

Island Communities Impact Assessment

Preferred option for the future of **sportscotland** national training centre Cumbrae – October 2019 (updated February 2020 and March 2020)

Sport for life

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Introduction

What is an Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA)?

1. The Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 received Royal Assent in July 2018. The main objective of the Act is to improve outcomes within island communities by creating the right environment for investment, empowerment and increasing sustainable economic growth. There are three underpinning objectives:
 - 1.1. promoting islands voice
 - 1.2. harnessing island resources
 - 1.3. enhancing islands wellbeing.
2. The Act recognises that island communities face specific challenges around geographic remoteness, declining populations, transport and digital connections.
3. Section 8 of the Act puts a duty on listed public bodies to undertake an islands communities impact assessment (ICIA) when they develop policies or make decisions that may have a significantly different effect on an island community compared with other communities in Scotland. It had been anticipated that Section 8 of the Act would come into effect at the end of 2019 together with detailed guidance however these have been delayed so this Impact Assessment has been developed in the spirit of the Act in line with Ministers advice to public bodies.
4. In the context of the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018, in December 2019 the Scottish Government published The National Islands Plan which set out its 13 strategic objectives, these relate to population levels; sustainable economic development; transport; housing; fuel poverty; digital connectivity; health, social care and wellbeing; environmental wellbeing and biosecurity; climate change and energy; empowered island communities and strong local partnership; arts, culture and language; education and implementation.

5. The National Islands Plan was published during the review of the national centre Cumbrae and as this impact assessment was being completed. Consequently, the assessment reflects both on the original underpinning objectives of the Act and those set out in the recently published National Islands Plan. Throughout the document reference will be made when the proposals and findings from the assessment intersect with these objectives.
6. ICIA's should be undertaken in partnership and consultation with the local people and island local authorities. In addition, the subject of this assessment, the national centre Cumbrae receives public investment through **sportscotland** to pursue a nationwide remit through driving participation and performance in sailing. Consequently, this assessment has necessarily involved a wide consultation process involving both local and national organisations, many of whom are stakeholders in the centre.
7. In terms of process ICIA's must include:
 - 7.1. a description of the effect the decision will have that is different for the island community than other communities in Scotland.
 - 7.2. an assessment of how the decision can be carried out in a way that will improve positive outcomes or mitigate negative outcomes for island communities.

Scope of this ICIA

8. This ICIA covers the preferred option for delivering high level support to sailing which has historically been the role of the **sportscotland** national training centre Cumbrae (Cumbrae).
9. The preferred option is to enhance the capacity of the Royal Yachting Association Scotland (RYAS) to develop sailing opportunities across Scotland, this will include developing the provision and delivery of sailing from Largs and increased capacity in the Education and Training team and the Regional Team at RYAS. This represents a move away from the current centralised model based on the existing national centre. It will allow the governing body for sailing to extend and deepen its support to many more Scottish island communities than is currently possible.
10. The enhancement of facilities at Largs will allow RYAS to deliver to performance squads, provide high level education courses required to support sailing and sailing clubs across Scotland, support sailing events and meet other demands as they arise including those previously provided by the national centre. In addition, strengthening RYAS's regional development capacity will enable it to support more sailing clubs to develop their own local provision including in the Highlands and Islands area so that these areas are as well served as the remainder of Scotland.
11. The new concept empowers RYAS, the governing body for the sport in Scotland. The concept and its delivery plan have been developed through a strong partnership involving **sportscotland**, RYAS and Largs Sailing Club (LSC) including its training arm Largs Sailing Club Training Association. Establishing the new approach will strengthen RYAS's capacity in the areas of regional development, training and performance and will mean that the national centre Cumbrae will close. The planning and decision-making process has involved an extensive research and consultation programme covering a very wide range of individuals, organisations and the local community on Cumbrae.
12. The new approach and concept are supported by the RYAS, Largs Sailing Club, Largs Sailing Club Training Association, the **sportscotland** Board and its subsidiary the **sportscotland** Trust Company Board, the latter being responsible for overseeing **sportscotland**'s three national centres including Cumbrae. The shift away from having a national centre was not seen by other governing bodies for

related watersports as an impediment to their own plans as they too recognise the changes in the demand for watersports.

13. This ICIA will explore the impact on the island community of:

- 13.1. closing the national centre Cumbrae and the associated impact on other Scottish Islands
- 13.2. our plans for the future of national centre Cumbrae assets (buildings, equipment and land).

Summary of mitigating actions

14. To mitigate the risks associated with its plans to close the existing national centre Cumbrae and enhance the capacity of the RYAS to develop sailing opportunities across Scotland, **sportscotland** will continue to:

- 14.1. support the existing Cumbrae staff to help them secure other roles through redeployment, training support or voluntary severance
- 14.2. work with North Ayrshire Council and local community representatives to secure the best outcome for the island in terms of a new user and investment in the existing site which will help negate the impact on the local economy, ferry traffic and school roll
- 14.3. operate the national centre for the 2020 season (accepting the impact of Covid-19) to give time to market the site and for staff to consider their future options
- 14.4. ensure that watersports will continue to be available to schools through its programmes offered by the national centre Inverclyde
- 14.5. work with RYAS to help develop sailing opportunities across Scotland, including developments at Largs Marina which will ultimately support more sailing events here and at other Scottish sailing clubs.

Background

What is National Centre Cumbrae?

15. National centre Cumbrae (Cumbrae) was established on the island of Cumbrae over 40 years ago. It was first established when it was the only provider in Scotland of high-level instructor and skills training and supported those people who had the potential to become top sailors. Over time more sailing clubs have developed their capabilities as have other providers of training and outdoor sport including an ever-increasing variety of water sports. According to RYAS there are now over 140 other accredited training providers in Scotland spread right across the country, including many sailing clubs with some now extending their range of activities in response to changing demands. Some are now becoming watersports hubs to meet the growing demand for new watersports which is helping clubs become more viable. Additionally, it is understood that people who have trained at one of the national centres have established their own outdoor activity companies and now also offer a range of activities and experiences.

16. Over time and against this backdrop the national centre has had to modify the type of courses it has run so there is now less formal courses run and instead schools and cruising have taken a greater share of activities despite the centre being staffed to deliver higher level qualifications. As a result, in recent years the national centre has broadened its support to:

- 16.1. people of all ages who want to attend courses to develop their skills and knowledge which can lead to a range of governing body awards

- 16.2. people of all ages who want to become instructors and/or employed as professionals within water sports and leisure industries
 - 16.3. people of all ages who want to experience water sports, ranging from a first experience through to those who want to hone their skills and confidence at a higher level
 - 16.4. other activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Awards.
17. As with all three **sportscotland** national centres, Cumbrae receives an annual investment from **sportscotland** to underpin its activities, this is in addition to variable amounts of capital each year being invested in new equipment, and to maintain and upgrade buildings and facilities. In the case of Cumbrae the annual revenue investment from **sportscotland** has grown steadily and currently amounts to nearly £700k. It also generates income from its users. These have seen a gradual decrease from 3,133 in 2017/18, 2,948 in 2018/19 and 2,855 in 2019/20.

