

Alderney Postal Survey Results Summary

In order to obtain an insight into how the marine environment is used and perceived by Alderney's community, a postal survey was distributed to every household on the island (1,600 properties). The survey contained questions about the use made of Alderney's coast and sea, the priorities for the future management of Alderney's waters, and the demographic character of those people answering the survey. A total of 136 surveys were returned and a summary of the results is described in the following pages.

Demographics

A total of 136 completed surveys were received. The majority (82) of returned surveys were completed by community members aged 65+, with only 1 response from the age group 18-24 (Figure 1). The Alderney Electronic Census Report (March 2015) indicates that the age range 65- 84 makes up approximately a quarter of the population (584 individual out of a population of 2,020). A roughly even number of males and females responded to the survey, 66 and 70 respectively. There was a wide range of responses regarding length of residence in Alderney and no clear correlation with age. The largest percentage of respondents (~25%) have lived on the island for 21-40 years. Some completed surveys indicated both a male and female respondent, however we can only speculate that this survey may have been completed by a couple. These surveys were few in number and as such were included in the analysis, using the data for either male or female and not both.

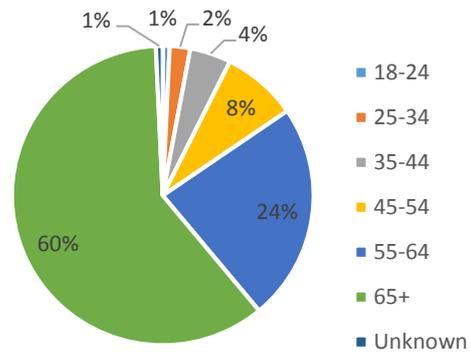


Figure 1 - Age of survey respondents

Involvement in marine activities

The most popular activities amongst males and females in all age groups are: looking at the sea (130), relaxing (119), bird watching (91), visiting the sea for inspiration (91), swimming (78), and transport (76) (figure 2).

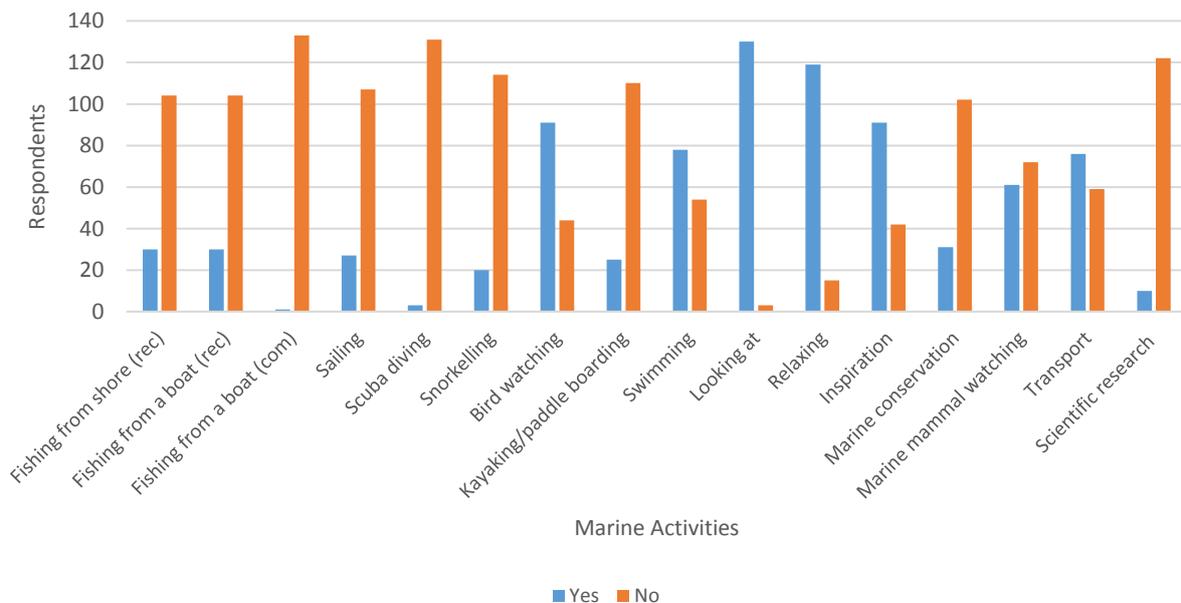


Figure 2 – Respondent involvement in marine activities (all ages/M&F)

