



The Shetland Befriender



Autumn & Winter 25/26

“I’m 100% delighted with it all!”



Margaret Sinclair, Lerwick has recently finished a two year befriending match with the Scheme.

How did you first become involved with the Scheme?

“I saw a poster about the Tea and Cake sessions which the Befriending Scheme offer at Islesburgh and I thought it sounded interesting. I was feeling lonely following lockdown and knew my social life could be improved. Life had also presented it’s own challenging times to work through, so I decided to get in touch with the Scheme to find out more.”

How did you find your befriending match?

“After completing my application, I was able to describe the type of person I was looking for, and when I met my volunteer we clicked straight away! My volunteer was an outgoing person, so friendly and happy. We had good laughs together and I found her very supportive. She is a lovely soul who became very special to me. We enjoyed drives to the country together and had lunch at Frankie’s and the Hoswick Visitor Centre. We had trips to the street and The Olive Tree, we went to see the Christmas Panto and had a Christmas lunch at The Lerwick Hotel. We also went to a few of the Tea and Cake sessions at Islesburgh.”

What difference has your match made to you?

“Having a befriending match gave me something to look forward to on a regular basis. It provided companionship for me. Instead of empty weeks ahead, I could look forward to the next time I saw my volunteer. The match has helped to reduce my feelings of isolation and opened up a new life for me. I now regularly attend the Tea and Cake sessions and have made new friends there. We chat together, have fun and play games. It’s a very inclusive atmosphere. Now that I’ve done all of this, I would heartily recommend it. The staff who make it all possible are friendly and kind. I’m 100% delighted with it all and very grateful to everyone.”

Reasons to be cheerful!



We're 25 Years!



The Shetland Befriending Scheme would like to say a heartfelt thankyou to everyone who helped make our 25th Anniversary High Teas at the Cunningsburgh Hall in June, such a success! It is a significant milestone to have reached this point and staff are all feeling very proud.

We had the most amazing time celebrating. We had a packed hall, with fantastic musical entertainment and delicious sandwiches, scones and homebakes. It was so lovely to see everyone enjoying themselves.

Thank you to all volunteers past and present, as without your committed contribution, we would not be where we are today. We appreciate you all.

A final thank you to all helpers in the set up, tidy up and on the day itself, and all businesses who donated prizes to our raffle.

Going Independent

There are exciting times ahead as the Befriending Scheme are in the process of becoming an independent charity, moving away from being an organisation which is managed underneath Voluntary Action Shetland.

We have already formed a steering group, who meet on a regular basis to take this forward.

Becoming an independent charity involves the establishment of a dedicated board of trustees, registration with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and the creation of governance, safeguarding and financial structures.

The Scheme will have greater autonomy in decision making and the ability to apply for a wider range of funding and grants, tailored specifically to our needs.

The transformation of the Scheme into an independent charity is a positive step for us, which we are hoping to achieve by April 2026.



All Things Volunteering!



Getting Involved Event

On Wednesday 11th June, Ian and Amanda attended the 'Getting Involved' event at the Anderson High School, which is aimed at Secondary 6 pupils. It was great to see some different faces at this event and to be able to talk to pupils about what we do and the volunteering opportunities we have available.

Following the event, Amanda and Ian were able to follow up on new enquiries made, and are delighted that some individuals have now completed their initial training to be a volunteer with the Scheme!



Volunteer Training

Amanda and Ian have gained five new volunteers between them since the Summer time, with initial training having taken place during October and November. We are very excited to see these new volunteers matched up in the near future!

Those individuals who expressed an interest at the 'Getting Involved' event, but who were only turning 17 years at the end of the year, will be contacted by Scheme staff in due course.

Willin Haands

Shetland Befriending Scheme again nominated some volunteers this year for a VAS Volunteering 'Willin Haands' award, which is open to someone aged 26 years and over.

These awards are for people who make a real difference to others by helping out in the community, and who deserve a thank you!

There was a slight change to criteria this year, meaning that volunteers could not be nominated again for the same role for the same organisation as in previous years.

The Willin Haands award complements the national Saltire Awards scheme, which VAS delivers annually to recognise young people aged 11 to 25 years.

