



# **Argyll and Bute: A good place to live, work and play?**

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**Local report on the consultation within Bute and Cowal  
Area**

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## SUMMARY

This is a report on the recent consultation by the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) in Argyll and Bute designed to identify priorities at local level and inform the Delivery Plans of the ten-year Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2013-23. This consultation was undertaken across Argyll and Bute, however, the focus of this report is on findings within the Bute and Cowal area.

The Argyll and Bute wide report is available online<sup>1</sup>

Recent census data demonstrated that the population of Argyll and Bute had declined by 3.4%. Population change within Bute and Cowal is -4.8% with significant local variation. It is recognised that for Argyll and Bute to become more prosperous tackling this population decline and cultivating an environment where the economy can thrive are of the highest importance. Attentive to these themes the CPP has agreed the overarching outcome for the SOA: 'Argyll and Bute's economic success is built on a growing population'.

The consultation was entitled: **Argyll and Bute - A Good Place to Live, Work and Play?** and comprised an online survey and 15 events across Argyll and Bute, with three held in the Bute and Cowal area.

The findings in Bute and Cowal highlighted the need to focus on employment, housing, land ownership issues, transport links, more support for small business, encouraging growth in high income tourism and developing improved internet and mobile connections.

Suggestions include placing a target on desired population within Bute and Cowal (and the wider Argyll and Bute) and the alignment of services to support this growth, a focus on finding a long term solution to the issues of the A83 and connectivity more generally, enhancing support to small and or emerging businesses and raising the rate of broadband internet roll out across Bute and Cowal

The data from this and the full Argyll and Bute wide report will feed into the strategic Population Summit to be held later this year, to consider ways of addressing the population decline in Argyll and Bute.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/good-place-live-work-and-play>

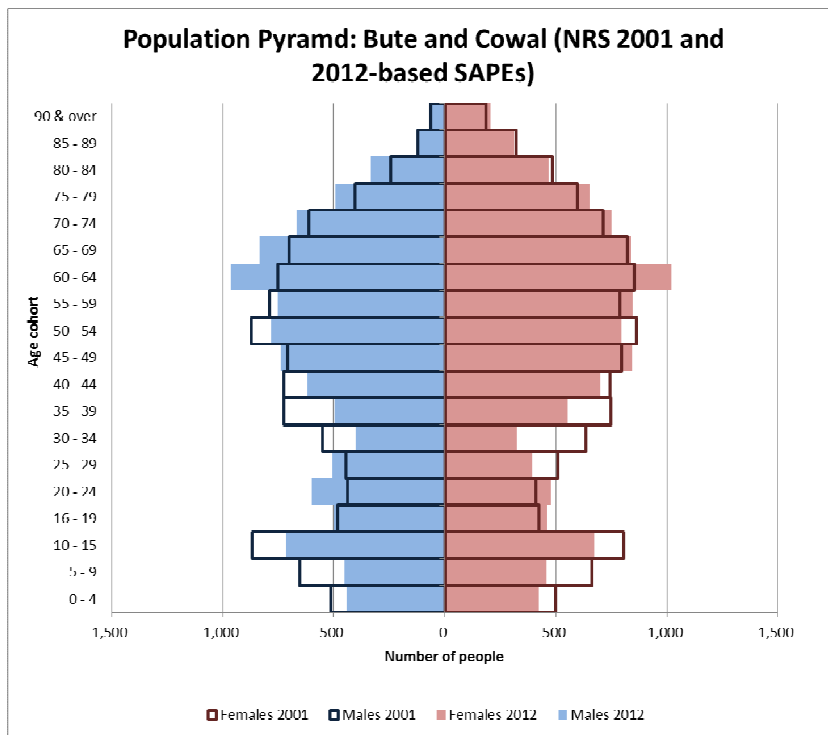
## BACKGROUND

In August 2012 Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership agreed to annual consultations on the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) to ensure communities had a say in how the Partnership can achieve its outcomes.

The figures from the census of 2011 were published and highlighted Argyll and Bute as the highest area in terms of percentage population decline, and this was seen as the greatest challenge for all community planning partners. The 2011 census shows the population of Argyll and Bute was 88,166 which is a 3.4 percentage drop from 2001 when the figure was 91,306.

