



# The Children's Living Well Locally Plan for the North Isles, Shetland

**2025**

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document, the Children and Teenagers' Living Well Locally Plan for the North Isles Shetland, contains the output of a week of engagement with the four schools in the North Isles and serves as the first step in identifying the actions required to ensure that the North Isles, as a place, can meet the needs of its children and teenagers as far as possible. This plan should form part of all initial considerations of all stakeholders who are looking to undertake work in the North Isles of Shetland to ensure that the needs of children and young people can be met or aligned with as far as possible, at every opportunity.
- 1.2 This plan should be considered as a foundational document in understanding the broader place context for the North Isles from both a child and community perspective. This is based on the principle of that through understanding and prioritising the needs of children and young people, we can create local places which work better for everyone, including the elderly and those with mobility issues.
- 1.3 As this document has interdepartmental and cross sectoral actions, we consider that the **responsibility for implementation sits with elected members and an associated working group, made of up of a mix of both local authority officers, community stakeholders and any other relevant associated organisations**. This will reduce the risk of actions becoming siloed into specific departments and support ongoing community engagement, as well as supporting shared ownership of accountability to the children.

## 2. The Project

- 2.1 In May 2025, A Place in Childhood worked with young people to create **Living Well Locally Plans for the North Isles, Shetland**. The purpose of the engagement was:
  - To develop an informed understanding of what young people like and dislike about their place.
  - Understand how they move around and through their place.
  - Identify any barriers to movement; and
  - Identify opportunities to improve their place.
- 2.2 To fulfil the purpose, APiC attended four youth-led bus tours and facilitated experiential mappings of Unst, North Yell, Mid Yell and South Yell with approximately 44 local children and teenagers. Respectively, these tours involved pupils from Baltasound Junior High (P6,7 & S1-2 (16)), Cullivoe Primary (Whole School (12)) Mid-Yell Junior High (P6,7) (12), and Burravoe Primary (Whole School (4)).
- 2.3 **A follow-up 1.5-hour Showcase Event and workshop was held on the 15th May 2025** in the gym hall at Yell Leisure Centre. Thirty six pupils from all four schools - a significant majority of all who had participated in the tours and experiential mapping - presented their plans and priorities to a number of key stakeholders. These included representatives of the Council and local anchor organisations who have the influence to make some of the priorities and improvements in the plan happen. Attendees can be noted in section 4 of this document and were happy to continue to participate as future working group members for the plan.
- 2.4 Between **2<sup>nd</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> June**, the draft plans were shared with all four schools for validation by participants. In the case of the two Junior High Schools, a feedback form was also issued to all pupil Glow accounts to ensure **every young person in the North Isles had the opportunity to view, comment on, or challenge the content. All respondents confirmed the plans accurately reflected their views, with no objections raised**. A small number of additional suggestions were submitted and have since been incorporated.
- 2.5 **An online stakeholder workshop was convened on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July** to review and discuss the final plans, including two showcase attendees, and another council officer with an interest in the findings (also included in section 4 of this document).
- 2.6 This document contains the outputs from the Engagement and includes an updated Action Plan and a Policy Map identifying the policy opportunities for utilising the plan to inform the multiple departmental and third-party decisions relating to place, community, and economic development in the North Isles.

### 3. Recognising and Protecting the Unique Character of the North Isles

3.1 The following are things and assets that the local children and young people articulated as being of vital importance to their lives in the North Isles. Each of these can be seen in their full place context and detail in each school's plan, detailed in the Appendix. These should be understood by all those supporting the implementation of their Plan:

- **Our important places and assets** — the names and locations of which we have mapped in our plans — which define life in each area and hold meaning for young people.
- **A strong sense of community**, where people know each other, look out for one another, and come together across islands, villages and generations. We also value the local organisations, committees, community councils and volunteers whose time and commitment help keep this spirit strong.
- **The islands are safe places to grow up**, offering freedom, independence and the ability to roam, play and learn in ways many children elsewhere cannot.
- **Our culture of trust, respect and responsibility**, where young people feel valued and are given space by adults to develop confidence and decision-making.
- **Our deep and practical “superhero” life skills**, passed down through generations, and mastered at a young age by us — including crofting, fishing, farming, boating, DIY, construction, vehicle repair, knitting and more.
- **Our ability to turn the landscape into places for play through imagination** — including our fields, beaches, burns, trees, castles and historical sites — which are part of our everyday play worlds and not just things to visit or preserve.
- **Our everyday connection with nature**, from watching local wildlife, crofting, climbing and playing outdoors to participating in environmental clean-ups.
- **Our events, gatherings and gathering places**, including agricultural shows, Up Helly Aa festivals, regattas, and social nights in community halls. We love all the places that bring people together, including schools, halls, youth clubs and cafés, leisure facilities, and playparks.
- **Creative expression and cultural heritage**, including access to historic sites, local art and sculpture, and opportunities to celebrate history through play and learning.
- **Vital infrastructure**, including our local shops and bus companies, and ferries which support daily life and sustain our community and enable it to function.

### 4. Children’s Living Well Locally Priorities for the North Isles, Shetland (consolidated)

4.1 The following summary groups priorities shared by young people across the North Isles into broad themes. While not exhaustive, it offers a useful overview of common priorities identified across the North Isles. It is strongly recommended that this summary be read in conjunction with the Maps and Plans presented in the Appendix, which provide the detailed, place-based context and meaning behind each theme.

#### 4.2 Community Sustainability Priorities

- Support local organisations, committees, and community councils.
- Maintain a safe environment to support young people’s independence and freedom.
- Preserve cultural heritage, creative expression, and practical skills, including crofting, fishing, farming, DIY, and traditional crafts.
- Protect and engage with the natural environment through outdoor activities and community clean-ups.
- Maintain and enhance places for play and gathering
- Increase the number of young people living in the North Isles.
- Address the loss of childcare services which impacts household incomes and population retention.
- Explore sustainable and affordable childcare options to support families relocating to or remaining in the North Isles.
- Expand community food growing capacity, including investment in community polytunnels.

- Enable and support community renewable energy projects, including offshore wind, solar, and tidal energy.
- Support woodland planting, community gardens, ecological regeneration, and school-based rewilding projects.

#### 4.3 Play and Recreation Priorities

- Maintain and enhance play parks and play equipment, particularly at Burra Park (Mid-Yell), Haroldswick, and Baltasound Junior High School (Unst).
- Provide outdoor and indoor play resources at community halls, with Cullivoe as a high priority.
- Enable use of public or community buildings as indoor hangout spaces for teenagers, especially in winter.
- Support greater youth socialisation during weekends and holidays to address isolation.
- Improve coordination and scheduling of youth activities across islands.
- Explore shared calendars, transport solutions, and resources for a dedicated youth activity coordinator.

