ARISAIG COMMUNITY TRUST

Community Consultation Key Findings Report

113 responses • August 2026

In a nutshell

The consultation shows a community that strongly values Arisaig's natural environment, close-knit community and village character — while wanting practical action on affordable housing, activities for young people, parking and transport, employment and the pressures created by tourism.

The community has spoken. This report highlights what it said.

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1. Key findings at a glance

Responses	Finding	What it tells us
66	Affordable housing	Top community priority
64	Community events	Strong demand for connection and activity
62	Youth activities	A clear priority across responses
58	Employment opportunities	Keeping people and skills locally
55	Playparks & outdoor spaces	Protecting and improving shared spaces
55	Environment & biodiversity	A major part of Arisaig's identity

The strongest priorities are not isolated issues. They are closely connected: respondents want a village where people can afford to live, work and stay, where children and young people have things to do, where community life is active, and where Arisaig's environment and character are protected.

What people value most

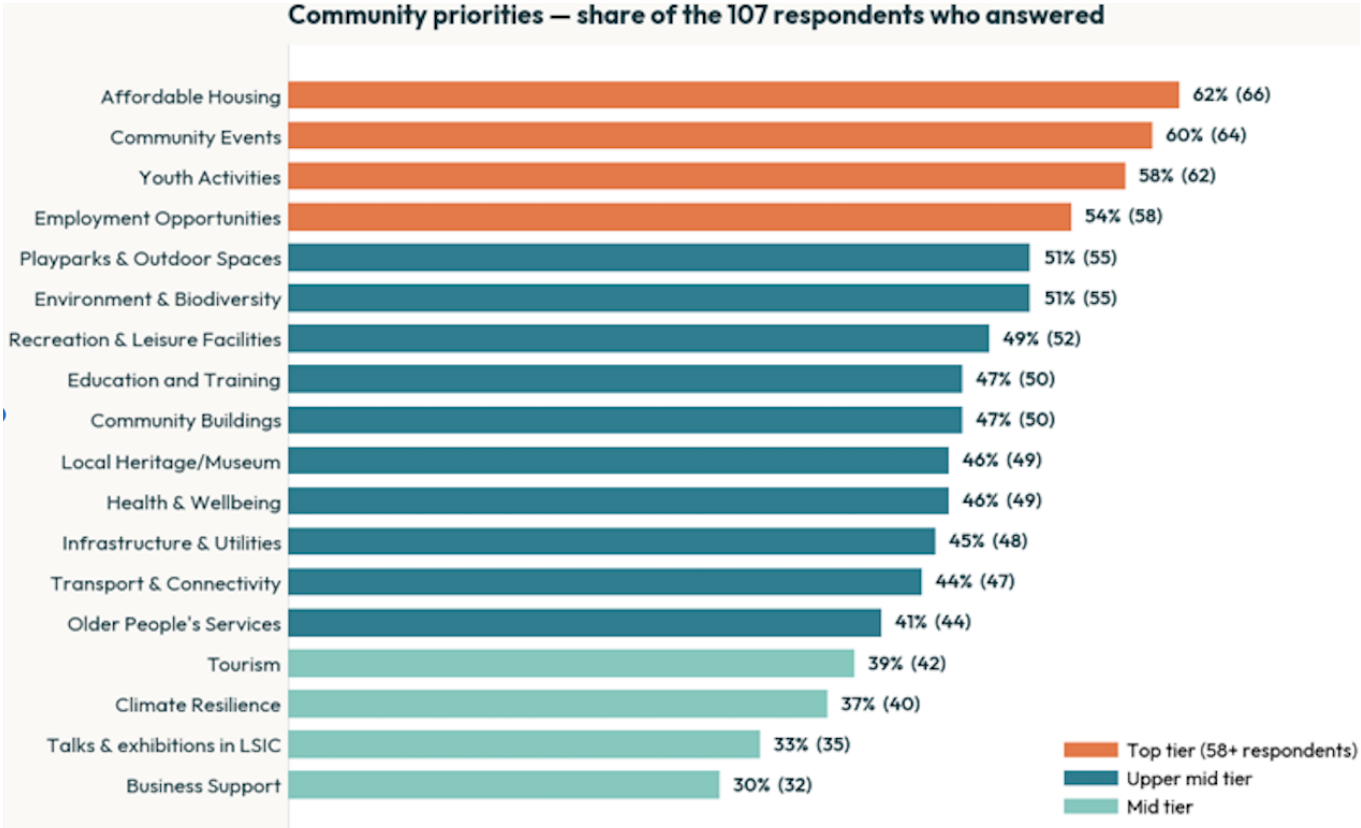
Open-text responses repeatedly celebrated three things: the natural and coastal environment, the people and sense of community, and Arisaig's peace, safety and village character. Local services, the marina, beaches, playpark, LSIC and community events were also frequently mentioned.

