

FAIR ISLE TIMES

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Fair Isle Primary School News

January is not far off reaching its conclusion and the children have had a great first month back after the holidays. However, there was a bonus day off this week on Wednesday 28th January. The children have decided to tell you all about it in the form of an explanation text, the features of which we have been looking at in our Literacy lessons

A Random Wednesday Off in January

Written by Luca (10)

Normally, I would be waking up and getting ready for school but today is very different. Up Helly Aa is happening in Lerwick (not here in Fair Isle) so all schools in Shetland get a free day off. Allow me to explain what our day involved.

Have a Lie-In

If you are a child why not let your parents have a lie-in? Why not go and play with some of your toys until your parents wake from what seems their everlasting sleep. At least your parents aren't going to be nagging you to brush your teeth.

Pancakes

They are a quick, yummy snack to make on a relaxed day off. Be careful when flipping them. You do not want a pancake on the floor, do you? In the end, I felt sorry for our pet mouse and made a little pancake for it.



Sofa Surfing

Don't feel embarrassed about staying on the sofa all day. Everyone did it! The weather is dreadful outside. (It is very windy!) You can go for a walk but it would be a bit miserable.

Thanks to the Vikings

Written by Ander (8)

It's a normal Wednesday but it's not a normal Wednesday. These are ideas you could do if you have a day off like me.

Pancakes

Pancakes are quick, easy, fun and involve all the family. You can use all of the batter to make a giant pile of pancakes. So then you can munch them in a leisurely fashion without worrying about school.

Pyjama Day

I did not take my pyjamas off for the whole day. It feels nicer when you have them on. They are wonderful and warm on a cold winter's day.

My Day Off

Written by Khalicee (5)

Breakfast was pancakes and daddy was home. I played with my toys and also went for a walk. Before bedtime, I watched Narnia. My favourite characters are Aslan and Lucy. I like Aslan and his magic roars.



A visit to Windsor Castle – This week we hear from our new *royal correspondent*, Marie who has had another exciting royal engagement this week



Who would have thought that living and knitting on a tiny island at 59° north could take you all the way to Windsor Castle?

A few months ago, I received the fanciest invitation I've ever had: an invitation from the King's Foundation to attend a Royal Premiere at Windsor Castle.

It's surprising that I don't have bruises all over my arms from the number of times I had to pinch myself.

On Wednesday 28th January, I attended the premiere of *Finding Harmony: A King's Vision*, a Prime Video documentary created in collaboration with the King's Foundation, launching on the 6th of February.

The film explores His Majesty King Charles III's lifelong commitment to nature and sustainability, and the Harmony philosophy, which encourages us to see ourselves as part of nature, not apart from it.

This year, I've been lucky to be part of the King's Foundation's *35 under 35* network of makers and change-makers, brought together as part of the Foundation's 35th anniversary celebrations to advocate for the change the Foundation wants to see in the world.

Through this network and several events over the year, I've come to know the work of the Foundation, but the documentary sheds a new light on the global reach and impact of the King's vision.

So much of it resonated deeply with my life in Fair Isle, immersed in a landscape where nature is something you must respect and work with in order to survive and live in harmony.

I'm delighted that so many viewers will soon have access to the incredible work of His Majesty King Charles III, and I hope they will feel as inspired by it as we all have.

Harmony, I would say, is contagious. I hope this film becomes a call for change for many people who, deep down, already sense that a lack of connection with nature is making them unhappy.

The dress code for the event was *Black Tie or National Dress*, with an emphasis on *Rewear, Repair or Recycle*.



Having never been to a black-tie event before, I didn't really have anything to rewear. However, I did have in mind a beautiful dress that I could wear many times in the future. I had been admiring the work of designer and dressmaker Haus Dalia for months, and I was delighted to order a dress from her. She only buys fabric once an order is placed and makes everything to order, which is a very low-impact approach to fashion. Buying locally and keeping skills and know-how alive feels incredibly important to me.

I had originally planned to knit something to wear with the dress, but somehow, as beautiful as Fair Isle knitting is, it didn't feel like the right way to compliment the silk dress. What did feel right was a Shetland lace stole. This one was lent to me by Rachel Hunter, who knitted it herself, a piece that likely took over 300 hours to complete. I was so proud to wear it and to share her extraordinary skills with anyone who laid eyes on it.

As part of its programme, the King's Foundation teaches six skills that appear on the Red List of Endangered Crafts published by Heritage Crafts. Wearing Shetland lace, which is also on the Red List, felt particularly fitting.

Being in Windsor Castle, surrounded by so many passionate and prominent figures, was a real honour. The documentary screening could have felt like a celebration of an achievement, but instead there was a strong

sense that this was only the beginning, a moment of inspiration to take back and act upon - even if that simply means spending more time than usual walking in nature this week.