In terms of frequency, there are few females who partake in recreational fishing activities, whereas 21 male respondents noted their fishing activities from ‘once a year’ to ‘every couple of days’. Of the respondents, there is only 1 male who fishes commercially, and this is done every 3 months or so. Activities such as scuba diving (3), snorkelling (20), and kayaking/paddle boarding (25) are conducted relatively infrequently by a relatively small number of respondents, both male and female. Activities such as marine conservation and marine-mammal watching are conducted predominantly by respondents aged 55+. It is difficult to draw any conclusions about the preferred activities of different age group as the majority of survey respondents are age 55+.

What would encourage more use of the coast and sea?

The most commonly cited change to encourage respondents to use the coast and sea further was ‘Improvements to and expansion of ferry services’ (21) and ‘access/path improvements for beaches and coastal walks’ (18). Improved marine and coastal facilities, such as public toilets or built-in recreational facilities such as a BBQ (7) and the construction of a marina (8) also featured prominently amongst responses. Some respondents noted factors outside the control of the marine plan, such as ‘warmer weather/calmer sea’ (13) and ‘being younger’ (3).

Importance of the sea for quality of life

The sea around Alderney was identified as being very important to respondent’s quality of life by both men and women, as shown in Figures 3a and 3b. Figure 4a highlights the differences in perception based on the length of time spent on Alderney; and Figure 4b demonstrates the differences in perceptions between age groups.

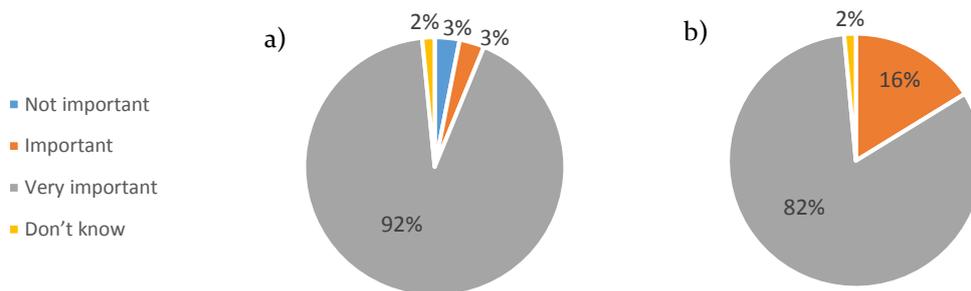


Figure 4 - Responses listing the importance of the sea for quality of life: a) Male; b) Female

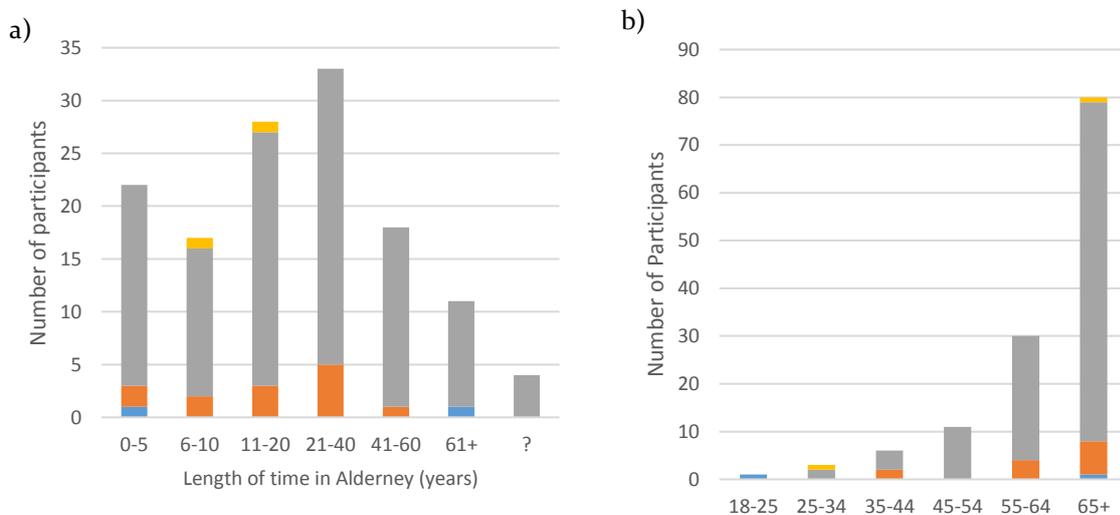


Figure 3: a) Perceived importance of the sea around Alderney to quality of life based on length of stay; b) Differences in perceived importance of sea around Alderney to quality of life between age groups