Main challenges raised

The recurring challenges were affordable housing, tourism and visitor pressure, parking/traffic and transport, employment and the local economy, facilities and opportunities for young people, environmental pressures, and access to health and other essential services.

2. Community priorities

Respondents could select as many priorities as they felt were important, so percentages do not add to 100%. The ranking below is based on all 113 responses.



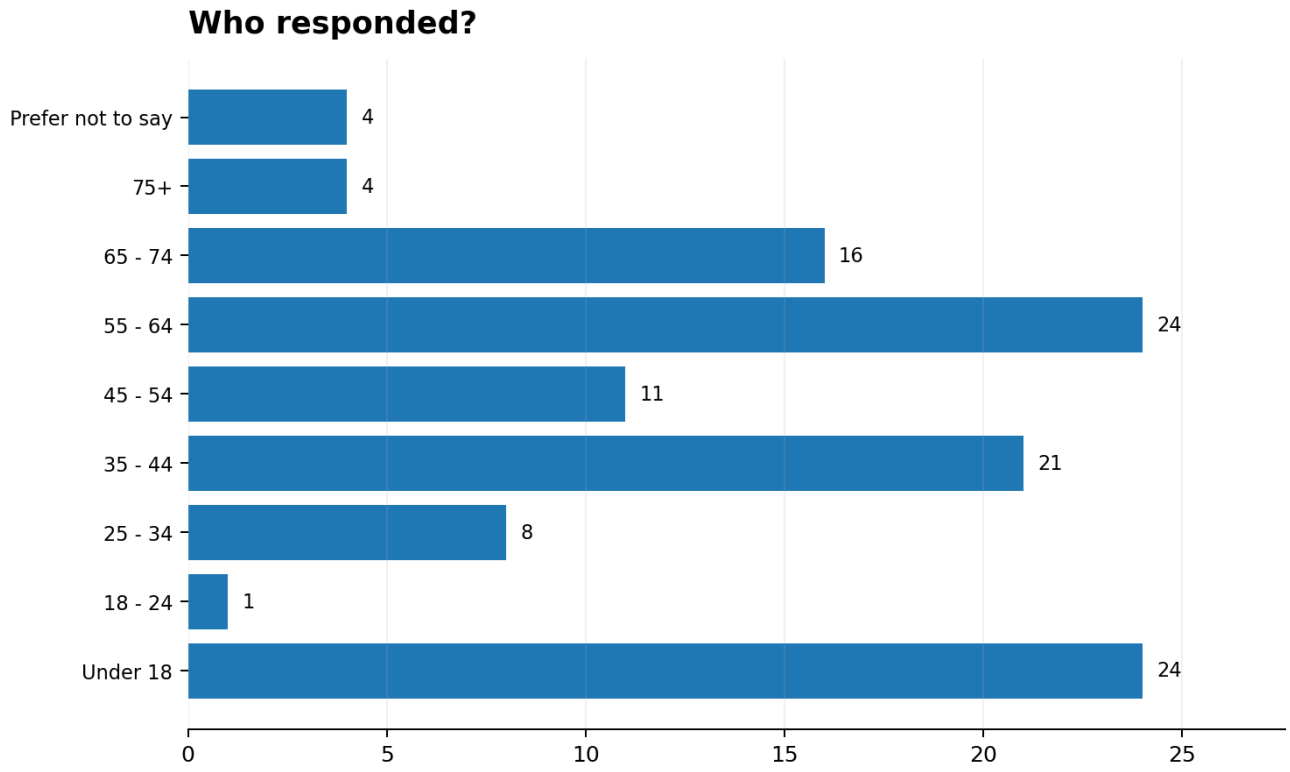
Top six priorities: affordable housing (62%), community events (60%), youth activities (58%), employment opportunities (54%), playparks/outdoor spaces (51%), and environment & biodiversity (51%).

