

Weel Bressa, Whit News?

We need you! We are always looking for new Directors to help oversee BDL's activities. We meet monthly, and even if you can only commit to coming to meetings, it's important that we hear as many island voices as possible to direct our work. Or, we are always happy to hear your questions, comments and suggestions about any of our projects or any other ideas you may have.

Contact us at Bressay.org email info@bressay.org or call 01595 820706.

A busy 2023 at BDL!

It has been a very full year at Bressay Development and here's a short summary of some of the things we have been up to.

Speldiburn Cafe had a busy summer, with locals, individual visitors and more tour groups than ever enjoying our delicious food. Local crafts have also been popular with visitors and locals alike. We love being an outlet for Bressay artists and crafters - do get in touch if you wish to sell your work with us, or would like to hold an art exhibition in the cafe.

The Good as New Shop has been tweaked to make it more 'self service', but we are always looking for volunteers to help out.

Speldiburn is hosting and supporting more NHS and Council services such as the fortnightly NHS clinic, vaccination sessions, and the Living Well Hub. We've also played host to academic researchers who are interested in island life - including two from Japan!

Our dementia-friendly Social Afternoon (Wednesdays 2-4pm) started in January (feel free to come along any time!) We now have chairs which are suitable for those needing a more upright seat for mobility or other issues, and these can be used throughout the building.

We've hosted varied workshops, including knitting, grow-you-own, and art and craft. See inside for more upcoming workshops themed around sustainability, up-cycling and creativity! The nursery has been used as a multipurpose space for varied groups and workshops too, including RAM knitwear and UHI.

The Woodland Group held more Community Woodland planting sessions in Spring. BDL organised and held the Garden Show in the hall, and as always are very grateful to the judges, volunteers, bakers and everyone who took part in these events.

We undertook a consultation to try and gauge how islanders felt about life in Bressay. This feeds into our development plan. We're also getting to grips with understanding housing needs in Bressay, ensuring we understand all the complexities involved.

Shetland Amenity Trust asked us to investigate whether Bressay Lighthouse could become a community asset. While there has not been any viable community interest so far, SAT will support us to research other options before they look for a private buyer.

We continue to produce our quarterly newsletter which goes to every household, ensuring islanders who don't use social media can be aware of our activities and those of other groups (which we are always happy to advertise).

We continue to talk to other community development companies in Shetland and with SIC and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. We also meet with many organisations who work with rural and island communities. This ensures we stay updated and involved in conversations affecting island life.

All are welcome to our AGM, 7.30pm, Tuesday 20th February, at Speldiburn.



The first open day of our community consultation.



Bressay Garden Show.



Chatting at the social afternoon.

What’s on in Bressa?

BRESSAY HALL

Badminton: Mondays from 7pm. Equipment provided or bring your own. No need to book.

Cards (500): Wednesdays 7.15pm, all welcome

Bressay Up Helly Aa and Hop Night: Friday March 1st (Light up at 7.45 at Hall) and Saturday 2nd March. See www.facebook.com/BressayUpHellyAa for updates on events and timings for the weekend.

SPELDIBURN

Social Afternoon, Wednesdays, 2- 4pm. Big Room. Everyone welcome. Come for a free cuppa, a chat and optional activities, bring a friend!

Living Well Hub, Wednesdays, 2-4 pm NHS Room. Visit Rita and Theresa for advice or a chat. They also arrange visiting services, such as sensory impairment, social security and oral health. Look out for adverts for these visits.

Art and Craft Group: Bressay’s new craft group meets monthly, usually on a Wednesday evening. See separate posters and Facebook posts for details.

WORKSHOPS: We have an exciting programme of workshops happening at Speldiburn this winter, supported by Shetland local Action Group - see below for details on a few upcoming sessions. More are planned for the next few months, including singing, recycled crafts and nature sessions. Keep checking our website, Facebook and noticeboards!

Do you have an idea for a workshop? Get in touch! Room hire £15 per half day.

BRESSAY UNDER 5S. Friday mornings 10.30 - 12.30am £2 per family, all welcome.

