



SCOTTISH ISLANDS FEDERATION
www.scottish-islands-federation.co.uk

Norman Baker MP,
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State,
Great Minster House,
33 Horseferry Road,
London SW1P 4DR.

21 October 2012

Dear Mr Baker,

I am writing to you regarding the plight of the Scilly islands which will be left without affordable and regular public transport at the onset of the winter season.

The view of the Scottish Islands Federation is that no island whether situated in Scotland or the rest of the UK should suffer from lack of regular and affordable links to the mainland. It is essential for the well being of any island population that links which are providing a lifeline service should be maintained all year round in the same way as road links are maintained for mainland communities.

It is not acceptable that a community of the size of the Scilly island should be cut off for the entire winter, and depend on a private air service for its communication with the rest of the UK.

We therefore urge you to consider solutions which would alleviate the burden placed on these isolated communities exposed to hostile winter conditions and find a way to provide them with a regular and affordable ferry service during the winter months.

Island communities need to be considered in the same way as other rural communities and should not be discriminated against because they suffer permanent geographical handicaps.

Such permanent geographical handicaps are indeed acknowledged in Article 174 of the Lisbon treaty in relation to islands, mountainous regions and sparsely populated areas. The Article also spells out how these regions should not be discriminated against in the global framework of the EU Cohesion Policy.

It would be timely for the UK government to reflect on this article's implications regarding the Scilly islands.

As the Scilly isles have now applied for associate membership of the Scottish Islands Federation, we will be making representation directly to Brussels in that respect.

Yours sincerely,

Camille Dressler
Chair
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