



University of the  
Highlands and Islands  
Shetland

# Shetland Fisheries Statistics

## 2020

**Ian R. Napier**

( [ian.napier@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:ian.napier@uhi.ac.uk) )

**November 2021**



# Shetland Fisheries Statistics 2020

**Ian R. Napier**

( [ian.napier@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:ian.napier@uhi.ac.uk) )

**November 2021**

**[www.shetland.uhi.ac.uk/research/statistics/reports](http://www.shetland.uhi.ac.uk/research/statistics/reports)**

**Shetland UHI**

Port Arthur

Scalloway

Shetland ZE1 0UN

Tel: 01595 772000

Email: [info@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:info@uhi.ac.uk)

Web: [www.shetland.ac.uk](http://www.shetland.ac.uk)

# Summary

## In 2020:

- ◆ 54,000 tonnes of fish and shellfish, worth £72 million, were landed in Shetland, just under half of it by Shetland fishing boats. That was more by weight than in 2019 but less in value.
- ◆ One-fifth of all the finfish landed in Scotland, and almost one-sixth of that landed in the UK, were landed in Shetland.
- ◆ More fish and shellfish were landed in Shetland than in any other port in the UK, except Peterhead.
- ◆ More finfish were landed in Shetland than in all of England and Wales and almost as much as all that landed in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- ◆ Shetland boats landed 94,000 tonnes of fish and shellfish worth £105 million. That was somewhat more by weight but slightly less by value than in 2019.
- ◆ Shetland boats accounted for almost one-quarter of all the fish and shellfish landed by Scottish boats, and 15% of that landed by UK boats.
- ◆ 18,600 tonnes of whitefish worth £37 million were landed in Shetland, more than two-thirds of it by local boats. That was substantially less than in 2019, mainly due to a 50% cut in the cod quota.
- ◆ Lerwick, Scalloway and Cullivoe were all in the top-15 UK ports for whitefish landings.
- ◆ Shetland boats landed 13,500 tonnes of whitefish worth £28 million, almost all of it in Shetland. Again, that was substantially less than in 2019.
- ◆ 33,000 tonnes of pelagic fish, worth £30 million, were landed in Shetland, significantly more than in 2019.
- ◆ 2,100 tonnes of shellfish, worth almost £5 million, were landed in Shetland, slightly more by weight than in 2019 but significantly less in value.
- ◆ Overall, there does not appear to have been a large impact on fish landings in Shetland from the COVID-19 pandemic. The biggest probable impact was on the prices of shellfish and, to a lesser extent, of some whitefish species.

# Contents

<b>Summary</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Data Sources .....	1
<b>All Species</b> .....	<b>2</b>
The COVID-19 Pandemic .....	3
Composition of Landings .....	5
Place of Landing .....	5
National Context .....	7
<b>Whitefish</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Composition of Whitefish Landings .....	14
Changes in Landings of Whitefish Species .....	15
Changes in Whitefish Prices .....	16
Place of Whitefish Landings .....	17
National Context .....	18
Comparison of Whitefish Prices .....	20
<b>Pelagic Fish</b> .....	<b>22</b>
Handline Caught Mackerel .....	25
National Context .....	26
<b>Shellfish</b> .....	<b>28</b>
Composition of Shellfish Landings .....	30
Changes in Shellfish Prices .....	31
Place of Shellfish Landings .....	32
National Context .....	32

# Introduction

This report summarises the results of analyses of official data on the weight<sup>1</sup> and value of fish landed in Shetland and by Shetland fishing boats in 2020.

## Data Sources

The analyses are based primarily on data supplied by the Marine Analytical Unit of Marine Scotland Science, part of the Marine Scotland department of the Scottish Government, whose cooperation and assistance are gratefully acknowledged.

Additional data were obtained from:

- ◆ *Scottish Sea Fisheries Statistics* published by the Scottish Government<sup>2</sup>.
- ◆ *UK Sea Fisheries Annual Statistics* and associated data published by the UK Marine Management Organisation (MMO)<sup>3</sup>.

## Further Information

For further information, or any queries, please contact:

Ian R. Napier, Tel. 01595 772308, Email: [ian.napier@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:ian.napier@uhi.ac.uk)

**Copies of this and previous Shetland Fisheries Statistics are available on the Shetland UHI website at:**

**[www.shetland.uhi.ac.uk/research/statistics/reports](http://www.shetland.uhi.ac.uk/research/statistics/reports)**

---

<sup>1</sup> All weights are 'Live Weight Equivalent', i.e. the estimated weights of the fish in their live (ungutted) state.

<sup>2</sup> Available online at: <https://www.gov.scot/collections/sea-fisheries-statistics/>

<sup>3</sup> Available online at: [www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-sea-fisheries-annual-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-sea-fisheries-annual-statistics)

# All Species

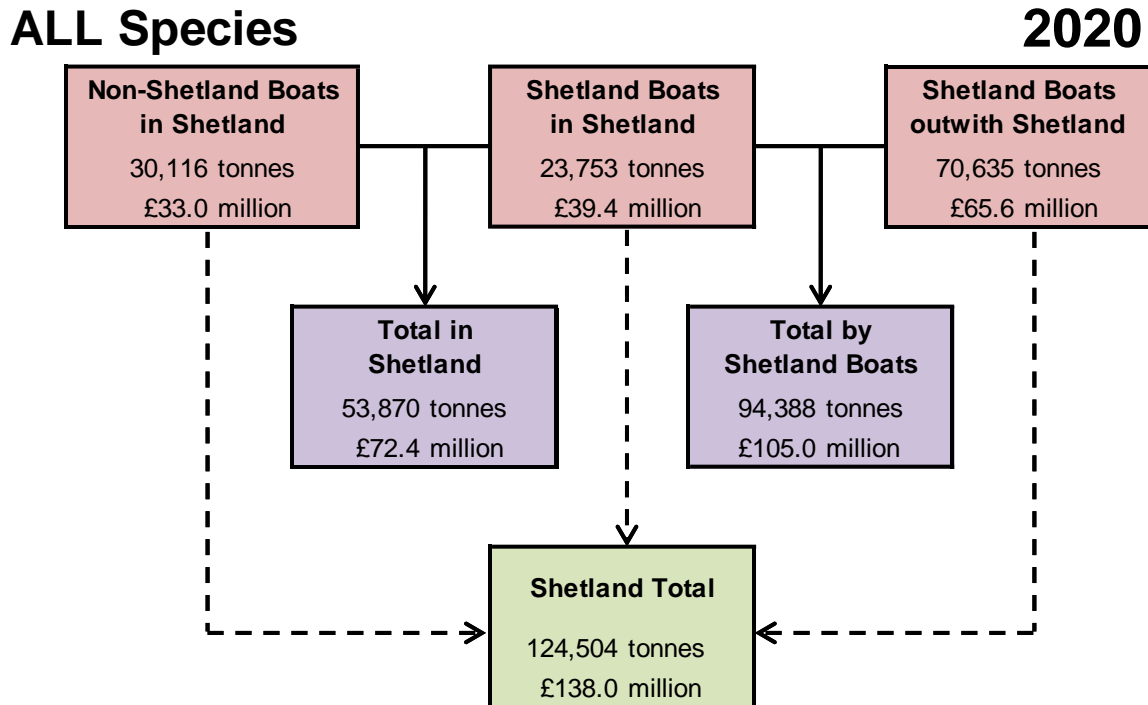


Figure 1 Summary breakdown of the weight and value of all fish landed in Shetland and by Shetland boats in 2020.

Just over 54,000 tonnes of fish and shellfish, worth some £72 million, were landed in Shetland in 2020 (Figure 1). That was more by weight (by 7%) than in 2019 but less by value (by 10%) (Figure 2). These changes were largely due to an increase in the quantity of pelagic fish landed in Shetland in 2020 together with a reduction in the quantity of whitefish landed (see page 11 for more details).

Just under half of the fish and shellfish landed in Shetland in 2020 (44% by weight) were landed by Shetland fishing boats, but local boats accounted for more than half of the landings by value (54%) (Figure 2).

Shetland fishing boats landed about 94,000 tonnes of fish and shellfish worth £105 million in 2020 (Figure 1). That was somewhat more by weight (by 7%) than in 2019, but slightly less by value (by 3%) (Figure 3).

The total weight of fish and shellfish landed in Shetland, and by Shetland fishing boats elsewhere, ('Shetland' fish landings) was about 124,000 tonnes in 2020, 10% more than in 2019, although the value was slightly (2%) less at £138 million (Figure 1).

### The COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic hit the UK in force from March 2020 when the UK Governments imposed the first full lockdown, although some effects on seafood exports from the UK had been apparent before that. The effects of the pandemic on the UK seafood industry were varied and included impacts on exports of reduced transport and logistic timetables and the collapse of the foodservice market due to the end of eating out. On the other hand, there was a surge in demand for retail products, including pre-packed, tinned and frozen seafood.<sup>4</sup>

Shetland's seafood industry continued to operate throughout the pandemic: Boats continued to land fish and shellfish in Shetland, the whitefish auction continued to operate, and fish and shellfish continued to be exported from the islands.

While a full analysis of the impacts of the pandemic on Shetland's seafood industry has not been carried out, some probable effects are apparent from these data. Although the overall quantity of fish and shellfish landed in Shetland in 2020 was slightly higher than in 2019 its value was lower, mainly due to a reduction in whitefish landings. That is believed to have mainly been a result of the substantial (50%) cut in the cod quota in 2020 which reduced the quantity of whitefish landed in Shetland (see page 15). Although the price of some whitefish species landed in Shetland fell in 2020, probably because of the pandemic, not all species were affected equally (page 16).

The biggest probable impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was on the prices of shellfish landed in Shetland (page 31), possibly because shellfish markets were affected more by the closure of restaurants and the end of eating out during the lockdowns.

Overall, these statistics indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic did not have a very large impact on fish and shellfish landings in Shetland during 2020. It is likely that the cut in the cod quota had a much greater impact.

---

<sup>4</sup> See: Seafish's review of how COVID-19 has affected the UK seafood industry: <https://www.seafish.org/insight-and-research/covid-19-impact-on-seafood-industry/>.

## ALL Species

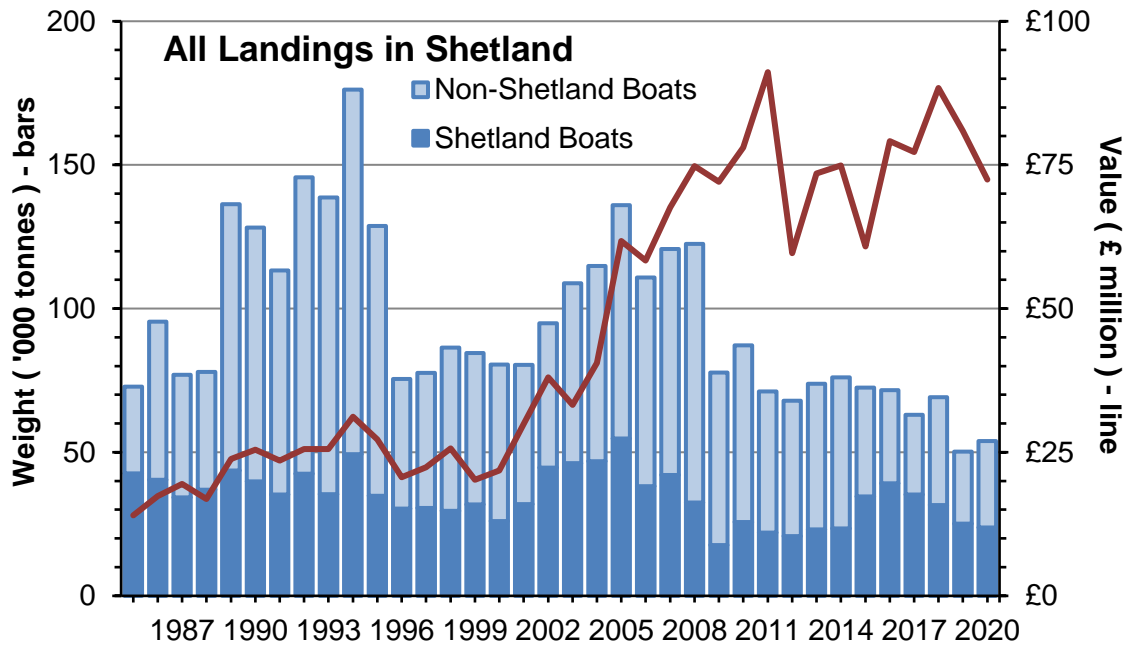


Figure 2 The weight (bars) and value (line) of all fish and shellfish landed in Shetland from 1985 to 2020.

