

Shetland Environmental Awards 2010

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Shetland Amenity Trust

Foreword

It is my pleasure to introduce the winners of the 2010 Shetland Environmental Awards. For 22 years, these awards have acknowledged a wide range of projects demonstrating sustainability, innovation and best practice. Each one of these projects has contributed to Shetland's rich and diverse environment – an environment we all cherish and wish to preserve for the future.

The awards have always been truly inclusive, attracting nominations for a wide variety of projects from all sectors of the community. This year's award winners have again shown an outstanding commitment to our environment.

On behalf of the Shetland Amenity Trust, I would like to thank the Shetland Environment Group for its continued support of the awards as well as the award sponsors, details of which you will find in the back of the booklet.

Finally, I would like to pass on my personal congratulations to all this year's winners - I hope you enjoy today's event, are proud of your award and what you have achieved.

Brian P Gregson
Chairman

Shetland Amenity Trust & Shetland Environment Group



The Belmont Trust

For almost 15 years The Belmont Trust has been dedicated to the faithful restoration of Belmont House in Unst. The best example of a Georgian House in the Northern Isles, Belmont House was built in 1775 and was near to collapse when the Trust acquired it in 1996. The £1.2 million project has restored the house to how it would have looked when built, retaining as much as possible of the original fabric and using traditional materials and methods throughout.



Most of the refurbishment work has been carried out by local men and, once furnished, it will be used as holiday accommodation and a venue for meetings, weddings and local events. This will provide further local employment and support to local businesses, through sourcing local supplies and attracting visitors to the island.



JUDGING PANEL COMMENTS

This is an excellent example of the sustainable reuse of an important piece of Shetland's built heritage. The extensive use of reclaimed and recycled materials is admirable, as is the sympathetic restoration using traditional building techniques. The project is also providing local employment, both during and post restoration.

Brae Youth Club Garden Project



Youth club members, youth workers and members of the local community came together to transform a piece of unused land at the back of the Youth Centre into a welcoming garden for all to use. As well as working on the garden, and encouraging others to volunteer their time and skills, the youth club gained funding from the youth centre management committee and attracted donations of plants and trees.

Giving the youth club members input into the design and creation of the garden has fostered a sense of ownership and pride in their work.

This has led to their continued enthusiasm for the care of the garden, with an annual maintenance programme linked into their activities.



JUDGING PANEL COMMENTS

The panel were impressed by the youth club members seeing something which needed improvement and taking action to achieve it, including mobilising volunteers, raising funds and securing material donations. They were also impressed by the ongoing commitment from the youth club to care for the area in the long term.

Beyond the Briggistanes

Now in its fifth year, Beyond the Briggistanes has showcased environmental topics and out of doors activities throughout Shetland, raising awareness of and creating interest in environmental initiatives and issues. Broadcast monthly from October to May the programme features a wide range of subjects, including gardening, recycling, archaeology, outdoor sports, marine mammals, the built environment, eco-schools and community projects.

The concept of Mike Grundon, and co presented by Val Turner, the programme is a very effective way of taking environmental topics into the homes of listeners and encouraging them to get out and explore the islands. The programme has attracted a large following and become one of the most popular items in BBC Radio Shetland's repertoire.



JUDGING PANEL COMMENTS

This radio programme has covered a wide range of environmental subjects and inspired listeners to get out and experience Shetland's cultural and natural heritage. It allows time for more in depth discussion on the issues highlighted and raises the profile of Shetland's environment. The presenters are enthusiastic about their subject and this shines through, the panel would like to congratulate them on a popular and informative programme.

Foula Heritage Ranger Service

Inspired by recent memorials built on the island, the Foula Ranger Service undertook a unique access and interpretation project linked to an old island tradition. Based on traditional stone 'rests' - sheltered seats which were once used by islanders pushing barrows or carrying kishies of peats to stop and rest for a while - the project created seating to encourage visitors with a broader range of abilities to enjoy their unique island setting.

During the summer, two traditional rests were restored and two new ones designed and built. Along with two other new rests, built privately as memorials to Betty Holbourn and Davie Gear, these seats will form a network of rests with interpretation relevant to each seat location.

JUDGING PANEL COMMENTS

An excellent example of a project which has improved access and interpretation while highlighting a near forgotten island tradition. Incorporating digital interpretive materials will mix the old and new seamlessly. The panel were also impressed with the extensive use of local materials and pleased to see the ranger's ongoing commitment to maintenance.



