

Committee	Board of Management		
Date paper prepared	18/03/2024	Date of committee meeting	27/03/2024
Subject	Principal's Report		
Author	Jane Lewis, Principal with members of SMG		
Action requested	For discussion		
Purpose of the paper	<p>To update the board on activities across the College. These contribute to our fulfilment of the Regional Outcome Agreement*. The Regional Outcome Agreement covers aspirations around: Fair access and transitions; High quality learning, teaching and support; Partnership participation and student experience; learning with impact; equalities and inclusion; Responsive institutions; Climate emergency; Knowledge exchange and innovation; Research excellence and sustainability.</p> <p>Outcomes for students include our targets for FE credits; our UG and PG targets and our Schools delivery. It also highlights work on fair access; articulation and work with care experienced students.</p> <p>Outcomes for economic delivery and social renewal includes responding to employer and industry needs for example through upskilling and reskilling the workforce. It also includes our work on Islands Deal projects and knowledge exchange</p> <p>Outcomes for research includes our work to maintain and increase research excellence</p> <p>*The present ROA is for 2022-23 which was received and sent to the board at our last meeting</p>		
Brief summary of the paper	The current position on student numbers and credits is provided. Activities of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing committee are provided. An update is given on activity related to the Islands Deal. Updates are given on research activities and other college activities and achievements.		
Consultation	SMG members provide the updates in the report		
Resource implications	n/a		
Risk implications	n/a		
Link with strategy	Links to all parts of the college strategic plan		
<u>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</u>	n/a		
Island Community Impact	n/a		

Paper status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open – The paper may be circulated to non-members of the committee and published online without restriction. <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted – The paper must not be circulated to non-members or published online until after the committee meeting. <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential - The paper must not be circulated beyond the committee members and should not be published online. [Please note papers may still be subject to Freedom of Information requests – see below].
Freedom of information	Choose an item. If closed/ withheld, select date this will become 'open': Enter a date.

1. UHI Updates

Vicki Nairn has been appointed Principal and Vice-Chancellor of UHI. Vicki has been serving as UHI's Interim Principal and Vice-Chancellor since October 2022, initially joined the institution as Vice-Principal Operations in November 2021. With nearly two decades of experience in executive leadership across both private and public sectors in northern Scotland, Vicki previously held the role at Robert Gordon University as Vice Principal Corporate Operations. She has also advised the Scottish Government on remote and rural issues and has served on various national higher education and public sector boards.

Mike Baxter has been appointed as UHI executive director of finance. Mike will work with UHI's senior executive team and with colleagues across the partnership to provide strategic financial direction, harnessing financial resources and performance data to deliver UHI's financial sustainability ambitions as articulated in the [2030 strategic plan](#). Mike joins UHI from the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) as director of finance and corporate services and brings experience from previous roles at Transport Scotland and The Scottish Government.

2. Update on enrolment figures (FE/HE)

FE numbers are very strong, alongside the large increase in FT numbers this year, the overall number of part time students is lower, but many of these students are studying greater proportions of their courses.

		18/03/24	19/04/23	Enrolments		
				2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
FE	Full time (FT)	89	52	57	72	76
	Part time (PT)	1706	1873	2469	2585	2235
HE	Full time (FT)	123	138	140	128	163
	Part time (PT)	240	209	227	273	255

Shetland UHI enrolments at 18/03/2024 (data extracted from Metis)

18/03/24	Total credit figures				
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
4910	4698	4383	4337	4276	4572

Shetland UHI credits at 18/03/2024 (data extracted from Metis)

Our credit target for AY 2023-24 is 3902 and we were initially planning for 4118 credits delivery to provide some over delivery margin. With the flat cash award from SFC, we will not be paid for any additional credits delivered. We are already reporting credits well over target, largely due to the increase in full time students. Current predictions for our end of year position are at over 5000 credits. This is despite taking action to reduce the credit claim for full time courses, moving short courses to full cost recovery, and reducing the credits claimed against modern apprenticeships by 20%. We are looking at further reduction of FT students and modern apprenticeship credits at present. However, because we had committed to many of our part time students (modern apprentices and school students) ahead of our FT intake, our ability to reduce credit delivery at this point is limited.

