

Fetlar2013

Community

Most of Fetlar's population is spread between the three main settlements on the island: Houbie, Funzie, and Tresta. Houbie, which is centrally located on the island, has the largest concentration of houses and is where most local services can be found.

The community of Fetlar is small but thriving with regularly held events taking place at Fetlar Community Hall, which is the central hub of activity for the island's residents. Originally established as a kirk in the 1840s, the building was converted to a community hall to provide the island with a focal point for socialisation and community events.

Crofting plays a big part in the Fetlar Community. For a few it is their main source of income, however most crofters have a number of jobs with crofting forming part of the mix. This has led to a diverse range of skills, abilities, and interests being represented on the island.

Organisations

There are a number of local groups based on Fetlar that meet on a regular basis. Three of the main organisations are:

Fetlar Developments Ltd: Established in 2008, FDL aims to counter the depopulation of the island, and build a sustainable future. The office is based at Fetlar Community Hall. FDL is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.

Fetlar Museum Trust: The Trust run Fetlar Interpretive Centre, the island's heritage and craft centre. The trustees, staff, and volunteers work to preserve, record, interpret and display the social and natural heritage of Fetlar for the benefit of the future. Fetlar Museum Trust is a registered charity.

Fetlar Community Association: Officially established in 1974, the Community Association runs Fetlar Community Hall, and is responsible for organising many of the events that take place through the year. The Association has charitable status.

Other groups on the island include:

- Fetlar Makers' Group
- Fetlar Hnefatafl Panel
- The Boating and Recreation Club
- Brough Lodge Trust
- Fetlar Book Group
- Badminton Club

Events

Many events take place throughout the year, including the Annual Sheepdog Trials, which take place each summer. There are also a number of regular events, including:

- Weekly Club Night
- Film nights
- Fish & chip suppers
- Bingo night

Local Businesses

A number of Fetlar's residents are self-employed, and there is a range of professions present on the island. These include:

- Crofting & farming
- Ferry staff
- Tourism
- Craft and jewellery creation

Top:
Front Exterior of
Fetlar
Community Hall

Image provided
courtesy of
fetlar.org



Bottom:
The islanders
gather for the
premiere of the
school play.

Image © Katy
Jackson



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Education

Education has always been of paramount importance to the island's residents. An example of early education on Fetlar was the 19th Century school at Urie.

Today, Shetland Islands Council offers primary and nursery education on Fetlar, both provided at the school. As of the 2012-2013 academic year, seven children attend the primary school and two attend nursery. It is hoped that Fetlar will be able to maintain and increase these numbers in the future.

Secondary education is available by default through Anderson High School in Lerwick on the mainland, although placements at Baltasound Junior High School on Unst are available.

Pupils attending Anderson High School board in halls of residence throughout the week. Those attending Baltasound commute each day by ferry.

Emergency Services

Fetlar's community nurse is the first point of call for health services required by residents. The nurse works in partnership with the Yell & Fetlar Medical Practice.

The island also has a retained firefighter service. These firefighters have other occupations, but respond immediately to any fire-related emergencies on Fetlar.



Above:
Volunteers participate in the annual Voar Redd Up at Tresta Beach.
Image provided courtesy of fetlar.org

Religion

Religion has always played an important role in the community life on Fetlar. This is demonstrated not only through the numerous ruins of churches and chapels that can be identified on the island, but also through the presence of a number of active religious institutions.

Fetlar Kirk, built in 1790 on the same site as numerous other kirks, holds services on a fortnightly basis, with the minister coming in to Fetlar from the neighbouring Isle of Yell.

SOLI, Britain's most northerly Episcopalian order, was established on Fetlar in 1988. Services are held on a regular basis.

St Sunniva Skete, an Orthodox monastic house, also holds services on a regular basis.

Visitors to Fetlar are welcome to any and all services that take place throughout the week.

Eco-Friendly Island

Fetlar's community strives to keep the island beautiful, eco-friendly, and welcoming, and in particular is very proud of Tresta Beach, which has received a Seaside Award each year since 2008. Additionally, each spring most of the island's residents attend the annual Voar Redd Up, an award winning Shetland-wide initiative to help keep the islands clean and litter-free.

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