increasing habitat diversity and as a carbon-neutral source of energy.

Land use and ownership on Coll is a contentious issue. One landowner is particularly dominant on the island and has attempted to establish a wind project to boost his income. This has included destruction of a local beach habitat without planning permission. This also creates challenges in planning for housing and attracting people to the island community.

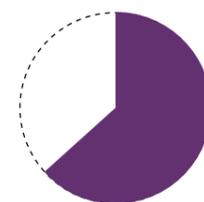
Coll has a number of other features of interest, including artificial islands or crannógs in its inland bodies of water. They are just one example of the mixed Norse and Celtic archaeological heritage found across Coll and neighbouring islands. Many sites still used today for housing, including the island's two castles, have histories of habitation stretching back many centuries.

Although a small island, Coll has its own airport with flights to



CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

HOUSING



87

No of active households on Coll



50

Unoccupied household spaces

19%

Coll population increase between 2001 and 2011

9%

Resident household increase between 2001 and 2011

91

No of resident households

53

No of non resident households

15

No of social houses on Coll

5

No of houses sold through Right to Buy

36%

Percentage of housing which are second homes

60%

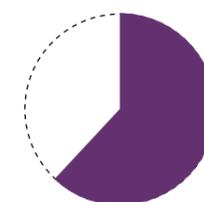
Population increase between 1981 and 2011

20

Households renting privately

20

No of house sales between 2006-2012



62%

Of 91 resident households % which were owner occupied



38%

Of 91 resident households % which were tenants



£164,350

Average sale price of house on Coll between 2006-2012

Oban. This is particularly useful when bad weather makes sea passage to the island difficult and functions as an emergency lifeline. The main means of transport in and out of Coll is the publicly run Caledonian MacBrayne ferry which calls five times a week. The ferry takes a total of 3 hours to go between Oban and Coll, whilst the airport is located 5 miles (8km) south west of Arinagour and can take small propeller aircraft. The relatively insecure transport links to the island means it that must be able to withstand shocks and periods of isolation, demonstrating a high level of resilience.

Despite the land ownership issues the island has a development trust, Coll Development, which has sought to open up the island to visitor and permanent residents alike. Coll has already developed An Cridhe ('The Heart'), a newbuild community centre. Among the current initiatives are a new bunkhouse (hostel) for visitors, increased mobile phone reception across the island and ongoing plans to develop low cost community housing. This has not been a straightforward process, but the potential for sustainable local development is large.

In the 2011 census, 50 homes on the island were classified as holiday homes, demonstrating the popularity of the island with visitors but also the challenges of housing the local population. For housing, Coll is ranked in the lowest 30% of communities in Scotland, due to the poor quality of the housing on the island.

The local primary school, which teaches in English, is situated in Arinagour and has thirty pupils, representing a significant proportion of the overall population. There is no secondary education available on Coll, with pupils having to travel to Oban and board.

Governance issues on and around Coll are complicated by the lack of coordination between various actors. The island belongs to the South Oban and the Isles council ward, sharing elected representatives with other local islands but also with the main urban centre on the mainland. Development requires negotiation between the local authority, powerful private landowners and the Crown Estate, who own the foreshore and are crucial to any marine development. This is particularly the case with developing moorings for pleasure craft and smaller boats that may wish to visit the island.

The waters around Coll are home to a diverse range of wildlife, including basking sharks, dolphins, porpoises, white-tailed Sea Eagles and many other species found across the Hebrides. The waters around Tiree and the western side of Coll have been under consideration as a Marine Protected Area (MPA) by the Scottish Government, which would limit development and marine activity deemed to be harmful to the local ecosystem.

Sources:

- <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/info/population-where-we-live>
- <http://www.usp.scot/Town?mainTownName=oban>

ENABLING CONDITIONS

The Marine Protected Area is beneficial for wildlife protection and biodiversity. This biodiversity is an asset for Coll.

Renewable energy resources, in particular wind energy, is abundant with capacity for community harnessing.

