

Shetland Islands Council

Our performance matters 2012-13

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This annual performance report gives you a snapshot of what was achieved during the financial year 2012-13 (1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013). We've focused on some of the services you most likely use on a regular basis, giving you a variety of information on how we performed.

We sometimes make reference to 'red' indicators on the following pages; this is part of our traffic light monitoring system. These are actions where objectives have not been met. In our work we also use amber to show where there are some issues, and green to highlight projects that are on track to meet objectives within time and budget.

We've also included some graphs showing a cross section of some of the Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) that are specified by Audit Scotland. All Scottish councils must report on the same indicators and you can see how we compare with the rest of Scotland. The full SPI report can be found at www.shetland.gov.uk/about_performance/.

We'd welcome any feedback on this report, including suggestions or comments for future issues. You can send these to communications@shetland.gov.uk, tel 01595 744535 or put your ideas in writing to:

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Please click on any of the page titles below to take you to the page you'd like to read:

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LOOKING BACK ON 2012-13



Gary Robinson, Leader

I am delighted to introduce our latest public performance report. This report covers the financial year 2012-13. This is a very important document as it shows, at a glance, the things we have delivered for the people of Shetland, as well as seeking to identify and explain a few areas where we did not do so well.

2012-13 saw a number of important changes, most notably the election of the new Council. The biggest challenge we faced when we took office was to continue the work started at the end of the last Council to put our finances in order. I am pleased to say that we have made good progress.

The next few years pose challenges for us. However, as an organisation, I believe that we are in a much better place than we were a few years ago. Building on the kinds of achievements that are mentioned in this report, we need to look forward with confidence. I hope that by the time we are publishing next year's report, we will begin to see the benefit from the hard decisions we've had to take and we can plan for a more stable and sustainable future.



Mark Boden, Chief Executive

In my first year as Chief Executive I have worked closely with colleagues to implement the priorities and policies of the Council.

Putting people first has been one of my key motivations; both members of the public who access our services, as well as the staff who are the people behind that service delivery.

We may have less money available to us, but this just means we need to find new ways of working and providing services. It is often at times like these that both staff and members of the public come forward with innovative solutions to the challenges we face and I welcome and encourage that kind of interest and commitment in this organisation's future.

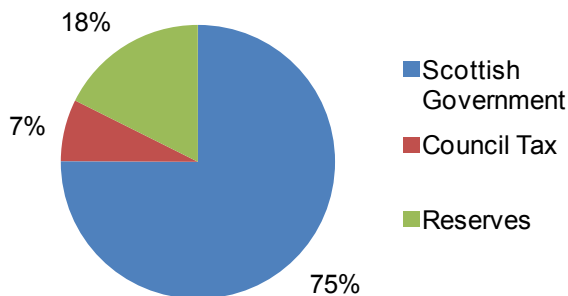
This annual report provides an overview of some of those front-line services that are most important to you. In this, and future issues of these reports, I hope you see real evidence of our commitment to serving our residents, supporting our staff, building our reputation and leading an organisation that people can be proud of.

OUR FINANCES

Clean bill of health for our accounts...



Where our money comes from

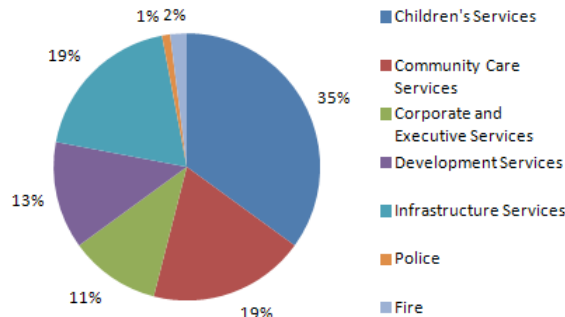


- Clean bill of health for our accounts:** Our financial accounts for 2011-12 were given a clean bill of health by Audit Scotland in September 2012. For the first time in seven years, our external auditors issued an unqualified opinion on the annual accounts. The accounts and working papers were submitted ahead of time and were described as being 'of a high standard'. This is a great improvement from the previous year when they were criticised as being of poor quality.
- Sussing out SOFIE:** SOFIE (sussing out further internal efficiencies) was rolled out across all services during the year. By March 2012, over £1.5m of savings had been identified that could be implemented without any significant change to front line services. One example of this has been the implementation of a new centralised procurement process for office supplies and ICT consumables by the Procurement Service. Previously this was ordered adhoc across the Council. The result was a reduction in spending from £380k to £227k, a saving of 40%.
- Delivered within the 2012-13 Budget:** There was reduced spending of over £3m against the budget set for 2012-13. Built into this budget was £15.4m of savings, which were met either from the original savings proposals or alternative savings identified in the year.
- Approval of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP):** This year the Council agreed the five-year MTFP; this plan was to set out the roadmap for Shetland Islands Council to achieve financial sustainability over the term of this Council and to align resources in accordance with the priorities of Members as set out in the Corporate Plan. One of the key tasks was to preserve externally invested funds at £125m. (In the MTFP update for the 2014/15 budget, the level of reserves was increased from £125m to £150m following the successful implementation of the savings programme.)

This document is proposed to be updated annually to take account of known changes.

[Download our 2013-18 Medium Term Financial Plan \(PDF\)](#)

How the money is spent



Note: excludes capital and accounting adjustments
This expenditure is net of fees and charges

- SIC sets a 'robust and realistic' budget for 2013-14:** This budget was set in February 2013 recognising the critical need for the Council to get its spending back to sustainable levels as set out in the MTFP. Built into the 2013-14 budget are savings of £12.5m, which is £1.2m more than originally anticipated in the MTFP. Thus, should the budget be achieved, it will mean that the Council is almost 70% of the way towards becoming financially sustainable.

