

<b>Draft Minutes Bute Community Council</b>	
<b>Date</b>	2024-03-20 1900 at United Church Bute
<b>Online at</b>	<a href="https://butecommunitycouncil.wordpress.com">butecommunitycouncil.wordpress.com</a>
<b>Draft Minutes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attendance: G Fear, R Macintyre, F Martin, J Moffat, I Morisson, T Nelson, W Nelson, J Osborne, Cllr R Kennedy-Boyle, Cllr P Wallace  Apologies: C Hall</li> <li>2. Declarations of Interest: F Martin, J Moffat, T Nelson, W Nelson all Buteiful Seas and Shores</li> <li>3. Police Report: attached, no officer was available to attend</li> <li>4. Minutes of Previous Meeting: 21 February, 2024 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Proposed by J Osborne, seconded by J Moffat, unanimously agreed.</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. Community Council By-Elections: A&amp;B Council called for by-elections to take place for Community Councils. It is possible to register for the election until 1600 tomorrow afternoon. There are places for 6 additional councillors on BCC.</li> <li>6. A&amp;B Councillors' reports <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Cllr Kennedy-Boyle had been unable to make a written report, as she usually does, this month, so spoke to those assembled about the various committee meetings she had attended and actions she had taken to support individual constituents and groups over the past month. Some points to note were: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A special meeting was held before the full council at which decisions on supporting a new campus on Mull and final stages of Rothesay Pavilion was deferred to May. At the full council a vote by TALIG Administration to raise Council Tax by 10% was passed, a budget that Reeni did not vote for.</li> <li>2. As a member of the Audit and Scrutiny committee she said that the simple question of 'what is the amount of reserves set aside by ABC' has been actually quite difficult to find an answer to. She told the gathering that there seem to be various pots of money making up the reserve fund and thought that an additional £2.5m had been added to the reserves, while at the same time raising council tax was deemed necessary. She is continuing to pursue an answer to the 'simple' question and will report back. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A BCC councillor at this point asked whether the Strategic Housing fund was part of the reserve fund. He was told that the £7m fund is not part of the reserve fund as it is allocated to strategic housing.</li> <li>2. Cllr Kennedy-Boyle explained that at a recent meeting she learned that Bute has a double digit rate of homelessness and that 20% of that number is comprised of 16 – 24 year olds. She will be looking into this issue further. Bute and Cowal Area Committee SHIP Update 2024.pdf (<a href="http://argyll-bute.gov.uk">argyll-bute.gov.uk</a>) An audience member asked if it was known whether those who</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> </ol>

were homeless were Bute residents who had become homeless or homeless persons who had come to Bute. Cllr Kennedy-Boyle said that at the moment there were no statistics/data available to answer that question.

3. She has been supporting several constituents with planning issues, explaining that Bute and Cowal are the worst performing areas of ABC in regards to planning

1. Cllr Kennedy-Boyle was supporting Disability Bute as they undertake a study to identify access/motability issues on Bute.

b. Councillor Peter Wallace: Councillor Wallace had submitted a written report but fielded questions:

1. A BCC member asked what the Council meeting on 15 April was for. Cllr Wallace explained that a Council meeting on 25 March would be held to approve the audited accounts for the previous year and the meeting on 15 April would be held to discuss a freeze on council tax charges, with the expectation that this would be approved. ABC had negotiated a £6.2m package of funding that would alleviate the need for the 10% increase. Council Tax bills would need to be reissued and payments would be adjusted to compensate for the initial overpayments residents had made. The funding package breaks down as follows: 2.8m originally on offer, £1.1m from the UK budget, £2.3m weather related support.

2. Cllr Wallace was asked if the doubling of Council Tax for second homes would remain in place and he said yes.

1. Anecdotally, a BCC member said that she knew of two flats that had been put on the market as a result of this policy.

3. Concerns were raised about the striking of the budget line that had allocated £800k for the demolition of the old academy building. Cllr Wallace said that though the item had been removed as an individual budget line, the expectation was that the work would go forward and be funded through the Strategic Housing fund (item 6.a.2.1 above).

4. Cllr Wallace was asked about seawall repairs between Rothesay and Ardbeg. He explained that the initial repairs were 'emergency' repairs and so could be undertaken without consents (eg SEPA). Permanent repairs were on hold while the appropriate consents are being gathered. The money for the permanent repairs was allocated in last year's budget, so the repairs would be carried out once the consents were in place.

1. It was confirmed that repairs at Ettrickdale were on the docket for this year.

2. In related discussion, it was confirmed that £480k has been allocated for road repairs on Bute in the current budget.

7. Guest speaker: Tony Edwards of Positive Pedals

a. Tony explained to the assembly that he had been a lifelong cyclist, starting as a child then using a cycle for commuting and taking holidays.

He had run a bike shop on Bute for 10 years, starting in 1995. During lockdown, he had been taking garden waste up to the recycling site and noticed that there were bikes, perfectly repairable, being put into the metal skip. About the same time, Live Argyll asked him to run a cycle repair workshop with several men who were recent refugees that had come to Bute. Once that workshop finished, he stayed on as a volunteer and helped to form an organisation that would repair bikes and get them back into use on the island. To date, they have put 28 bikes back into use. The goal would be to be able to eventually pay the people doing the repairs as well as self-fund the organisation, by being able to sell repaired bikes and charge for repairs. To achieve this they would need to change from a community group to a limited company.

- b. Positive Pedals was fortunate in receiving a £20k grant from Cycling Scotland. This was meant to fund a container that would be used as a base for carrying out repairs and storing tools. It was originally meant to be placed near the Lade Centre, where a shed had previously been granted planning permission. However, that site now falls within an identified flood risk area and so can no longer be pursued. An alternative site has been identified but permission is held up in the planning department (see 6.a.4 above). Tony also wrote to HIE in January, regarding waste ground near to the TSE units. He has had no response from HIE. He asked the ABC councillors and BCC for any support they might be able to give him in moving enquiries forward, with both ABC Planning and HIE.
- c. A member of the assembly asked if young people on Bute might be trained to do bike repairs in the future and Tony said this was something they would like to see happen.

8. BCC Councillor reports:

- a. W Nelson reported that a planning application by the BID had been made to place banner signage in Guildford Square.
- b. R Macintyre said that ferry usage numbers were still unavailable from Transport Scotland.
  - 1. The topic of ferries led to a discussion regarding the Active Transport Proposals that were progressing for the ferry to joint campus route as well as Albert Pier to the Pavilion. Proposed changes included shortening the length of the ferry lanes and making changes to the pick up/drop off area. Cllrs Kennedy-Boyle and Wallace were not aware of the proposed changes and W Nelson is to send information on to the two councillors.

9. Matters Arising

- a. Update on West Coast Motors/ young riders being denied travel: J Moffat will follow this up and report back at the next meeting.
- b. Any advance on offer by CHall to use Coffee Stop once a week for teen only hot chocolate and chat session: At the last meeting C Hall was not present but Shona Edwards was in the audience and said that she had not had time to speak with C Hall yet. At this meeting, neither C Hall nor Shona were present so this item will be deferred to the next meeting.