The majority of individuals perceive the sea around Alderney to be very important to their quality of life, with only 2 entries stating it is not important and 2 stating that they do not know (Figure 5).

Importance of the sea for livelihoods

A majority of respondents stated that the sea around Alderney is not important to their livelihood (Figure 6). There is a marked difference between perception of contribution of the sea to livelihood and contribution to quality of life. This suggests that many may view the sea as a contributor to their quality of life via aesthetics and recreational use, rather than viewing the marine environment as a source of income. Given that the most common respondent group was aged over 65, it is possible that many respondents were retired.

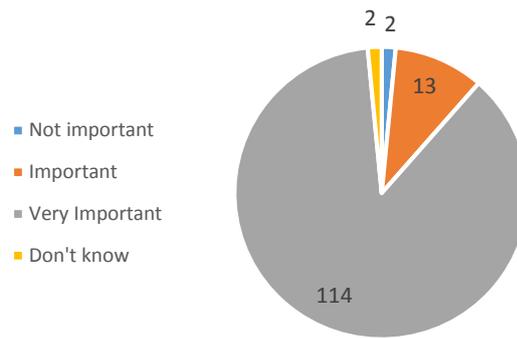


Figure 6: Perceived importance of sea to quality of life by respondents, irrespective of age, gender or length of stay

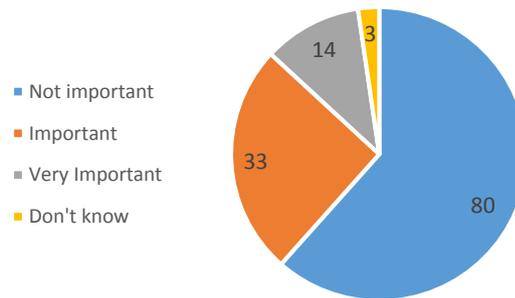


Figure 5: Perceived importance of sea to livelihood by respondents, irrespective of age, gender or length of stay

What 3 words describe Alderney's coast and sea?

Question 5 asked respondents to describe, using 3 words, what the coast and sea around Alderney means to them. Responses were grouped into overarching themes. It would appear that respondents perceive the sea around Alderney to be aesthetically pleasing, however they recognise the unique and challenging environment in which they live, as the most common themes are 'beauty' (79), 'peace' (46), and 'interest/inspiration' (41), with 'danger' closely following (30). In instances where sentences were provided rather than individual words, responses were not included.

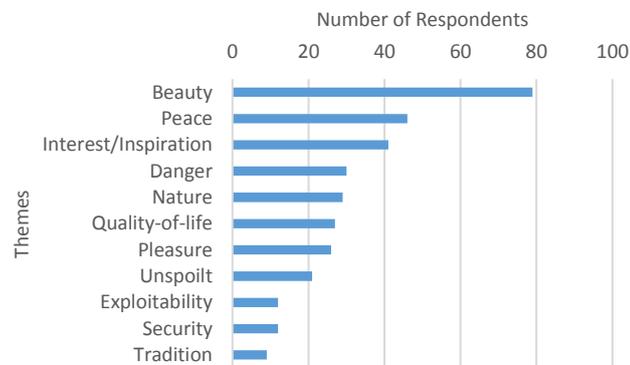


Figure 7 – Respondent descriptions of Alderney's coast and sea, grouped into key themes

Priorities for the management of Alderney's coast and sea

The priorities for marine and coastal management in the next 10-15 years are presented in Figure 8. Survey respondents were asked to select 3 priorities from a list of 10. Respondents were also able to provide alternative priorities should they wish. From the responses, the top three priorities for management are: Improved marine transport links (51); Environmental protection (48); and Jobs and employment for island residents (45). Other priorities included maintaining accessibility for all, sustaining fish stocks for recreational users as well as commercial, a wildlife conservation law, and the development of a marina.