#### 4.4 Transport-based Priorities

- Create, maintain, and improve active travel routes and paths, including:
  - Pavement improvements in Baltasound between the SHE housing estate and the play park/school/shop.
  - A safe path in Cullivoe connecting the primary school to the hall/shop.
  - An accessible path down to Breckon Beach in Cullivoe.
  - A track to Galtagarth Beach in Burravoe.
- Support fixed tunnel links between Mainland and Yell, and Yell and Unst
- Address reliability and capacity issues with ferry services.

#### 4.5 Housing Priorities

- Increase the availability of affordable housing, especially in Unst.
- Consider policies to address the impact of second homes on local housing availability.
- Invest in visitor accommodation to support tourism and provide employment opportunities for young people.

#### 4.6 Health and Emergency Response Priorities

- Improve access to regular first aid and emergency response training for young people.
- Maintain helipads near populated areas to enable air ambulance access during emergencies or ferry disruption.

## 5. Attendee Stakeholders & Potential Working Group

5.1 A number of key stakeholders attended the Showcase Event, where the young people were able to provide an in-depth overview of their priorities, and / or the follow-up Online Stakeholder Workshop. The attendees have been noted below as the first step in progressing action on the priorities identified in the plans. This may also serve as a way of identifying the relevant members of any future working group who may be responsible for delivering the priorities of the plan in the short, medium and long term.

Showcase Event Attendees		
Name	Email	Organisation
██████████	████████████████████	SIC – Planning
██████████	████████████████████	SIC - Community Involvement & Development Officer
██████████	████████████████████	SIC Outdoor Access Officer
██████████	████████████████████	North Yell Development Council
██████████	████████████████████	Yell Community Council

		Unst Partnership
██████████	████████████████████	

## 6. Key Priorities and Actions identified in the Showcase Event

6.1 The Showcase Event served as an opportunity for the children involved in creating their plans to discuss their key priorities with the stakeholders. Below is a summary of the key actions and next steps identified as part of the Showcase.

Ref	Priority	Key Contact	Action	Delivery Timescales (Short 0-6m, Medium 6m-12m and Long Term 12m +)	Related Priorities
KA1	Maintenance and upgrading of play parks	██████████ (SIC Play Officer)	Frances Browne offered to arrange a meeting between North Isles young people to discuss play equipment priorities across the isles, particularly Burra Park, and Haroldswick	Short	U1, U2, U4, U5, MY1,
KA2	Play opportunities at community halls	██████████ / Local Hall Committees / NYDC	Inform Community Hall Committees of young people's play equipment priorities; explore funding opportunities.	Short	NYPBC1, MY3
KA3	Path Maintenance – Baltasound	██████████ / North Isles County Boys	Explore improved maintenance of roadside path between SHE estate and Baltasound school/play park/shop	Short	U4
KA4	Path creation – Cullivoe	██████████ (SIC Active Travel) / ██████████ (NYDC)	Confirm status of Cullivoe path in Active Travel Strategy and liaise on follow-up	Medium	NYPBC2
KA5	Path access – Breckon Sands	██████████ Ability Shetland	Provide an update to Cullivoe School on Breckon Sands path challenges (environmental / engineering) and explore offroad wheelchair access solutions (Ability Shetland)	Medium	NY3
KA6	Path access – Galtagarth Beach	██████████ (Yell CC)	Support Community Council's efforts to progress Galtagarth Beach track improvements, already in development	Medium	SY1
KA7	Indoor spaces for teenagers	Baltasound Hall Committee / Youth Services / Frances Browne	Potential in Baltasound to develop proposal to trial youth access to community halls for weekend or winter hangouts, using recent sleepover at the school as precedent	Medium	U3

<b>KA8</b>	Youth activity coordination	Youth Services / Hall Committees / [REDACTED]	Potential to convene meeting between youth reps, hall committees and potentially Leisure Centres to discuss coordination of calendar and activity spaces, and resourced coordinator	Medium	MY2
<b>KA9</b>	Scheduling and coordination of youth activities	Community Council and Other Community Organisations	Explore feasibility of providing community transport to convey young people to and from youth activities, particularly is shared calendar / resourced coordinator / improved programme scheduling is achievable	Medium	MY2
<b>KA10</b>	Holiday activity provision	Community Development / Children's Services	Potential opportunity to couch youth summer activity programmes under the umbrella of additional childcare funding	Short	MY2, SY5
<b>KA11</b>	Fixed links (tunnel advocacy)	Tunnel Action Group	Inform Tunnel Action Group of strong youth support and rationale	Medium	U6, MY7, SY2
<b>KA12</b>	Strategic transport infrastructure	SIC Planning?	Potential to feed youth evidence into Shetland Inter-Island Connectivity Study	Medium / Long	U6, MY7, SY2
<b>KA13</b>	Community renewable energy	SIC Climate & Sustainability / NYDC	Involve young people in consultations and planning around community renewables	Medium	U7.2, MY5
<b>KA14</b>	Woodland regeneration	[REDACTED] (Shetland Amenity Trust)	Explore partnership to support tree planting and woodland regeneration, where rewilding school grounds may be low-hanging fruit	Medium	U9, MY6
<b>KA15</b>	Ecological restoration	NYDC / Unst Partnership / Community Development	Publicise young people's rewilding proposals to landowners to explore potential land access or availability for regeneration or planting	Medium	U9, MY6
<b>KA16</b>	Affordable housing and second home policy	SIC Planning / NYDC / Unst Partnership / Community Councils	Feed youth housing ideas / concerns into Local Place Plan and assessments	Long	U8
<b>KA17</b>	Emergency response training for schoolchildren	NHS / Youth Services / Unst Partnership / Blyde Welcome / Schools / [REDACTED]	Explore options for youth-specific first responder or emergency training	Medium	U10, SY4

## 7. Policies, Plans And Activities Relevant to Implementation

7.1 Noted below are a range of policy and plan documents and key groups which can utilise the plan document as it aligns closely with their aims and objectives. These policy, plans and groups will also be crucial in delivering some of the actions identified in this plan.