Total population change within Bute and Cowal: 2001 to 2011 (2001 and 2011 Census)

### Population changes in Bute and Cowal



### Population changes 2001 to 2012 in Bute and Cowal

Bute and Cowal	Number of people		Percentage change 2001 to 2012	Proportion of age cohort within total population (%)	
	2001	2012		2001	2012
Age cohort	2001	2012		2001	2012
0-15	3,998	3,103	-22.4	17.8	14.6
16-24	1,756	1,864	6.2	7.8	8.8
25-44	5,079	3,839	-24.4	22.6	18.1
45-64	6,419	6,565	2.3	28.5	30.9
65-74	2,850	3,217	12.9	12.7	15.2

75+	2,421	2,630	8.6	10.7	12.4
Total population	22,523	21,218	-5.8	100.0	100.0

Argyll and Bute is one of only four out of 32 local authorities across Scotland that has seen a decline in population.

In August 2013, the first stage of Argyll and Bute's Single Outcome Agreement was approved by the Scottish Government. This included:

Principal outcome:

**“Argyll and Bute’s economy is based on a growing population”**

To achieve the principal outcome a set of supporting long-term outcomes were agreed:

- 1. The economy is diverse and thriving**
- 2. We have an infrastructure that supports sustainable growth**
- 3. Education, skills and training maximises opportunities for all**
- 4. Children and young people have the best possible start**
- 5. People live active, healthier and independent lives**
- 6. People live in safer and stronger communities**

In order to achieve these outcomes, a delivery plan has been developed for each of the six outcomes.

The community consultation was designed to inform the content of delivery plans for each of these outcomes in addition to contributing to setting and achieving localised outcomes.

A parallel online survey was undertaken with over 500 responses across Argyll and Bute, including 148 from Bute and Cowal. The data has not been analysed at a local level but some details can be found in the full Argyll and Bute report.

In addition, a Youth Consultation was undertaken on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of November 2013 by Argyll and Bute Youth Forum, attended by 50 young people, including 9 from Bute and 10 from Cowal.

Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership is grateful to Education Scotland for its support in part-funding this consultation process, which in turn will feed into the strategic guidance on Community Learning and Development.

## WORKSHOP FINDINGS

### Introduction

Many of the Argyll and Bute wide issues were picked up within the Bute and Cowal consultation.

Noteworthy comments include a desire for the SOA to consider a specific target population; to implement programmes to encourage growth; and to consider the impact this may have in planning service provision. For example certain areas could be targeted for growth with local initiatives designed to encourage inbound mobility such as a multi-layered approach to housing, targeted small business support, and developing appropriate infrastructure. It was noted at some workshops that other rural areas in Scotland were experiencing growth (for example Western Isles) in population and a suggestion was to learn from their experiences where appropriate.

A brief description of the main headlines from the Argyll and Bute wide perspective followed by detail on local issues and priorities within the Bute and Cowal consultation follows. Potential solutions to the topics and issues raised are based on participants views and comments put forward at workshop and Question Time events.

### ***Outcome 1 - The economy is diverse and thriving***

#### Argyll and Bute

Four main issues were raised in the Outcome 1 workshops:

- Enabling (small) businesses / start-ups
- Promoting Argyll and Bute
- Housing
- Land ownership

#### Bute and Cowal

Key areas raised in Bute and Cowal were around the economy, support for small business and land ownership issues.

Topic raised	Issue discussed	Potential solutions raised as part of engagement process
Marketing	Need to improve marketing of area	Set up marketing project
Small Business Development	Small Business Support, lack of premises Infrastructure	More Targeted support at early stages, more affordable business units in key localities
Employment	Farming	Initiatives to support these areas
Employment	Tourism	Promote high end tourism
Employment	Income Deprivation	Adopt Living Wage across CPP partners
Land Ownership	Control of land	Community buy outs, Land Release
*Transport	Reliability and costs	Local Strategies for Redevelopment, PA23 BID and CHORD

*\*This topics occurs across all Outcomes in some form*

## **Outcome 2 – We have an infrastructure that supports sustainable growth**

### Argyll and Bute

Four main issues were raised in the Outcome 2 workshops:

- Transport
- Broadband and internet
- Mobile coverage
- Electricity / grid

### Bute and Cowal

Bute and Cowal in the main reflected concerns as highlighted in other areas, with some localised issues.