Development Coll's approach to inclusive community engagement and strategic planning. Through this planning process the community has already identified the need for local food production and an abattoir for local meat processing, improvements to inter-island transport, improvements in housing, community renewable energy and mobile phone coverage. Development Coll is active in building sustainable low cost housing, a new bunk house and promoting other community development activities.

The people on Coll are resilient and creative in "making do". Many have multiple forms of employment to secure a sufficient income.

IMPENDING FACTORS

Land ownership impedes community development, especially where a community feels threatened by unwanted commercial wind energy developments on the land with which they are intrinsically linked to in terms of cultural space and natural environment.

The housing stock needs significant investment and there is a lack of affordable housing and industrial units for residents wishing to start businesses. The number of holiday homes in the community forces up house prices and decreases housing availability for local residents, but does provide accommodation for visitors in the summer months. There is a lack of deployment of renewable energy technologies in properties for home heating.

There is a lack of community access to and development of renewable energy resources despite the wind project.

There is a total lack of forestry for wood fuel production.

The lack of inter-island and poor mainland connectivity is a significant impediment to development. Procurement of goods and services outwith the island (including veterinary and dentistry) require overnight stays. Secondary school students

have to lodge at their school (many are attend the secondary school in Oban). Life and enterprise on Coll is dependent on infrequent ferry services to Oban to access goods and services. Goods that are procured from the mainland (including petroleum fuels for heating and transport) incur an additional surcharge for transport to the island.

The lack of priority placed on carbon reduction risks activities that could benefit, not just the environment but also the community, may be missed.

The community is dependent on the public sector and tourism for employment.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Coll has a number of initiatives such as Recycoll, Coll Kids Club and Coll Seniors which are successful and require continued support. However, for the island the biggest problem is ensuring that the community remains sustainable and does not lose its identity as a place to live, work and play. This is currently under threat due to the rise of holiday homes, lack of investment in new housing stock for island residents and a lack of services to keep young people on the island or attract other young families.

A number of projects should be investigated which will improve “the long term sustainability of Coll by increasing confidence in the viability of life” on the island. Development Coll have already identified The first and most urgent priority is to deliver “affordable and social housing” for the island. This

would have a number of positive effects.

The improvement of transport links between Coll, Tiree and Mull is essential for sustaining the economy and life on Coll, but also the other islands too.

Communications need to be improved with commitment from a mobile phone provider for improved coverage on Coll

Community renewable energy, a need already identified by Development Coll, needs to be enacted.

Workshop and storage accommodation for small businesses and enterprises is also needed on Coll.





KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Investigating Scotland's Bio-economy