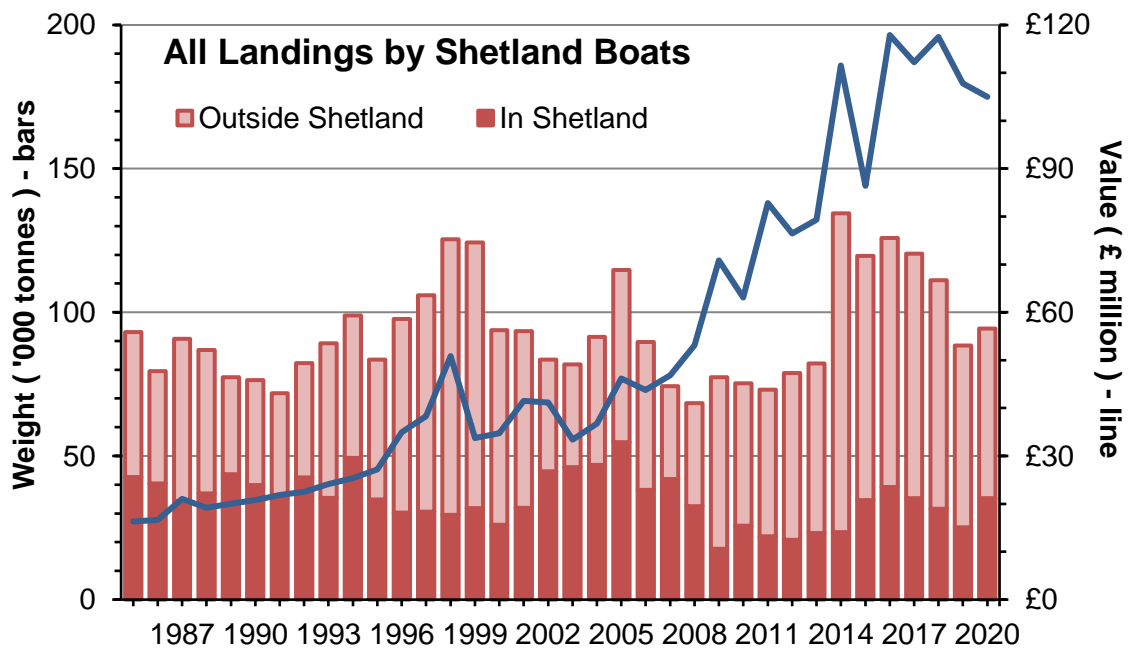


Figure 3 The weight (bars) and value (line) of all fish and shellfish landed by Shetland fishing boats from 1985 to 2020.



## Composition of Landings

Pelagic species (such as mackerel and herring) accounted for almost two-thirds of the fish and shellfish landed in Shetland in 2020. Although only two-fifths of the value (Table 1). Whitefish (such as cod, haddock, monks and flatfish) accounted for about one-third of the weight landed but half of the value, reflecting their greater unit value. Shellfish such as crabs, lobsters and scallops accounted for only a small proportion of the total landings but had the highest unit-value.

Table 1 The total weights and values of fish and shellfish landed in Shetland in 2020 by species group and their average unit-values.

	Weight		Value		Unit Value
	tonnes	%	£ m	%	£ / kg
<b>Pelagic Fish</b>	33,049	61%	£30.27	42%	£0.92
<b>Whitefish</b>	18,668	35%	£37.49	52%	£2.01
<b>Shellfish</b>	2,153	4%	£4.68	6%	£2.18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>53,870</b>		<b>£72.44</b>		<b>£1.34</b>

## Place of Landing

Almost all the fish and shellfish landed in Shetland in 2020 was landed in Lerwick, Scalloway or Cullivoe (Table 2). Landings at other ports were predominantly of shellfish.

## ALL Species

Table 2 The total weights and values of fish and shellfish landed in Shetland (by all boats) in 2020 by place of landing.

	Weight (tonnes)	% Wt.	Value (£ 000s)	% £
Baltasound	5		£12	
Uyeasound	16		£40	
Burravoe	5		£10	
Cullivoe	2,984	6%	£6,315	8%
Mid Yell	14		£27	
Yell & Fetlar	8		£15	
<b>North Isles Total</b>	<b>3,030</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>£6,418</b>	<b>8%</b>
Collafirth	376		£742	
Eshaness	39		£101	
North Roe to Hillswick	42		£119	
Northmavine	0		£2	
<b>Northmavine Total</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>£964</b>	<b>1%</b>
Sullom	104		£352	
Sullom / Toft	6		£12	
Vidlin	96		£208	
Voe	6		£11	
<b>Central Mainland Total</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>£583</b>	<b>2%</b>
Whalsay	362		£789	
Skerries	69		£136	
<b>Whalsay / Skerries Total</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>£925</b>	<b>1%</b>
Aith	24		£58	
Skeld	251		£421	
West Burrafirth	330		£684	
Walls	4		£8	
<b>West Mainland Total</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>£1,170</b>	<b>2%</b>
Burra (Hamnavoe)	40		£84	
Sandwick	81		£109	
Levenwick	2		£3	
Dunrossness and Fair Isle	64		£123	
Fair Isle	0		£1	
<b>South Mainland Total</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>£319</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Lerwick</b>	<b>44,945</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>£53,592</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>Scalloway</b>	<b>3,988</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>£8,449</b>	<b>20%</b>
Other Shetland	10		£21	
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>53,870</b>		<b>£72,442</b>	

### National Context

In a national context, just over one-fifth of all the finfish<sup>5</sup> landed in Scotland in 2020 (21% by weight) and almost one quarter by value (23%) were landed in Shetland (Figure 4). And one-sixth of all the finfish landed in the UK (17% by weight and value) was landed in Shetland (Figure 4).

More fish and shellfish were landed in Shetland – and in Lerwick - in 2020 than in any other port in the UK, except Peterhead (Figure 5).

Overall, Scalloway ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in the UK for the value of fish and shellfish landed, and Cullivoe 19<sup>th</sup>.

The weight of finfish landed in Shetland in 2020 (51,500 tonnes) was almost as much as the total landed in all of England, Wales and Northern Ireland (52,700 tonnes) and was greater than that landed in all of England and Wales (40,800 tonnes).

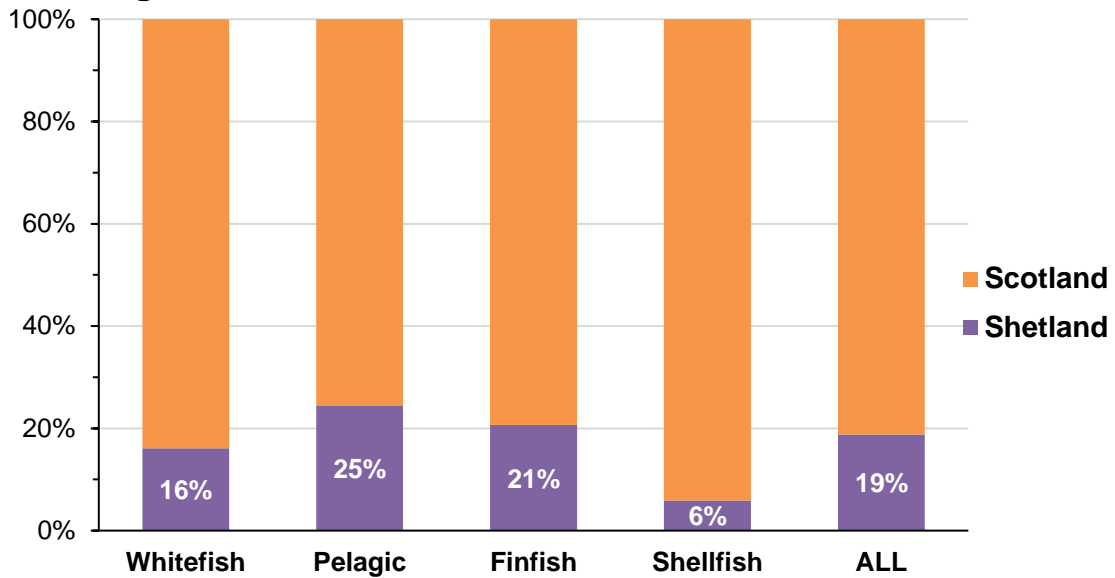
Shetland fishing boats accounted for almost one-quarter (24% by weight) of all the fish and shellfish landed by Scottish fishing boats in 2020, and 15% (by weight) of all the landings by UK boats (Figure 6).

---

<sup>5</sup> Whitefish and pelagic fish.

# ALL Species

## Landings in Scotland



## Landings in the UK

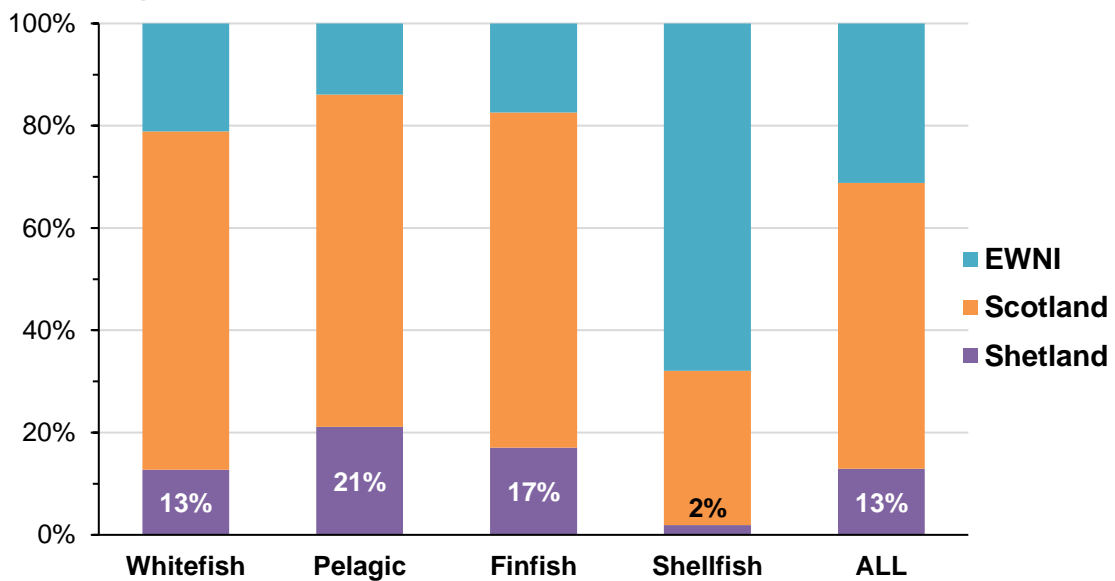
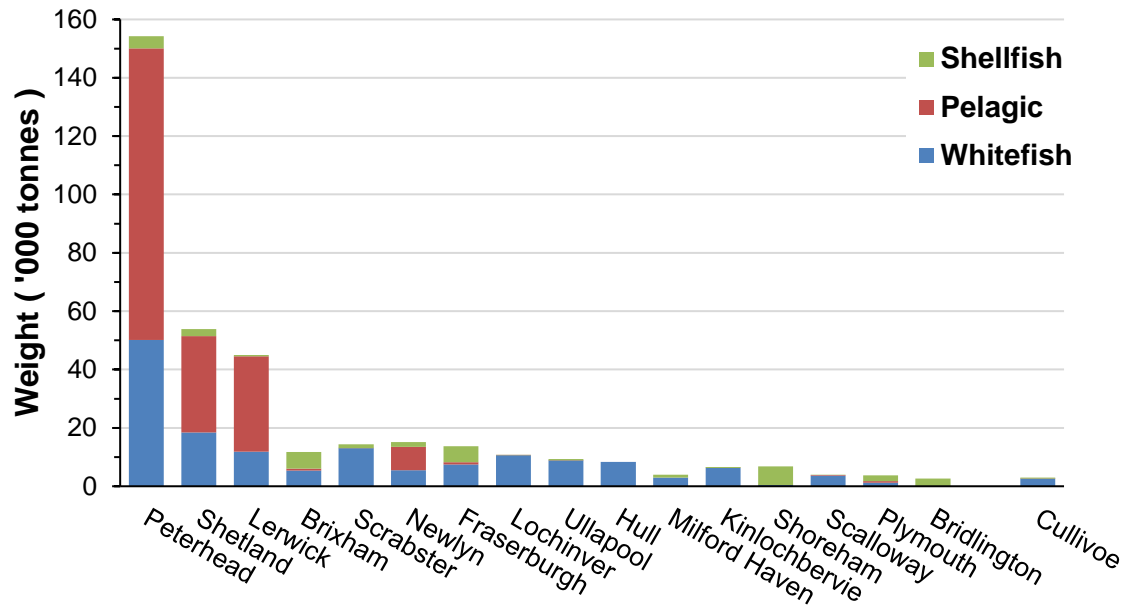


Figure 4 Breakdowns of all fish and shellfish landed in Scotland (top) and in the UK (bottom) in 2020 showing the proportions (by weight) landed in Shetland, in the rest of Scotland and in England, Wales and Northern Ireland ('EWNI').

