

shetland.org



Fetlar Welcome Pack

2024 Edition



W

Sand of Tresta, by David Gifford

We are delighted that you are considering making Fetlar your home. You will enjoy the wonderful scenery, the unpolluted skies, the abundant wildlife and the peace and quiet. This welcome pack seeks to give you some basic information to assist you in settling into your new home.



Fetlar from Brough Lodge, by Graham Booth



Fetlar Overview

Fetlar overview

Fetlar, which has a population of 60(ish), is one of the Northern Isles in Shetland (along with Yell and Unst) and is the fourth largest island in Shetland. It is 60 miles northeast of Lerwick, the main town on Shetland Mainland.

To get to Fetlar from Lerwick you need to drive north from Lerwick to Toft, take the ferry across Yell Sound to Ulsta and then drive across Yell; you then need to take the ferry across the Bluemull Sound to Hamars Ness in Fetlar. If you plan your journey to coincide with ferry times, you can get from Fetlar to Lerwick (and from Lerwick to Fetlar) in two hours.

You will find the ferry timetable on the Shetland Islands Council (SIC) website. On ferry crossings on the Bluemull Sound, look for the ferries which have “H” as that indicates ferries whose destination is Hamars Ness in Fetlar. The ferries offer an account facility which give a discount to residents/regular users.

Full information is available on the SIC website at <http://www.shetland.gov.uk/ferries/>, or if you prefer telephone the booking office is very helpful on 01595 745804.

The roads on Fetlar are single track with passing places.



Fetlar has a large community hall, a shop/post office with a cafe, a primary school, a nurse's surgery with ambulance available, a Kirk, and a small museum (Fetlar Interpretative Centre). There is self-catering accommodation available ranging from one to three-bedroom houses, a low-cost camping böd (not currently available) and a Guest House with four double bedrooms serving breakfast and evening meal. There is also a Christian retreat centre.

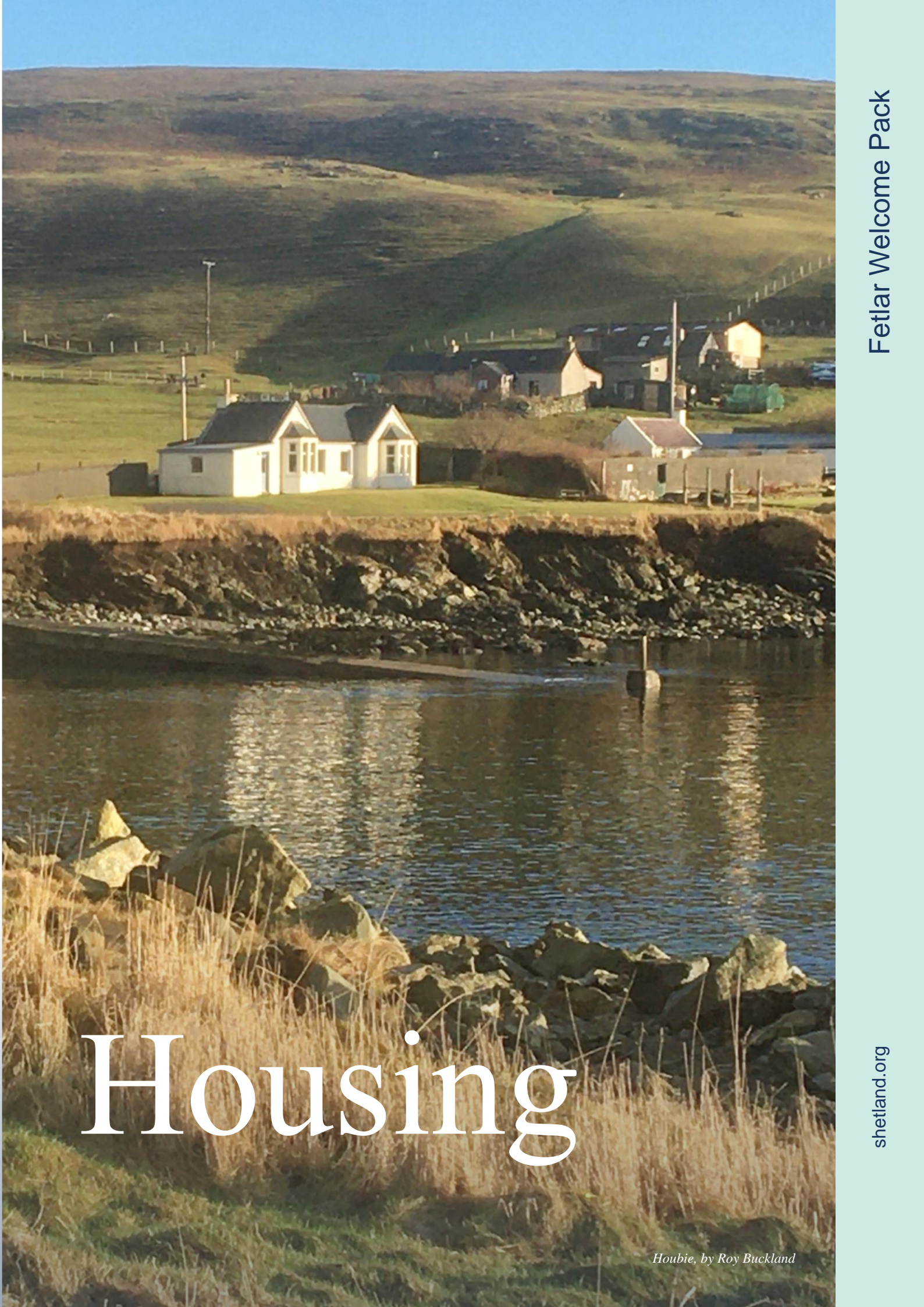
The community hall has three electric hook-ups for caravans and camper vans. This includes commercial washing and drying machines which are available for residents to use.



