

# Building rural futures – opportunities for action: *Island/rural proofing*

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*Leading the way in Agriculture and Rural Research, Education and Consulting*



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## Islands (Scotland) Bill

### About the Bill



The Islands (Scotland) Bill was introduced by the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity, Fergus Ewing MSP, on 9 June 2017.

A Bill for an Act of the Scottish Parliament to make provision for a national islands plan; to impose duties in relation to island communities on certain public authorities; to make provision about the electoral representation of island communities; and to establish a licensing scheme in respect of marine development adjacent to islands.

# Islands (Scotland) Bill: what's happening?



June 2017

Jan 2018

Feb 2018

tbh 2018

June 2018

Summer  
2018

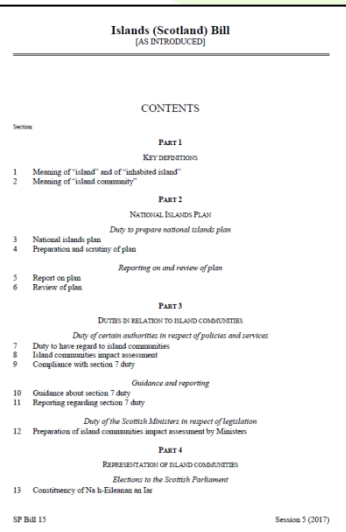
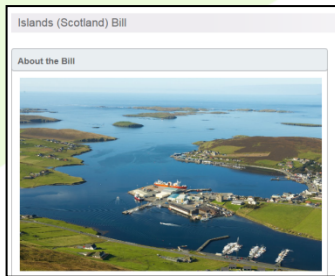
Summer  
2019

Stage 1  
Report

Stage 1  
debate

Stage 2  
scrutiny

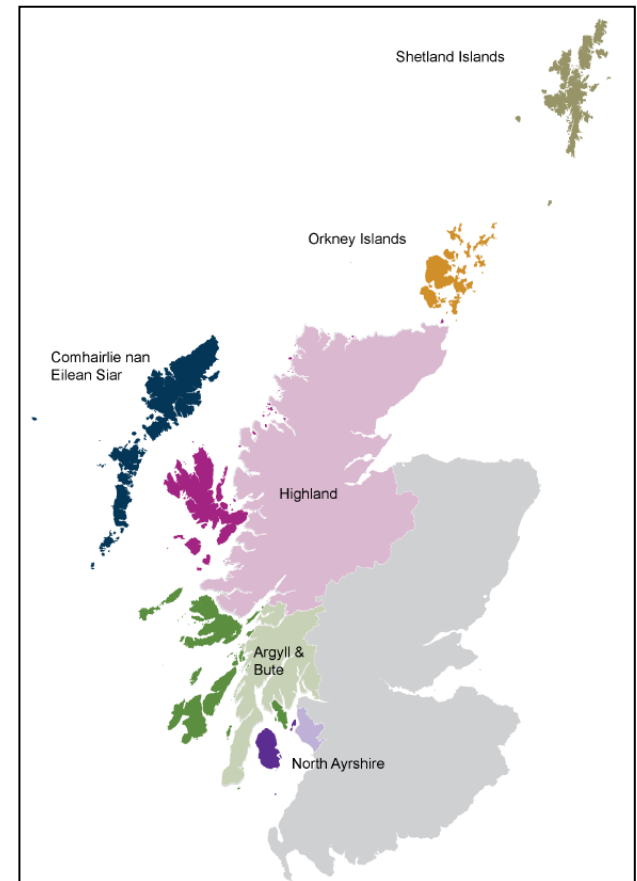
Stage 3  
debate



Royal  
Assent  
=> Act

Guidance

# Why do we need to keep an eye on the Islands (Scotland) Bill?



# The **Bill** itself



- “Island-proofing” = cornerstone
  - statutory **Duty** on Scottish Ministers and all other relevant public bodies to have regard to island communities in exercising their functions;
  - island communities **impact assessment**;
  - ensure that island communities **are not unreasonably disadvantaged** due to their location;
  - The Duty will apply to **66 public bodies** in Scotland whose functions and activities **can** impact on island communities.

