

OUR PLACE

Our Place – Your Say 2025

Final Report

November 2025

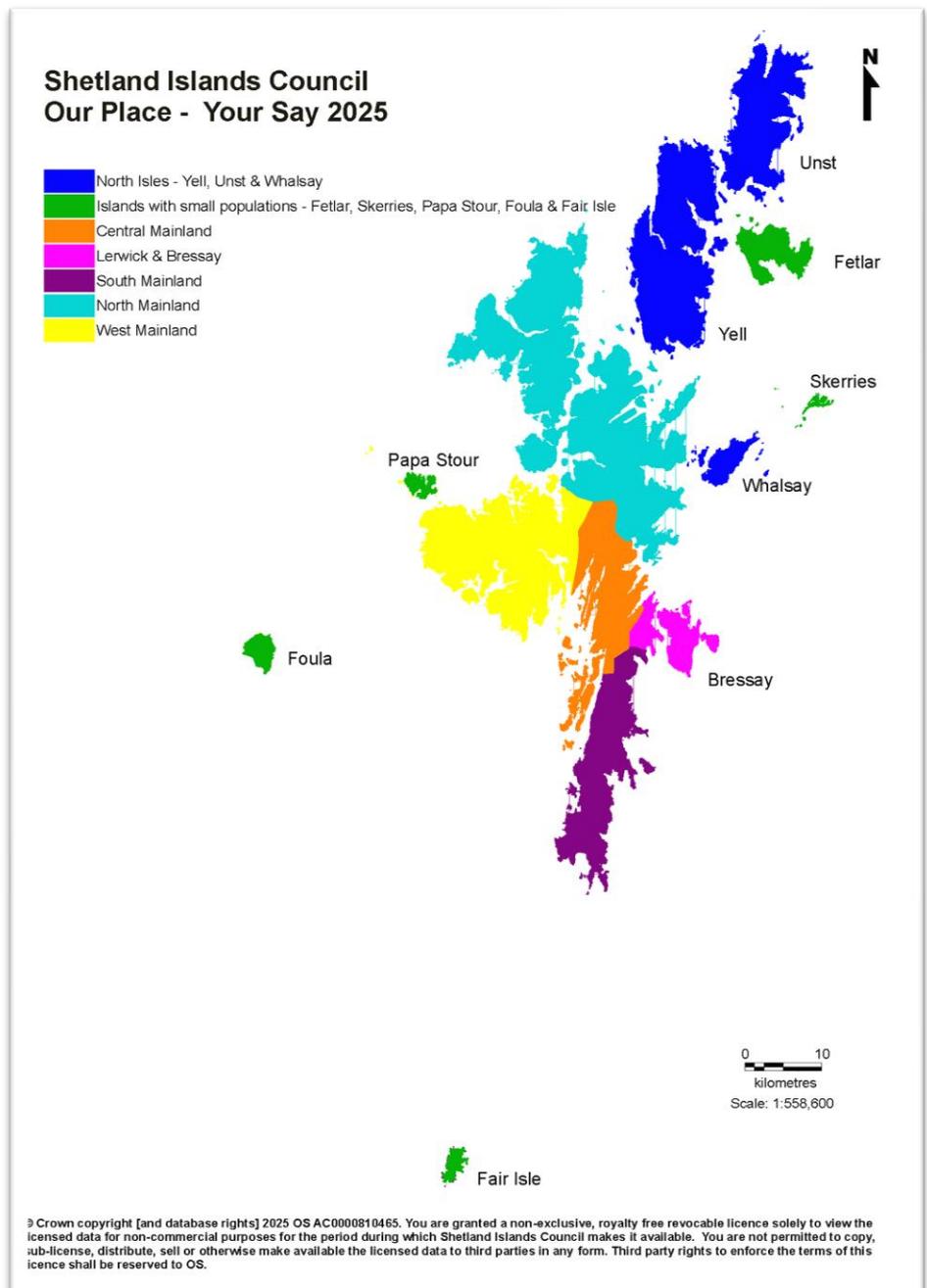


Why Place Matters

The places we live, work, and play shape our health, wellbeing, and opportunities. Research and experience show that the design, function, and character of a place influence everything from social connections to economic prospects. Improving the quality of places is therefore a powerful way to reduce inequalities and strengthen communities.

Understanding what works well—and what needs improvement—helps to target resources effectively and deliver long-term benefits. Everyone deserves to live in a place where they feel safe at home in and proud of, and in Shetland we are fortunate to have exceptional natural and cultural assets. Our challenge is to protect these qualities while addressing areas that fall short of their potential.

This report presents the findings of the 2025 **Our Place – Your Say** consultation, which invited residents to share their views across 15 themes. These themes derive from the new Rural and Islands lens of the **Place Standard** tool, and they ensure that all aspects of Shetland's unique context are fully considered. The consultation builds on lessons learned in 2016 **Our Place** consultation, including the need for clearer comment categorisation and stronger youth engagement. By pre-grouping feedback into positive, negative, and constructive suggestions—and by actively involving under-18s and young adults—we have captured richer insights to guide future action in 2025.



Why the Place Standard tool?

To protect and enhance the places where we live, work and play in Shetland, it is essential to:

- Understand how people feel about where they live
- Provide opportunities for communities to share what needs to change
- Identify the most effective ways to deliver improvements

The nationally developed **Place Standard** tool was again selected as the best way to achieve this. It invites people to assess their local area across 15 key themes, helping to build a rounded picture of what works well and what could be better. Crucially, the Place Standard tool bridges the gap between physical and social aspects of place—highlighting how both influence our health, wellbeing, and quality of life.

Recognising the importance of meaningful engagement without overwhelming communities with repeated consultations, the Place Standard offers a broad and efficient way to gather valuable insights. Its wide-ranging results make it directly relevant to services across the public, private, community and voluntary sectors—supporting joined-up action and long-term impact.

Shetland Islands Council's Development Services Directorate undertook the Shetland place standard (SPS) public consultation between 7th February and 7th March 2025.

Comparative summary 2017 - 2025

The 2025 *Our Place – Your Say* consultation builds on the 2017 exercise, maintaining core themes while introducing refinements to reflect evolving priorities and community expectations.

Key Similarities

- Both reports use the Place Standard framework to assess Shetland's quality of place across multiple dimensions.
- Core themes remain consistent: **Moving Around, Public Transport, Traffic & Parking, Streets & Spaces, Natural Space, Play & Recreation, Facilities & Services, Housing & Community, Social Interaction, Identity & Belonging, Feeling Safe, Care & Maintenance, Influence & Sense of Control, Work & Local Economy.**
- Top priorities in both years include **Public Transport, Housing & Community, and Work & Local Economy.**

Key Differences

- **Additional Theme:** 2025 introduces *Nature & Land Management* as theme 15, and slightly renames *Facilities & Amenities* to *Facilities & Services*. These changes result from applying the Place Standard tool's new **Rural and Islands lens**, which better reflects Shetland's context.

- **Engagement:** 2025 achieved slightly higher participation (947 vs 939 responses) and far more comments (21,412 vs 4,840). This increase stems from learning in 2016 that individual comments were often multifaceted. In 2025, comments were pre-grouped into **positive**, **negative**, and **constructive** categories, enabling richer analysis.
- **Youth Participation:** In 2016, responses from under-18s and young adults were very limited. In 2025, a conscious effort was made to target these groups, resulting in strong youth engagement and separate analysis for under-18 respondents.
- **Analysis Depth:** 2025 provides detailed breakdowns of positive, negative, and constructive suggestions for each theme, supported by charts for comparisons by age and community.
- **Priority Shifts:** While Public Transport remains the top priority, **Moving Around** emerges as a major concern for younger respondents in 2025.
- **Tone:** 2017 had a stronger focus on problems and deficits; 2025 balances ongoing challenges with positive aspects and constructive suggestions.

Implications

The consistency of core priorities suggests enduring challenges in transport and housing. The addition of Nature & Land Management and the stronger youth voice highlight the need for future strategies to integrate environmental stewardship and active travel solutions.