HE numbers (APC papers Feb 2024)	Feb 24	Feb 23
Undergraduate Taught 'home' fee status – FTE target 140.1		
Total FTE	127.8	145
Total Heads	236	222
Postgraduate Taught – FTE target 16.4		
Total FTE	15.0	15.3
Total Heads	25	26

HE student numbers are higher than at this point last year, however, with more part time students, we are reporting a lower FTE level at present. Due to the lower numbers of full time students, we will struggle to meet our FTE target of 140.1 FTE for undergraduate taught 'home' fee status students. We are predicting that we will end the year at approximately 130 FTE. This is likely to result in a reduction in budgeted income of over £40k. On the other hand, we should be close to our postgraduate FTE target which we have almost achieved.

In considering the two related risks for AY 2023-24, the risk around not achieving FE credit target can be considered green, although there is a significant risk we will over deliver, but the HE student number target sits at a red position.

Applications for 2024/25 (data extracted from Feb 2024 APC reports)

Full time FE applications for 2024/25 are 45% higher than they were at this time last year, indicating that we are likely to see increased demand for full time provision. This presents a challenge in how the delivery will be funded with all indications being that the RSB will not see an increase in credits from SFC for 2024/25. Overall across UHI FT FE applications are at a similar level to last year but with island partners reporting significant increases in FT applications. FE PT applications are slightly increased for us from this time last year, however some partners are showing significant increases.

	AY 22-23 @ 28-Feb-2023	AY 23-24 @ 29-Feb-2024	% diff
Total FE FT Apps	75	109	45.3%
Total FE PT Apps	452	477	5.5%

Vocational pathways school applications are at least as high as last year with 177 individuals applying for one or more course. Interviews should be completed by the end of this month, and we expected to be oversubscribed for almost all of the courses.

Senior phase applications are also very strong, with around 90 applications received, which is at a very similar level to last year. It appears that there is sufficient demand for all of the advertised courses in this programme to go ahead, including the new routes in allied health and energy.

Our HE application numbers are currently 11% lower than this time last year. However, across UHI applications have increased by 24% with 66% of the growth being at the two largest partners.

New Courses

New Aquaculture courses

- New CPD module Sustainable Aquaculture Practises approved.

- New CPD course for Sustainable Aquaculture Management awaiting UHI approval.

New Textiles courses

Sarah Dearlove was awarded internal development funding from UHI to help to develop the proposal for a new MA Creative Textiles programme. The programme would be delivered as part of the Centre for Island Creativity's suite of postgraduate taught and research programmes. The programme would be delivered mostly through online modules with some compressed in-person sessions. It is being designed to appeal to a wide range of local and international students.

3. Update on Apprentices KB

As of 1 March, we had 166 new starts out of 178 registered on FIPs. There are still some starts to add. We are anticipating that we will be at around the target figure by the end of the contract period (all starts to be on by 28 March). Our achievement rate is at 81%, above the target figure of 75%

In terms of spend, we had spent £514k of the contract value, leaving only £42k to spend before the end of March. The spend comes from a mixture of claiming milestones and outcomes payments from SDS and spending on apprentice travel. Similar to the volume of apprentices, we are anticipating to have spent the majority of the contract value by the end of the year.

We have made changes to our process that as of January, the employers were asked to book their own travel and reclaim the funding after the travel has taken place. This will help with our resourcing and cash flow.

Modern Apprenticeship week was from 4-8 March 2024. Whilst we didn't have any apprentices in the running for the SDS MA awards, we had 4 apprentices represented at the LANTRA awards. During Modern Apprenticeship Week, we arranged for Beatrice Wishart and Alistair Carmichael to visit our apprentices in the workplace. We also had Vocational Coordinators speaking with pupils at the Anderson High School.

We await the announcement for the new contract. We have been advised that this has been delayed by SDS.