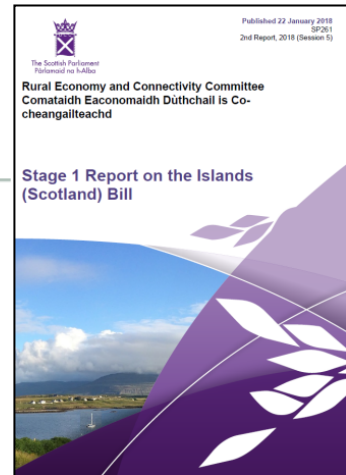
## SCHEDULE (introduced by section 7(2))

### DUTIES IN RELATION TO ISLAND COMMUNITIES: RELEVANT AUTHORITIES

<i>Scottish Administration</i>	<i>Health Boards (incl. Special Health Boards)</i>
1 Scottish Ministers	37 Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service
2 Keeper of the Records of Scotland	38 Healthcare Improvement Scotland
3 Keeper of the Registers of Scotland	39 NHS 24
4 Registrar General of Births, Deaths and Marriages for Scotland	40 NHS Ayrshire and Arran
	41 NHS Education for Scotland
	42 NHS Health Scotland
<i>Scottish public authorities with mixed functions or no reserved functions</i>	
5 Accounts Commission for Scotland	43 NHS Highland
6 Audit Scotland	44 NHS National Waiting Times Centre
7 Bòrd na Gàidhlig	45 NHS Orkney
8 Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (company number SC001854)	46 NHS Shetland
9 Children's Hearings Scotland	47 NHS Western Isles
10 Creative Scotland	48 Scottish Ambulance Service
11 Crofting Commission	49 State Hospitals Board for Scotland
12 Crown Estate Scotland (Interim Management)	
13 David MacBrayne Limited (company number SC015304)	<i>Integration Joint Boards</i>
14 Highlands and Islands Airports Limited (company number SC097647)	50 Argyll and Bute
15 Highlands and Islands Enterprise	51 Highland
16 Historic Environment Scotland	52 North Ayrshire
17 Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland	53 Orkney Islands
18 Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland	54 Shetland Islands
19 Scottish Children's Reporter Administration	55 Western Isles
20 Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service	
21 Scottish Enterprise	<i>Local Government</i>
22 Scottish Environment Protection Agency	56 Argyll and Bute Council
23 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	57 Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
24 Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council	58 Highland Council
25 Scottish Housing Regulator	59 North Ayrshire Council
26 Scottish Land Commission	60 Orkney Council
27 Scottish Legal Aid Board	61 Shetland Council
28 Scottish Natural Heritage	
29 Scottish Police Authority	<i>Regional Colleges</i>
30 Scottish Qualifications Authority	62 Ayrshire Regional College
31 Scottish Social Services Council	63 University of the Highlands and Islands
32 Scottish Sports Council	
33 Scottish Water	<i>Regional Transport Partnerships</i>
34 Skills Development Scotland Co. Ltd (company number SC202659)	64 Highlands and Islands Regional Transport Partnership
35 Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland	65 Shetland Regional Transport Partnership
36 VisitScotland	66 Strathclyde Regional Transport Partnership

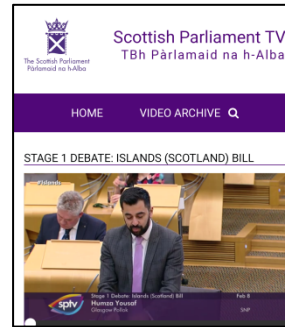
# Stage 1 Committee Report

- **60+ Recommendations**
- **Need to state overall Purpose of Bill:**
  - 1 or 2 high-level objectives to give greater focus
  - How aims to deliver equity and sustainability for islands
- **Review definitions** (including “uninhabited island”)
- **Islands Plan:** strategic, practical, reflecting islanders’ views – including focus on young people
  - Creation of local authority level islands plans as a statutory requirement
  - Build community capacity to take advantage of Bill
  - Clear outcomes, targets and measurable indicators
  - Progress: islanders’ views + Committee scrutiny
- **“Island-proofing” and/or Islands Impact Assessments?**
  - There’s a difference between the two; need culture-change not tick-box
  - Mitigation not just impact assessment
  - Evidence-base: “some data sources do not accurately reflect island life”... So?
  - *Retrospective* island assessments: where significantly detrimental impact on island communities
- **Remote and rural mainland areas:**
  - “There is a very good argument to be made around some areas of the periphery of the mainland that face many of the same challenges as island communities” (Humza Yousaf, 08.11.17)





# Stage 1 Debate – some key points:




- Need a **purpose statement – ambition...**
  - Islands are seeking equity not special treatment; Equalities + Human Rights
  - Inhabited AND uninhabited islands (changes over time)
- Interchangeable use in Bill of “island-proofing” and Islands Impact Assessment = not the same in terms of **action**
  - Careful that Bill matches expectations, otherwise disappointment;
  - Lack of finance for Bill...
  - Practical difference from Bill?
- An **“enabling Bill for future action”**
  - Islands Community Impact Assessment process: capacity?
- **Retrospective application** of island-proofing, e.g. fuel poverty?
- Plus **remote and rural mainland** areas:
  - Don't want to see elevation of islands at expense of remote rural; not “them against them”.
  - Policies should not be “territorially-blind”
  - “Rural communities should consider island proofing as a great opportunity. If the Islands (Scotland) Bill is passed ... and island proofing is successful in its implementation ... there is no reason why the Government should not look at that success and consider whether we want to explore that approach for rural Scotland as well.” [Humza Yousaf, 08.11.17, re-quoted by Gail Ross MSP]

