**Covid-19 and Islands**

***Orkney Islands, Scotland***

1. What actions are being taken to protect the island community from Covid 19? In particular, how are travel restrictions being put in place and enforced?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| S. Davidson | 22 March 2020 | * As of 22 March, ferry travel to islands will now only be allowed for residents and essential services. However, how this will be implemented and controlled, is not yet clear. |
| Neil Kermode  OREF  [neil.kermode@gmail.com](mailto:neil.kermode@gmail.com) | 23 April 2020 | * Ferries to the Isles now limited to supplies and to people returning home. No visitors permitted. Even tighter between mainland Orkney and other isles. * Instructed to remain in houses and not travel. * Hospital workers organised and mobilising workers from other health sectors. * Non-food shops shut. Pubs and restaurants shut. * Local gin distilleries now making sanitiser. * Schools shut. * Ban on more than 2 people gathering. General social shut down for 3 weeks (now in Day 2), businesses dispersed staff and working from home where possible. |
| Gareth Davies  [gareth.davies@aquatera.co.uk](mailto:gareth.davies@aquatera.co.uk) | 7 May 2020 | * Internal and external air and ferry services are restricted to emergency and essential users only (including mariners and offshore oil and gas workers). All visitors have been asked to leave. No new visitors are allowed. |

1. What actions will be taken should people on the island have Covid 19?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| S. Davidson | 22 March 2020 | * Testing in Scotland in general is extremely limited. Contact tracing is basically non-existent in general. * Isles testing numbers are being kept from the public under the excuse of confidentiality which is a) not appropriate, because for example in Orkney around 22,000 people live there and b) it has so far given people the (false) perception of safety through remoteness. * General advice is quarantine at home if experiencing symptoms, call NHS24 helpline or GP if severe and discuss further steps. |
| Neil Kermode  OREF  [neil.kermode@gmail.com](mailto:neil.kermode@gmail.com) | 23 April 2020 | * Local hospital is mobilised and prepared to handle a small number. It has been stated that more serious cases will be flown to larger hospitals on mainland Scotland , however it is doubtful if there will be space elsewhere. Some local reports have shown that people have been able to be supported at home with the right (oxygen) therapy. |
| Gareth Davies  [gareth.davies@aquatera.co.uk](mailto:gareth.davies@aquatera.co.uk) | 7 May 2020 | * Normal Scottish process followed. Non critical symptoms - self medicate, if breathing difficulties or more serious symptoms hospitalisation locally in central hospital on main island, but no ICU on the island, so any seriously ill people are transferred by air ambulance to Aberdeen. No outbreak in care homes so far. |

1. What actions are being taken to ensure that essential goods and services are provided to the island community?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| S. Davidson | 22 March 2020 | * Some basic precautions have been introduced to protect staff providing these services (distancing, no physical tickets for passengers, PPE for staff). |
| Neil Kermode  OREF  [neil.kermode@gmail.com](mailto:neil.kermode@gmail.com) | 23 April 2020 | * Some workers deemed essential (power and water). * Citizens asked to limit time out of house to minimum shopping time and for essential food items only. * Several local shops are providing home deliveries although there is a lack of coordination yet. |
| Gareth Davies  [gareth.davies@aquatera.co.uk](mailto:gareth.davies@aquatera.co.uk) | 7 May 2020 | * Normal food supply lines maintained through local suppliers, wholesalers and national supermarket chains. Most other parts of retail trade closed down or working a delivery only service. |

1. What actions are being taken to ensure that people working on the islands, not only in the tourism sector, are sustained financially in the short term and in the long term?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| S. Davidson | 22 March 2020 | * 80% continued pay for the ones unable to work. |
| Neil Kermode  OREF  [neil.kermode@gmail.com](mailto:neil.kermode@gmail.com) | 23 April 2020 | * Financial support packages have been distributed to some businesses by the local council comprising money provided by central government. In addition some further support for unsupported groups has been arranged. There has been some criticism of the council for not doing more, but there is also great appreciation for what has been achieved so far. * Businesses are also starting to collectively consider how the islands will respond in the post-covid crisis era. |
| Gareth Davies  [gareth.davies@aquatera.co.uk](mailto:gareth.davies@aquatera.co.uk) | 7 May 2020 | * UK and Scottish systems apply plus local authority loans for businesses that fall through the net. Localfood bank in operation. Informal buddying quite strong and volunteers/charities working to help all in need. Task forces being set up to consider longer term options. Digital business solutions being exploited more - always hampered by lower capacity broadband as a result of long term discrimination - we are in the 5% ignored by repeated government commitments on connectivity |

1. What actions are being taken to ensure the mental well-being of people on the islands?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| S. Davidson | 22 March 2020 | * Mostly, communities try to take care of this themselves. |
| Neil Kermode  OREF  [neil.kermode@gmail.com](mailto:neil.kermode@gmail.com) | 23 April 2020 | * Lots of Social media chat on assorted platforms. Local radio still operating. Plans for local events to go 'virtual' |
| Gareth Davies  [gareth.davies@aquatera.co.uk](mailto:gareth.davies@aquatera.co.uk) | 7 May 2020 | * Normal health and welfare service in heightened state of readiness, people helping each other, generally much enhanced friendliness and care between people even in chance encounters |

1. If you consider it appropriate, feel free to share any data about people who have Covid 19 on your island and of people who, sadly, have passed away because of Covid 19.

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| S. Davidson | 22 March 2020 | * As of 22 March, we have no data because none is being made available at island parish level. |
| Neil Kermode  OREF  [neil.kermode@gmail.com](mailto:neil.kermode@gmail.com) | 23 April 2020 | * Understood to be 5 or 6 confirmed cases with 2 deaths. Due to lack of testing these confirmed cases are felt to be an underestimate. Public announcements are that the peak of infections is being planned to occur in 5 weeks’ time. It is not clear how this date has been arrived at. |
| Gareth Davies  [gareth.davies@aquatera.co.uk](mailto:gareth.davies@aquatera.co.uk) | 7 May 2020 | As of 6 May 2020   * To date 7 hospitalised cases and 2 deaths |

1. If applicable, how are the lockdown measures being relaxed?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
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1. Is there anything else you want to share?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| S. Davidson | 22 March 2020 | * As of 22 March, neither the UK nor Scotland have taken the decisive steps which would have been necessary several weeks ago to protect remote island communities with fragile healthcare services. What the government is doing now, is too little, too late... and much of it still is based on the belief that voluntary behaviour changes will take place. There is no legal base for authorities to clamp down, close not complying businesses, or act if 'advice' is not being followed. |
| Gareth Davies  [gareth.davies@aquatera.co.uk](mailto:gareth.davies@aquatera.co.uk) | 7 May 2020 | * Faroese example of testing response is an inspiration to us all. Much talk locally about ensuring that the future is different from the past by leaving old bad societal habits behind and embracing new more sustainable practises. Need to ensure COVID solutions address the climate emergency as well. Islands across the world should unite and share and build a better future together. |

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*This information has been collated by the Strathclyde Centre for Environmental Law and Governance in collaboration with Island Innovation and can be found at* [*https://www.strath.ac.uk/research/strathclydecentreenvironmentallawgovernance/ourwork/research/labsincubators/eilean/islandsandcovid-19/*](https://www.strath.ac.uk/research/strathclydecentreenvironmentallawgovernance/ourwork/research/labsincubators/eilean/islandsandcovid-19/)*.*