Our plans

18. The proposal to close the national centre Cumbrae has been developed following a comprehensive review of trends in watersports, the centre's activities and recent financial performance. In detail these proposals reflect the findings from market research commissioned by British Marine* into the future of water sports which was published in 2018; a series of discussions and consultations with existing Cumbrae staff, sports governing bodies connected with the national centre and the **sportscotland** partnership managers responsible for the investment made in these governing bodies, local and national politicians, the Minister, North Ayrshire Council including councillors and officers, and other agencies associated with activities on water including the RNLi and HM Coastguard; a local community consultation exercise and a detailed assessment of the centre's financial and operational performance over the past five years.
19. The review of the Centre's operational and financial performance highlighted the need for increasing annual investment from **sportscotland**, currently this stands at around £700k per year. As with all three national centres, Cumbrae also receives capital investment in new equipment and upgrades to its buildings and facilities to ensure that these meet approved health and safety standards. Over time Cumbrae has seen its original pattern of demand change with less high-level training taking place and more provision for other activities which could, in many cases be provided more sustainably by other providers which are distributed across Scotland.
20. Significantly, the review found that the context and demand for watersports training has changed since the centre was first established. Sailing clubs across Scotland have developed their own capacity, aided in part by the **sportscotland** sponsored regional development staff employed by RYAS, allowing them to provide training and access to water sports closer to where people live reducing the need to travel to the national centre. RYAS's regional development capacity is currently concentrated in the west and east regions however it has limited capacity to cover the north which is in effect the area covered by Highlands and Islands.
21. Some sailing clubs are actively becoming watersports hubs to reflect the growth in demand for a more diverse range of water sports. These developments have coincided with wider social and economic trends identified in the British Marine research which showed that decreasing numbers of people are interested in formal training and a long-term commitment to a single sport. Instead they are looking for a range of experiences which they can readily access at a time that suits them. The cost of entry to sailing is also seen as a barrier, with 'pay and play' becoming much more popular.
22. These findings led to various options being identified as a way of ensuring the **sportscotland** investment in sailing currently made through the national centre Cumbrae achieves the desired impact on water sports participation and development across Scotland. As part of this process RYAS, the

governing body for sailing and the main sport associated with Cumbrae, proposed an option which would increase the capacity of RYAS to develop and support opportunities across Scotland for more people to try sailing and in addition proposed a new building at the Largs Marina.

23. The increased capacity of RYAS through an additional Regional Development Officer (RDO) and Education and Training Officer (TDO), will continue the process of helping strengthen existing sailing clubs. The approach is based on the experience of the RYAS Focus Club programme which helps support clubs to revisit and establish strong governance; identify, recruit and support key volunteer roles (ashore and afloat) and build towards a vibrant programme of activity. This approach has proven to be successful and evidence of this comes from the previous cycle of support when the Focus Clubs averaged a membership increase of 20%. The planned increase in capacity will allow for more support to be provided in the Highlands and Islands area. This should bring direct benefits to sailing in Shetland, Orkney and the Western Isles. As a result, it should help distribute the benefits of more people physical activity across more Scottish Islands, one of the aims of the National Islands Plan.
24. The new RDO is expected to support up to 10 clubs at any one time in their operational area while offering general expertise for clubs to develop capacity to deliver programmes for 'on and off' water activity and run or facilitate other types of events. This will complement the existing RYAS expertise around facility development and volunteering to help strengthen the capacity to run events at a higher standard and more efficiently. The education and training officer will target training in race management, course laying and event management. All this reflects RYAS's vision for 'strong, sustainable, vibrant clubs'. These are fundamental to the future success of sailing in Scotland, creating more opportunities, interest and engagement locally to attract more participation. It will also support those with the desire and talent to develop their competence and competitiveness through a local to national pathway. One objective of this new approach is to allow talented sailors to develop and hone their skills locally encouraging them to remain in the sport for as long as possible.
25. The direct support to sailing clubs will be further enhanced by the RYAS Club Development Framework – a printed tool which helps clubs to self-guide their approach to development. The new RDO will engage with clubs which have historically been harder to reach due to their geographic location and the limitations on the existing staff time to travel to these more remote areas given commitments in their existing areas of the 'east' and 'west' regions. In the course of this engagement, clubs will be supported to establish or review a development plan which then becomes the basis of tailored support from the RDO. RYAS guidance for these plans follows its Club Development Framework and through drawing on the expertise of the existing RDOs and the new TDO each club will receive tailored support to meet their individual needs.
26. An example of this approach would see the new RDO establish a connection with Skye Sailing Club and with them refresh their development plan. The work identifies the club has good local support but lacks people with powerboat qualifications for safety provision which limits activity. The club wants to bring in an instructor to train volunteer parents to operate the safety boats. However, given their role the RDO knows there are similar needs at Barra Watersports Club and Plockton Sailing Club and that each club have people who are qualified already. They show that it will be better for the long term to train a Powerboat Instructor at each club who can then train others as needed at the individual clubs. The RDO then liaises with the TDO who follows this up and makes the necessary arrangements. A viable course is created and delivered at the Skye Sailing Club at nominal cost to the individuals and as a result six new powerboat instructors are trained. They go on to deliver powerboat training at their respective clubs and over time they help grow the capacity to support more on water activity at three different locations with greater sustainability.
27. A current example of how the regional development model works is the evolution of the Kintyre Seasports Project which began with a desire to rejuvenate the sailing club in Campbeltown. This

project now has multiple local water sport clubs and youth work partners, including the high school, committed to a shared hub location which will offer a range of watersports and training for personal proficiency and qualifications aimed at improving employability for young people at risk of negative destinations. Overall helping the provision of a wider range of water sports opportunities, something younger people are now looking for while increasing the sustainability through offering strength in depth and breadth. Similar opportunities for innovative developments will be extended to the geographic areas of the new RDO which will include Orkney, Shetland and the Western isles.

