



Shetland Marine Planning Partnership Newsletter

Supporting clean, healthy, safe and productive seas in Shetland



© Rachel Shucksmith

Welcome!

Welcome to the first newsletter of the Shetland Marine Planning Partnership (SMPP). The partnership between Shetland UHI and the Shetland Islands Council was formed to develop a marine plan to guide marine activity to meet the long term needs of nature and people. The SMPP is guided by an advisory group made up of industry, community, recreation and environmental representatives. You can find out more about it on the [Shetland UHI Marine Spatial Planning web-pages](#).

The Shetland marine plan is the most developed in Scotland, set to be the first statutory plan in Scotland once approved by Scottish Ministers. It has already been approved by the local advisory group and the Shetland Islands Council after a public consultation.

The marine plan provides a policy and data framework. We seek to continually improve our knowledge of the Shetland marine environment and its uses through data gathering.

This newsletter will bring together items about the marine environment in Shetland and further afield. If you have anything you would like to be included, please get in touch at marineplan.shetland@uhi.ac.uk.

Rachel Shucksmith
Marine Spatial Planning Manager
Shetland UHI



Simon Pallant
Coastal Zone Manager
Shetland Islands Council



In this issue...

Marine Planning News-

- Shetland Regional Marine Plan
- Sullom Voe Master Plan update
- Welcoming our new team member

Reports and Publications-

- Find out how the Shetland community is shaped by the sea around them
- Biosecurity Plan Publication

Introducing the Shetland Community Wildlife Group



Find out how to get involved in the Shetland Porpoise survey

Invasive Non-native Species



© Lisa Humphray

Download our new guide and help us monitor INNS

Projects of Interest...

- WDC Shorewatch in the Northern Isles
- Capturing marine vessel data around Scotland with Herriot Watt University
- Harbour Porpoise SUPER DTP funded PhD.
- Integrating diverse values into management

To get in touch please contact the Marine Planning Team at Shetland UHI

Email: marineplan.shetland@uhi.ac.uk

Phone: 01595 772000

Website: www.shetland.uhi.ac.uk

Marine Planning News

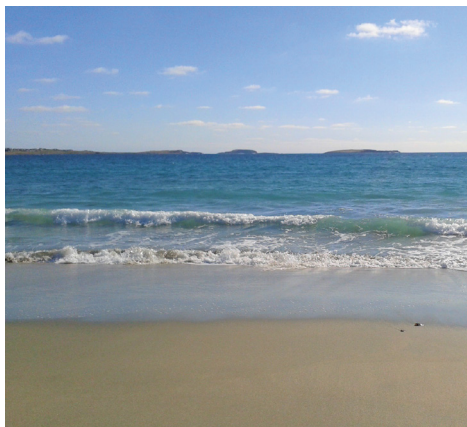
Shetland UHI

Shetland College UHI, NAFC Marine Centre and Train Shetland merged in August 2021 to become Shetland UHI. We are currently awaiting the Scottish Government to update the Marine Planning Partnership Direction to reflect this change.

Shetland Marine Plan Update

The Shetland Islands Regional Marine Plan (SIRMP) provides a policy framework linked to data to guide development around the Shetland coast, out to 12 NM. The marine plan was subject to public consultation in Autumn 2019 and has since been approved by the Shetland Islands Council.

We have submitted the marine plan to Scottish Ministers for approval and are awaiting their response. We are currently developing an implementation strategy for the marine plan and will be sharing the implementation plan soon. Many of the topics and projects highlighted within this newsletter will inform this stage of the plan's development. The marine plan can be downloaded from the [Shetland UHI web pages](#).



Shetland Islands Regional Marine Plan
September 2021



Scan the QR code to find out more about the SIRMP



Sullom Voe Master Plan

The Draft Sullom Voe Harbour Area (SVHA) Masterplan and accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment were subject to a 6 week public consultation in the summer of 2021. A number of responses were received which sought changes to the Master Plan.

Shetland Islands Council agreed at Development Committee in January 2022 that a short period of targeted additional consultation could take place to determine whether further amendments should be made before the Master Plan is finalised.