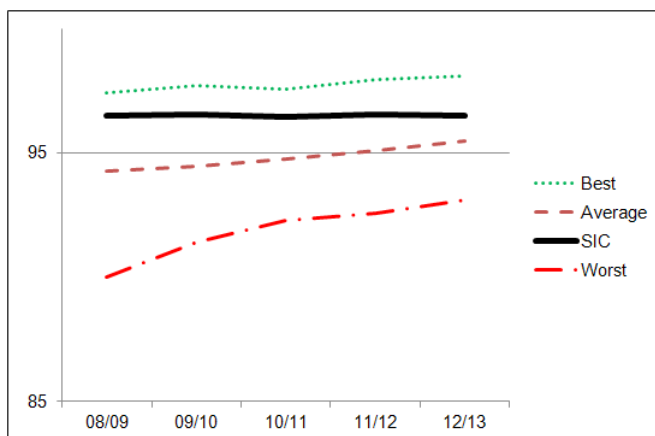
At a glance:

Budget under/(over)spends by service area in 2012-13

- Children's £0.9m
- Community Care* (£1.0m)
- Development £2.0m
- Executive & Corporate £1.3m
- Infrastructure £0.4m

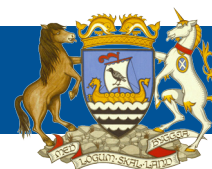
*Community Care did not meet their budget due to delays in implementing savings.

Council Tax income - percentage of income due from council tax for the year that was received by the end of the year



The Council continues to achieve a higher than average collection rate (96.5%) which means that there is more money available to spend on services.

LOOKING AFTER THE ELDERLY & VULNERABLE



We supported more people to remain at home...

- Internal efficiencies:** We worked hard to find internal efficiencies within the service, although savings have not been fully achieved.
 We identified a number of projects, including delivering meals on wheels more efficiently, that will help us to meet our targets set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- Carers' Initiative:** We were involved in the development of the Carers' Initiative with third sector partners, which better supports those who look after a relative or friend.
- Three 'red' indicators during the year:** All relating to hospital discharges for adults. This is one of the factors which has led to discussions around reviewing how resources are allocated in residential units. There will be a review of assessment processes with the introduction of Self Directed Support. Also the criteria for accessing residential care must be clearer as many people end up living in residential units when alternative and more appropriate options have not been available.
- Carers' assessments:** 22 carers' assessments were completed during the year (our target is 40). We will continue to work with partners to increase that figure.
- Respite provision:** We have increased our performance by increasing the number of beds available and providing more respite at home.
- People waiting for assessments:** While we need to improve the time taken for all our assessments to be completed, we are completing more assessments and are also focusing on completing more assessments of carers' needs.
- Staff training:** Seven Community Care staff gained their Open University 'Managing in the Work Place' qualification in August 2012. This is the second group of staff who have successfully undertaken the qualification. Staff are now using their learning in the workplace to effectively manage services. The qualification meets the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) registration requirements for senior social care staff.



Staff with their 'Managing in the Work Place' awards

- Growing demand:** The demand for community care services continues to grow due mainly to an ageing population. However, we are experiencing steady growth in all areas of community care provision.
- Digital healthcare project gives direct 24/7 link to Foula patients:** A purpose-built portable building was specially adapted in a joint project between us and NHS Shetland. The new health clinic has a fully equipped GP's surgery and the latest digital technology for patient assessment. Medical services in Foula are delivered by a resident nurse with regular GP visits and these will continue. The new health clinic will allow videoconferenced consultations to be carried out by medical staff at the Walls surgery and will be particularly useful in the event of an emergency or when the weather makes it difficult to travel to and from the isle.
- Care inspections:** The Care Commission issued questionnaires seeking the views of relatives on the quality of service provided. Here are some examples:

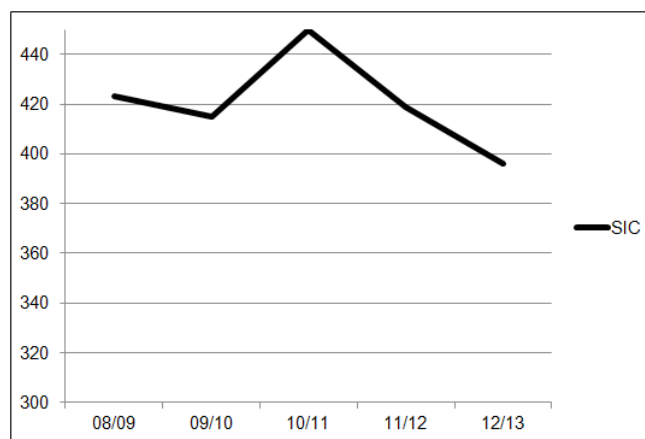
"I cannot begin to tell you how wonderful the care my mum receives there is and how kind and caring all the staff are - she is treated so well and with so much sensitivity ... the staff are so reassuring and know just what is needed at any given time - I also feel as a family we are very well supported - the staff are always so helpful and nothing is ever a bother for them - they give us peace of mind."
Overtonlea

"Working as part of the team at Annsbrae is a joy. To feel well supported and cared for by the team, including manager and seniors, is an experience I value."
Annsbrae House

While Viewforth received a 'weak' score, an action plan is now in place with timescales for improvements that are monitored weekly. At no time has any residents' care been affected.

Home care/ Home helps

Number of people aged 65+ receiving homecare



Our figure for 2012-13 is 396. There has been a slight decrease here with respite and telecare providing alternatives in some instances.

YOUR SCHOOLS

Children were motivated and enthusiastic...



- **Inspiring teaching:** The Head Teacher of Dunrossness Primary School, Lesley Simpson, was described as “inspiring” by judges at the finals of the Scottish Education Awards in June 2012.
- **Exam results:** Over 600 pupils received their exam results in August 2012. Three sixth-year students from the Anderson High School were presented for the Scottish Baccalaureate, two in Science and one in Modern Languages. This was the first time that a Shetland student had been presented for the Scottish Baccalaureate in Modern Languages.

The percentage of Standard Grade Credit grades (grade 1 or 2) attained as a percentage of all presentations at Standard Grade rose again this year, from 60% in 2011 to 62%.

At Higher level, the percentage of passes (A-C grade) in at least one subject dropped slightly, from 80% to 78%.

At Intermediate level, there was a drop in the percentage of passes at Intermediate 1, from 79% to 69%. Intermediate 2 saw a very small reduction in passes, from 84% to 83%.

There was also a decrease in the number of passes at Advanced Higher level. The percentage fell from 87% in 2011 to 79% in 2012.

In all areas other than Advanced Higher, performance was again above the national average. In Advanced Higher, it was slightly below the national average.