Paul and Vee Parsons preparing for the Christmas lunch, by Graham Booth



The hall is decorated for the festive dinner, by Graham Booth



Housing

Housing

There is council owned property for rent at Stakkafletts in Houbie, the centre of Fetlar. Stakkafletts is a group of semi-detached and terraced bungalows and houses with 1,2 or 3 bedrooms.

Details of availability are available on the SIC website at <http://www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/>.

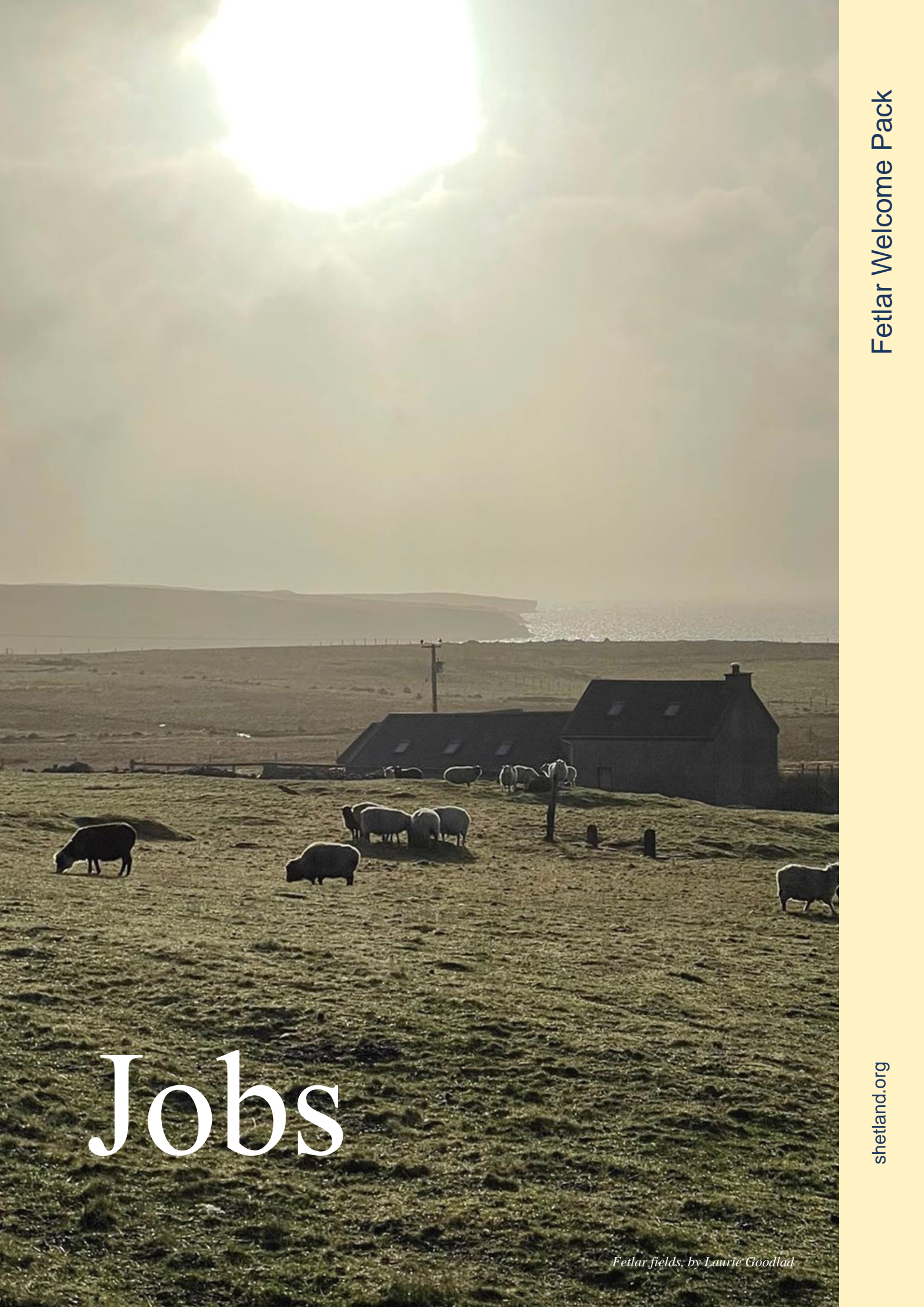
Please contact SIC to discuss eligibility criteria for Stakkafletts, restrictions apply but are somewhat relaxed due to the lack of demand for social housing on Fetlar.