The Council's Coastal and Marine Planning Team is currently in the process of finalising the Master Plan with the intention to have it adopted by the Council as non-statutory planning guidance in spring 2022.

Once adopted it will become a material consideration in planning decisions for marine planning (aquaculture) and works licence applications. It will also be used to help guide and inform future leasing and licensing decisions, thereby contributing to the future regulation and management of the SVHA.

New Team Member

Rebecca Giesler has joined the Marine Planning Team at Shetland UHI as a Marine Planning Project Officer.

Rebecca trained as a biologist, but is interested in the wider science and policy challenges that are involved in the management of the marine environment. Rebecca completed her MRes and PhD based at the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) in Oban, where she researched marine invasive non-native species around mainland Scotland.

Prior to arriving in Shetland, Rebecca worked as a researcher in Dublin and as an environmental charity policy officer in London, but missed living and working near Scotland's coasts and seas.

In her role within the Marine Planning Team, she will be working on implementing the SIRMP and on updating Shetland's Biosecurity Plan.



Welcome Rebecca!

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Email: marineplan.shetland@uhi.ac.uk

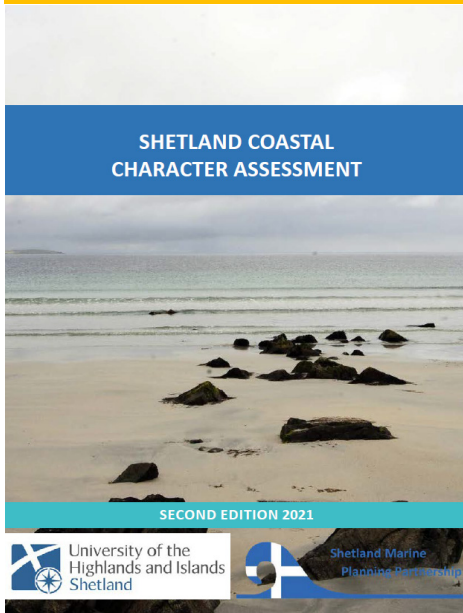
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Reports and Publications

Shetland Coastal Character Assessment 2nd Edition



The Shetland Coastal Character Assessment (SCCA) was originally published in 2017 and has now been updated and can be downloaded from the [Shetland UHI website](#).

The SCCA has been prepared by the Marine Spatial Planning Team at Shetland UHI to support the Shetland Islands Regional Marine Plan (SIRMP).

The aim of the SCCA is to map Shetland coastal character types to inform marine and coastal planning.

The objectives of the SCCA are to:

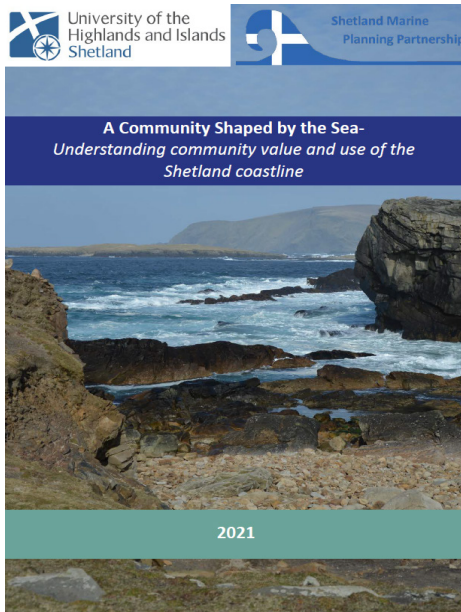
- Identify and map different coastal character types at a local level
- Describe the key features and character of each area which relates to the experience of the place
- Identify any areas around the coast sensitive to onshore and/or offshore development

Relate the study to other published documents such as the Shetland Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) and the Shetland Local Development Plan (LDP).