# ALL Species

## Weight of Landings



## Value of Landings

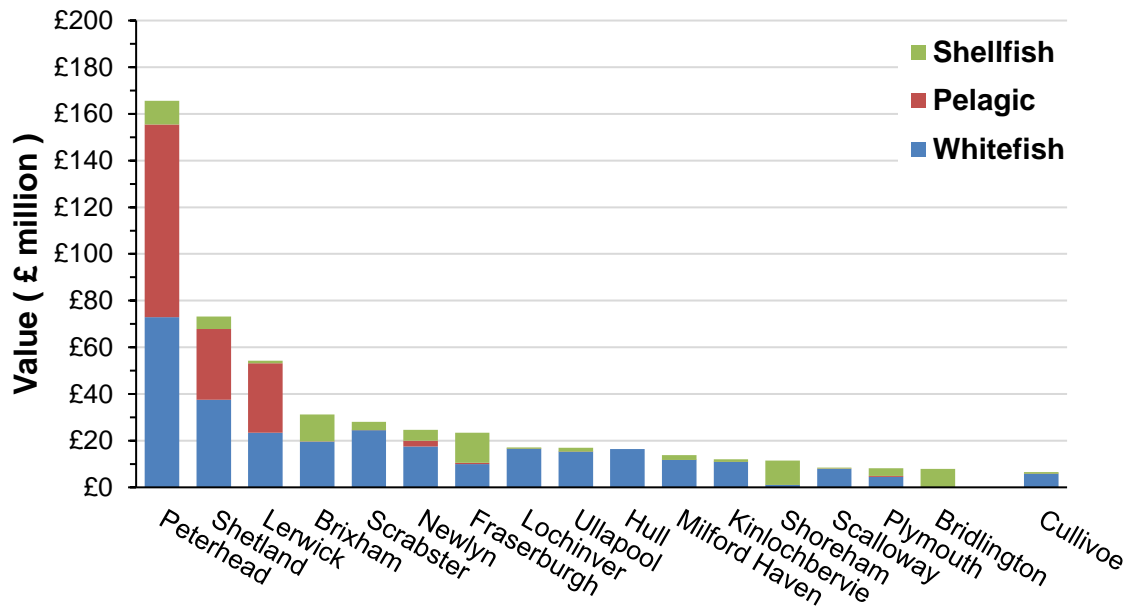
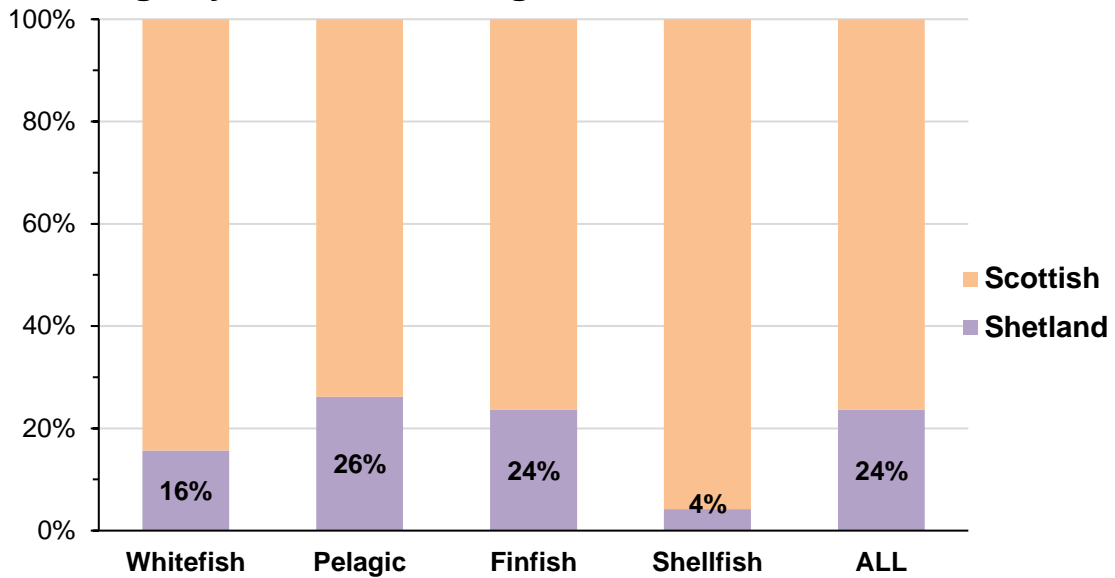


Figure 5 The weights (top) and values (bottom) of fish and shellfish landed in the top-15 UK ports in 2020, plus Cullivoe. Totals for Shetland are also shown. (Ports are ranked by value of landings.)

# ALL Species

## Landings by Scottish Fishing Boats



## Landings by UK Fishing Boats

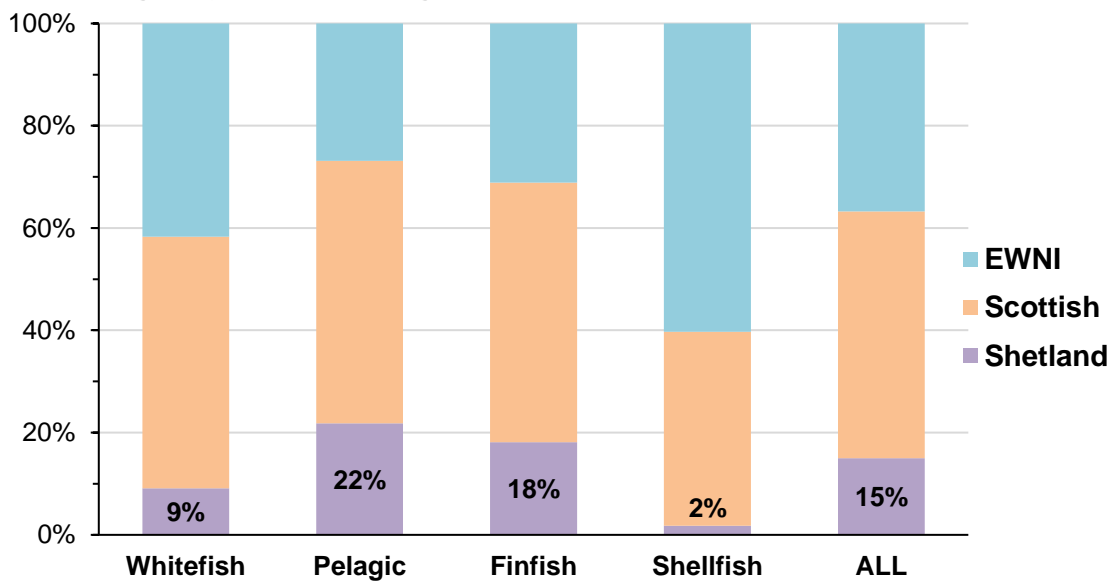


Figure 6 Breakdowns of all landings of fish and shellfish in 2020 by Scottish Boats (top) and UK boats (bottom) showing the proportions (by weight) landed by Shetland boats, other Scottish boats and other UK boats ('EWNI' = England, Wales and Northern Ireland.)

# Whitefish

'Whitefish' (also referred to as 'demersal' fish) includes cod, haddock, whiting, monkfish, flatfish and similar species. Some shellfish (cuttlefish, nephrops and squid) are included in these figures as around Shetland they are predominantly caught in the whitefish fishery.

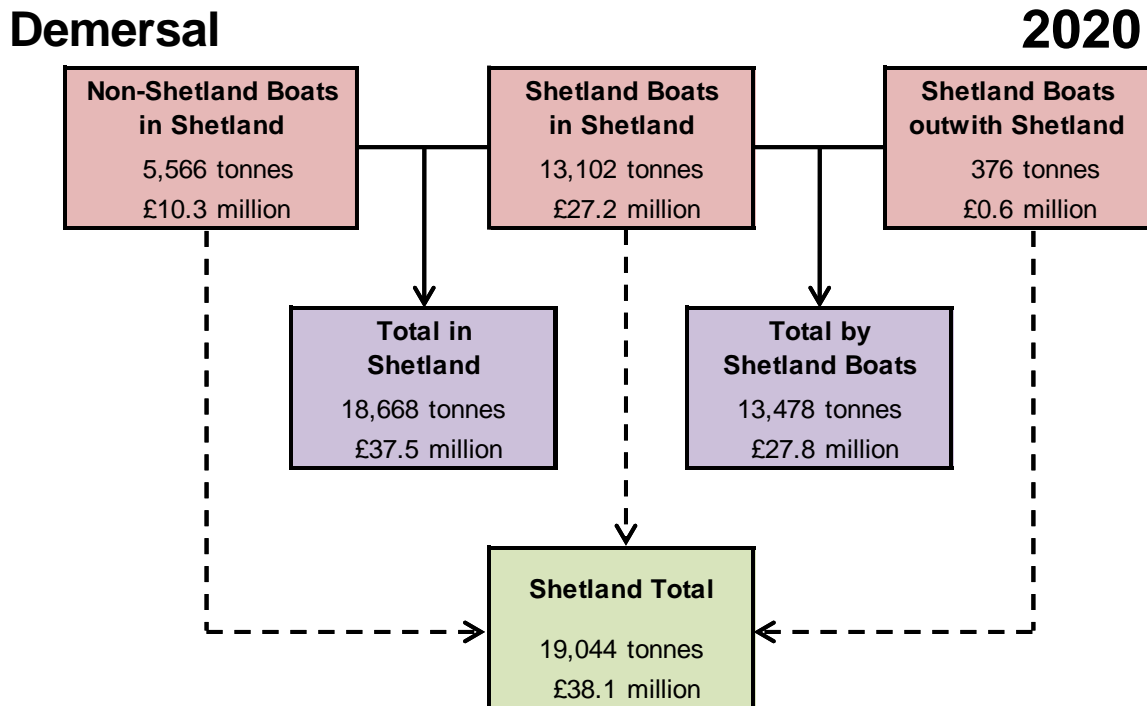


Figure 7 Summary breakdown of the weight and value of whitefish landed in Shetland and by Shetland fishing boats in 2020.

Just under 19,000 tonnes of whitefish, worth some £37 million were landed in Shetland in 2020 (Figure 7). That was substantially less than in 2019 (23% less by weight, 28% less by value (Figure 8).

More than two-thirds of the whitefish landed in Shetland in 2020 (70% by weight, 73% by value) was landed by local fishing boats. (Figure 8).

Shetland fishing boats landed more than 13,000 tonnes of whitefish (everywhere) in 2020, worth some £28 million (Figure 7), virtually all of it (99%) in Shetland. These landings were also substantially less than in 2019 (by 21% by weight, 25% by value) (Figure 9).

## **Whitefish**

While the COVID-19 pandemic may have had an impact on whitefish landings it is believed that the reductions in whitefish landings in Shetland and by Shetland boats was mainly a result of the substantial (50%) cut in the quota for North Sea cod in 2020 (see page 15).