Organisation	Sector	Policy/Plans/Strategies	Lead Contact	Alignment/Opportunity
Shetland Islands Council	Planning	Local Development Plans	██████████	This Plan can contribute to the aims of LDP through identifying key priorities and actions which support the LDP objective of supporting better access across the Islands, supporting sustainable and active transport solutions, such as by foot, cycle and public transport, and enabling people to access services, employment and other opportunities. The Plan provides a direct insight as to what the key issues of place are across the North Isles for children and teenagers and can serve to provide deeper focus as to the key planning issues which exist in the area including, planning for recreation needs, housing, sustainable transport, community development, economic growth, biodiversity and sustainability
		Plan Shetland (the next LDP)		The Plan provide a foundation for ongoing engagement with children and teenagers to establish further insights as to what are the key issues relating to the Westside as a place which Plan Shetland can address which can inform the Proposed Plan document. This would also align with duties under the most recent Planning (Scotland) Act which requires the Planning Authority to consult with children and young people on the Proposed Plan document, or another appropriate stage of plan development.
		Local Place Plans	██████████	The Plan provides a rich and detailed picture of place from the perspectives of children, including how each place relates to each other in the broader context of a rural area. We consider that this Plan can serve as a strong foundation from which any Local Place Plan can be built.
		Play Sufficiency Assessment		The Plans identify that some play areas and other spaces where play takes place require some additional, mostly small, interventions to make them the best they can be. This includes diversification and upgrading of equipment, supporting accessibility and further maintenance. This plan can serve as an evidence base to inform the context of how children feel about the places they play in the local area, including the play parks, and (particularly) community halls, but also places like beaches, fields, piers, heritage centres (e.g. Haroldswick and Burravoe) and historical sites (e.g. Muness Castle and the Haroldswick Viking Longhouse and Longship).
	Roads	Roads Planning Priorities	██████████	The Plan identifies issues relating to pavements, paths, active travel, and public transport which can be utilised as a starting point for conversations with children and the community about the key interventions required to support active lifestyles and private vehicle journeys as far as possible.
	Transport	Shetland Transport Strategy 2022-2042 Development	██████████ ██████████	
		Shetland Transport Strategy Refresh 2018-2028		
		Shetland Active Travel Strategy 2021-2026		
	Climate & Sustainability	Shetland Climate Change Strategy 2023–2027		The Plan supports priorities on renewable energy, tree planting, ecological restoration, and community resilience identified across the North Isles.
	Housing	Local Housing Strategy 2022–2027		The Plan could inform affordable housing policies, second home issues, and supports evidence from the North Isles regarding housing pressures.
Community Learning & Development	CLD Plan 2024–2027		The Plan supports youth participation, lifelong learning, and community empowerment. The priorities also reflect a key will for community development as a priority, including enhanced youth work opportunities.	

<b>Amenity Trust</b>	<b>Planting</b>	Tree Planting	██████████	The Plan identifies young people's ambition for further tree planting in each of their areas, acknowledging the benefits of tree planting for biodiversity, shelter belts and for recreation and enjoyment.
<b>Shetland Tourism Strategy Group</b>	<b>Tourism</b>	Shetland Tourism Strategy Refresh 2024–2026		The Plan identifies relevant visitor infrastructure, sustainable tourism development, and youth employment opportunities.
<b>NHS Shetland &amp; SIC</b>	<b>Health &amp; Social Care</b>	HSCP Joint Strategic Plan 2025–2028		The Plan aligns with priorities for active lifestyles, safe environments, mental health, and community wellbeing.
<b>Community Councils</b>		Ongoing meetings		

## 8. Conclusion and next steps

- 8.1 The aim of this document is to provide a starting point for anyone engaging in place-based projects in North Isles to gain an understanding of the perspective and ambitions of the children living across the area. The Plan outlines the priorities for action and seeks to actively identify opportunities for alignment with additional ongoing projects and offer information to feed into policy development and support interventions.
- 8.2 This plan also serves as a starting point for long-term engagement with children and teenagers living in the area, with opportunities to revisit the plans in years to come to identify changes in the area and update priorities. Furthermore, the creation and implementation of the plan offers stakeholders a legacy for communication and engagement with children and teenagers to support their participation in decision-making that affects their lives, and aligns with the Council's duties under the UNCRC, which was recently adopted into Scottish law.

## 9. Appendix: Full North Isles Plans: Unst, North Yell, Mid-Yell and South Yell.

- 9.1 The following appendices provide each school's plan for their specific area which consists of a map of important tangible and intangible assets, and a list of priorities drawn together by the participating pupils. The maps provide an outline of the tour designed by the participants and contains information in relating to their experiences of the area. The maps can be used to provide depth and context to the priorities identified by the children and teenagers and provide insight as to the experience of growing up in the different areas of the North Isles.
  - Unst– Local Living Plan (Baltasound Junior High)
  - North Yell– Local Living Plan (Cullivoe Primary)
  - Mid-Yell– Local Living Plan (Mid-Yell Junior High)
  - South Yell – Local Living Plan (Burravoe Primary)
- 9.2 It is important to note that all four schools emphasised the importance of assets featured in each other's plans — such as community halls, leisure centres, and beaches. This cross-referencing reinforced a strong sense of Yell, and the North Isles as a whole, as a larger interrelated and interdependent community. However, with two exceptions — consistent across all four schools — all referenced assets remained within the North Isles themselves. Both in Lerwick, there were the Clickimin Leisure Complex — particularly its swimming pool — and Anderson High School. These were both universally regarded as important for young people's lives, and Anderson High was described as a kind of rite-of-passage: a shared anchor point in the wider experience of growing up in Shetland.

# UNST (Baltasound Pupils') Local Living Plan: What we think of the local area

KEY What's Important / Good? ■ \*Projects / Improvements? ■ Environmental Projects ■

\*Combines "What's Missing / Could be Better?" & "Things to Change" (in line with Cullivoe Plan)

## WHAT WE AGREE IS SPECIAL ABOUT UNST & IMPORTANT TO PROTECT:

- We might live in different villages, but we're a **strong united community**
- We are a **safe island**
- Our **freedom** and **independence**
- The **trust, respect** and **responsibility** given to us from a young age by adults.
- Our **"superhero" skills**: including *crofting, animal handling, house insulation, fishing, boating, climbing quad biking, knitting* and *DIY*.
- That **we're allowed to use our historical places for playing and hanging out**, including *Muness Castle*, and the Haroldswick *Viking Long Ship / House*, and *Heritage Centre*.
- **Our cultural events**: including our week-long *Unst Festival*, the *Unst (agricultural) Show*, and *Up Helly Aa*.
- Our **community gatherings** and the places -school and halls- which enable these.

**Muckle Flugga**, the most northerly lighthouse (and point) in the UK

Protecting our heads on the Saxaness **Bonxie** (and Planetary) **Trail**

**NORWICK community and beach** (another of Unst's finest)

**Baltasound Playpark**: Pretty good (!), but we'd love a basketswing or zipline so there's something more for teenagers and older primaries (see 'Priorities' below).

**Baltasound Jr High**: We have no play equipment at the school and we can't access a great play area due to a wee bridge deemed 'unsafe' (see 'Priorities' below).

**Leisure Centre**: we'd all love a rugby pitch (see 'Priorities' below)

**Youth Social Space**: We love our youth club, but it's only one night, teenagers would love access to community space on weekends or during winter, with agreed rules.