Engagement Summary

Who took part

A total of 945 individuals (Under 18 - 464 & Adults – 481) provided valid responses to the consultation, contributing thousands of individual comments across a wide range of themes. This represents a substantial and meaningful public engagement exercise, generating rich insights that are being evaluated locally and recognised nationally as a model for effective consultation.

Responses were received from 17 of Shetland's 18 Community Council areas, with some variation in participation levels by area albeit broadly reflecting the population distribution across Shetland. The depth and breadth of feedback gathered through the Place Standard tool offer valuable evidence to inform future planning and service delivery across sectors.

Responses by area

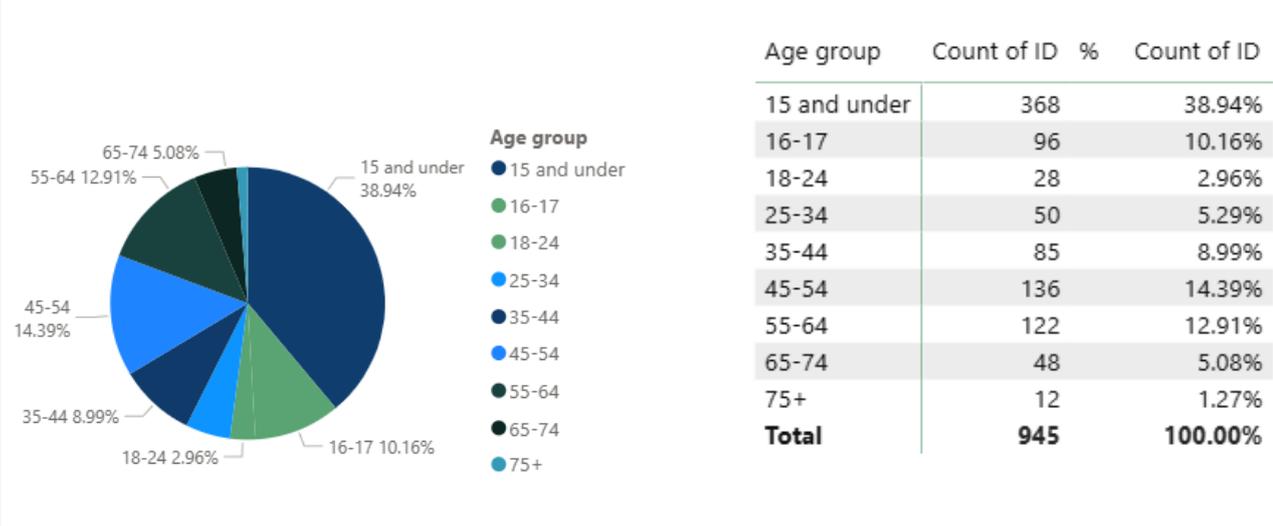
Community Council area (OR island)	Number of responses
☒ Lerwick	194
☒ Yell	78
☒ Dunrossness (Excluding Fair Isle)	76
☒ Tingwall, Whiteness & Weisdale	73
☒ Sandsting & Aithsting	69
☒ Whalsay	67
☒ Gulberwick, Quarff & Cunningsburgh	66
☒ Sandwick	59
☒ Sandness & Walls (Excluding Foula and Papa Stour)	56
☒ Scalloway	43
☒ Delting	36
☒ Unst	34
☒ Burra & Trondra	29
☒ Nesting & Lunnasting	25
☒ Northmavine	16
☒ Bressay	14
☒ Fetlar	4
☒ Fair Isle	3
☒ Papa Stour	2
☒ Foula	1
Total	945

Response rate by locality

Locality	Community Council Areas	Population (Census 2021)	Share of Population by Locality	Number of Responses	Share of Responses by Locality
Central	Scalloway; Burra & Trondra; Tingwall, Whiteness & Weisdale	3,494	15%	145	15%
Lerwick & Bressay	Lerwick; Bressay	6,848	30%	208	22%
North	Delting, Nesting & Lunnasting; Northmavine	3,251	14%	77	8%
North Isles	Yell; Fetlar; Unst	1,542	7%	116	12%
South	Dunrossness; Sandwick; Gulberwick, Quarff & Cunningsburgh	4,494	20%	204	22%
West	Sandness & Walls; Sandsting & Aithsting	2,246	10%	128	14%
Whalsay & Skerries	Whalsay; Skerries	1,065	5%	67	7%
TOTAL	Shetland	22,900	100%	945	100%

Survey responses by age group

Ordered by Age group



Of those who completed the survey, 523 were female (55%) and 401 were male (42%) and 23 prefer not to say (3%).

What Shetland Said

There are three diagrams presented below: One showing the response for the whole of Shetland; One showing results for respondents **under 18 years of age**; And the third for those **aged 18 and over**. The show the **average rankings** of the relevant respondents. The closer the line is to the centre, the more improvement respondents feel is needed.

The diagrams show the scores for all 15 categories across a range of 1 to 7, where 7 equates to 'a lot of improvement needed' and 1 equates to 'no improvement needed'. In summary:

The topics receiving higher scores – requiring little or no improvement - were:

Natural Space, Play & Recreation, and Feeling Safe received relatively strong ratings, indicating general satisfaction with outdoor environments and safety.

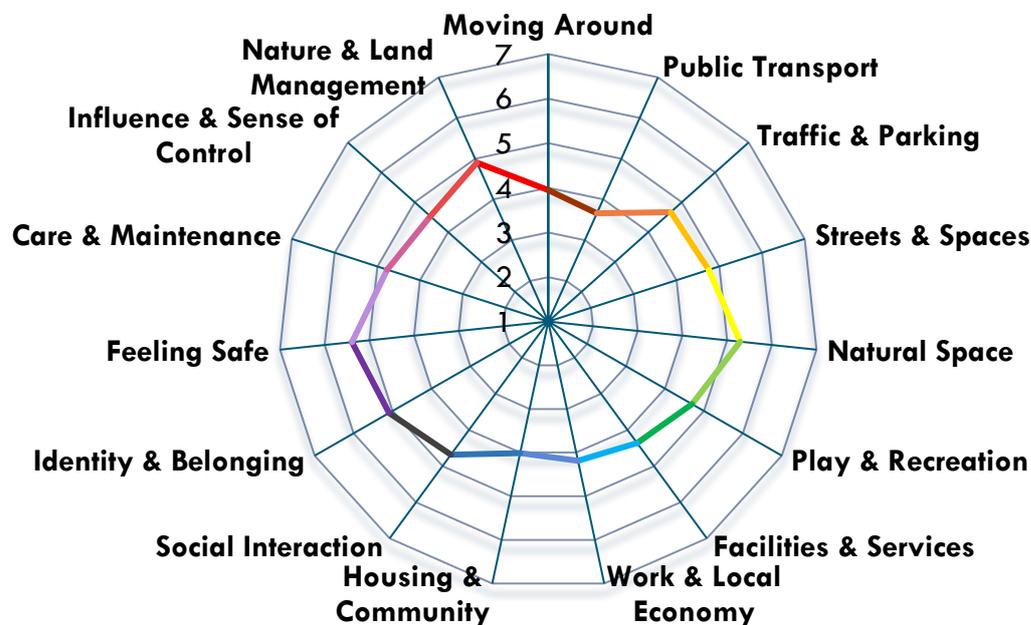
The topics receiving medium cores – requiring some improvement - were:

Social Interaction, Identity & Belonging, and Facilities & Services show balanced feedback, suggesting room for improvement in community cohesion and service accessibility.