# Whitefish

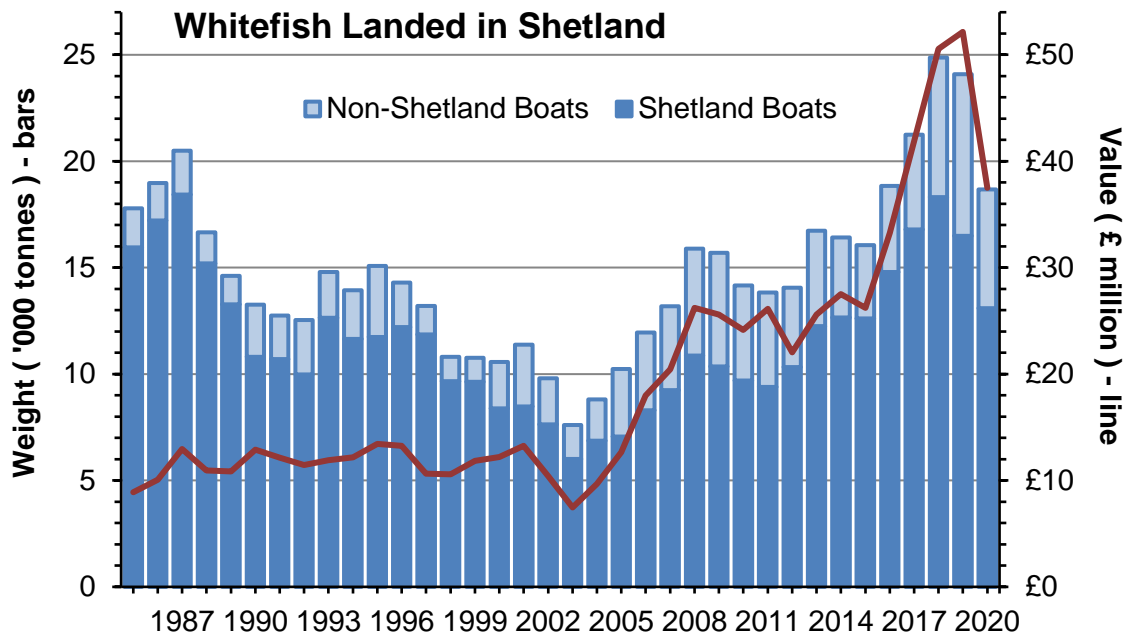


Figure 8 The weight (bars) and value (line) of whitefish landed in Shetland from 1985 to 2020.

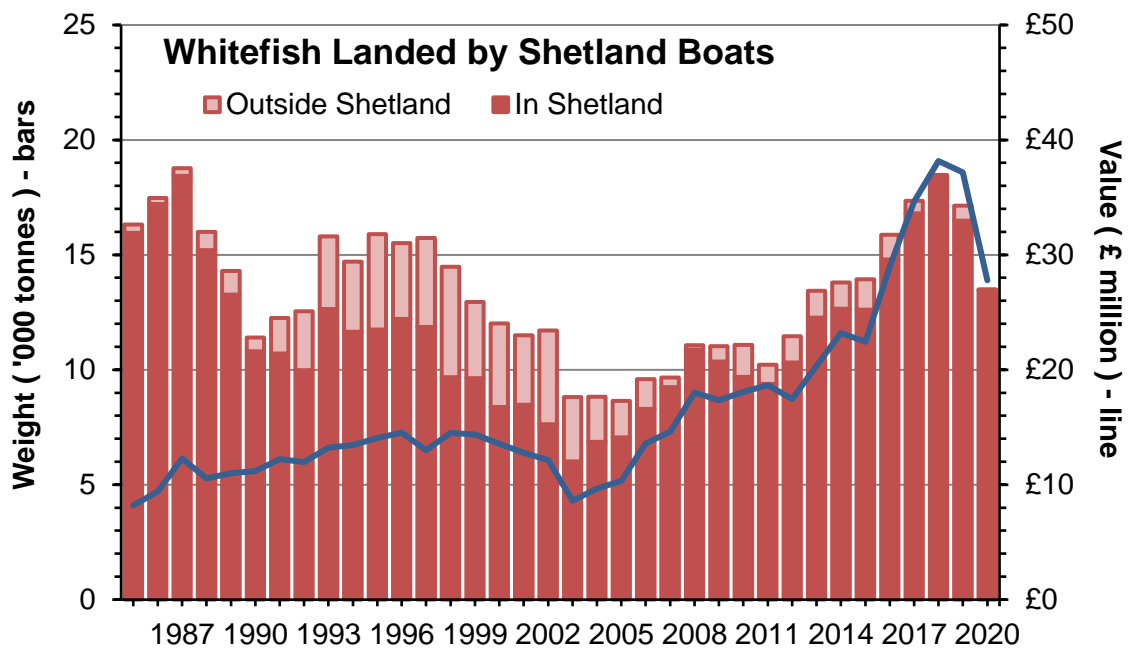


Figure 9 The weight (bars) and value (line) of whitefish landed by Shetland fishing boats from 1985 to 2020.

## Composition of Whitefish Landings

Cod was the most valuable whitefish species landed in Shetland in 2020, accounting for just over-one-fifth (21%) of the total value of whitefish landed (Table 3), followed by monks, haddock and hake.

Haddock accounted for the greatest share of the landings by weight (17%), followed by cod and hake (Table 3).

Table 3 The top-10 whitefish species (ranked by value) landed in Shetland in 2020.

Species	Weight		Value	
	tonnes	%	£ m	%
Cod	2,760	15%	£7.95	21%
Monks	2,203	12%	£6.16	16%
Haddock	3,239	17%	£4.52	12%
Hake	2,596	14%	£4.35	12%
Whiting	1,137	6%	£4.15	11%
Megrim	2,302	12%	£2.31	6%
Saithe	1,369	7%	£2.29	6%
Ling	1,420	8%	£1.88	5%
Plaice	218	1%	£0.97	3%
Lemon Sole	527	3%	£0.90	2%
Others	896	5%	£2.00	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,668</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£37.49</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Changes in Landings of Whitefish Species

The weights and values of most whitefish landed in Shetland fell from 2019 to 2020, in some cases by substantial amounts (Figure 10). While landings of cod fell by half (51% by weight), in line with the cut in cod quota, there were also substantial falls in landings of hake (down 45%), saithe (-26%) and lemon sole (-36%). The only principal whitefish species to show an increase in landings in 2020 was megrim.

As noted above, while the COVID-19 pandemic may have had an impact, it is believed that the principal cause of the reductions in whitefish landings in Shetland in 2020 was the substantial (50%) cut in the quota for North Sea cod in 2020. The decline in landings of cod in Shetland (51%; Figure 10) closely matched the cut in the cod quota. The cut in the cod quota also had a significant knock-on effect on landings of other whitefish species as it limited the amount of time boats could spend fishing (to avoid exceeding their cod quotas). They were thus unable to fully utilise their quotas for other species with the results that there were also substantial reductions in the landings of some other whitefish species.

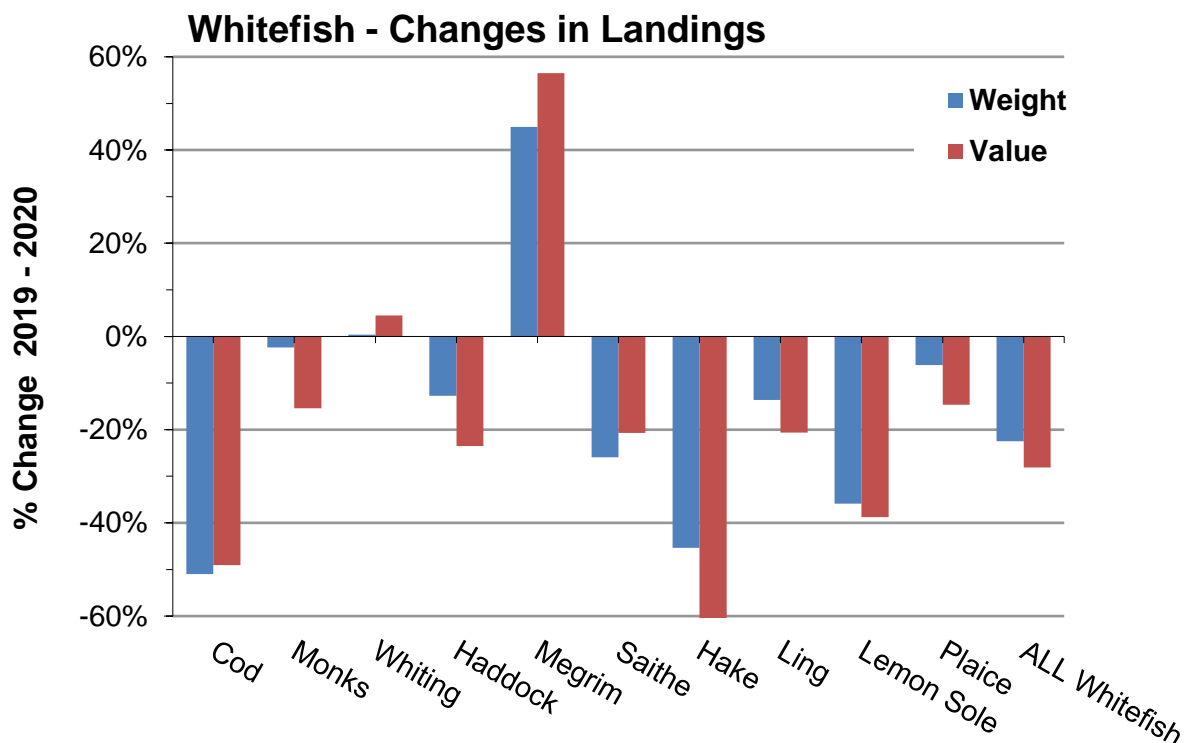


Figure 10 Percentage changes in the weight and value of landings of the top-10 whitefish species (by value) in Shetland from 2019 to 2020.

## Changes in Whitefish Prices

The average prices of some of the principal whitefish species landed in Shetland in 2020 – cod, haddock, hake and plaice – were about 10% lower than in 2019, while the average prices of ling and lemon sole were also slightly lower (Figure 11).

This may reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on seafood markets. However, the average prices of some other whitefish species landed in Shetland – cod, whiting, megrim and saithe – were slightly higher in 2020, so any effect of the pandemic on prices was not simple or universal.

It is noticeable that the declines in prices in Shetland in 2020 were generally less than those in Scotland as a whole, in some cases (for example, ling, plaice and lemon sole) by substantial amount. In other cases (cod, whiting, saithe) average prices increased in Shetland while they declined in Scotland (Figure 11).

Overall, it appears that any impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on whitefish prices in Shetland was both complex (in that it did not affect all species equally) and was less severe than in Scotland as a whole.