28. Furthermore, by working in conjunction with all the RDOs, the new TDO will help facilitate the delivery of targeted training at or as near as is practical to the location of identified need. Again, reflecting the market research which indicated a stronger desire to access more opportunities locally instead of travelling to a single national centre. This is a role that will particularly benefit the Highlands and Islands which have historically been disadvantaged by their distance from centres with the capability to deliver this type of training. The TDO will be able to deploy resources directly to Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles to support locally organised training opportunities which are important in sustaining club volunteer structures and the delivery of on water activity.
29. The proposed new building located at the Largs Marina is on a site adjacent to the Largs Sailing Club. The focus will be to offer a location for national squad training, utilising the inclusive accommodation and physical preparation facilities now available at the national centre Inverclyde, located close to the Largs Yacht Haven. It will also provide a base for the delivery of high-level instructor and skills training required by Scottish sailing clubs.
30. In combination these actions will create a more geographically distributed model of support for the sport while also enhancing provision at Largs Marina. The development at Largs Marina will be located next to the existing Largs Sailing Club so will facilitate mutual benefits through sharing facilities and in doing so will assist the Club enhance its own capacity to potentially develop into a water sports hub. The close working between RYAS, the Club and Marina will also provide the basis for helping to attract more sailing events to this part of the Scottish coast and through the outreach work of the regional development staff to other locations across Scotland.
31. The investments required to enhance the RYAS staff team and for the developments at Largs Marina will be covered by **sportscotland**. The additional annual revenue costs will be considerably less than the current annual cost of around £700k in revenue support which is required to sustain the national centre Cumbrae. This new arrangement will help achieve efficiencies for the 'public purse' and much greater impact over a much wider geographical area than is currently the case and especially to some of Scotland's larger islands.
32. The overall aim of these proposals is to create a model which is fit for purpose and better reflects the trends in the way in which people, especially younger generations want to engage with water sports. The governing body, supported by **sportscotland** believes that strengthening the support available to sailing clubs across Scotland, particularly the other islands will create a more decentralised and responsive model capable of growing participation and improving performance outcomes.
33. It also means that as the governing body, RYAS will have responsibility for overseeing all elements of the sailing pathway across the whole of Scotland, from introductory courses and experiences through to the development of elite sailors working closely with its clubs through the new model. It will allow other providers including existing sailing clubs to improve their provision through the development of their coaches, volunteers and staff which in turn will improve the accessibility to training and skill development across all areas in Scotland.
34. Against this backdrop, this impact assessment is based on the closure of the national Centre and the implementation of the plans to enhance the capacity of the RYAS to develop sailing opportunities

across Scotland, including developments at Largs Marina. This approach will address the issues raised through the research on trends in water sports and informed by the wide range of consultations which have taken place including a local community consultation held in October 2019 as part of the review of the national centre.

*(British Marine is the trade association for the UK leisure, superyacht and small commercial marine industry and has over 1,500 members who come from a broad range of businesses including boat builders, chandlers, brokers, marinas, passenger boats and engines)

Summary of potential local impact

35. As highlighted in Table 3 there has been extensive consultations with many stakeholders with an interest in the role of the national centre Cumbrae and its future. From these the new model proposed by RYAS emerged and has been developed to the point where it has gained the support of the main investors and stakeholders. Most consultees recognised the importance of responding to the changing demand for watersports. It is important that action is taken to ensure future public investment is directed towards achieving the desired outcomes for sailing in Scotland. Ultimately, the new approach will mean that support for developing sailing will be deployed across a wider geographical area and service many of the Scottish islands not currently covered.
36. Set against this wider consultation exercise the local community consultation highlighted more locally focused issues which are explained below. Having been established over 40 years ago the removal of the national centre from the island is naturally perceived in a more negative light by the local community. (This reflects the essence of the responses and discussions from the 23 people who attended the community consultation event). The following paragraphs explain the approach taken to the community consultation and the findings.
37. Working in partnership with North Ayrshire Council, a community consultation event took place at Millport on 23 October 2019. This took the form of a drop-in session from 2.00pm to 5.30pm. This method of consultation was used following advice from the Council which has considerable experience of managing this type of community consultation. Altogether 23 local community representatives availed themselves of the opportunity of attending the session. This compares with the 15 island residents who were attracted to participate in the consultation event arranged by the University of Strathclyde Centre for Environmental Law and Governance as an integral part of the consultation required by the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 to inform the National Islands Plan.
38. Those attending the **sportscotland** event represented a wide age range and cross section of the community. These included one currently working for **sportscotland** at the Centre, one currently working for the catering and cleaning contractor providing services at both Inverclyde and Cumbrae and an ex-staff member who previously worked at the Centre.
39. As they arrived members of the local community were invited to join one of two tables where the Head of Centre: Inverclyde and Cumbrae and the Project Adviser outlined the background to the review and then listened to the issues and concerns the local residents had about the proposal to close the national centre. At the end of the discussions each attendee was invited to complete a survey form with four questions regarding how they currently use the national centre, how they would use the Centre if it remains on the island, how they think closure would impact on the island and if the Centre closed what they think the site could be used for. Some attendees asked to take the forms away to give more consideration to the questions and North Ayrshire Council made blank copies available should others have wanted to comment.

40. During the discussions, residents expressed a range of views about the potential of the existing National Centre closing. These are summarised below:

- 40.1. Existing uses of the Centre, include using the gym, watching activities at the Centre, grandchildren learning to dinghy sail and sea kayak, doing try a day programmes, stopping off place for tea/coffee on cycle rides and considering doing activities, being employed at the Centre and using the launching/landing facilities. In addition, some residents indicated that they had used the Centre in the past for courses on VHF, RYA courses, power boating and sailing. One respondent had rented out their properties for participants attending National Centre courses especially for BSAC and SSA instructors running diving courses, although this is a relatively minor element of the national centre's current activities. The same person also indicated that they had used the Centre for family fun events.
- 40.2. If the Centre were to remain open, then respondents made a few suggestions as to how they would use it. These included they would see an opportunity to introduce cycle hire for groups of children and schools, introduce access to Field Studies students including power boating Level 2 and other nautical training courses given that many will be required to use boats in marine environments as part of their course/future jobs, they would participate in sailing, powerboating, sea kayaking, and use the gym. In addition, they would continue to use it as a stopping off point on cycle rides round the island and for occasional courses especially if a broader range of activities were offered.
- 40.3. The anticipated impact of the Centre closing included comments which suggested that it would have a 'tremendous impact on the island' and was seen as a 'retrograde step', with other references to the loss of jobs and visitors with one comment suggesting it would be the 'last nail in the coffin'. In this context comments were made about the potential adverse impact on the island of the Peel Park Developments across the water at Hunterston, while it was also suggested that closure could negate some of the positive impact of the Town hall developments and pier proposals under the Ayrshire Growth Deal plan. There was also a feeling that no consideration had been given to the alternative uses on the site. More specifically the Centre closing could reduce opportunities for young residents to become involved in water sports noting that in the past some had taken courses and moved onto become instructors and lifelong participants. It was suggested that all this would be much more difficult if the opportunities did not exist on the island. An economic impact was also perceived although not quantified.
- 40.4. Suggestions regarding possible future uses of the site, should the Centre close included attracting a business taking on the site to provide better accommodation and a water sports centre with a broader range of activities than the National Centre offers, especially for younger people. The activities mentioned were sailing, sea kayaking, surf boarding and paddle boarding as well as 'organised sea events', a yacht haven, restaurant, shop and café. Some comments suggested this might attract more visitors and jobs on the island. There was a very strongly held view that better links were needed between the Field Studies Centre with whatever happens on the National Centre site and that whatever happens to the national centre the site, because of its prominent location close to the ferry terminal should not be left derelict.