Lerwick Port Authority Environmental Management System

In 2008 Lerwick Port Authority became the first Scottish port to gain certification to the internationally recognised environmental standard ISO 14001:2004. Since then they have striven to maintain and develop their Environmental Management System and continually improve their environmental performance.


A number of practical measures introduced in 2009 have proven very successful, including a 26% decrease in electricity consumption at their operations centre, 8% increase in fuel efficiency, 32 tonnes of waste cleared from the harbour seabed and a saving of over 31,000 sheets of A4 paper. Also, recycling has increased, and waste decreased, significantly. Taken together Lerwick Port Authority has made considerable progress in a short time, reducing their energy consumption, carbon emissions and running costs.

JUDGING PANEL COMMENTS

Their outstanding commitment to environmental improvement has placed Lerwick Port Authority at the forefront of environmental standards in Scotland. The energy reductions made, in a relatively short time, must have taken a large behavioural change in the organisation and the panel would like to congratulate all staff on their efforts and achievements to date.




Ollaberry Primary School Grounds



During May to September 2010 the parents, staff and pupils of Ollaberry Primary School redesigned their school garden and grounds to increase habitats for birds and small mammals, increase educational opportunities for biodiversity and improve their built environment.

Works included the construction of a sloped path, to increase accessibility for disabled persons, and the installation of renewable resources, such as a solar fountain and wind powered ornaments. Local and recycled materials were also used, with some materials sourced through beachcombing.



The resultant garden is a fantastic resource for the school and local community, including the youth club and under fives group.

JUDGING PANEL COMMENTS

Ollaberry is a very proactive school and this is another good example of their ongoing environmental initiatives. The increased facilities and learning opportunities this project has created will be a benefit to the whole community, a community which has provided much of the funds and voluntary labour required to carry out the project.

Peter Kenny

Peter Kenny is one of Shetland's regular beach cleaners, keeping the Gulberwick beach litter free, with no other duty than a care for the environment. Gulberwick does catch a significant amount of marine litter and the clearance of this cannot be underestimated, removing hazards to wildlife and other beach visitors and making the beach a much more pleasant place to be.

Nominated by members of the local community, Peter has made a regular and sustained effort to combat marine litter over a number of years. Working with the relevant authorities he has collected and arranged the safe disposal of a large amount of sea borne rubbish, including various plastics, rope, netting, bags and some more unusual objects, from the beach in all weathers.



JUDGING PANEL COMMENTS

Beach cleaning efforts are undertaken by many people throughout Shetland each year, mainly around Da Voar Redd Up. The panel were impressed with Peter's commitment and efforts throughout the year, which has removed a large amount of marine litter from the environment. The panel would like to wish Peter well in his continuing efforts and congratulate him for past work in keeping Shetland's environment bruck free.

Uyeasound Primary School

Mapping Unst's Built Heritage...

Working in partnership with Scotland's Rural Past, the Uyeasound Primary School mapped Unst's ruined built heritage and uploaded this onto a National Database for access by researchers from all over the world. Their work included measuring and recording the site and condition, identifying on a map, plotting GPS grid references and researching census information. During the project previous sketches and plans made by June Owers were discovered, which the school included in their research.

One of the houses surveyed was Valind, the family home of Captain John Gray of the ss Great Britain. Investigations into this resulted in partnerships with the Shetland Museum and Archives and ss Great Britain Museum.

As well as uploading their research onto a national database, the pupils created an exhibition for Homefarers, an electronic display for the Unst Heritage Centre and materials for the ss Great Britain Museum.

JUDGING PANEL COMMENTS

This is a fantastic example of a project which is raising the profile of Shetland's built heritage, at a local, national and international level. It has also linked in with many other aspects of Shetland's heritage and culture and created a number of impressive partnerships. The school should be very proud of what they have achieved.



Our Sponsors

For several years now the awards have been sponsored by many members of the Shetland Environment Group, namely the Shetland Civic Society, Scottish Natural Heritage, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Shetland Islands Council and VisitShetland.

This year, for the first time, the awards presentation event has also been sponsored – with the Total Laggan-Tormore Project committing to sponsor the event until 2014.

The Shetland Amenity Trust would like to thank all of these sponsors; their support is instrumental in the award's success.