(SF) **Aquaculture MA:** Since start of new academic year (1/8/23) the following MA students have completed: L2 – 24; L3 – 22; L4 – 11. Currently 93 MA Aquaculture in progress (L2 – 24, L3 – 49, L4 – 20).

4. Update on Research

a. Marine Sciences

Preparation is underway for the launch of the Centre for Sustainable Seafood.

PhDs:

Fisheries – Pelagic Project, Iohara Quirino. Progressing in line with objectives.

- **Carbon uptake project** (SUHI co-supervised SF). Alice Jensen. Progressing in line with objectives.

- **Predator & prey dynamics project** (SUHI co-supervised SF). James Harris. Progressing in line with objectives.

Aquaculture - IFCB project, Gary Groves. Presented project at ICHA in Hiroshima. Continues to refine IFCB dashboard and image classifier (currently based on Inception3 architecture).

Marine Spatial Planning, Porpoise project, Sophie Smith. Year 1 assessment completed.

Ocean Literacy project, Erin Rizatto. Progressing in line with objectives.

Invasive species and vessels research – Funded via SUPER. Student recruited; starts October.

KB and RG led the second Research and Development RAD Session for students and staff on the topic of strategic networking and the importance of building a network in doing research well.

Research Publications / Presentations:

- **Paper:** McAllister, M., Fraser, S., and Henry, L.A., 2023. Population ecology and juvenile density hotspots of thornback ray (*Raja clavata*) around the Shetland Islands, Scotland. *Journal of Fish Biology*. 2023: 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jfb.15610>
- **Paper:** Isaksson, N., Fraser, S., Houghton, J., Williamson, B., Wilson, J., and Masden, E., 2023. Diet of European Shag *Gulosus aristotelis* during the non-breeding season at a roost within a tidal channel. *Bird Study*, 71(1): 103-107. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00063657.2024.2311080>
- **Policy brief:** Kathryn Allen has completed a policy brief (REF money funded) based on the outputs on Dr Inne Withoutuck's PhD. This policy brief highlights the importance of including communities and stakeholders in the process of decision making. The policy brief will be circulated to local councillors, MSP, MPs, NGOs, stakeholders and government agencies/ officials. Google alerts have been set up to monitor digital engagement.
- **MASTS Policy Brief- Marine Natural Capital.** The MASTS Marine Planning and Governance Forum, co-convened by Rachel Shucksmith and Sinead Sheridan (NatureScot) have published a policy brief on marine natural capital. Slade Fernandez, L., Sheridan S., Shucksmith, R., (2023). *Marine Natural Capital Policy Brief*. Brief prepared by the Marine Planning and Governance Forum, Marine Alliance for Science and Technology for Scotland (MASTS). 7pp. <https://masts.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Policy-Brief-Marine-Natural-Capital-PDF.pdf> The policy brief has been circulated to the MASTS community and Scottish Government.
- **Report:** Fraser, S., Angus C., McAllister, M., Thomason, L., Ayres, S. and Harlow, L., 2023. Shetland Inshore Fish Survey (SIFS) 2023: summary of catch rates, size compositions, and spatial distributions of commercial demersal fish species. UHI Shetland report. p28.

Conferences:

MASTS Annual Science Conference (Dec 23)

- **Workshop:** Rachel Shucksmith and Sinead Sheridan co-convened a workshop on marine natural capital and launched the MASTS policy brief. The workshop had presentations from the Scottish Government, DEFRA and NatureScot, and was attended by staff from Scottish Government, government agencies (HIE, SEPA, NatureScot) and researchers.
- **E-poster:** Rebecca Giesler presented an e-poster at the MASTS ASM in December titled "A new record of a Southern Ocean ascidian in Shetland – implications for surveillance and eradication" sharing results of a novel non-native species introduction to Shetland found during annual biosecurity monitoring work.
- **Presentation:** Kathryn Fradera presented on the diverse values research project 'Speaking different languages: How both science and lived experience are valuable to marine decision-making'.