41. In summary the main areas of concern related to:

- 41.1. the loss of immediate access to a water sports training facility and the gym facility for local people and particularly the younger generation and the opportunity to stop off for a coffee/to watch activities
 - 41.2. the perceived importance of having a national centre on the island and its potential for attracting people to the island and the contribution to the local economy
 - 41.3. concerns that if it closes the site which is at a prominent entry point to the island would lie derelict adversely affecting the attraction of the island to visitors and residents alike.
42. Clearly, these and the other comments made during the whole consultation process need to be considered within the context of the purpose of public investment in a national sports centre. Its purpose is to have a nationwide impact focused on the provision of higher-level qualifications, development and instruction which cannot be readily delivered locally. Done successfully at this level in turn helps build capacity across the sport and in all locations, taking account of changes in demand patterns. Importantly it also needs to be considered that closing the national centre allows investment to be redirected towards offering a better service to sailing clubs across more of Scotland and particularly in Orkney, Shetland and the Western isles where such provision cannot currently be offered. This would spread the impact of that investment over a much wider geographic area and especially on these islands.
43. The analysis of data shows the impact on Cumbrae:
- 43.1. **sportscotland** currently employ 14 permanent members of staff at the National Centre Cumbrae. Of these, three reside on the island (accounting for 18% National Centre salaries). Based on figures provided by North Ayrshire Council, they represent approximately 0.4% of the economically active population on the island.
 - 43.2. Users and staff of the national centre Cumbrae take approximately 11,500 ferry journeys per year on the Largs – Cumbrae route. Based on CalMac data, this accounts for less than 1.5% of ferry passenger journeys on this route.
 - 43.3. While Cumbrae is a popular tourist destination, including daytrips, we do not believe there is evidence that the national centre is a significant driver of wider tourism to the island. The centre is residential, positioned close to the ferry terminal and away from Millport, the main town on the island, with most users visiting to undertake a specific course then leaving. As a result, it is believed there is little direct economic benefit to the local economy from national centre users making use of local accommodation, cafes, restaurants or shops on the island. Even if national centre users did visit Millport, which is where local businesses are concentrated the statistics suggest that relative to the total number of visitors to the island this is a relatively small number. The table below compares the changes in the number of ferry passengers travelling to and from the island over the past few years with the number of people taking courses at the national centre.

Table 1: CalMac ferry traffic compared with course participants based at national centre Cumbrae

	CalMac ferry traffic Largs to Cumbrae	
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Year	(note these are single journeys so the actual number of people travelling will be half the total shown)		Number of course participants based at the national centre Cumbrae
	Passengers	Cars	
2015	687082	138167	2765
2016	738549	161298	2593
2017	745619	169936	2630
2018	793206	174180	2595
2019	786819	178927	2345
Change 2014 to 2019	+91378 (+14%)	+44817 (+29%)	-420 (-15%)

This shows a significant growth in both passenger and car numbers visiting the island over a period when the island's population has remained at or around 1,400 suggesting that the growth has been in visitors. Over the same period the number of people travelling to the island for a course at the national centre has declined and significantly remains only a small fraction of the total passenger numbers. Consequently, while one or two comments received from the local community indicated that the closure of the centre would have an economic impact, based on these figures it is likely to be comparatively small. Given this rise in visitors the suggestion that came out of the National Islands Plan consultation on Cumbrae which indicated the island needed more capacity for motorhome parking would possibly help retain more spend on the island.

43.4. In financial year 2018-19, the National Centre Cumbrae directly spent £15,500 with local businesses and suppliers. Based on financial records this represents a level of annual spend with island-based suppliers. The reasons behind this are the limited range of suppliers based on the island and the joint management of the two national centres which allows for efficiencies to be achieved and best value for the public purse.

43.5. Currently the staff living on the island have two children between them, with one of primary school age representing 2% of the current school roll of 50. The school roll has over time seen fluctuations although as the age profile of the island population has changed so the numbers at the primary school has reduced. Over the last ten years it has gone from 72 in 2009 to 50 in 2019. Clearly, the impact on the school roll is relatively small and that would only happen if the parents decided to move.

44. As the set of proposals regarding the closure of the national centre are directly associated with the RYAS proposals being funded by **sportscotland** through the reduction in the investment required to keep the national centre open, these too will have an impact on other Scottish islands. These can be summarised as:

44.1. The development of a more decentralised model will support more sailing clubs across more of Scotland especially in the islands of Orkney, Shetland and the Western isles. In turn by helping to create more opportunities locally across these islands it will meet the growing demand for

easier access to water sports. Developing the confidence and capacity of local clubs and allowing talented sailors to develop their skills and experience for longer locally, a key objective of the RYAS proposal. Accordingly, these measures will further strengthen the capabilities of local sailing clubs.

- 44.2. RYAS will have the capacity to expand its regional development and education and training staffing with a focus on providing support to clubs particularly on the islands. This has not previously been possible due to capacity constraints. This will support locally organised training opportunities which are important in sustaining club volunteer structures, growing capacity to hold high standard events and deliver quality instruction to promote more on water activity.
- 44.3. The proposed new approach will also see a building development adjacent to the existing Largs Sailing Club to provide for national squads and high level and specialist instructor courses which will in turn support the development of sailing clubs across Scotland and enhance the attraction of events. It will benefit from being in proximity to the national centre Inverclyde with its enhanced physical preparation facilities and inclusive accommodation. Talented sailors from across Scotland will then have access to some of the best facilities available without having an extra ferry crossing from Largs to Cumbrae.
- 44.4. There is already evidence to suggest that the regional development model, backed up with appropriate specialist expertise, together with a more focused hub will achieve better outcomes for sailing. Looking further ahead it will help continue to lay the foundations for more water sports hubs to evolve to meet the growing interest and demand for a wider range of experiences and activities. In this respect it meets several objectives in the National Islands Plan especially by spreading opportunities for physical activity across more islands and helping empower local communities through their sailing clubs to build capacity and confidence locally.

Methodology

45. Our approach to this ICIA has been to:

- 45.1. Undertake an initial assessment using a small team of those with the appropriate skills and knowledge using a template setting out the issues defined in the legislation as a guide to the types of questions that need to be considered.
- 45.2. Use the initial analysis undertaken as part of the review of the national centre to identify the possible impact on the island of the closure and other options which were being considered during the different stages of the process.
- 45.3. Continually refine the assessment of the impact on Cumbrae and other Scottish islands as the review of the national centre and the future options has progressed; this has allowed additional information to be considered as it has become available through a combination of research and consultations.
- 45.4. Identify and record the risks associated with the options including the closure of the national centre at all stages through the review process and how they might be mitigated; these have all been reported through the relevant decision-making processes.

