

FAIR ISLE TIMES

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Fair Isle Primary School News



My Birthday

(Written by Khalicee – aged 6).

I had a birthday party in the hall. I enjoyed everything. My cake was delicious. I wanted to eat it all. I turned six and had the best time.

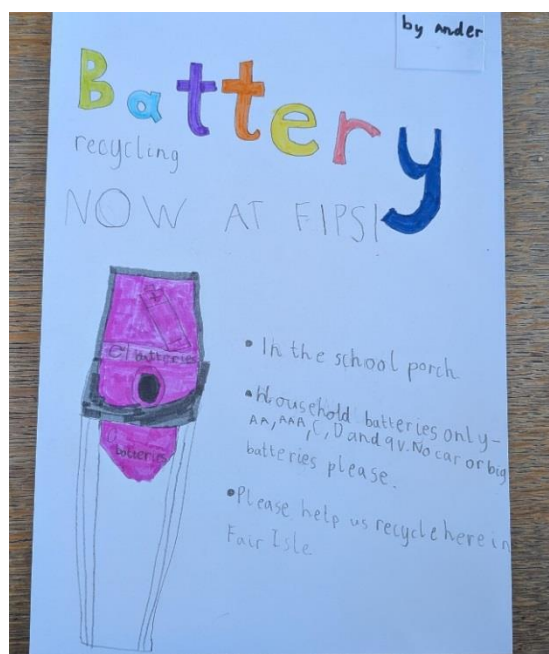


A big **Happy Birthday** to the lovely Khalicee from her friends and teachers at Fair Isle Primary School.

Now, for some other exciting news from the school. Starting with Da Voar Redd Up, which you are all very welcome to join us for. See this superb poster from Luca (11) for more information...



And, rather excitingly, we now have a **battery recycling point** here in Fair Isle, at the school. It is situated in the porch of our building and you are welcome to start putting batteries in it from now. A big thank you to the ferry crew for bringing it in and to Andrew for helping with future emptying and transporting. Please see this equally superb poster from Ander (8) for more information and rules on what sort of batteries can go



inside it.

This week's *week dat's awa* comes from Maebh, who is back in the isle after an adventurous star to the year...

It's been just under a month since I arrived back in Fair Isle, and I've never been happier to be back somewhere. Winter passed in a blur of eating, drinking, trying (and failing) to get a job, and multiple crash courses in birding from Luke. There were lots of things I missed about home (my dog and takeaways mainly), but there were lots more things I missed about Fair Isle. Basingstoke, where my parents live, is notable only for its roundabouts, which just about sums up how exciting it is as a place.

Whilst the prospect of returning to Fair Isle felt so distant when we returned home in November, the months passed so quickly, and March soon rolled around. I had spent a lot of the winter receiving job rejection after job rejection (an experience I would happily never repeat again) and so, at the beginning of February, I had decided that I needed a holiday.

Perhaps ill-advisedly (thanks to Luke's allergy to all things sesame), I had settled on a trip to China, a place I have always wanted to visit and which, with my Irish passport (thanks Grandad!), I was able to visit Visa free. It's a daunting thing planning a visit to a country that is so different; China doesn't even use Google which made things like researching and planning really hard sometimes. Still, with the help of Luke (who found lots of birding hotspots), we had three weeks planned in March, and after a couple of trips to London, we had Luke's Visa secured.

After a ten hour flight, across the mountains and plains of Russia and Mongolia, we arrived in Beijing, giving the Chinese government our fingerprints before a taxi whisked us to our hotel. From Beijing (where I spent my 25th birthday on the Great Wall of China), we went to Chengdu, Hainan, Shenzhen, Lake Poyang, and Shanghai in a whirlwind of trains and taxis and planes. The temperature varied, from freezing cold in Beijing to tropical sun in Hainan, an island in the South of China.