PARKRUN Saturdays: Meet outside the Heritage Centre by 9.15 am for 9.30 start. Check www.facebook.com/bressayparkrun for updates.



Jessie and her father-in-law, Aald Tammie, with a sheepdog on the briggistanes at Gorie, 1937. Courtesy of the Mainland Collection.

‘Da Gorie Story’

Jonathan Wills gave an interesting and informative talk for us in January. It covered Jessie and Tammie Laurenson’s time crofting at Gorie and Jonathan’s subsequent refurbishing and growing at the croft, and at Sundside. There’s more information about the Laurensons in his book *Sixty North to Sixty South*, available at Speldiburn.

Bressay Locality Profile

Shetland Partnership at the Council are reviewing their ‘Locality Profiles’. These are infographics which show statistics for each area of Shetland. Bressay usually sits with Lerwick, but we have the chance to have our own, to better represent Bressay (to see the this go to www.shetland.gov.uk/downloads/file/4716/lerwick-bressay).

This means collecting data about Bressay, including the age breakdown of our population, what we all do and how we feel about life in Bressay. The Community Council and BDL will work with SIC to try and make this happen. Collecting this data will be a big job, so please get in touch with us or the Community Council if you think you can help.

Green workshops as spring approaches!

Our upcoming workshops are themed on creativity sustainability and up-cycling! All are FREE, with materials provided. Look out for more being added soon!

Up-cycling and Sewing Skills with Wendy Hand. Saturday 24th February 1.30 - 4.30pm. Choose an item from the Good As New Shop or bring your own and create something new!

Nature and Art Activities with Alex Purbrick. Fun-filled sessions using found and recycled materials! Parents/carer welcome to stay. One more session left!

- **All ages welcome. Saturday 24th Feb. 11.30 - 1.30.**

Reuse Recycle Easter with Mandy Moore. Saturday 9th March. Time TBC.

Cooking Class with Blyde Welcome. Sunday 17th March. Time TBC. Please look out for more details nearer the time!

Art and Craft Group

Thanks to Louise Scollay and Hannah Bateson, Speldiburn is delighted to host a monthly art and craft group. This is held on an early Wednesday of each month - look out for posters and our Facebook pages for further dates, with the next one on Wednesday, 7th February. Everyone welcome, just turn up with something arty or crafty you’d like to try. Donations are taken to cover the cost of room hire and refreshments.



January’s Art & Craft night - a fantastic turnout!

Beat the winter blues with a walk to Culliesbrough

This is a fine walk on a winter’s day - just make sure you wear good waterproof shoes, as the track can be wet and muddy. Although it is called ‘Cullingsburgh’ on modern maps, Bressay folk, of course, know it as Culliesbrough.

Park at the car park at Setter, go through the gate and cross the bridge to follow the rough track along the shore. The bridge across the burn has an otter trap built into it; upstream are the remains of two water mills, formerly used for grinding grain. This bay is slowly eroding. Several of the ruined buildings are nearer the water’s edge now than when they were built, and who knows what has disappeared!

Look out for the Neolithic turf covered dyke. The extensive ruins outside the kirkyard include a 19th century crofting settlement with houses, byres and outbuildings. The largest house was built as the manse and was lived in until 1887. Below the houses the remains of fishing lodges and boats’ noosts used during the summer by fishermen can still be seen, though much eroded.

At the end of the track stands a Bronze Age burnt mound. Near the 19th century house up from the gate are the foundations of two Viking houses.

The kirkyard lies over the mound of an earlier broch. In it lie the ruins of the early church of St Mary’s, a pre-Reformation chapel and one of the few cross-shaped kirks in Shetland. A carved stone dating from Pictish times was found here; the original is now in the Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, but a replica stands in the graveyard.

