



Climate Change Strategy

Climate Conversation

2021 Survey Analysis



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Executive Summary

Climate change is happening now and will have a huge impact on all aspects of life around the globe. Ahead of embarking on how Shetland and the Shetland Islands Council responds to these changes and impacts, we have undertaken a survey to better understand the community's thoughts, feelings and perceptions around climate change. To begin our 'Climate Conversation' we developed a survey that covered the subject at a high-level, with options to allow respondents to delve into greater specifics in certain areas.

The survey garnered 836 complete responses, of which 81.7% believed there was a climate emergency. 67.8% of respondents believed the best way to tackle climate change was to do everything necessary urgently, whilst 98.68% were already doing something at home, from buying an electric car to using energy saving light bulbs, to make a difference.

Climate Change has become prevalent in the media, and often centres on specific topics which can evoke emotion and divide opinion. One question asked was, 'Does news of the environment and climate change make you worried/anxious?' Combined at 45%, just under half of respondents answered either 'always' or 'usually' with a further third responding 'sometimes.' We therefore must have a considered approach to our messaging around climate change. It is important to highlight the key issues, challenges and consequences but also to impress that collective action can make a real difference and there are many benefits to be realised through positive climate action.

The top three priority areas respondents believed needed to be addressed were transport (including aviation and shipping), energy supply, and business and industry. Whilst these are key areas across the country, in Shetland they have additional significance, due to the isles remote location and dispersed population. Transport has its own unique challenges, which is reflected in the frequency of responses requesting replacement of the inter-island ferries with fixed links or alternative clean energy sources. The Viking Energy project was also an area which had both positive and negative comments. In both cases environment was central, whether this was the environmental benefit of producing green energy or the detriment to the environment of peatland disruption in the project construction.

The Scottish Government has set the target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2045, as such ensuring consistency and wide understanding on terms and definitions commonly used is important. The survey highlighted almost 50% of respondents are unclear on the definition of the term 'net-zero.' From this we have taken that an awareness requires raising around the terminology and jargon commonly used when discussing climate change. We will also take this into account with future climate change messaging and discussion to ensure it is more inclusive to increase participation.

As for why we need to tackle climate change, the survey has shown community understanding that climate change is a global emergency and that the need to act

goes far beyond just what happens in Shetland, Scotland and the UK. The top choices by a considerable margin were 'for future generations', 'the global natural environment', and 'to protect people globally,' With options of 'to prevent higher energy bills' or 'to prevent increases to insurance and tax' featuring the lowest.

Our first Climate Conversation survey demonstrates considerable support for tackling the climate emergency. Despite being a small community, the Shetland respondents echo the views of a growing number globally, in line with the EU's 2021 'Citizen Support for Climate Action' survey¹ results. The community is eager for change, with many ideas on how that can be achieved. Going forward we will utilise insights gained from this survey to steer future communications, engagement and actions around climate change.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/clima/citizens/support_en

Background and Objectives

In January 2020, the Shetland Islands Council formally “acknowledged the global climate emergency”. In response to this, the Climate Change Programme was established leading to the formation of the Climate Change Strategy Team in April 2021.

One of the main aims of the new team is to work with the Shetland community, including individuals, local groups and businesses, to encourage climate positive actions and behaviour change. The importance of understanding the public’s current thoughts and perceptions about climate change was recognised.

In order gain this understanding, the team launched a survey to gauge the beliefs and opinions of Shetland residents on climate change. This survey signified the beginning of the Council’s “climate conversation” which will be part of the ongoing engagement with the community.

Through this initial survey, the team aimed to learn:

- how engaged the community was with climate change
- community perception of climate change
- the level of acceptance of the Council’s acknowledgement of the climate emergency
- the most effective methods of communication and engagement to reach as many members of the community as possible
- the key areas people want to see addressed
- anxiety levels around climate change messaging
- understanding of terminology commonly used

The survey will set a baseline that can be used to monitor and track changes to actions, behaviour, and level of engagement over time. It is proposed that this will be achieved through repeating the survey at regular intervals of three years, in addition to other consultation and survey work.

Methodology

The Council has an account with SmartSurvey.co.uk for online surveys. Given restrictions still in place due to COVID-19 at the time of the information gathering phase, this was used as the sole means of gathering information.

It was decided to collect data only from those who stated they lived in Shetland, with the first question being used to determine this. The survey's logic was set so that those outside the isles would not be able to complete the survey. The survey was open to all residents of Shetland with access to the internet.

We used three optional questions at the end of the survey to gather demographic information on respondents to help us identify what groups we might have difficulty in reaching.

The survey was promoted through an initial press release and ran for four weeks. During this time an advert banner was posted on shetnews.co.uk and reminders were sent out via the Communications Team on social media for the wider Shetland public. Within the Council, the survey was highlighted twice within the weekly "Message from Maggie Sandison, Chief Executive" as well as through an all staff email from John Smith, Director of Infrastructure.

We worked with colleagues in Community Planning and Development and Quality Improvement to help engage those in the 'Outer Isles' and the '17 and Under' age bracket, respectively.

The majority of the questions were set up for respondents to select one of a set number of options (e.g. 'Do You Believe There Is A Climate Emergency?' with the options 'Yes', 'No' or 'Undecided'). A few questions did include the option 'Other' which included a text box for a response. Following a request from an elected member, two weeks into the surveys data gathering, the 'Other' option was added to two questions.

Four questions allowed for multiple responses, with two being limited to three options and the other two allowing for as many as applied. All of these questions required a response before participants could move on to the next.

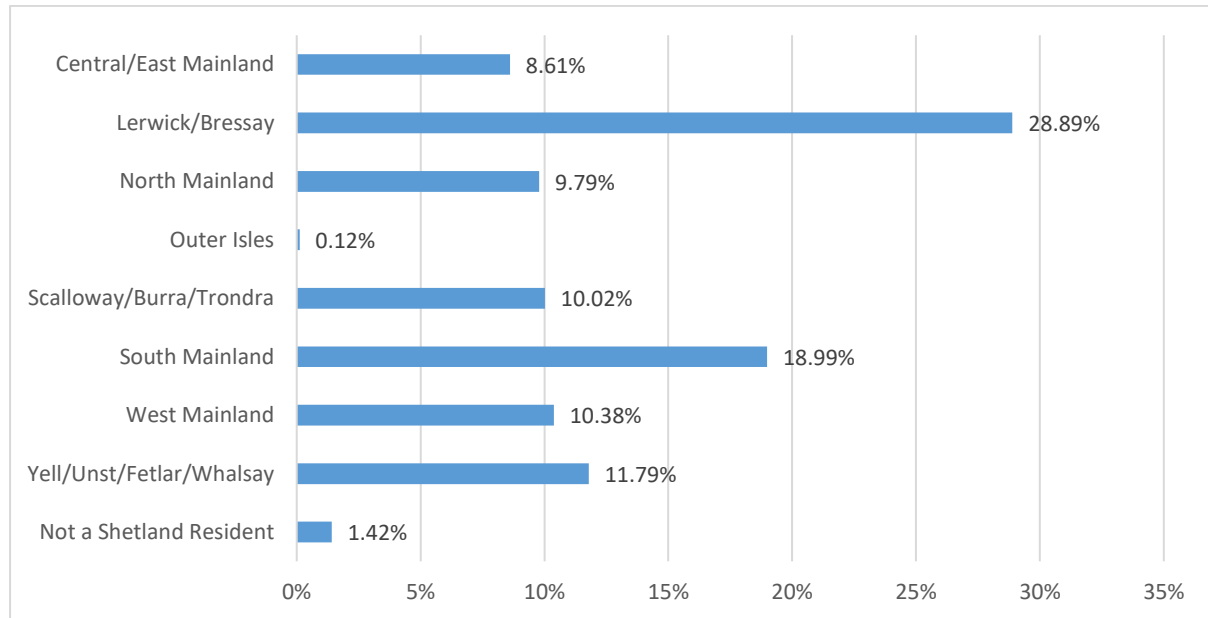
It was determined that this method would allow for clear responses and straightforward analysis. It also allows ease of analysis in using the survey as a baseline to monitor and track changes in response rates in future surveys.

Three questions were provided with just a text box for respondents to provide their own answers, so they could provide as much information as they wanted. These three questions were also set as unrequired, allowing them to be skipped.

When compiling the results, these answers were examined for similar keywords or themes to determine what areas were common priorities across all responses.

Results

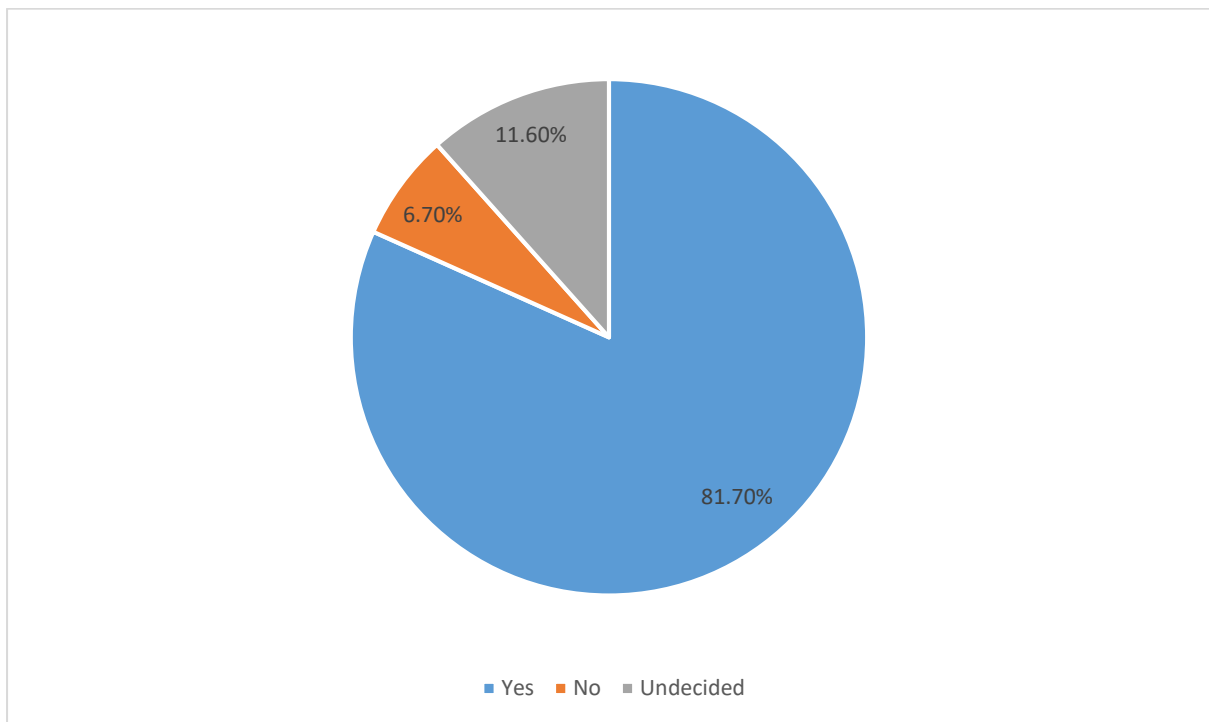
Question 1: In Which Area Of Shetland Do You Live?