- **Presentation:** Fraser, S., McAllister, M., Thomson, M., and Cubbon, K., 2023. Flapper skate (*Dipturus intermedius*) in Shetland: a first look at distribution, behaviour, and critical habitats. MASTS Annual Science Meeting, Glasgow, UK, December 2023.
- **Poster:** McAllister, M., Fraser, S., and Henry, L. A., 2023. Population ecology and juvenile density hotspots of thornback ray (*Raja clavata*) around the Shetland Islands. MASTS Annual Science Meeting, Glasgow, UK, December 2023.

World Fisheries Congress (Seattle)

- **Presentation:** KB secured funding to attend and present a paper on our pelagic work:
- **Presentation:** Fernandes, P., Ashworth, A, Yi, D., and Fraser, S., 2024. Smartrawl: A Vision for Sustainable Fishing and An End to Trawl Bycatch. 9th World Fisheries Congress, Seattle, USA, March 2024.

Pelagic workstream:

- KB is at World Fisheries Congress in Seattle to present a paper on pelagic work. She will meet with Ray Hilborn & others while there.
- 5th Annual Meeting held in December 2023 for the Scottish Pelagic Industry Sampling Data Collection Programme. Attendance from programme partners (SPFA and Marine Directorate), and good turnout from vessels skippers and crew.
- KB attended the SPFA board meeting in December 2023 to provide updates on pelagic work. Iohara also attend to provide an intro to PhD work.
- Autumn MAC sample processing complete, Jan/Feb MAC samples being received and processed.
- SUHI have been invited to be a WP lead in a large consortium for a new EU funded project under the Farm2Fork call. KB will be PI for SUHI with focus on pelagic fisheries. First round submission was Feb 2024.

Whitefish workstream:

- Good publicity around SIFS 2023 report. Work continuing with SG SED and others to utilise data further.
- SMEEF elasmobranch project continuing. Collaboration has led to invite into consortia for a further project and funding application submitted for developing a larger elasmobranch multi-partner project.
- SF presented data and underwater footage from Fair Isle survey to a meeting in FI. Very well received. Funding is available for further surveys in 2024.
- Routine sampling under SG SED MoU ongoing and targets being met. Continuation for next year currently being negotiated.
- Ling project – Tom Blasdale will start as project scientist on 1st April. BATMAP workstream testing phase complete, and App now live. IN has been working on WP relating to quotas. Data being received from SFF observer programme.

Shellfish workstream:

- Velvet crab project progressing in line with objectives,
- LH participated in recent (Jan) scallop survey undertaken by SG SED

- Data entry for annual shellfish stock assessments on schedule
- Engagement with Marine Directorate and NatureScot with SSMO on proposed fisheries management measures for MPAs
- Submission of funding application for consideration at March meeting of SIC Development Committee

Fisheries Policy workstream:

Dr Napier has continued to work with the Shetland Fishermen's Association and Shetland Fish Producer's Organisation on various issues of interest and concern to the local fishing industry under the MoU with these organisations. This has included discussions with these organisations on a variety of issues, several pieces of data analysis and the drafting of a number of discussion papers.

Aquaculture:

UHI Aquaculture Hub.

- Development of new CPD proposal.
- Development of A3 Scotland Conference.
- Attended Synergies and Niches for Environmental and Health Sciences at LSIC, Inverness.
- Completed a round of UHI [Aquaculture Industry Engagement Fund](#), with one successful award to SAMS in association with oyster businesses. The project will help optimise broodstock spawning of native oysters.

Harmful Algal Blooms and Phytoplankton monitoring.

- Submission of ComSHIFTS application to NERC (led by SAMS).
- HAB App project was completed.
- Attended European IFCB Workshop (online).
- Routine (4-6 monthly) IFCB recovery maintenance, repairs, alignment and redeployment (included Gary Groves and Callum Whyte (SAMS) giving departmental seminar).

Lea of Trondra.

- Pre-planning application process undertaken with SIC Marine Planning.
- Future options paper submitted to F+GP.

Marine Hatchery.