The Scheme would like to say a huge well done to the following volunteers, who were all nominated this year for an award:

Karl Bolt
Rebecca Davies
Archie Fulton
Cheryl Graham
Claire Henry

Danielle McPhee
Alan Murdoch
Jimmy Ridland
Colin Smith
Joanne Thomson



Time to Shine!



QIB Reaccreditation



Scheme staff are delighted to announce that we achieved our Quality in Befriending (QIB) Award reaccreditation in July! Hayley Chandler, Befriending Networks assessor, who evaluated the Scheme's submission, said the following:

"Congratulations on your recent reaccreditation. This award recognises Befriending Services who can demonstrate a strong organisational framework, good practice within their service and positive experiences of people involved. It involves time and effort from the staff who lead on the award as well as the support of others to assist them through it."

"It was a pleasure to speak with your staff, volunteers and people accessing the Befriending Service, for the assessment. All had warm and positive stories to tell of their involvement with Shetland Befriending Scheme, and it was wonderful to hear about the community people are a part of and the care that everyone involved experiences."

"We wish you all the best with future endeavours. Well done to all involved with Shetland Befriending Scheme."

Befriending Networks Conference



Following our reaccreditation for QiB, Mairi was thrilled to be invited to be one of the 'spotlight members' at this year's Befriending Networks Annual Conference, held online at the beginning of November.

Befriending Networks had been particularly impressed at Shetland's inter-agency approach to safeguarding of children and adults, and with the theme at this year's conference being 'Collaboration and Partnership', they felt it would be beneficial for other organisations to hear about how this was achieved. Mairi did a fantastic job of sharing the Shetland Inter-agency Child & Adult Protection procedures which are practiced throughout Shetland.

Befriending Week

Befriending Week took place 1st - 7th November, and we sent out thank you certificates to all our amazing volunteers!





On Show!



Bear-aking News!

Staff attended the Voe and Cunningsburgh Country Shows this year and had a super time! We always enjoy getting out and about to meet other people and chat about volunteering.



This year we took one of our unique, handmade 25th Anniversary Befriending bears with us to the shows, and encouraged everyone who visited our stand to guess the bear's birthday!

We would like to say a big congratulations to Callum Irvine who is the lucky recipient of our Befriending Bear.

Callum's great granny, Eva Leask, was one of the 245 people who had a go at guessing the bear's birthday on our stands - and correctly guessed 25th March!

We will miss the bear but hope he enjoys his new life with Callum!

Thank you to everyone who came to see us over both days. We enjoyed chatting with you, handing out leaflets, hearing all your birthday guesses, distributing freebies and giving out sweets!

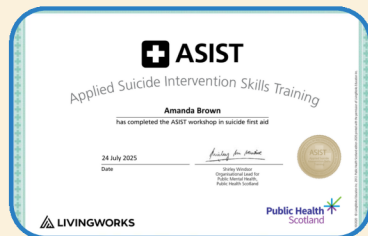


Staff Training

All staff attended the Trauma Skilled Practice - Transforming Connections course at the Town Hall in May.

Ian also attended an excellent online course to learn more about communicating with people living with dementia. The course was put on by Age Scotland and anybody who wishes to learn more about dementia can access their courses for free.

Amanda and Mairi both attended a two day ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) course at Islesburgh, in July. The two day face to face workshop provided participants with practical skills and knowledge to effectively recognise those who may be at risk of suicide and to be able to conduct a suicide intervention.





Just for fun...



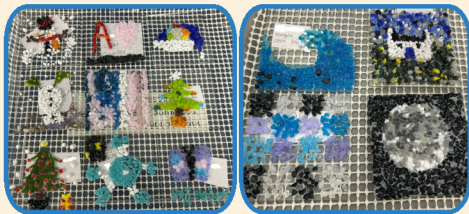
Group Activities

We tried our best but unfortunately, this year, our Seabirds-and-Seals boat trip just wasn't meant to be! In total we had four dates organised, but each time the trip was cancelled by the owners, due to poor weather. We are keeping our fingers crossed for next year!