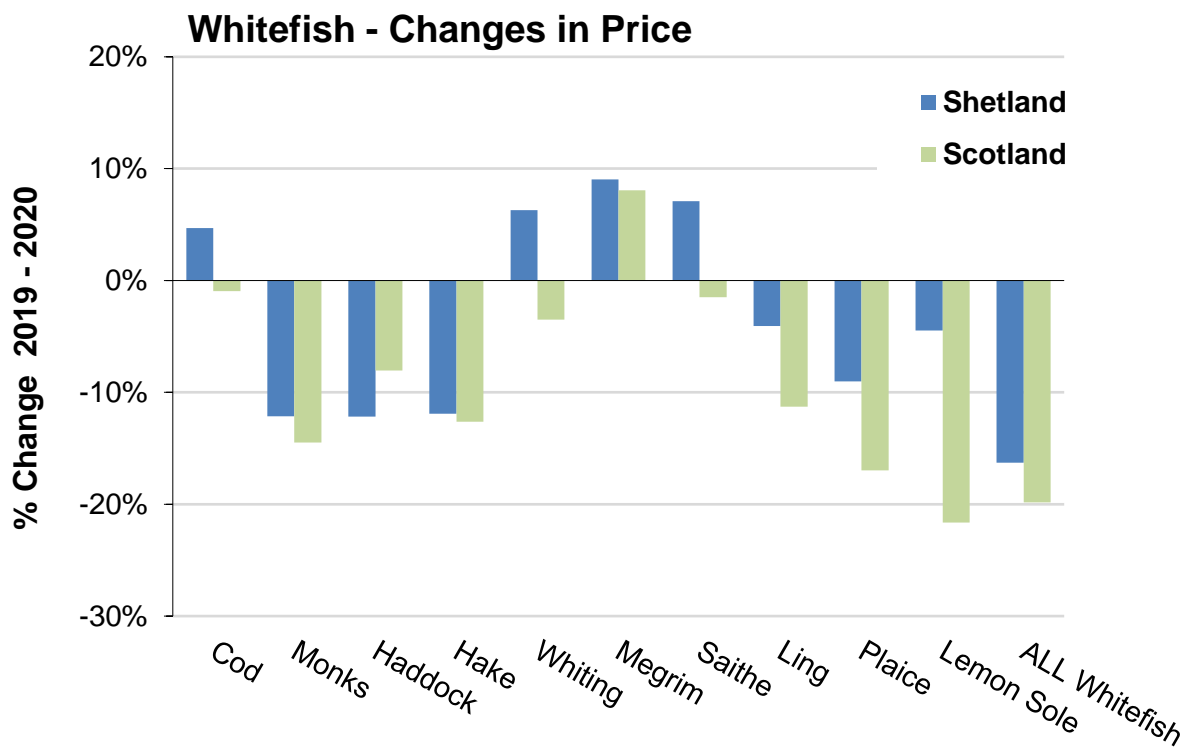


Figure 11 Percentage changes in the average prices (£/kg) of the principal whitefish species landed in Shetland from 2019 to 2020 in Shetland and in all of Scotland.

## Place of Whitefish Landing

Almost two-thirds of the whitefish landed in Shetland in 2020 was landed in Lerwick, one-fifth in Scalloway and 14% in Cullivoe (Yell) (Figure 12).

The weights of whitefish landed in Lerwick and Scalloway both fell substantially from 2019 to 2020 (by 17% and 44% respectively, by weight) (Figure 13). However, landings in Cullivoe remained almost unchanged.

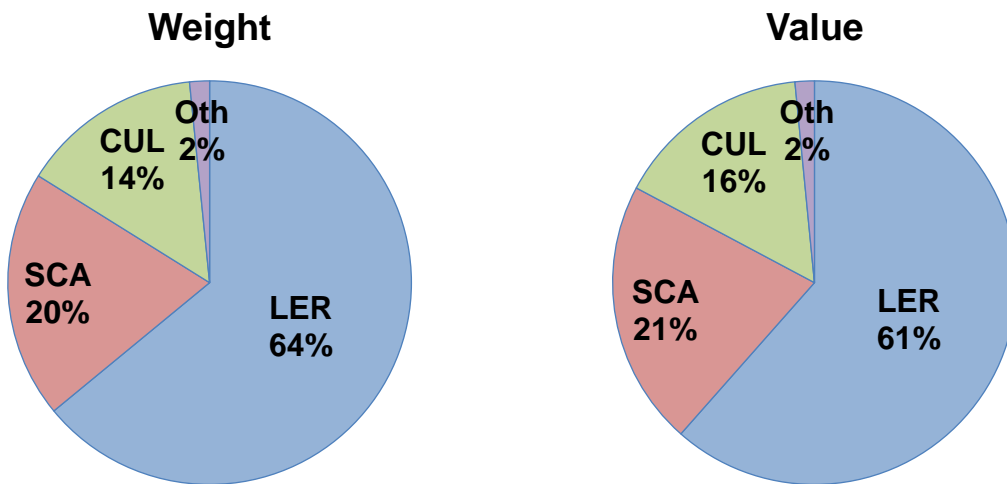


Figure 12 The proportions of the weight and value of whitefish landed in Shetland in 2020 landed in Lerwick ('LER'), Scalloway ('SCA'), Cullivoe ('CUL') and other Shetland ports ('Oth').

### Whitefish - Landings by Port

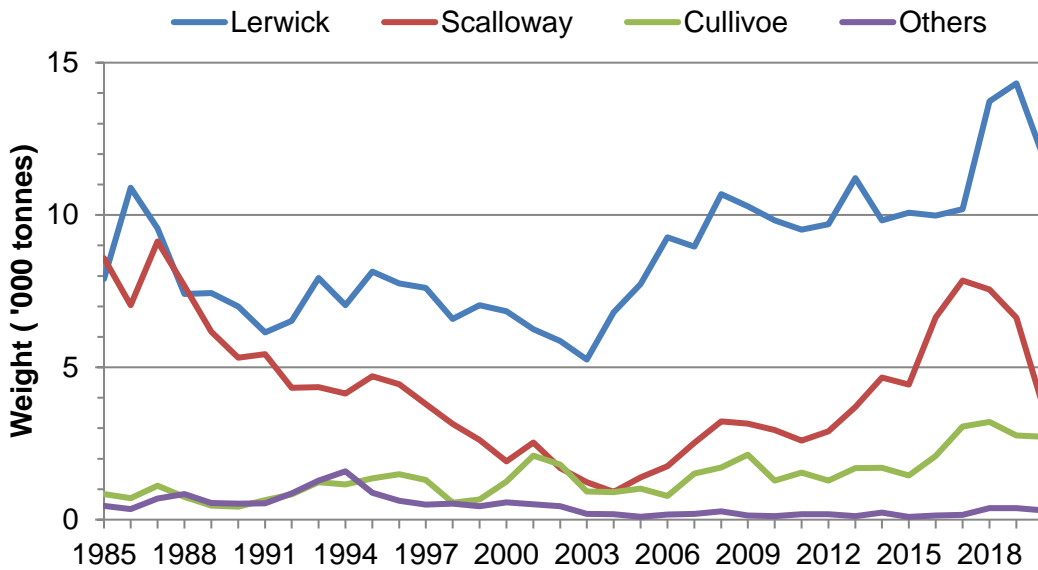


Figure 13 The weights of whitefish landed in Lerwick, Scalloway, Cullivoe and other places in Shetland from 1985 to 2020.

### National Context

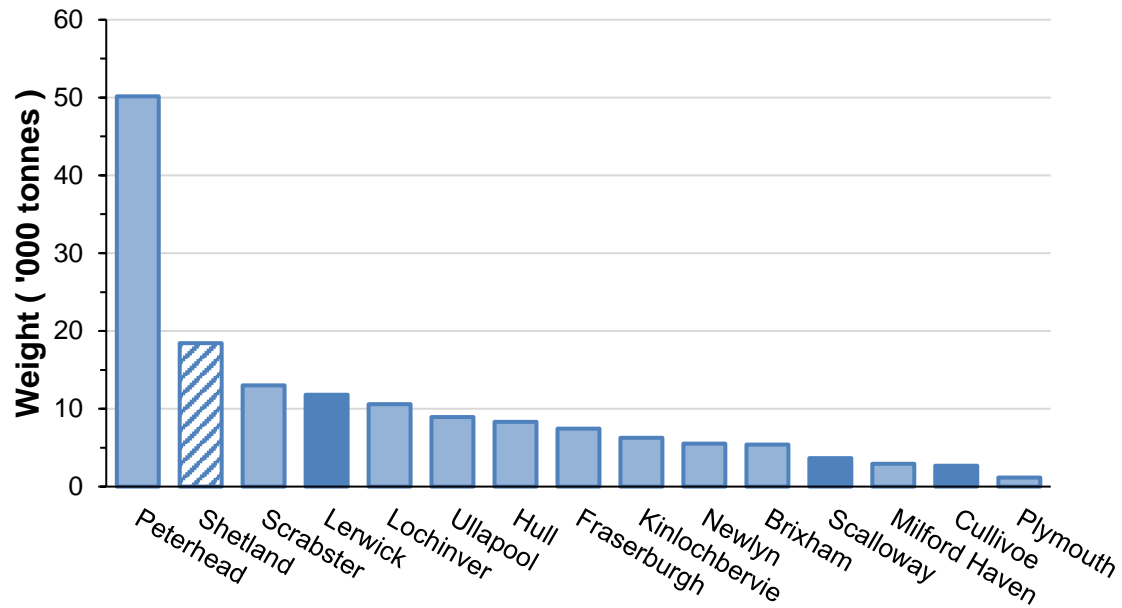
In a national context, Shetland accounted for about one-sixth of all the whitefish landed in Scotland in 2020 (16% by weight, 19% by value), and 13% of all the whitefish landed in the UK (by weight and value). More whitefish was landed in Shetland than in any other port in the UK except Peterhead (Figure 14),

Lerwick, Scalloway and Cullivoe were all in the top 15 UK ports for whitefish landings (Figure 14) and Lerwick ranked third, behind Peterhead and Scrabster.

Shetland fishing boats accounted for 18% of the whitefish landed by Scottish fishing boats in 2019 and 10% of the landings by UK boats.

# Whitefish

## Weight of Landings - Whitefish



## Value of Landings - Whitefish

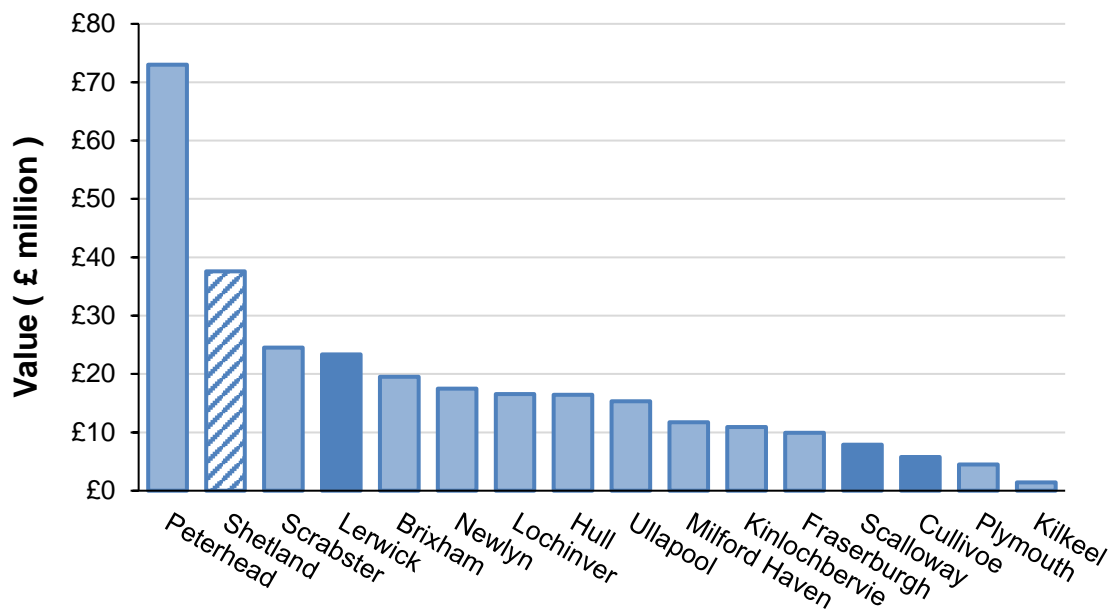


Figure 14 The weights (top) and values (bottom) of whitefish landed in the top-15 UK ports in 2020, and the totals for Shetland as a whole. (Shetland ports are highlighted.)

### Comparison of Whitefish Prices

Figure 13 compares the average prices of the principal whitefish species landed in Shetland in 2020 with those in Peterhead. The prices were similar, although slightly greater in Shetland, for species such as cod, hake, saithe and ling.

The prices in Shetland were significantly greater for haddock and whiting which may reflect differences in the size composition of the fish landed and the much smaller proportion of 'round' (ungutted) fish landed in Shetland.

The price differential was especially large for the flatfish megrim, lemon sole and plaice, with average prices in Shetland at least 40% greater than those in Peterhead.