46. Table 2 sets out our analysis of the potential risks and negative impact of closing the national centre Cumbrae on the island of Cumbrae and how we intend to mitigate these. Then Table 3 sets out the list of consultations which have been held during the review and a summary of the outcome of these consultations. The impact of the proposed investment to enhance the capacity of RYAS to develop opportunities to sail across Scotland has been explained above.

Analysis of potential impact

Table 2: Analysis of potential impact

Area of potential impact	What do we know about the potential impact (positive, neutral and negative) on people who live in island communities?	What could we do to reduce any negative impacts, maximise positive impacts?
<p>Declining populations</p> <p>(Job opportunities, school roll numbers, access to services)</p>	<p>Job opportunities</p> <p>Cumbrae employs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 permanent staff – three of these people live on the island • 31 seasonal staff – none of these people live on the island • Three contractors – two of these people live on the island. <p>There are a further six to eight people who work across Cumbrae and sportscotland national training centre Inverclyde depending on the level of demand. Two of these people live on the island, but the closure will not put their roles at risk as they will continue to be needed to support the national centre Inverclyde as demand for its services, facilities and accommodation continue to grow.</p> <p>This means that closing the national centre Cumbrae could impact on the three permanent members of staff who live on the island. The other two island residents who are currently employed by the contractor which services both Cumbrae and Inverclyde already work between both locations. Their future employment will be influenced by the level of demand for their services from Inverclyde and their other local contracts.</p> <p>Beyond this we also recognise that the closure may lead to an overall reduction in the number of jobs available on the</p>	<p>We will offer all Cumbrae staff the opportunity to take voluntary redundancy and we will explore possible redeployment within the sportscotland Trust Company, sportscotland more widely as well as support for retraining should any staff member be interested. An initial voluntary redundancy scheme has been offered to staff, with two taking up that opportunity.</p> <p>We will work with RYAS to understand any opportunities within the governing body or sector that we can support staff to consider.</p> <p>sportscotland will actively market the site and buildings of the existing national centre Cumbrae to a new user. Given the infrastructure this could be another water sports / leisure accommodation operator. Alternatively, it could be an island-based community organisation through an asset transfer should there be interest from the local community in pursuing this option.</p> <p>By possibly attracting an alternative watersports provider to the existing site of the national centre would create both permanent and seasonal employment. The scale of this would only be known after a marketing exercise has been completed and bids formally assessed. However, based on the size of the site and the fact that there has already been commercial interest expressed by businesses in acquiring the site, it is reasonable to assume that there could be up to 10 new permanent jobs created plus seasonal roles with similar, if not greater</p>

island depending on the alternative use of the site of the existing national centre Cumbrae.

School roll numbers

There is one primary school on Cumbrae. The school roll was 72 in 2009. It grew to reach 83 in 2011 then has seen a gradual decline to 50 in 2019. Based on current knowledge the three permanent members of staff residing on the island have two children, one being pre-school age and the other at school so represents 2% of the school roll. Clearly, with the closure of the national centre there is no guarantee that these families will move from the island should a new user for the national centre site offer suitable job opportunities.

Local services

We know that 24 members of the local community use the fitness suite at Cumbrae and from the community consultation a number of local residents have and continue to use the programmes and courses run at the national centre although from booking registrations this has been a relatively small number over the recent past.

Cumbrae Primary School sends 15 pupils in June each year for four days of tailor-made watersports activity.

numbers than are currently employed at Cumbrae. This is especially true as a new provider is likely to be able to offer a wider range of water-based experiences and activities which can be flexed according to changing demand patterns and not necessarily be confined by the delivery of governing body awards.

A new provider of watersports who may be attracted to invest in the national centre site may also attract new employees to the island and this sector often employs younger people so could ultimately help support the local primary school roll. In addition, other possible users of the site might also attract other employment opportunities and bring new employees to the island assuming suitable housing can be found.

Access to services

We plan to donate the fitness suite equipment to the local community which will help underpin the National Islands Plan objective of health, social care and wellbeing and potentially helping empower the local community to run their own facilities again as envisaged in the National Islands Plan under objective 10.

The benefits of this are:

- Improved health and wellbeing of the island community because the equipment will be closer to residents and easier for them to access. This is a core strategic objective of the National Islands Plan and one of the main issues highlighted in the National Islands Plan consultation on Cumbrae.
- Support local business development and employment. We could provide training to support enterprises to start up the fitness suite provision as well as help existing national centre employees interested in setting up a new business through the provision of training support.

Cumbrae Primary School will be able to access watersports through other provision including that which will be offered through

		<p>the national centre Inverclyde as part of its school programmes. There is also a watersports provider at Castle Semple on Lochwinnoch which is about an hour's travel time. Having said that there may well be the option of the school using a new water sports provider who could be attracted to the existing national centre site. There could be a modest increase in cost if the provision used is on the mainland as a result of a ferry crossing and additional mileage to an alternative provider.</p>
<p>Plans for the future of the building and land</p>	<p>The options which are being considered for the future use of the existing national centre site include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community asset transfer to a suitably constituted body which can use the existing site for a meaningful and sustainable use • Offer the site on the open market. Having consulted with the local planning authority, North Ayrshire Council it is understood that a water activities and tourist accommodation or similar would be acceptable uses under the new Development Plan so would influence the brief that would be taken to the market. We will also continue to work with North Ayrshire Council to ensure that any proposals will reflect the economic / social needs of the island. 	<p>By continuing to work closely with North Ayrshire Council it will be possible to determine the future uses of the existing site which will add value to the island and be compliant with local planning policy.</p> <p>During the local community consultation process various suggestions were made about the future use of the site. These emphasised the need for some form of watersports centre offering a range of activities, accommodation plus related facilities such as bike hire, café/restaurant, shop, etc. One thing that became clear was the need to ensure there was no period when the existing site was left to become derelict.</p> <p>From the community consultation undertaken on Cumbrae as part of the consultation required by the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 to inform the National Islands Plan a need for a site for motorhomes was identified as a priority and this is something else that the national centre site could provide as long as it met with the Council's planning policy.</p> <p>We will work as quickly as possible to market the site to ensure continuity of use as far as is practical given that any new owner/user will require a period to develop their own facilities. Having said that it is believed that the local community would be satisfied if any new owner was seen to be investing in the site as soon as ownership is transferred. We will continue to work with North Ayrshire Council and local community representatives about the future use of the site.</p>

