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## Socio Economic Update 44 January 2022



Did you know?  
The next Census  
takes place on  
20 March 2022.



## Population Estimates

National Records of Scotland (NRS) published 2020 Population Estimates in June 2021. These estimates relate to year ending 30 June 2020 and take into account the impact of the first 3 months of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The current population estimate for the Outer Hebrides is 26,500 as at 30 June 2020; this represents an estimated decrease in the overall population of 220 persons (-0.8%) from mid 2019 to mid 2020. The Outer Hebrides is one of 20 (out of 32) council areas which have experienced a population decrease.

The estimated decrease in population over the year is due to negative natural change (more deaths than births) and negative net migration and is the 2nd greatest decrease in Scotland (Inverclyde highest at -1.0%).

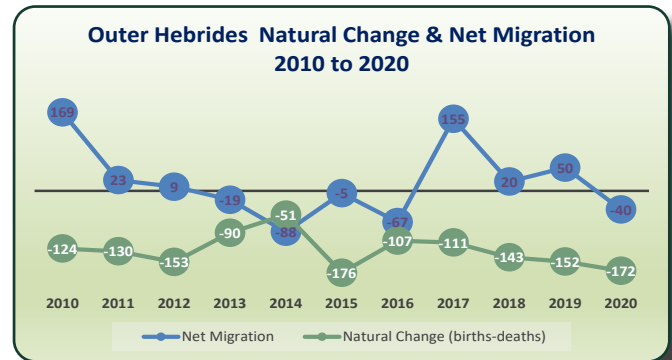
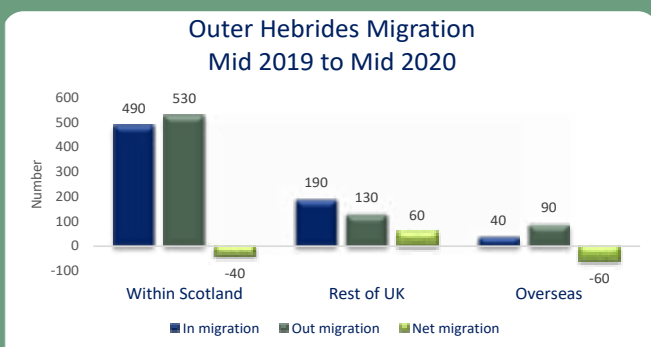
Deaths (375) continue to exceed births (203) in the Outer Hebrides, resulting in a negative natural change of -172.

Over the same period Orkney had an increase of 130 persons (0.6%) and Shetland had a decrease of 50 persons (-0.2%).

Over the decade from 2010 to 2020 there was a population decrease of 1,100 persons (-4.0%) in the Outer Hebrides, in comparison to a 3.9% increase nationally. Orkney had a 5.6% increase and Shetland had a 0.8% decrease over the same period.

The estimated net migration for mid 2019 to mid 2020 was -40 and natural change was -172 due to 375 deaths and 203 births (34 more deaths than in the previous year and 14 more UK births).

The Outer Hebrides is estimated to have had positive net migration from the Rest of the UK (60), but negative migration Within Scotland (-40) and from Overseas (-60) as illustrated below.



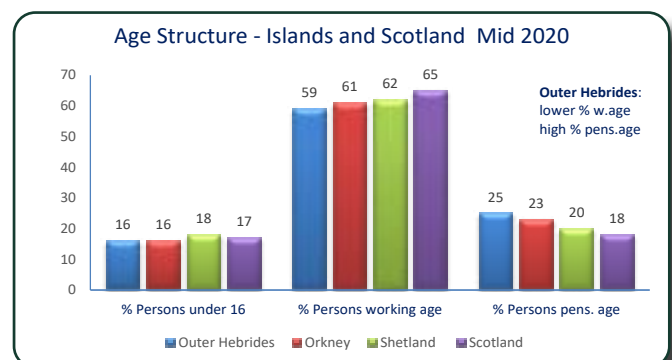
The estimated net migration for mid 2019 to mid 2020 was a decrease of 40 and natural change was -172 due to 375 deaths and 203 births.