Finding a house

Shetland house prices are lower than mainland Scotland, and Fetlar house prices are lower than those on mainland Shetland. Properties may be advertised in the weekly Shetland Times newspaper published each Friday or with estate agents/solicitors in Lerwick.



Stakkafletts, by Lucy Cummings



Jobs

Fetlar fields, by Laurie Goodlad

Jobs

Many people on Fetlar enjoy running their crofts, but all have additional jobs. The principal employer is Shetland Islands Council which employs skippers, engineers and deckhands to staff the ferry which is based at Hamars Ness.



The SIC advertises current vacancies on the website
<https://www.myjobscotland.gov.uk/>

There are farming enterprises on Fetlar who are always looking for skilled workers as well as the guest house and shop.

There are also several self-employed people who run their own business from home in Fetlar, including several skilled crafters. Lisa's Leatherworks is open by appointment, www.lisasleatherworks.co.uk. There is also an author whose work is available online: www.avalinakreskafictionauthor.blogspot.com. Cruise ships visit Fetlar during the Summer and this also provide opportunities to sell locally made craft items and books.

Commuting to Yell, Unst and even the mainland for work is possible (four residents currently have jobs off island), although ferry times do not always match exactly. The main industries on these isles include mussel farming and salmon farming, retail, haulage and public sector work, including social care in care centres and help at home, education and health care.



Medical Facilities

Fetlar clinic, ambulance and Nurse's house, by Dave Sumner

Medical Facilities

Yell Health Centre (at Mid Yell) covers the islands of Yell and Fetlar with a GP visiting Fetlar once a month. Telephone and video consultation are available.

Their website is at: <https://www.yellhealthcentre.co.uk/>.

There are daily weekday surgeries at the Yell Health Centre. The doctor visits Fetlar once a month and there is a resident health care support worker. Emergency cover is provided by First Responders under the Scottish Ambulance Service. The health care support worker works from the surgery attached to the Nurse's House in Fetlar. When you move to Fetlar we recommend contacting the care assistant who can take some basic details. There are green cross pots available from the health care support worker so you can list your medications and store it in the fridge for emergencies.



Yell Health Centre, by GP Nomad

There are a number of first responders who can be called upon in an emergency and will respond to a 999 call. The coastguard helicopter provides a medivac service in an

emergency to the Gilbert Bain Hospital in Lerwick. The Yell Health Centre is the base for the community nurses, midwife, health visitor and other therapists. A dentist comes to Yell Health Centre regularly.

The pharmacy is based in Brae on Shetland Mainland, but in emergency drugs may be obtained from the practice in Yell or from the nurse in Fetlar. Regular prescriptions are delivered to the island and are available for collection from the shop.

Outpatient and inpatient care is delivered at the Gilbert Bain Hospital which also has an Accident and Emergency department. Some general surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology, and dialysis is performed at the Gilbert Bain which has two in patient wards and a maternity department. For more complex conditions and major surgery patients have to travel to Aberdeen or Glasgow. There are psychiatric services based in Shetland although psychiatric inpatient care is in Aberdeen. Assistance with travel expenses for medical reasons can be obtained through the Patient Travel Office based at the Gilbert Bain:
<https://www.shb.scot.nhs.uk/departments/patienttravel/index.asp>.

Social care, for example home visits and help, is not available in Fetlar unless organised independently. Funding for this may be available through the personal budget care scheme. The scheme is run by Shetland Islands Council:
https://www.shetland.gov.uk/community_care/Self_Directed_support.asp