		<p>There was also a view that more could be made of the connection between the centre and the Field Studies Council already established on the island. Moves have been made in the past by the Cumbrae management to develop these links which have so far not materialised into any confirmed partnership arrangement. There is no reason this type of partnership could not be developed in the future between a new provider located on the existing national centre site and the Field Studies Council if there are mutual interests and benefits to be gained.</p>
<p>Economic impact of Cumbrae on the island community</p>	<p>Based on an analysis of current expenditure it is known that there is £15,000 of direct spend with suppliers on the island per annum.</p> <p>While there is no hard evidence about what individuals and groups do on the island in addition to attending the courses/ programmes at Cumbrae, based on the fact these tend to be programmed for set days especially for school groups the number of people using the Centre and then going on to do other things on the island is believed to be relatively small especially when compared with the number of day trippers and staying tourists attracted to the island. Additionally, there is no data on the number of people who attend a course at the Centre then come back to the island because of their experience.</p> <p>We know that 17% of staff salaries stay on the island assuming they spend all this on Cumbrae. The other salaries paid to national centre staff are almost certainly spent where these people live on the mainland, there is no evidence to suggest otherwise.</p>	<p>sportscotland will actively market the site and buildings of the existing national centre Cumbrae to other users which could include an alternative water sports / leisure accommodation operator as well as to the island community through an asset transfer should there be interest from the local community in pursuing this option.</p> <p>Attracting an alternative watersports and visitor accommodation provider to the existing site of the national centre would create both permanent and seasonal employment on the island. The scale of this would only be known after a marketing exercise has been completed and bids formally assessed. However, based on the size of the site and in the knowledge that there has already been commercial interest expressed in acquiring the site, it is reasonable to assume that there could be up to 10 new permanent jobs created plus seasonal roles with similar, if not greater numbers than are currently employed at Cumbrae. This is especially true as a new provider is likely to be able to offer a wider range of water-based experiences and activities which can be flexed according to changing demand patterns.</p> <p>A new provider may also have different requirements to those of the existing national centre so could require more services from island-based businesses thus increasing the direct and indirect economic benefits</p>

		compared with those currently generated by the national centre.
Geographic remoteness	Although Cumbrae has to deal with similar issues to those facing other islands, given its proximity to the mainland, with a short ferry crossing of 10 minutes, and immediate access to rail and road links from Largs, it does not have the same level of remoteness which affects those which are more geographically distant.	As set out earlier, the full set of proposals includes the closure of the existing national centre on Cumbrae and then the increasing of capacity with RYAS regional model which will increase the level of support offered to other remote islands including the Western Isles, Shetland and Orkney.
Transport	<p>Based on 2017/18 data the total number of individuals who travelled to the national centre Cumbrae for courses was 2654 (this excludes the 479 who attended cruising courses as these start and finish at Largs Yacht Haven, so participants do not travel to Cumbrae). This gives a total of 5308 ferry trips taken by course participants. Further calculations for permanent and seasonal staff suggest between them they account for another 6220 trips annually to and from the island. Altogether these numbers indicate that the national centre Cumbrae generated a total of 11,500 trips in 2017/18. For the 12 months of 2018 the total number of people carried by CalMac's Largs to Cumbrae ferry (from CalMac's website) was 793,206 people. This means that the passengers generated by the national centre Cumbrae account for 1.45% of this total. With a new use, possibly based on water sports activities and tourist accommodation on the site of the existing national centre this number would almost certainly be equaled, if not increased, by new visitors to the island.</p> <p>The proximity of the ferry terminal on Cumbrae to the national centre means that most users of the centre do not go on to travel to Millport or other parts of the island unless that activity is part of their course. Consequently, closure of the centre is expected to have minimal impact on the island's public transport.</p>	By attracting an alternative water sports / accommodation provider to the site of the existing national centre it is expected that any loss of ferry passenger numbers from its closure will more than be made up by visitors attracted to the new facility, especially if it became an all year round operation. Similarly, users of a new facility, especially if it includes tourist accommodation and possibly motorhome parking, something the Cumbrae National Islands Plan consultation identified as a need on the island, are more likely to have the flexibility and desire to travel to other parts of the island especially if bike hire is part of the new facility.

<p>Digital connections</p>	<p>The national centre Cumbrae uses its own antenna providing a digital connection to the national centre Inverclyde. It is understood there is a fibre connection available on the island however this is not used by the national centre so its closure will not affect the viability of this infrastructure. Its presence however will make the location more attractive to a new user of the site.</p>	<p>The availability of a fibre digital connection will be used as part of the marketing of the site.</p>
<p>Other Islands</p>	<p>While the national centre is based on Cumbrae it is used by people from across Scotland and beyond.</p>	<p>With the building developments at Largs Marina performance sailors from across Scotland, including its islands will have one less ferry trip to make for national squad development.</p> <p>In addition, the enhanced RYAS regional development capacity will be able to reach out and help more sailing clubs particularly in the Highlands and Islands area to Shetland, Orkney and the Western Isles so they will receive the same level of support as is currently available in the 'east' and 'west' regions. Clearly, this will be an enhancement to the services currently available to these Scottish islands and should see more opportunities available locally on these islands to promote health and wellbeing which is a strategic objective in the National Islands Plan. This Plan also cites the success of the Community Sports Hubs programme. Through the reallocation of sportscotland investment to enhance RYAS regional capacity it is possible that sailing clubs, in the longer term, will become hubs of watersports or become part of the existing community sports hubs. These developments will help the ambition in the National Islands Plan which states 'there should be no barriers at all to participating in sport and physical activity – everyone should be able to access opportunities to be active, whoever they are, wherever they live and whatever their background'. By extending the support to the other Scottish Islands sportscotland working with RYAS should be able to help further facilitate this ambition.</p>

Consultation

47. Throughout the review of the national centre Cumbrae, consultations have been held with a very wide range of stakeholders including the Centre staff, the sportscotland Board and its Trust Company Board, the Minister and other national and local politicians, the local community, North Ayrshire Council, various governing bodies of sport, Largs Sailing Club and Largs Sailing Training Association plus other national bodies interested in water based activities such as the RNLI and HM Coastguard amongst many others. All the key meetings and a summary of the outcome is outlined in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of consultation meetings

Date	Consultee	Outcome
8 November 2018	sportscotland Trust Company Board Meeting	<p>Research findings presented to the Trust Company Board covering external market changes and detailed appraisal of the last 5 years operational and financial performance of the national centre Cumbrae and the future options.</p> <p>The Board noted the findings from the review and agreed that it would establish a sub-group to consider the content of the report in more detail as a way of informing the next steps in the review process.</p>
26 November 2018	All staff briefing at Cumbrae	<p>Research findings presented to all Cumbrae staff covering external market changes and detailed appraisal of the operational and financial performance of the existing national centre and the options being considered for the future of the centre. An invitation made to staff to comment on the research findings and to put forward ideas about how to improve the centre's performance.</p>
4 December 2018	sportscotland Trust Company Sub-Group Meeting	<p>The Trust Company Board sub-group agreed that consultations with other stakeholders was required to help refine the future role and responsibilities of whatever option is ultimately taken forward for the national centre. These should include sports governing bodies, other than RYAS, which could have a role in making more use of a national centre if its strategic and operational roles were further developed.</p> <p>The sub-group also supported the proposal that Glenmore Lodge should work with the Scottish Canoe Association and Inverclyde and Cumbrae to develop a strategy for paddle sports in the central belt of Scotland.</p>
18 January 2019	Update Meeting with North Ayrshire Council	<p>Updated the Council on the research and the outcome from the Trust Company Board discussions. The Council representatives explained the proposed tourist routes being developed across Ayrshire and the one proposed for Cumbrae which could help profile the centre on the island.</p>
21 January 2019	Meeting with RLNI and Water Safety Scotland	<p>Research findings about water sports and the performance of the national centre Cumbrae were explained while the options for the future of the centre were outlined. The option of using the centre for RNLI/water safety activities was discussed.</p> <p>RNLI have their own established training centre on the south coast and do not require additional capacity however they indicated they would be willing to contribute to existing courses to enhance the focus on water safety and other activities such as towing yachts.</p>
February 2019	Head of Technical Training, Maritime and	<p>This was an exploratory discussion to assess the opportunities for collaborative working. It was noted that the Maritime and Coastguard Agency has its own national training centre in Southampton and sends all employees to this for their training.</p>