<https://www.theyworkforyou.com/sp/?id=2018-02-08.22.0>

# Quote from Stage 1 Debate...

- “We talk about remoteness, but the islands are not so much remote from Edinburgh, as Edinburgh and London are remote from the islands. That is why the term “island proofing”, which has been used frequently in the debate, is so important...” Kate Forbes MSP

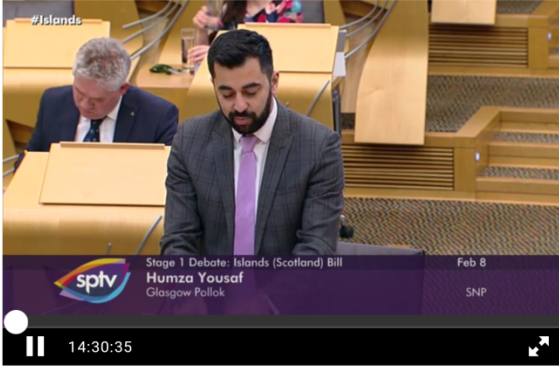


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STAGE 1 DEBATE: ISLANDS (SCOTLAND) BILL



About This Meeting

Clip And Share

Stage 1 Debate: Islands  
(Scotland) Bill

February 08, 2018 14:30



# Island-proofing and rural-proofing?

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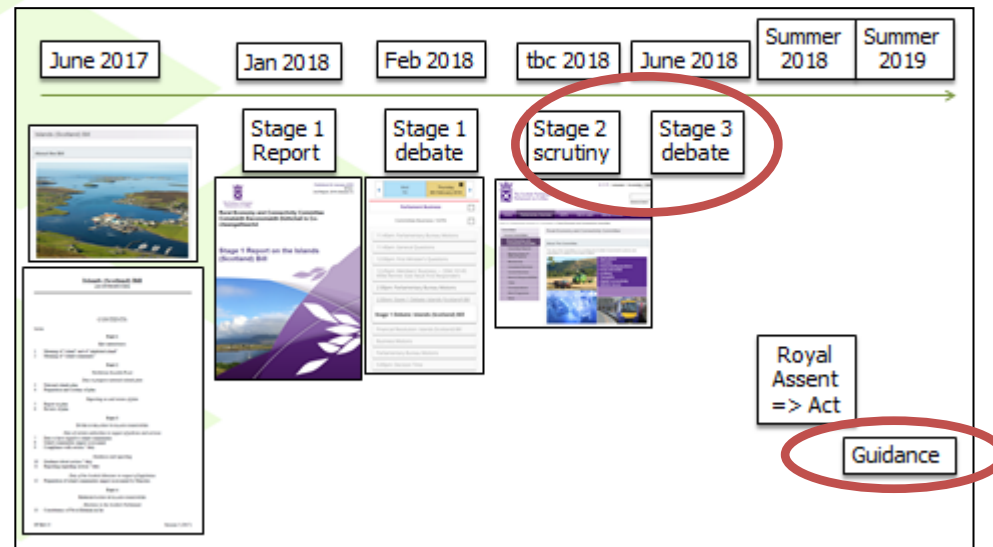


- Building rural futures – opportunities for action:
  - There will be commitments...
  - Momentum is gathering, for island *and* coastal rural areas
- Opportunities to engage in the process -> ->

# The remainder of the process:



- **Stage 2:** REC Committee further Scrutiny & Evidence – amendments...
- **Stage 3:** Chamber Debate with further amendments...
- **Guidance development:** Input, support, shaping?

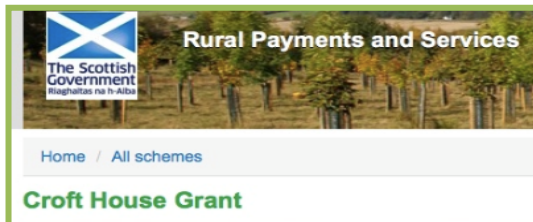


# Rural economy: preparing for the future



- **Repopulating and empowering Scotland's rural, coastal and island communities:**
  - Rural Skills Action Plan (2018); increase rural housing stock; 100% access to superfast broadband; low carbon technologies; attract more people into farming; maximise potential from modern approach to crofting;
  - Islands Bill and Crown Estate Bill

Rural Housing Fund launches



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