- Lerwick/Bressay – 28.89% (245 respondents)
 - South Mainland – 18.99% (161 respondents)
 - Yell/Unst/Fetlar/Whalsay – 11.79% (100 respondents)
 - West Mainland – 10.38% (88 respondents)
 - Scalloway/Burra/Trondra – 10.02% (85 respondents)
 - North Mainland – 9.79% (83 respondents)
 - Central/East Mainland – 8.61% (73 respondents)
 - Not a Shetland Resident – 1.42% (12 respondents)
 - Outer Isles – 0.12% (1 respondent)
-
- We worked with Community Planning and Development to encourage participation from the Outer Isles, due to the unique circumstances of the inhabitants.
 - The logic was set so that the response 'Not a Shetland Resident' ended the survey
 - Total of fully completed surveys was 836
 - Survey response is approximately 3.6% of the isles population²

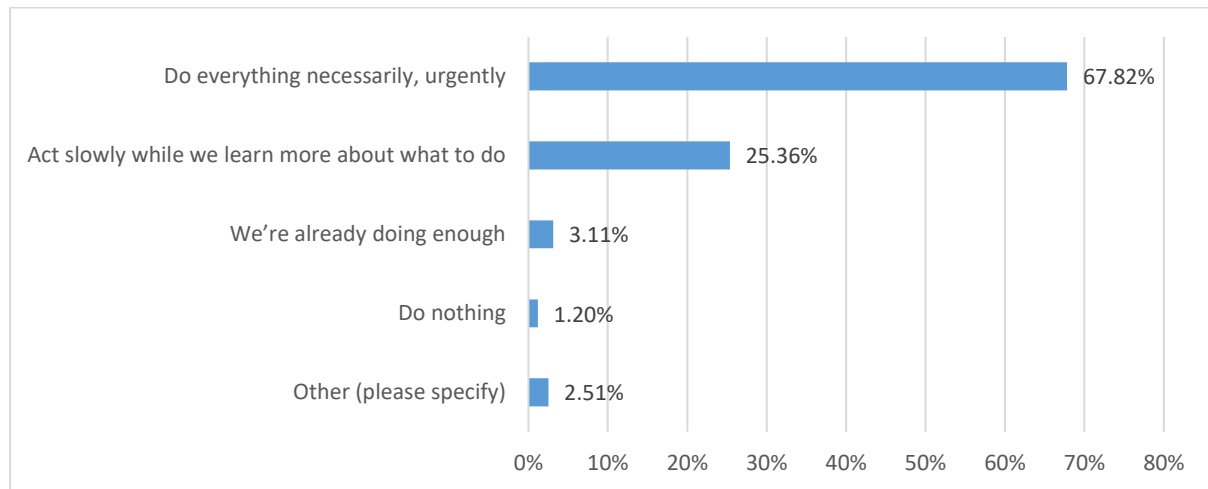
² Based on population figure of 23,080 from Shetland in Statistics, 2017

Question 2: Do You Believe There Is A Climate Emergency?



- Yes – 81.7% (683 respondents)
- No – 6.7% (56 respondents)
- Undecided – 11.6% (97 respondents)

Question 3: What Do You Feel Is The Most Appropriate Response To Addressing The Climate Emergency?



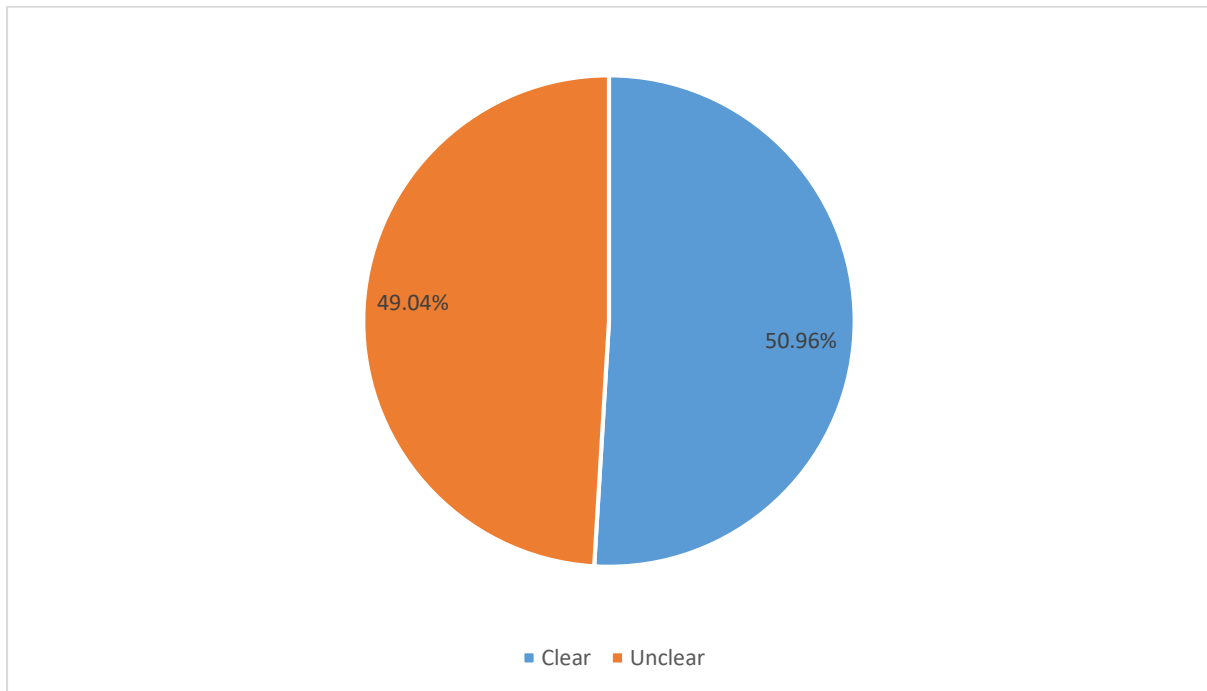
- Do everything necessarily, urgently – 67.82%(567 respondents)
- Act slowly while we learn more about what to do – 25.36% (212 respondents)
- We're already doing enough – 3.11% (26 respondents)
- Do nothing – 1.2% (10 respondents)
- Other – 2.51% (21 respondents)

This question was amended to include the option 'Other' two weeks into the survey data gathering phase. Within the option 'Other' a text box was provided for clarification.

Comments included:

- *“Action is required but we also need to act accordingly. If things are rushed, without full thought this may lead to other issues or only a short term fix”*
- *“Make sure we are doing as much as we have done in the past on an individual and community level and look for more feasible opportunities”*
- *“We need to act quickly but we also need to bring everyone along”*
- *“We are going in the right direction but until China and the US change their own policies what we do is almost irrelevant”*
- *“Do everything necessary in a well-informed manner, engaging with people with extensive knowledge and understanding of the natural environment. It is important to focus resources on encouraging and supporting sustainable living at local level, which will help to deliver other priorities like tackling inequalities, as well as (or possibly instead of) trying to provide energy on a national scale.”*
- *“Perhaps a response that doesn't destroy our rural communities and landscapes”*
- *“Action needs to be taken NOW, by all walks of life, including big companies. Everyone needs to be doing something - not just put pressure on the people who earn just enough to get by, making them feel worse about not being able to do more, while those who could easily afford to make bigger changes/ take bigger action don't do it”*

Question 4: How Clear Are You On The Definition Of ‘Net-Zero’?

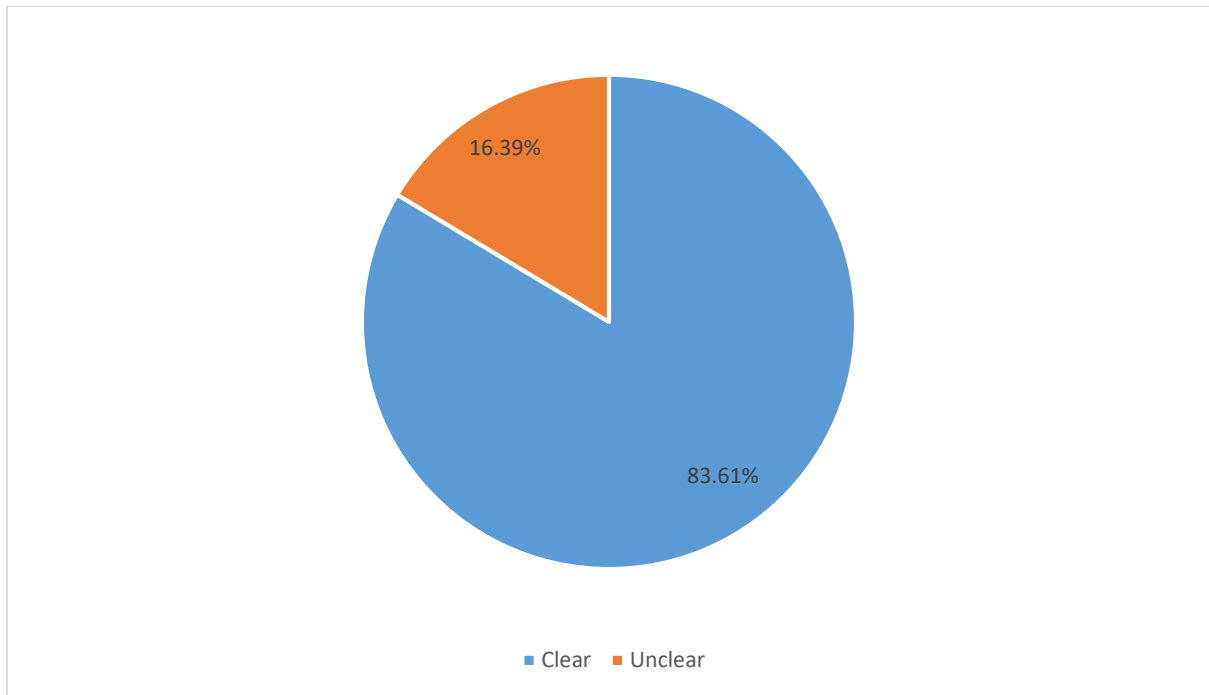


- Clear – 50.96% (426 respondents)
- Unclear – 49.04% (410 respondents)

Following selection of an answer, we included the definition of “net-zero” as:

Net-Zero is achieving a balance between the amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced and the amount removed from the atmosphere. The term Net-Zero is important as this is the point we stop contributing to increasing global warming.

Question 5: Are You Clear On The Definition Of 'Carbon Footprint'?

