# Case study Andrew Hall – Brae

Andrew Hall started planting trees on his croft, in Burravoe, Brae, back in 2001. However, the first large woodland creation he undertook was in 2005. Since 2017, he has received three more forestry grants, encouraged by an application process that has become easier and better adapted to the crofter's needs.

By planting trees and shrubs on his croft, Andrew hopes to bring back biodiversity to the land whilst providing much-needed shelter for

livestock (and people!), significantly improving animal productivity and welfare, especially at lambing time.

Woodland creation also provides opportunities for croft diversification. Two

glamping cabins are now situated within the woodland planted in 2005. This has made the crofting business financially resilient. Andrew is planning to create more woodlands and shelterbelts in the coming years and encourages all crofters to consider woodland creation on their ground.



"Don't wait! Start now, but keep in mind it's a long-term project and the first benefit will be observed after 5 years or so – you need patience but it will be worth it."

# Need support?

# Contact the Shetland Amenity Trust

for free specialist advice on native woodland creation and grants



www.shetlandamenity.org



01 595 694 688



info@shetlandamenity.org













We encourage inclusion of native species of local origin to support our biodiversity and wildlife

## Shetland tree facts

extensive open woodlands. After centuries of land management geared towards livestock grazing, only relics remain on isolated crags and loch islands. These support important flora and fauna, evidence of our woodland history. The Shetland Amenity Trust monitors and cares for these relics and supports projects seeking to expand native

woodlands in Shetland.

# **Trees and Crofts**

Crofting lies at the heart of Shetland's economy and cultural heritage. It also plays a pivotal role in the preservation of our natural heritage. Woodland creation offers benefits for generations to come by providing:

- shelter, resulting in improved animal welfare, faster gain of live weight and higher lamb survival;
- higher soil fertility and better grass quality and improved cropping;
- protection against soil erosion;
- •improved water quality and flood alleviation;
- opportunities for croft diversification;
- ·a sustainable source of firewood;
- new habitat for wildlife and for people to enjoy; and,
- •a carbon sink, helping to mitigate climate change.

# Sites to Consider

Mineral soils or shallow peats (<50cm deep) — Reasonably well drained — Sheltered from prevailing winds — Not replacing healthy habitats like blanket bog, wet heath or herb rich meadows

### Tree source

The Trust maintains a seed bank and tree nursery, preserving crucial genetic material and producing a wide variety of trees adapted to thrive in Shetland's climate.

These trees are available to stock community and private projects. Selecting seed from our own Shetland trees and propagating them in the islands improves establishment rates and eliminates the risk of importing unwelcome pests and plant diseases.

# We are here to help

Working in partnership with the Woodland Trust Scotland's 'Croft Woodland Project' and Scottish Forestry, Shetland Amenity Trust offers free advice on:

#### **Woodland Creation and Management**

We can visit and assess site suitability, listen to your objectives, and provide advice on woodland design, choosing your trees, planting techniques, tree protection and maintenance.

Funding application

We support you along the different application stages to get financial help for your project.

# Main Sources of Funding

#### **Croft MOREwoods and MOREhedges**

These schemes are supported by Woodland Trust Scotland for the creation of small native woodlands and hedges on crofts and smallholdings. A minimum size limit of 0.1ha or 300 trees applies to woodlands and a minimum length of 100m applies to hedges. This scheme contributes up to 60% of the cost of trees and protective guards.

#### **Forestry Grant Schemes**

Part of the Scottish Rural Development Programme, this grant is administered by Scottish Forestry. Standard grant rates are offered for tree planting, fencing and maintenance. Minimum scheme size is 0.25ha. Grants are also available for co-operative projects involving neighbours and for management of existing woodland.

#### **The Crofting Agricultural Grant Scheme**

Whilst not focused on native woodland creation, this fund can potentially support tree planting that will improve agricultural business productivity e.g. shelterbelts.

We can prepare outline budgets, help identify the best funding options, assist with applications and provide friendly unbiased guidance throughout the process.