- c. Any advance on receipt of report from Shona Edwards on results of consultation she carried out at Rothesay Joint Campus: the report has been received and is available on the BCC website and as part of the combined minutes and reports document.
- d. Update on derelict buildings in Port Bannatyne:
1. Since the last BCC meeting, a group of 16 residents has formed an action group in Port Bannatyne.
  2. At the February BCC meeting, it was reported that Brendan O’Hara had received a letter from ABC, Fergus Murray in relation to 12 – 16 Castle Street: “The response to Brendan O’Hara’s letter had also revealed that the developer has told the A&B Council building standards office that they are now undertaking a feasibility study on how to take the development forward since ownership issues, which had been holding up progress, have been resolved.” J Osborne reported that after identifying and then speaking with the architects who are working with the developer on 29 February, this information was incorrect. The issue that had been resolved was that the developer successfully sued the solicitors involved in the purchase for negligence based on the fact that the developer thought they were purchasing all flats in the property when in fact they ended up as owning only 22 of the 24 properties. The remaining two were owned by two individuals, so ownership issues was still a major stumbling block to any progress. As well, the architect said that due to deterioration in the building since 2017 it is now uneconomic to redevelop. The estimated costs of doing so are put at over £2 million. Demolition is now the only viable option. The building is now a liability rather than an asset. The only way forward would be a compulsory purchase order by the Council.
  3. The property at 21 Castle Street is owned by the McGoldrick family and is being marketed as a “development opportunity” in shell condition by Blosshomes, which is a estate agency owned by the McGoldrick family. To date no buyer has yet to be found..
  4. Lawrence Lyndsey, a member of the action group, had a discussion with Steven Gove of ABC Planning Department, regarding the process involved in reaching a decision to demolish. As Castle Street is within the conservation area Historic Environment Scotland will have to be satisfied that demolition is the only option. An up to date structural condition report will be required.
  5. The action group is now seeking to arrange a meeting with three different ABC Departments together – Planning, Building Standards and the Empty Homes Team. The group is seeking support from the local ABC Councillors to arrange this meeting.
  6. While waiting for the meeting in item 9.d.5 (immediately above) to be arranged, the group will let the architects and developer know of the obligation to pay full council tax on empty properties that comes into effect on 1 April.

1. Information on Second Home and Unoccupied Properties council tax can be found at:

1. <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/council-tax-and-benefits/council-tax/council-tax-empty-properties>
2. <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/council-tax-and-benefits/council-tax/council-tax-exemptions-and-discounts>

e. Survey on fish farms: T Nelson explained that the initial survey form that had been agreed at last month's meeting is live for the month of March. Paper copies are placed in Kilchattan Bay, Port Bannatyne and Rothesay for those who do not use the computer. An article about the survey and the process being followed was included in the Isle of Bute News on 8 March,

1. To date, 33 surveys have been completed – 17 online and 16 on paper.
2. To increase awareness of the survey and the number of responses, BCC will take the survey to the public by spending some time in Guildford Square.
3. G Fear, director of Bute Island Radio as well as being the newest BCC member, suggested a radio discussion about fish farms. This will be particularly applicable to stage 2 of the process, answering questions that island residents have asked.

f. Update on Arden Craig Gardens and Rothesay Pavilion:

1. Plug plants are due to be delivered to the Gardens starting later this week or early next week.
2. As per item 6.a.1 any discussion of the Pavilion by ABC has been deferred until 15 April.

g. Bute Island Foods Community Fund: in January 2024, three representatives of Bute Island Foods, spoke to the BCC meeting about the BIF Community Fund. Item 5.b.6 of the January minutes notes the following:

1. J Osborne shared that he had been involved with several successful and several unsuccessful applications to the fund. He felt that the criteria had not been applied consistently and that at times the reason/s for denial were not clearly explained. It was agreed that a meeting be arranged between himself and the Community Fund committee to discuss these issues.
2. J Osborne explained that he had duly contacted BIFCF via email on 18 January. Though BIFCF had acknowledged receipt of his email on 30 Jan, he has had no further contact from BIFCF since this.

#### 10. Public Questions


a. The matter of having more than one meeting in Port Bannatyne per year was again raised. After this issue was raised at the last meeting, W




	<p>Nelson did some research into population numbers on the island. The last available figures were the 2011 census, which identified 6499 total residents on Bute and 470 living in Port Bannatyne. See the Bute Population Map (2011 Census) document for the generated map. Based on this information, sticking with the current plan of one meeting each in Port Bannatyne and Kilchattan Bay would seem fair.</p> <p>11. Date of Next Meeting: 17 April, 2024</p>
<p><b>Following Documents</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police Report</li> <li>• Cllr Report – Peter Wallace</li> <li>• Bute Population Map (2011 Census)</li> <li>• Youth Consultation Report</li> <li>• Argyll &amp; Bute Council Council Tax Information</li> </ul>

DRAFT




<b>Community Council Debrief</b>
<b>Dates Between: 14/02/24 – 07/03/24</b>
<b>Location &amp; Beat: Bute – LB53/54</b>
<b>Reporting Officer: PC James Convery</b>

<b>Between the dates of 14/02/24 and 07/03/24, the number of Incidents and Crime Reports respectively are 126 and 50</b>	
 <p><b>SERIOUS ORGANISED CRIME</b></p>	<p>You identified drug dealing / drug misuse as a priority</p> <p>We identified human trafficking as a priority</p>
	<p>There have been 4 crimes recorded in relation to drugs offences.</p> <p>There have been 3 crimes regarding possession of controlled substances, all of which are detected.</p> <p>There has been 1 crime regarding being concerned in the supply of controlled substances which has been detected.</p>

 <p><b>ACQUISITIVE CRIME</b></p> <p>You identified homes being broken in to as a priority</p> <p>We have also identified fraud as a priority</p>	<p>There have been 4 crimes recorded regarding thefts. 2 of these have been detected and the remaining 2 are ongoing enquiries.</p>
 <p><b>ROAD SAFETY AND ROAD CRIME</b></p> <p>You identified road safety as a priority</p> <p>We identified drink / drug driving and reducing road casualties as priorities</p>	<p>There have been 2 crimes recorded regarding road traffic matters, including a detected drink driver.</p> <p>The other crime is regarding failing to stop/failing to report a road accident within 24 hours. This is an ongoing enquiry.</p>
 <p><b>VIOLENT CRIME</b></p> <p>You identified violent crime as a priority</p> <p>We have also identified domestic abuse as a priority</p>	<p>There have been 10 crimes recorded regarding assault, several of which include assaults on police and other emergency services. 8 of these are detected and the other 2 are ongoing enquiries.</p>