- Preparations of Marine Hatchery for tenant.
- Hatchery Asset Register completed

Marine Spatial Planning (MSP):

- **Horizon Europe funding Blue Connect-** We have successfully obtained funding to participate in the Horizon Europe Project will fund a post-doc position and some of Rachel Shucksmith's time. It will run for three years. The project received EUR 9 million of which EUR 400k is for UHI Shetland.
- **NORA funding-** we have received funding to collaborate with colleagues in Iceland and Sweden to share best practice in the Nordic region relating to Marine Spatial Planning. The funding of DKK 1 million will provide UHI Shetland with approx. £100k of funding. It is anticipated that this research will lead to one academic publication and one policy brief. Additional 'neighbours to the West' funding is being sought with the same partners.
- Rebecca Giesler has received an additional £8000 from the Scottish Marine Environmental Enhancement Fund (**SMEEF**) and Nature Restoration Fund for the purchase of a new Mavic

drone in support of the SMEEF project “Searching for Shetland’s lost seagrass”. This project is entering its final year and has mapped and identified previously unknown seagrass beds using drones. These data have fed into the local and national data sets.

- **Diverse Values project (UKRI funded)**- this project is now in the final stage and it is anticipated it will lead to two-three publications and one policy brief. Two peer review publications are being finalised.
- **Invasive species**- Rebecca Giesler attended an invasive species workshop in Italy which is leading to an international collaboration on invasive species monitoring. It is intended that this will lead to one or two publications.
- **Predictive habitat mapping Fair Isle**- We have completed a predictive habitat mapping project for Fair Isle DRMPA, further survey work is commissioned for the summer (approx. £100k). Initial findings have been presented to the FI DRMPA working group and a report from the first work package has been provided.
- **SIRMP**- We have been working closely with the Scottish Government to work towards the adoption of the Shetland Islands Regional Marine Plan, which we hope will be adopted in Q3.
- CPD in **Sustainable Marine Environmental Management (level 8)** has received approval from UHI and will commence in August 2024. This three module CPD will have two core modules and a choice of four optional modules to facilitate three study routes: renewable energy, community engagement and aquaculture. The course will be developed and delivered by Rachel Shucksmith and Rebecca Giesler, with aquaculture modules provided by Saro Saravanan and Stuart Fitzsimons.
- Research from the MSP team have informed the identification of Shetland as an Important Marine Mammal area [Shetland and Fair Isle IMMA - Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force \(marinemammalhabitat.org\)](https://www.marinemammalhabitat.org)
- Yell Blue Carbon workshop- funding from the carbon neutral islands project supported an in-person blue carbon event in Yell. The event included two drop-in photo displays and a workshop on mapping blue carbon. The event was organised by Tanya Rilley and Kate Allen, and the workshop by Rebecca Giesler. Photographs were provided by Richard Shucksmith. The photo display included audio with text read by Louise Thomason is available to view and listen online (<https://bluecarbonyell.wordpress.com/>) and will also be on display at UHI Shetland Scalloway campus next month.

b. Centre for Island Creativity

A new joint knowledge exchange stakeholder event being developed by Malcolm Innes, Steve Taylor (Chair of KE Tourism & Recreation) and Bobby Macauley (Chair KE Land and Communities). The business focussed event will be held in Inverness on the 23rd of May and will include keynote speakers from HIE, XpoNorth and Crofting Commission. The following day, the team will host an internal KE event for UHI staff to explore KE opportunities funding and case studies. Guest speaker will be Louis Hou from Science Ceilidh.

Malcolm has begun discussions with several research leaders from around UHI to discuss opportunities to establish a new multi-disciplinary research focus around a live research testbed built around a range of research and KE opportunities working with the local community groups and businesses on Bressay. The proposal is at the very early stages but colleagues are very enthusiastic and are keen to work with the community to develop a series of multi-disciplinary research funding applications. So far, we have research interest covering Tourism, Island Studies,

Social Art Practice, Community Land Ownership, Sustainable Communities and Creative Wellbeing. Other research subject areas will be involved as the project develops.