Marie, Taft

NO CHAPEL SERVICE THIS WEEK

Important information for Good Shepherd IV passengers. Please see the following notice from the SIC regarding passenger numbers until the new boat arrives:



Shetland Islands Council

Director: John R Smith

Marine & Air Operations
Infrastructure Services Department
Port Administration Building
Sella Ness
Sullom Voe
ZE2 9QR

Telephone: 01595 244200
Fax: 01806 244232
Infrastructure@shetland.gov.uk
www.shetland.gov.uk

If calling please ask for
Alastair Danabie
Direct Dial: 01595 744267
Email:
alastair.danabie@shetland.gov.uk

Our Ref: WB3/GSIV
Your Ref:

Date: 26th January 2026

Dear Ian,

Following a change in legislation applicable to Good Shepherd IV the total persons that the vessel can now carry is limited to 15. As it is necessary to maintain a crew number of 4 to enable efficient working of the vessel and provide the required service then it has been necessary to restrict the number of passengers to 11.

This is a temporary arrangement whereby upon delivery of the new vessel the passenger number will be reinstated to 12 persons.

We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause to service users.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alastair Danabie'.

Alastair Danabie
Team Leader Marine Superintendent

cc. Fiona Farquhar, Resources Manager



Our Return to Fair Isle

After seeing Christmas and New Year at our home in Manchester, it was time to return to wonderful Fair Isle and we couldn't wait to get going.

After purchasing our super-duper Nissan Micra, affectionately nicknamed *Sloth*, we set about cramming as much of our life as possible into him. Despite his modest appearance, Sloth is surprisingly spacious, and we even managed to squeeze in our paddleboards.

The journey up to Aberdeen was an eventful one. The wind and rain were fierce, while Sloth's headlights... less so. But eventually we reached the NorthLink ferry terminal, and after a rocking and rolling night at sea, we arrived in Shetland.

It was lovely to be back in Lerwick, and after a beautifully smooth flight we finally touched down on Fair Isle. Seeing all our friends again was simply tremendous.



There have been a few bumps in the road, with building issues leaving us temporarily without heating or water. But the island and its people looked after us in true Fair Isle fashion, making sure we were warm, fed, and able to get a proper wash. Before we knew it, the *Good Shepherd* and its sturdy crew brought Sloth across with all our belongings, and we were able to settle back in at the Bird Observatory.

There's plenty of work ahead, but we're hugely excited for the year to come—with grand openings, weddings, and so many wonderful guests to welcome to this very special place.

We can't wait to get started

Ruth and Steve, at the Obs

Remembering Jim Wallace – by Jimmy at Skerryholm

There will be many memories from the great and the good, remembering Jim Wallace, who died on Thursday, at the age of 71.

Jim will be remembered as a man of faith, a man of his word, a man of high principals. He was a liberal, but never was critical of others persuasions. He was a keen advocate for Scottish Devolution and instrumental in setting up the Scottish Parliament in 1999, with Donald Dewar as First Minister, and himself as deputy. Following the sudden death of Donald Dewar, he temporarily held the role of First Minister, a position he filled on two further occasions.

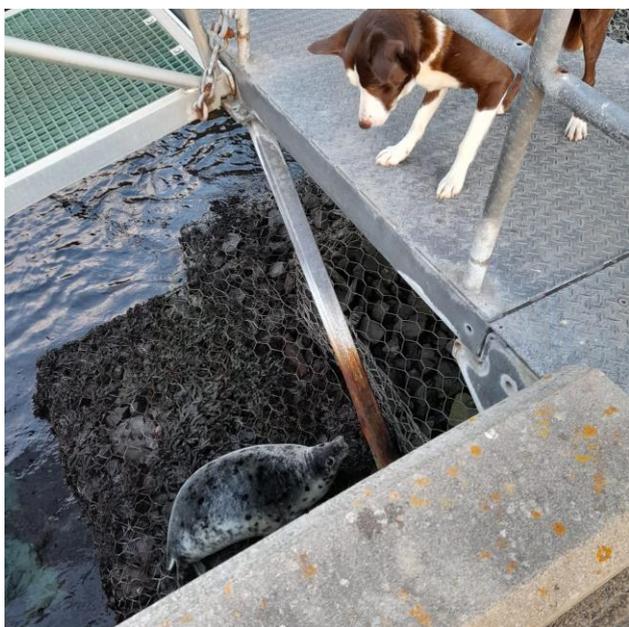
He was MP for Orkney and Shetland from 1986 until Scottish Devolution, after which he became MSP for Orkney.

After retiring he became Lord Wallace and served in the House of Lords, becoming Lord Advocate for Scotland.

A devout Christian, he was only the second non-ordained minister to be chosen as Moderator of the Church of Scotland in 2020. With a love of music, he was a member of the choir at the Cathedral of St Magnus in Kirkwall, and as recently as this Christmas, was singing in the choir of Dunblane Cathedral. For those who knew him, even for those like myself who would not claim to know him well, he would always recognise you, and be more than willing to make that acquaintance known. A man of the people, for the people.