 <p><b>PUBLIC PROTECTION</b></p> <p>You identified protecting children and adults at risk of harm as a priority</p> <p>We identified missing persons, sexual crime and the management of registered sex offenders as priorities</p>	<p>There have been 3 crimes recorded regarding communications offences. 2 of these are detected with the remaining an ongoing enquiry.</p> <p>There have been 3 detected crimes regarding the possession of offensive weapons in a public place.</p> <p>There have been 2 detected crimes regarding resisting arrest.</p> <p>There has been 1 detected crime regarding attempting to enter a licensed premises while barred by means of an exclusion order.</p> <p>There have been 2 sexual crimes, 1 of which has been detected and the other an ongoing enquiry.</p> <p>There have been 2 crimes recorded involving dogs. An incident of dangerous dogs being out of control which was detected and an incident regarding a dog being punched to it's face which is an ongoing enquiry.</p> <p>There has been 1 detected crime regarding making false allegations towards Police.</p> <p>There have been 2 crimes recorded regarding breaches of bail, 1 is detected and the other is an ongoing enquiry.</p> <p>There have been 14 crimes recorded regarding threatening/abusive behaviour. 13 of these are detected with the remaining an ongoing enquiry.</p>
	<p><b>Crimestoppers</b> – <a href="https://www.crimestoppers-uk.org/">Crimestoppers in Scotland   Crimestoppers (crimestoppers-uk.org)</a></p>

<p><i>Useful Links/Contacts</i></p>	<p><b>Distress Brief Intervention</b> - <a href="#">Distress Brief Intervention - Connected Compassionate Support   DBI.scot</a></p> <p><b>Scottish Partnership against Rural Crime</b> - <a href="#">Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime   Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime (scottishparc.co.uk)</a></p> <p><b>Women's Aid</b> - <a href="#">Home - Women's Aid (womensaid.org.uk)</a></p> <p><b>Citizens Advice</b> – 08081646000</p> <p><b>Trading Standards</b> - 08081646000</p>
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The Council faced a gap of £40m this year in the revenue and capital budgets, which put at risk the services and maintenance that we all rely on. The decision to increase Council Tax by 10% was one that I was reluctant to take, but despite identifying £4M of savings and looking for other ways to raise income, a multi-million pound budget gap remained. The alternative put forward included measures such as transferring £3.1M of the Health and Social Care Partnership pension gain to the Capital Plan, increasing fees and charges by 8% and depleting funds for future projects. The Council Tax Freeze proposed by the Scottish Government was not fully funded, with the CoSLA budget reality analysis showing a £62.7M cut to Councils. The Council continues to support the CoSLA campaign for fair funding for local authorities in Scotland.

Since then, on Friday 8th March the Council Leader and Depute Leader met with Deputy First Minister Shona Robison and while it is somewhat disappointing that engaging with the Council seems to have been an afterthought for the Scottish Government, I welcome the ongoing discussions to try to address the issues that we face here in Argyll & Bute. Our goal remains to protect the vital services and jobs on which we all rely and I support any constructive dialogue with the Scottish Government that furthers that objective.

I attended the Townscape Heritage Event which highlighted the beneficial impact this funding has had on the built fabric of our town and community. The funding from key partners, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic Environment Scotland and Highlands and Islands Enterprise has allowed the Council to support businesses and owners to reinvigorate buildings on Victoria Street, Montague Street, Argyle Street and the Discovery Centre, building on the successful delivery of the first THI programme.

Thanks to members of the community council for raising the issues of Ardenraig Gardens and Castle Street, Port Bannatyne at public questions at the Area Committee meeting, highlighting the concerns of the community. With Cllr Kennedy-Boyle, I also met with the new BID manager and council officers to discuss a number of issues affecting the town.

The Fyne Homes Management Committee heard a report about the challenges faced with abandoned tenancies and the poor state of repair that some properties are left in and the additional time and money required for these properties to be reallocated. This is particularly frustrating given the Housing Emergency that the area is currently facing, where these properties are much needed to provide new homes.

The capital footway works on Marine road are now complete and preparation works are about to begin for surfacing work on a 300mtr section of the A844 between Ballianlay Farm and Etrick Bay.

I attended the CalMac Community Board Drop In event at the Glenburn Hotel and heard from members of the Community Board and from our own community about the shared experiences being faced across the network, particularly in relation to the new ticketing system and capacity.

At the Argyll & Islands Sounding Board we heard feedback from the Scottish Government's Islands Team on the National Islands Plan with a desire for a more localised approach with more connectivity. It was noted that there had been high expectations with the initial plan but with too many priorities and not enough money the outcome had been disappointing, with members requesting a plan for action, not just a plan.

There are public engagement events planned for w/c 18th March on the A83 Rest and Be Thankful to provide the opportunity to see and comment on the design for the long-term solution to that key route. Unfortunately there are no events planned on the island, however a virtual exhibition is

available at [www.pinpointcloud.co.uk/A83restandbethankful](http://www.pinpointcloud.co.uk/A83restandbethankful) with a deadline for response by 10th May 2024.

Councillor Peter Wallace  
Isle of Bute Ward  
Argyll and Bute Council

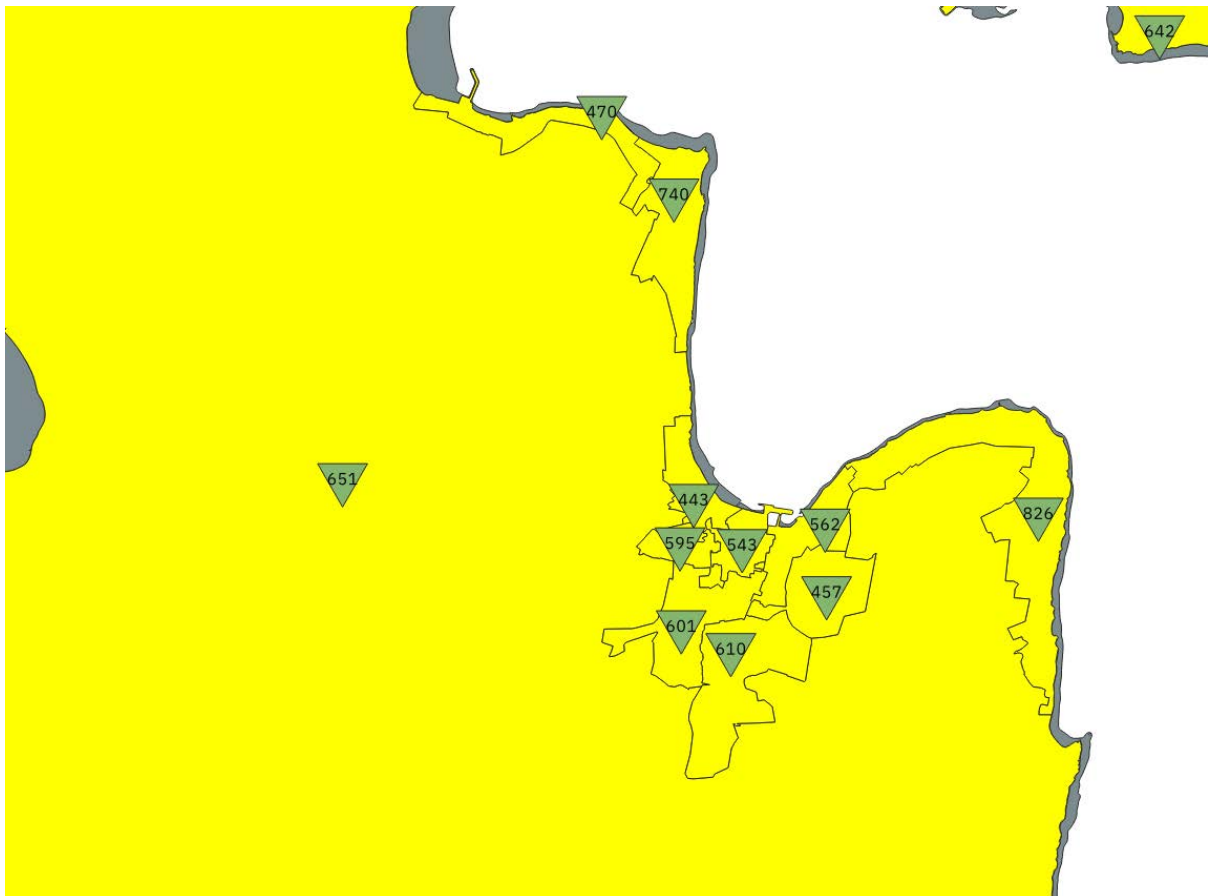
## BUTE POPULATION FROM 2011 CENSUS DATA