Malcolm hosted an online public meeting to discuss the current situation around the Textile Facilitation Unit and textile education. The meeting was well attended by business owners, former TFU customers and other Shetland based designers.

The Scottish Flag Trust (business partner for Malcolm's 2023 Innovation Voucher) have applied for funding to progress the project to phase two. If successful, this would trigger an application for an Advanced Innovation Voucher to create a £40k project.

Malcolm continues to be involved in the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America's committee that is rewriting and updating their Museum and Gallery Lighting Code of Practice. This document is used extensively as a standards document in the USA, Canada and is an influential reference document in several other countries internationally. Malcolm has also been approached by the committee chair (the lighting designer for the Smithsonian in Washington) to consult on revisions to a separate seminal text in the museum conservation science world.

HerInDep (Andrew Jennings) - the Shetland workshop during UpHellyAa went very well. The colleagues from Prague and Kaunas were very impressed and the meeting with the Shetland stakeholders was a success.

Rural Health Shetland (Andrew Jennings, Malcolm Innes) - the final consultation events took place in late Feb with workshops in Vidlin and Bressay.

Landscape in Pain (Roxane Permar) - preparing new photographic work for exhibition in the Arctic Congress in Bodø, Norway in May/June 2024; updated web site, including new Blog article; working on development of funding bid.

Living in the Landscape (Roxane Permar) - member of the coordinating group for this project, which includes artist researchers and postgraduate students from University of Lapland, Umeå University, Nord Universitet Nesna Campus and University of the West of Scotland; planning for the virtual phase and later fieldwork in Finland in May 2024; liaising with the four UHI Shetland students selected to take part from our MA course (Art and Social Practice)

Cold War Projects (Roxane Permar) - preparing material for major exhibition at the National Museum of Scotland; continuing to collect material about the experience of local population in Unst during the Cold War Period

Post-Home and Belonging Impact Case Study work (Siún Carden): Engagement with Who Cares? Scotland, the Meids (Shetland's Corporate Parenting Board) and the #Shetland Crew of young people, to evidence the changes that are happening as a result of the *Home and Belonging* project. Examples of activity:

- We have shared the impact of *Home and Belonging* on the experience of young people and the organisations which support them in Shetland in a poster at The Promise Scotland's *Stories of Change* conference in Edinburgh on 5 February, following discussion among the Meids. The poster is attached.
- The #Shetland Crew are working on several of their own projects with roots in *Home and Belonging*. In November they launched their 'coming into care packs' for children going into care, and gift boxes for those leaving for their first independent home, at a well-attended event in Islesburgh Community Centre. They are developing printed leaflets with Gaada, planning another book, and working on schools-based awareness raising. The film

maker Rozi Peters, who was part of Home and Belonging, is returning to Shetland this week to work with the #Shetland Crew again.

- The #Shetland Crew's book of creative writing, *Take A Walk In My Shoes*, was reprinted with 2023 REG funding. The book is being used by Dr Paula Villegas Verdu, a lecturer in Academic English at St Andrews University's International Education Institute, as an example for her teaching students. Her students' feedback will be shared with us and the #Shetland Crew.

Cân y Buqail/Shepherds Song (Siún Carden): This network of creative practitioners and museum/heritage professionals with an interest in wool and sheep-rearing communities has expanded since our previous Horizon Europe application and is connecting via a travelling exhibition (*Erk Skip*) which we brought to Shetland in 2023 as part of the *Woolly Thinking* conference. The central group has paid for me to join them and international partners in Wales for discussion around the latest exhibition launch on [17-18 February](#) about how to take forward research on cultural and creative activity related to sheep farming. New partners include [Ealaín na Gaeltachta](#), the arts development organization for Ireland's Gaeltacht. This means that the RSE/RIA Ireland-Scotland Bilateral Network Grants are a possibility, building on my published research on Shetland and Ireland in terms of knitwear and their relationship as archipelagic neighbours, as well as AHRC opportunities for the wider network.