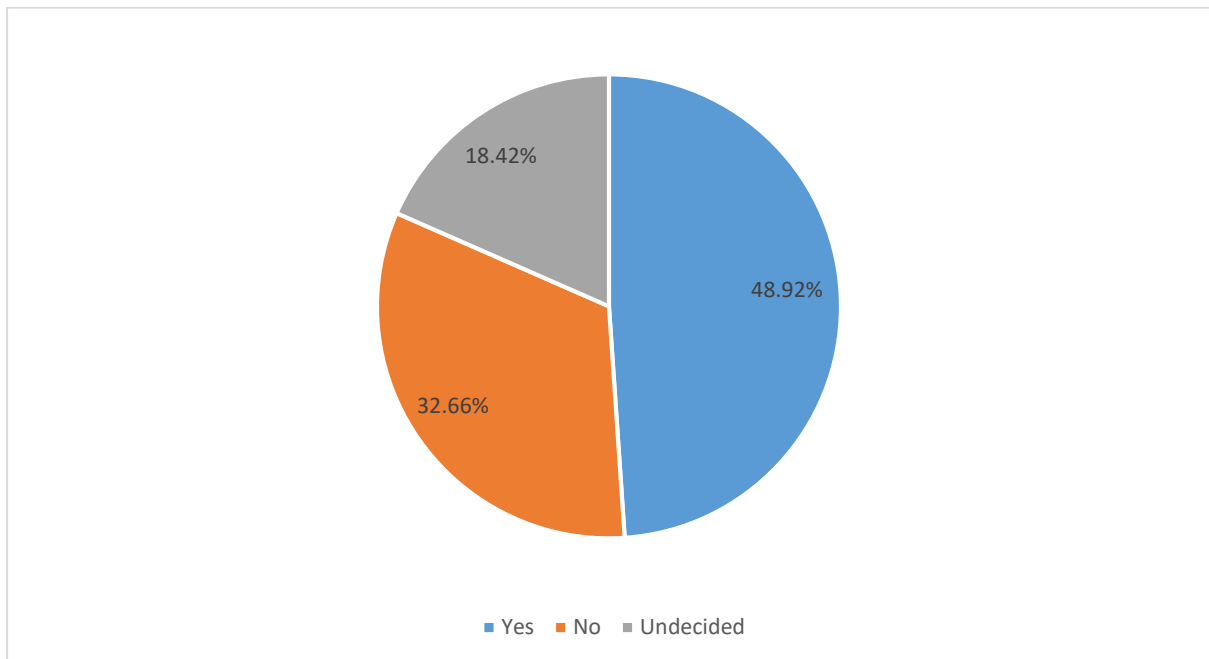


- Clear – 83.61% (699 respondents)
- Unclear – 16.39% (137 respondents)

Following selection of an answer, we included the definition of “carbon footprint” as:

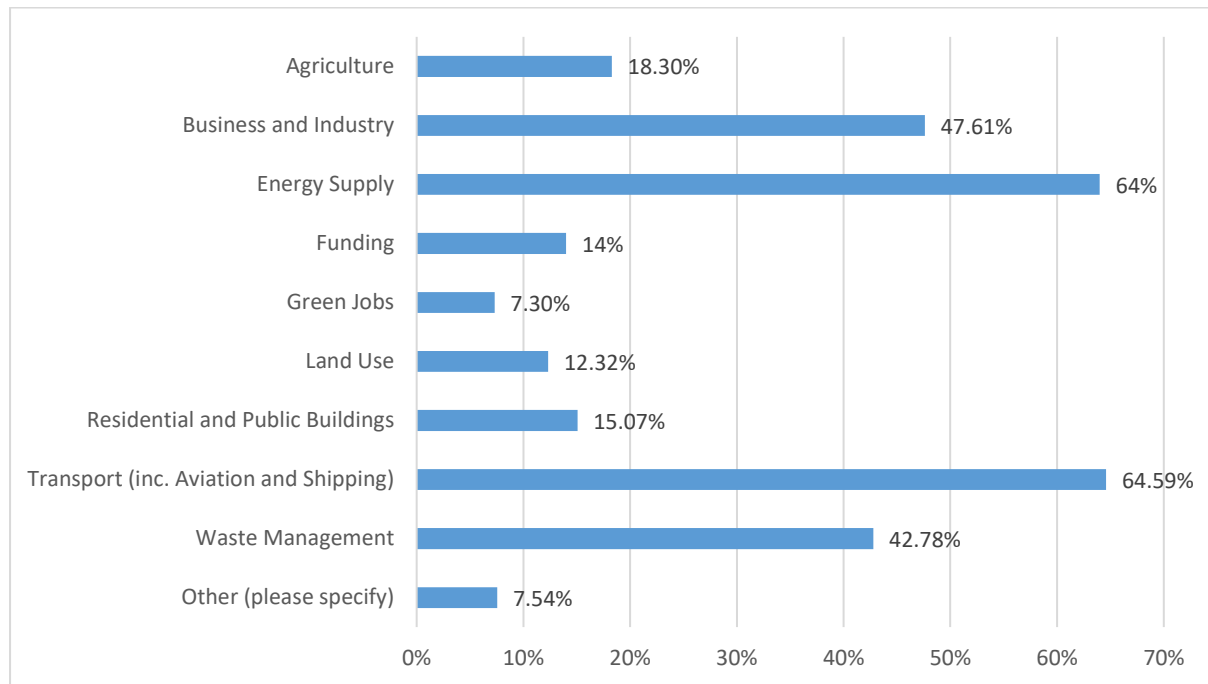
Carbon footprint – the amount of greenhouse gas emissions released into the atmosphere as a result of the activities of a particular individual, organisation or community.

Question 6: Has The COVID-19 Pandemic Changed Your Opinion On The Country's Resilience To Dealing With Unforeseeable Issues?



- Yes – 48.92% (409 respondents)
- No – 32.66% (273 respondents)
- Undecided – 18.42% (154 respondents)

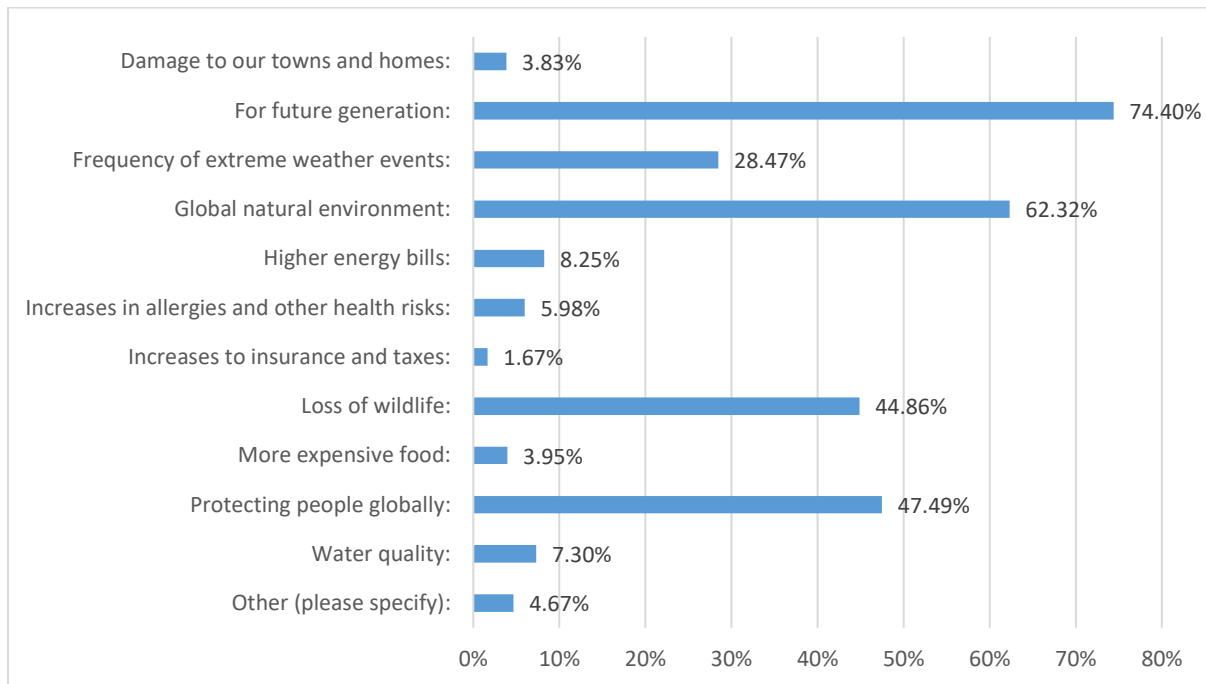
Question 7: In Your Opinion, What Are The Top Three Priority Areas For Tackling Climate Change?



- Respondents were asked to make three selections from the options provided. The results are as follows:
 - Transport (inc. Aviation and Shipping) – 64.59% (540 respondents)
 - Energy Supply – 64% (535 respondents)
 - Business and Industry – 47.61% (395 respondents)
 - Waste Management – 42.78% (366 respondents)
 - Agriculture – 18.3% (153 respondents)
 - Residential and Public Buildings – 15.07% (126 respondents)
 - Funding – 14% (117 respondents)
 - Land Use – 12.32% (103 respondents)
 - Other – 7.54% (63 respondents)
 - Green Jobs – 7.3% (61 respondents)

- Within the option 'Other' a text box was provided for clarification. Comments included:
 - *“Biodiversity”*
 - *“Food security – we need to reduce food air miles, eat local food, be more self-sufficient”*
 - *“Residential household heating”*
 - *“Behaviour change...I feel strongly behaviour change requires its own category, it's all too often overlooked, it doesn't really matter what you do if you can't effectively change behaviour which is massively difficult to do and requires various skill-sets and specific actions”*
 - *“Fixed links need to be a priority”*
 - *“Stop digging up carbon stores like peat to build more wind farms than is needed to compensate for Shetlands carbon footprint!”*
 - *“All of the above”*