**Improve paths**: grass and weeds mean paths are too narrow for wheelchairs and pushchairs, e.g. for anyone want to get to the playpark from the SHE estate

**HAROLDSWICK**:

- **Playpark**: Important, and the one in Unst we all agree most needs improvement
- **The Viking Longship and Longhouse**: celebrating our history as well as a great place to play
- Our annual **Unst Show** (agricultural)
- **Unst Heritage Centre**, where we like to hang out as well as learn about our island culture and history
- **Haroldswick Community Hall**: the biggest on Unst
- **Victoria's Vintage Tea Rooms**.

**BALTASOUND JUNIOR HIGH UNST PLAN**

**The White Wife of Watlee**, our ghostly hitchhiker

**Leisure Centre**: we'd all love a rugby pitch (see 'Priorities' below)

**Uyeasound Playpark**: we're not asking much, only that the very rusty swing chains are replaced (see 'Priorities' below)

**Lund**: one of our best sandy beaches and site of the biggest standing stone in Shetland

**Our ferry port**, our essential connection to Shetland

We worry about our dependency on ferries. They are often full; when one isn't working it affects essentials, work and medical support. We think it is important to plan for the future, and that a **tunnel** is the reliable solution

**Uyeasound playpark, pier, galley shed and hall**

**Muness Castle**: our own castle to play in with **Sandwick beach** nearby

**Skaw Beach**, the best on Unst, including the old WWII buildings which are fun to play in

**Our Shops**: nFinal Checkout; UP Charity Shop, Skibhoul and Ethels, Rock Shop and French Fridge (Uyeasound); Victoria's Team Rooms

**Voar Redd Ups**: our communities working together to keep our island clean

**Baltasound Junior High School**. our school and an important gathering place, although **small play improvements** -some play equipment and repair of a wee bridge- could significantly benefit all young people on the island (see 'Priorities' below)

**The wee burn (near school)** great for wildlife, and to play, jump, rolls, sail siggie boats, and run about

**Youth Club**: great for teenagers on the island though we'd love it if it was on more, and particularly in winter.

Our **Community Hall** and Gatherings

Our **PlayPark**, though there's still space for a basketswing for older children, which would make it perfect!

Our **Marina and Pier**, great for pier jumping and swimming in summer.

**Bobby's Bus Shelter** (and pyramid)

**The lovely Wee Wood and Cemetry at Halligarth House**, great for nature, climbing and relaxing

**Leisure Centre**, our sports facilities and pitches, and swimming pool (and the best netball team!), though we'd love a rugby pitch

## Our Priorities for Local Improvement:

Overall we feel that Unst is a great place to grow up. We give our reasons why in our map above, including both our important places and other reasons why we're a special island. Although Unst is made up of a number of different settlements, these are close enough together for us to feel that we're one big community, where everyone shares in each other's activities and resources. We ask that you see us as we see ourselves when you review our map and priorities.

Below are our priorities for action for making Unst a better and more sustainable place for children and young people to live. We have split these into immediate and longer-term, each in rough order of priority.

### OUR PRIORITIES:

#### Immediate (also our *Play Sufficiency Assessment*)

**U1. Haroldswick Playpark:** The Unst Playpark in most urgent need of attention and render the Haroldswick play provision insufficient, in our view currently. Our climbing frame and slide were recently removed, and have not yet been replaced. Our tyre swing also needs a peerie service, and we are really worried because we've heard that the Council might be considering removing it altogether -because they can't find someone to fix or replace it. Can we please ask for a solution to be found, as by general agreement, it is the best playpark "ride" on the island.

**U2. Baltasound Junior High School / Leisure Centre:** Most importantly, please mend the peerie loch bridge to an area of the school grounds where we love to play, but we're not allowed to at the moment because its unsafe. Secondly, although this is the place where children and young people spend most time together, currently we have no outdoor play equipment. It would enable play for the island children enormously if both of these were addressed. We would also love a rugby pitch, as this is something we are lacking on the island.

**U3. Youth Social Space: We (teenagers)** really enjoy our Monday youth club but would love more opportunity to hangout together on other nights, particularly at the weekend or during the winter. We were wondering if the Council or community might consider us allowing and/or supervised access to the hall or another local space, with agreed rules.

**U4. Baltasound Playpark:** We're really happy with this on the whole, but there is some space where a paddling pool used to be, and we'd love a basket swing or zip line so there's more for the older children to enjoy. Also the pavement between the SHE Estate and the Playpark (and Shop) requires more regular maintenance, as when it gets overgrown it becomes difficult or impossible to use for people using pushchairs, prams or wheelchairs.

**U5. Uyeasound Playpark:** For this to be sufficient all that's needed is for the rusty swing chains to be replaced. For it to be great, we'd love another play feature for older children, such as a basket swing or a zipline.