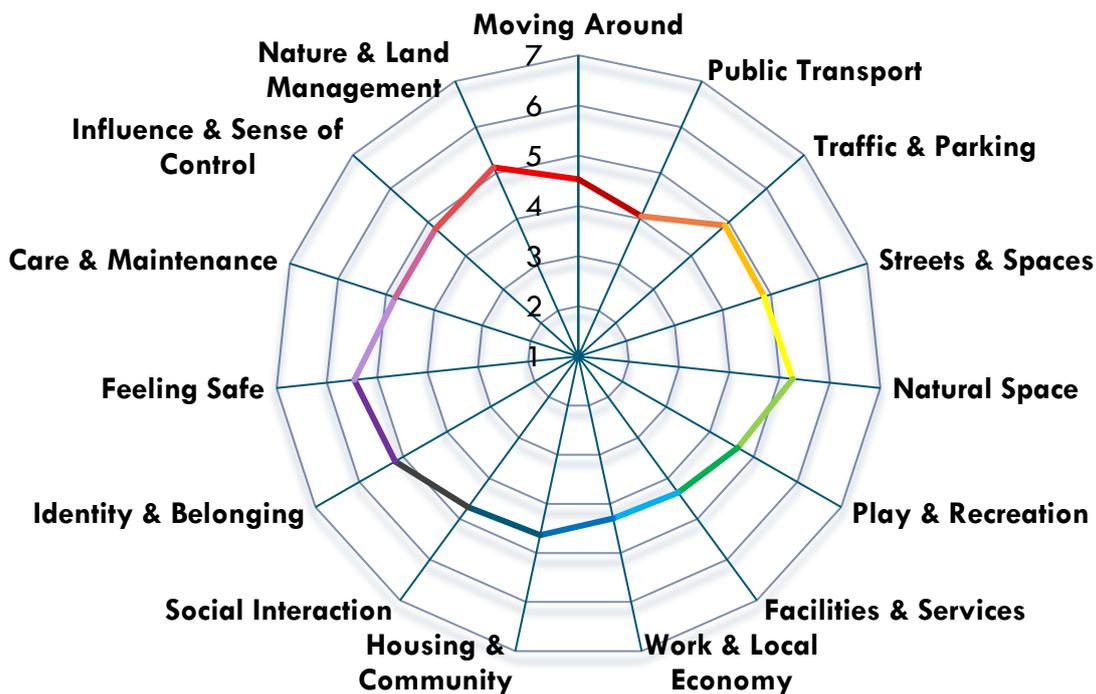
The topics receiving lower scores – requiring improvement - were:

Influence & Sense of Control, Public Transport, and Work & Local Economy were rated lower, reflecting concerns about governance, connectivity, and employment opportunities.

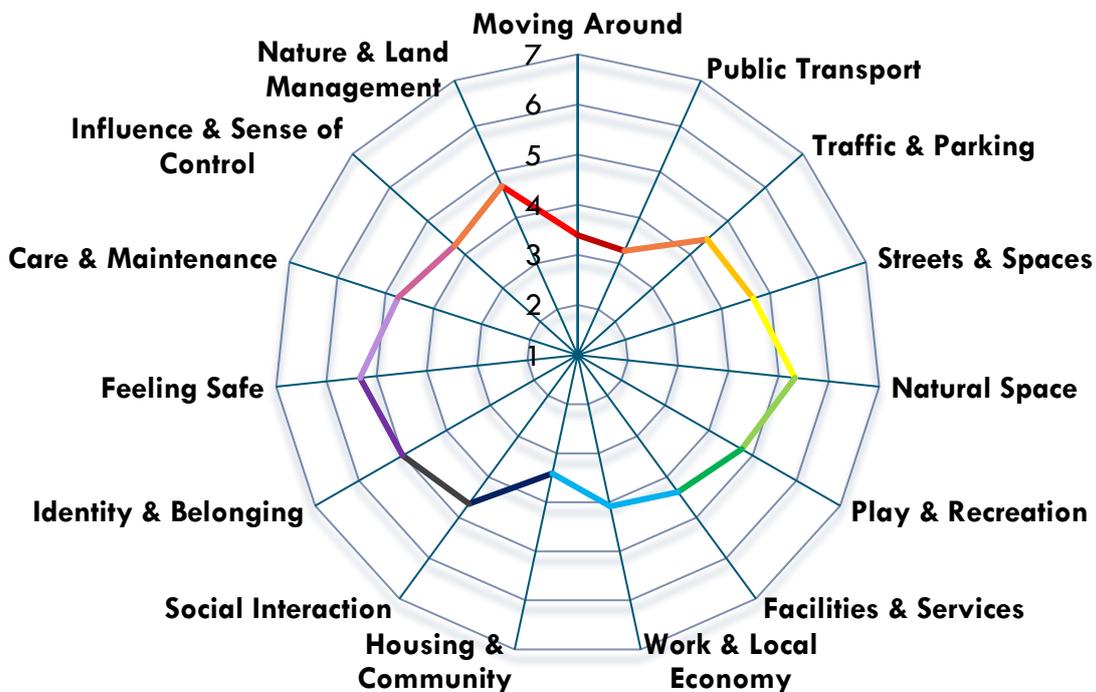
Shetland - all respondents



Shetland - under 18s



18 and over



Response Analysis

Young people (under 18) consistently rated their community experience higher and more positively than adults (18 and over) across most categories, especially in areas like **Moving Around (+1.1)** and **Housing & Community (+1.2)**. Both groups rated **Natural Space, Facilities & Services,** and **Social Interaction** similarly showing shared satisfaction in these areas. Adults gave slightly higher scores for **Play & Recreation**, but overall, youth expressed greater satisfaction across most categories. Ratings are highly likely to be influenced by an individual's direct experience of a given theme.

Category	Under 18	18 and Over	Difference
Moving Around	4.5	3.4	+1.1
Public Transport	4.1	3.3	+0.8
Traffic & Parking	4.9	4.5	+0.4
Streets & Spaces	4.9	4.7	+0.2
Natural Space	5.3	5.3	0.0
Play & Recreation	4.6	4.7	-0.1
Facilities & Services	4.4	4.4	0.0
Work & Local Economy	4.3	4.1	+0.2
Housing & Community	4.6	3.4	+1.2
Social Interaction	4.7	4.7	0.0
Identity & Belonging	5.2	5.0	+0.2
Feeling Safe	5.5	5.3	+0.2
Care & Maintenance	4.8	4.7	+0.1
Influence & Sense of Control	4.8	4.3	+0.5
Nature & Land Management	5.1	4.7	+0.4

Looking at all age groups, the 15 *Place Standard* themes have been grouped into four categories – Community, Economy, Connectivity and Environment. This allows related themes to be considered together. The average ranking by *Place Standard* theme and age group is shown in the four tables below.

Connectivity	Shetland Average	15 and under	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Moving Around	3.73	4.53	4.52	3.64	3.48	3.28	3.18	3.45	3.71	3.75
Public Transport	3.50	4.09	3.95	3.32	3.40	3.14	3.23	3.28	3.37	3.75
Traffic & Parking	4.63	4.86	5.06	5.18	3.92	4.46	4.54	4.37	4.43	4.83
Average	3.95	4.49	4.51	4.05	3.60	3.63	3.65	3.70	3.84	4.11

Community	Shetland Average	15 and under	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Play & Recreation	4.69	4.63	4.65	4.39	4.40	4.47	5.00	4.77	4.98	4.92
Facilities & Services	4.43	4.44	4.02	4.68	4.52	4.22	4.40	4.26	4.39	4.92
Housing & Community	3.79	4.68	4.47	3.39	3.08	2.99	3.46	3.50	3.80	4.75
Social Interaction	4.68	4.71	4.72	4.36	4.30	4.51	4.82	4.63	5.04	5.00
Identity & Belonging	5.13	5.13	5.39	4.86	4.72	4.96	5.09	4.89	5.24	5.92
Feeling Safe	5.42	5.41	5.61	5.82	4.84	5.28	5.52	5.13	5.53	5.67
Influence and Sense of Control	4.39	4.78	4.88	4.46	4.10	3.98	4.35	4.40	4.31	4.25
Average	4.65	4.83	4.82	4.57	4.28	4.34	4.66	4.51	4.76	5.06

Economy	Shetland Average	15 and under	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Work & Local Economy	4.17	4.28	4.35	4.39	4.08	3.76	3.98	4.32	4.10	4.25
Average	4.17	4.28	4.35	4.39	4.08	3.76	3.98	4.32	4.10	4.25

Environment	Shetland Average	15 and under	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Streets & Spaces	4.80	4.82	5.03	5.04	4.42	4.38	4.83	4.53	4.82	5.33
Natural Space	5.37	5.23	5.35	5.50	4.98	5.40	5.39	5.21	5.41	5.83
Care & Maintenance	4.80	4.79	4.86	5.07	4.56	4.87	4.72	4.54	4.96	4.83
Nature & Land Management	4.87	5.13	5.10	5.25	4.60	4.76	4.53	4.63	4.86	5.00
Average	4.96	4.99	5.09	5.22	4.64	4.85	4.87	4.73	5.01	5.25

Comment Analysis

In addition to the quantitative data obtained, all respondents had the opportunity to contribute comments for each of the 15 **Place Standard** themes. A total of **21,412** comments were made and this section summarises the key issues raised in those comments for each of the 15 themes.