Net migration was estimated to be highest in 2017 at 155 and was the reason that the Outer Hebrides showed the first increase in population since the 2011 Census. However, as illustrated, net migration has now decreased since, while negative natural change continues and increases with each year.

In contrast, Orkney has had negative natural change of -44 and positive net migration of 170 resulting in a population increase of 0.6%, while Shetland has had a negative natural change of -24 with net migration of -30.

Over one in four people (26%) living in the Outer Hebrides, Argyll & Bute, Dumfries & Galloway and South Ayrshire are aged 65 and over, in comparison to the Scottish average of 19%. Ten years previously, in 2010, the percentage aged 65 and over in the Outer Hebrides was 21%, while in the year 2000, it was 19%.

There is also an age imbalance with more men than women in the younger age groups and more women than men aged 65 and over. In the 90+ age group there are almost double the number of women to men (223 in comparison to 116). This reflects the longer life expectancy of females in the Outer Hebrides.



## Small Area Population Estimates

National Records of Scotland have published published Small Area Estimates (SAPES) for 2020.

Scotland's 32 Council areas are made up of 6,976 data zones. There are 36 data zones in the Outer Hebrides. Most data zones contain between 500 and 1,000 people.

In Edinburgh, 73% of data zones had an increase in population while in Inverclyde only 18% showed an increase. In the Outer Hebrides 25% showed an increase.

Scotland's population continues to age and the median age in Scotland is now 42. The percentage of data zones in which the median age increased, varied from 52% of the data zones in Dundee City, to 94% of the data zones in the Outer Hebrides. Over the period 2010 to 2020 the Outer Hebrides had the highest average change in median age at an increase of 4.1 years.

In the Outer Hebrides in 2020, Loch Roag data zone had the smallest population of 450 while Tong to Upper Coll had the largest at 1,084.

Areas with the highest percentage of data zones experiencing depopulation in Scotland are mainly rural and island areas, as well as areas in the West of Scotland. Conversely, the areas becoming more youthful tend to be in cities.

Over the last year from 2019 to 2020, in the Outer Hebrides the 3 data zones with the highest estimated percentage population increase were:

- Vatersay to Castlebay +4.2% (26)
- Melbost to Braighe +4.0% (41)
- Loch Roag +2.0% (9)

The 3 data zones with the largest estimated population decrease over the year 2019 to 2020 were:

- Bragar to Brue -4.6% (-32)
- Central Stornoway -4.3% (-36)
- Marybank to Newvalley -4.1% (-43)

Data zone	Total pop. 2020	% Change 2011-2020
Galson to Swainbost	559	-14
Newton to Plasterfield	738	-12
Eriskay to South Boisdale	466	-12
Goathill	774	-11
Habost to Port of Ness	710	-10
Loch Roag	450	-9
Coulegrain to Stenish	599	-9
Loch Boisdale	569	-9
Central Stornoway	800	-9
Bragar to Brue	669	-8
South Harris	842	-8
North Manor Park	612	-8
Uig and Bernera	728	-7
Knock to Bayble	789	-6
Loch Eynort to lochdar	699	-6
Marybank to Newvalley	1015	-6
North Bayhead (Stornoway)	612	-6
Coll to Back	878	-6
Pairc and Kinloch	871	-6
Barvas to Borve	714	-5
North Benbecula	775	-5
Carloway to Shawbost	597	-5
North Harris and Scalpay	939	-4
West North Uist to Baleshare	692	-4
Sheshader to Tiumpan Head	583	-4
Springfield	596	-3
Garrabost	777	-3
Grimsay, East North Uist - Berneray	886	-2
North Barra	650	-1
Gress to Tolsta	708	-1
Tong to Upper Coll	1084	-1
South Benbecula	525	2
Vatersay to Castlebay	647	4
North Lochs	919	4
Newmarket	950	6
Melbost to Braighe	1078	23

The table above highlights the difference in population change in different data zones. While Melbost to the Braighe has increased by 203 persons (23.2%) over the period, Galson to Swainbost has decreased by 89 persons (-13.7) from 2011 to 2020. Five data zones have had decreases of 10% and over during this period.