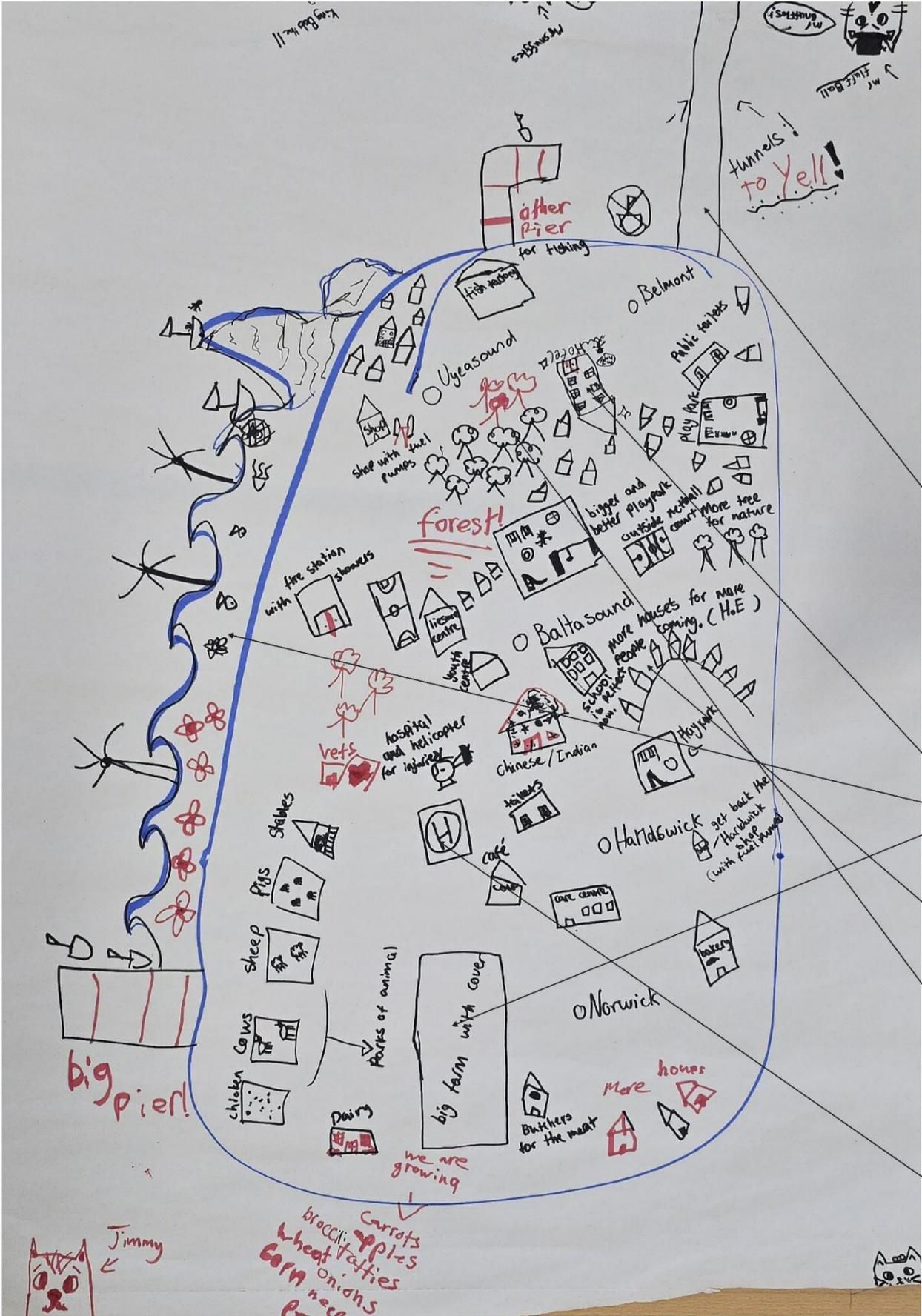


Figure 1: Young People's Spatial Plan: Unst

## **Longer-Term:**

**U6. Tunnel to Yell and Mainland:** While valuing the ferry and the jobs it provides, we were unanimous that a tunnel was the single most important improvement our island needs, because of our dependency on the link for food, emergency care, access to services, the economy (e.g. the spaceport) and tourism.

**U7. Community Enterprise:** In our plan for the island, the next most important thing was to become much more self-sufficient in terms of the essentials

**U7.1. Food:** Community Supported Agriculture (veg, fruit, wheat, sweetcorn, livestock), providing jobs and food for the island.

**U7.2. Energy:** Offshore wind (with marine habitat potential), solar (Saxavord slopes), tidal (Atlantic coast) to power our houses, vehicles and generate income for our other aspirations.

**U7.3. Hotel:** To support the tourist economy, provide jobs and work experience for us, and linked to tunnel benefits.

**U8. Community Housing:** We have been losing homes and property prices are rising beyond the reach of locals because of tourist lets and people coming here to retire. We propose building affordable homes focused in Norwick, Haroldswick, and Uyeasound (a HE development to 'partner' with our SHE development ;-)) for local and young people, and greater control on holiday lets.

**U9. Environmental Restoration:** We propose two ideas (i) to plant a large forest like Halligarth to the south of the island, because we have seen how rich it is in wildlife and (ii) to start a wildlife sanctuary where people can monitor and learn more about the nature of the island, and look after injured animals (e.g. wildcats).

**U10. Medical Facilities:** We want to focus on improving these including (i) have 'first responder' paramedic training for all young people and first aid kits important places so we're able to deal with medical emergencies; and (ii) a helipad so it is easy for the air ambulance to land for sick people or if the ferries cannot run.

**U11. Community Care Strategy:** In managing any money we make from the above, we want to include a strategy which ensures that we take care of people who are struggling or fall on hard times, and of elderly people, so no one is left behind.

# NORTH YELL (Cullivoe Primary Pupils') Local Living Plan: What we think of the local area

**KEY** What's Important / Good? ■ \*Projects / Improvements? ■ Environmental Projects ■

\*Combines "What's Missing / Could be Better?" & "Things to Change" (in line with Cullivoe Plan)

## North Yell Primary Bairns Consultation 2024/2025

North Yell Development Council

**Project 1: Footpaths**  
We would like footpaths to be put in from the school up to the shop. This would make it much safer for us to participate in The Daily Mile each morning. It would also mean that it was more accessible for all pupils to participate in these activities.  
Not only would paths be beneficial for the school bairns but it would make it safer for everyone and encourage people of all ages to participate in active travel options. This would be better for the environment and reduce the number of people using their cars for small journeys around the town.

**Project 2: Poly Tunnels**  
We think it would be nice for the community to have more access to poly tunnels for growing fruit and vegetables.  
The poly tunnels could also be used as a place for bairns to meet and socialise in poor weather.

**Sands of Breckon**  
It would be good to have some more information boards at the beach to tell people about the environment.

**Sands of Breckon**  
We love playing in the sand, swimming and hunting for treasures.

**Sands of Breckon**  
The temporary steps are not accessible to disabled or older people and it is a shame they can't enjoy the beach.

**Play Park**  
We particularly enjoy the swings and the slide.

**Play Park**  
The play park could be more accessible for very little and disabled children, there isn't much fun for them to play with there.

**North Yell Community Shop**  
We like to go to the shop to buy sweets and ice cream in the summer.

**North Yell Community Shop**  
It would be good to have more picnic benches outside or a little cafe to sit in.

**Cullivoe Public Hall**  
We love the Christmas Tree and the Christmas Show each year. We also really like coming to the community lunches.

**Cullivoe Public Hall**  
It would be good to have a play park at the hall and a bairns room with games. It isn't safe for us to play outside at the hall at the moment.

**Sellafirth**  
We enjoy driving about on our quads and working on the croft.

**Gutcher**  
There are great places to walk around my house.

**The Consultation Process**  
The Cullivoe School P3-P6 were engaged in a full day consultation about what is important to them in their local area. They identified 4 main places: The play park, Sands of Breckon, the Shop and the Hall. We went on a walk to these places and they discussed what was important to them and why, as well as possible improvements they would like to see. Once back in the classroom they discussed these points and came up with this map indicating their thoughts and feelings as well as some potential areas of local development.

**Secondary Bairns Consultation**  
During the North Yell Development Council's Junior Members Forum the secondary ages bairns from North Yell were consulted about what was important to them about North Yell and improvements they would like to see. They raised a lot of the same points as the primary bairns and came up with their own priority project.

**Junior Members Project**  
Old Marina Improvements  
We spend a lot of time in the summer down at the Old Marina and we would like to see some improvements to the infrastructure there. We would like a slide from the garages into the water and a lending library of water toys such as kayaks and paddle boards to play with.