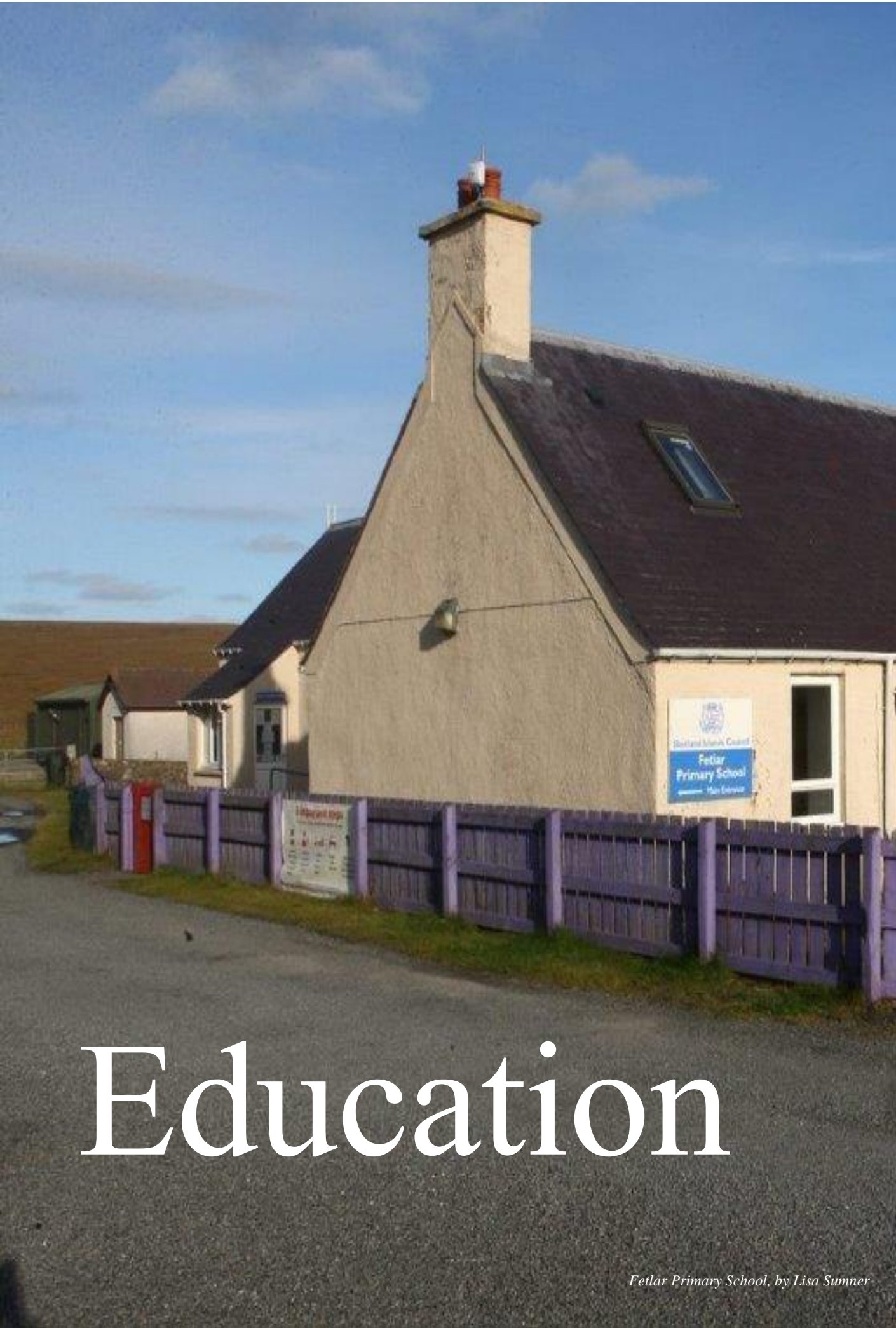
Veterinary Services

The veterinary practice is Shetland Vets, based in Bixter with offices in Scalloway and Lerwick, and they hold surgeries in Yell or Unst for pets once every two weeks:
<https://www.shetlandvets.co.uk/contact>.

The vet visits Fetlar occasionally to carry out testing on cattle, and will treat animals by prior arrangement.



Fetlar ponies, by Dominika



Education

Fetlar Primary School, by Lisa Sumner

Schools

There is a primary school in Fetlar which is currently mothballed as the primary school age children on the island are being home-schooled. The school will be re-opened if there is a child of primary school age on the island. When open, the pupils at the Fetlar Primary School attend Baltasound primary school in Unst one day a week.

The primary school will also host the nursery which pre-school children attend.



*At 12 years old pupils start attending Anderson High School,
by Shetland Islands Council*

There are mother and toddler groups on the neighbouring Isles of Yell and Unst

At 12 years old pupils board weekly at Anderson High School in Lerwick with pupils from Fair Isle, Foula, Skerries, Whalsay and Mainland Shetland. Anderson High School has recently been totally modernised with new hostel accommodation provided for the weekly boarders.



Baltasound Junior High School, by VAS Volunteering Shetland

All pupils have their own room with en suite facilities. There is no charge for accommodation. Pupils can alternatively choose to go to Baltasound High School in Unst between the ages 12 and 16.

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College

Shetland is home to Shetland UHI for post 16 learning which also incorporates Train Shetland and the Internationally renowned NAFC Marine Centre.

There are numerous day time and evening courses available which can be found on the website: <https://www.shetland.uhi.ac.uk/>. These are both for general interest and to develop more specific qualifications. For example, two Fetlar residents have recently learned Chinese and others have achieved care qualifications. You can also take full degree courses at Shetland College in a wide range of subjects.



The NAFC Marine Centre , part of Shetland UHI, overlooks Scalloway Harbour, by NAFC

Leisure activities

Fetlar's lochs offer excellent fly fishing, by Euan Myles

Fetlar Community Hall

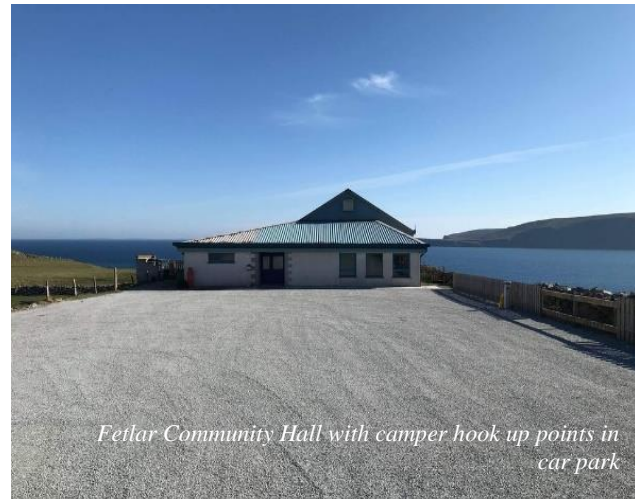
There is a large well equipped community hall run by the Fetlar Community Association. The main hall is used for events such as concerts, dances and performances and is also marked out as a badminton court. There is a pool table and darts board in the Club Room.