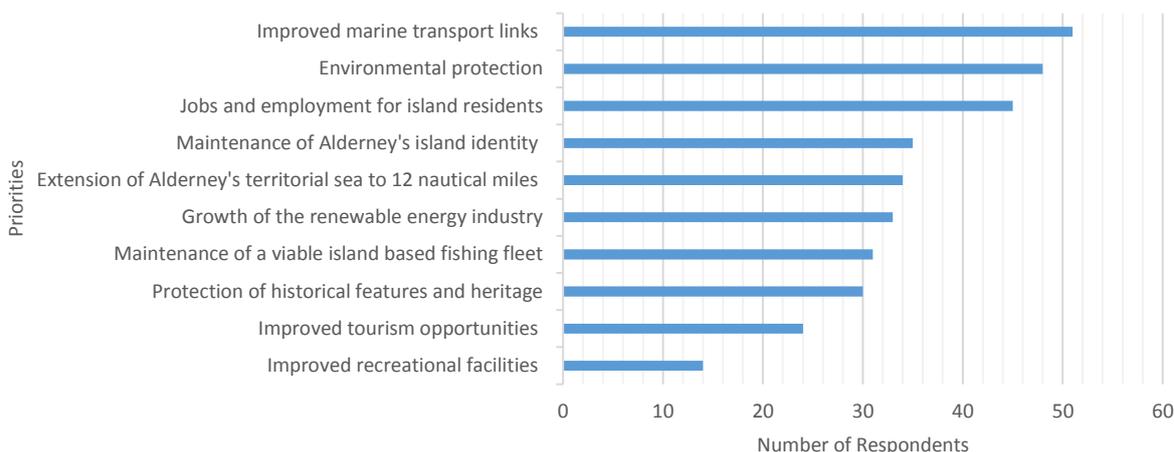


Figure 8 - Key priorities for coastal and marine management in the next 10-15 years (all age groups, M&F)

Improvements to current marine and coastal management

Respondents noted specific improvements to current marine and coastal management that they could like to see implemented in the near future. Responses were grouped into common themes and are presented in Figure 10.



Figure 9 - Improvements to the management of Alderney's coast and sea, as suggested by respondents

The most common management changes relate to the removal of waste and litter from Alderney's beaches (17). General improvements to, and maintenance of the harbour has emerged as a common management change that respondents would like to see (6), with specific support for related issues such as, the building of a marina (6), the provision of more pontoons at the harbour (4), and the regular clearance of seaweed

from the harbour area (5). Contrastingly, a number of respondents noted that they are happy with the current management measures in place around Alderney's coast and sea (11).

Additional comments

Opportunity was provided for survey respondents to provide any further comments at the end of the survey. Notable comments included:

- *"We all agree the sea is stunning at all states of tide. If we look after the sea, the sea will look after us. Keep it clean and do not take more than we need."*
- *"The coast is one of the most beautiful I know - we should protect it for the future."*
- *"People only care and maintain things which they perceive as having a use to them. Therefore coast and sea providing employment in any form would encourage tactful management of the sea and coasts resources."*

Overall summary of community survey

There are a wide range of activities taking place along Alderney's coast and in its waters. The activities and activity frequency for males and females are fairly similar, with the main difference being a tendency towards male participation in recreational fishing activities. Broadly speaking, the majority of respondents perceive the sea around Alderney to be very important for their quality of life, however the same cannot be said for the perceived contributions of the marine environment to livelihoods. Other key perceptions of Alderney's marine environment include those of beauty, interest/inspiration, pleasure, quality of life, nature, and the exploitability of island resources. From the responses, it is clear that key priorities for respondents, are improved marine transport links, environmental protection and the creation and maintenance of jobs for island residents. The extension of Alderney's territorial sea to 12nm is a priority for a relatively large number of respondents. Changes to existing marine and coastal management have also been identified and feature a wide range of issues including, beach cleaning, seaweed clearance, harbour improvements, waste management and improvements to sewage facilities. The creation of a UNESCO World Heritage site is also noted as a potentially key change by one respondent.