**"Grotties Hole"** A great place for hunting cowries

**Coastguards Hut**

**Gloup Memorial:** commemorating the names of the locals lost in the disaster

**CULLIVOE PRIMARY NORTH YELL PLAN**

**Our NYDC WINDMILLS - 'powering' our community,** named by us after 5 boats lost in the Gloup disaster

**MUSSEL BEDS**

**GUTCHER:**

- The **Unst Ferry**
- Our **Charity Shop**, good for finding books, games and clothes
- The two **Gutcher beaches**, which are great for crab-spotting and exploring
- Our local **quarry**

**CULLIVOE (additions to NYPBC)**

- Our **Galley Shed**
- Our **petrol pump, bus garage, and the old bus!**
- Our **strawberry farmer**, and her delicious strawberries
- Our **new Marina, Pier and Business Park**, and the companies (haulage, mussel factory, angling, tourists, and more), jobs and future opportunities it enables for our community and families

Our bus tour of North Yell strengthened our agreement that **PROJECTS 1, 3 and 4** from our NYPBC are our highest priorities (see 'Priorities' below)

See **NORTH YELL PRIMARY BAIRN'S CONSULTATION (NYPBC)**

**Our Natural Environment & Wildlife:** Sheep, chickens, wild animals (seal, orca, otter, stoat, rabbit, crabs), birds (seabirds, skylarks, lapwing, oystercatcher).

**Voe Redd Ups:** our communities working together to keep our island clean



**SELLAFIRTH:**

- The office of our **North Yell Development Trust (NYDT)**: which is responsible for funding many of important things, including the *Cullivoe (new) Marina, Community Shop and Galley Shed*, the *Sellafirth Art Gallery, polytunnels* for community food growing, and the *North Yell Primary Bairns' Consultation*.
- Our **Art Gallery and shows**: supporting, encouraging and celebrating our talented local artists, and providing an attraction for visitors
- The **Yell PO Sorting Office**
- Our **Hall** and the events and gatherings that take place there for the broader community
- Our **Chalets** where people who want to visit our island or go fishing from the Marina can stay.
- Our **Waterworks**, essential for providing clean water for our island
- Our **Art Gallery and shows**: supporting, encouraging and celebrating our talented local artists, and providing an attraction for visitors
- **Waterworks**, essential for providing clean water for our island
- Our community **Polytunnel**
- The **Old Schoolhouse** and it's/our resident young "eggtrepeneur"

## Our Priorities for Local Improvement:

Overall we feel that that North Yell is a great and beautiful place to grow up. We value our strong, safe and independent community, the freedom and skills it gives us, as well as the opportunities provided by our windmills. and the North Yell Development Trust. Those of us who have lived elsewhere realise how lucky we are to have these things.

We had previously discussed and agreed important places and projects in Cullivoe through the North Yell Primary Bairns Consultation (NYBC). The map above shows the NYBC and some additions resulting from our bus tour to visit other communities and places in North Yell.

Our tour strengthened our view that projects we decided through the NYBC were our top priorities. These are as follows, in rough order of importance to all young people living in or visiting North Yell:

### **OUR PRIORITIES**

**NYPBC1. Play Equipment at Cullivoe Community Hall** (*a PLAY SUFFICIENCY priority across all Yell Community Halls*): At Cullivoe Hall, we really need some outdoor play equipment in the space out the back and / or some indoor games or toys. The Hall isn't just for Cullivoe, it serves the whole of North Yell, and many events also include families from Unst, Mainland or who are visiting Shetland. At the moment there is literally nothing for children to do at adult events except play on their phones (indoors) or in the car park or road (outdoors).

The playpark at school is quite far away along a single track road with steep verges used by big lorries and cars which can drive too fast (see NYPBC Project 1 below). A little play provision at the Hall would therefore significantly improve safety and community events for all the young people on the island and who visit with their families (and for adults too).

**NYPBC2. Footpath between Cullivoe School and the Shop / Hall:** The reasons why a new footpath between Cullivoe School and the Shop / Hall is important to us is given in the NYPBC map / report above. We think it could also support NYBC Project 4 by providing older children a safe route between the Hall and the Playpark at School. too).

**NYPBC3. Improved access to Breckon Sands:** Breckon Sands is Yell's best beach, and many think one of the best in the whole of Scotland! It is a wonderful and beautiful place for natural play and exploration right on our doorstep. However, the path is unsafe and inaccessible for people who are elderly or who have disabilities -including some of our siblings and grandparents- and improving this would allow them and visitors to enjoy one of our most special places.

# MID YELL (Jr High Pupils') Local Living Plan: What we think of the local area

KEY What's Important / Good? ■ \*Projects / Improvements? ■ Environmental Projects ■

\*Combines "What's Missing / Could be Better?" & "Things to Change" (in line with Cullivoe Plan)

## WHAT WE AGREE IS SPECIAL ABOUT YELL & IMPORTANT TO PROTECT:

- Our **strong community**, where people watch out and care for each other
- We are **safe place** to grow up, where we have **freedom** to play and roam our own, in a way children elsewhere don't have.
- We feel **respected** and **trusted** by adults
- Our **life skills**: which include crofting, fishing, farming, handing / fixing boats and vehicles, construction, climbing, and much more.
- Our **imagination**, and our ability together to make anywhere -fields, beaches, burns and trees- into great places for play
- Our **youth facilities and services**: including our **school, leisure centre, sports pitches**, our **Youth Club** (primary schoolers) and **Youth Café** (secondary schoolers), and **Burra Playpark** (though this much needs improvement)
- Our **gathering places**: including **Mid-Yell Hall**, our **School**, the **Boating Club**, and those which appear in the North and South Yell plans, where we also frequently attend gatherings.
- Our **shops**, particularly **Aywick Shop**, and our favourite, **Hillshop** (Mid-Yell), because of the hot snacks, friendliness to young people, and sweets, as well as other groceries.
- Our **care for the natural environment**: including our Voe Redd Ups (community litter cleanups), and wildlife awareness.
- Our **community gatherings, festivals and events**, including the **Yell Show, Up Helly Aa, Regatta, Duck (Burn) Race**, and **Fish & Chip / Chinese Nights** at the Hall.
- Our **creative culture**: including many local artists and sculptors, and gallery at Sellafirth.
- Our **local transport -ferries and our local bus companies-** which we recognise to be lifelines for our community.

**Mid-Yell Burra Park Improvements.** The *most important playground on the island* -due to its proximity to the school and other youth services- really needs a 'service' (see '**Priorities**' below).as it used to be a great place to hangout, but young people are using it less and less.

**Indoor / Outdoor Play Equipment** are sorely needed at **Community Halls**, so young people have something to do at adult gatherings except play on their phones! (see '**Priorities**' below).