We did have a fantastic time at our Pumpkin Carving Group Activity at the end of October. We all enjoyed the spooky decorations and yummy hot chocolate - and the designs were so creative!



Volunteers and service users enjoyed a visit from Cheryl Jamieson of Glansin Glass on 6th December. We were able to make a coaster or a wall hanger, and we look forward to receiving our creative pieces back from Cheryl once they are ready.



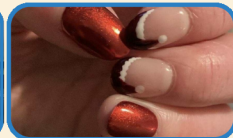
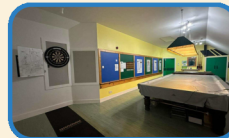
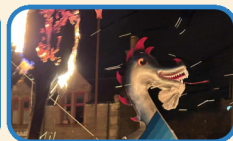
The 16+ section are also looking forward to a Christmas meal at the Lerwick Hotel on 20th December.

Winter Wonder?

Wondering about what to do for your Befriending meetings during the Winter months?

It's not always easy to think of things to do when the weather isn't so great. Maybe one of the following ideas might help you?

- *Go out for a nice meal, cuppa and cake or tabna
- *Go for a swim
- *Try the Hydrotherapy pool
- *Visit the Health suite
- *Book a court to play a sport
- *Try the climbing wall
- *Get inducted at the gym, then have a gym session!
- *Play a game of carpet bowls
- *Watch a film at Mareel
- *Do some baking at the Staneyhill Hall
- *Book a room in Market House to do arts and crafts, model making, colouring in, play board games or make a jigsaw
- *Visit the Library or Museum
- *Book the Scalloway Youth Centre to play a game of pool or darts
- *Watch one of the Up Helly Aa festivals
- *Get a manicure
- *Go for a run in the car





Did you know?



Our Equipment Bank

If any volunteer would like a reminder of our Equipment Bank, please just let staff know. We have a range of resources stored in our Befriending cupboards, which you can book out to use for your meetings.

Equipment such as board games, playing cards, jigsaws, arts and crafts boxes, adult colouring books and colouring pens, hama beads, lego, loom bands and a magnetic dart board may all come in handy! Rooms can be booked out within Market House for your meetings.



Tea & Cake Group

Tea and Cake takes place at Islesburgh Community Centre on the third Friday of every month from 2.30pm - 4.00pm.

The group is open to adults who want to pop along for cake, a cuppa and a friendly chat. We enjoy playing the odd game of bingo and occasionally invite along a speaker to chat about a topic which may be relevant to you.

Please come along and join us!



Future Tea & Cake dates for 2026 include:

16 th January	17 th April
20 th February	15 th May
20 th March	19 th June

Thank You to all our Funders



Shetland Befriending Scheme is a project supported by Voluntary Action Shetland Charitable Company limited by guarantee SC165677 Scottish Charity SC017286





How to get in touch



Our Door is Open

Our door is always open to our volunteers for support and ideas for befriending.

You can find us at:

Shetland Befriending Scheme
Market House, 14 Market Street, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0JP

Reception is open:

Monday to Thursday

9.00am - 5.00pm

Friday

9.00am - 4.00pm

Find us on the Web

www.shetlandbefriendingscheme.com

Find, like and message us on Facebook

If you wish to unsubscribe from receiving this newsletter please email: befriending@shetland.org

Would you like to Volunteer?

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with the scheme we would love to hear from you.

Volunteering is a lot of fun and it can help you gain new skills and experiences. People aged 17+ and from all walks of life can apply - full-time mums and dads, retired folk, full or part-time workers, unemployed or students.

All that we ask is that you are able to commit to giving a few hours once a fortnight for at least six months.



Scan the QR code to enquire about volunteering

We want to Hear from You!

If you have comments or suggestions you can let us know by phone, email, through social media, the post or even face to face!



Mairi Jamieson

Project
Co-ordinator

Tel: 01595 74 3907
mairi.jamieson@shetland.org



Amanda Brown

Children and Young Persons
& 16+ Development Worker

Tel: 01595 74 3908
amanda.brown@shetland.org



Ian Edwards

16+ Development
Worker

Tel: 01595 74 3964
ian.edwards@shetland.org