## Small Area Population Estimates

The adjacent table shows the broad age groups by data zone for 2020 for each data zone.

There are large variations within the Outer Hebrides, with some data zones having a much older profile than others.

Uig and Bernera has the smallest percentage under 16, at 9%, while Melbost to the Braighe and Tong to Upper Coll have the highest at 23%.

Goathill has the smallest working age population at 51%, while Newmarket has the highest at 69%.

Newmarket has the smallest 65+ age group at 14% while Goathill has the highest at 37%.

As such, with the data zone areas varying so greatly, the island areas do too.

In the island areas Benbecula has the highest under 16 age group at 21% (Scot. avg. 17%) and Harris has the greatest 65+ age group at 32% (Scot. avg. 19%). Benbecula and Lewis have 59% aged 16-64 (Scot. avg. 65%).

Data zone	Total pop	% Under 16	% 16-64	% 65+
Vatersay to Castlebay	647	22	58	21
North Barra	650	18	54	29
Eriskay to South Boisdale	466	12	56	33
Loch Boisdale	569	16	59	27
Loch Eynort to lochdar	699	18	60	24
South Benbecula	525	19	58	25
North Benbecula	775	22	62	17
West North Uist to Baleshare	692	14	57	31
Grimsay, East North Uist to Berneray	886	11	60	30
South Harris	842	13	54	35
North Harris and Scalpay	939	14	58	30
Pairc and Kinloch	871	14	60	28
North Lochs	919	16	58	28
Uig and Bernera	728	9	60	33
Loch Roag	450	12	56	34
Carloway to Shawbost	597	11	64	29
Bragar to Brue	669	13	63	26
Barvas to Borve	714	15	60	26
Galson to Swainbost	559	10	57	35
Habost to Port of Ness	710	14	56	31
Gress to Tolsta	708	15	58	29
Coll to Back	878	17	63	21
Tong to Upper Coll	1084	23	59	19
Newmarket	950	18	69	14
Marybank to Newvalley	1015	17	64	20
North Manor Park	612	19	64	18
North Bayhead (Stornoway)	612	11	64	27
Central Stornoway	800	14	62	25
Newton to Plasterfield	738	12	59	30
Springfield	596	15	59	27
Goathill	774	13	51	37
Coulegrain to Stenish	599	15	56	30
Melbost to Braighe	1078	23	61	18
Garrabost	777	18	63	21
Knock to Bayble	789	15	59	28
Sheshader to Tiumpnan Head	583	14	57	32
Island Area	Total pop	% u16	% 16-64	% 65+
Barra & Vatersay	1,297	20	55	25
South Uist	1,734	16	57	28
Benbecula	1,300	21	59	20
North Uist	1,578	13	57	31
Harris	1,781	13	55	32
Lewis	18,810	15	59	26

Percentages may not add up due to rounding.

## Household Estimates

National Records of Scotland published 2020 Household Estimates in June 2021.

There was an estimated increase of 16 households (0.1%) from 2019 to 2020 in the Outer Hebrides while the Scottish average was a 0.5% increase. The number of households has increased in every local authority area.

In the long term the estimates identified an increase of 492 households (4%) from 2010 to 2020, while the Scottish average was a 6.0% increase.

Of all 32 Scottish Local Authorities areas, the Outer Hebrides is estimated to have:



the highest % of vacant dwellings at 8.1% (nat avg 3.4%)

second highest percentage of long term empty properties at 4.3%, Shetland has the highest at 5.2% (nat avg 1.8%)

the second highest % of second homes at 5.3%, Argyll & Bute have the highest at 6.5% (nat avg 0.9%)

highest proportion of unoccupied exemptions at 3.8% (nat avg 1.6%)

The Outer Hebrides had the highest percentage of dwellings in Council Tax Bands A-C at 77% (nat avg. 59%).