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

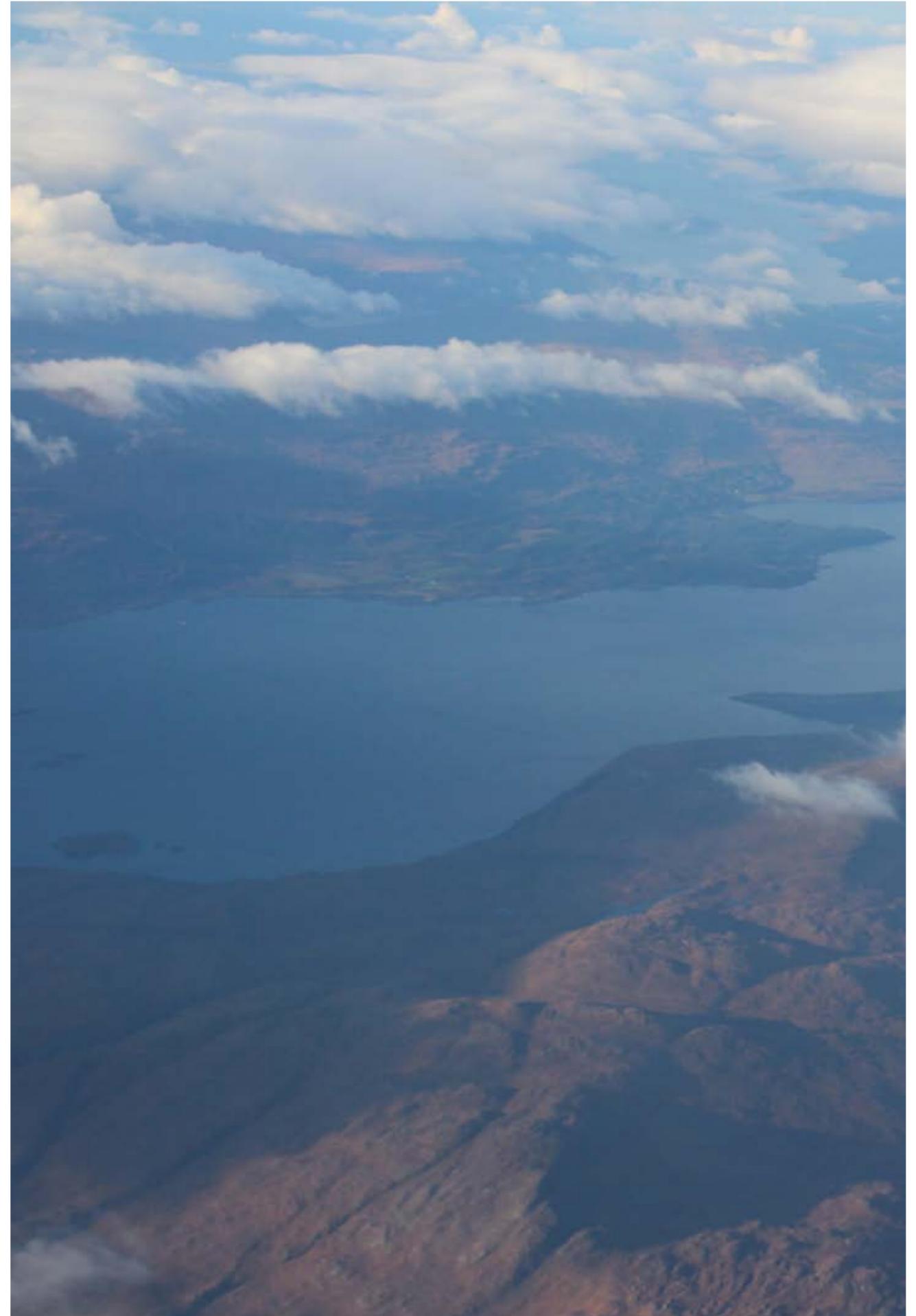
There were eight themes identified at the start of this project:

- Population
- Industry
- Food
- Forestry
- Military
- Renewable Energy
- Marine Activity
- Transport
- Community Empowerment

This project has investigated the needs, priorities, innovations and impediments to sustainability of four communities in Argyll and Bute: Dalmally, Tarbert, Oban and the Isle of Coll. Each community is geographically different, which has created a view of the multiple perspectives of the heterogeneity of life in the region. Nevertheless, comparison of the four communities has led to the identification of common issues, as well as place-specific problems. These recommendations from these four communities were originally intended to fit within the themes above. Due to the very nature of social practices, whereby a single practice spans many different domains of life and society, identifying recommendations specific to each theme has not been possible. Each recommendation below reflects the interconnectedness of the themes above and the holistic nature of community. Therefore, the next stage of this report is to identify how each of the recommendations cuts across these themes and the interconnectedness of the recommendations themselves.

Central to the recommendations is community-led decision-making, inclusive engagement and regeneration of communities by sustainable exploitation of the renewable resources available in the region. This means investing in new forms of community development that do not just rely on the volunteer effort of an altruistic few in each community. Labour invested in community development needs to be recognised and properly supported, so that more can engage and those that do participate can sustain their livelihoods.

The following are recommendations that have emerged from the analysis of four communities in Argyll and Bute: Dalmally, Tarbert, Oban and the Isle of Coll.