The themes are again grouped into four categories – Community, Economy, Connectivity and Environment.

Positive comments reflect what people appreciate about moving around in their area, negative comments highlight barriers and frustrations while neutral comments and suggestions for improvement contain constructive ideas for making things better.

The issues highlighted for each theme are summaries of the most frequent issues raised by respondents. This section therefore serves to highlight the most frequent issues that were raised.

We have not included any '*lone*' comments or '*outliers*' in this report. This does not reflect the importance of such comments or signify in any way how such a comment might be evaluated or acted on. Rather, given the Shetland's small population, the nature, topic or content of an individual comment might inadvertently identify the individual respondent who made it. For reasons of privacy, any such comments have not been included in this report.

Connectivity

Moving around - Walking and cycling are good for both our health and the environment. The design and layout of a place can encourage walking and cycling by providing pleasant and safe routes that connect people to where they want to go.

Most Frequent Positive Comments

- Low traffic volumes – makes walking and driving easier.
- Good bus service – especially in some rural areas.
- Well-maintained roads – particularly single-track roads.
- Friendly bus drivers – noted repeatedly.
- Accessible parking – especially in smaller communities.
- Good walking paths – where available.
- Regular ferry service – when not disrupted.
- Quiet streets – contributing to a sense of safety.
- Scenic walking routes – appreciated for leisure.
- Safe cycling in low-traffic areas.

Most Frequent Negative Comments

- Lack of pavements – especially on rural roads.
- Speeding traffic – particularly near schools and villages.
- Poor lighting – making walking unsafe at night.
- Unreliable ferry services – due to breakdowns or staffing.
- Limited bus services – especially evenings/weekends.
- No safe crossing points – on busy roads.
- Poor road conditions – potholes, narrow verges.
- No cycle paths – making cycling unsafe.
- Congestion near ferry terminals – during peak times.
- Parking issues – especially in Lerwick and tourist areas.

Most Frequent Neutral/Improvement Suggestions

- Install more pavements and cycle paths.
- Reduce speed limits in residential areas.
- Improve lighting in dark areas.
- Better integration of buses and ferries.
- More frequent bus services.
- Create safe pedestrian crossings.
- Add benches and rest areas.
- Improve signage for walking routes.
- Upgrade ferry fleet.
- Add mirrors on blind corners.

Comment Count on Moving Around by Age Group



Public Transport - people have access to affordable, reliable, well connected and sustainable public transport services.

Most Frequent Positive Comments

- Bus service: Regular, reliable, and accessible.
- Affordability: Reasonable fares, especially for buses and ferries.
- Coverage: Good connections in some areas.
- Friendly staff: Bus drivers and ferry crews often praised.
- Cleanliness and comfort: Buses are generally clean and comfortable.

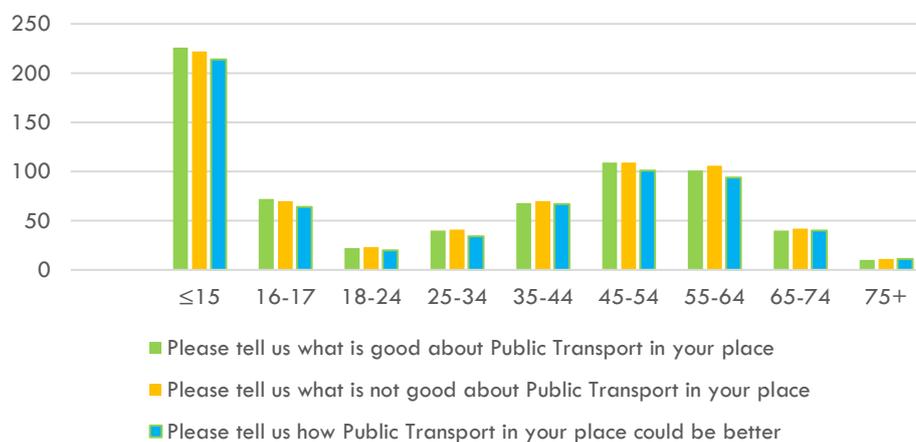
Most Frequent Negative Comments

- Infrequency: Buses and ferries not running often enough, especially evenings and weekends.
- Poor connections: Lack of coordination between buses and ferries.
- Unreliable ferries: Frequent cancellations and delays.
- Limited coverage: Some areas not served at all.
- Accessibility issues: Difficult for people with disabilities or without cars.

Most Frequent Neutral/Improvement Suggestions

- More frequent services: Especially during evenings, weekends, and for shift workers.
- Better coordination: Between buses, ferries, and flights.
- Infrastructure upgrades: More shelters, live tracking, better signage.
- Accessibility: Improved access for disabled users and safer walking routes to stops.
- Affordability: Calls for free or cheaper travel options.

Comment Count on Public Transport by Age Group



Traffic & Parking- Traffic flow and parking are managed in a way that supports safe movement for all users and meets the everyday needs of the community.

Most Frequent Positive Comments

- Plenty of parking
- Low traffic levels
- Roads well maintained
- Drivers considerate
- Good access to facilities

Most Frequent Negative Comments

- Speeding vehicles
- Lack of parking spaces
- Poor lighting
- Unsafe pedestrian areas
- Congestion near ferry terminals or schools

Most Frequent Neutral/Improvement Suggestions

- Parking is adequate at most ferry terminals fs
- Some passing places are hard to pick out in the dark
- Roads are generally good but narrow

Comment Count on *Traffic & Parking* by Age Group



Community

Play & Recreation- People can enjoy a variety of spaces and opportunities for play, leisure, and sport, supporting active lifestyles and social connection across all age groups.

Most Frequent Positive Comments

- Good facilities: especially play parks, community halls, and leisure centres.
- Well-maintained spaces: clean, safe, and accessible.
- Community spirit: many noted strong local involvement and volunteer efforts.

Most Frequent Negative Comments

- Limited access: play areas often closed during school hours or not available locally.
- Outdated or poor-quality equipment: especially in play parks and leisure centres.
- Lack of facilities: particularly for toddlers, teenagers, or people with disabilities.

Most Frequent Neutral/Improvement Suggestions

- More and better equipment: especially modern, inclusive, and fun play structures.
- Improved access: such as better paths, lighting, and transport links.
- More activities and events: especially for youth, older adults, and non-sporting interests.

Comment Count on *Play & Recreation* by Age Group



Facilities & Services- People benefit from convenient access to high-quality local amenities such as shops, schools, healthcare services, nurseries, libraries, and welcoming places to eat, drink, and connect with others.

Most Frequent Positive Comments

- Shops and local services: especially the presence of a good shop or well-stocked local stores.
- Accessibility: many noted that facilities are close by or easy to reach.
- General satisfaction: with phrases like “good,” “are,” and “is” appearing often, indicating overall approval.

Most Frequent Negative Comments

- Lack of facilities: especially no shop, no dentist, or no leisure centre.
- Poor accessibility: issues with transport, distance, or inadequate infrastructure.
- Service gaps: such as not enough support, not open often, or not well maintained.

Most Frequent Neutral/Improvement Suggestions

- More shops and services: especially affordable, accessible, and open more often.
- Better transport and connectivity: including bus services, paths, and parking.
- Improved infrastructure: such as upgraded buildings, more community spaces, and better maintenance.

Comment Count on *Facilities & Services* by Age Group



Housing & Community- A diverse and well-integrated mix of high-quality housing supports people of all ages, household types, and income levels, while contributing positively to the character and sustainability of the local area.