# Whitefish

## Whitefish - Comparison of Prices

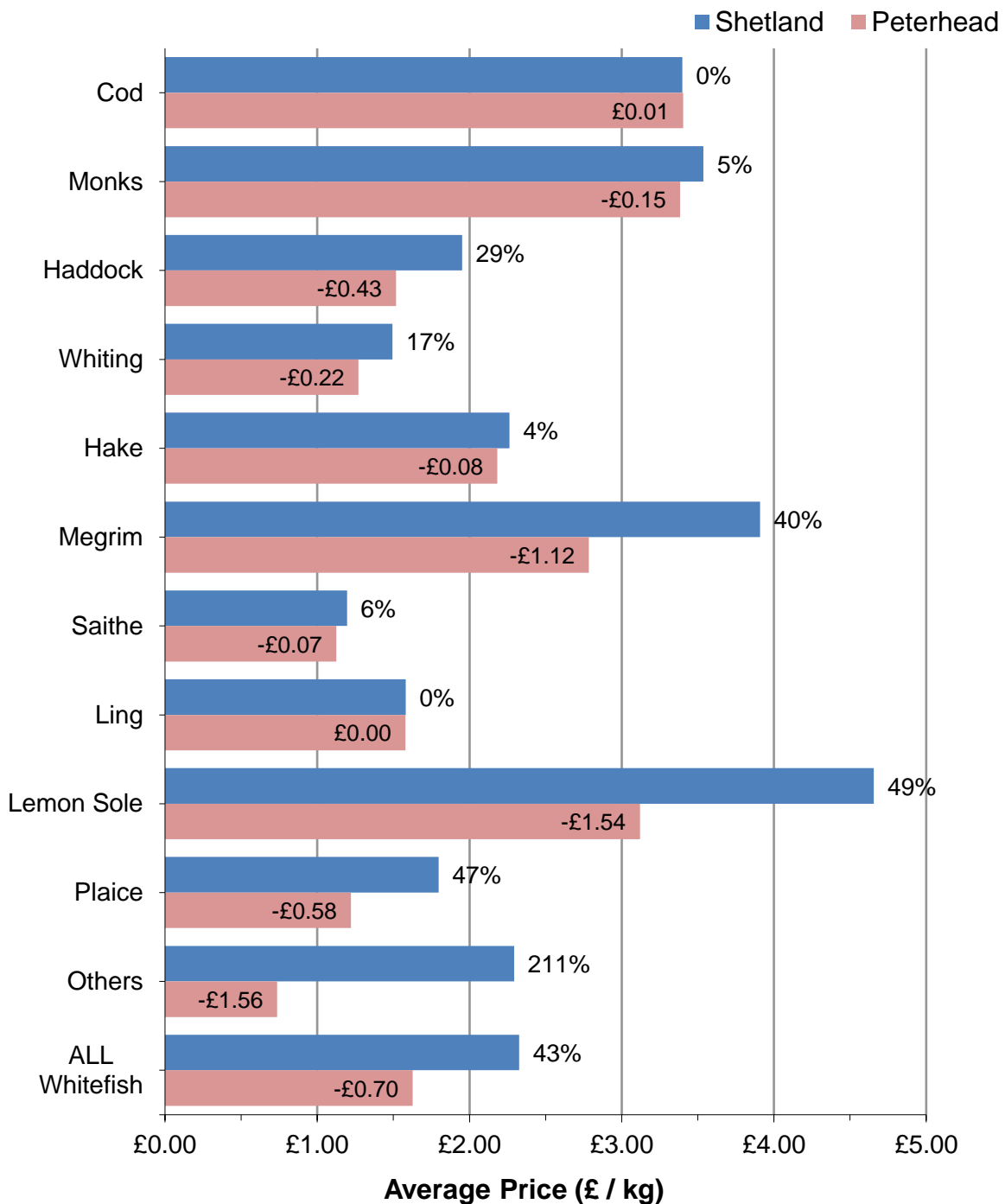


Figure 15 Comparisons of the average prices of the principal whitefish species landed in Shetland in 2020 with those in Peterhead. Figures outside the bars show the percentage differences between the prices in Shetland and those in Peterhead. Figures inside the bars show the actual differences in prices between Peterhead and Shetland. (Prices are based on landed weights.)

# Pelagic Fish

*Pelagic fish include mackerel, herring, blue whiting and similar species. Past pelagic landings have included both landings for human consumption and for reduction to fish meal, although they are now almost entirely for human consumption.*

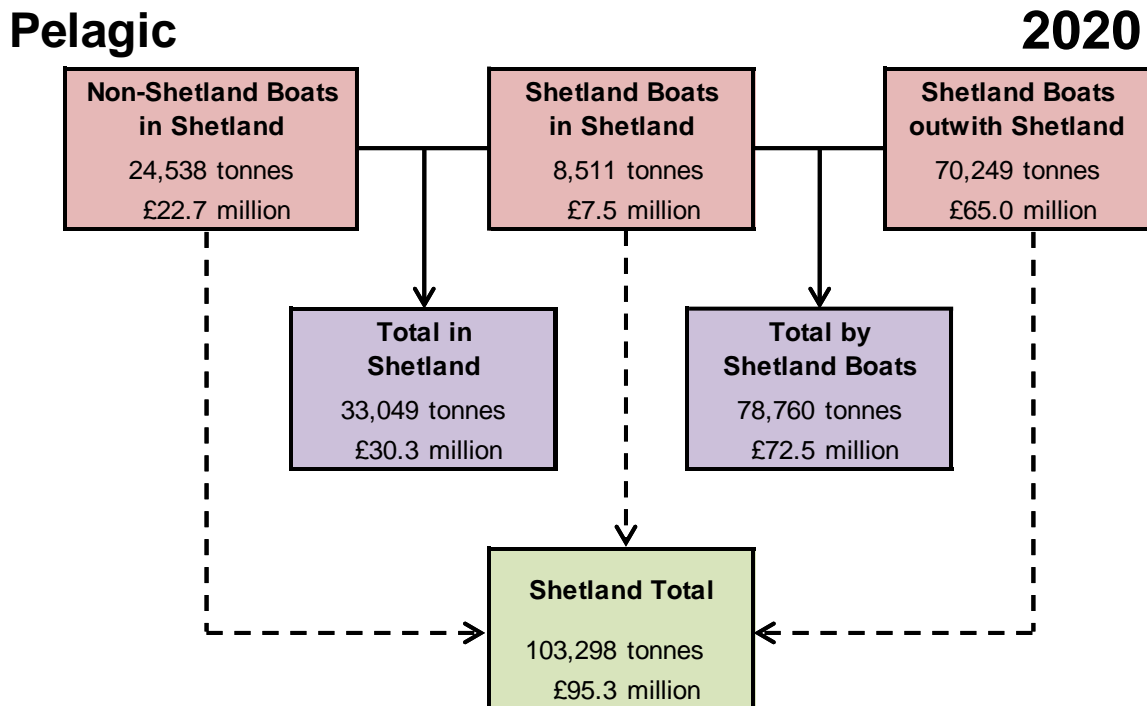


Figure 16 Summary breakdown of the weight and value of pelagic fish landed in Shetland and by Shetland boats in 2020.

About 33,000 tonnes of pelagic fish, worth about £30 million were landed in Shetland in 2020 (Figure 16). That was an increase of more than one-third from 2019 (37% by weight; 34% by value) (Figure 17).

Almost all pelagic fish landed in Shetland are landed to the Shetland Catch factory in Lerwick which is now owned by the Norwegian-owned multi-national company Pelagia AS. The quantity of pelagic fish landed in Shetland probably therefore reflects company management decisions.

About one quarter of the pelagic fish landed in Shetland in 2020 (26% by weight, 25% by value) was landed by local fishing boats (Figure 17).

## **Pelagic Fish**

Shetland fishing boats landed almost 79,000 tonnes of pelagic fish (everywhere) worth some £72 million in 2020 (Figure 16). That was 14% more than in 2019 (by weight; 12% by value) (Figure 18).

Mackerel accounted for almost three-quarters (71% by weight) of the pelagic fish landed in Shetland in 2020 and four-fifths of the value (82%). Herring made up virtually all the balance.

## Pelagic Fish

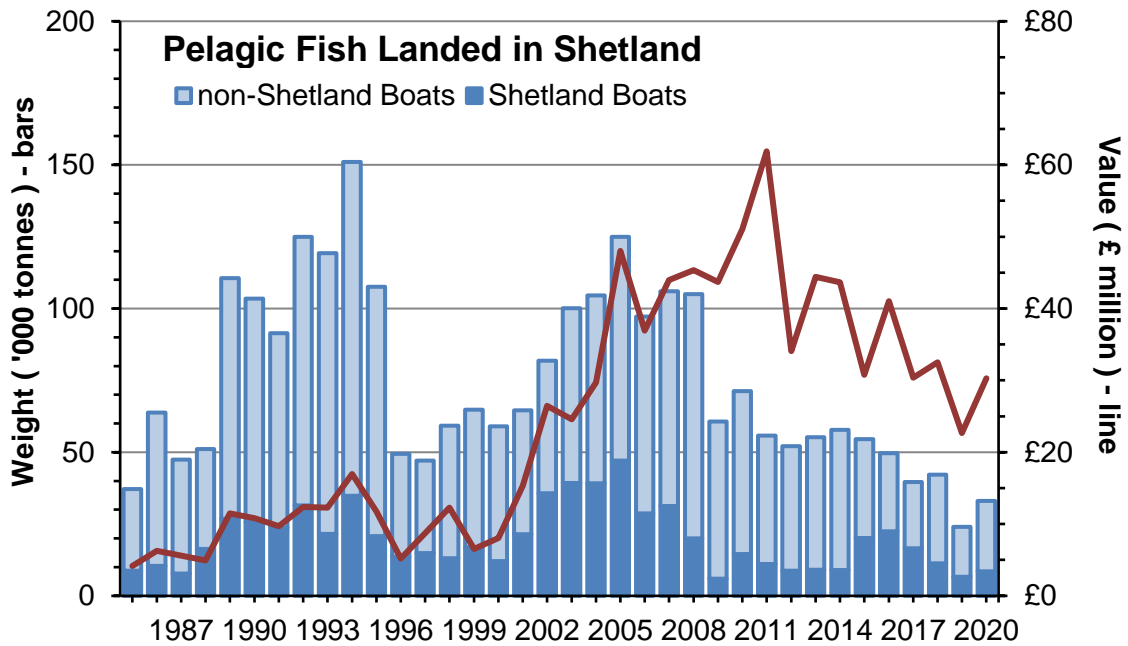


Figure 17 The weight (bars) and value (line) of pelagic fish landed in Shetland from 1985 to 2020.

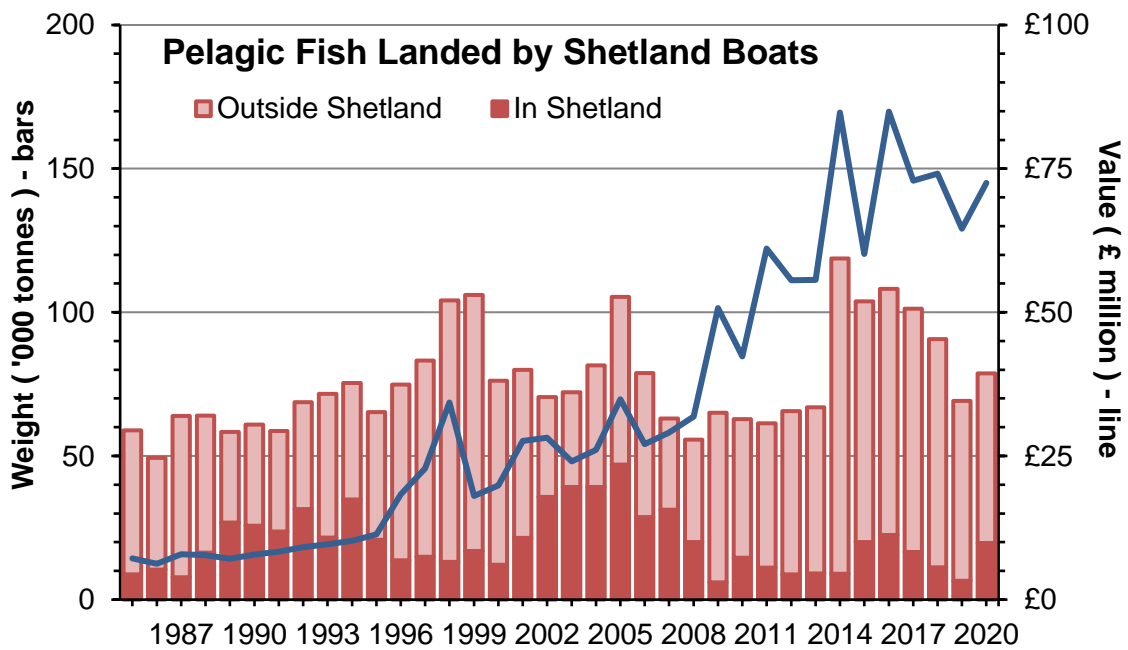


Figure 18 The weight (bars) and value (line) of pelagic fish landed by Shetland boats from 1985 to 2020.