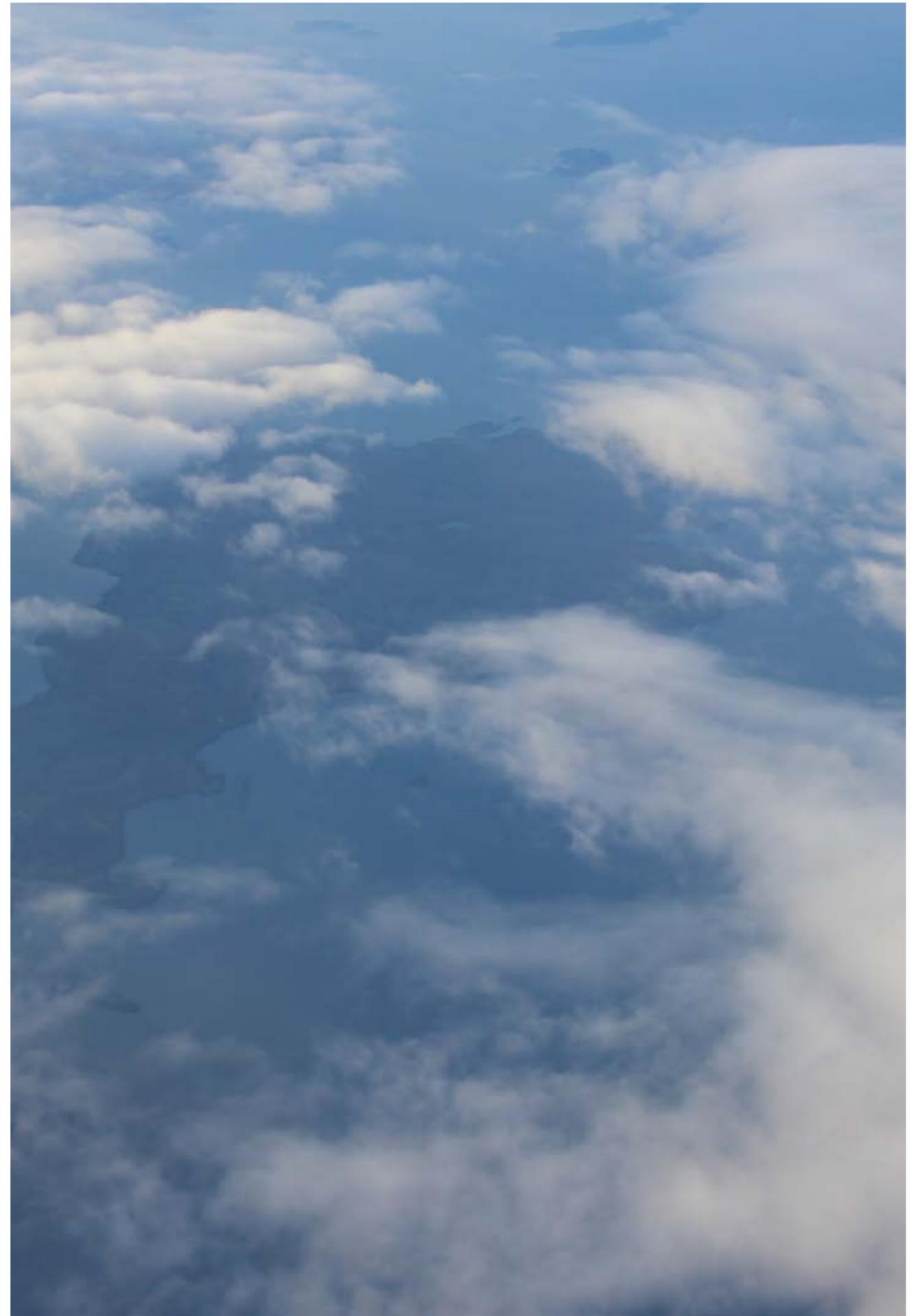


1. Create a region-wide planning and community development process that addresses the strategic long term sustainability of all communities in Argyll and Bute.