Allow me to end this small tribute on a personal note: The chairman of the Liberal association in Shetland was Theo Nicholson, who I knew well, through his job as an engineer with HNP Engineers in Lerwick. Ironically, and sadly, Theo also died a week past. Some years ago now, myself and my late wife Florrie (who, incidently was a fully paid up member of the Liberal Party) were, along with Theo and his wife, at Hollyrood attending the Queen's garden party. Through the Nicholsons, we met up with Jim Wallace. As we were departing the 'park', laughing and joking about such a gathering on a blashy, showery afternoon in Edinburgh, you could see so many people recognising one of the most well kent faces in Scotland. There were six of us, plus Jim and those recognising Jim must have wondered who this bunch of hoodlums were, but Jim was with us and as they say, we were "aa Jack Tamson's bairns" and he, for all of his high profile, was very much part of that, and proud of it.

Jim Wallace will be remembered as s stalwart of modern Scottish politics, but he was more than that.....he was a good man.



Caption competition answers, thanks for coming up with these!

"Are you coming in for a dram?" *Steve at the Obs*

"...and is it true you get fed chocolate biscuits?!"

Jonnie at the Obs

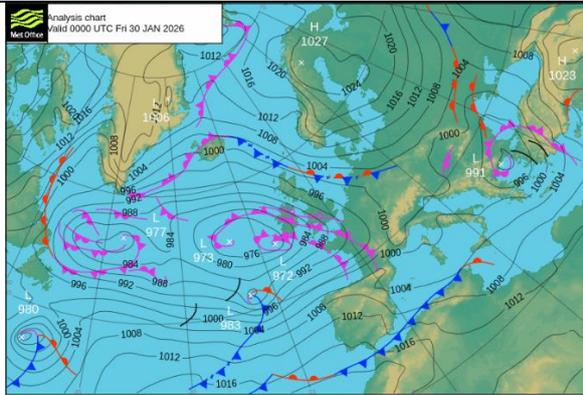
"And as seen here, the **Fair Isle Dug**™ also comes in a Fishing model" *Jonnie at the Obs*

"Don't know what the boss thinks I can do with that funny lamb..." *Eileen at Houll*

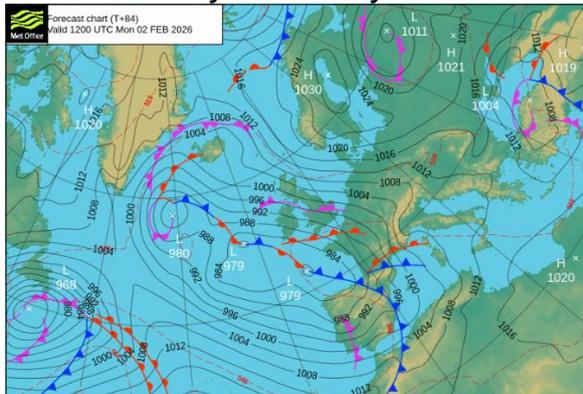
"Surely I'm not your father as well??"

Eileen at Houll

FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST



**Analysis Chart 0000 UTC
Friday 30th January 2026**



**Forecast Chart 1200 UTC
Monday 2nd February 2026**

GENERAL SITUATION

Friday 30th January 2026

Low pressure west of the British Isles and high pressure across Scandinavia maintains a strong to near gale, cold south-easterly airflow across northeast Scotland and the Northern Isles. As both low pressure and high pressure are predicted to change little this situation is expected to persist over the weekend and through most of next week.

OUTLOOK FOR THE WEEKEND

Cold with temperatures 3° to 5° by day, 2° to 4° overnight. A significant wind-chill as strong winds persist.

FRIDAY 30th: Some brighter spells otherwise cloudy with occasional outbreaks of mostly light rain or sleet accompanied by a raw F6-7 ESE wind. Little change overnight. **Sea State:** Very rough at SE 5 metre.

SATURDAY 31st: Another cloudy day. Outbreaks of sleet in the morning changing to light rain by afternoon. F6-7 ESE winds. **Sea State:** Mostly very rough at SE 5 metre.

SUNDAY 1st: Remaining cloudy and windy with rain or sleet. F6-7 SE winds. **Sea State:** Mostly rough occasionally very rough at SE 4 to 5 metre

FORECAST FOR NEXT WEEK

Cold with temperature 3° or 4° by day, 2° or 3° overnight.

MONDAY 2nd: Cloudy with patchy light drizzle dying out then drier though colder. Fresh or strong SE winds. **Sea State:** Mostly very rough at SE 5 to 6 metre.

TUESDAY 3rd: Cloudy cold and windy with scattered snow showers and continuing fresh or strong SE winds. **Sea State:** Mostly very rough at SE 5 metre.

WEDNESDAY 4th– SUNDAY 8th : Remaining cold and cloudy with further mainly light sleet or snow showers. Strong SE winds, perhaps gale force at times perhaps easing by the weekend. **Sea State Wednesday:** Very rough at SE 5 to 6 metre.

Dave Wheeler