The average household size in the Outer Hebrides has decreased from 2.05 in 2019 to 2.04 in 2020. Over the period 2010 to 2020 the Outer Hebrides has had the largest percentage decrease in household size in Scotland at -7.7%.

Average household size 2010 and 2020

2.04

2.20

Outer Hebrides

2.14

2.18

Scotland

Over the ten-year period from June 2010 to June 2020, the percentage change in the number of households was a 4.0% increase, while the percentage change in the population was a 4% decrease. This highlights the change in household type with the percentage of single person households increasing. This is due to an ageing population and more people living alone.

The table below shows changes over time in vacant, long-term vacant and second homes. The Outer Hebrides continues to have one of the highest rates.

Outer Hebrides	2010	2020
Number of vacant dwellings	916	1192
% of total dwellings 2020 8.1% (scot.avg. 3.4%)		
Number of second homes	979	788
% of total dwellings 2020 5.3% (scot.avg. 0.9%)		
Number long-term empty homes	295	629
% of total dwellings 2020 4.3% (scot.avg. 1.8%)		

## Small Area Household Estimates

NRS also released Small Area Household Estimates. The percentage of vacant and second homes in 2020 by island area are shown below.

South Uist continues to have the highest percentage of vacant homes and Barra & Vatersay continues to have the highest percentage of second homes. The percentage of vacant homes in Barra & Vatersay has increased by 1.5 percentage points over the year, while there has been a 1.5 percentage points decrease in vacant homes in North Uist over the year.

Island Area	Total Dwellings	% Vacant	% 2nd Homes
Barra & Vatersay	785	11	12
South Uist	1,072	12	7
Benbecula	650	6	4
North Uist	989	7	10
Harris	1,173	10	11
Lewis	10,101	7	4
Stornoway HMA*	6,099	6	2
Rural Lewis HMA*	4,002	9	7

\* Housing Market Area

Data zone area	Total dwellings	Occupied dwellings	Vacant dwellings	Long-term empty	Second homes
Vatersay to Castlebay	370	78%	12%	5%	10%
North Barra	415	75%	10%	6%	15%
Eriskay to South Boisdale	325	79%	10%	3%	11%
Loch Boisdale	333	82%	14%	8%	5%
Loch Eynort to lochdar	414	83%	12%	7%	5%
South Benbecula	242	88%	7%	4%	4%
North Benbecula	408	91%	6%	5%	3%
West North Uist to Baleshare	448	82%	5%	2%	13%
Grimsay, East North Uist to Berneray	541	84%	9%	5%	7%
South Harris	586	76%	12%	6%	13%
North Harris and Scalpay	587	82%	9%	6%	9%
Pairc and Kinloch	548	81%	10%	5%	9%
North Lochs	472	88%	9%	4%	3%
Uig and Bernera	498	77%	12%	7%	11%
Loch Roag	272	82%	11%	3%	6%
Carloway to Shawbost	336	83%	8%	3%	9%
Bragar to Brue	372	87%	8%	3%	5%
Barvas to Borge	386	89%	8%	3%	3%
Galson to Swainbost	352	87%	8%	3%	5%
Habost to Port of Ness	433	80%	13%	5%	7%
Gress to Tolsta	333	88%	7%	3%	5%
Coll to Back	414	91%	6%	3%	3%
Tong to Upper Coll	484	93%	5%	3%	2%
Newmarket	433	95%	5%	3%	1%
Marybank to Newvalley	466	93%	5%	4%	2%
North Manor Park	343	96%	3%	1%	0%
North Bayhead (Stornoway)	399	93%	6%	4%	1%
Central Stornoway	576	90%	9%	6%	1%
Newton to Plasterfield	402	92%	7%	4%	1%
Springfield	302	93%	6%	4%	1%
Goathill	415	94%	5%	3%	1%
Coulegrain to Stenish	307	95%	4%	2%	1%
Melbost to Braighe	511	95%	4%	2%	1%
Garrabost	366	89%	8%	3%	4%
Knock to Bayble	375	90%	8%	3%	2%
Sheshader to Tiumpnan Head	306	85%	10%	5%	5%