Scan the QR code to find out more about the Shetland CCA

A Community Shaped by the Sea



The sea is evident in every part of Shetland life, from the climate to the main industries, to the most popular recreational pursuits. The sea is intertwined into the culture and history of the Shetland community and visiting the coast is the top activity for visitors to the islands. This report 'A community shaped by the Sea- Understanding community value and use of the Shetland coastline' seeks to provide background information and evidence relating to the Shetland sea and coast, and its use and value to communities. This information is provided to help facilitate strategic and project level planning which considers the range of uses and benefits provided by the coast and sea.



Scan the QR code to find out more about community coastal values in Shetland



Biosecurity Plan Publication

An assessment of the challenges and opportunities in developing biosecurity plans has been published in the *Journal of Biological Invasions* by Rachel Shucksmith and Sam Collin of Shetland UHI. The article examines the role of legislation, risk management and stakeholder engagement in biosecurity planning. It proposes a framework for engaging licensed and un-licensed activities. The publication draws on learning from the development of the Shetland Biosecurity Plan. The journal article is open access and can be viewed here:

[REABIC Journal Article](#)

The Biosecurity Plan for the Shetland Islands can be accessed on the [Shetland UHI website](#).

Previous journal articles are available on a baseline assessment of [Shetland's non-native marine species](#), records of the [Pacific oyster](#), and [risk assessment process](#) for developing our non-native species monitoring programme.



Scan the QR code to find out more about the biosecurity in Shetland



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Invasive Non-native Species

At Shetland UHI we keep a check on the number of marine non-native species arriving in Shetland. These species have the potential to harm native species and habitats and impact dependent marine industries such as fisheries and aquaculture.

Invasive Non-native Species..

- come from elsewhere in the world
- usually via boat hulls or ballast water
- some trialled as novel aquaculture species from 1960s-1980s
- can out compete native wildlife for food and space

We monitor ports, marinas and other man-made structures, as this is usually where species colonise first. You can see how we monitor for NNS by watching this [video](#).

Download our INNS identification guide [here](#) and help us monitor and limit the impact from INNS in Shetland. Send your records to us by email on marineplan.shetland@uhi.ac.uk

We also have range of resources to help marine users minimise the spread of INNS and how to report sightings on our website [here](#).



Orange-tipped Sea Squirt



Turn over rocks on the lower shore at low tide and see if you can find an Orange-tipped Sea Squirt (*Corella eumyota*), an INNS common on man-made structures in Shetland and now moving onto rocky shore areas. Find out more information [here](#).

Report any sightings to us at marineplan.shetland@uhi.ac.uk

American Lobster

Marine Scotland are running a campaign to help raise awareness of American lobster (*Homarus americanus*), which are posing a threat to our native Scottish marine life through competition for food and shelter and as disease carriers. Find out more about the project [here](#).

Report any American lobsters caught directly to your local Marine Scotland Compliance Fishery Office or the UK Fisheries Monitoring Centre at 0131 271 9700 or via email at UKFMC@gov.scot.

IF YOU CATCH AN AMERICAN LOBSTER... RETAIN & REPORT

AMERICAN LOBSTER	DISTINGUISHING FEATURES	EUROPEAN LOBSTER
 Location: Underside claw Distinctions: Orange-red		 Location: Underside claw Distinctions: Cream
 Location: Head Distinctions: Spines tipped red Ventral tooth present		 Location: Head Distinctions: Spines tipped white No ventral tooth
 Location: Back & neck Distinctions: Larger, orange, reddish, dark green or black speckles		 Location: Back & neck Distinctions: Smaller, blue to dark blue
<p>Occasionally American lobsters find their way into our waters. This poses a risk of disease, outcompeting and interbreeding.</p>		<p>Please keep all potential American lobsters or hybrids and report them asap.</p>

marinescotland



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© Ian Napier

Shetland Community Wildlife Group News

Introducing the Shetland Community Wildlife Group

The Shetland Community Wildlife Group (SCWG) has been created by the Marine Spatial Planning team at Shetland UHI using funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Aims...

- **enabling** local people to get involved in nature
- **teaching** people new skills
- **connecting** like-minded people
- **collecting** valuable scientific data

The data is being used locally to fill knowledge gaps in the SIRMP to help inform marine and land-based planning decisions as well as feeding into national data sets.