- **Funding for new Anderson High School:** In September, we received welcome news that we had secured funding from the Scottish Government to build a new Anderson High School.

The project is on track with a planned opening date for the new school of August 2016.
- **Well done Burra Playgroup:** The Burra Playgroup received a very positive report from HM Inspectors, following a visit in May. The Inspector commented that children were ‘motivated and enthusiastic’ about their activities, and were learning and achieving very well.
- **Top marks:** Mid-Yell Junior High School received a very positive follow-up report on their August 2011 inspection. The inspectors reported that the Headteacher and his management team had worked very well with staff to plan and deliver improvements since the time of the original report.
- **Curriculum for Excellence:** We continued to implement Curriculum for Excellence in keeping with agreed milestones. In particular, work was undertaken with secondary departments, schools and partners in learning with regard to the structure and provision of the Senior Phase (S4-6).
- **Clothing grants:** The number of clothing grants in 2011/12 was 414. There was therefore a drop of 28 in 2012-13.

- **Blueprint:** In September 2012, Shetland Islands Council approved a report detailing a refresh of the Education Blueprint which was commissioned on 9 February 2012. The principal reason for seeking to revisit the Blueprint for Education was that as the Curriculum for Excellence Senior Phase plans were being finalised, the current model of secondary education provision in Shetland began to look increasingly incompatible with the new national curriculum.

The refreshed report presented a plan for delivering school education in Shetland for the next five years. During the remainder of 2012-13, work was undertaken to progress the plan.

- **Young mathematicians were Regional Champions:** Anderson High School’s Junior UK Maths Challenge team went all the way to the finals of the UK’s Mathematical Trust’s Team Maths Challenge after winning their regional team event in March, beating 17 schools from across the north of Scotland and private sector.



Young mathematicians Jack Tait and Fyntan Shaw from Fair Isle, and Lois Ross and Louise Cluness from Lerwick

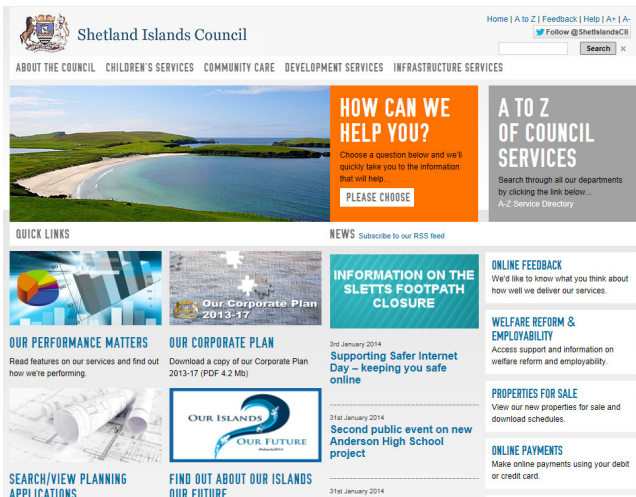
- **Bell’s Brae launches new DVD:** Bell’s Brae Primary School launched a new DVD in November 2012, which showcased the different ways its pupils learn. The project was filmed over the course of a year and launched on the ‘big screen’ in Mareel. It was a great way to showcase the successes of the school’s pupils and staff, as well as sharing information with parents and carers.
- **Nesting Primary School celebrates Heritage Lottery Fund grant:** Nesting Primary School was awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund ‘All Our Stories’ grant of £5,800 to create a Viking Thing within the school and grounds. The school was one of the first groups in the UK to receive money from this fund. The pupils will work with the local community and Shetland Amenity Trust to create a visual and physical record of the culture and heritage of Nesting.

YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITIES



The fastest way to find out information about our services...

- **Sound Choices:** In June 2012, residents in the Sound area of Lerwick had the chance to help decide which community projects received a share of the 'Sound Choices' £12,500 funding pot. This is the second time this kind of project has been rolled out in Lerwick, providing opportunities for local people to identify local needs and make decisions which help, support and improve their local community. 14 groups faced the public vote, 120 people turned out to vote, 10 groups received funding, with Sound School's inter-generational bulb planting project receiving the highest number of votes.
- **New website:** We launched our new website in June with a new look and structure, designed to let visitors find the information they need quickly and easily. Since then the site has averaged around 14,000 unique visits each month.
- **Support for community groups in 2012-13:** We supported almost 50 community groups with external funding applications, securing £889k of external funding (an increase of around 282% on the previous year). In 2012-13 our Community Planning & Development service awarded 129 grants from SIC schemes (£254,564) to local community groups for a range of projects and activities.
- **Good advice from Trading Standards:** During the year our Trading Standards service provided information and advice on a number of issues including: being aware of doorstep callers offering roof treatments and other home improvement works; electricity rebate scam phone calls; and saying no to uninvited salespeople.
- **Shetland Adult Protection Committee hosts first Adult Protection Conference:** Shetland Adult Protection Committee hosted its first conference in March 2013. 60 members of staff and colleagues from the voluntary sector involved in providing health, social work and support services to adults in Shetland came together to raise awareness of adult protection in this very important area of work.



- **Community Energy Efficiency Programme:** This two-year scheme was set up providing grant aid support to community facilities for energy audits, and capital grants for them to improve their facilities. By the end of the programme (December 2012) a total of £374,340 had been awarded to 32 different organisations. This has enabled 16 energy audits to be completed and 26 community facilities have received funding for capital projects.
- **New Child Protection website:** The Shetland Child Protection Committee unveiled a new section of its website www.childprotectionsketland.com in November, designed to give local clubs and voluntary organisations direct access to information and guidance on keeping children safe.
- **New Work Club:** Our Adult Learning team and members of the Skills, Learning and Employability Partnership launched a new Work Club in February 2013. The weekly drop-in sessions will help people get back into employment, into their first job or to change the kind of work they do. There is also specialist support available for job seekers.
- **Twitter 24:** In September 2012 we took part in a national campaign, Twitter 24, to encourage public engagement through social media. We launched our new Twitter feed [@ShetIslandsCII](https://twitter.com/ShetIslandsCII), which now has more than 1,000 followers. This is the fastest way to find out information about what's happening in our services, particularly when it comes to schools closing due to adverse weather and gritting information.
- **High level of satisfaction with Adult Learning:** 89% of learners rated our Adult Learning classes as very good, 9% as good and 2% as satisfactory. 1,062 adults in Shetland took part in learning programmes delivered by the Adult Learning team. The team support a number of different groups including people who need to improve their reading, writing and number skills, or need help to complete application forms and look for jobs. They also help service users of the Eric Gray Centre, Annsbrae and Supported Living and Outreach; migrant groups improve their English; and hundreds of folk throughout Shetland through the evening class programme.
- **Train Shetland shortlisted:** Train Shetland was shortlisted for the Scottish Training Federation's 'Provider of the Year' for 2012. The winner of the award has to demonstrate outstanding achievements in all aspects of the delivery of vocational education and training, with judges looking for innovation, creativity and continuous improvement.