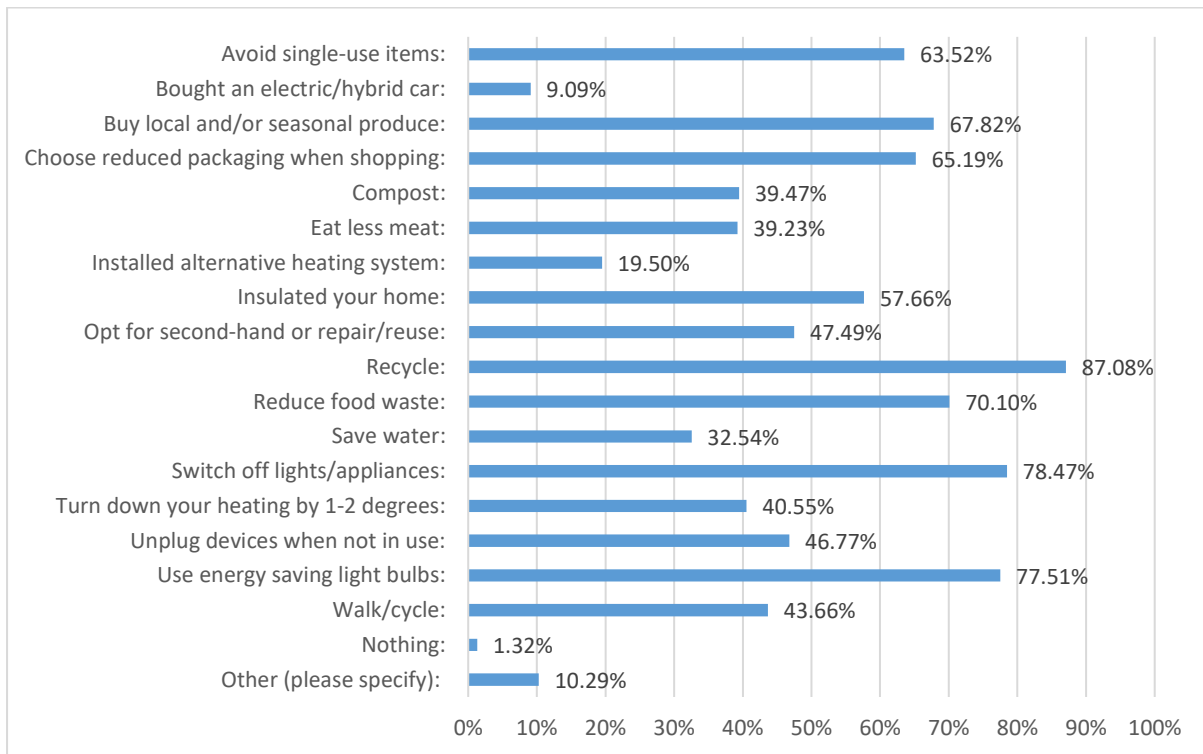
Question 8: In Your Opinion, What Are The Top Three Reasons Why We Should Be Tackling Climate Change?



- Respondents were asked to make three selections from the options provided. The results are as follows:
 - For Future Generations – 74.4% (622 respondents)
 - Global Natural Environment – 62.32% (521 respondents)
 - Protecting People Globally – 47.49% (397 respondents)
 - Loss of Wildlife – 44.86% (375 respondents)
 - Frequency of Extreme Weather Events – 28.47% (238 respondents)
 - Higher Energy Bills – 8.25% (69 respondents)
 - Water Quality – 7.3% (61 respondents)
 - Increases in Allergies/Health Risks – 5.98% (50 respondents)
 - Other – 4.67% (39 respondents)
 - More Expensive Food – 3.95% (33 respondents)
 - Damage to Our Towns and Homes – 3.83% (32 respondents)
 - Increases to Insurance and Taxes – 1.67% (14 respondents)

- Within the option 'Other' a text box was provided for clarification. Comments included:
 - *“Avoiding collapse of eco-systems leading to mass extinctions”*
 - *“Protecting living things globally”*
 - *“People need to change their attitudes to the planet and stop seeing it as a resource we can take from ad infinitum”*
 - *“Business can no longer continue to get away with ruining environments for profit only. Most of the food in supermarkets are part of the problem but we all lived fine 60 years ago without them. They say but its employment, well it is the wrong employment”*
 - *“All of the above is equally important”*

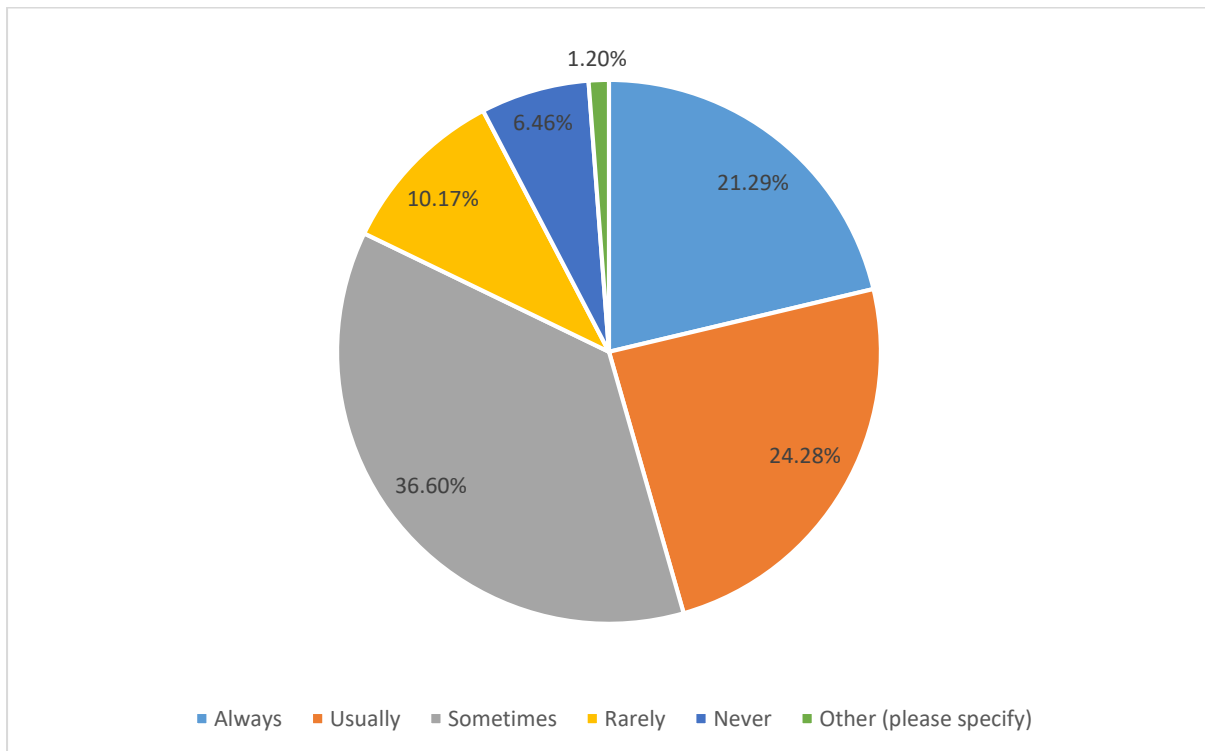
Question 9: What Do You Currently Do At Home To Reduce Your Impact On Climate Change?



- The last of three multiple choice question, there were no maximum choice limits
- What respondents are currently doing received the following votes (from most to least):
 - Recycle – 87.08% (728 respondents)
 - Switch Off Lights/Appliances – 78.47% (656 respondents)
 - Use Energy Saving Light Bulbs – 77.51% (648 respondents)
 - Reduce Food Waste – 70.1% (586 respondents)
 - Buy Local and/or Seasonal Produce – 67.82% (567 respondents)
 - Choose Reduced Packaging – 65.19% (545 respondents)
 - Avoid Single-Use Items – 63.52% (531 respondents)
 - Insulate Your Home – 57.66% (482 respondents)
 - Opt for Second-Hand or Repair/Reuse – 47.49% (397 respondents)
 - Unplug Devices When Not in Use – 46.77% (391 respondents)
 - Walk/Cycle – 43.66% (365 respondents)
 - Turn Down Your Heating by 1-2°C – 40.55% (339 respondents)
 - Compost – 39.47% (330 respondents)
 - Eat Less Meat – 39.23% (328 respondents)
 - Save Water – 32.54% (272 respondents)
 - Installed Alternative Heating System – 19.5% (163 respondents)
 - Other – 10.29% (86 respondents)
 - Bought an Electric/Hybrid Car – 9.09% (76 respondents)
 - Nothing – 1.32% (11 respondents)
- 98.68% of participants were currently doing something at home
- All options will reduce a households/individuals impact on climate change

- Within the option 'Other' a text box was provided for clarification. Comments included:
 - *"Grow our own veg"*
 - *"Drive less"*
 - *"Installed wind turbine and solar panels. Bit Surprised the options list didn't include solar PV or other micro renewables as many have been installing this in Shetland"*
 - *"Went Vegan"*
 - *"Try to use 'eco-friendly' cleaning and personal care products e.g. ENJO for cleaning – no/low chemicals"*
 - *"Don't have children"*
 - *"Plant native trees and ecologically restore what we can"*

Question 10: Does News Of The Environment And Climate Change Make You Worried/Anxious?



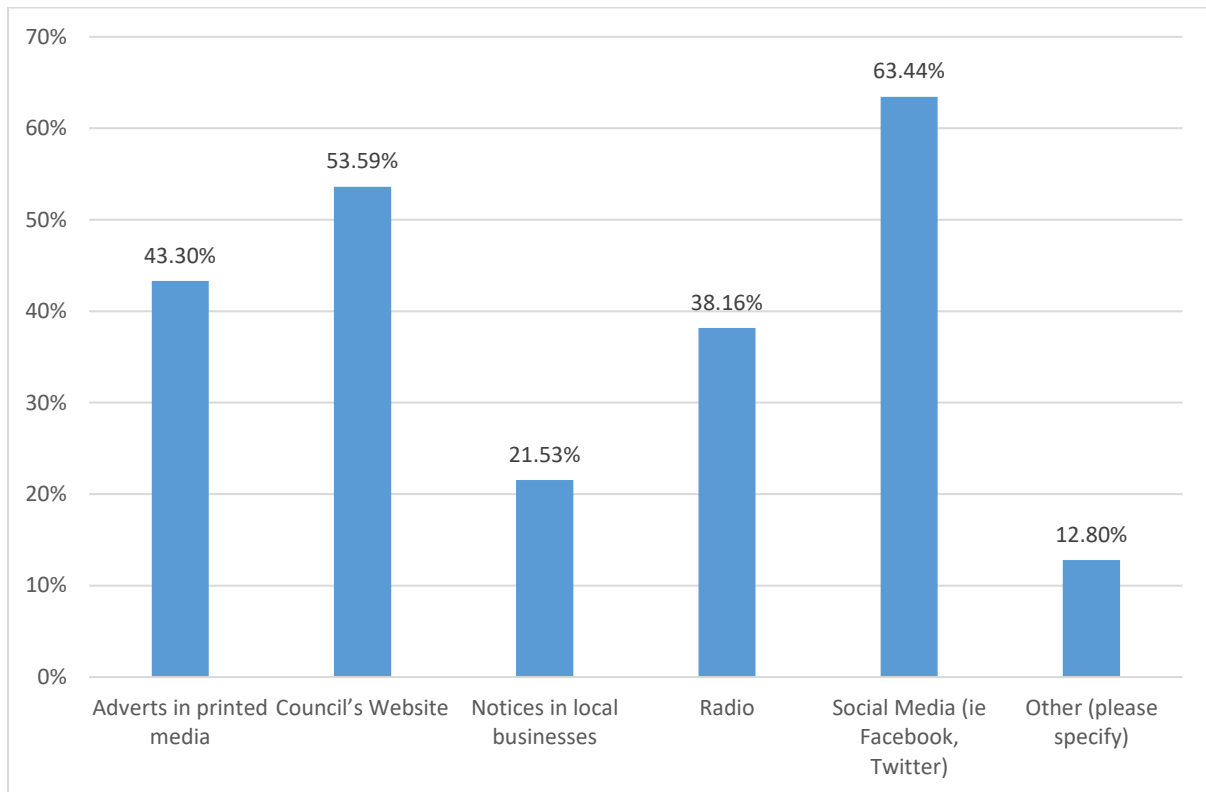
- Always – 21.29% (178 respondents)
- Usually – 24.28% (203 respondents)
- Sometimes – 36.6% (306 respondents)
- Rarely – 10.17% (85 respondents)
- Never – 6.46% (54 respondents)
- Other – 1.2% (10 respondents)

This question was amended to include the option ‘Other’ two weeks into the survey data gathering phase. Within the option ‘Other’ a text box was provided for clarification.