Projects...

We have a range of projects you can get involved in, from bees and butterflies in your own back garden, to egg-case hunting on local beaches all of our projects can be found on our website [here](#).

Resources...

We have also produced a number of ID guides to help nature become more accessible to everyone, these can be downloaded from our website [here](#) and are really handy to print out and take in your pocket/rucksack. We will be adding to our range in the coming months so keep an eye on our Facebook page for new projects, articles and leaflets.

Shetland Porpoise Survey

Harbour porpoise are regularly spotted in Shetland waters in small groups and sometimes in large aggregations that are not seen in many other areas in the UK. However, porpoises are very under recorded and little is known about these aggregations and any seasonal variations in the areas the porpoise are using.



© Charlie Philips WDC

The Shetland Community Wildlife Group, in collaboration with Whale and Dolphin Conservation's Shorewatch and NatureScot, are encouraging volunteers to collect data on porpoise sightings in three survey sites known for attracting large aggregations of porpoise: **South Nesting Bay, Mousa Sound and Quendale Bay**.

The Shetland Porpoise survey, along with WDC Shorewatch data and any reported one-off sightings, will go a long way to helping fill some of the data gaps we currently have on porpoise numbers around the isles and will increase our understanding of where large groups congregate, at what time of year and for what purpose.

The data will be used locally to update the Shetland Islands Regional Marine Plan, and by the other organisations

involved to better understand the movements and behaviour of this species.



© Karen Hall

Get in Touch

We would love to hear from anyone who would like to get involved in the group or has ideas for projects or leaflets that would be beneficial. So please get in touch.

Kate Allan

SCWG

Coordinator



shetlandcommunitywildlife@outlook.com

shetlandcommunitywildlife.org



Scan the QR code to go to the SCWG website

To get in touch please contact the Marine Planning Team at Shetland UHI

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Projects of Interest

Capturing Marine Vessel Data around Scotland



We have been collaborating with **Emily Hague** from Heriot Watt University who is leading a project to collect data to help better understand vessel activity around Scotland's coastline.

This will then allow for an assessment of the potential risks marine mammals in Scotland face from boats, which is important as vessels may pose a number of risks, including physical injuries from strikes, behavioural disturbance, and reduced health and survival due to underwater noise and pollution. Collecting vessel activity across a number of sites will allow them to compare and contrast how this pressure varies around coastal sites of Scotland, highlighting areas or times of year where the pressure is heightened or reduced.

In Shetland, vessel monitoring equipment has been deployed to collect data on the movements of small and large vessels which will be analysed alongside data collected by the Shetland Community Wildlife Group members and Shorewatch volunteers who are undertaking boat surveys from some of their shore-based watch sites. To find out more information take a look at the project website [here](#) or contact Emily at elh2001@hw.ac.uk



Whale and Dolphin Conservation Shorewatch



Shorewatch is a citizen science project run by the charity Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC) which launched in Shetland last year. Anyone can become a volunteer and contribute towards building a better understanding of whales and dolphins by participating in 10-minute cetacean surveys. The Shorewatch team provide full training, equipment and ongoing support for volunteers to ensure the effort-based data collected is robust and can be used by developers, marine planners and policy makers.

For more information visit WDC Shore watch website [here](#) or email Emma Steel

northernisles@shorewatch.org



Harbour Porpoise SUPER DTP funded PhD

Shetland UHI has secured funding for a studentship starting in October 2022 researching harbour porpoise. This studentship is a collaboration between the UHI (supervisors Rachel Shucksmith and Prof Ben Wilson SAMS UHI), Heriot Watt University (supervisor Dr Lauren McWhinnie) Marine Scotland Science and NatureScot (Karen Hall). In addition, it is supported by Shetland Community Wildlife Group (SCWG) and Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC).

Building on the data gathered by the Shetland Community Wildlife Group's porpoise survey, the studentship will explore the use of data collection techniques (shore watching, drones and CPODS) to answer questions relating to their behaviour, spatial and temporal use relevant to their conservation and management.