SUPPORTING THE ECONOMY



Involved in attracting over £8.4 million funding...

- **A prosperous economy:** The Shetland Economic Survey for 2010-11 organised by the Economic Development service was published in May 2013. This research and analysis calculated the annual output of the economy to be £1.1 billion and that the main sector of the economy was fisheries, with a combined output of £317 million a year, nearly 30% of the total output. Shetland has a positive trade balance between exports and imports of £317 million. We also have a positive exchequer balance of £77 million, the difference between Government revenues raised from businesses and households in Shetland and Government expenditure on businesses and households. These figures demonstrate a very healthy economy at a time of continuing recession in other parts of the country.
- **Attracting external funding:** Our Economic Development service has been involved in attracting over £8.4 million funding through the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) programme since approvals began in February 2009, which has enabled 48 local businesses to carry out 63 projects with a total capital cost of almost £25 million. The figure secured is over 44% of the Scottish allocation of approximately £19 million for the Highlands and Islands area.
- **Shetland defends Assisted Area status:** We began lobbying all levels of Government in February 2013 to resist an EU proposal which could have a significant impact on Shetland's ability to support economic development projects.
- **Shetland hosted the Convention of the Highlands and Islands:** The Convention, which meets twice a year at different locations around the country, aims to strengthen the links between the Scottish Government and other public agencies, with a focus on increasing sustainable economic growth.

The event was held in March 2013 and chaired by John Swinney MSP with over fifty delegates from local authorities and public bodies across Scotland attending.
- **Shetland Gas Plant Project:** We have worked with Total, Petrofac and others involved in the Shetland Gas Plant Project to maximise the benefit to Shetland.
- **LEADER funding:** Under the Shetland LEADER programme we support economic and community development within rural areas. A number of projects were approved for funding during 2012-13 including:
 - The North Yell Development Council to employ a project manager to develop three major capital projects in North Yell – a community wind farm, a community owned tidal generator in Bluemull Sound and an extension to the Cullivoe Industrial Estate to provide new sites for businesses.
 - Shetland Amenity Trust to purchase and install new plant and equipment at the Enviroglass waste glass recycling facility in Cunningsburgh.

If successful, the proposal would mean that Shetland would be excluded from the Assisted Area map 2014-2020. Such a change would limit what the Council, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and other public bodies could invest in new projects, and would place Shetland at a competitive disadvantage. So far our campaign looks like being successful with strong indications that Shetland will remain on the Assisted Area map beyond 2014.

- **High Speed Broadband:** We have installed fibre-optic high-speed broadband connections from Sandwick to the Sullom Voe Oil Terminal.

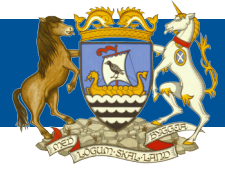


Installing the fibre-optic broadband connection

Did you know?

- **119 Business Gateway enquiries were made during 2012-13.** 70 of these enquiries related to possible business start-ups and of those 22 have since started trading
- 27 enquiries were answered from a single Business Gateway meeting and 55 were referred to one of our business advisers for additional support
- 42 individuals either applied for, or were considering applying for, Council assistance
- 123 individuals have attended 15 training courses run by Train Shetland on behalf of Business Gateway including: business start up; marketing and promotion; selling and book-keeping; introduction to social media; and customer relations
- While the number of enquiries recorded during this period is 4% down on the previous year (124), in a relatively small economy like Shetland enquiries, particularly start-up enquiries, are likely to fluctuate from year to year
- Awareness of, and satisfaction with, the Business Gateway service is monitored nationally and had an average satisfaction rate of 86% for the year

ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE



It was important to get feedback from the community...

- **Help to identify savings:** A series of drop-in sessions were held across the year to ask the public for their help in identifying savings across a number of front-line services – including ferries, road gritting and street lighting.

After an 18-month review involving extensive consultation with communities and staff, Shetland Islands Council approved changes to its interisland ferry service in February 2013, which will generate savings of £3.1 million by 2017, while minimising the impact on island communities. Several elements of feedback from islanders and ferry crews were used in the options recommended to the full Council.



The crew of MV Good Shepherd at work



MV Snolda on the Papa Stour service

We completed and implemented: the winter roads maintenance review delivering savings of £375,000; a review of the Neighbourhood Support Worker service saving £40,000; and a review of street lighting delivering savings of £25,000.

We completed a review of: public toilets identifying savings of £64,000; Tingwall Airport identifying savings of £120,000; and the Viking Bus Station identifying savings of £40,000.

We also worked with ZetTrans to consult on bus services before putting the new network out to tender later in the year. It was important to get feedback from the community on the proposed services.

- **Street cleansing:** We completed and implemented a review of street cleansing, delivering savings of £19,000 this year and £45,000 in a full year.



One of our essie kerts

- **Apprentice of the Year:** Congratulations went to Amy Garrick, an electrician in our Building Services Unit, who had just completed her four-year apprenticeship when she scooped the prize 'Apprentice of the Year'. The award was sponsored by the Scottish Joint Industry Board and Edmundson Electrical, the leading distributor of electrical equipment to trade and industry in the UK.
- **The Climate Challenge Fund:** This fund has already benefitted 12 projects in Shetland including energy efficiency advice and improvements, community allotments/grow your own, lower carbon transport and recycling/waste prevention works. One of these was the Foula community polycrub polytunnel, which aims to create a space for local year-round food production and sharing knowledge of 'growing your own' between generations.
- **New collection service for bulky household items:** The end of March 2013 saw plans in place for a new bulky uplift service to give folk the opportunity to have larger unwanted items collected and disposed of following the removal of community skips.