Comments included:

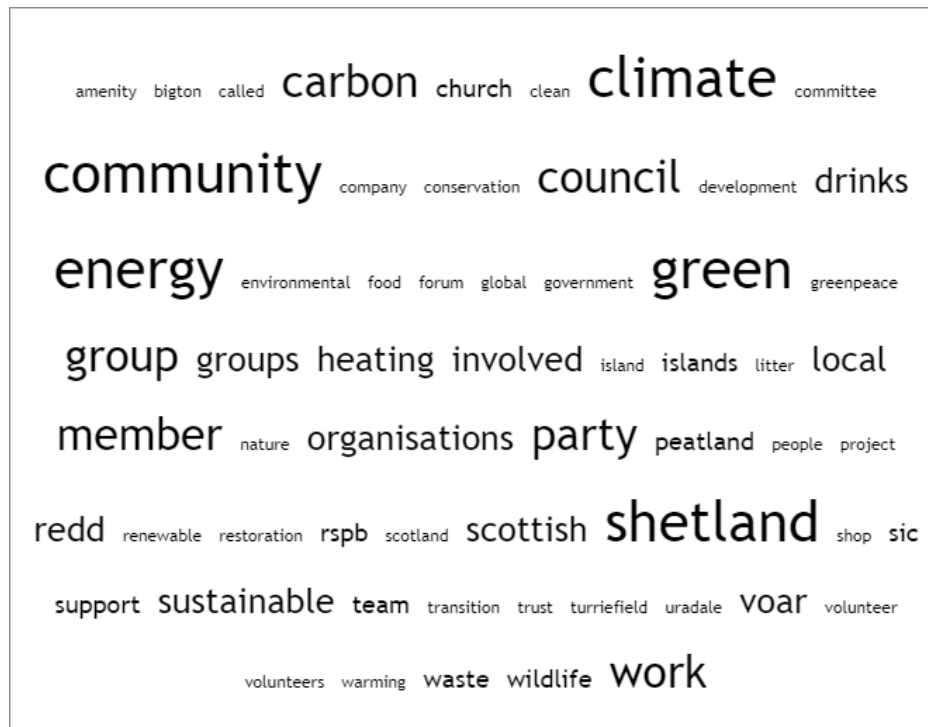
- *“Not for me, but for the young folk who are really concerned and are unsure how to get their voices heard”*
- *“The transition to net-zero also makes me anxious as it is a huge shift away from fossil fuels”*
- *“The lack of material action by SIC is the most worrying thing. Lots of talk and outlines of strategies but the council appears to be in hock to the oil industry”*
- *“Some of the measures that are supposedly green are not actually as green as they seem. Some renewable energy developments can actually make things worse by destroying the environment in a vain attempt to save it.”*

Question 11: What Would Be Your Preferred Way To Hear More About What The Climate Change Strategy Team Are Involved In?



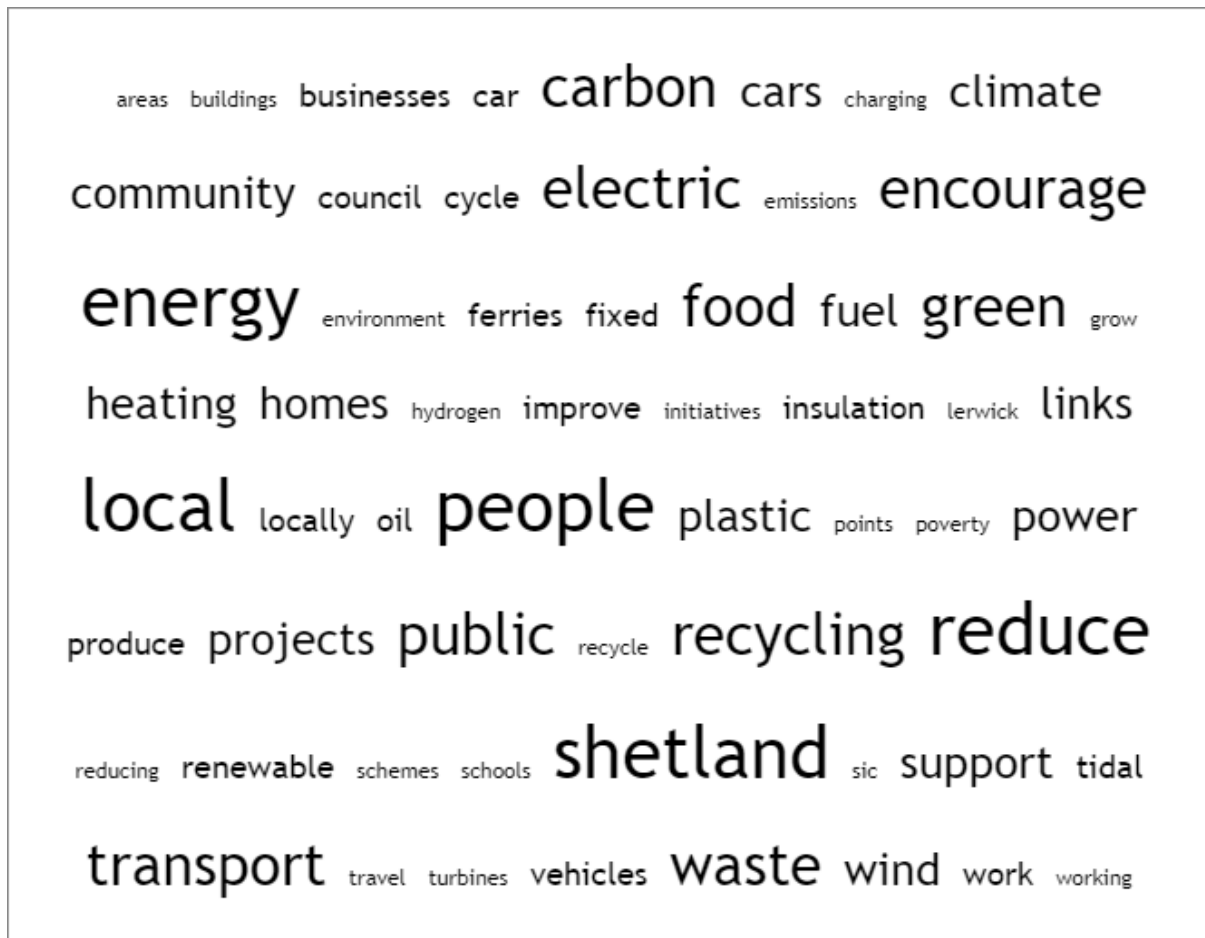
- Social Media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter) – 63.44% (532 respondents)
 - Council's Website – 53.59% (448 respondents)
 - Adverts in Printed Media – 43.3% (362 respondents)
 - Radio – 38.16% (319 respondents)
 - Notices in Local Businesses – 21.53% (180 respondents)
 - Other – 12.8% (107 respondents)
- Within the option 'Other' a text box was provided for clarification. Comments included:
 - *"Online news site"*
 - *"Direct communication"*
 - *"I'd rather not hear"*
 - *"Word of mouth"*

Question 12: Are You Currently Involved With Climate Positive Organisations, Community Groups Or Businesses That Exist In Shetland?



- This question provided a text box for participants to write their own answers
- The word cloud was generated based on how frequently words were included in responses
- The top ten most common words used were:
 - Shetland = 70
 - green = 22
 - climate = 20
 - community = 18
 - energy = 17
 - group = 14
 - party = 11
 - council = 10
 - work = 10
 - member = 9
- 227 people responded to this question, of these:
 - 91 (40%) said they were not involved in any groups or organisations
 - 11 (4.8%) said they were not currently involved but would like to be, with 3 (1.3%) further responses not being aware of what groups existed
- Whilst others were involved with various local, national and international groups, including:
 - “Scottish Green Party”
 - “Greenpeace”
 - “Da Voar Redd Up”
 - “Green Drinks Shetland”
 - “Involved with local church and looking at eco church and sustainability criteria”
 - “Shetland Students Green Team”
 - “Northmavine Community Development Company”
 - “Peatland restoration”
 - “Sustainable Shetland”

Question 13: What Sort Of Projects, Campaigns Or Initiatives Should Shetland Focus On To Tackle Climate Change?