Most Frequent Positive Comments

- Housing availability – many mentioned there are houses available.
- Good housing quality – homes are described as good or well-maintained.
- Community spirit – strong sense of community and support.
- Accessibility – housing is accessible or well-located.
- Safe environment – people feel safe in their neighbourhoods.
- Friendly neighbours – social cohesion is often highlighted.
- Quiet areas – peaceful living conditions.
- Clean surroundings – tidy and well-kept areas.
- Local pride – pride in local identity and heritage.
- Support networks – informal support from neighbours and community groups.

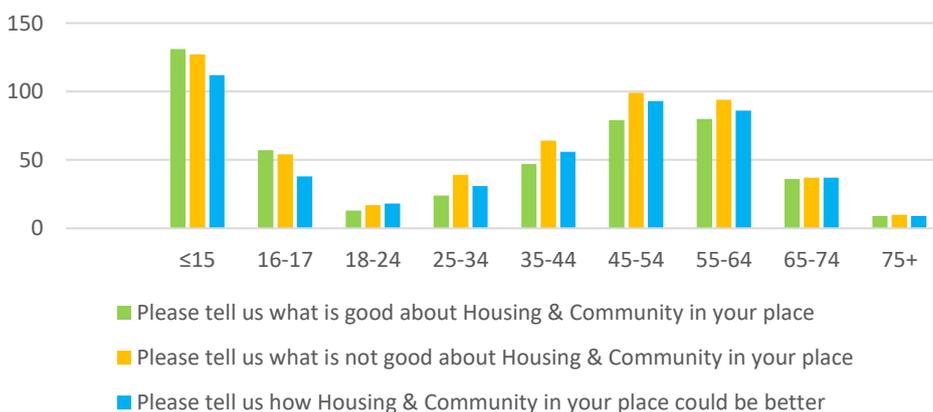
Most Frequent Negative Comments

- Lack of housing – especially for young people and families.
- Poor housing conditions – issues with damp, insulation, or maintenance.
- High costs – housing is too expensive to buy or rent.
- Limited social housing – not enough council or affordable homes.
- Empty homes – properties left vacant or used as holiday lets.
- Planning restrictions – difficulty gaining permission to build.
- Poor accessibility – especially for elderly or disabled residents.
- Isolation – some areas feel socially disconnected.
- Unwelcoming attitudes – newcomers sometimes feel excluded.
- Neglected areas – poor upkeep of public spaces or housing schemes.

Most Frequent Neutral/Improvement Suggestions

- Build more housing – especially affordable and social housing.
- Renovate empty homes – bring unused properties back into use.
- Improve housing quality – better insulation, repairs, and maintenance.
- Support young people – help them get started with housing.
- Encourage community events – to strengthen social bonds.
- Improve planning processes – make it easier to build or renovate.
- Increase accessibility – for disabled and elderly residents.
- Reduce housing costs – make homes more affordable.
- Support volunteers – to maintain halls and community spaces.
- Create mixed housing schemes – for diverse age and income groups.

Comment Count on *Housing & Community* by Age Group



Social Interaction- A variety of well-designed, welcoming spaces are available for people to connect, socialise, and build relationships within the community.

Most Frequent Positive Comments

- Community: Strong sense of community and helpfulness.
- People: Friendly and supportive neighbours.
- Good: General satisfaction with social interaction.
- Togetherness: Many responses highlight people coming together, especially in times of need.

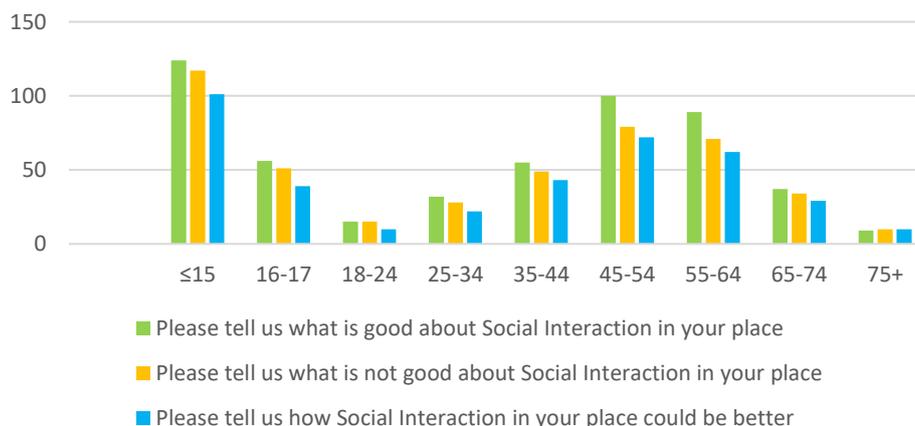
Most Frequent Negative Comments

- Not enough: Lack of opportunities or spaces for interaction.
- People: Some mention exclusion or cliques.
- Access: Difficulty accessing events or facilities.
- Isolation: Feelings of being left out or disconnected.

Most Frequent Neutral/Improvement Suggestions

- More events: Requests for more community activities and gatherings.
- Better access: Improved transport or facilities to enable participation.
- Support for people: Especially for youth, elderly, and newcomers.
- Inclusive spaces: Places where everyone feels welcome.

Comment Count on *Social Interaction* by Age Group



Identity & Belonging- A strong and positive sense of place is fostered through shared community values, local heritage, and inclusive spaces that reflect the identity of the people who live there. When individuals feel connected to their surroundings and recognised within their community, it builds a sense of belonging, pride, and mutual respect. This connection encourages active participation, strengthens relationships, and contributes to a resilient and welcoming environment where everyone feels they have a place.

Most Frequent Positive Comments:

- Community: Frequently mentioned as a strength — people value a strong, supportive, and friendly community.
- People: Highlighted as kind, helpful, and welcoming.
- Togetherness: Many responses reflect appreciation for how people come together, especially in times of need.

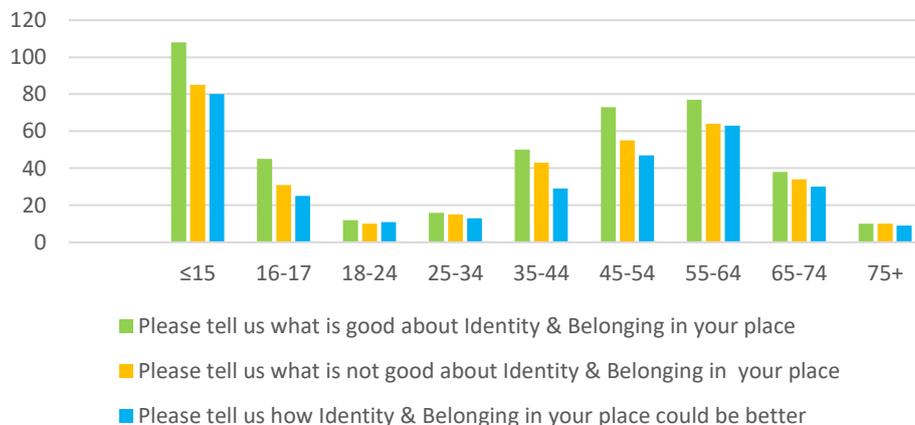
Most Frequent Negative Comments

- People: Some comments mention issues like cliques, exclusion, or lack of engagement.
- Not enough: A recurring theme is the lack of opportunities, events, or spaces for interaction.
- Isolation: Feelings of being left out or disconnected were noted.

Most Frequent Neutral/Improvement Suggestions

- More: Requests for more events, activities, and opportunities to connect.
- People: Suggestions often focus on improving inclusion and support for different groups (e.g. youth, elderly, newcomers).
- Access: Calls for better access to facilities, transport, and community spaces.

Comment Count on Identity & Belonging by Age Group



Feeling Safe- Reducing crime, tackling antisocial behaviour, and addressing the fear of crime to help communities feel safer and more secure.