The decision was taken to withdraw the skips on health and safety as well as economic reasons. Many folk didn't find it easy to get their larger unwanted items to the skips, and there were some serious problems with potentially dangerous items being dumped there, as well as large quantities of commercial waste. The review of community skips also identified savings of £70,000.

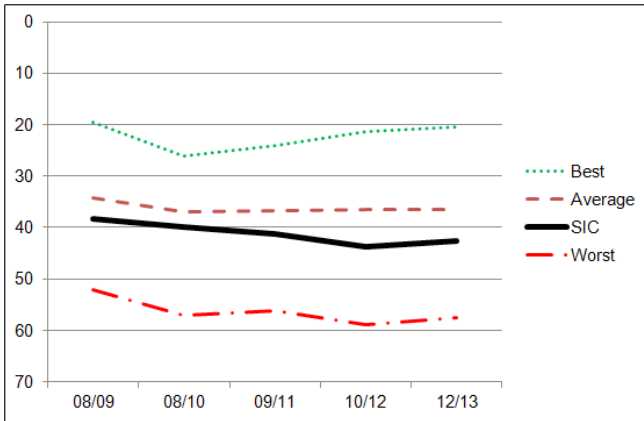
ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Our statistics

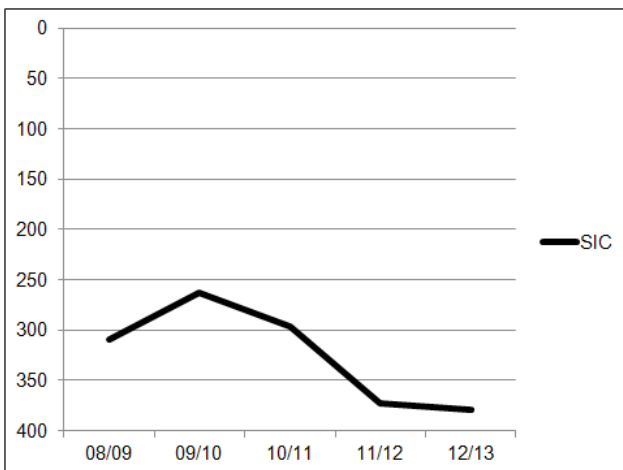
Carriageway condition

Overall percentage of road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment



Our Roads Service has set a target to minimise further reduction in condition from the 2011 baseline figure of 43.7%. To achieve this full use will be made of the information we receive from the annual condition surveys of our carriageways. This identifies the lengths of road where most benefit can be achieved, allowing us to prioritise repairs and to decide on the most appropriate type of treatment. Surface dressing is used to treat cracking and loss of texture, while more expensive resurfacing is used to repair carriageways when they are 'wheel tracked' or have lost their shape.

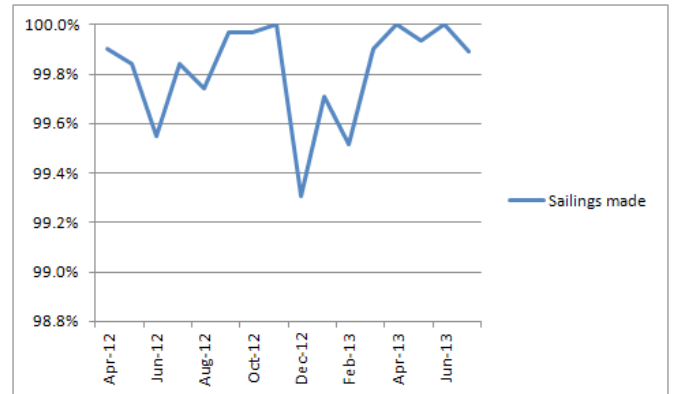
Domestic noise complaints



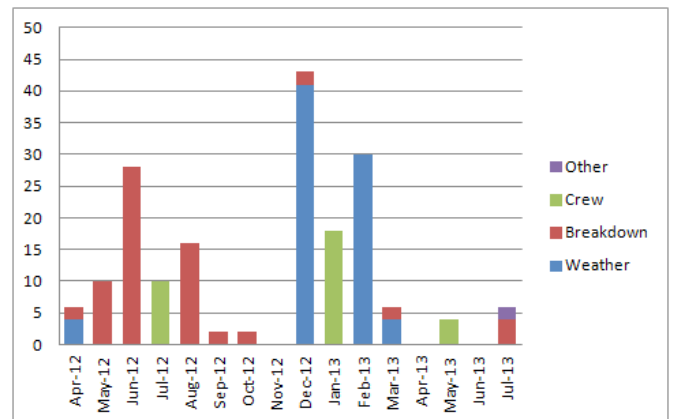
In 2012-13 we had 379 noise complaints.

Around 60% of Shetland's noise complaints are resolved by the first contact with the person causing the noise and 90% resolved by first or second contact. Only a very small number of complaints which require more detailed investigation need a visit to assess the noise.

Percentage of ferry sailings operated:



Cancelled ferry sailings during the year:



Total number of passengers and vehicles by ferry during the year:

	Vehicles	Passengers
Bressay	69,292	180,739
Papa Stour	1,014	2,237
Skerries	2,623	5,547
Bluemull	94,205	169,506
Whalsay	77,687	166,942
Yell	134,098	251,260
Total	378,919	776,231

Did you know?

A total of 5,632 tonnes of rubbish was collected from 10,677 Shetland households last year.

HOUSING



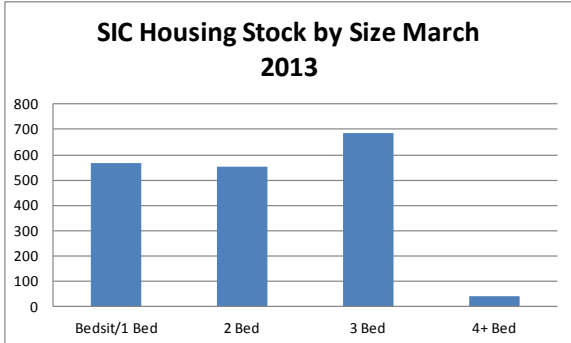
To discuss the problems the historic housing debt is causing...