	Coastguard Agency	Consequently, they could not see any opportunities for using national centre Cumbrae.
5 February 2019	Meeting with Mark Castle, CEO of Fields Studies Council	Introductory meeting regarding both businesses and update on the Cumbrae Review and potential impacts. Exploration about future joint working and local connections with operations teams.
5 February 2019	Partnership meeting with Ocean Youth Trust (not review specific)	Discussions around existing partnership agreements and future arrangements.
7 February 2019	sportscotland Trust Company Board Meeting	<p>The Board received an update on the strategic review of the national centre Cumbrae including the full range of the consultations which had followed the sub-group meeting at the beginning of December 2018. The Board were also given a high-level presentation on the potential future business models for the centre and the proposal to introduce a seasonal model at the end of 2019. The latter would mean operations ceasing at the end of November and restart in March next year, with only key staff continuing to work at the centre, the remainder would work from Inverclyde.</p> <p>The initial discussions with North Ayrshire Council were noted as was the possibility of Growth Deal funding nominally allocated to the breakwater at the national centre. The RYAS proposal was noted. The next steps in the review process were explained. These would include commissioning a valuation of the existing national centre site and a survey to identify the cost of making improvements to the existing centre.</p> <p>The Board discussed the operation of the seasonal model and the engagement with staff and endorsed the overall approach being taken.</p>
22 February 2019	Meeting with RYAS Performance Manager	This focused on the RYAS proposals if the national centre Cumbrae is closed.
24 February 2019	Initial meeting with Kenneth Gibson MSP	The background to the review and options being considered were explained. Mr Gibson highlighted his support for Cumbrae and suggested that he would not like to see the facility close. Mr Gibson mentioned the work he had undertaken to secure the future of the Fields Studies Council in recent years.
27 February 2019	sportscotland Board Meeting	<p>Update paper presented to the sportscotland Board outlining progress made and the options under consideration. The focus was on the opportunities to further support sailing in Scotland and the accompanying risks attached to operating differently.</p> <p>The Board was made aware of the emerging options based on a proposal submitted by RYAS. The risks and rewards of this new option were explored and discussed.</p>
8 March 2019	Letter issued to Minister for Sport	This was in the form of a briefing on the background to the Cumbrae review, details of the background research and the options being considered including the possibility of the Centre being closed.

13 March 2019	Meeting with RYAS	Updated RYAS on the Cumbrae review and follow up discussions on their proposals.
18 March 2019	Call with Sail Scotland CEO, Daniel Steel	Outlined the background to the national centre Cumbrae review and the options being considered. Sail Scotland clarified that they understood the rationale.
18 March 2019	Meeting with Largs Yacht Haven	This meeting focused on the national centre Cumbrae review and the emerging proposal developed by RYAS.
21 March 2019	Meeting with RYAS Performance Manager	This considered in more detail the performance sport requirements.
22 March 2019	Meeting with North Ayrshire Council	Update meeting on recent partner engagements and current position of the Cumbrae Review.
11 April 2019	Meeting with RYAS CEO and Chair	This meeting focused on the RYAS proposal and the governing body's commitment to working up more detail as well as the opportunity for presenting the preferred option to the RYAS Board.
25 April 2019	Meeting with RYAS Board	The RYAS Board received a presentation on the proposal. The Board endorsed the proposal recognising further work was needed to establish the financial and operational viability of the model and to consider wider geographical impact
2 May 2019	Meeting with RYAS CEO	This focused on further developing the detail behind the RYAS proposal before it was presented to the sportscotland Trust Company Board.
9 May 2019	sportscotland Trust Company Board Meeting	The Board received an update on the actions that had been taken to manage costs at the national centre Cumbrae to improve its financial performance and operational performance.
16 May 2019	Meeting with Largs Sailing Club	Outlined the background to the national centre Cumbrae Review and the options being considered with a focus on the RYAS proposal. The Club's executive agreed to participate in the development of the proposal.
27 May 2019	Update Meeting with North Ayrshire Council	Update meeting on recent partner engagements and current position of the Cumbrae Review.
4 June 2019	Meeting with Largs Yacht Haven	Provided an update on the initial RYAS proposals and the current status of the review of the national centre Cumbrae.
21 June 2019	Meeting with Kenneth Gibson MSP	This was an opportunity to explain the background to the review of the national centre Cumbrae and the details of the research findings about the way in which sailing and water sports was changing, the operational and financial performance of the centre over the past five years and the options currently being considered

		with more detail given on the preferred option to support the RYAS proposals. This meeting was held in advance of discussions with staff and the local councillors.
25 June 2019	Meeting with North Ayrshire Council	This was an opportunity to explain the background to the review of the national centre Cumbrae and the details of the research findings about the way in which sailing and water sports was changing, the operational and financial performance of the centre over the past five years and the options currently being considered with more detail given on the preferred option to support the RYAS proposals
26 June 2019	Staff Meeting Cumbrae	Provided comprehensive update on the national centre Cumbrae review and introduced the detail of the proposed Scottish National Sailing Academy, (this was the working title for the initial RYAS proposals) to the staff and sought questions and suggestions from staff. Staff were offered the opportunity to meet with the Head of Centre and HR given that some of the proposals could be unsettling for staff. Follow up communications were made with those individual members of Cumbrae staff who could not attend.
26 June 2019	Meeting with North Coast Councillors (4 members)	This provided an update to the North Ayrshire Councillors who represent the area most closely associated with the national centre Cumbrae. This was an opportunity to explain the background to the review of the national centre Cumbrae and the details of the research findings about the way in which sailing and water sports was changing, the operational and financial performance of the centre over the past five years and the options currently being considered with more detail given on the preferred option to support the RYAS proposals
24 July 2019	Follow up meeting with NAC and North Coast Councillors (3 members attended)	This follow up meeting focused on the current status of the national centre Cumbrae review and the preferred option. The Councillors offered mixed views about the possibility of the existing centre closing although there was an acknowledgement that action was needed; the idea of attracting another water sports and tourist type use to the existing national centre site being favoured as an option.
8 August 2019	sportscotland Trust Company Board Meeting	In response to a further update paper, the Trust Company Board endorsed and supported the RYAS proposals and asked that they be further developed.
23 August 2019	Meeting with North Ayrshire Council	Update meeting on recent partner engagements and current position of the Cumbrae Review.
28 August 2019	sportscotland Board Meeting	The sportscotland Board supported the Trust Board's decision.
3 September 2019	Call with British Sub Aqua Club	Background to the review of the national centre Cumbrae and the options being considered was explained. Agreed to circulate a questionnaire to its members who use the national centre. Findings suggested that there would be an impact on their members although this was a relatively small user group.
10 September 2019	Paddle sports review meeting with SCA (conference call with Glenmore	This focused on the content and approach being taken to the review of paddle sports across the central belt of Scotland.