## Handline Caught Mackerel

Although the vast majority of pelagic fish landed in Shetland are caught by large pelagic fishing boats and landed to the Shetland Catch factory in Lerwick, landings of mackerel caught by handline from small boats have expanded substantially in recent years.

About 330 tonnes of handline caught mackerel, worth some £420,000 were sold through the Shetland Seafood Auction in 2020 (Figure 19).

The quantity of handline caught mackerel sold through the Auction increased by more than three-quarters from 2018 to 2020 (79% by weight; 77% by value) (Figure 19).

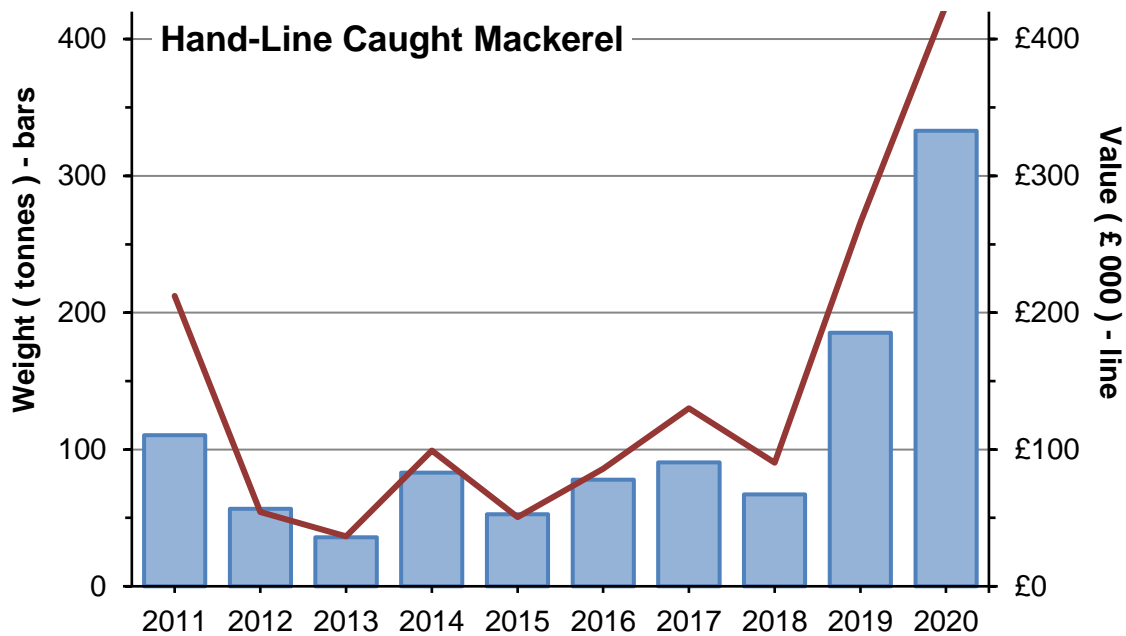


Figure 19 The weight (bars) and value (line) of handline caught mackerel sold through the Shetland Seafood Auction from 2011 to 2020.

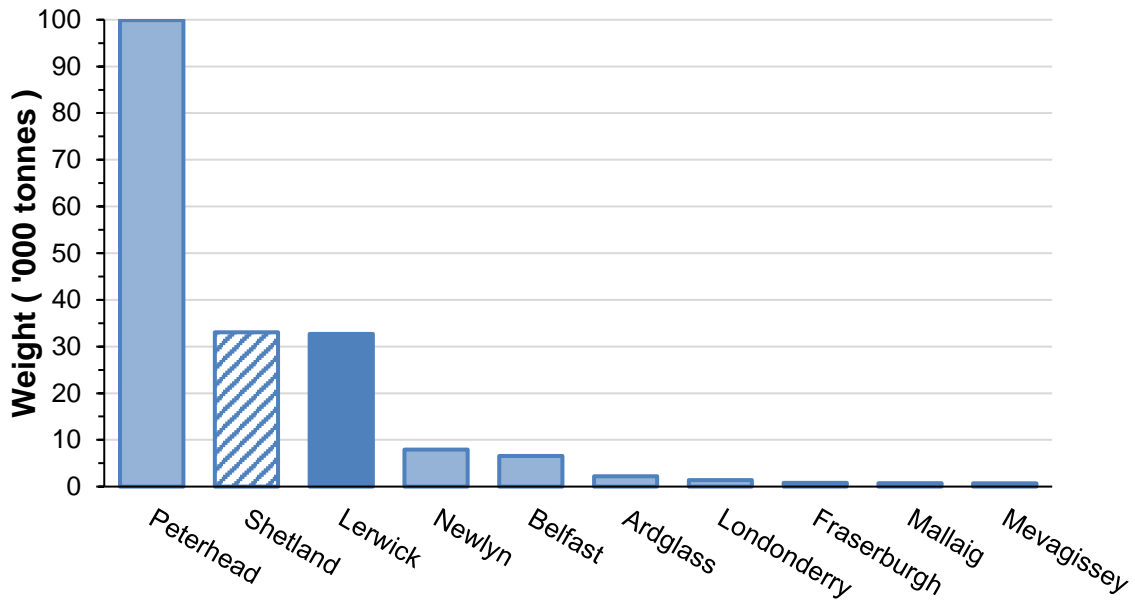
### National Context

In a national context, Shetland accounted for about one-quarter of all the pelagic fish landed in Scotland in 2020 (25% by weight, 27% by value), and one-fifth of all the pelagic fish landed in the UK (21% by weight, 24% and value). More pelagic fish were landed in Shetland than in any other port in the UK except Peterhead (Figure 20).

Shetland fishing boats accounted for almost one-third of all the pelagic fish landed in Scotland in 2020 (30% by weight, 33% by value) and almost one-quarter of all the pelagic fish landed in the UK (22% by weight, 26% by value).

# Pelagic Fish

## Weight of Landings - Pelagic Fish



## Value of Landings - Pelagic Fish

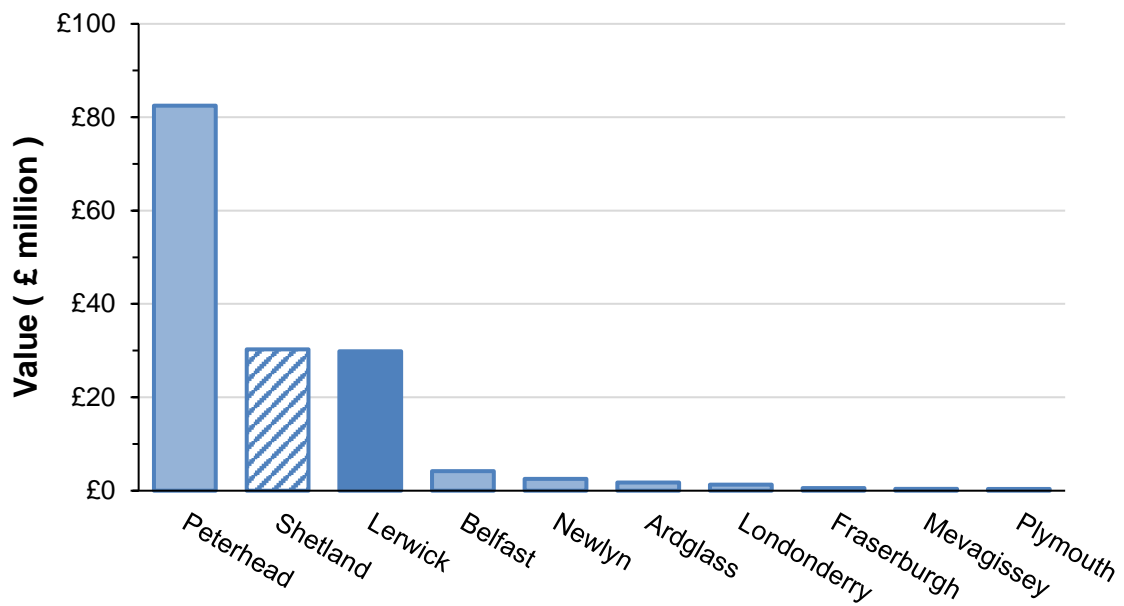


Figure 20 The weights (top) and values (bottom) of pelagic fish landed in the top-10 UK ports in 2020, and the totals for Shetland as a whole. (Shetland ports are highlighted.)

# Shellfish

Shellfish includes lobsters, crabs, scallops and buckies (whelks). Some shellfish species (cuttlefish, nephrops and squid) are not included in these figures but instead included in the whitefish figures as they are predominantly caught by whitefish boats around Shetland.

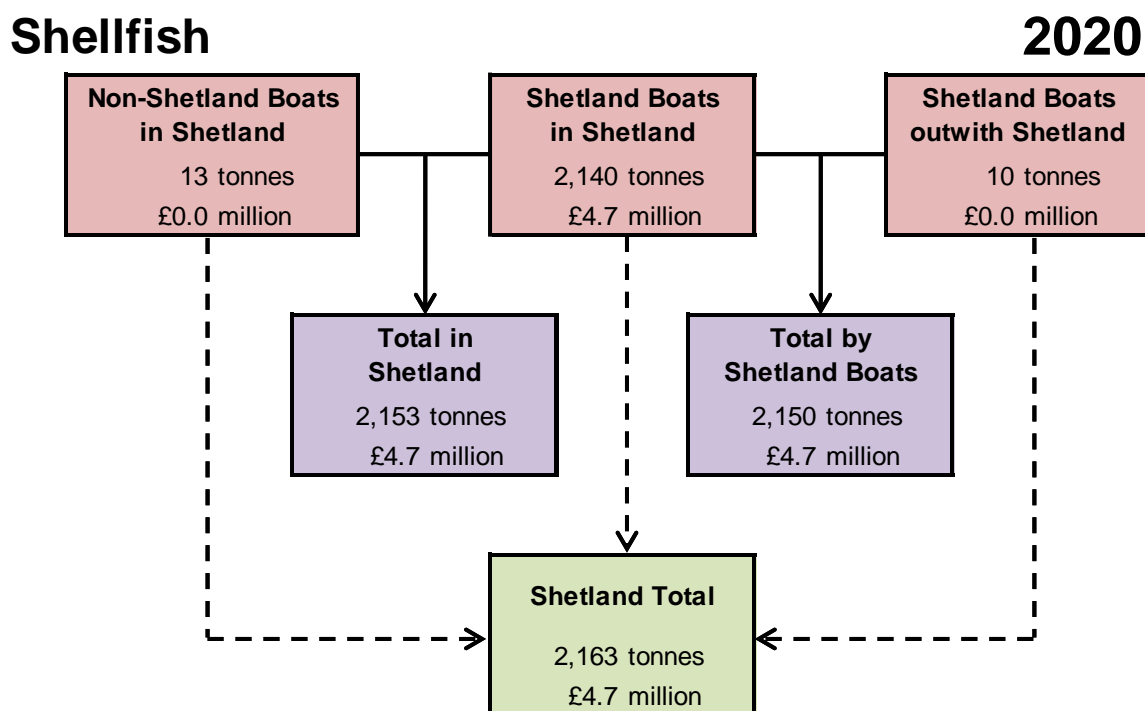


Figure 21 Summary breakdown of the weight and value of shellfish landed in Shetland and by Shetland boats in 2020.

Just over 2,100 tonnes of shellfish worth almost £5 million were landed in Shetland in 2020 (Figure 21). That was slightly more than in 2019 by weight (4%) but the value was substantially (23%) less (Figure 22).

Virtually all of the shellfish landed in Shetland (99%) was landed by Shetland fishing boats (Figure 22) and virtually all of the shellfish landed by Shetland boats was landed in Shetland (Figure 23).