- This question provided a text box for participants to write their own answers
- The word cloud was generated based on how frequently words were included in responses
- The top ten most common words used were:
 - energy = 243
 - Shetland = 180
 - local = 178
 - people = 166
 - reduce = 130
 - transport = 122
 - electric = 113
 - waste = 112
 - public = 100
 - food = 97
- 560 people responded to this question
- Some of the most frequently requested actions were:
 - Alignment:
 - *“There needs to be change at every level (strategic government policy level, to local infrastructure/food initiatives with school children) and in every sector and aspect of life”*

- *“A fair and equitable transformation to net zero”*
 - *“A whole community approach, something that everyone can get involved with together, focussing on one main initiative at a time”*
 - *“Include biodiversity and sustainability issues in all long term planning decisions”*
- **Adaptation Planning:**
 - *“Tackling the effects of rising sea levels—risk of damage to properties near the sea”*
- **Biodiversity:**
 - *“Discourage practices that harm fragile ecosystems (e.g. over-fishing; inshore dredging)”*
 - *“Protecting environment and wildlife”*
“Ideas such as seaweed farming that can help with carbon capture, other carbon capture methods”
- **Business and Industry:**
 - *“Remote working where applicable”*
 - *“Initiatives connected to make fishing more sustainable”*
 - *“Holding industry to account for its emissions/poor environmental track record”*
- **Education and Information Sharing:**
 - *“Education - helping people understand climate science, threats to Shetland, support available”*
 - *“Education, children’s ability to use peer power is immense when changing mentalities of their parents”*
 - *“Education - not just for children”*
 - *“Information - Education so that people are better informed”*
 - *“More education for schools and the community on the need for action - highlight ways to reduce carbon footprint and the consequences if we don’t”*
 - *“Community initiatives to encourage people to feel like it is possible to achieve this and make a difference in a small way”*
 - *“Reducing meat and fish consumption”*
- **Energy Supply:**
 - *“Green energy, especially with our natural resources...Cheaper electricity from locally produced energy, making Shetland 100% green energy”*
 - *“Alternative Fuels (buildings & transport) / Decarbonisation / Hydrogen”*
 - *“Reduced energy tariff / Tackle cost of electricity”*
- **Funding:**
 - *“Financial support for people to insulate their homes (which has the additional benefit of tackling fuel poverty)”*
 - *“Large scale investment to insulate home and eliminate fuel poverty”*

- *“Funding to help better insulate and change heating systems”*
- *“Support should be given to further help people improve the fabric of their homes”*
- *“Funding for energy efficiency measures/domestic renewables”*
- *“Investments into green projects”*
- *“Got to tackle the cost of electricity in Shetland otherwise people will be going back to casting peats as they cannot afford to heat their homes”*
- *“Tackling the cost of electricity (lower electricity costs would mean folk have more money to spend on insulation etc.)”*

- Green Jobs:
 - *“Creating local green jobs to accelerate our transition away from oil and gas and provide opportunities for people in those sectors to retrain”*

- Land Use/Sustainable Food:
 - *“Grow more produce locally rather than rely on transportation from the Mainland”*
 - *“Sustainable food sources”*
 - *“Hydroponics, greenhouses for more local food production and less import requirements”*
 - *“Grow your own fruit and veg”*
 - *“Allotments and grow your own initiatives”*
 - *“Invest more in peatland restoration projects to encourage growth to achieve the required goals”*
 - *“Shetland has a huge opportunity to contribute to saving carbon emission through peatland restoration”*

- Residential and Public Buildings:
 - *“More green spaces for new council housing”*
 - *“Long term infrastructure projects that will have a REAL impact on CO2 emissions”*
 - *“Draught proofing property as well as insulation”*
 - *“Being vigilant about environmental damage involved in construction”*
 - *“Improve/Upgrade Properties (domestic & public buildings)”*

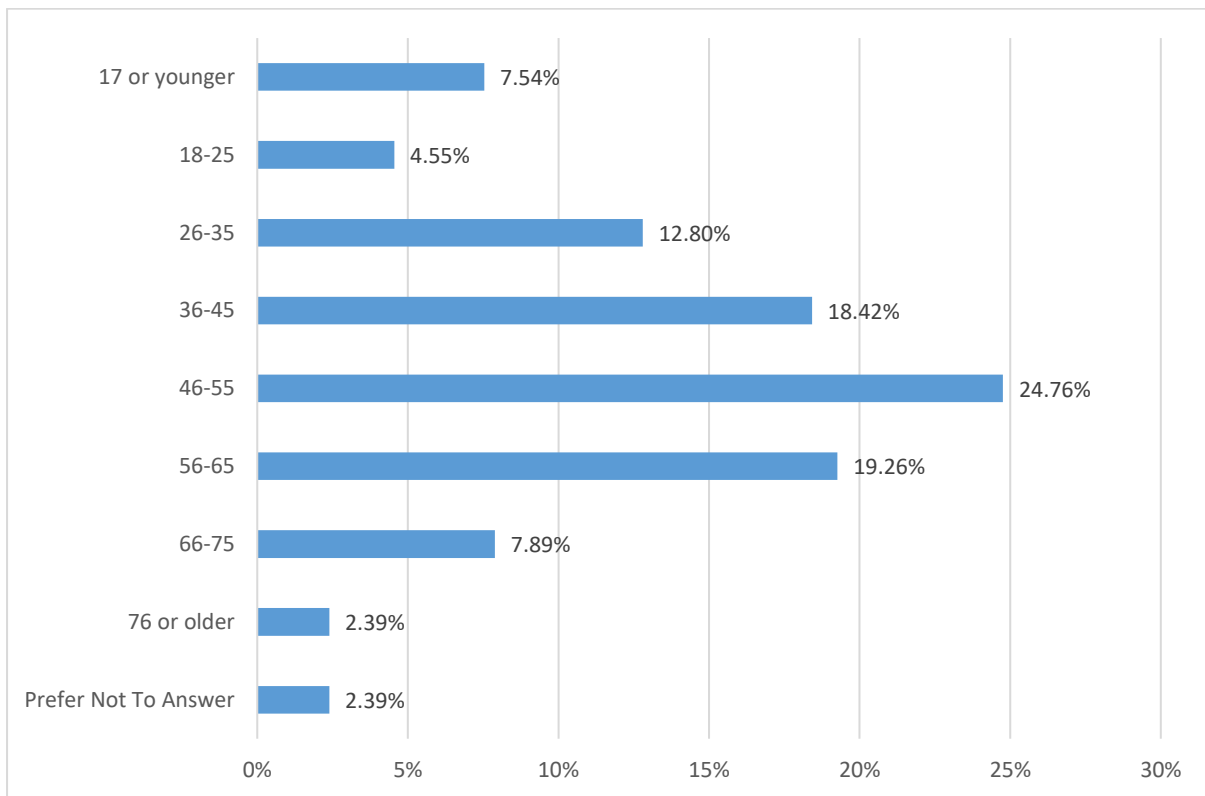
- Sustainability:
 - *“Encourage sustainable living”*
 - *“Develop our islands for sustainability, reduce import as much as possible”*

- Transport (including Aviation and Shipping):
 - *“For me it's decarbonisation of transport and behaviour change in travel choices”*
 - *“Decarbonising public transport (ferries and busses)”*
 - *“Investing in infrastructure e.g. electric vehicle charging points, replacing ferries with fixed links where possible”*
 - *“Fixed links for outer islands where feasible”*

- *“Provide better coverage of public transport on the island, then people will be less likely to use their own vehicles (which has to be done, especially on a Sunday where the public transport service is almost zero)”*
- *“More charging points for cars, especially outside Lerwick”*
- *“More emphasis on active travel and enabling infrastructure to encourage walking/cycling for journey's, especially those which are under a 2 miles”*

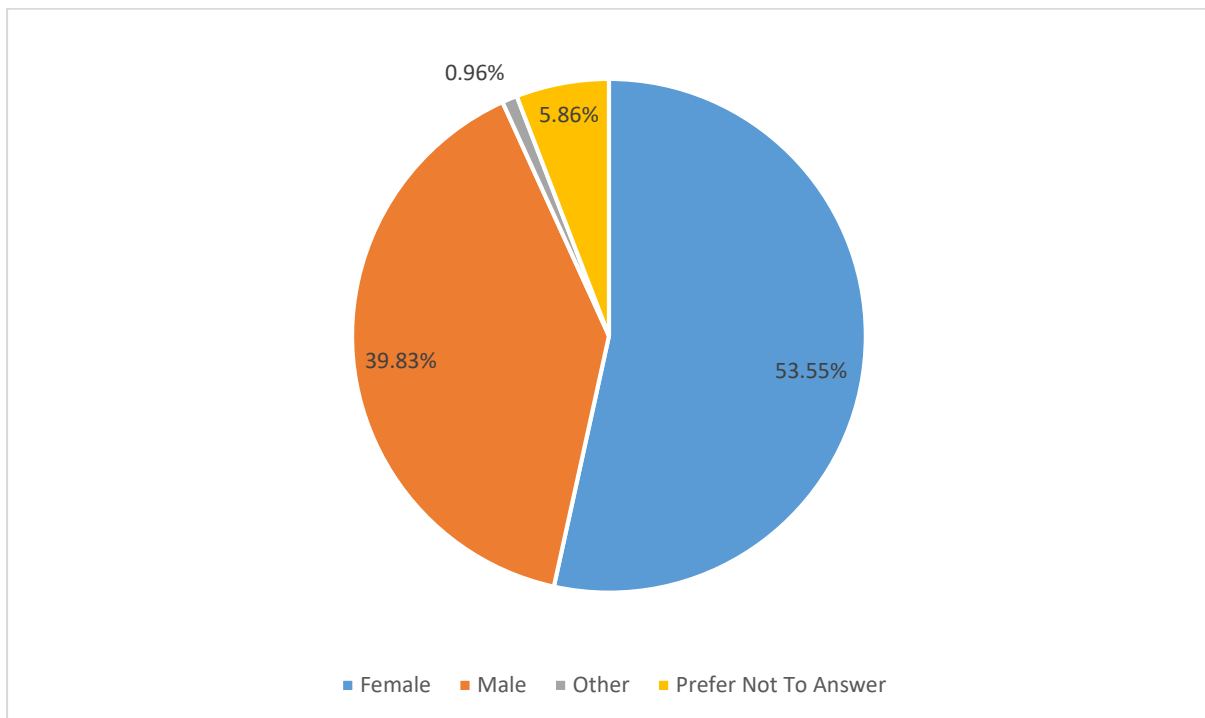
- **Waste Management:**
 - *“Better recycling of more items”*
 - *“People recycling correctly”*
 - *“Recycling at home and at work. At the moment there is no recycling at my place of work”*
 - *“Repair Cafe's also would help prevent stuff going to waste and help build community and offer inter-generational bonding and skill building/learning”*
 - *“Encourage shops and supermarkets to reduce packaging”*
 - *“Educate people on the importance of our environment, it is not acceptable to litter the countryside the way we do”*
 - *“Tackle the litter problem in our roadside verges and other areas”*

Question 14: What Age Group Are You In?



