



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Rural Affairs Committee

Ariane Burgess MSP

Tim Eagle MSP

Kristopher Leask MSP

Morven-May MacCallum MSP

Donald MacKinnon MSP

Liam McArthur MSP

Jenni Minto MSP

16 September 2026

Dear colleagues,

Re: Islands Act post-legislative scrutiny

Thank you for your letter regarding post-legislative scrutiny of the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018.

The Committee welcomes your reflections on the operation of the Act and, in particular, the concerns you have highlighted regarding the implementation and effectiveness of Island Communities Impact Assessments and the wider ambition of island proofing.

The Committee has recently written to the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs seeking an update on the Scottish Government's work on rural proofing and the proposed Rural Renewal Bill. In doing so, the Committee shared the issues raised in your letter, including the extent to which the needs and circumstances of island communities are being considered effectively in policy development and decision-making.

The Committee will consider this issue, and the Cabinet Secretary's response to it, as part of its discussions on potential future work. I have also asked clerks to share the Cabinet Secretary's response with you once it has been received.

In the short-term, should Members, or a representative of this cross-party grouping of Members, wish to explore these matters further, I have also asked clerks to advise Members should an opportunity to question the Scottish Government on this topic arise.

Contact: Rural Affairs Committee, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP.
Email rural.committee@parliament.scot. We welcome calls through Relay UK and in BSL through Contact Scotland BSL.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mark Ruskell', with a horizontal line underneath.

Mark Ruskell MSP
Convener