To provide context for the discussion on where and how often Bute Community Council meetings are held, the following map was produced from the 2011 Census Data Scottish Data Zones. The 2022 Census Data at this scale is not scheduled to be available till May 2024.

Scottish Data Zones are the most granular data set that the public has access to, to preserve anonymity.

Notes on the following:

- Total Population 2011: 6499
- All of Bute's Population is represented by the visible triangles on the Island; the 642 top-right is only included due to the map view
- The 651 value includes all of Bute not shown, including Mount Stuart and Kilchattan Bay



Contains OS data © Crown copyright 2024

# Youth Consultation

## Young People's views about living on Bute



### Take Time Event

### Rothesay Joint Campus

### Wednesday 15 November 2024



## Overview



Bute youth worker Shona supported by colleague Hugh attended Rothesay Joint Campus to take part in their Take Time event which is held during careers week. This event brings prospective colleges, universities, employers and services together in one place to meet with young people.

Being an island this is a key event as young people cannot always easily travel to events to experience this type of event so often don't have the opportunities that many urban young people have.

This was an ideal opportunity for Youth Services on Bute to hear young people's voices and gather views as the event was open to all pupils in the only secondary school on the island.

Having discussed with Bute Youth Action Group it was decided that we would adapt a consultation that Kintyre Youth Action Group had run previously to find out what young people felt about living on Bute and what supports or services they felt were needed.

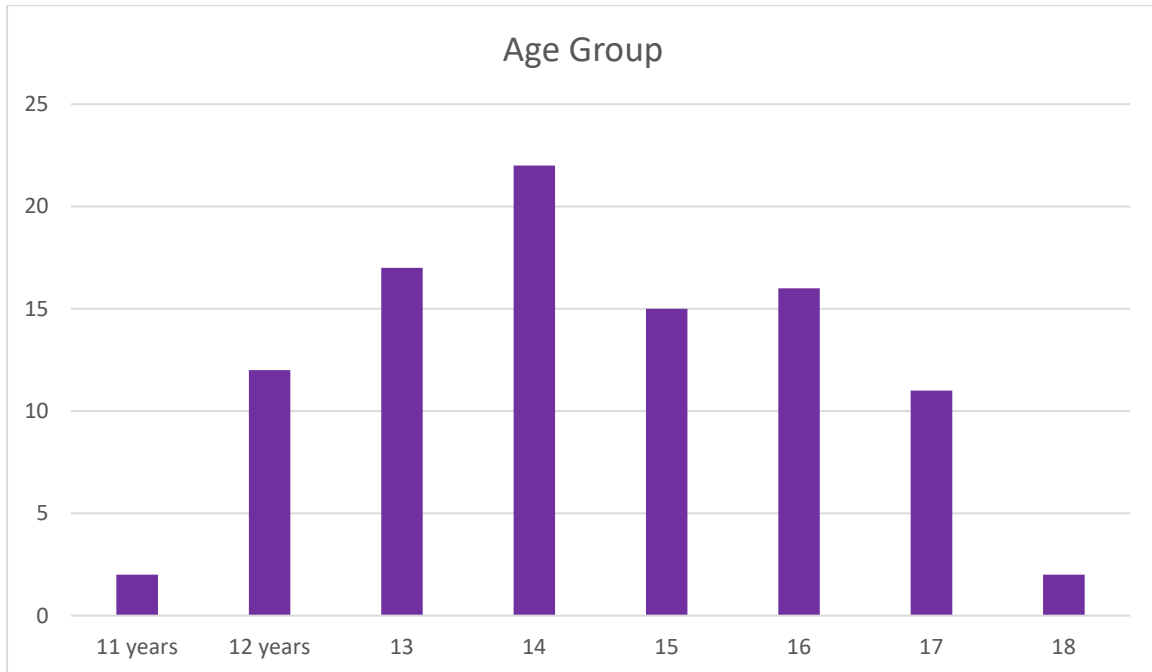
The consultation was completed by young people at the event and the personal data collected was age and their current situation.

The information collected was collated by the worker and then interpreted by members of youth action group to form this report.

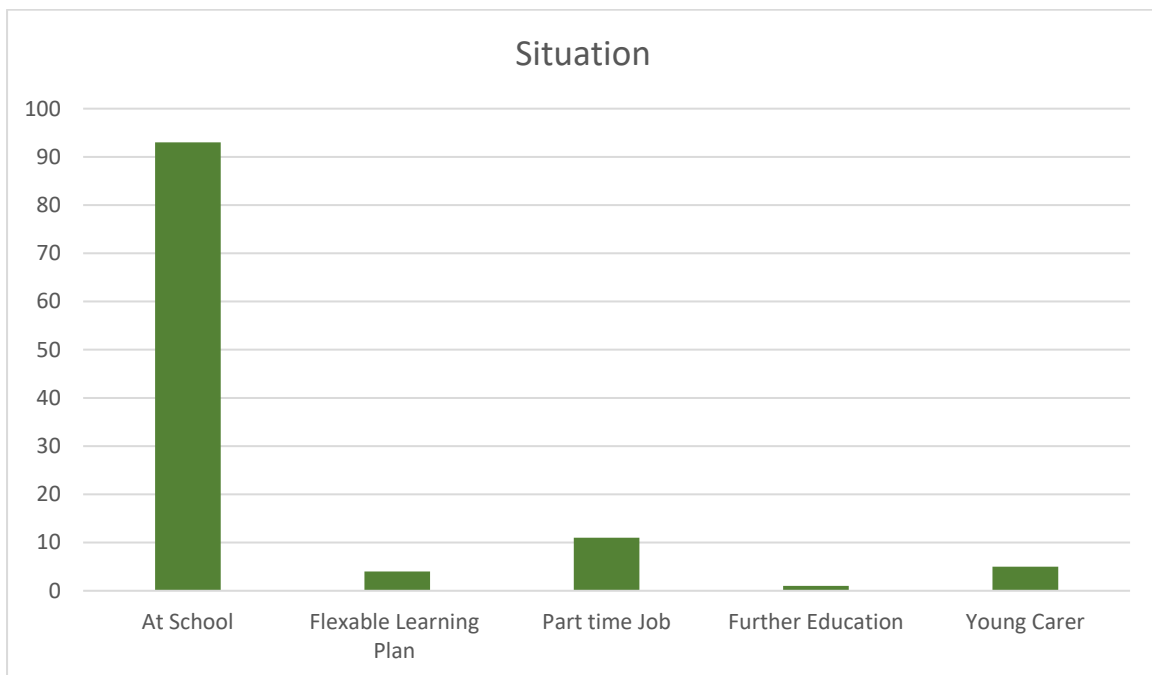
This report will be used to provide feedback to Rothesay Academy staff, Bute Community Council, local councillors and other organisations who want to know the views of young people on Bute. It will also be used by the Youth Services to shape our services on Bute.