On Saturday nights after 7pm the hall opens as a bar. Community events occur most months including such things as goose pie supper and karaoke, concerts with local traditional music bands, a Christmas community meal and fish and chips suppers. These are popular nights and typically attract over half of Fetlar residents.

There is a singing group and a knitting group which both meet weekly at the hall. The hall can be rented out by individuals and for events.

Fetlar Community Council meets at the hall once a month to discuss the concerns of islanders and to represent Fetlar's views to Shetland Island Council.

To contact the hall email: fetlarhallbookings@gmail.com



Fetlar Community Hall with camper hook up points in car park



Fetlar Interpretive Centre

The Fetlar Interpretive Centre, run by the Fetlar Museum Trust is open between May and September. It has displays about local history and culture, a shop and offers access to archives for research and access to wifi.

Cinema

Lerwick shows regular films at the Mareel centre. Occasionally films (usually old or unusual films) with a local interest are shown in Unst or Yell.

Angling

Fetlar has very good fishing, both freshwater on Papil Water, Winyadepla, Funzie and Skutes Water and sea fishing either from the shore or by boat.

You should apply to the Shetland Angling Association for an annual permit to fish on the freshwater lochs [Permits - Shetland Anglers Association \(shetlandtrout.co.uk\)](https://shetlandtrout.co.uk).

Other leisure activities

Kayaking, windsurfing and walking are also popular around Fetlar – even water skiing! The scenery is unspoilt and magnificent with a large number of wildflowers and also wonderful birds and occasional otter and whale sightings (orca, humpback and minke have all been seen regularly). Fetlar also has interesting geology and is a haven for those who like walking in the wild beauty.

The adjacent islands of Yell and Unst have good leisure centre facilities with a range of swimming and fitness activities. Other groups in the Northern Isles include book groups, knitting groups and local history groups. Shetland Library supplies book bags on a five weekly basis to library members, and visits with a mobile library in the Summer.

In the summer there are regular RSPB walks organised on the RSPB reserve. Fetlar is one of the few places in the UK where the red necked phalarope breeds and many birdwatchers visit during the summer months to see the birds. Local birders post their sightings on a WhatsApp group so that unusual sightings are shared.

Where to stay

Gord Guest House offers ensuite bedrooms with breakfast and evening meal – a packed lunch is available on request. [Gord Guesthouse | Fetlar Shetland](#)

Self-catering accommodation (one and three-bedroomed) is available at Leagarth, the contact details are on their Facebook page: [The Fetlar Lodge and The Peerie House | Facebook](#) . There is also self-catering accommodation at Aithness (one bedroomed) [Bethany | Fetlar Shetland](#) and Tresta (four-bedroomed); [Tresta Croft House | Fetlar Shetland](#). There is also a camping böd at Aith which sleeps up to eight in two rooms and is bookable through Fetlar Community Association fetlarhallbookings@gmail.com .

For campers, there are hookups at Fetlar Hall with shower facilities and a washing machine and dryer: fetlarhallbookings@gmail.com . You can also wild camp, but if on private