Luke, of course, wanted to see as many birds as possible and admittedly the birds we saw in China were very cool, colourful and chirpy with something new pretty much everywhere we went. We also managed to attract many an odd look from the people of China. One hotel receptionist (with the help of a translation app) remarked on the fact that Luke was wearing shorts – she couldn't believe that anybody would wear shorts in March and told us that it is thought of as unhealthy in Chinese culture, which prioritises keeping the body warm. Other people were also astounded by the sight of Luke in shorts, with one elderly lady circling round him, making a loud astonished 'oooooh' sound as she pointed him out to her friends. Others asked for selfies. Despite China becoming more easy to travel for foreigners, we were often the only foreign tourists anywhere we went, and therefore got so much attention, with one group of men following us down the street, smiling and waving at us and coming to say 'hello' multiple times.

It was possibly the most exhausting holiday I've ever been on, and once we had arrived back at Luke's house I slept more than I've ever slept in my life, passing out on the sofa whilst he planned his travel back to Fair Isle. We ate all of the food we had missed (the pizza we ate in Chinese Pizza Hut had been oddly sweet and did not hit the spot the way good old British pizza does), and slept lots before Luke started his journey up to Shetland and I attended an (ill-fated) job interview in London, in which I almost definitely flashed the interviewers as I sat down on their stupidly low sofa.

Even after seeing as much of China as we could physically cram into seventeen days, there is nowhere like home, and coming back to the Bird Obs for another season has felt a bit like a homecoming. I've gotten back into the familiar rhythm of housekeeping, changing over rooms and doing laundry, and spending my afternoon breaks reacquainting myself with the island and with Alice's fitness classes (in a much unfitter state than when I left last year). I can't wait to see what the rest of the season will hold.

Photos of Maebh and Luke's trip below!





Thanks to all those who submitted light-hearted suggestions for what to call the temporary accommodation block at the Puffinn (*installed for the team of contractors working at the pier*). Here are some of the best...

- SouthBAMton David at Shirva
- Fair Isle City Centre
- City of Skaden
- BAM Village all Naomi in Boston
- Patrick BAMford Luca at Houll

Cruise ship season begins a week on Monday – 4th of May. I took fewer bookings this year due to the works at the Haven meaning we are once more reliant on the South Harbour for landing guests. The Hall and Museum will be open for visits (timings TBC) so all visitors to the isle are very welcome. For any more information, please ask. Thanks, Eileen at Houll

☐

04/05/26		Ocean Explorer
07/05/26		Silver Endeavour
15/05/26		Sea Spirit

17/05/26		Greg Mortimer
19/05/26		Greg Mortimer
20/05/26		Sea Spirit
02/06/26		Sylvia Earle
03/06/26		Ocean Nova
05/06/26		Ocean Nova (CA)
08/06/26		Silver Wind
20/06/26		Hanseatic Spirit
27/06/26		Seabourn Venture
28/06/26		Hebridean Sky
30/06/26		Hebridean Sky
18/07/26		Scenic Eclipse



MEET THE TEAM building the Good Shepherd V. Thanks to the Parkol team for another introduction to those key in building the new Good Shepherd V.

This week we meet Andrew Oliver – Director & Engineering Manager.

Son of Parkol's founder – late John Oliver, Andrew joined Parkol from school and went to work with his father as an apprentice engineer in 1998, completing a five-year specialist marine engineering training programme which included six months at the well-regarded South Tyneside Marine College. Andrew became a Director in 2013 and took over as Engineering Manager from his late father. He is responsible for overseeing all of Parkol's engineering activities, leading a team of experienced marine engineers.

