



**PUBLIC PETITION NO.**

**PE01516**

**Name of petitioner**

Malcolm Lamont

**Petition title**

Referenda for Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles

**Petition summary**

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to hold three separate referenda in Shetland, Orkney, and the Western Isles on Thursday 25 September 2014, one week after the Scottish independence referendum, asking the people of each island group whether they would prefer their island group to:

- to become an independent country, or
- to stay in Scotland

and, in the event of a yes vote in the referendum on Scottish independence, to have the following additional option:

- to leave Scotland and stay in the remainder of the UK

**Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition**

Soundings of the Scottish Government and of the respective local authorities have met with no support, despite there being many people in each of the three island groups who would welcome the chance to take part in such a referendum.

**Petition background information**

The three island groups are culturally very different but they share a history of having been part of Norway.

In each island group, there are many people who have expressed support for local independence, and there are also people who have said that, in the event that Scotland becomes independent, they would want their island group to leave Scotland and remain in the UK.

**Unique web address**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/islandgroups>

**Related information for petition**

**Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?**

YES

**How many signatures have you collected so far?**

0

**Closing date for collecting signatures online**

28 / 04 / 2014

### **Comments to stimulate online discussion**

Whether you live in Shetland, Orkney or the Western Isles, you will know that your part of the world was once in Norway and still has its own traditions and culture which set it apart from the rest of what is now Scotland.

A referendum will soon be held on whether Scotland should be an independent country.

What better time to decide the status of each of these island groups?

Many believe there is a case for independence - for Shetland, for Orkney, and sometimes the idea is also heard in the Western Isles.

Others believe there is a case for remaining part of the UK even if Scotland leaves.

The UK Government decided not to allow any other referendum to be held on the same day as the Scottish independence referendum. But there is nothing the Scottish Government from deciding to hold these three referenda, in the island groups, a week later.

Note that the result of the Scottish referendum will be known by the date on which the islands referenda are requested to be held. So staying in Scotland will mean either being part of an independent Scotland (if the Scottish result was 'yes') or staying in a non-independent Scotland (if the Scottish result was 'no'). The option to 'leave Scotland but staying in the remainder of the UK' will only be included if the Scottish result was 'yes'.

You do not have to live in Shetland, Orkney or the Western Isles to sign this petition. But wherever you live, please sign it if you would like residents to be able to decide the status of their islands.