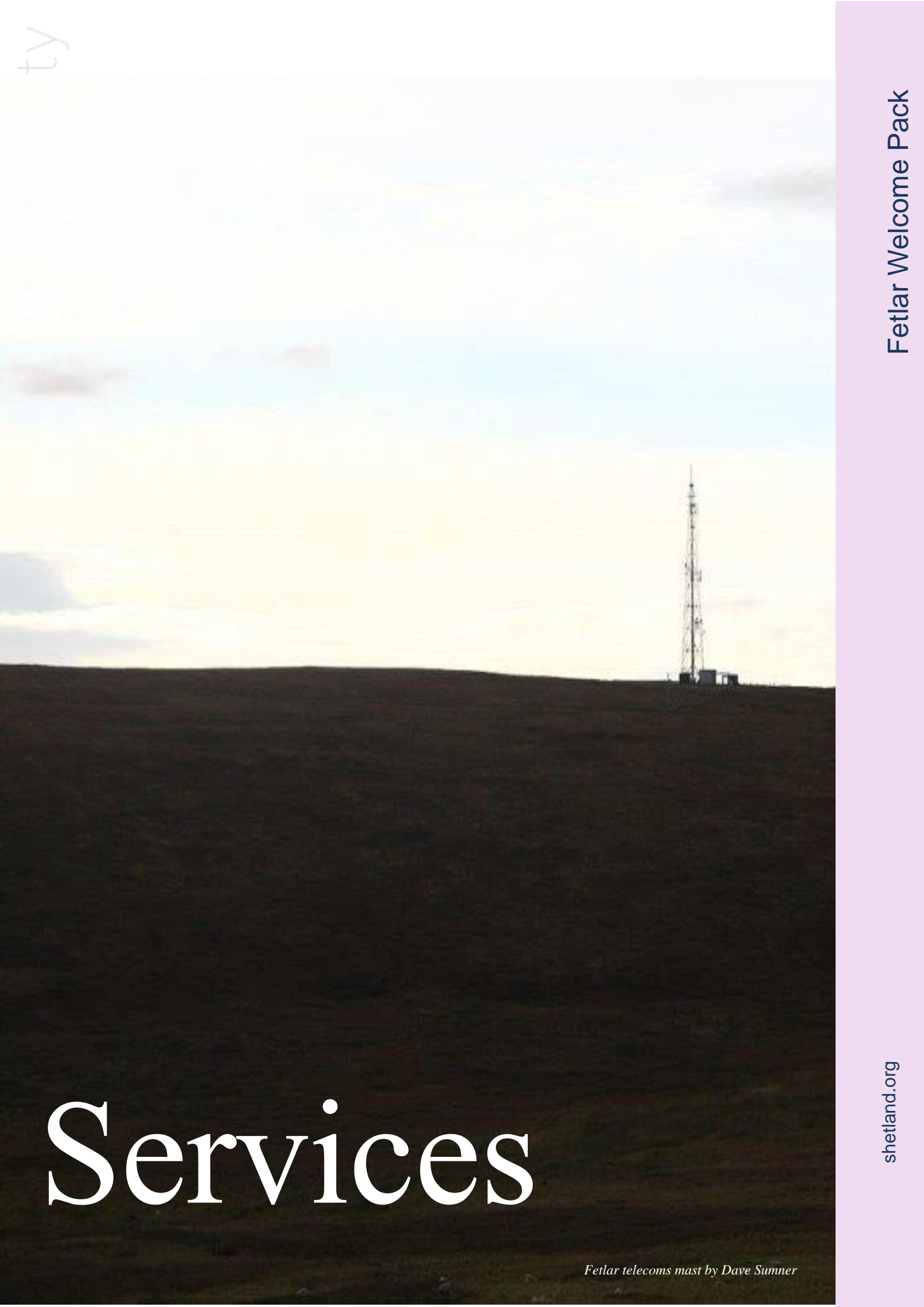
ground you should ask the landowner's permission. If you check at the shop or the museum they can usually help you with where to go and who to ask.

There is also a House of Prayer and Retreat at The Glebe, Tresta : [About | Shetland Pilgrimage](#)

Library

Shetland Library has a mobile library service which operates in Fetlar over the Summer months (April – September). During the rest of the year you can request and return books through the library. The books are delivered to the shop and you can drop your return books off there.

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Services

Fetlar telecoms mast by Dave Sumner

Shopping

Fetlar has a combined Post Office, general store and café with wi-fi available at Houbie. The shop will deliver provisions if requested (on any day). If specific items are required which are not in the shop these will be obtained by the shop for the customer.

The shop has fresh bread on Tuesdays and Fridays: for other fresh foodstuffs ask at the shop for delivery days. The shop is open every day during the tourist season, and five days a week out of season. The shop has a full off licence and sells a wide range of beers, wines and spirits. Prescriptions and library books are available for collection at the shop.

There are five grocery shops in Yell. R.S Henderson in Cullivoe will deliver goods to Fetlar on a Friday evening. Aywick shop, (known locally as Mary's) at Aywick, East Yell sells nearly everything apart from large items, both new and second hand, and is a must to visit especially for Christmas items. Mary also sells the cheapest fuel on Shetland. The Hill Shop in Mid Yell has a café attached which is open on set days (check their Facebook page) and there are two shops in Burravoe (one a community shop with limited opening hours).

You can contact the shop by email: gord@fetlarshetland.co.uk or by phone during opening hours: 01957 733227. Their website: www.fetlarshetland.co.uk has more information about the shop, café, guest house and Fetlar in general.



There are three shops in Unst which carry a large range of goods. Two sell fuel and Skibhoul has a bakery, Fetlar shop also stocks Skibhoul products and products from the Yell bakery, Da Kitchen.

On Mainland (the main island of Shetland) there is a Tesco in Lerwick and a Co-Op in Lerwick and in Brae. Other shops in Lerwick include builders' supplies, clothes shops, electrical goods, furniture, jewellers, craft, wool and book shops. There are second-hand shops and recycling centres dotted throughout Shetland including in Unst and Yell.

Any items ordered online sent by courier are delivered on a Friday night by Henderson's so allow two weeks for delivery. Always check delivery charges when ordering online. Some suppliers make a large charge to deliver to Shetland and some will not even deliver. Some suppliers, however, will deliver even large items free of charge so it is always worth checking. More urgent items can be posted.

Fuel

There is no petrol or diesel available in Fetlar, although there is an electric charge point. There is petrol and diesel available in Unst and Yell. Several people on the island have their own tanks of red and white diesel, so in an emergency ask and you should be able to borrow or buy enough to get you going.

Only bottled gas is available which can be ordered at Henderson's and delivered to the door (on a Friday).