Most Frequent Positive Comments

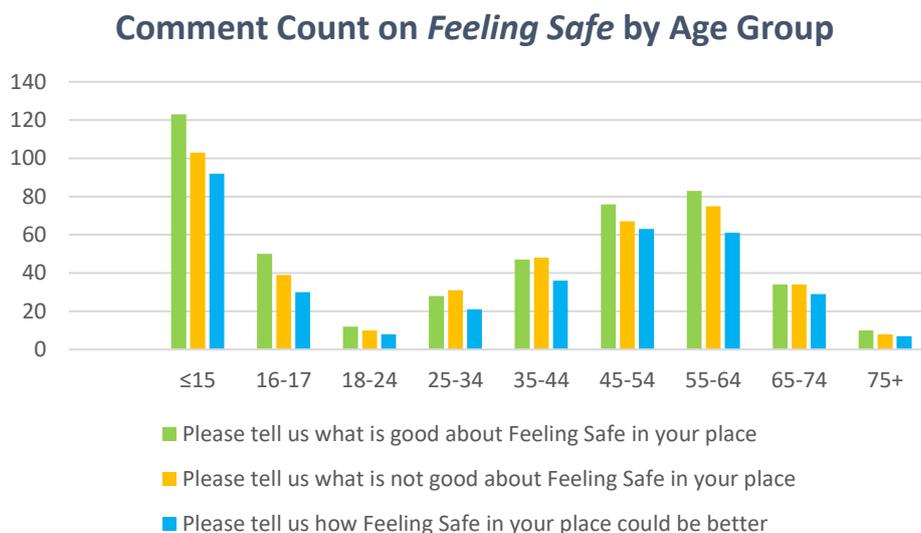
- Community — strong sense of connection and support
- Safety — many feel safe in their area
- Low crime — frequently mentioned as a positive aspect
- Trust — people feel they can trust neighbours
- Lighting — good street lighting in some areas

Most Frequent Negative Comments

- Traffic speed — fast or reckless driving is a major concern
- Antisocial behaviour — especially from youth groups
- Drug use — frequently mentioned as a growing issue
- Poor lighting — in some areas, especially near schools or paths
- Lack of police presence — contributes to feelings of vulnerability

Most Frequent Neutral/Improvement Suggestions

- More police presence — especially in rural or isolated areas
- Better street lighting — to improve visibility and safety
- Traffic calming measures — speed bumps, lower limits, enforcement
- Footpaths and cycle paths — to separate pedestrians from vehicles
- Community engagement — more activities for youth, neighbourhood watch



Influence and Sense of Control- residents feel confident in their ability to contribute to local decision-making and are empowered to take action that strengthens community connections and enhances the quality of their surroundings.

Most Frequent Positive Comments

- Community — strong sense of belonging and mutual support
- Personal agency — many feel they can influence local matters
- Trust and safety — feeling heard and respected
- Participation — opportunities to be involved in decisions

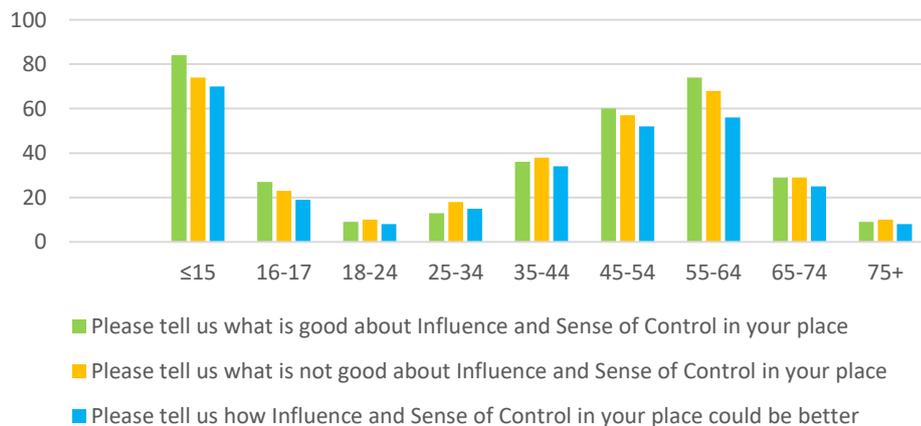
Most Frequent Negative Comments

- Lack of influence — feeling decisions are made without local input
- Poor communication — limited transparency from authorities
- Disconnection — some feel excluded or unheard
- Frustration with systems — bureaucracy or slow responses

Most Frequent Neutral/Improvement Suggestions

- More community involvement — inclusive decision-making
- Better communication — clearer updates and feedback loops
- Empowerment — giving residents more control over local issues
- Support structures — resources to help people engage effectively

Comment Count on *Influence & Sense of Control* by Age Group



Economy

Work and Local Economy- A flourishing local economy that supports diverse employment opportunities and fosters a dynamic, welcoming atmosphere where people enjoy living, working, and spending time.

Most Frequent Positive Comments

- Work availability — many noted there are jobs, plenty of work, or lots of opportunities
- Local economy — appreciation for local businesses and job opportunities
- Good employment environment — some described the area as having good work options or available jobs

Most Frequent Negative Comments

- Lack of jobs — especially for young people, specialised roles, or career progression
- Limited opportunities — mentions of no work, lack of jobs, or few options
- Economic challenges — some noted low wages, seasonal work, or reliance on specific industries

Most Frequent Neutral/Improvement Suggestions

- More jobs — especially diverse, full-time, and skilled roles
- Support for local businesses — investment and incentives to grow the local economy
- Better infrastructure — including transport, training, and digital access
- Youth employment — creating opportunities for young people and career pathways

Comment Count on *Work & Local Economy* by Age Group



Environment

Streets and Spaces- Well-designed buildings, streets, and public spaces contribute to an attractive and accessible environment, making it easy for people to move around and enjoy their surroundings.

Most Frequent Positive Comments

- Well-maintained streets and public areas — described as good, clean, and well-kept
- Accessibility — areas that are easy to navigate and pleasant to walk through
- Sense of pride — many noted that their streets and spaces contribute to a positive community image

Most Frequent Negative Comments

- Street conditions — mentions of poor lighting, damaged pavements, and lack of seating
- Neglect or underinvestment — some areas are not maintained, overgrown, or uninviting
- Safety issues — concerns about traffic, visibility, and antisocial behaviour

Most Frequent Neutral/Improvement Suggestions

- More investment in infrastructure — including better lighting, street furniture, and pathways
- Improved maintenance — regular cleaning, weed removal, and repairs
- Enhancing public spaces — adding greenery, benches, and community features to make areas more welcoming

Comment Count on Streets & Spaces by Age Group



Natural Space- Residents enjoy access to high-quality natural spaces, including parks, woodlands, open fields, streams, and coastal areas, as well as green corridors alongside paths and roadways that enhance wellbeing and encourage outdoor activity.

Most Frequent Positive Comments

- Beaches and coastal areas — mentioned as nice, good, and plentiful
- Natural beauty — references to natural spaces, green areas, and scenic views
- Access to outdoor areas — including fields, paths, and open spaces
- Peacefulness and enjoyment — many described natural spaces as pleasant and important for wellbeing

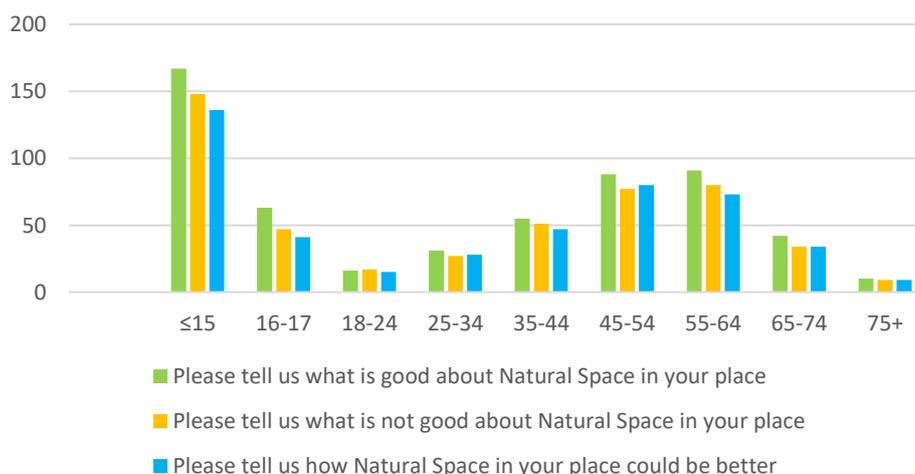
Most Frequent Negative Comments

- Littering — especially on beaches and public paths
- Limited access — some areas are hard to reach or not well maintained
- Neglect or lack of care — mentions of overgrown areas, lack of seating, or poor signage
- Underutilised spaces — some feel natural areas are not inviting or underdeveloped

Most Frequent Neutral/Improvement Suggestions

- More maintenance — regular clean-ups, litter bins, and path upkeep
- Better access — improved pathways, signage, and transport links
- Tree planting and biodiversity — calls for more trees, wildflower areas, and habitat protection
- Community use — suggestions for picnic areas, play spaces, and events in natural settings

Comment Count on *Natural Space* by Age Group



Care and Maintenance - Buildings and public spaces are well cared for, contributing to a pleasant and functional environment. Residents feel supported and confident in their surroundings, fostering a sense of pride and wellbeing.