<b>Topic raised</b>	<b>Issue discussed</b>	<b>Potential solutions raised as part of engagement process</b>
*Transport	A83	Long term solution found quickly – e.g. Tunnel; develop alternative routes; bridge between Cowal and Bute
Transport	Ferry Services	Year Round reliable ferry services required. Increase lobbying via SG and other routes
Transport	Cost of travel especially on ferries	Possible subsidies or discounts for young people e.g. Via Young Scot Card
Transport	Transport services do not link up	Integrated transport system required
Health care	Need to travel to access some health care services	More local services provided
Broadband	Slow roll out hindering small business growth and inbound mobility	European Funding, Research innovative models, community ownership models, Lobby for faster rollout
Mobile Phone Signal	Poor in many areas hindering small business growth and inbound mobility	Alternative models, lobby
Housing	Affordability, location, size	More appropriately sized and located affordable housing

*\*This topic occurs across all outcomes in some form*

## **Outcome 3 - Education, skills and training maximises opportunities for all**

### Argyll and Bute

Main issues raised in the Outcome 3 workshops related to:

- Barriers to accessing education, skills and training opportunities
- Secondary education, particularly with regard to where this leads and how it relates to future careers
- Access to, and availability of, further and higher education
- Skills gaps between the workforce and job opportunities
- Need for apprenticeships, career progression and work experience opportunities

## Bute and Cowal

<b>Topic raised</b>	<b>Issue discussed</b>	<b>Potential solutions raised as part of engagement process</b>
Barriers to Education	Need to leave area to access HE/FE	Increase delivery locally
Barriers to Education	Costs of travel to college/ Timetables	Subsidies
Barriers to Education	Lack of funds to support people in education, skills and learning	Bursaries
Education (Especially Bute)	Large numbers of teachers travel from mainland to work. Ferry disruption causes problems.	Encourage recruitment of local teachers or relocation to local area
Skills & training	Work experience being carried out	Expand work experience opportunities
Skills & training	Mismatch of existing skills and available employment	More apprenticeships in local skills such as farming
Skills & training	Need to access training opportunities locally	Mentors to support distance learning.

## ***Outcome 4 - Children and young people have the best possible start***

### Argyll and Bute

The discussions in the workshops appear to have concentrated on childcare issues and the lack of activities and facilities for children and young people.

Main Issues discussed in Outcome 4:

- Childcare
- Facilities and Activities
- Volunteering
- Engagement with Young People

### Bute and Cowal

<b>Topic raised</b>	<b>Issue discussed</b>	<b>Potential solutions raised as part of engagement process</b>
Childcare	Lack of after school care	Development of provision for after school and wrap around care
Facilities	Need better premises for activities	Development of buildings to house activities
Activities, especially youth	Lack of out of school activities for young people	Encourage the development of Youth Clubs and sports activities
Volunteering	Limited pool of volunteers	More support to encourage more people to volunteer
Engagement with young people	Lack of meaningful consultation and engagement with young people	Better ways of engaging with young people



## **Outcome 5 - People live active, healthier and independent lives**

### Argyll and Bute

The majority of comments from the area workshops fall into two broad categories:

- Staying healthy – Initiatives to help residents stay healthy
- Access to Health Service
- Issues for older people

### Bute and Cowal

<b>Topic raised</b>	<b>Issue discussed</b>	<b>Potential solutions raised as part of engagement process</b>
Staying Healthy	Older people need to improve health	Activities for older people run on a regular basis
Staying Healthy	No central activity to encourage healthy living	Re-instate Bute Healthy Living Centre
Access to Health Service	Transport on ferries and patient transport	Deliver more services locally
Older People	Need to review care for older people	Reshaping Care for Older People

## **Outcome 6 - People live in safer and stronger communities**

General agreement across Argyll and Bute, and in Bute and Cowal, that the area is safe and secure with a vibrant third sector.