Bute Youth Action Group and our Member of Scottish Youth Parliament can draw on relevant information from this report to enable them to share the voices of their peers on Bute and shape any programme of campaign they may take from this information.

On the day 94 Young People between the ages of 11 & 18 who were attending the Take Time event took time to complete our consultation, this is just over a third of all pupils attending the school. All who completed the consultation attend Rothesay Academy of the these young people 4 are on flexible learning plans, 11 have part time jobs out with school and 5 are young carers. 1 young person is in further education doing a volunteer placement within the school.

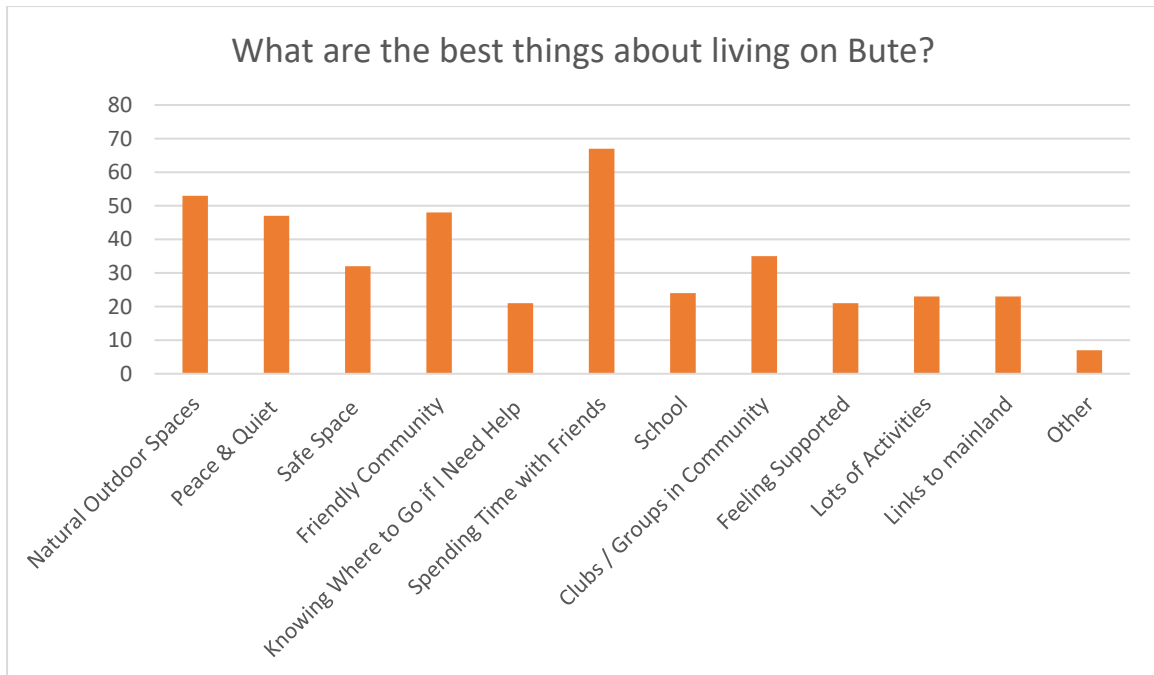


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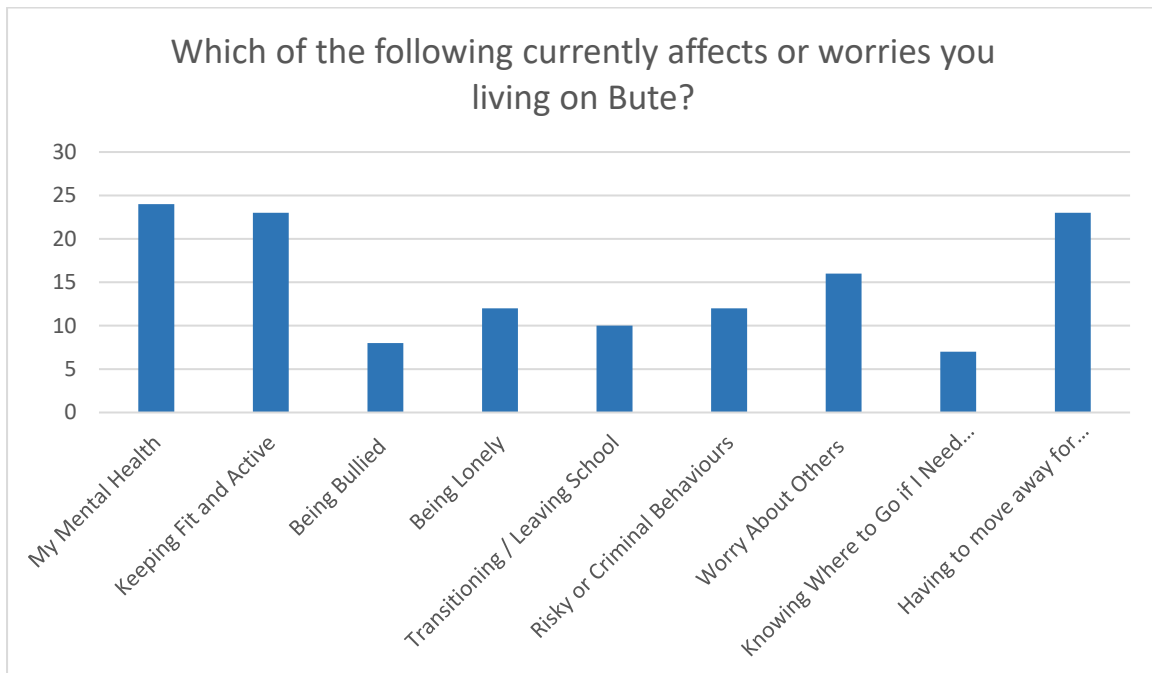
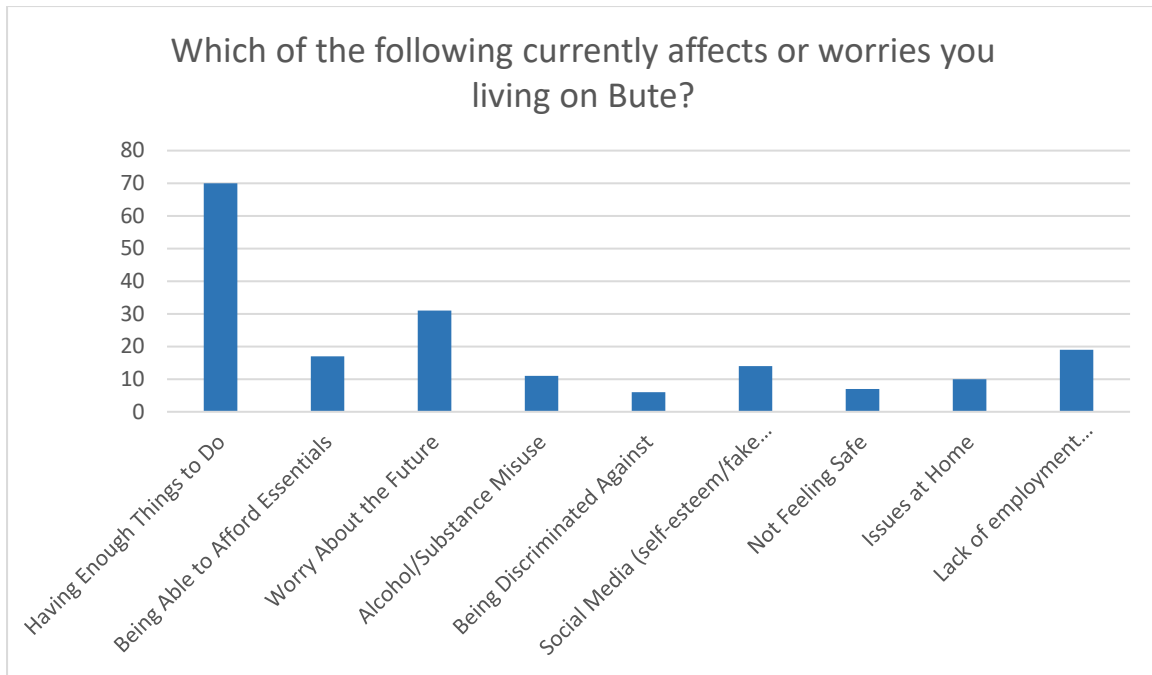