- Working in partnership:** In July 2012, the then Scottish Housing Minister, Keith Brown, turned the first turf at Strand, Gott where 40 new housing units would be built in a partnership project with Hjaltland Housing Association. Work got underway at three sites – Strand, North Star and Ladies Mire – which will result in 63 new houses and flats for the isles. That makes it one of the biggest development programmes by a community-based housing association in Scotland.
- Housing debt campaign:** In December, a delegation from the Council met with Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Danny Alexander MP, in London to discuss the problems the historic housing debt is causing for Shetland.

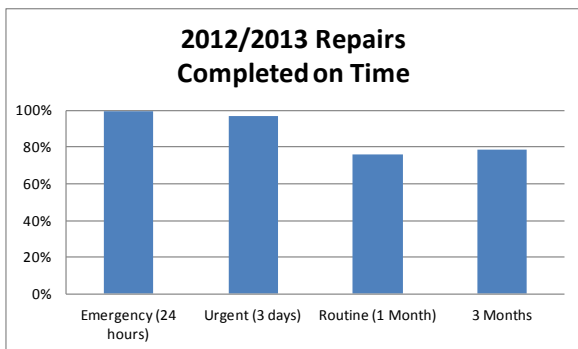
During January and February this year we did a search on all the information we held in our archives on this issue, seeking evidence of past assurances from the UK Government at the time of the Sullom Voe development that the cost of oil developments would not be passed to council tax payers in Shetland.

In March 2013, we again asked for a three-way meeting with both the Scottish and UK governments, supporting this request with the results of the archive file search.

- Number of properties:** At March 2013 we had 1,851 properties.



- Repairs on time:** On average, we completed 88% of all repairs on time.



- Homelessness:** During the year, 152 people presented themselves as homeless. Over half of these were aged 26-59 and most were single males.

Our target for completing an assessment for a homeless application is 28 days and this was achieved for 94% of applications.

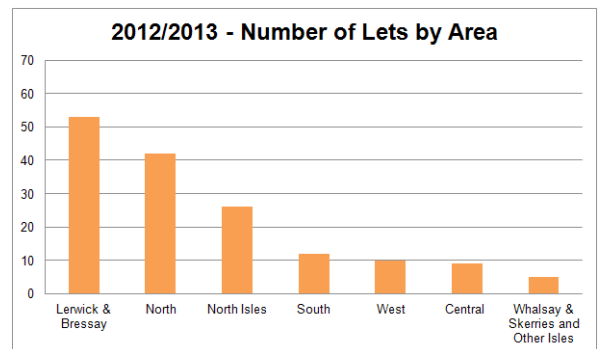
- Housing applications:** We received 584 new housing applications during 2012-13. At 31 March 2013, there were 832 current housing applications.

At March 2013, the areas of highest housing demand were Lerwick (619) and Scalloway (308). Areas with over 100 housing applications registered were Tingwall, Weisdale, Sandwick, Cunningsburgh, Burra - Hamnavoe, Burra - Bridge End/Toogs, Whiteness and Brae.

Areas with between 20-100 housing applications registered were Voe, Virkie, Bressay, Mossbank, Boddam, Bigton, South Nesting, Aith, Firth, Vidlin, Walls, Bixter, Hillswick, Girsta, Ollaberry and Urafirth.

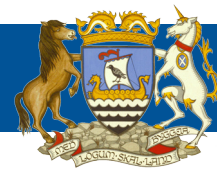
The areas with less than 20 housing applications registered were North Roe, Sandness, Skeld, Unst - Baltasound, Tresta, Whalsay - Symbister, Unst - Uyeasound, Yell - Mid Yell, Unst - Haroldswick, Whalsay - Brough, Yell - Burravoe, Yell - Cullivoe, Muckle Roe, Fetlar and Skerries.

- Letting information:** We let 157 properties across Shetland in 2012-13. Most of the properties were in Lerwick and Bressay, followed by North and North Isles.



New houses at Burnbank, Lerwick

PLANNING



An example of best practice in planning application decision times...

- **New Local Development Plan:** A draft Local Development Plan was published in October 2012 and opened for public comment until December. It sets out a vision for the development of land in Shetland over the next 10 to 20 years. When it is formally adopted it will replace the current Structure Plan and Local Plan. This Plan has been prepared in consultation with stakeholders and the local community. It identifies the most appropriate areas for different kinds of development and gives greater clarity on where development should take place.
- **Shetland is an example of best practice:** The Planning Service successfully increased the number of planning applications determined within two months from 30% to 73%. This was achieved by investing in back office systems that speeded up the whole process. People are now able to submit applications online, consultations can be carried out electronically, applicants and objectors can engage in the e-planning process and, as a result, officers' time has been freed up to deal with applications. Decisions within eight weeks are now the norm. Shetland is now being used as an example of best practice in demonstrating improved performance in planning application decision times.
- **Total Gas Plant:** We've been involved in the new gas plant planning application, which is one of the biggest developments in Scotland at the moment.



The Total Gas Plant paperwork at our offices

- **Supporting the aquaculture industry:** Our Marine Planning Team are responsible for supporting Shetland's aquaculture industry, which is worth £150 million to the local economy. The team's work includes dealing with marine planning applications and ensuring developments are fit for purpose and correctly located to ensure safe navigation.
- **Planning review:** Our service was independently reviewed and our activities examined against other island and small authorities looking at cost, value and overall efficiency. During the process statutory consultees and members of the public were interviewed for their feedback. All this led to an action plan which we've been working to put into practice.

Did you know?

We maintain 108 core paths and 57 access routes across Shetland.

Core paths make up the basic network of paths around Shetland. These could be the most popular paths and/or key routes that link communities or provide access to local sites. They may be important paths that manage public access in environmentally sensitive areas or help crofters and land managers to manage access on their land.

Access routes are routes maintained to give access to points of interest such as lochs, beaches and viewpoints and some may be adopted as core paths in future views of our Core Path Plan.