Most Frequent Positive Comments

- Clean and well-maintained areas — many noted that spaces are generally clean, well looked after, and free from vandalism
- Low levels of litter and graffiti — especially in comparison to other places
- Reliable services — such as regular bin collections and responsive maintenance teams

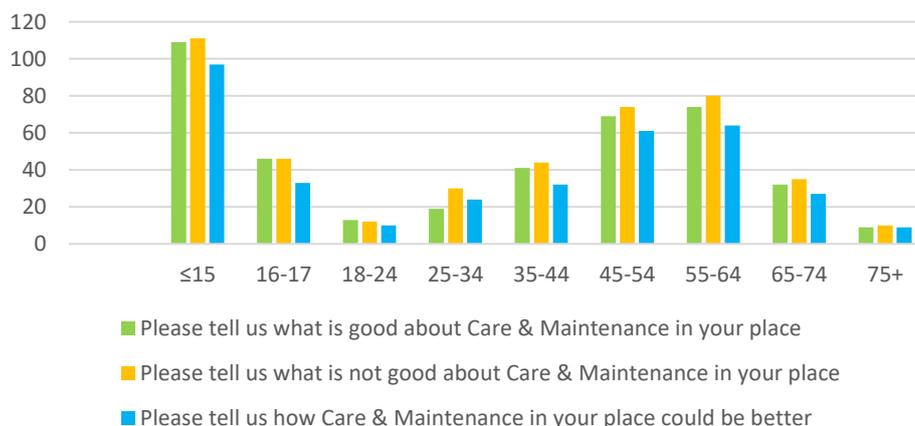
Most Frequent Negative Comments

- Litter and dog fouling — especially in public areas and along paths
- Inadequate bin provision — not enough bins or bins overflowing
- Neglected areas — mentions of overgrown verges, damaged pavements, and poor upkeep
- Slow response to issues — delays in repairs or lack of follow-up

Most Frequent Neutral/Improvement Suggestions

- More bins — especially for dog waste and litter hotspots
- Regular maintenance — including road repairs, weed control, and cleaning schedules
- Better responsiveness — quicker action on reported issues
- Community involvement — encouraging local pride and volunteer clean-ups

Comment Count on Care & Maintenance by Age Group



Nature and Land Management

Most Frequent Positive Comments

- Good land management — many noted that land is well cared for and natural areas are maintained
- Access to nature — including open spaces, wildlife, and scenic landscapes
- Environmental quality — references to clean air, biodiversity, and natural beauty

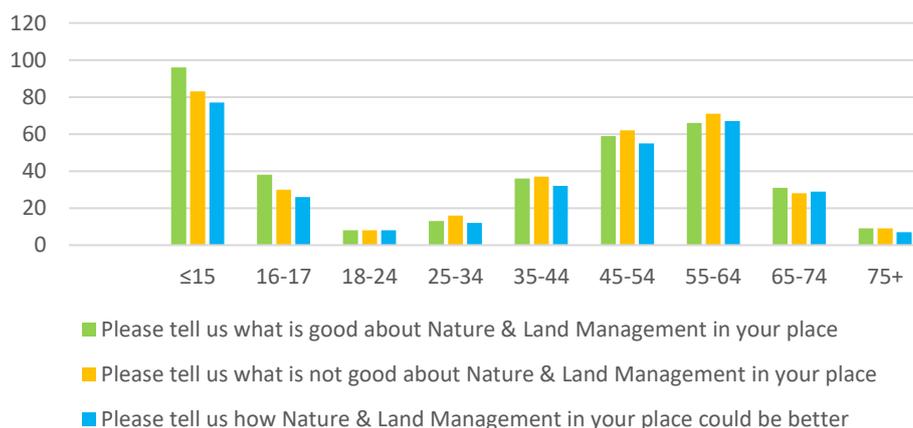
Most Frequent Negative Comments

- Neglected land — mentions of poor upkeep, overgrown areas, and lack of attention
- Limited access or use — some areas are underutilised or not accessible
- Environmental degradation — concerns about pollution, erosion, or loss of biodiversity

Most Frequent Neutral/Improvement Suggestions

- More active land management — including regular maintenance, tree planting, and habitat restoration
- Better access and signage — making natural areas easier to reach and more inviting
- Community involvement — encouraging local stewardship and volunteer-led initiatives
- Sustainable practices — calls for eco-friendly approaches and long-term planning

Comment Count on Nature & Land Management of Control by Age Group



Shetland's Priorities by Age

As in 2016, respondents were asked to rank their top three priorities for improvement. The two tables below show how the under 18s and 18s and over chose their top three. For the 18s and over, Public Transport received 225 votes, Housing and Community 196 votes and Moving Around 141 votes. The under 18s gave Public Transport 311 votes, Moving Around 129 votes and Housing and Community 128. **For Shetland as a whole, the top priority for improvement was *Public Transport*, *Housing and Community* was second and *Moving Around* third.**

Top three priorities – 18 and over

THEME	Top priority	Second Priority	Third Priority	Total
Moving Around	66	40	35	141
Public Transport	116	61	48	225
Traffic & Parking	39	42	33	114
Streets & Spaces	13	22	17	52
Natural Space	8	24	15	47
Play & Recreation	17	31	44	92
Facilities & Services	19	47	57	123
Work & Local Economy	21	40	51	112
Housing & Community	91	60	45	196
Social Interaction	9	16	24	49
Identity & Belonging	4	5	12	21
Feeling Safe	20	21	18	59
Care & Maintenance	21	26	23	70
Influence & Sense of Control	12	22	23	57
Nature & Land Management	26	25	37	88
Total	482	482	482	

