

Rathlin Island Policy Responses

Respondee	Overall	Aims	Objectives	Action Plan	Forum	Other	Comment
1. RSPB	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Currently employ 2 islanders; we would be keen to work with DRD to enhance the Seabird Centre for the benefit of the island community, economy and sustainable tourism visitor numbers to the Seabird Centre increased to 14,479, up 24% on last year, thought to be due to the improved ferry service. We support development which does not harm wildlife. Would be happy to be involved with Forum. Support SEA and HRA approach.
2. Ulster Wildlife Trust	Support	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	The Ulster Wildlife Trust welcomes the strategic aims of this consultation ie to enhance community involvement, improve the provision of public services for islanders, advance policies for a sustainable island community and to conserve the island's exceptional environmental heritage. We would call on the government to consider how islanders can best access appropriate training and development opportunities for natural heritage based enterprises and to raise this issue with FE and HE providers We welcome the strategic objective of drawing up a Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Rathlin and the seas immediately around it.
3. Barnes, Mrs	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Wants drystone walling rebuilt and maintained
4. Planning Service	Neutral	Neutral	Support	Support	Support	Neutral	When completing action plan consideration should be given to integrate other relevant policies. Would be content to participate in proposed forum
5. Judith Annett (Countryside Consultancy)	Neutral	Support	Support	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Employment of a development officer to assist islanders with community development. The Aim - To advance policies for a sustainable island community - needs to address how to retain or encourage the return of young people to the island - this aim lines to affordable housing and good healthcare. Rathlin islanders should not have special policy on developing a carbon neutral island, should be treated the same as on mainland. Rathlin could be used to pilot such a scheme. Possible omissions - no objective to protect landscape - no specific objectives around conditions and facilities for young people - objectives on environment and biodiversity, it would be good if they led to further employment - no mention of benchmarking with other islands.
6. Augustine McCurdy (Islander)	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Neutral	Issue with holiday home development versus affordable housing for islanders. Education - particularly secondary education and the lack of boarding schools. Suggestion is for DE to provide accommodation in Ballycastle from Monday to Friday in order for them to have access to schools around the north coast. Island needs a dedicated recreational area for young children, building could also be used for islanders to run small business from. Issue with RSPB and National Trust buying up all the land. Don't agree to forum set up, believe it should be government officials and islanders.
7. Moyle District Council	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Neutral	Over many years Moyle District Council has lobbied for Northern Ireland's only inhabited off-shore Island to be considered by Central Government as an area which requires and deserves a different approach from that of other rural areas. This draft policy is therefore extremely welcome and Moyle District Council will be happy to support the efforts of the Department for Regional Development in whatever way it can. Wish to thank Minister and team for time and effort developing policy
8. Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Neutral	CNCC welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Draft Rathlin Island policy, which represents an important step in that it formally recognises the unique circumstances of the island and the challenges posed by those circumstances for the human population. We have some concerns about the use of the terms "sustainable" and "sustainability" through the Policy document. These terms can have different interpretations, particularly when used in conjunction with words like "economic development", "tourism", "growth" and "population". We feel that there should be some clarification of what exactly is meant by the term where it is used. We welcome the articulation of the Strategic Aims and particularly of the key Strategic Objectives, many of which will contribute to achieving genuine sustainable development for the island. CNCC looks forward to the development of an Action Plan to deliver the Policy, and the partnership proposed between the Executive, the islanders and other interested parties.
9. Ulster Society for the Protection of the Countryside	Support	Support	Support	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Fully supportive of purpose, aims and objectives
10. Limavady Borough Council	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	No comment
11. Islanders	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Stressed the importance of 24/7 nursing cover and implications in the reduction of Home Help Service. Reduced service in the collection of waste causing concern particularly during the summer months when levels of rubbish are on the increase. No reduced rate for commercial vehicles on ferry. Post primary education a concern, lack of boarding schools in area - could DE purchase house in Ballycastle for Islanders use. There is a need for mixed use building to provide leisure activities for youth and work space for others. Poor water supply in certain areas of the island. Supportive of both wind and tidal power, would like islanders to have opportunity to train and work in this area. Issue with affordable housing and restrictions on planning. Assessment process for NIHE grants too slow. Lack of recycling facilities for bottles and engine oil from cars and boats. Issue as to when return tickets can be used, should be able to use return ticket purchased in September in October. Bye laws as written could adversely impact on businesses. Is it necessary for Local Diversity Action Plan to be part of Policy. Would like to see new Island brand "Greener Island" rather than using puffins who only inh
12. Northern Ireland Tourist Board	Support	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Support	Rathlin is an important part of the visitor experience in the Causeway Coast and Glen region. The Causeway Coast and Glens signature project provides the strategic direction for tourism development within the region. Further investment required in sustainable tourism facilities and services.
13. National Trust	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Neutral	We wish to reaffirm the National Trust's commitment and willingness to play our part in the three-way working partnership envisaged in the policy between the NI Executive, the Islanders and other parties. The National Trust welcomes the initiative by the Northern Ireland Executive to recognise the particular status of Rathlin Island as Northern Ireland's only offshore inhabited island. We support the purpose, aims and objectives as set out. We welcome the balanced approach which seeks to improve conditions for Islanders, while protecting its environment. We support the strategic objectives identified, and we look forward to working in partnership with Rathlin Development and Community Association and others to develop the action plan for a number of these objectives. We endorse the proposed process for implementation and delivery of the policy and welcome the lead role to be taken by the Department for Regional Development. Would like to be involved in forum
14. NIEA	Support	Support	Support	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Comments were all made during earlier draft of policy
15. NIHE	Support	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Agree with the broad thrust of the policy i.e. due to its unique nature, Rathlin issues need to be addressed in a different way from those on the mainland; Highlight that if -as set out in the Policy document - a different approach is needed, then it should also be acknowledged that this may require additional funding which may not be readily available from within existing budgets. Looking clarification on housing objective particularly where budget will come from, 2 year review timescale is not realistic in relation to housing provision and would like the structure for the proposed forum and working group explained further.