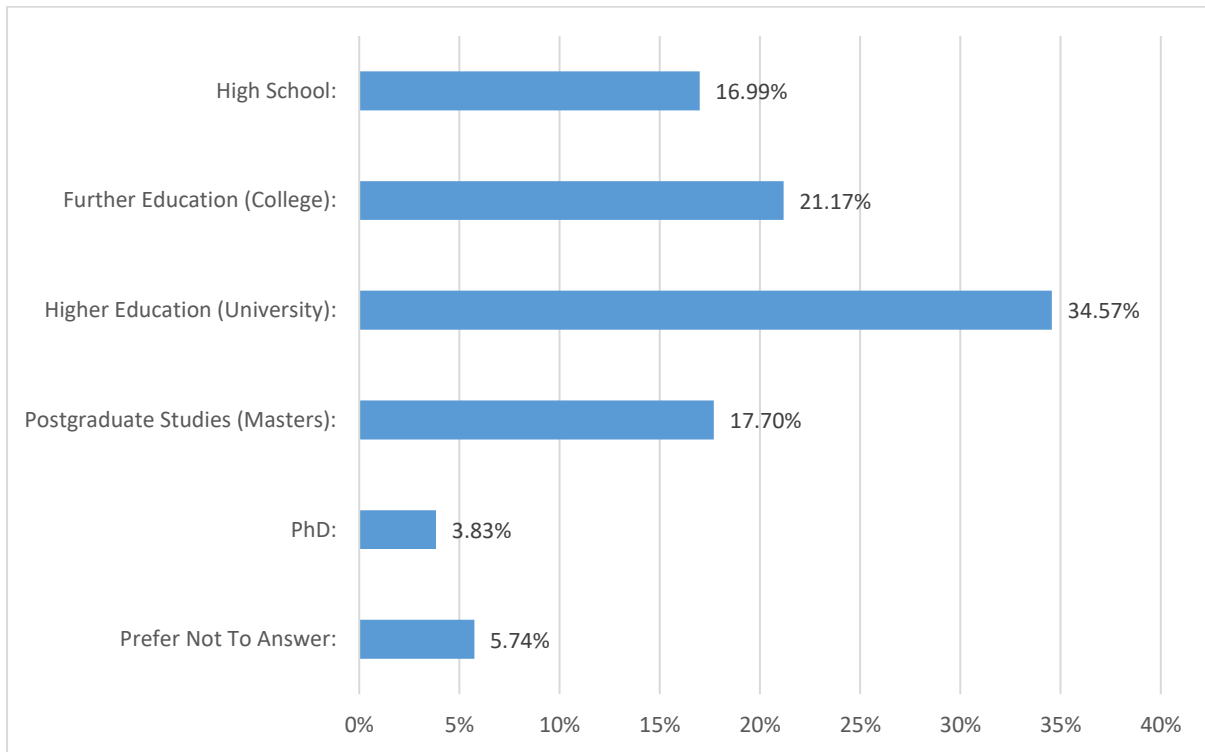
- The respondents age groups results were:
 - 17 or Younger – 7.54% (63 respondents)
 - 18-25 – 4.55% (38 respondents)
 - 26-35 – 12.80% (107 respondents)
 - 36-45 – 18.42% (154 respondents)
 - 46-55 – 24.76% (207 respondents)
 - 56-65 – 19.26% (161 respondents)
 - 66-75 – 7.89% (66 respondents)
 - 76 or Older – 2.39% (20 respondents)
 - Prefer Not to Answer – 2.39% (20 respondents)
- We experienced difficulties in gathering responses from the younger demographics
- We liaised with Quality Improvement to get information directly into schools to capture the 17 or Younger age group
- 18-25 is an age group we need to improve upon engagement with
- Over 66 is another group which we need to improve upon engagement with

Question 15: What Gender Do You Identify As?



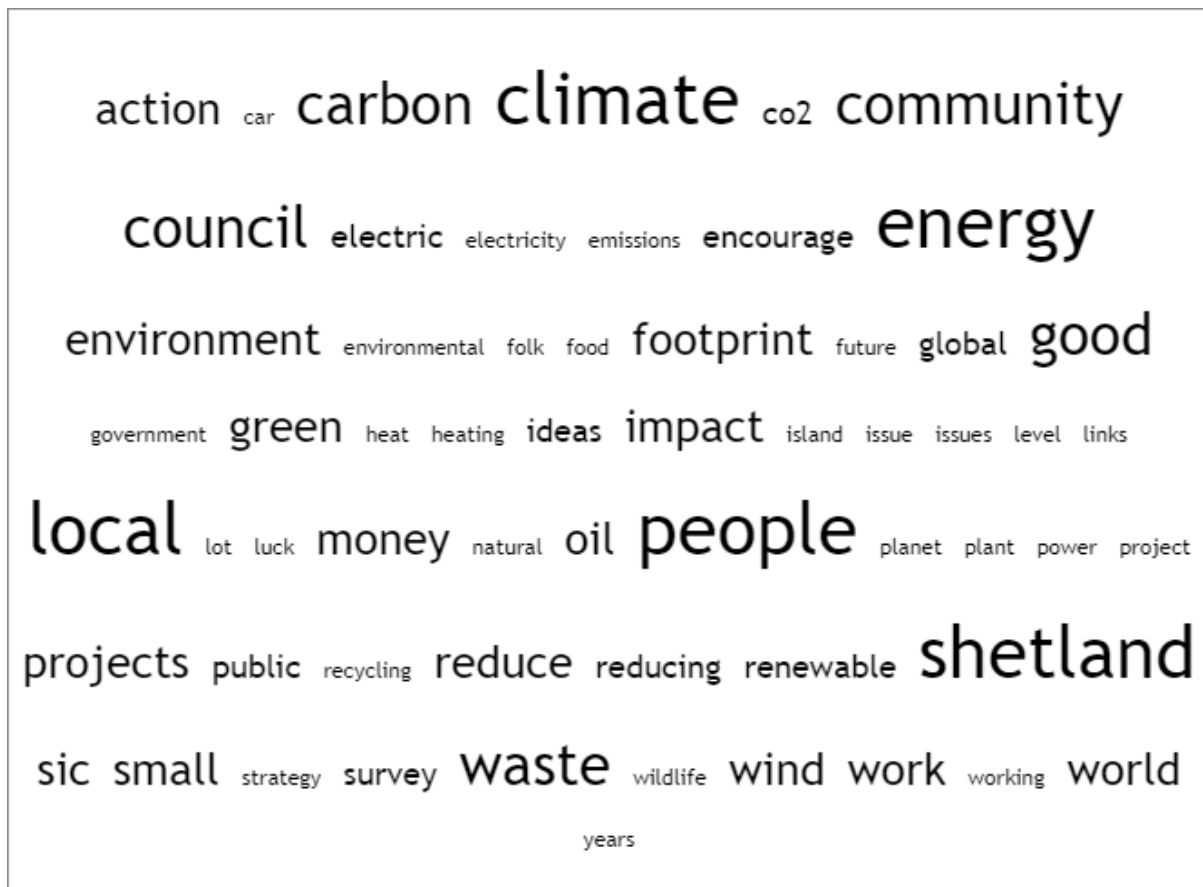
- What respondents gender responses were:
 - Female – 53.55% (446 respondents)
 - Male – 39.83% (333 respondents)
 - Other – 0.96% (8 respondents)
 - Prefer Not to Answer – 5.86% (49 respondents)

Question 16: What Is The Highest Level Of Education You Have Achieved?



- What respondents level of education responses were:
 - High School – 16.99% (142 respondents)
 - Further Education (College) – 21.17% (177 respondents)
 - Higher Education (University) – 34.57% (289 respondents)
 - Postgraduate Studies (Masters) – 17.7% (148 respondents)
 - PhD – 3.83% (32 respondents)
 - Prefer Not to Answer – 5.74% (48 respondents)

Question 17: Do You Have Anything Else You'd Like To Add?



- This question provided a text box for participants to write their own answers
- The word cloud was generated based on how frequently words were included in responses
- The top ten most common words used were:
 - Shetland = 75
 - climate = 62
 - energy = 48
 - people = 38
 - local = 37
 - carbon = 32
 - good = 26
 - community = 25
 - council = 20
 - waste = 20
- 239 people responded to this question
- The most frequently comments were:
 - Adaption Planning:
 - *“We need to actually be building what resilience we can into communities so that we can adapt as far as we can to the consequences/impacts we have already built in, as well as doing what we can to mitigate further impacts”*

- Agriculture:
 - *“Encouraging families to live off the land more”*
- Biodiversity:
 - *“Expect to see words like biodiversity, ecosystems and habitats featuring strongly in project plans and communications”*
- Business and Industry:
 - *“Home working and investing in broadband and home working”*
 - *“The world obsession with economic growth, shareholder profits and big business are a sure way to use up the worlds resources”*
- Council Matters:
 - *“I wish this project success. It is important”*
 - *“Stop conducting surveys and take positive action”*
 - *“I am looking forward to seeing the results of this survey and hope that it builds into a more in-depth questionnaires in the future”*
- Education and Information Sharing:
 - *“It is time we start to ask the questions and have the debate where Shetland has to be in 20 to 30 years’ time without fossil fuels and start to invest in local projects / solutions to achieve this”*
 - *“Would be amazing to be part of a community who really embraced this agenda and because we want to (not because we’re forced to) but our community needs educated”*
 - *“The science is not done, there is a lot we don’t know and are in danger of unintentional consequences”*
 - *“I would like to see something similar to a citizens assembly on climate change and the environment”*
- Energy Supply:
 - *“Nuclear is the cheapest, cleanest and safest way to produce electricity but the Scottish government is opposed to this”*
 - *“Is the Lerwick District Heating Scheme feasible in the climate we find ourselves?”*
 - *“We must learn from the saga of Viking Energy when it comes to large projects i.e. Orion and respect community views”*
 - *“SIC/Scottish Government/UK Government to minimise fossil fuels, and support the Orion project”*
 - *“We need to concentrate on offshore wind and tidal energy”*
- Funding:
 - *“Provide grants for insulating homes”*
- Green Jobs:
 - *“I’d like a career change to a green job – more opportunities for that please”*

- Land Use:
 - *“Shetland is a beautiful, scenic, wildlife haven that is slowly but surely being destroyed to line the pockets of businesses that do not care”*
 - *“Viking energy is a disaster, the peatland which holds so much carbon has been destroyed which will have a detrimental impact on the environment”*

- Residential and Public Buildings:
 - *“Get rid of all the primary schools built in the 70s with no insulation to new energy efficient school buildings”*

- Sustainability:
 - *“Abandon this in favour of a 'Local Sustainability Strategy' please”*

- Transport (including Aviation and Shipping):
 - *“Fixed links”*
 - *“Upgrading Inter-Islands Ferries / New Fuels (eg Hydrogen)”*

- Waste Management:
 - *“Reduce Reuse Recycle only then waste to energy”*
 - *“More transparency on what happens to our recycling, too many people believe this is a pretence and that it all gets burned, perhaps a council YouTube video!”*

Conclusion and Recommendations

This initial survey has provided invaluable insight into what Shetlanders think about climate change, the positive and the negative. It is clear is that the community wants to see action in tackling the climate emergency. The results also provide much needed insight on how to deliver communications around climate change going forward. This includes the most effective methods of engaging the public, what groups we need to approach differently to reach and the tone of our messaging. Lessons learned from this survey will be applied to the net-zero route map consultation, to ensure that the Shetland-wide plan takes on board the priorities of the community.

We need to work closely with Community Planning and Development to ensure that we reach all communities within the isles, so that inhabitants from all areas are heard and treated equally to ensure there is no perceived 'Lerwick-centric bias'. Making greater use of online options for meetings and public engagement should help to ensure that we reach as wide a reach as possible.

In January 2020, the Shetland Islands Council acknowledged the global climate emergency, stating that, "The evidence is irrefutable and the science is clear and action is required." This statement is shared by the overwhelming majority of respondents.

Why Do We Need To Tackle Climate Change?