**The Herra** our wee community and beach!

**North A Voe:** Kaywick, Seafield Seafield, our burn, beach, tree, peathills and fields for play!

## MID-YELL COMMUNITY:

- **Mid-Yell Junior High School:** Our school, and the activities and events that take place there. An important community 'gathering' place.
- Our **Leisure Centre**, swimming pool, gym and other facilities.
- **Burra Playpark:** The most important playground in Yell, but currently neglected (see '**Priorities**' below)
- **Mid Yell Pier and Linkhouse Beach**
- **Mid Yell (Community Hall):** and the events that take place there, including the Youth Club, Youth Cafe and fish and chip nights!
- Our **Youth Club** and **Youth Cafe**, both really important for us (*though we wish P7s were allowed to attend the Cafe, as we feel too old for the Club*)
- **Our Care Facilities:** Our Clinic and Care Home
- **Hillshop:** (in our view) the best shop in Shetland, for hot snacks, sweets, and adults who are welcoming and friendly to young people.
- **Duck Race Burn**, and our annual Duck Race.
- **Heatherberry Hill:** A hill above Yell where we collect heatherberries to eat and make jam



**Wind House** is a part of our history and the most haunted house in Shetland!



**West Sandwick** is Mid-Yell's best sandy beach, with beautiful views, popular for playing in the sand and dunes, grotties, the loch picnicking, swimming, climbing (down the rope to the secret beach) and exploring.



**Aywick Store and Playpark**



**Loch Vatsetter** for fishing and swimming

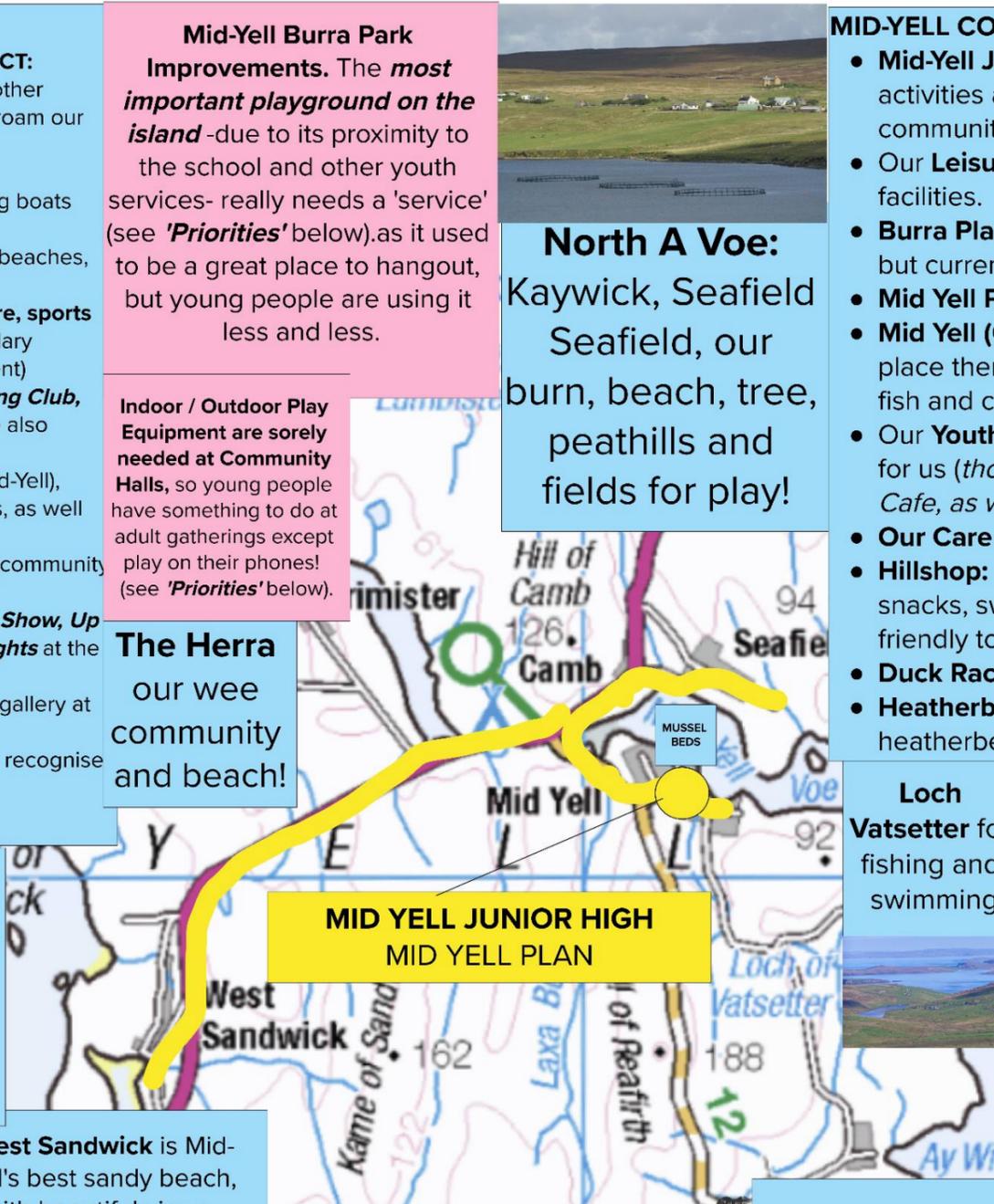


Better coordination / timetabling of / transport to youth services / activities across the North Isles could be transformative for us, enabling us to socialise with our peers out-of-school, and over weekends, holidays and winter, when many of us can feel very isolated. (see '**Priorities**' below).

**Our Natural Environment & Wildlife:** Sheep, chickens, wild animals (seal, orca, otter, stoat, rabbit, crabs), birds (seabirds, skylarks, lapwing, oystercatcher).



**Voe Redd Ups:** our communities working together to keep our island clean



## Our Priorities for Local Improvement:

Overall we feel Yell is a great place to grow up. We give our reasons why in our map above, including both our important places and other reasons why we're a special community.

Below are our priorities for action for making Unst a better and more sustainable place for children and young people to live. We have split these into immediate and longer-term, each in rough order of priority.

### OUR PRIORITIES

#### Immediate (also our *Play Sufficiency Assessment*)

**MY1. Mid-Yell (Burra Park) Playground Refurbishment.** This is really the most important playpark for all bairns on the island, because it is close to our main school and Mid-Yell is our biggest settlement. Before COVID it was always bustling, but as important equipment (particularly for older children) has fallen into disrepair, less and less of us are going there. Specifically: (i) the roundabout is broken; (ii) the flying fox is loose and doesn't work as it should; (iii) the rusty chains on the baby swings need replacing; and (iv) we'd love just one more feature for older bairns -e.g. a roundabout or basket swing- as a lot is aimed at toddlers at the moment.