Question 3

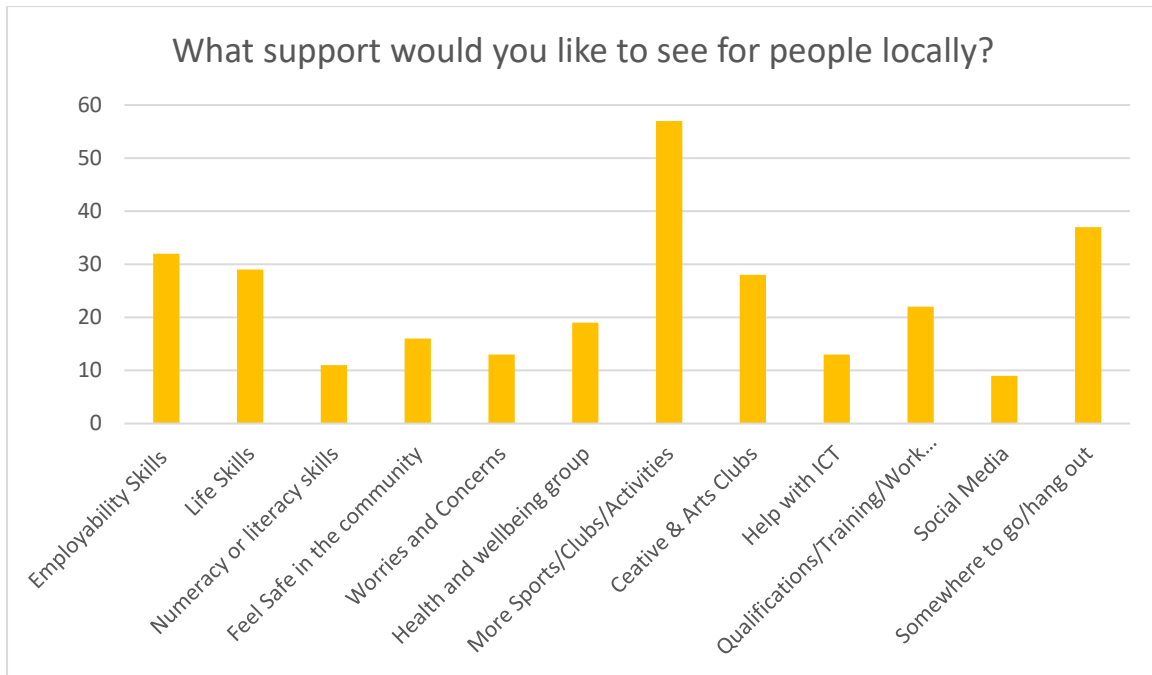


Bute & Kintyre youth exchange July 23

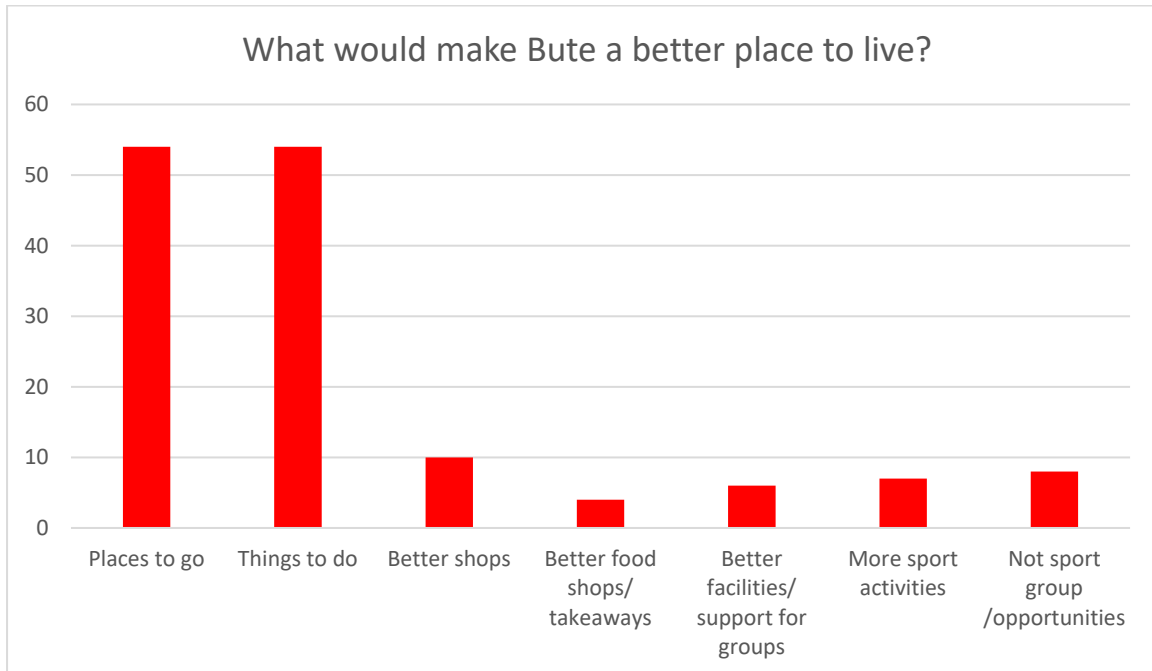
Question 4



Question 5



Question 6



## **Analysis of information**

Young people said that there are lots of good things about living on Bute they liked the natural outdoor spaces and that they felt safe. Most said they loved spending time with their friends and attending groups in the community. Many of the young people are worried about the future being able to access employment or training also having to leave the island to access these opportunities.

An astounding 70 young people have told us that there is not enough for young people to do on Bute. These young people said that this was a massive thing as they have nowhere to go and meet up and this effected their ability to meet friends and socialise in a safe warm environment. 37 of these said they would like somewhere they could go & hang out without being chased. 57 people said that there is a need for more organised activities/ groups and clubs however many of these are already engaged in sports or dancing groups who want more or different to what is available, many young people said there is nothing for non-sporty people.

More than 1/2 of young people said they were worried about their own physical and/or mental health and that they didn't know where to access good support. They told us that the HUB at school is the best place and that other services didn't meet their needs. Young carers support a large amount of young people on Bute (only 5 completed this consultation) they run groups for primary and secondary pupils on alternating Wednesdays after school. Youth services work closely with Young Carers.

The biggest response to what young people felt would make a better place to live was "Places to Go and Thing to do".

## **Additional information**

### **Community Learning Youth Services**

Youth services are part of the Live Argyll Community Learning team, who also offer adult and family learning. This service is a flexible service working both with young people in school and within the wider community. The service is led partially by young people who are involved with planning of activities and projects and statutory commitments which are service wide.

Youth Services;

- Are engaging with young people within school and the community every week
- Support young people to plan and run their own groups in the community promoting youth voice, Youth Action & LGBT inclusion group.
- Work in partnership & act as a links to other groups and organisations. E.g. fire service and young carers
- Support or deliver SQA certified courses and other accredited learning e.g. Youth achievement awards & saltires awards at school & within the community
- Support & train Argyll & Bute MSYP's throughout their terms
- Are working partnership with RJC to support young people to run an Art & Craft group in the HUB during Thursday lunchbreak
- Will be supporting Bute Youth Action group who are going to carry out audit of groups and activities for young people on Bute & create a directory.
- Support ABMSYP's & Bute Youth Action Group to conduct regular consultations with young people

### **In response to the consultation Rothesay Academy have clarified that they currently along with partners Inc. Youth Services and our local community;**

- Have effective pupil councils & pupil leadership teams in place. (Youth Voice)
- All 4<sup>th</sup> year pupils do the Employability Award units as part of their wider achievement classes,
- All pupils in their senior phase are give further employability opportunities tailored to their needs including flexible learning plans to incorporate college courses , volunteering opportunities & work placements as well as Leadership Awards at levels 4, 5 & 6
- Literacy & Numeracy is a core subject which all pupils attend right through school they offer 1-1 support to any pupil who needs this.
- Through some courses pupils are able to attain practical qualifications and awards, e.g. hospitality, sports coaching,
- A variety of lunch and after school clubs/ classes
- Young people on flexible learning plans are able to access alternative classes and opportunities which support life skills.