The Small Area Household Estimates highlight the variations between data zones. The highest and lowest in each column are highlighted in the table above. The percentage of vacant houses varies greatly between data zones with 14% vacant in Lochboisdale and 3% in North Manor Park, Stornoway. The percentage of second homes continues to remain highest in North Barra at 15%, while North Manor Park has no second homes. Eleven out of the 36 data zones (30%) have 10% or more of houses vacant. Six out of the 36 data zone (17%) have over 10% or more of dwellings used as second homes.

## Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions

The Scottish Government released information from the Annual Population Survey 2020/21 in the above [publication](#) in September 2021. The data covers the period April 2020 to March 2021.

Some key findings for the Outer Hebrides are as follows:

The Outer Hebrides had the second highest employment rate for 16-64 at 81.2%, while Orkney had the highest at 84.2%, with a Scottish average of 72.8%.

The employment rate for those aged 50 and over was highest in the Outer Hebrides at 45.8%.

In the last year the employment rate has decreased in all age bands up to 65 years in Scotland.

Men were estimated to have higher employment rates across all local authorities except: Edinburgh (-0.2), South Ayrshire (-3.7), Aberdeen City (-5.9), Outer Hebrides (-4.8) and Orkney (-4.8), where women had higher employment rates.

The Outer Hebrides had the third highest underemployment rate at 11.8%. Underemployment is those who are in work but would prefer to work more hours in their current job (at their basic rate of pay), in an additional job or in a new job with longer hours to replace their current job.

The Outer Hebrides had the highest percentage of those employed in the public sector at 40.4%.

The Outer Hebrides had the second lowest inactivity rates in Scotland at 14.3% (please note estimates are based on small sample sizes and so may be less precise and should be used with caution).

The main reason for inactivity in Scotland is long term sickness or disability.

The Outer Hebrides had the largest decrease in inactivity rates with a decrease of 17.3 percentage points from 31.6 to 14.3.

These changes represent a statistically significant decrease over the year, but again, based on small sample sizes.

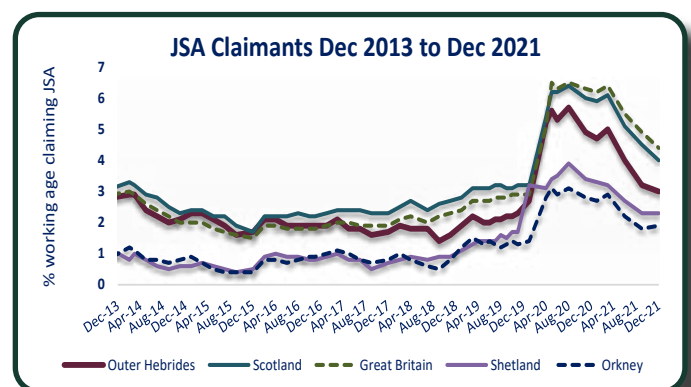
## Labour Market

The latest [NOMIS](#) update gives employment rates from the period October 2020 to September 2021. The employment rate in the Outer Hebrides was 81.5%, greater than the national average of 72.9%, Great Britain was 74.6%. Model-based unemployment in the Outer Hebrides was at 3.3%, lower than the national and UK average of 4.2% and 4.8% respectively. Glasgow had the highest rate of 5.5% and Shetland Islands the lowest at 2.4%.

The Job Seeker Allowance (JSA) rate (shown in the chart below) increased significantly in April 2020 across all areas. Glasgow city had the highest JSA rate in December 2021 at 5.8%, while Orkney had the lowest at 1.9%. The Orkney Islands consistently have the lowest rate. The Outer Hebrides had the 9th lowest out of the 32 local authority areas at 3.0%.