The full priority picture

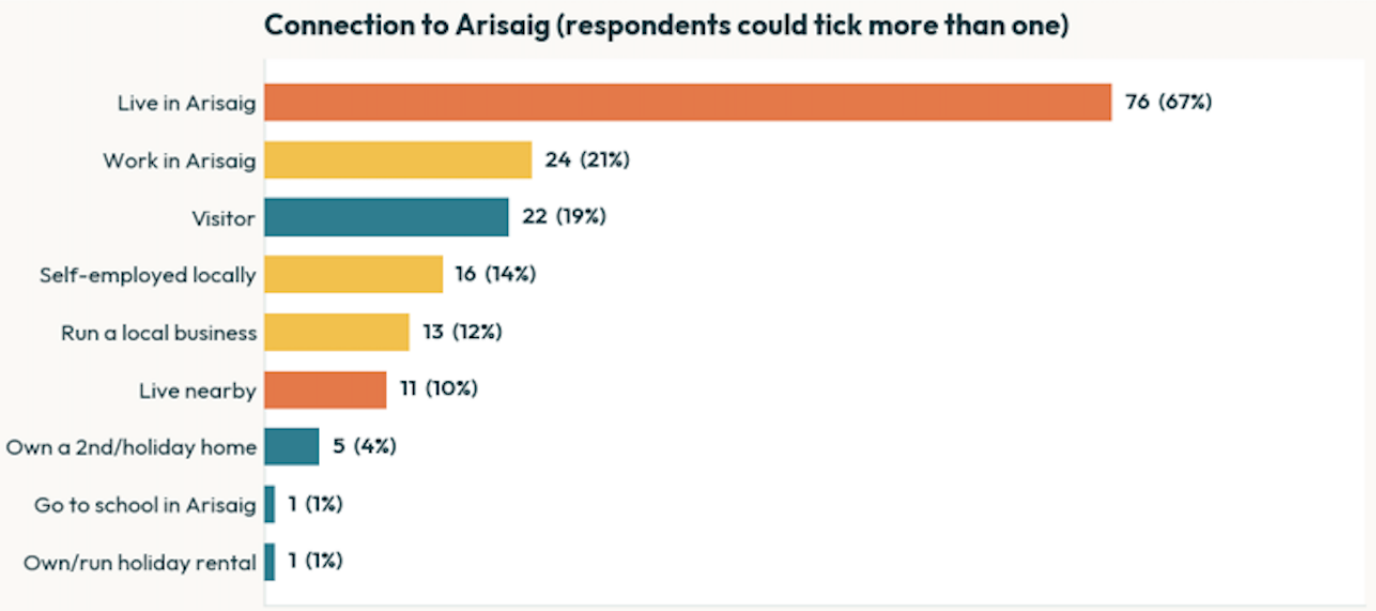
Priority	Responses	Share of respondents
Affordable Housing	66	58%
Community Events	64	57%
Youth Activities	62	55%
Employment Opportunities	58	51%
Playparks & Outdoor Spaces	55	49%
Environment & Biodiversity	55	49%
Recreation & Leisure Facilities	52	46%
Community Buildings	50	44%

Education and Training	50	44%
Health & Wellbeing	49	43%
Local Heritage/Museum	49	43%
Infrastructure & Utilities	48	42%
Transport & Connectivity	47	42%
Older People's Services	44	39%
Tourism	42	37%
Climate Resilience	40	35%
Talks & exhibitions in LSIC	34	30%
Business Support	32	28%