Argyll and Bute has not promoted community development planning for communities across the whole region. The Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park (the Park) has followed the STAR group's community futures programme to deliver community visions across the entire park area, but this does not encompass the whole of Argyll and Bute. Every community in the Park has a development trust and community council, which are supported by the Park's Community Partnership. This is a network led by and serves all the communities in the Park. A strong recommendation is to facilitate community-led strategic community visions and plans for a green and sustainable future for all communities across Argyll and Bute. Community groups will need support as well and will need a form of community network (perhaps similar to the Park's Community Partnership) to support development and share knowledge and experience. Out of the communities studied in this investigation, Tarbert and Coll are examples of community-led community development development (but there are likely to be other communities within the region). Successes and difficulties experienced in Tarbert and Coll should form a basis for extending community development and planning processes to other communities.

2. Build local food production to increase resilience, provide employment, reduce food poverty and reduce environmental impacts

Projects such as Lagganbuie in Dalmally and the permaculture garden in Strachur demonstrate that vegetable and fruit production is possible in the region. The labour cost of food production is not recompensed in the sale value of locally produced vegetables and this together with the risks of production and access to markets / retail distribution deters local small-holders and crofts from production. New forms of production incentives, trade and markets for small local producers need to be trialled and facilitated across the region. The range of local food production and ways in which products sold in the supermarket food chain can be better utilise local supply pathways needs to be increased and extended, to increase local food consumption and reduce the travel miles associated with food purchasing in distant locations.



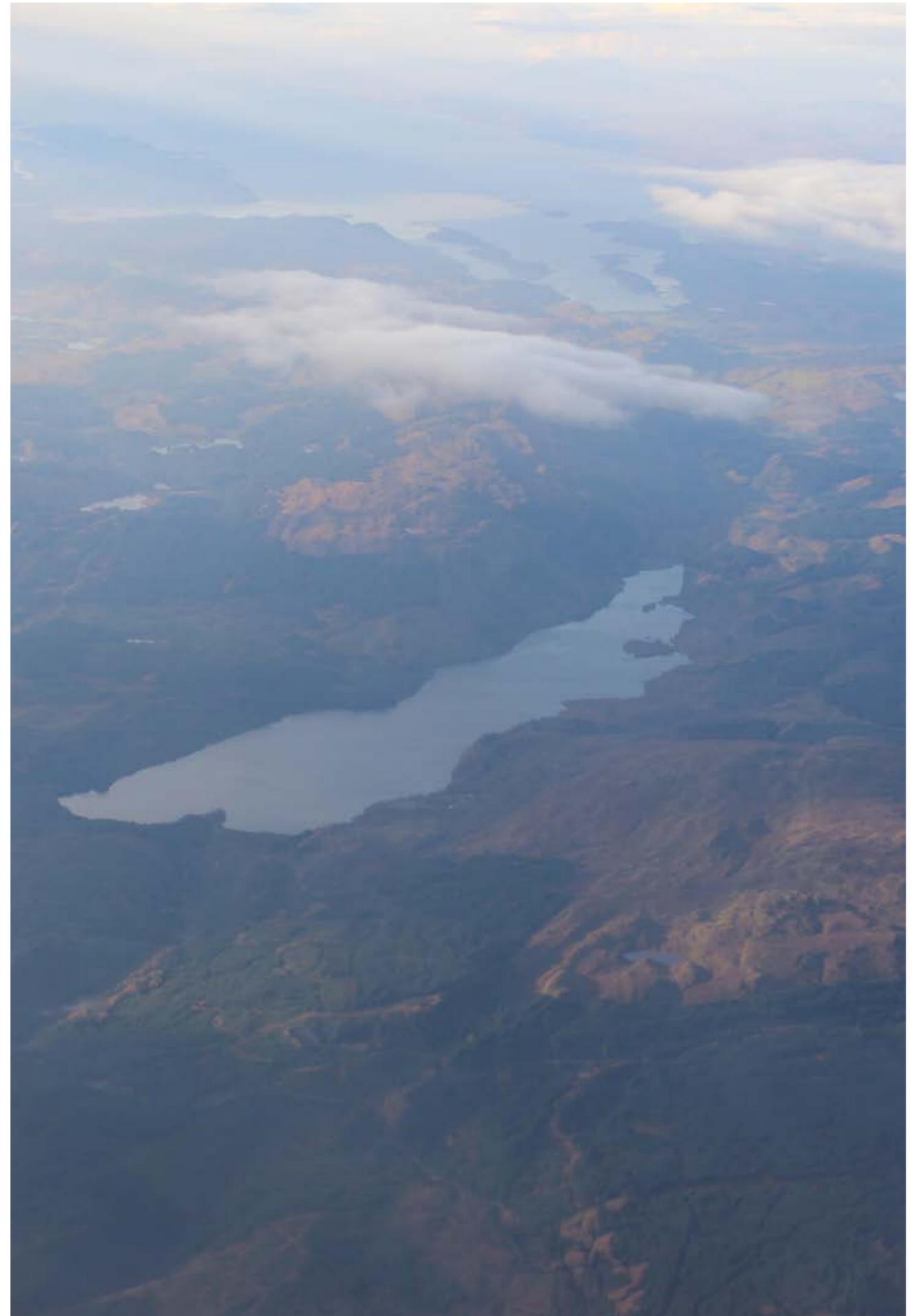
3. Land and fisheries management should focus on management strategies for sustainable renewable resource use (i.e. utilise only at the rate of replenishment) for local consumption or for income for the community as a whole and biodiversity management.