JSA rates (and numbers for Outer Hebrides) within age bands was as follows:

18-24	East Ayrshire highest 7.9%
	Edinburgh lowest at 2.4%
	Outer Hebrides 5th lowest 3.7% (55)
25-49	North Ayrshire highest 6.9%
	Orkney Islands lowest 1.9%
	Outer Hebrides 5th lowest 3.0% (215)
50+	Glasgow highest at 5.3%
	Shetland Islands lowest 1.2%
	Outer Hebrides 11th highest 3.1% (195)



The latest update from NOMIS gives the following JSA claimant rates for December 2021 :

Outer Hebrides	3.0%
Scotland	4.0%
Great Britain	4.4%
Shetland Island	2.3%
Orkney Islands	1.9%

## Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) 2019

The latest [GDHI bulletin](#) was released in October 2021. Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics (NUTS) classification have now been replaced by the new UK classification of International Territorial Levels (ITL).

In 2019, GDHI growth per head in the UK was 2.5% in comparison to 2018. Growth in Scotland was greater at 2.8%. GDHI per head of population increased in all ITL1 countries and regions over the year.

Out of the 179 ITL3 subregions in the UK the Outer Hebrides was the top performing local area with GDHI per head increasing by 7.1% from 2018 to 2019.

As in previous years Kensington and Chelsea and Hammersmith and Fulham was the local area with the highest GDHI per head (£62,408), nearly three times the UK average; Nottingham had the lowest GDHI per head at £13,381.

Edinburgh city had the highest GDHI in Scotland at £23,580 while Glasgow City had the lowest at £16,345.

The Outer Hebrides had the second lowest GDHI per head in the Highlands and Islands region and the 10th lowest (previously 4th) out of the 23 ITL regions in Scotland. GDHI in the Outer Hebrides was £19,318 in 2019 in comparison to the Scottish average of £19,649.

Over the period 2009 to 2019 the Outer Hebrides had the largest increase in Scotland with a 41%, while Glasgow had the lowest increase at 17%. Over this period Edinburgh, with the highest GDHI in Scotland, saw a 27% increase. The average increase for Scotland over the period was also 27%.

### Outer Hebrides GDHI 2009 & 2019

13,699      19,318      ↑ 41%

### Outer Hebrides GDHI 2018 & 2019

18,301      19,318      ↑ 7.1%

## Subregional Productivity



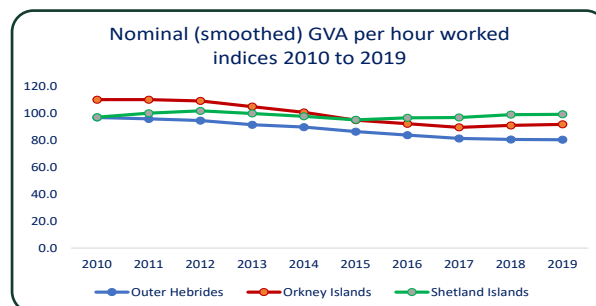
“Productivity matters because increasing productivity is critical to increasing the standard of living in an economy. A more productive economy is able to produce more goods and services, not by increasing inputs such as labour hours, but by making production more efficient. Furthermore, in the long run, real earnings are closely related to labour productivity. Productivity growth also helps to offset inflation and improves public finances.”

The [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) published subregional productivity information up to 2019. As part of this release they also produced experimental statistics at Local Authority level.

Runnymede, Hounslow, and Tower Hamlets are the local authority districts with the highest productivity in Great Britain. In Scotland, Clackmannanshire had the highest productivity in 2019 at 131. East Ayrshire had the lowest at 77, while the Outer Hebrides had the second lowest at 81. The UK average is equal to 100.

However, both the Outer Hebrides and Orkney are below average, with the Outer Hebrides productivity 19% lower than the UK average.