### **Final Note**

Where possible both Youth Services and Rothesay Joint Campus consult and engage with our young people and try to tailor our services and wider offer to meet the needs of our young people. This means that services are flexible, adaptable and change regularly meeting the needs of our young people as best we can.

# Council tax - empty properties

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/council-tax-and-benefits/council-tax/council-tax-empty-properties>

Argyll and Bute Council

## Double Council Tax charge for long term unoccupied properties starting

If your property is lived in for at least 25 days in the last 12 months, then it is classed as a [second home](#) for council tax purposes, from 1 April 2024 your property will attract a double charge for Council Tax under The Council Tax (Variation for Unoccupied Dwellings) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2023. If it is used for less than 25 days in any rolling 12 month period, then it is regarded as an unoccupied property.

Properties that have been unoccupied for a period of two years or more are not entitled to any [discount of council tax](#) and instead are be subject to an increase to their council tax charge by 100%. Properties unoccupied for less than two years but more than one year will also be subject to the double council tax unless they are being actively marketed for sale or let at appropriate conditions or are undergoing major repair. This will only apply whilst these works are being actively carried out and provided that building warrants and planning permission where necessary have been obtained and there is a schedule of works.

If you have recently purchased a property which has been unoccupied for a considerable period of time prior to your purchase and you are intending carrying out major repairs to the property, you will be eligible for a 50% discount for 6 months from date of purchase. After the 50% discount has expired, a 10% discount may be applicable for a further 6 months if the property is still undergoing repair. An additional 12 months 10% discount is available to new owners where the Planning and Building Control process has taken a significant period of time and there is clear evidence that building works have started.

### Application form - [Council Tax discount - Property marketed for sale](#)

These charges do not apply to purpose built holiday homes incapable of habitation throughout the year or job-related properties.

### Application forms

- [10% Council Tax discount - Property under repair](#)
- [50% Council Tax discount - Properties under repair](#)

These charges were following powers introduced under The Council Tax (Variation for Unoccupied Dwellings) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 (SSI 2013/45). These changes were made to provide an incentive to bring empty properties back into use. If this applies to you, the [council's empty homes officer](#) can provide a range of help to you.

## Council tax enquiries

- Phone us - **01546 605511**
- Email us - [ctax1@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:ctax1@argyll-bute.gov.uk)
- Visit us - At your local [customer service point](#)

# Council tax exemptions and discounts

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/council-tax-and-benefits/council-tax/council-tax-exemptions-and-discounts>

Argyll and Bute Council

## Single person's discount

If you have received notification on a Single Person's Discount Review, [please follow these instructions](#).

Council Tax bills are issued on the assumption that two adults are living in the property. If only one adult lives in the property, the council tax can be reduced by 25%.

Discount	Apply online	Download application form (Microsoft Word)
Single persons over 18 years old 25% discount	<a href="#">Apply online for single person discount</a>	<a href="#">Download application form for single person discount</a>

If someone moves into your property, it may affect your Single Persons Discount - you need to let us know about any [changes to your circumstances](#) - please contact us using the details above to let us know about any changes.

## Status discounts (for people not counted when calculating council tax)

Certain residents can be disregarded when working out the number of adults who live in a property and will mean your bill may be reduced. Examples include students, care leavers up to the age of 26, student nurses, apprentices, long-term hospital patients and people who have a severe mental impairment.