(C) Charlie Phillips WDC

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Projects of Interest

Integrating Diverse Values into Management

Shetland UHI has secured funding as project partner in the SMMR funded project 'Integrating Diverse Values into Management'. Shetland will form one of three case studies within the project, with the Severn Estuary and Portsmouth the other case study areas.

Diverse values refer to the many dimensions of value including economic values, social and cultural values, aesthetic values, and natural values, and how they might be accounted for in decision-making frameworks such as instrumental values, intrinsic values and relational values.

Marine environments and human well-being are inextricably linked through complex socio-ecological systems that span terrestrial, coastal and ocean domains. While this complexity is widely acknowledged in theory, current models of marine resource management practice do not adequately adopt the necessary transdisciplinary approaches to use diverse values or have the means to align them to decision making and policy development.

The project legacy will be an increased understanding and implementation of diverse values into marine policy and decision making and the creation of transition plans for institutions to facilitate embedding transdisciplinary practices into the operations of organisations.



Upcoming Events

Seeing and Understanding the Aurora in Shetland- with Richard Ashbee



The **Shetland Community Wildlife Group** are hosting an evening with Richard Ashbee who will be sharing his knowledge and photographs of Shetland's auroras.

Thurs 24th March. Doors open 6.45pm. Talk to start at **7pm** with refreshments to follow.

Carnegie Hall, Sandwick.

Tickets are **FREE** and open to all.

Booking advisable through Eventbrite: [here](#) or scan the QR code



WDC Shorewatch Spring 2022 Site Visits



Spring 2022 site visits

Join the Shorewatch team for a practical session on the following dates:

Shetland

- 5th March - Mousa Sound (2-4)
- 6th March - Sumburgh Head (10-12)
- 6th March - Quendale Bay (1-2.30)
- 7th March - Unst (get in touch)
- 8th March - South Nesting Bay (10-12)
- 10th March - Eshaness (11-1)
- 11th March - Lerwick (1-3)

Emma Steel, will be in Shetland leading practical watch sessions at our Shorewatch sites in early March. A great opportunity to catch up, get support if you're new to Shorewatching, and meet other volunteers in the area.

Wrap up warm, bring a flask, and fingers crossed for good weather and lots of cetacean sightings!



A world where every whale or dolphin is safe and free



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Upcoming Events continued

Talks

Dr Steve Mackinson, Buckland Professor and Chief Scientific Officer at the Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association, will deliver a public lecture at Shetland UHI Scalloway campus on Tuesday 29th March at 6:15pm: Resurrection: the fall and rise of industry participation in fisheries science.

The Buckland Professorship is an annual appointment by the Buckland Foundation, an organisation founded to support contemporary fisheries research.

The Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association, Marine Scotland Science and Shetland UHI are partners on the EU funded PANDORA project which seeks to explore how fisher self-sampling can enhance pelagic fisheries data collection. A short video about the project is available on [YouTube](#).



Scan the QR code to watch the full video

Summer Events

Across the summer Shetland UHI in collaboration with Shetland Community Wildlife group will be running a series of events and talks. This will include:

- Non-native species monitoring (24-30th May)
- Supported cetacean surveying
- Egg case surveys
- Intertidal surveys for rare and protected animals seaweeds, and seagrass

If you would like to be kept up-to-date with these events and get involved please contact the Shetland Community Wildlife Group or the Marine Planning section at Shetland UHI.



Further Information

This newsletter has been produced by Shetland UHI on behalf of the Shetland Marine Planning Partnership.

The development of the Shetland Islands Regional Marine Plan is supported by funding from Shetland Islands Council and Marine Scotland. If you would like to subscribe to this quarterly newsletter please contact us via email:

marineplan.shetland@uhi.ac.uk

The Shetland Islands Regional Marine Plan and more information on marine planning in Shetland can be found on the Marine Spatial Planning pages of the Shetland UHI website [here](#).

Contact the Marine Spatial Planning Team on:

01595 772000

marineplan.shetland@uhi.ac.uk

For more information on SIC marine and coastal planning visit their website [here](#) or contact them on:

01595 744293

marine.planning@shetland.gov.uk



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