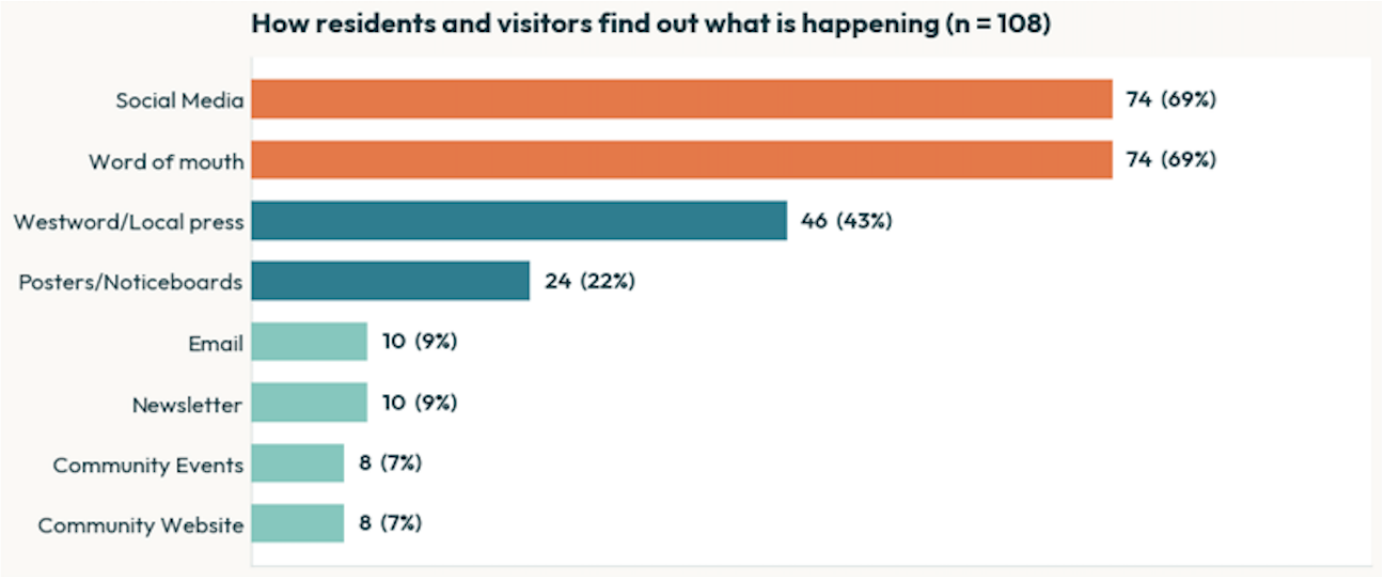
3. Who responded and how people engage



The survey reached a broad age range. Under-18s and people aged 55–64 were the largest groups, each with 24 responses. There were fewer responses from 18–24-year-olds (1) and people aged 75+ (4), which may be useful to bear in mind when planning future engagement.

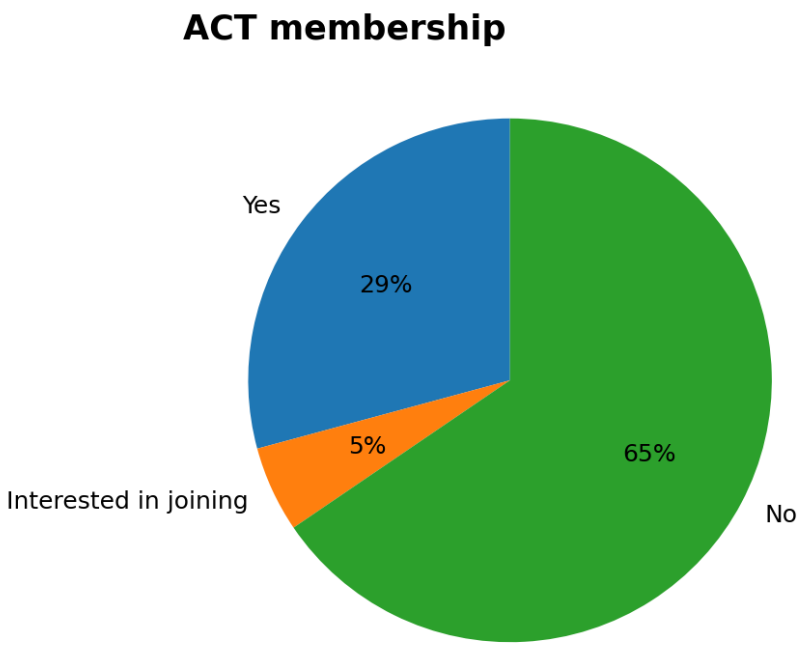


Most respondents were directly connected to Arisaig: 76 live in Arisaig, while 24 work there. The survey also captured visitors, local businesses, self-employed people and people living nearby, giving the findings a useful mix of resident, working and visitor perspectives.



Social media and word of mouth are the two strongest ways people find out what is happening, with 74 respondents selecting each (69%). Local press was next at 46 (43%). This suggests that future ACT communications should continue to use a mix of digital and community-based channels rather than relying on one platform.

ACT membership: 33 respondents (29%) are members of ACT, while 6 (5%) said they were interested in joining. That represents an opportunity to convert existing interest into stronger membership and involvement.



Volunteering and involvement

The survey suggests a sizeable pool of potential community involvement, but much of it is conditional or future-facing. Across the question on getting more involved, 16 respondents selected helping at events, 12 selected volunteering, 4 selected joining a working group and 13 said they already volunteer with ACT (responses could include more than one option).

Awareness of the volunteer WhatsApp group could also be strengthened: 44 respondents said they knew about it, while 64 said they did not.

4. What the community values

Community & people

The strongest recurring theme was the friendliness, community spirit and sense that people look out for one another.