24 September 2019	Briefing with the Sports Minister (sportscotland staff and Scottish Government representative in attendance)	<p>The current status of the national centre Cumbrae review was explained including the preferred option based on the proposals from RYAS and that the status quo option was not tenable going forward. Further the Minister was given information about the revenue and capital costs of keeping the existing Centre open or the very significant cost involved in redeveloping the Centre to a standard of the other two National Centres.</p> <p>The Minister was engaged and was satisfied with the information outlined. There was no challenge to the approach being taken. His main concerns related to the staff especially with the Scottish Government's no redundancy policy, and the island community. He advised that alternative options for the site in the event of closure should be fully investigated and communicated at the same time as the Centre's closure should this come to fruition.</p>
23 October 2019	Community consultation supported by NAC in the form of an open afternoon for anyone to attend over a three-hour period.	<p>Background to the national centre Cumbrae review was explained. Queries were answered and comments recorded. Questionnaires handed out to those who attended and wanted to respond. Questions focused on what have they used the Centre for in the past, how would they use it if it remained open, what did the community think the impact would be if the Centre was closed and what should happen to the site of the Centre did close.</p> <p>A summary of the points made at the consultation is available. This was set out in a paper presented to the Trust Company Board at its November meeting and is set out in this document.</p> <p>Follow up email from community member making various suggestions about the future of the Centre. They received a response explaining how the points were being taken into consideration in the review.</p>
30 October 2019	sportscotland Board Meeting	Verbal update on the progress being made on the proposals of RYAS was provided. The sportscotland Board noted the update.
14 November 2019	sportscotland Trust Company Board Meeting	The Trust Company Board agreed to continue to explore the options proposed by RYAS, noting the need for a detailed appraisal of the underlying proposals and financial forecasts. They also noted the ongoing changes to the existing operations at Cumbrae aimed at improving its effectiveness and efficiency these included the closure of the Centre from the end of November to March 2020. There were queries around the proposed voluntary severance package which was going to be offered to staff.
22 November 2019	Cumbrae Staff Briefing	An update provided on the progress with the Cumbrae review plus details of how the Centre will operate over the winter period. An outline of the additional practices being introduced to help manage costs and the voluntary severance scheme was explained.
11 December 2019 sportscotland Board Meeting	sportscotland Board Meeting	Verbal update was provided on the ongoing review.
13/15 January 2020	Cabinet Secretary with responsibility for the Year of Coast and Waters	Detailed response provided to a request for information about the impact of the national centre Cumbrae on the island. A response was compiled which explained the relatively limited impact on the economically active total on the island, the number of ferry passengers and the limited spend by the existing national centre with island businesses.

		The Cabinet Secretary expressed her satisfaction with the detail provided with no follow up requested.
7 February 2020	sportscotland Trust Company Board meeting	The Trust Company Board approved in principle the closure and subsequent sale of the national centre Cumbrae site on condition that the current proposals from RYAS are fully supported by all the key partners, noting that at this stage they have all endorsed the proposed approach and sportscotland has indicated its willingness to accept the additional ongoing revenue costs of supporting the RYAS proposals.
19 February 2020	North Ayrshire Council	Strategic meeting with Executive Director to provide an update on the outcome of the Trust Company Meeting and provide an overview of the next steps following the sportscotland Board meeting.
26 February 2020	sportscotland Board meeting	The sportscotland Board supported the Trust Company Board's decision to approve in principle the closure and subsequent sale of the national centre Cumbrae site on condition that the current proposals from RYAS are fully supported by all the key partners, noting that at this stage they have all endorsed the proposed approach and sportscotland has indicated its willingness to accept the additional ongoing revenue costs of supporting the expansion of the RYAS workforce.

Key findings

48. Following an exhaustive review of the national centre Cumbrae and the alternative options for supporting sailing in Scotland it has been agreed by the key stakeholders that the existing centre will close and instead investment will be directed to increase the capacity of RYAS to develop sailing opportunities across Scotland, in addition a building development at Largs Marina, next to Largs sailing club will be progressed to support national squads, high level education courses and the delivery of events.
49. From the review the impact on the local economy in terms of jobs for island residents and ferry passengers generated by the existing centre has shown these to be relatively small in percentage terms, however, it is acknowledged that the impact on the individuals concerned may be significant. All the existing national centre staff will be offered alternative roles within **sportscotland**, support for training and/or a voluntary redundancy scheme.
50. The impact on the island of Cumbrae of this decision will be mitigated by **sportscotland** continuing to work with North Ayrshire Council and local community representatives. This partnership will seek to ensure that the existing site attracts uses which utilise the existing infrastructure and which can generate as much if not more economic activity to the island than was the case with the national centre. One of the main concerns of the island community was for **sportscotland** not to leave the site so it became derelict given its prominent location. So, the partnership will work as quickly as possible to secure a new user for the site thus reducing any delay between the site being vacated and a user coming on stream.
51. **sportscotland** working with RYAS and other partners believe that this new model of support for sailing will bring a range of benefits greater than those currently secured from the current focus on the national centre. It will create a more focused hub for sailing in Largs and a much broader network of support for sailing clubs across the Highlands and Islands filling a gap in current provision. These will help contribute to the delivery of the National Islands Plan through increasing local opportunities for physical

activity, empowering volunteer bodies to build local capacity and confidence in their sailing clubs and increasing the range of these impacts to more islands.

Conclusions

52. The work we have done to produce this impact assessment has developed our understanding of the impact the decision to close the existing national centre Cumbrae will have on the island community.
53. We have developed a set of actions that will help us mitigate the impact of this decision. We will achieve these actions through continuing to work closely with North Ayrshire Council to find a new user for the existing site of the national centre and continue to work with RYAS to develop sailing opportunities across Scotland.

Sign off

Assessment signed off by:	Senior Management Team
Sign off date:	27/03/2020