Due to occasional power cuts it is worth having an alternative source of heat and light for back-up. It is also worthwhile having an old-fashioned phone available for the landline. Red diesel, white diesel and heating oil is delivered to Fetlar through Highland Fuels or Scottish Fuels but allow a good lead in time as they only come to Fetlar when they have enough orders (six weeks advance warning is usually enough).

If you are energetic, a peat digging licence can be obtained costing about £10 per year. This allows access to certain areas in Yell and requires the use of your own transport. The licence can be obtained from Shetland Island Council.

An even cheaper option is driftwood on the beaches, but not all wood burners are suitable for this fuel.

Refuse collection

Refuse is collected every Friday morning: non-recyclable waste (in black plastic sacks) every fortnight, and recyclable waste divided into paper/cardboard and tins/plastic bottles. Clear plastic bags for recyclable waste are provided by SIC.

There is a calendar of collection dates available from SIC. The recyclable waste is collected on a four-weekly basis, with paper/cardboard and tins/plastic bottles on alternate fortnights. There is a bottle bank at the community hall for glass recycling. To find out which collection is due ask your neighbours or check at the shop.

Connections

Vodafone and EE give the best mobile phone coverage for Fetlar. EE continues to work during fairly lengthy power cuts (so far up to six hours). There is generally good 4G connectivity on the island.

Shetland Broadband is an additional local internet provider. This is a community-based scheme and provides broadband access for a fixed monthly fee, you do not need a landline with Shetland Broadband. It is available provided your property has a line of sight to one of the transmission points on the island. Ian Brown of Shetland Broadband will tell you if this is the case [Shetland Broadband - Shetland Wide Area Network \(SWAN\)](#). We are told that ultra fast broadband is going to be installed in Fetlar in 2025.

Church

Fetlar Kirk was bought from the Church of Scotland by a local charity, 'Friends of Fetlar Kirk' (FriendsFK@outlook.com), formed by Fetlar residents in 2018.

The charity's aim is to maintain the kirk for community use. This includes use of the building for worship services as well as for educational purposes. A small exhibition on local and church matters of interest is at the back of the kirk.

There is usually a Sunday service and once a month there is a Catholic mass. Dates of all services are published locally, or you can ask at the shop.



Fetlar Kirk, by Graham Booth



Climate

Ugasta, by David Gifford

Climate

Fetlar is 60.35 degrees North, roughly level with Bergen in Norway, but because it is a small island benefitting from the Gulf Stream it has a temperate climate. The temperature normally has lows of between 0°- 4° in the winter and highs of 15°- 17° in the summer.

The main difference between Shetland and the rest of the UK is the wind. The average annual wind speed is around force 4 (15 mph) and gales are quite common in the winter. If a gale has been forecast make sure you park into the wind to avoid the car door being blown back.



Bog Asphodel, by Frances Hurley

Fog, including sea mist, is more frequent in the summer and may affect flights in and out of Shetland in July and August.

In the summer from mid-May to mid-July you can enjoy the beautiful long days of sunlight known as the simmer dim, when the sun only dips below the horizon for a few hours. This is the peak visitor season. Of course, the converse is that in the depths of winter, especially December and January, we are down to around six hours of daylight.



Frozen Papil Water, by Graham Booth



Transport

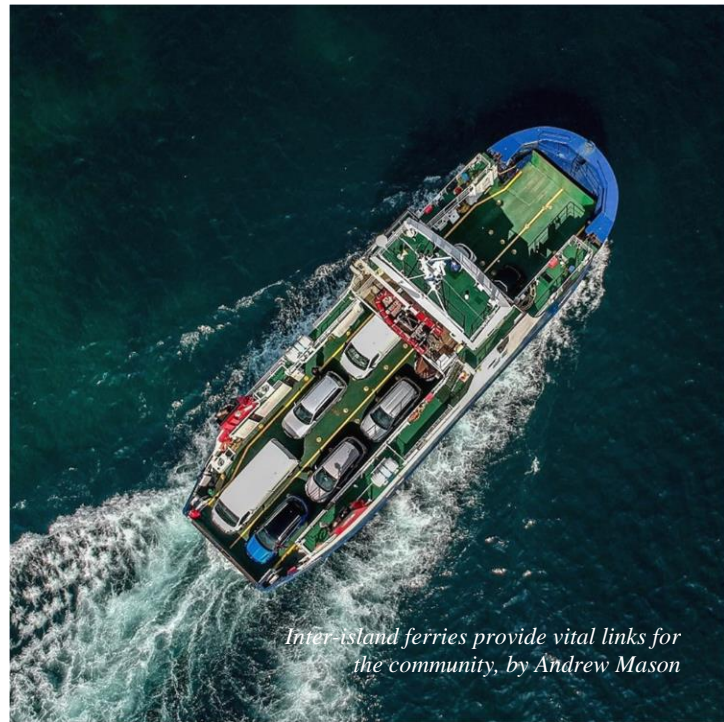
Jamiesons bus at Gutcher ferry terminal

Transport

From mainland Scotland, Shetland can be reached by the overnight Northlink car ferry from Aberdeen or by air with Loganair.

There are regular flights to Sumburgh Airport (on the southern end of the main island) from Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Inverness, Kirkwall and, in the summer from Bergen.