Funding applications:

Roxane submitted funding bid for 12-month project *Island Power* to the Ecological Citizens project, a UKRI funded project based at the Royal College of Art, the interdisciplinary project is in collaboration with 3 researchers at Nord Universitet, Nesna Campus; two schools - Baltasound Junior High School (Shetland) and Unøy/Lurøy Skole (Norway); North Isles Development Office, Shetland Islands Council; and two innovative energy companies in Shetland - Windswept Energy (Roderick Read) and Pure Energy Centre (Unst).

Roxane is waiting results of AHRC funding bid as a Co-Investigator for the project *Divided Lines*, a 3 year project led by Manchester Metropolitan.

REF Outputs (Roxane Permar)

- co-editor with E Härkönen, L. Lundsedt, K Burnett, M Gårdvik for *Nurture: Livina in the Landscape Summer School and Exhibition*, ed. by E Härkönen, L. Lundsedt, K Burnett, M Gårdvik and R Permar
- 'Torn by the wind - questions around forest, loss and renewal'. in *Nurture: Livina in the Landscape Summer School and Exhibition*, ed. by E Härkönen, L. Lundsedt, K Burnett, M Gårdvik and R Permar
- *Windlins*. a digital film. 00:02:30. exhibited as a loop (2023)
- *Nurture*. a group exhibition of work created for the research project *Living in the Landscape*, Umeå University, November 2023

Research Related Activity - Talks/ Presentations/ Panels

- Roxane is Co-convenor, together with Dr Loraine Leeson, Middlesex University, for the **Social Art Educators Forum**, an international forum, monthly meetings

5. Update on merger related topics

No further progress on MOU or data sharing agreements.

6. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Occupational Health questionnaires have been sent out to key staff and followed up.

DSE questionnaires have been rolling out in batches and followed up.

The removal of the UHI phone system and its replacement with an online system, has meant that the lifts at both campuses will no longer have a connected phone system in case of emergencies. We managed to negotiate an acceptable price with ADT to upgrade the lifts to a new call system. In the meantime, we have posted signs to users not to use the lifts outside office hours.

Fire Risk Assessments have been completed and are awaiting signature.

A new policy on energy use has been created and is awaiting approval. We are asking staff and students to take responsibility for the equipment and rooms they use, turning off equipment, lights, closing windows and recycling properly.

The Asset Register has been completed.

Safe Use of Electrical Equipment has been approved.

Site Security Policy and Procedures have been approved.

Risk Assessment and Safe Use of Chemicals Policy has been approved.

Smoke vents have been fixed at the Lerwick campus.

New Incident Coordinators have had their training.

Work has started on a new Health & Safety handbook for Employees.

7. Islands Deal

Campus redevelopment

The Outline Business Case (OBC) for the Shetland Campus Redevelopment project was signed off by the Scottish Government in September 2022. £3m funding was agreed, in principle, with £2.3m for the existing campus and £0.7m for a project on UNST. The feasibility study which was produced in August 2023, identified that the scope of work detailed in the OBC for the existing campus amounted to £5.2m.

In January 2024, a new Project Manager, Stephen Martin, started work on the project and has started consultations with stakeholders on value engineering, to scope the existing campus project to developments within the £2.3M budget.

This first stage is almost complete, and an Invitation to Tender for an architect, engineer and other required professionals is about to be issued to progress these revised plans to technical drawings and detailed cost analysis.

It is planned that the Full Business Case will be ready to be submitted to the Scottish and UK Government in late October 2024, with construction work starting in 2025.

Shell-volution project

A Short Life Working Group to progress the Full Business Case has been convened by HIE and includes UHI, and Industry partners.

Creative Island Wellbeing

The Full Business Case is currently in the first revision. Malcolm is awaiting some information from EO to be able to complete our answers to questions raised by reviewers in round one. It is now

proposed that Creative Islands Wellbeing will begin in September 2024. This programme will include two new PhD starts in the first year (a total of 10 PhD fee waivers over 7 years) along with funding for research forums in Shetland, Orkney and Western Isles. The programme will also provide annual funding for a new Creative Islands Research and Innovation Fund for islands based researchers.