- **Outdoor access:** During 2012-13, we worked with Shetland Amenity Trust Rangers to do a full audit of the path network to assess path condition and any route concerns. We also carried out a number of works including: the reconstruction of the North Roe cycleway; access to West Voe Beach, Sumburgh and associated coastal protection; and improved access to Voxter Woods from the visitor centre.



Access to West Voe Beach, Sumburgh

We constructed 13 stiles, one footbridge, and a number of boardwalks and self-closing gates across Shetland.

Many paths are not signposted and those that are have signage that doesn't meet the required standards. We worked with Shetland Access Forum to develop a suitable and cost effective method of signing paths and, while it has not been possible to manufacture and install these in the current financial climate, we hope that it may be possible to carry out the project over a number of years in the future.

SPORTS AND LEISURE

Designed to get more young people to take part in sport...



- **Play park investment:** Isles MP Alistair Carmichael officially opened Tingwall Primary School's refurbished play area in December 2012. The original play equipment was over 25 years old and had reached the end of its lifespan. The introduction of the Little Tikes Nursery at the school meant it was necessary to also source items suitable for the new nursery children. The new equipment was all chosen by children from the Tingwall School Pupil Council.



Alistair Carmichael opens Tingwall Primary School's refurbished play area

- **Best Hostel in the World:** For the second year in a row, Islesburgh House Hostel walked away with the highly coveted 'Best Hostel in the World' title at the Hostelling International Hostel Awards in December. This comes right on the back of the hostel comfortably holding on to its VisitScotland five-star status.

The 'Best Hostel in the World' title is reserved for the establishment with the highest overall customer satisfaction rating on the Hostelling International website. Islesburgh House Hostel achieved an overall customer satisfaction rating of 97% for 2012.

- **School Sports Week:** Over 20 schools in Shetland participated in The Bank of Scotland's National School Sports Week in June, designed to get more young people to take part in sport and learn about the values of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Shetland's own Island Games athletes played a big part in the week. Foula Primary School went all-out and held a residential Mini-Olympics for children from the island schools of Foula, Fair Isle, Fetlar, Skerries and Burravoe.
- **Shetland Sports Week:** Shetland received £10,000 from the Games for Scotland Programme to host Shetland Sports Week during September/October. The week-long event is designed to encourage people to participate in sport and dance, and create new opportunities for participating, volunteering and coaching in sport.

Over 4,500 participants and spectators took part in the activities.

- **The Olympic Flame:** The Olympic Flame came to Shetland in June 2012 and the iconic torch was carried through Lerwick by a number of nominated torchbearers sharing the honour of passing the torch along the four-mile route.



A close-up of the Olympic Flame

- **Outdoor education:** Over 550 school children from across Shetland participated in at least one day of outdoor education with many of them doing three days of activity towards their John Muir Discovery Award.



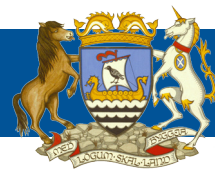
Bell's Brae pupils enjoying an adventure scramble on Bressay

- **Red indicators:** Sport and Leisure had three 'red' actions during the year. A number of play area projects did not happen due to changing budgetary priorities. These include the replacement of play equipment at Stouts Court and Church Road play areas, and the replacement of two gates at the Sound School play area. The existing play area at Tarland was not decommissioned because the play equipment was in good condition.

A new play area was opened at Quoys and the play areas in Cullivoe and Sycamore Avenue, Scalloway were refurbished.

OUR LIBRARY

The Library achieved 91% customer satisfaction rate...



- **Ten years of rhyme and stories:** Shetland Library celebrated ten years of providing rhyme and story sessions for the under-fives in January 2013. The scheme was first introduced in January 2003 under the name 'Bookstart' and was relaunched seven years later as 'Bookbug', now a firm favourite with the under-fives.
- **New eBook service:** The Library launched its ebook lending service in July 2012. The eBooks are available through a link on the Library website and free to borrow for all Shetland Library members. They can be downloaded to a range of devices, including iPhones, iPads, Android devices and many eReaders. This latest development comes on the back of a survey carried out earlier in the year where there was a lot of interest in being able to borrow in this way.



Marghie West demonstrates the new ebook lending service

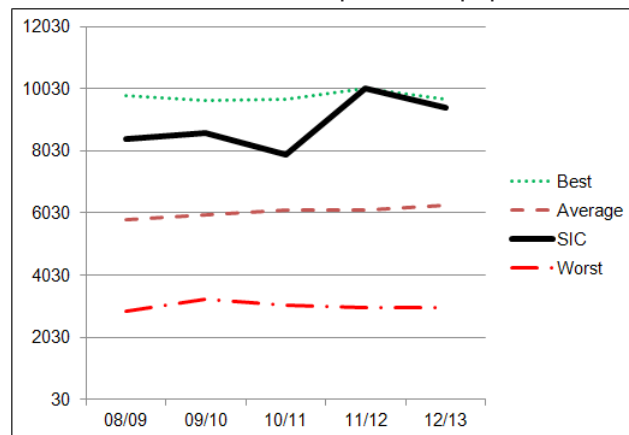
- **Better online browsing:** A new online public catalogue was launched in October, allowing customers to browse library stock, request and renew items and check their loans. This new version is easier to use, with better search features and providing more information about each item.
- **Free books for all Primary 1 pupils:** During November, in the lead up to Book Week Scotland, library staff were out and about gifting the Bookbug Primary 1 Family Pack to every Primary 1 pupil in Shetland and donating a free set of books to every school library. The project was wholly funded by the Scottish Book Trust.
- **Play Talk Read:** The Play Talk Read bus visited in September with a range of interactive activities on board, designed to help children and parents get the most from playing, talking and reading.



The Play Talk Read bus in Shetland

Use of libraries

Number of visits to libraries per 1,000 population



With a figure of 9,402 visits in 2012-13, library attendances in Shetland are second highest in Scotland, behind Glasgow City.

At a glance:

- Shetland Library achieved 91% customer satisfaction rate in its annual survey
- Our computer terminals were used for a total of 14,380 hours during the year
- We received 9,603 requests of which 3,394 were made online and 52% were supplied within seven working days
- We recorded 65,681 visits to the library
- 167,836 items were borrowed in 2012-13
- We held 98 events across the year

THINGS WE'VE BUILT



Some of the projects we've been involved in during the year...