The Northlink ferries go via Kirkwall four times a week and ferry sailing times on those days are therefore earlier than direct sailings between Lerwick and Aberdeen. As the crossing is overnight, there are cabins available as well as sleeping pods and chairs.



Inter-island ferries provide vital links for the community, by Andrew Mason

See the Northlink web site for full details. <https://www.northlinkferries.co.uk>

Shetland Residents apply for an Islander ID from Northlink to obtain a discount and can name friends and relatives to get discounted fares with Northlink using the Northlink website. 16 – 19 year olds and over 60s get two free return journeys with cabins per year as part of the NEC scheme, which also gives free travel on buses and reduced fares for passengers on the inter-island ferries. You can apply for an NEC card at <https://getyournec.scot/nec/>. Travel expenses for medical purposes can be applied for (see above).

Residents in Shetland can make use of the air discount scheme with Loganair which reduces airfare prices. This only applies to journeys unrelated to paid work and only to flights from Sumburgh to the mainland, so would not, for example, apply to a connecting flight from Edinburgh to Heathrow.

Full details of the scheme are at: [Air Discount Scheme - Home](#).

Ferry and airfares can be expensive despite the discounts available. There is political pressure to ensure fares are kept as low as possible and to introduce the road equivalent tariff method of pricing which should reduce fares.

Parking at Sumburgh Airport is free for those who live in the North Isles provided they have



Sumburgh Airport, by James Lyne

registered with Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd. There is an application for an exemption form available on their website: [sumburgh-airport-inter-island-passenger-car-park-exemption-application \(hial.co.uk\)](#)

Journey times from and to Sumburgh Airport and Lerwick to and from Fetlar are dependent on the ferries but with careful planning you can get down to Sumburgh Airport in 2.5 hours and to Lerwick in 2 hours.

The fare for the inter-island ferries can be found on the SIC website but is currently just under £21.70 for a car and driver plus one passenger. The current discounted islander rate is £10.60 for a car and driver.

Payment is by card or cash. To set up an account refer to the SIC ferries website <http://www.shetland.gov.uk/ferries/>. This gives you a card to ensure your islander discount.

The fare is payable on the northbound journey across Yell Sound and covers that ferry and the onward Bluemull sound ferry to Fetlar. Keep your ticket to show on the Bluemull Sound crossing. The fare also covers your southbound journey.

Remember that 5 – 19 year-olds and over 60s who have an NEC card are eligible for reduced fares on the inter-island ferries and that children under 5 travel free.

There is a recorded information service which gives details of any disruption to the ferry service for any reason (weather, breakdown etc). The telephone number for the Bluemull service is 01595 743971 and for Yell service is 01595 743972.

Buses and ferries

ZetTrans publishes bus timetables and there are some buses which are co-ordinated with the ferry times so that journeys to Lerwick and back can be straightforward by public transport if rather limited in times. ZetTrans have a useful app which is available to download via their website: <https://zettrans.org/uk/travel> . Jamiesons can also provide a bus service on demand across Yell, for example if attending the Yell Health Centre or for the dentist or vet. If stuck usually an islander will be happy to offer a lift if able!

Rush hour in Fetlar is before and after ferries... so do leave enough time as the ferries are usually very punctual! A Dial-a-Ride service is available in Fetlar, the cost is low (£1.60) per journey. You need to book the Dial-a-Ride service the day before during office hours, or for a Monday, on the previous Friday. The number to book this 01595 745745.

Driving etiquette on Fetlar is simple – please be a polite and patient driver!

The protocol for meeting oncoming traffic is as follows: When only one passing place remains between you and the oncoming vehicle, the first to reach it stops either in it, (if it is to the driver's left) or opposite to it (if on the right). Then the other vehicle can pass and should give you a friendly wave as thanks. If someone wants to pass you from behind, please try to let them pass by going into a passing place.

If you keep a car just for driving on the island you do not need an MOT. Your car does still need to be taxed and in order to do this you have to complete a form V112 which you can download here: [Declaration of exemption from MOT \(V112\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk).

You need to take this to a main post office to tax your vehicle – you cannot do this online or at the island post office. Your car still needs to be roadworthy and it is not legal to drive it on the mainland.

Local Government

The devolved parliament in Edinburgh runs Scotland. Thirty-two unitary authorities control schools, local needs, and other local services. Fetlar's authority is Shetland Island Council with headquarters based in Lerwick. A volunteer Fetlar Community Council acts as a means of consultation and to undertake local projects.

Details of current Fetlar Community council members can be found here:

[Shetland Islands Council Committee Information - Members For:Fetlar Community Council](#)

The community council clerk is Chris Bolton.
He can be contacted by email on: clerk.fetlarcc@outlook.com

Contacts

Fetlar Community Council: clerk.fetlarcc@outlook.com

Fetlar Community Hall: fetlarhallbookings@gmail.com

Fetlar Interpretive Centre: fetlarinterpretivecentre@outlook.com 01957 733206

Friends of Fetlar Kirk: FriendsFK@outlook.com

Visit Shetland.org for more information

Website

Fetlar Community Association: <https://www.fetlar.org/>