Top three priorities – under 18

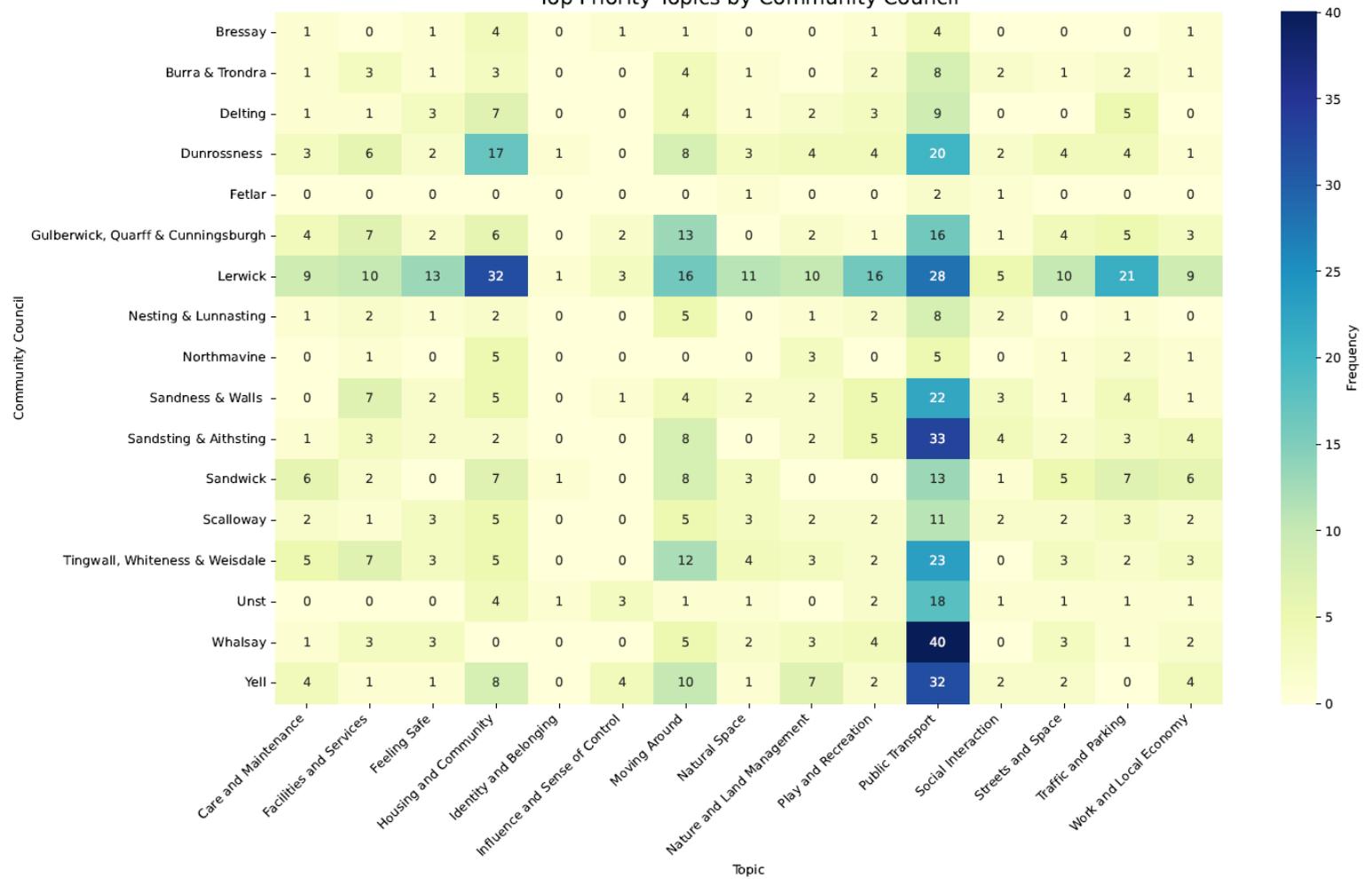
THEME	Top priority	Second Priority	Third Priority	Total
Moving Around	38	48	43	129
Public Transport	176	84	51	311
Traffic & Parking	22	28	24	74
Streets & Spaces	26	40	31	97
Natural Space	25	32	31	88
Play & Recreation	34	48	46	128
Facilities & Services	35	44	46	125
Work & Local Economy	18	35	44	97
Housing & Community	21	30	42	93
Social Interaction	17	17	19	53
Identity & Belonging	0	2	5	7
Feeling Safe	17	17	29	63
Care & Maintenance	18	20	24	62
Influence & Sense of Control	2	4	5	11
Nature & Land Management	15	15	24	54
Total	464	464	464	

Shetland's Priorities by Community Council

The three tables below show how respondents ranked their top three priorities by Community Council area.

For Shetland as a whole, the top priority for improvement was **Public Transport, Housing and Community** was second and **Moving Around** third.

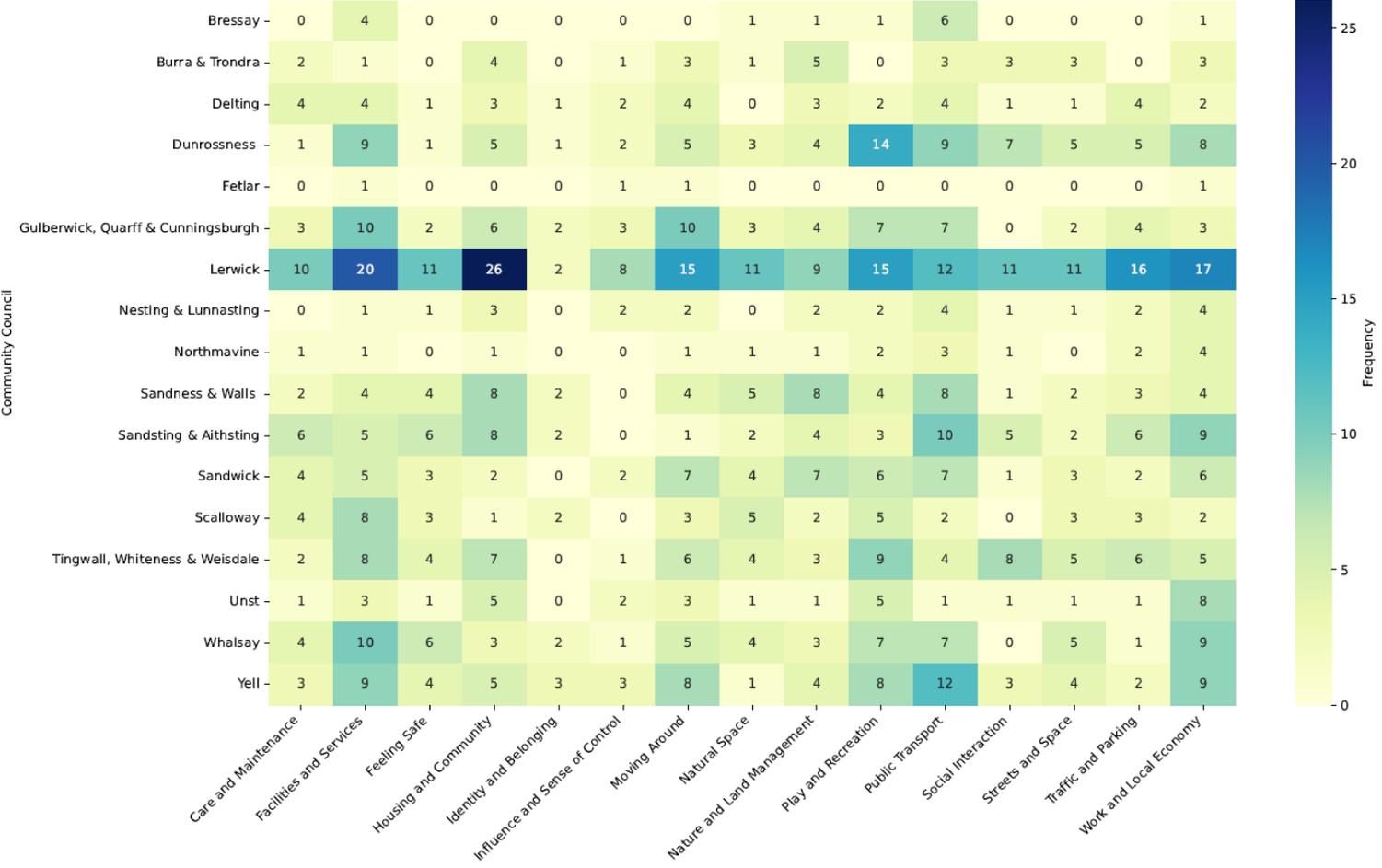
Top Priority Topics by Community Council



Second Priority Topics by Community Council



Third Priority Topics by Community Council



Conclusions

The insights gathered through this consultation will help inform key strategies and plans, including The Shetland Islands Council Corporate Plan, the next Local Development Plan, Community Action Plans and Local Place Plans. The data gathered will also guide community-level discussions and investment decisions.

Our next steps are clear:

- Share findings widely with communities and stakeholders.
- Work collaboratively to address priority areas—particularly transport, housing, and opportunities for active travel.
- Integrate environmental stewardship and land management into planning and service delivery.
- Ensure young people's voices continue to shape decisions about Shetland's future.

The success of this consultation lies not only in the depth of engagement but in how we act on what we've learned. Together, we can make Shetland an even better place to live, work, and thrive.

Notes

To ensure maximum accessibility to, and value of, the data collected:

1. An anonymised data pack will be made available so that partners, stakeholders and community groups can interrogate the data gathered in more detail.
2. Copies of this report can be made available in alternative formats if required.

To get in touch regarding the above, or for any other enquiries, please contact us at:

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