The chart below highlights how Gross Value Added (GVA) per hour worked indices vary between island areas. Over the period productivity for the Outer Hebrides has decreased steadily since 2010, Shetland’s productivity has remained constant and has increased in the last few years, while in Orkney it had decreased since 2012, but risen in the last couple of years.



A decrease in a subregion’s productivity does not necessarily mean that it has decreased in actual terms, its actual productivity level may have improved, but that this is at a slower rate than the UK overall, therefore declining relative to the UK equals 100 index.



## Healthy Life Expectancy

NRS recently published [Healthy Life Expectancy 2018-2020](#). Healthy life expectancy (HLE) is an estimate of the number of years lived in 'very good' or 'good' general health, based on how individuals perceive their state of health at the time of completing the annual population survey (APS).

“Life expectancy estimates and healthy life expectancy estimates are important to analyse. Most importantly, it is important to understand how the two estimates are changing over time and relative to each other as this can determine the future health state of the population. For this reason, HLE is of particular use in monitoring and investigating the health inequalities across Scotland and directing public health targets.”

The main finding from the report was that in the last few years healthy life expectancy has decreased for both men and women. It was lower in 2018-2020 than it was in 2009-2011 for both men and women.

Orkney was the Local Authority area with the highest life expectancy at birth for both men (71.2 years) and women (77.5) years, while Inverclyde had the lowest for men (54.4) and North Ayrshire had the lowest for women (54).

Highlighting health inequality, there is a significant difference between local authority areas when you look at the highest and lowest healthy life expectancy with a difference of 23.5 years for women and 16.8 years for men.

HLE at age 65 in Scotland is 9.6 years for men (13.4 years in Outer Hebrides) and 10.8 years for women (14.6 years for women in the Outer Hebrides). Although both life expectancy and HLE have fallen for men in recent years, HLE has done so at a faster rate. This means that a greater proportion of life is likely to be spent in poor health now than in previous years.

Life expectancy for women has experienced relatively little change over the last decade. However, HLE has been highly variable, increasing and decreasing over the period.

The Outer Hebrides, Orkney and Shetland have some of the highest HLE estimates in Scotland. However, they also have the widest confidence intervals of all areas making their estimates less reliable than in other areas.

Women in the Outer Hebrides have the 2nd highest HLE at birth of all local authority areas in Scotland at 67.5 years.

Men in the Outer Hebrides have the 3rd highest HLE at birth of all local authority areas in Scotland at 68.3 years.

## Scotlands People Newsletter

The **Scotlands People Newsletter** highlights the birth of a woman in Glasgow in September 1921 who later became a Hollywood star. It also marks the 51st anniversary of the Ibrox disaster of 2nd January 1971. It highlights the release of Scottish Cabinet records and the addition of more agriculture planning maps.

## Outer Hebrides - A Popular Tourist Destination

The Outer Hebrides continues to be a popular tourist destination, with recommendations from papers, web pages and blogs, see below.

**Sail Scotland** have produced some truly stunning aerial footage of locations from the coasts and islands of Scotland.

From the Outer Hebrides there is footage of Stornoway, Harris, St Kilda and Mingulay.

The **Daily Record** recommends 7 destinations which make you feel like you're abroad - paddle on Luskentyre instead of the Maldives.

Once again, Luskentyre is named in the top 25 beaches in Europe in 2022, in 7th place, the highest ranked in the UK. Lampedusa beach in Sicily is top.

**Conde Naste** recommends the 49 best beaches in the UK. Among them are Scarista, Uig Sands and Luskentyre in the 6 Scottish beaches mentioned.

**MyLondon** recommends travelling to a beautiful island only 3 hours away - the beautiful island of Barra.

In the **Daily Express** Influencer and TV producer Alex Outhwaite visits the Hebrides.

**MSN** recommends 51 of the most incredible natural wonders in the UK. Highlighted at number 10 is Luskentyre .

**Travels with a Kilt blog** recommends Outer Hebrides holidays and adventures.



If you have any queries or suggestions regarding this bulletin please contact:

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