### Argyll and Bute

Main issues raised related to:

- Prevention activities
- Community safety
- Information
- Vibrant and supportive communities

### Bute and Cowal

<b>Topic raised</b>	<b>Issue discussed</b>	<b>Potential solutions raised as part of engagement process</b>
Prevention Activities	Increase in Road Traffic Accidents especially in summer	Safety events and information
Prevention Activities	Young people involved in accidents	Safe drive event targeted at pre-17 year olds
Community Safety	Fear of engaging with police	More community policemen
Information	Lack of knowledge of services	Information leaflets and websites. Improved signage
Vibrant and		

supportive communities	Isolation	Network of volunteers to support isolated people
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## CONCLUSION

The consultation highlighted participants' wish to prioritise developing the economic potential of Argyll and Bute through harnessing the strengths of our rich natural resources and heritage. The main points raised were as follows:

1. Support to small and medium enterprises, and the expansion of existing businesses through a range of measures including support at the early stages; and availability of suitable premises.
2. Support to businesses that produce local goods to expand their markets further afield.
3. Better and more appropriate training to enable people to find employment, including increased number of apprenticeship places.
4. Improved ferry services - reliability, cost and frequency of services.
5. Provision of faster broadband, particularly on the west side of Bute and rural Cowal, and better mobile phone services.
6. Health service meets the need of the local and ageing population, taking into consideration the need to travel long distances to get medical attention.
7. There was general recognition that young people have to leave the area for further and higher education. Many do not return to the area, so the area must be more attractive to encourage them to return once their education is complete.

Options for practical incentives designed to encourage inbound migration include opening land for development; a multi-faceted approach to delivering new, appropriate housing solutions; and a commitment to paying the living wage across Community Planning Partners. All, or some, of these may begin to address the falling population and build a longer term sustainable and vibrant economy, serving the needs of those who choose to live, work and play in one of Scotland's most impressive, hospitable, and safest areas.

This report also suggests there is scope to develop a local area action plan for the Bute and Cowal Community Planning group in parallel with the high level Single Outcome Agreement delivery plans. Such a move would demonstrate a commitment by partners to ensure the priorities of local communities are both listened to and transformed into meaningful action.

## APPENDIX 1

Three consultation events occurred in two locations in Bute and Cowal as follows:

Area	Day and date	Time	Location
Rothesay Workshop	Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> January	2.00 – 4.30 pm	The Pavilion, Rothesay
Dunoon Workshop	Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> January	2.00 – 4.30 pm	Queens Hall, Dunoon
Bute and Cowal Question Time	Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> February	7.00 - 9.00 pm	Dunoon Grammar School with video link to Rothesay Academy

Attendance at events as follows:

Location	Dates	Attendance			Total
		CPP	Third Sector/Community	Other	
Rothesay Workshop	Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> January	13	21	4	38
Dunoon Workshop	Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> January	21	25	0	46
Bute and Cowal Question Time	Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> February	12	22	6	40

Online survey responses were as follows

Area	No of responses
<b>Bute and Cowal</b>	<b>148</b>
• <i>Bute</i>	54
• <i>Cowal</i>	81
• <i>Other</i>	13

## EVALUATION OF EVENTS

In order to assess how participants felt about the events, and how the consultation processes might be improved in future, evaluation of events were carried out. At 8 of 9 workshop events, PowerPoint voting was used, and results for Bute and Cowal are as follows:

### Results of PowerPoint voting evaluation at workshops – Bute and Cowal

		Important	Quite important	Not really important	Not important at all
How important do you think it is that we hold events to discuss issues like this with the community?	Bute	78%	16%	6%	0%
	Cowal	66%	21%	8%	5%
		Comprehensive	Adequate	I would have liked more information	I didn't receive any information
How would you rate the information you received prior to the event?	Bute	3%	28%	41%	28%
	Cowal	3%	33%	33%	33%
		Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor
How would you rate the opportunities to discuss issues in the workshops?	Bute	39%	52%	6%	3%
	Cowal	18%	61%	16%	5%
		Better than I expected		As I expected	Less than I expected
Did the event meet your expectations?	Bute	44%		47%	9%
	Cowal	23%		62%	15%
		Excellent	Good	Not very good	Poor
How would you rate the event overall?	Bute	9%	75%	13%	3%
	Cowal	3%	83%	10%	5%
		Important	Quite important	Not really important	Not important at all
How important is it that we provide you with a summary of the points raised at the event?	Bute	88%	3%	9%	0%
	Cowal	60%	33%	3%	5%

Evaluation forms were available at the Question Time events and some of the comments received are as follows:

- Very good well informed panel, excellent facilitator.
- What do the police think the impact on safety would be of turning off streetlights between say 01.00 – 06.00 in Cowal?
- Advertising the event? As always there could have been more people attending.
- Same tired approach to planning and development
- Microphone needed for questions
- Focus on economic issues not local services, education and health

- Major help with broadband
- Attract more people to participate