The weight landed by Shetland fishing boats increased slightly (by 3%) from 2019 to 2020 while their value fell by 24% (Figure 23).



# Shellfish

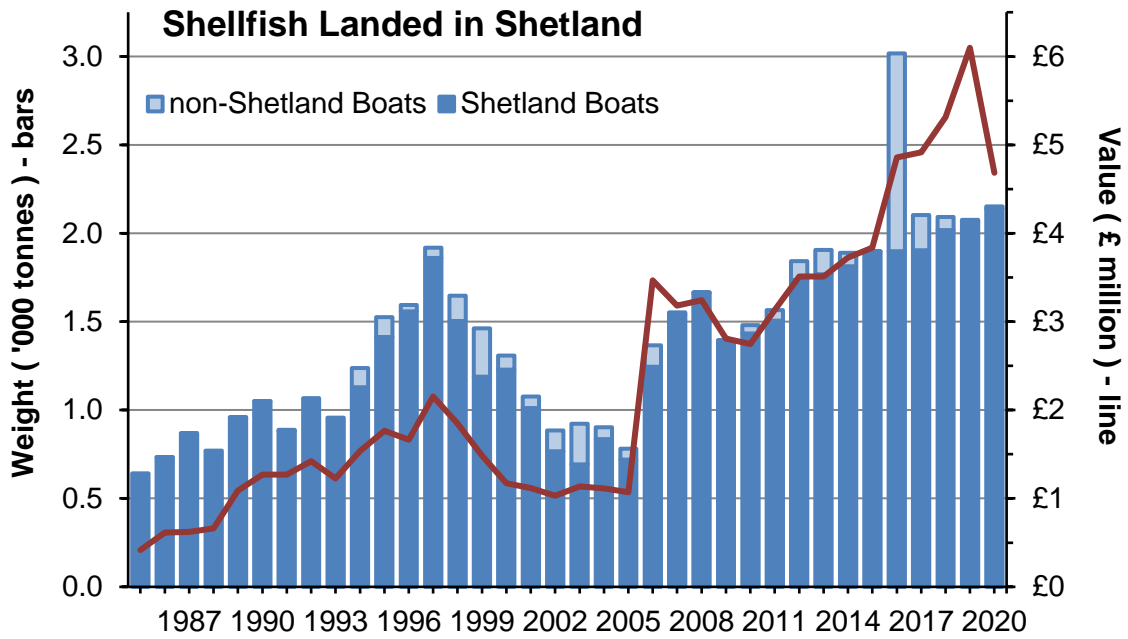


Figure 22 The weight (bars) and value (line) of shellfish landed in Shetland from 1985 to 2020. (The jump in landings from 2005 to 2006 reflects an improvement in data collection arising from the registration of buyers and sellers.)

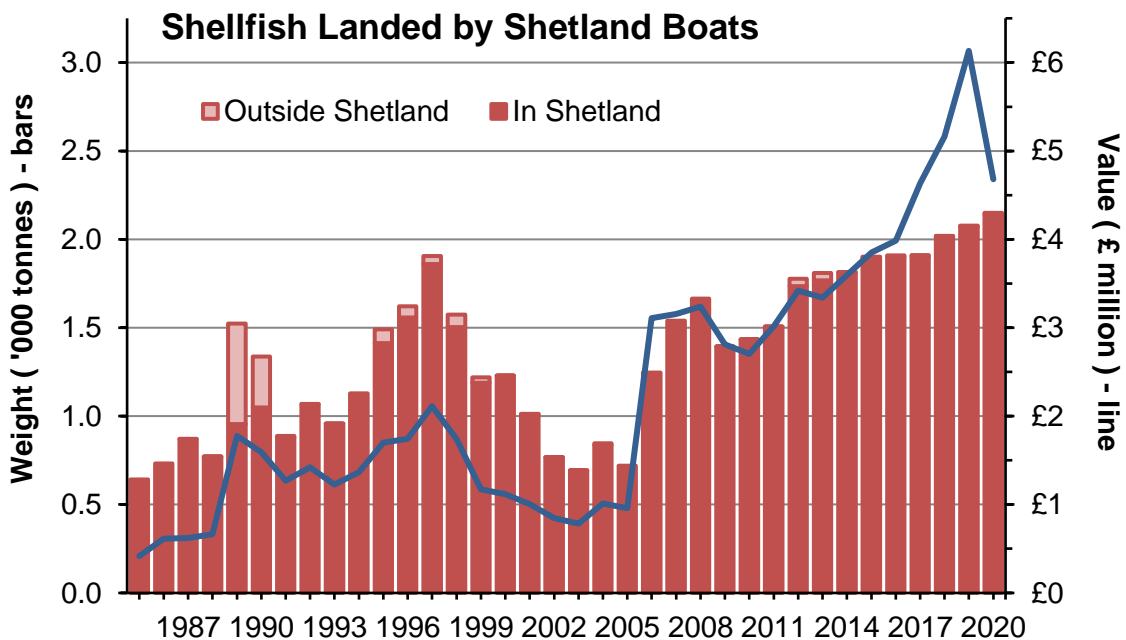


Figure 23 The weight (bars) and value (line) of shellfish landed by Shetland fishing boats from 1985 to 2020. (The jump in landings from 2005 to 2006 reflects an improvement in data collection arising from the registration of buyers and sellers.)

## Composition of Shellfish Landings

Scallops accounted for more than half of the shellfish landed in Shetland in 2020 (Table 4). By value, the remainder of the landings were roughly evenly split between edible crabs, lobsters, velvet crabs and buckies (whelks) although lobsters and velvet crabs accounted for only small proportions of the weight.

Table 4 The principal shellfish species landed in Shetland in 2020 (ranked by value).

Species	Weight		Value	
	tonnes	%	£ 000	%
Scallops	1,154	54%	£2,482	53%
Edible Crabs	333	15%	£596	13%
Lobsters	37	2%	£568	12%
Velvet Crabs	174	8%	£530	11%
Whelks	446	21%	£500	11%
Others	8	0%	£8	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,153</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£4,684</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Changes in Shellfish Prices

The average prices of scallops and edible crabs landed in Shetland in 2020 was about one-quarter less than in 2019 (Figure 23) which probably accounts for most of the decrease in the value of shellfish landed in Shetland. Although the average prices of lobsters, velvet crabs and buckies (whelks) also fell in 2020 they did so by much smaller amounts.

The declines in shellfish prices in Shetland in 2020 broadly reflected similar decreases across Scotland (Figure 23). Although the fall in scallop and edible crab prices in Shetland was greater than in Scotland as a whole, the prices of lobsters, velvet crabs and buckies did not fall as much in Shetland as they did nationally.

It seems likely that the fall in shellfish prices in 2020 was primarily a result of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on markets. Prices of scallops, for example, prior to the start of the pandemic in 2020 were similar to those in the same part of 2019.

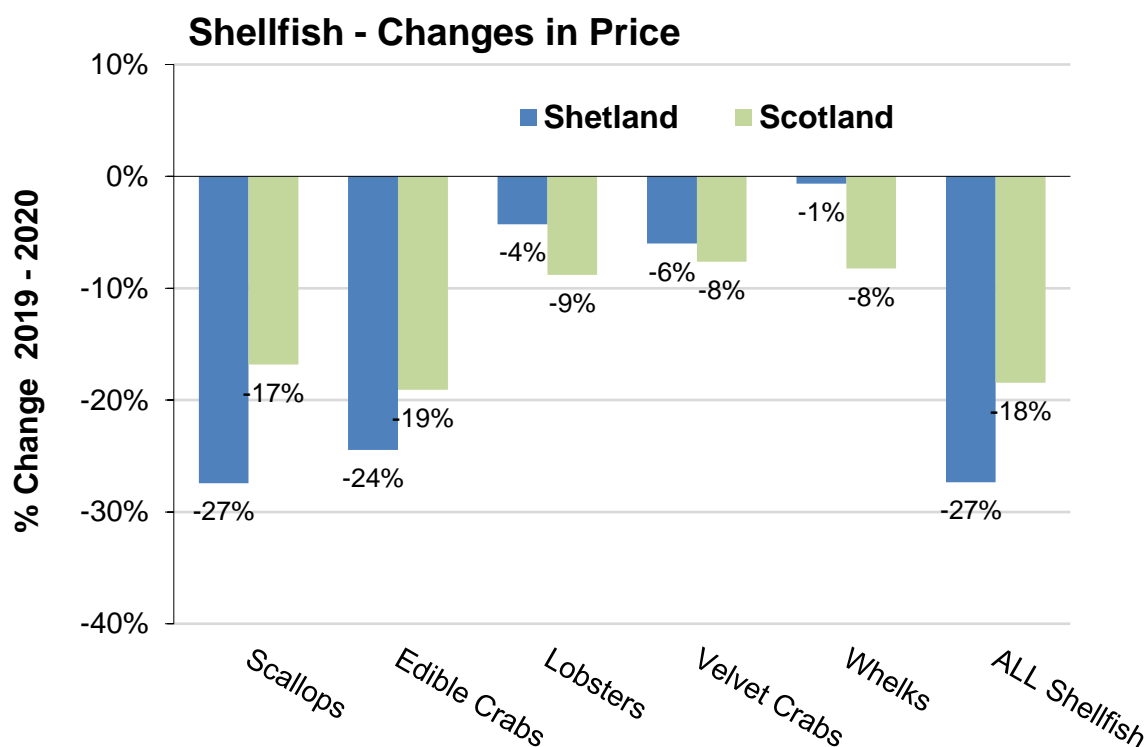


Figure 24 Percentages changes in the average prices (£/kg) of the principal shellfish species landed in Shetland from 2019 to 2020 in Shetland and in all of Scotland.

## Place of Shellfish Landings

Landings of shellfish are much more widely distributed around Shetland than those of whitefish or pelagic fish, with no landing place especially dominant. Collafirth and Lerwick accounted for about one-third of Shellfish landings in Shetland in 2020 (by weight) (Figure 25) and Cullivoe, Skeld and Whalsay about another third.

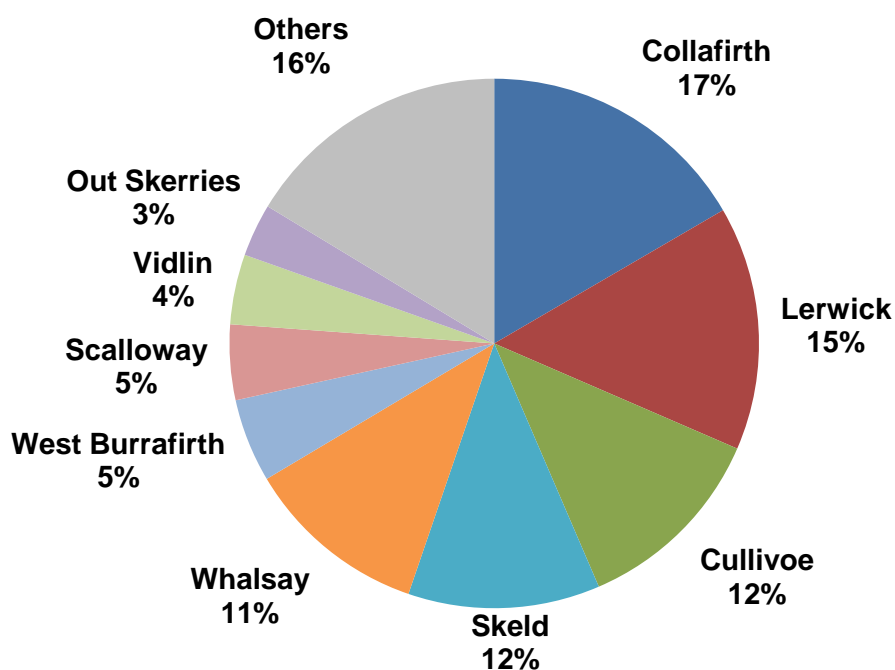


Figure 25 Breakdown of landings of shellfish in Shetland in 2020 by place of landing (by weight).

## National Context

Landings of Shellfish accounted for only small proportions of the quantities landed in Scotland (5% by value) or the UK (2% by value).