- **Fetlar's new pier and breakwater:** Fetlar's new pier and breakwater opened in November, providing shelter for the harbour and the infrastructure needed to attract investment, promote business and sustain economic growth.

We were able to obtain all the rock fill and armour stone we needed on site, rather than import it from outwith Fetlar. This provided a saving, part of which allowed the breakwater to be extended to provide more shelter to the harbour.



Aerial view of Fetlar Pier

- **Council buildings for sale:** During the year the Council moved several services to their new purpose built offices at the North Ness. With staff moving, there have been several former offices left empty. These buildings were advertised for sale to generate income for the Council and give opportunities to local developers. Most are being converted to provide private housing, although some have been leased, generating continuing income for the Council.
- **Council-owned crofting estates:** There have been a number of improvements in the way these have been managed. On the Busta Estate, agreements have been reached with Viking Energy and land has been sold for various developments that benefit local communities. In Brae, part of the estate was made available for new council housing and another area sold for the Moorfield Hotel. Crofts have also been sold to tenants, and around 20 new house sites have been taken on crofts.



View looking across to the estate at Brae

- **New houses in the north of Lerwick:** In April 2012, work started on-site at Burnbank, in the north end of Lerwick, to develop 22 new properties for Council tenants. The properties will be built and completed by DITT and managed by our Capital Programme Service.

The mix of properties, one, two and three-bedroom houses, as well as one-bedroom flats, was designed to match the need for smaller properties; something that is particularly important in light of recent housing benefit changes and the 'bedroom tax'.

The affordable houses have been designed to a high standard, with modern facilities and good energy efficiency. The construction of the houses has attracted Scottish Government grant funding of £600,000.



New houses at Burnbank, Lerwick

- **Walls Pier on budget despite delays:** The contract on works at the new Walls Pier was retendered early in 2012 with a local firm winning the bid to complete the work. Work had previously halted temporarily due to resourcing difficulties experienced by the original contractor in 2011.

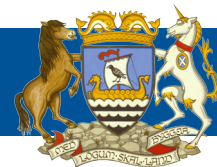
Although further delays have extended the project completion date, it remains on budget and is scheduled to be finished by early 2014.



Walls Pier

ABOUT US

A clean report card for the first time in years...



- **Council back on normal footing:** The Accounts Commission's findings in January 2013 recognised significant improvements in how we operate. Following a public hearing in June 2010, Commissioners were highly critical of our leadership, vision and strategic direction, governance, and financial management and accountability. Since then, we have been closely monitored as we first developed, then began to put our improvement plan into effect.

This latest Controller of Audit's report, and the Commission's subsequent findings, effectively put the Council back onto a 'normal footing', with our progress now being monitored through the annual audit common to all Scottish local authorities.

The Commission welcomed the significant progress made in developing a culture of continuous improvement, and has been particularly encouraged by the improving relationships between elected members, and between members and officers. There have also been significant improvements in how we manage finances and information.

At the time, Convener Malcolm Bell said: "It is easy to forget how far the SIC has come since the Accounts Commission carried out its two-day public hearing back in 2010. This is a very different Council now, and we must continue to build on the intensive work which has taken us to this point. There are significant challenges ahead, but the report and the Commission's findings are a testament to the hard work of staff and members over the past two years."

Leader Gary Robinson: "For the first time in years this Council has had a 'clean report card' from the local authority auditors, and we must continue to build on the work which has been carried out so far. I'm confident that given our clear priorities for the future, this Council can go from strength to strength in the coming years."

Chair of the Accounts Commission, John Baillie, said: "This is a very positive report. There has been a real desire to tackle long-standing problems at Shetland Islands Council. I am pleased that this has led to improvements in the way the council is run.

"It is vital that this positive momentum is maintained as the council faces major challenges to reshape services and continue to deliver for the people of Shetland in the years ahead."

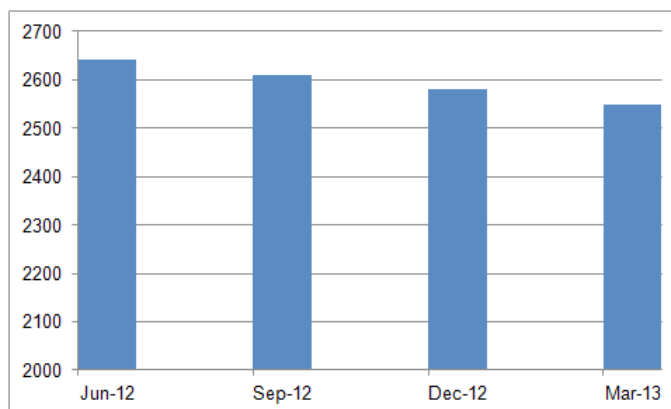
At a glance:

The Council published its Corporate Plan 2013-17 in July 2013 – a document which identifies the priorities, opportunities and challenges over the next four years.

[Download a copy \(PDF\)](#)

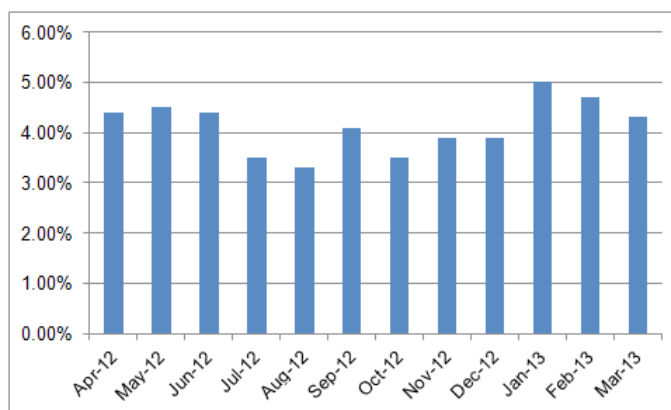
STAFFING:

Number of Full Time Equivalentents



We reduced the number of staff we employ by 93 FTE's during 2012-13.

Sickness percentage



The peak in January 2013 can be explained in part by the Norovirus outbreak.

For more information, please visit the performance section of our website at:

www.shetland.gov.uk/about-performance/

You can also keep up to date with spotlight features on services at:

www.shetland.gov.uk/Spotlighton/