Andrew is proud of Parkol's leading industry reputation and relishes the opportunity his role brings for him to continually trial new ideas. In his own words:

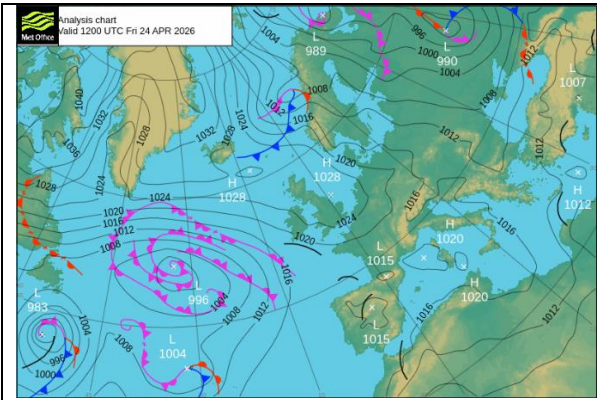


“My dad was very much a marine engineering expert and my mentor, and I learned all my skills from him. This represents everything I've ever wanted to do since I was young. I would watch my dad at work during the school holidays and share his fascination with boats, so it was inevitable that I would follow in his footsteps. I feel very proud to be carrying on my dad's legacy and hope that I can also pass it on to my children, if that's what they decide they want to do.”

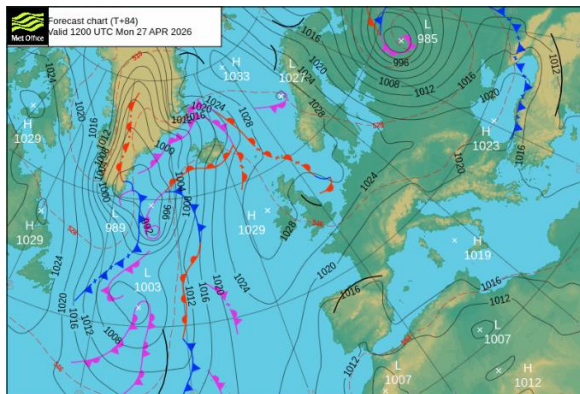
Below: The North Haven was very busy on Tuesday evening with the enormous P7 barge arriving atop another barge, towed by the BK Marine Marjorie and Dolphin. The Good Shepherd IV arrived back to berth at the south side of the old pier, in very little water. A yacht added to the traffic



FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST



**Analysis Chart 1200 UTC
Friday 24th April 2026**



**Forecast Chart 1200 UTC
Monday 27th April 2026**

GENERAL SITUATION Friday 24th April 2026

With a large area of high pressure covering the British Isles settled conditions with near-average temperatures are expected to continue. The clear skies of the last two days resulted grass frosts the past two nights (-3.7° and -3.4°. By early next week, as high pressure weakens across the north of Scotland, a moderate southerly airflow may bring some brighter conditions.

Later in the week the high may be moving away across the North Sea as an Atlantic low tracks towards Ireland resulting in a freshening southerly airflow. Towards the weekend we may see rain as Atlantic fronts push towards northwest Scotland.

OUTLOOK FOR THE WEEKEND Temperatures 8° to 10° by day 5° overnight.

SATURDAY 25th: Rather cloudy with risk of a light shower first thing. Perhaps brighter later with some sunny spells. A F4 NNE breeze. **Sea State:** Moderate at N 2 metre.

SUNDAY 26th: Mostly cloudy though dry with a F4 SE wind. **Sea State:** Moderate or rough at NNE 2 to 3 metre.

FORECAST FOR NEXT WEEK Temperatures 10° or 11° by day, 7° or 8° overnight.

MONDAY 27th: Cloudy with chance of a few showers but also some brighter spells. A moderate occasionally fresh SW breeze. **Sea State:** Mostly slight at NNE 1 metre.

TUESDAY 28th: Drier and brighter with a moderate SW breeze. **Sea State:** Mostly slight at NNE 1 metre.

WEDNESDAY 29th– SUNDAY 3rd: Wednesday and Thursday mostly cloudy though mainly dry with moderate S winds. The end of the week perhaps cloudy with chance of rain and freshening S winds. **Sea State Wednesday:** Mostly moderate at W 2 metre.

Dave Wheeler