Discount	Apply online	Download application form (Microsoft Word)
Student		<a href="#">Student discount - download application form</a>
Student nurse	<a href="#">Student nurse discount - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Student nurse discount - download application form</a>
Training and apprentices discount		<a href="#">Apprentice discount - download application form</a>
Careworker		<a href="#">Careworker - download application form</a>
Care leaver		<a href="#">Care leaver discount - download application form</a>
Discount for severe mental impairment	Not applicable	<a href="#">Severely mentally impaired - download application form</a>

## Discounts for persons with disabilities

The Council Tax on a property in which a disabled person lives and in which there are special features or facilities required to meet the disabled person's needs is charged at the next lower valuation band. Band A properties will receive a reduction of the same proportion of the bill.

<b>Discount</b>	<b>Apply online</b>	<b>Download application form (Microsoft Word)</b>
Disabled persons band reduction	Not applicable	<a href="#">Disabled persons band reduction- download application form</a>

## **Second home status and discounts for unoccupied homes**

As part of its response to the [Housing Emergency](#), Argyll and Bute Council will be charging double council tax (100% premium) on [Second Homes from 1 April 2024](#). If the Second Home Status is for a period on or after 1 April 2017 and before 1 April 2024 then no discount will be available. A 10% Discount will only be applied to properties for periods before this date.

After this date, you will still need to tell us the status of your second home using our forms to let us know if your property is occupied for more or less than 25 days per year. A second home is a property which is no one's sole or main residence, but which is furnished and lived in for 25 days or more during the previous 12 months. If your property was not lived in for at least 25 days in the last 12 months, then it must be classified as an [unoccupied property](#) rather than as a second home.

A 10% council tax only discount is available for unoccupied properties for a limited period. After a certain period, [double council tax](#) will apply.

<b>Discount</b>	<b>Apply online</b>	<b>Download application form (Microsoft Word)</b>
Second home status	<a href="#">Second home status - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Second home status - download application form</a>
Unoccupied property - 10% discount	<a href="#">Unoccupied property - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Unoccupied property - download application form</a>

Find out more about time periods for discounts and exemptions for empty homes, and additional charges, in our [long term empty homes section](#)

An unoccupied and unfurnished property which is not being actively marketed for sale or let will be eligible for 6 months exemption from council tax from the date last occupied (or from date first entered onto the council tax register for a new build property), followed by 10% discount for 6 months, followed by double the full charge after 12 months. If it is being actively marketed for sale or let, then the period of 10% discount is extended to 18 months before the double charge applies.

A 50% Discount is available for purpose built holiday homes incapable of habitation throughout the year and for job-related properties for an unlimited time period. It is also available for properties under repair for 6 months from date of purchase if these properties are not eligible for exemption as more than 12 months has elapsed since the property was last occupied. These discounts do not apply to water charges.

## **Water charges reduction scheme**

The Water Charges Reduction Scheme provides a reduction of up to 25% automatically to households in receipt of council tax reduction with 2 or more resident adults who are not already in receipt of status discounts.

## **Exemptions from council tax**

There are a number of circumstances where a property may be exempt from Council Tax if all



the relevant criteria are met. The criteria are explained on each application form.

Occupied properties may qualify to be exempt where:

- all the occupants are students or under the age of 18 or care leavers up to the age of 26
- the property is owned by a housing body and is used as trial accommodation for sheltered housing tenants
- all the occupants are severely mentally impaired

Unoccupied premises may qualify to be treated as exempt where the property:

- is undergoing major repair work or structural alteration (available for up to 12 months from the date the property was last occupied)
- is unfurnished (up to six months)
- is empty due to death of occupant
- is being held for use by a minister of religion
- was last occupied by persons disregarded for Council Tax purposes (see above)
- is repossessed or vested in trustee in bankruptcy
- is hard to let because it is part of a larger property
- was last used in connection with agriculture

<b>Exemption</b>	<b>Apply online</b>	<b>Download application form (Microsoft Word)</b>
Empty home (unoccupied and unfurnished - exemption for 6 months maximum)	<a href="#">Empty home - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Empty home - download application form</a>
Homes under repair (unoccupied dwelling undergoing major repair work - exemption for 12 months maximum)	<a href="#">Home under repair - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Home under repair - download application form</a>
New home (unoccupied and unfurnished - exemption for 6 months maximum)	<a href="#">New home - apply online</a>	<a href="#">New home - download application form</a>
Occupant(s) under 18 (all residents must be under 18 for exemption)	<a href="#">Under 18 - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Under 18 - download application form</a>
Home occupied by students (where sole occupant or all occupants are students)	<a href="#">Student exemption - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Student exemption - download application form</a>
Unoccupied home - students	<a href="#">Student (unoccupied) exemption - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Student (unoccupied) exemption - download application form</a>
Repossessed home (unoccupied and subject to repossession)	<a href="#">Repossessed home - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Repossessed home - download application form</a>
Agricultural home (unoccupied, last used for agriculture)	<a href="#">Agricultural home - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Agricultural home - download application form</a>
Home of person made bankrupt (unoccupied home)	<a href="#">Person made bankrupt - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Person made bankrupt - download application form</a>
Visiting forces (occupied or unoccupied)	<a href="#">Visiting forces - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Visiting forces - download application form</a>
Charitable bodies (unoccupied home last used for charitable purposes)	<a href="#">Charitable bodies - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Charitable bodies - download application form</a>
Home last occupied by someone now receiving or providing care	<a href="#">Receiving care / carer - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Receiving care / carer - download application form</a>
Estate of a deceased person (unoccupied home following the death of its single resident)	<a href="#">Estate of deceased person - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Estate of deceased person - download application form</a>

<b>Exemption</b>	<b>Apply online</b>	<b>Download application form (Microsoft Word)</b>
Home for occupation by minister (unoccupied home normally occupied by a minister of religion)	<a href="#">Minister's home - apply online</a>	<a href="#">Minister's home - download application form</a>
Property occupied by severely mentally impaired person	Not applicable	<a href="#">Severely mentally impaired - download application form</a>
Property occupied by a care leaver	Not applicable	<a href="#">Care leaver exemption - download application form</a>

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If you are in receipt of any discounts, exemptions or reliefs and your circumstances change, you must tell us right away. If you do not tell us, you could be fined up to £200.

The information you supply on these forms will be used for the purpose for which you have provided it, and appropriate measures are in place to protect your personal data. A full privacy notice, which provides information about your rights under current data protection legislation and details about what will happen to your personal data can be found here:

- [Privacy Notice - Council tax](#)

## **Council tax reviews for 2021/22**

Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to ensure that they collect all the Council Tax which is due and that any relief granted, such as a Discount or Exemption which are only awarded where there is valid entitlement.

For the current year the reviews that will be undertaken are as follows;

- Single Person's Discount Review

Letters with review forms will be issued to all customers in receipt of Single Person's Discount from Monday 29th November, and the review form needs to be completed and returned as soon as possible.