Nature, scenery & sea

Arisaig's beaches, sea, landscape, wildlife, views and access to the outdoors were repeatedly described as core assets.

Local services & amenities

The Spar, Post Office, cafes, pub, school, toilets, marina, playpark and LSIC were frequently recognised as important local assets.

Peace, quiet & safety

People valued the village's peaceful pace, low-crime feel, cleanliness and safe environment for families.

> *Immediate connection with the landscape… lots of cultural and community events… and a general DIY attitude — so many like-minded problem solvers with great practical instincts.*
>
> Survey respondent

> *The natural environment, the community, and being not spoilt by over-tourism.*
>
> Survey respondent

5. Challenges raised by respondents

Tourism & visitor pressure

Respondents raised the seasonal surge, wild/roadside camping, litter, pressure on beaches and infrastructure, and the need to balance tourism with residents' quality of life.

Affordable housing

A repeated concern was the shortage and cost of housing for local people, young people, families, key workers and those wishing to downsize.

Employment & local economy

People highlighted the need for year-round employment, support for local businesses and more opportunities for young people to remain in the area.

Parking, roads & transport

Parking during peak periods, traffic, public transport frequency and pedestrian/cycling safety were recurring concerns.

Youth activities & facilities

Many responses called for more activities, clubs and safe places for children and teenagers, including wet-weather options.

Environment & climate

Environmental damage, litter, extreme weather, climate adaptation and protecting Arisaig's natural assets were raised.

Health & essential services

Access to healthcare, the former medical centre, care for older people and wider essential services were mentioned.

> *Losing younger generation due to lack of housing and employment opportunities; tourism pressures; care and sheltered housing for the elderly.*
>
> Survey respondent

> *Health service access — Arisaig medical centre sits empty and deteriorating. We have to travel to Fort William for anything other than GP appointments.*
>
> Survey respondent

6. Improvements people would most like to see

The improvement suggestions were practical and varied. Parking and transport were especially prominent, alongside housing, youth activities, tourism management and health services. There was also interest in making better use of existing buildings and spaces rather than always creating new ones.

Recurring improvement theme	Examples raised by respondents
Parking, roads & transport	More parking; better traffic management; footpaths and cycle routes; safer walking routes; improved bus links; clearer signage.
Affordable housing	More affordable homes, including smaller homes and housing for young people, families and older residents wishing to downsize.
Youth activities & facilities	More clubs, sports, creative activities, wet-weather provision and places for teenagers to meet.
Tourism / visitor management	Better control of roadside camping, clearer and more positive visitor information, improved waste facilities and enforcement where needed.
Health & essential services	Re-use of the former medical centre, local clinics, community transport and better support for older people.

> *Repurpose the health centre as a community space; revitalise the train station to generate income for the community; revamp the LSIC as a museum and local archive/history hub.*
>
> Survey respondent

> *More regular extracurricular activities for children — Highland dancing, gymnastics, sailing club. And funding to help local seasonal businesses stay open over the winter months.*
>
> Survey respondent

7. What happens next?

The consultation is the starting point, not the finishing line.

ACT has listened to the views shared through this consultation. The next step is to use the findings to explore possible solutions, identify what is achievable, and develop an action plan that reflects the needs and priorities of the community.

Step	Action	Purpose
1	Review and prioritise	Use the findings to identify the issues where ACT can have the greatest positive impact.
2	Explore solutions	Look at practical options, costs, partners, funding opportunities and any permissions or responsibilities involved.

3	Develop an action plan	Turn the strongest opportunities into clear proposals, with realistic timescales and responsibilities.
4	Keep the community involved	Share progress, invite ideas and create opportunities for residents, businesses, young people and volunteers to contribute.

The consultation also highlights the importance of sustainable community income. ACT is open to ideas about how unrestricted income can be generated to help maintain and strengthen the projects and facilities that matter to Arisaig.

A final message

The overall picture is positive: people care deeply about Arisaig and want to see it remain a welcoming, active and sustainable place to live, work and visit. The challenge is to protect what makes the village special while responding to real pressures around housing, tourism, transport, employment, services and opportunities for all ages.

About the data

This report summarises the 113 survey responses provided in the Community Survey spreadsheet. Questions allowing multiple selections are shown as counts of respondents, so totals may exceed 113 and percentages may exceed 100% when added together. Open-text answers have been reviewed thematically to identify recurring issues and ideas; these themes are qualitative and should not be interpreted as a formal statistical coding exercise.