A detailed analysis of the potential for farm / small-holding / croft- scale sustainable, and preferably, organic agriculture should be undertaken, together with a strategy formulation for reducing dependence on remote supermarkets and the global food commodity supply chain.

Greater funding and support for small rural enterprises and making land available for these enterprises and / or small industrial units should be a priority.

4. Create bioregion and community-level land management strategies

There are competing land management interests with owners, who have multiple and varied objectives, and multiple stakeholders and land users, who also have multiple and varied experiences of and utilisation of the land. For a bioregion to be effective, it needs to incorporate the needs of all stakeholders and secure and develop the biodiverse and beautiful landscape, which also provides ecosystem services to the region. Those services may take the form of food production, biofuel production, landscape amenity, carbon capture and storage, fresh-water and renewable energy resources. There is a need for an overall perspective, evaluation and strategy for the rural landscape at present to balance these sometimes competing and sometimes complimentary needs.



5. Build a forest strategy that involves local communities in land management decisions and maintenance

Centralisation of the forest resource means that opportunities for local exploitation of biofuels and recreational amenity may be missed. Development of biofuels and forest resources for the local community is desirable, as it is an opportunity for communities to reduce their carbon impacts.

6. Promote local food networks and quality brands for the benefit of local communities, tourism and consumers across Scotland.

The Loch Fyne and Inverawe are brands, which guarantee quality foods. The range of foods associated with the quality of regional brands should be extended into fruits and vegetables and other meat products.

7. Achieve community renewable energy for all communities across the region to reduce carbon impacts and increase income and energy security

Community development of renewable energy resources is proven to facilitate community development. Community renewable energy should be integral to every community plan. Further technology developments for creating community energy supply companies to reduce fuel poverty needs investigation. The ideal is to develop greater self-sufficiency and move towards managing energy demand and supply at a community level.

8. Ensure commercial renewable energy developments protect the interests of rural communities and biodiversity and the benefits from these developments are fairly distributed to the communities that are affected

Ensure all (new and heritage) commercial renewable energy developments pay community benefits (compensation) at the Government's guideline rate of £5,000 per MW of installed capacity. Also, ensure that proper stakeholder engagement and in-depth community consultation and involvement in decision-making are central to the process of designing and awarding permission to commercial developments.



9. Achieve energy efficient housing for all properties in Argyll and Bute

The energy demand from housing must be reduced through retrofitting all properties to at least “C” standard for energy efficiency and with 100% implementation of renewable heating systems, together with extensive micro-renewable electricity generation. The poor quality (in terms of energy efficiency) of housing stock and the lack of domestic installations of renewable technologies create significant challenges in addressing the needs for carbon emission reduction. All new properties should be developed only with renewable energy heating systems and with BREEAM standards.