8. General activities and achievements

a. Student achievement

Festival of Decay: Clarissa Tam, on the MA Art and Social Practice course, was awarded a major grant from the Hong Kong government to curate and realise the *Festival of Decay*, an art exhibition in the heart of Hong Kong.

Lantra Awards: UHI Shetland students enjoyed a successful night at the annual ALBAs, the prestigious Lantra Scotland's Awards for Land-based and Aquaculture Skills, held on Thursday 7th March at the Crieff Hydro.

Scoring a one-two in the Aquaculture Student of the Year category, Craig Grounds was named Aquaculture Student of the Year, with Stuart Lavender coming in as runner-up. Both of these finalists studied with UHI Shetland; Craig, based in Oban, has recently progressed to his SVQ Level 4 in Aquaculture, and Stuart, based in Shetland, has successfully completed his SVQ2 in Aquaculture.

Hamish MacLean, from Tobermory, who recently completed his SCQF Level 9 in Aquaculture Management at UHI Shetland was runner-up in the Higher Education category.

UHI Shetland also had success in Land-based Engineering with Spencer Johnson finishing runner-up in the Learner of the Year category. Spencer is based at Braewick Agricultural Services and his apprenticeship programme is managed by UHI Shetland in collaboration with SRUC Oatridge.

Aquaculture Training: NPA L4 and new Senior Phase students completing their SFW courses – excellent feedback from students; Good numbers for next cohort of SFW L4 and Senior Academy S5/6 aquaculture students.

b. Staff achievement

From Shetland to the Stars! UHI Shetland staff supported a visit from Dynamic Earth with their planetarium for a extremely popular Family Open Day on Saturday 2nd March at the Scalloway Campus. Nearly 500 people attended throughout the day.

Yell's Blue Carbon The Marine Spatial Planning team, in collaboration with Carbon Neutral Islands, ran two successful photo exhibitions and an informal workshop about Yell's Blue Carbon Habitats.

Siun Carden named as one of Scottish Book Trust's New Writers Award 2024 recipients. Siun has also been invited by the British Council to take part in their *Taking Place* conference in London in March. Siun will be part of a workshop session giving a short talk about the work of the Centre for Island Creativity.

Royal Garden Party: Rachel Shucksmith and Rebecca Giesler have been invited to the Royal Garden Party in Edinburgh in July 2024 for their work in marine spatial planning.

Local Opportunities Event: A number of staff helped at the Local Opportunities Event at Clickimin speaking to young people from high schools across Shetland about opportunities at UHI Shetland and apprenticeships.

Mia McAllister appeared on *Good Evening Shetland* to discuss her research on skate species, and findings on her work on thornback ray nursery habitat.

Andrew Jennings' co-edited book *The Bridge Effect: Critical Reflections in the Age of Technological Solutionism* was launched at the University of Prince Edward Island.

UHI Shetland joined with community partners across Shetland on Friday 8th March to celebrate **International Women's Day 2024** with a well-attended forum on women, science and Net Zero. The theme of "inspiring inclusion" saw inspirational women join a celebration of women who are pursuing careers or studies in science and engineering. A video and short discussion panel was enjoyed by over forty people, including discussion areas such as barriers to traditionally male-dominated environments, and future roles in energy transition for women.

UHI Shetland has signed up to Scottish LGBTI+ Rainbow Mark during LGBT History Month. The [Scottish LGBTI+ Rainbow Mark \(The Rainbow Mark\)](#) was developed with LGBTI+ people and aims to:

- Increase positive LGBTI+ visibility
- Provide information and tools to enable better LGBTI+ inclusion
- Reduce isolation and minority stress for LGBTI+ people
- Create more welcoming places in Scotland

The signing is a commitment to ensuring UHI campuses and learning centres are inclusive spaces for LGBTI+ students, staff and the wider community and shows a powerful signal of support for The Rainbow Mark's principles.