When it comes to why we should tackle climate change, it is encouraging the majority of respondents voted for global issues, such as 'For future generations' and 'Global natural environment'. Issues directly affecting individuals, such as 'Increases to insurances and taxes' and 'More expensive food' received the fewest votes. This shows community understanding that climate change is a global emergency that will affect all of us, and that the need to act goes far beyond just what happens in Shetland, Scotland and the UK. Most of the comments in the text box 'Other' showed wider consideration of our environment, with only 6 responses being negative or denying the science.

The possible answers to question three will be reviewed and amended before the next survey, as there was some degree of uncertainty around the 'act slowly while we learn more about what to do' option. It was suggested that the wording of 'act slowly' should be reviewed and replaced. The wording for this question was taken from the UNDP 'People's Climate Vote'³.

How Do We Tackle Climate Change?

Most of the top ten options for what people are currently doing will also save them money in the long run, which may have been a significant deciding factor to making changes. Linking carbon and cost savings may be an effective way to encourage

³ <https://www.undp.org/publications/peoples-climate-vote>

further behaviour change. A dedicated Climate Change page will be set upon the Council's website, which will provide greater information on Climate Change, including projects that are being worked on, updates on the net-zero route maps, as well as advice for how individuals can make changes at home and at work, many of which will not only reduce their carbon footprint but also save money in the long-term.

When it comes to what people are already doing, only 1.32% stated they were doing nothing, which shows most people are already undertaking climate positive behaviours. Whilst not everyone can do everything to tackle climate change in their daily lives, everyone can do something that will make a positive difference. This should be encouraged and applauded as all small climate positive behaviours cumulate to make a significant difference.

Our hopes for Question 12 were to discover a wide range of diverse groups currently active across the isles. We did receive a number of good responses detailing existing groups, however there was a large number respondents who stated they would like to get involved but were unsure what groups existed and how to contact them. There is clearly a lot of interest in the community to do something, but there needs to be greater promotion or signposting of active groups. This is something the CCST is looking at becoming involved in, as the Council cannot lead or be involved in everything that can or needs to be done in the isles, we can at least support individuals wanting to find out more about what is already out there to become a part of.

Question 13 highlighted the vast number of priorities respondents had, with many diverse projects being suggested. A number were large scale projects that would require extensive budget and resources. It is important to promote, encourage and support community scale projects which will empower individuals, community groups and local businesses to drive forward the changes that they can make.

There were also those that were pleased to see action being taken or wished the team luck and success with the task at hand. The fact that so many people took the time to complete the survey and provide feedback shows that there is great interest in the subject of climate change. Providing and promoting opportunities for community led initiatives and participation in reducing carbon emissions will enable interest to become action.

Areas of Action

The top three priority areas respondents believed needed to be addressed were transport (including aviation and shipping), energy supply, and business and industry. Whilst these are key areas across the country, in Shetland they have additional significance, due to the isles remote location and dispersed population.

Transport has unique challenges, which is reflected in the frequency of responses requesting replacement of the inter-island ferries with fixed links or alternative clean energy sources. Though decarbonisation or electrification of the ferries was mentioned by a few respondents, the majority of responses suggested a preference for bridges/tunnels to the isles. It was highlighted this would also provide island

communities with more stable links to the Shetland Mainland, which could improve inequalities faced by those living on the isles.

A few respondents also highlighted that fixed links could be fitted with tidal or wave generators, which would have the co-benefit of increasing the green energy capacity. This support for renewable energy was another area that many respondents shared.

The Viking Energy project was an area which had both positive and negative comments. In both cases, the environmental aspect was central, whether this was the environmental benefit of producing green energy, or the detriment of the environment due to peatland disruption in the project construction.

Communications and Messaging

Insight gained on the levels of anxiety and worry in the community on climate/environmental news is incredibly important. Climate Change has become a prevalent topic in the media, and often one which centres on specific topics that can evoke emotion and divide opinion. One question asked 'Does news of the environment and climate change make you worried/anxious?' Combined at 45%, just under half of respondents answered either 'always' or 'usually' with a further third responding 'sometimes.' This highlights we must have a considered approach to our messaging around climate change. It is important not to downplay the key issues, challenges and consequences but to also to impress that positive action can make a real difference and there are many benefits to be realised through positive climate action.

In order to deliver effective communications, campaigns and promotions it's important to understand how people want to engage with our content. Social media was voted the most popular method of engagement. An options appraisal of the most effective platforms shall be undertaken. A new 'climate change and energy efficiency' section on the Council's website is currently under development, which will also act as an online engagement tool. It is recognised that within Shetland there are areas with poor connectivity, those who do not have access to the internet and those who are not computer literate. These groups are unlikely to have had access to the online survey, and so additional methods of completing surveys will be considered in future.

An oversight during the creation of the survey left out online news sites as a selectable option, future surveys will correct this.

Terminology

The Scottish Government has set the target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2045, as such ensuring consistency and wide understanding on the terms definition is important. The survey highlighted almost 50% of respondents are unclear on the definition of the term 'net-zero.' From this we have taken that an awareness raising piece is required around the terminology and jargon commonly used when discussing climate change. We will also take this into account with future climate change messaging and discussion to ensure it is more inclusive and so to increase participation.

Though ‘carbon footprint’ has been used to a greater extent than ‘net-zero emissions’ in recent years, we did not ask respondents if they had calculated their own—this would be something to include in future engagement. Providing a reputable resource for individuals to calculate their own carbon footprint may help in highlighting their impact and encourage a change in behaviour and actions. We plan to include a carbon footprint calculator tool in our Climate Change and Energy Efficiency webpage.

Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire

Introduction

This survey is the first that the Shetland Islands Council will be carrying out as part of our 'Climate Conversation'.

The purpose is to gain insight into the thoughts of the community around climate change. This will directly feed into our Shetland Net-Zero Plan, steer the conversation, and help us better provide for the residents of Shetland.

This survey should take around 10 minutes and we thank you for taking this time to help.

* = Mandatory Question

1. In which area of Shetland do you live?*

Central / East Mainland
Lerwick / Bressay
North Mainland
Outer Isles
Scalloway / Burra / Trondra
South Mainland
West Mainland
Yell / Unst / Fetlar / Whalsay
Not a Shetland resident

2. Do you believe there is a climate emergency?*

Yes
No
Undecided

3. What do you feel is the most appropriate response to addressing the climate emergency?*

Do everything necessary, urgently
Act slowly while we learn more about what to do
We're already doing enough
Do nothing
Other (please specify):

4. The Scottish Government has committed to a target of net-zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045. How clear are you on the definition of 'net-zero'?*

Clear
Unclear

Defining Net-Zero

Net-Zero is achieving a balance between the amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced and the amount removed from the atmosphere.

The term Net-Zero is important as this is the point we stop contributing to increasing global warming.

5. Are you clear on the definition of 'Carbon Footprint'?*

- Clear
- Unclear

Defining Carbon Footprint

Carbon footprint – the amount of greenhouse gas emissions released into the atmosphere as a result of the activities of a particular individual, organisation or community.

6. Has the COVID-19 pandemic changed your opinion on the country's resilience to dealing with unforeseeable issues?*

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

7. In your opinion, what are the top three priority areas for tackling climate change?*

- Agriculture
- Business and Industry
- Energy Supply
- Funding
- Green Jobs
- Land Use
- Residential and Public Buildings
- Transport (incl. Aviation and Shipping)
- Waste Management
- Other (please specify):

8. In your opinion, what are the top three reasons why we should be tackling climate change?*

- Damage to our towns and homes
- For future generations
- Frequency of extreme weather events
- Global natural environment
- Higher energy bills
- Increases in allergies and other health risks
- Increases to insurance and taxes
- Loss of wildlife
- More expensive food
- Protecting people globally

Water quality
Other (please specify):

9. What do you currently do at home to reduce your impact on climate change? (select all that apply)*

Avoid single-use items
Bought an electric/hybrid car
Buy local and/or seasonal produce
Choose reduced packaging when shopping
Compost
Eat less meat
Installed alternative heating system
Insulated your home
Opt for second-hand or repair/reuse
Recycle
Reduce food waste
Save water
Switch off lights/appliances
Turn down your heating by 1-2 degrees
Unplug devices when not in use
Use energy saving light bulbs
Walk/cycle
Nothing
Other (please specify):

10. Does news of the environment and climate change make you worried/anxious?*

Always
Usually
Sometimes
Rarely
Never
Other (please specify):

11. What would be your preferred way to hear more about what the Climate Change Strategy team are involved in? (select all that apply)*

Adverts in printed media
Council's Website
Notices in local businesses
Radio
Social Media (ie Facebook, Twitter)
Other (please specify):

12. Are you currently involved with climate positive organisations, community groups or businesses that exist in Shetland? If so, please list them.

13. What sort of projects, campaigns or initiatives should Shetland focus on to tackle climate change?

Demographics

14. What age group are you in?*

- 17 or younger
- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- 66-75
- 76 or older
- Prefer Not To Answer

15. What gender do you identify as?*

- Female
- Male
- Other
- Prefer Not To Answer

16. What is the highest level of education you have achieved?*

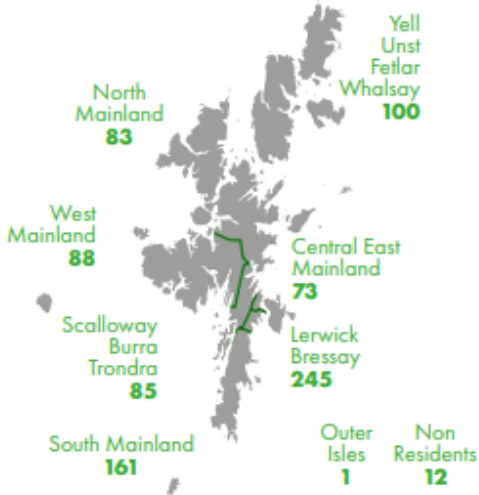
- High School
- Further Education (College)
- Higher Education (University)
- Postgraduate Studies (Masters)
- PhD
- Prefer Not To Answer

17. Do you have anything else you'd like to add?

Appendix 2: Infographic

Climate Conversation Survey 2021

848 responses from all across Shetland



The top three reasons why we should tackle climate change are global concerns

- FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS
- GLOBAL NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
- PROTECTING PEOPLE GLOBALLY



98.7% said they are doing something right now to reduce their impact on climate change



News about climate change and its impact on the environment makes people anxious or worried

45% always or usually



37% sometimes



82% believe there is a climate emergency

68% feel we **urgently** need to do all we can to address climate change



51% are clear what **Net Zero** means

84% are clear what **Carbon Footprint** means

The top three priorities identified are



Transport



Energy Supply



Business and Industry

Top areas folk want to see work done on are



Green/Renewable Energy



Improving reduce reuse recycle



Tackling fuel poverty, and more support for making improvements



Fixed Links to the Isles

recycle for Shetland