**MY2. Shared Scheduling / Coordination of the Local Youth Programme and related Transport:** We are very grateful for the different youth activities the council and community enable for us. However, we would welcome a collaborative discussion with all providers about how to better schedule / coordinate all youth-focused events across Yell (ideally, including Unst too). We think reviewing the programme together could lead to a shared calendar which avoids unnecessary clashes, ensures everybody who wants to participate is able to do so (e.g. through better coordination of shared transport). In turn, we think this could lead to activities which are better attended, and fill important gaps for us: such as opportunities targeted at particular age groups, or which take place when we need them the most: such as during weekends, winter and summer holidays. These are when we have the most time and need to socialise, but are currently when we often feel most isolated from our friends. The ideal programme for us and for community wellbeing is one which provides the most opportunity for us to meet and hangout with our peers at these times.

**MY3. Indoor and Outdoor Play Equipment at Community Halls** (*a PLAY SUFFICIENCY priority across all Yell Community Halls*): We really need some outdoor play equipment in the space out the back and / or some indoor games or toys at Mid-Yell Hall (and other community halls on the island). Even a little could make a big difference for bairns. The events at our Halls aren't just for one community -they are typically attended by adults and bairns from across Yell, or visiting from the other islands or outside Shetland. At the moment there is literally nothing for us to do, and we often end up just playing on our phones when we should and could be playing together.

#### Longer-Term:

**MY4. Community Enterprise.** In our plan for the island, one of the most important things is making sure we can take care of ourselves — especially when it comes to food and energy. Food: We want to grow more of our own fruit and vegetables and look after animals on community farms and in polytunnels. This way, we don't always have to bring food in from far away. (We could also include a go-kart track and visitor accommodation on the farm to provide money and fun (for us)).

**MY5. Energy:** We'd like to make our own electricity using wind turbines out at sea or on empty islands (so we don't use up land we need). We also think we could use power from the tides and the sun. This energy could run our houses and charge things like electric bikes — and we could even sell some to raise money for other things we need.

**MY6. Improving Nature:** We'd love to plant a special woodland or garden in North, Mid and South Yell — and maybe even on a tiny island nearby. These would be peaceful places for people to relax, and safe homes for birds, insects and other wildlife.

**MY7. Tunnel to Mainland:** Lots of us enjoy taking the ferry, and we think we should always have at least one. But ferries can be cancelled in bad weather or get too full — and that's a big problem when we need help or supplies. So we all agree that having a tunnel would make life on the island much safer and more reliable in the future.

# SOUTH YELL (Burravoe Primary Pupils') Local Living Plan: What we think of the local area

KEY What's Important / Good? ■ \*Projects / Improvements? ■ Environmental Projects ■ \*Combines "What's Missing / Could be Better?" & "Things to Change" (in line with Cullivoe Plan)

**Voe Redd Ups:** our communities working together to keep our island clean

**"Mary's Shop"** (Aywick Shop) is the best in Shetland and has everything! It sells groceries, sweets and ice-cream, gifts, toys, cards, clothes, stuff for households, gardening, DIY, building, parties and Xmas, a post office, and animal feed.

**The White Wife** (Otterswick) figurehead from the Bohus shipwreck

**Gossburgh Beach** is great for building sand volcanoes, burn jumping, and playing in the dunes

**OUR SHIMMERING OCEAN, BEAUTIFUL, CLIFFS, COAST AND VIEWS**

**Ness Community Hall** (West Yell) for community events and gatherings

**Wild Arisdale and the Catalina crash site**

**The Grey Pit** our hilltop place for bonfire night and fireworks

**Tombola:** another lovely sandy beach in West Yell

**BURRAVOE PRIMARY SOUTH YELL PLAN**

**BURRAVOE COMMUNITY:**

- Our **School**, and our *polytunnel* and *playground* (the best in Yell!)
- **The Old Haa**, for local art, learning about our local history and and geology, and playing in the lovely garden. Our **Marina, Pier & Campsite** (including Hope's Grandad's boat!)
- Our **Beaches, Voe & Ness**, and the walk around it
- Our wee **Coop** for essentials
- Our **Post Office**
- Our **Burra (Community) Hall**, for our Tuesday night *youth club* (which we love), *community gatherings and events*, and supporting our local **bakery**,
- Our **sledging places:** Mary's Park and Quarry Park
- The **trees**, where we're allowed to play sometimes
- Our **Pirrie Kirk** (St Colman's)
- Our new **Brough Shop** (and Brough beach)
- The **Laird's House** and **Skibhoul House**

**We worry about our dependency on ferries.** They are often full; when one isn't working it affects essentials, work and medical support. We think it is important to plan for the future, and that a tunnel is the reliable solution.

As well as being our **vital ferry port** and link to Mainland, **Ulsta** has a great burn where we play, a beach, and we enjoy dropping into the booking office to day hill

**Galtagarth** is Burravoe's best sandy beach, popular for playing and swimming.

The short road down to **Galtagarth** badly needs improving to enable access for locals and visitors

## Our Priorities for Local Improvement:

Overall we feel that that South Yell is a beautiful and peaceful place to grow up, and are content with what we have.

On the whole we are also content, and have only one minor immediate priority. However, we feel the most important improvement for you family is to attract more families and young people to live here, and all of our longer-term priorities contribute to this. Our priorities are as follows:

### OUR PRIORITIES

#### Immediate (also our *Play Sufficiency Assessment*)

**SY1. Improve the Galtagarth Beach road:** Galtagarth is Burravoe's best and closest sandy beach for playing and swimming, for local and visiting families and young people. The short road down to Galtagarth badly needs improving to enable access for locals and visitors.

#### Long-term Priorities

**SY2. Tunnel to Mainland:** (As per others) While valuing the ferry and the jobs it provides, we were unanimous that a tunnel is something our island needs, because of our dependency on the link for food, emergency care, access to services, tourism. We think if we had a tunnel, it would be a more attractive place to live for families.

**SY3. An "Essentials" Shop in Burravoe:** Mary's Shop is good for basics (milk, bread, eggs, etc.), but is a long way to travel for them. As such, we think a peerie shop that can provide reasonably-priced local food would really improve living in Burravoe. The affordability and availability of the "essentials" in South Yell is also important for attracting young families to live here.

**SY4. Helipad for Medical Emergencies:** A helipad would make it easy for an air ambulance to land in the event of a medical emergency, particularly if the ferries aren't running because of bad weather or another reason.

**SY5. Improved Childcare Provision:** We hear our parents talking about how the loss of affordable childcare provision in Mid Yell has made life on the island much more difficult. Many families had less money because one parent had to give up their job to look after the bairns, and some had to move away from the island. We think it is important for the future of our community that this problem is solved for working parents.

**SY6. A Local Café:** We love social gatherings around food at our Halls (e.g. fish and chip nights), but we'd love a cafe where we could go out for meals and events.

**SY7. A Petrol Pump:** A single pump at Ulsta (like there used to be) would save unnecessary driving and expense for people in South Yell.