Elaborate gravestones, now much weathered, record forgotten histories; the one within the kirk is the resting place of Claes Jansen Bruyn, the captain of a Dutch East



Community led housing group

In last year’s consultation, many of you said you felt there was not enough housing, particularly for young people. This is something we are keen to further investigate. Community-led housing is becoming more popular in the highlands and islands as a way of tackling declining population, and we are one of several community groups in Shetland currently looking at this idea. But it’s a long process. Learn more about community-led housing options and what we’re doing here www.bressay.org/about/current-projects, or come and chat to us.

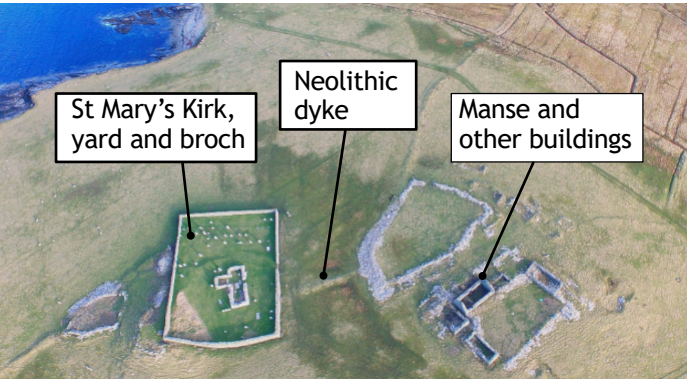
We’d really like to try and get a group together who can share knowledge and experiences, to start establishing aspirations and requirements for a housing project. This will help us seek support from key stakeholders and partners to undertake an in-depth survey for our island to quantify the need - a crucial first step. **If you have a few spare hours a month and this interests you - whether you have any knowledge or skills in this area or are just keen to support a thriving Bressay population, we’d love to hear from you.**

India ship which made landfall here on 24 August 1636 with her crew dead or dying of plague. Captain Bruyn died 3 days later.

Culliesbrough is a fertile place; in 1754 two hay farms were recorded here.

Beyond the gate is the Mortified, land owned by the Church of Scotland since the 1600s.

Follow the coast out as far as Rulesness to enjoy views of islands, flora and birds. If you are quiet s eals and otters may be seen on the rocks or watching you from the sea.



An aerial view of Culliesbrough.

Support us through membership

Have you considered becoming a member of Bressay Development? It’s completely free and membership is an easy way to show support for us and our work, and our membership helps us extend our reach in the community. For applying for funding for big projects like undertaking a housing needs assessment, it’s even more important that we can show community support. In return, we’ll keep you up to date with news and events with occasional emails.

If you are not already a member, just head to **www.bressay.org/about/documents** and download the membership form near the bottom of the page. Or pop in to Speldiburn and we’ll give you one to fill out.

light lunches

homebakes

crafts

art exhibitions

SPELDIBURN

Speldiburn Cafe

Winter Hours

Table booking available

Fridays: 11am-3pm

lunches and homebakes

Saturdays 9.30-11am

breakfast rolls & homebakes

12-3pm

lunches and homebakes

Good As New Shop open during cafe hours

We had ourselves a merry little Christmas!

As always, Christmas was a time of coming together on Bressay. The Christmas market kicked off the festive season, there was a wonderful meal at the hall for the over 60s, the bairns and the Social Afternoon had their Christmas parties, and the young folk baked Christmas cookies! It was rounded off with carol singing at the hall on Christmas Eve. Thank you to everyone who contributed to all of the Christmas events.



Lee Smith helps Lesley Roberts to draw the raffle.



Looking Festive: Jonathan Wills, Douglas Coutts, Chris Bunyan.



Members of the band enjoying dinner with Brian Deyell and Louise Anderson.



Douglas Garden, David Manson, Susan Manson.



Members of the Christmas Dinner serving team: Holly Johnstone, Lily Burrell, Sky March and Marietta Lowe.



Cookie making team: Mariette Lowe, Willow Tulloch, Pip Mason, Patty Mason, Ella Tulloch, River Tulloch.



Cookie cooking! Moira, Anne & Kathy.



No takers for the 'less-is-more' approach!



Speldiburn Christmas Market. New Bressay residents Estelle & Mark Hughes brought their Midwinter Yarns. Heather Christie and her lovely illustrative work.