10. Invest in the built environment to address the needs for affordable housing and industrial units to enable the population to live and work throughout the region

Investment is needed to meet the demand for affordable housing by providing life-time housing solutions that meet BREEAM standards. Those living in rural communities need meaningful work and industrial units are essential to many who wish to manage their own enterprises. Nevertheless, all development need to be sustainable and should minimise the impact on, or even enhance, the environment and landscape amenity.

In some areas, especially scenic coastal communities up to 50% of the housing stock may be holiday homes. The

flux in and intermittent population decimates the community’s cohesion and ability for community enterprise, and severely depletes the availability of affordable housing in areas where locals tend to have relatively low paid and insecure or seasonal employment.

11. Enhance inter-island and mainland connectivity through low carbon transport solutions

Transformation of public transport and inter-community connectivity is necessary to reduce carbon emissions, make remote areas more accessible and improve quality of life.

12. Enable universal telecommunications connectivity across the region

To compete in the global economy and to facilitate remote rural living, all living in Argyll and Bute should have equal access to mobile and internet technologies.



13. Continue to pursue land reform to ensure that communities can realise their potential to develop sustainably

Many communities struggle with access to land to develop affordable and life-time housing, care homes, new economic enterprises, opportunities for employment and community renewable energy. Resolving injustices with property rights needs to be a priority for creating sustainable futures for rural communities.

14. Community engagement must be inclusive and encompass the needs of all

National statistics mask the diversity and inequality in rural communities, as is reflected in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation statistics for Oban. The needs of those who are deprived and / or socially excluded are easily missed and vulnerable groups may be less likely to engage in community processes or decision-making. Social injustice is persistent and present, albeit in different shapes and forms, in all communities studied.

15. Develop skills in green jobs, food production and sustainability

Difficulties in developing skills has been highlighted by the Community Partnership in their Skills Partnership project. Developing new skills and opportunities to use these skills

in lifelong employment will be an important for regenerating rural Scotland.

16. Create community-led management of marine resources

Tarbert Harbour Authority run Tarbert as a Trust Port. This model of community-led management and development of the harbour needs to be extended across coastal and inland ports across the region. This approach can apply not just to the marine, but also other shared resources (for example, the community-run leisure centre and cinema in Oban).

17. Maximise the biodiversity and natural resources of the bioregion

The marine biodiversity and resource base is such an asset for the region and this is demonstrated by the presence of the SAMS institute near Oban and the EMEC in Orkney. The potential for world-wide recognition is not just for tourism but also offers opportunities for employment and education. Developing a country where every child in Scotland understands the wealth of biodiversity is essential for creating responsible citizens. This needs to be supported by developing education facilities relating to resources within our land and seascapes of each bioregion.



REFERENCES

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/info/population-where-we-live>

<http://www.usp.scot/Town?mainTownName=oban>

ibid

<http://argyllcommunities.org/oban/files/2013/01/Oban-Community-Action-Plan1a.pdf>

<http://www.craftbutchers.co.uk/butchers/index.php?ID=47&town=OBAN&county=Argyll®ion=scotla>

Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (2012). Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. The Scottish Government, Edinburgh.

<http://www.usp.scot/Town?mainTownName=Fort+William&comparisonTownName=Oban>

<http://www.usp.scot/Town?mainTownName=Helensburgh>

<http://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/OurAreas/ArgyllandBute/Pages/ArgyllButeCHP.aspx>

www.breeam.com

Winther, A.M., 2014. Survive or Thrive: Creating Options for Sustainable Communities in Rural Scotland. PhD Thesis. Stirling University; Winther, A.M., Hogg, G., Smith, T., 2015. Fintry – Developing our Sustainable Community: Part I and Part II. Report for Fintry Development Trust. Glasgow: Lateral North.

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/695/council_information_performance_and_statistics/165/highland_profile_-_key_facts_and_figures

Development Coll; Growth Plan; 2011

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/biodiversity>

