



Shetland Recreational Trust

Shetland more active, more often

Annual Report
2020/21

Our Vision, Mission and Values

OUR VISION

'Shetland more active, more often'

OUR MISSION

"To provide facilities and services that inspire and support communities in Shetland to enjoy being active and healthy"



OUR VALUES

TRUST



All of our customers, whether they are internal or external, trust us to deliver quality every time. We value this trust and are committed to retaining it.

ENJOYMENT



Everyone will not only benefit from participating in sport and recreational activity with us but will also have fun doing it.

INSPIRATION



We have energy, desire and determination to succeed in all we do and to inspire every individual within our community.

UNITED



We will work together with colleagues, partner agencies and customers to achieve our shared vision.

INNOVATION



We are forward thinking in all we do and continually look for ways to progress and improve.

PASSION



We go the extra mile.



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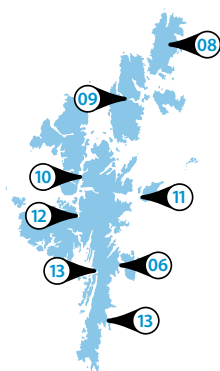
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REVIEW OF FINANCIAL POSITION

The financial position of the Trust is set out in the annual audited financial statements. Copies may be obtained by writing to Steven Laidlaw, CEO of the Shetland Recreational Trust.

Shetland Recreational Trust is an organisation accepted by the Inland Revenue as having Charitable Status.

The Shetland Recreational Trust is a charity registered in Scotland, No: SC002179

Funded by
 Shetland
Charitable Trust



Board of Trustees & Senior Management Team

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Bryan Leask
Chairman



Gordon Keith



Audrey Leask



Stuart Fox



Elizabeth Robinson



Adam Civico



David Thomson



Katie McMillan



Martin Summers



Ivor Cluness



Bobby Cumming



Grace Barnes



Derek Leask

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM



Steven Laidlaw
Chief Executive



Andrew Lyall
Head of Assets &
Business Support



Robert Geddes
Head of Operations &
Business Development



Janice Thomason
Finance Manager





Chairman's Report

At the end of my last report I expressed my hopes that 2020/21 would herald a brighter, more positive future for us all. Well... who could have predicted the year that we have just lived through? For many people it has been a time of uncertainty and real financial hardship with the pandemic exacerbating pre-existing inequalities in employment, income, health and wellbeing, as well as education.

We started the year in full lock-down with the majority of SRT staff on furlough, a new word for a new time. As we moved gradually through the phases of emerging from the restrictions imposed by the Government it was clear that the way we operated in the past would have to change and the organisation would have to adapt to a 'new normal'.

We also said goodbye to two long serving senior managers with James Johnston, who had led the Trust for over 35 years as General Manager, retiring in August, and Shona Nisbet, Head of Operations, leaving in October after almost 32 years of service. We wish James and Shona all the best for the future and I would like to personally thank them for everything they have done for the Trust over the years.

We welcomed Steven Laidlaw as new Chief Executive in June 2020 at a very challenging period and he has been using the time of full and partial closures to assess all the activities carried out by the Trust as well as re-developing the Business Plan and post-pandemic Strategy.

We managed to open our doors to the public again in September and closed as normal for Christmas on December 23rd. For the first year in over a decade Clickimin trialled a four-day opening period between Christmas and New Year, however rising cases locally meant the trial was cut short by a day and we were unable to open any facilities again until the 1st of March. In total we were only open for four months in 2020/21 but with the ongoing support of the Shetland Charitable Trust and Shetland Islands Council we managed to finish the year with optimism going into 2021/22.

Running any type of business during a pandemic will have its difficulties but staff have worked hard to find their way through the restrictions and rules and can be proud that they were able to offer a safe and clean place for Shetlanders to visit and improve their health and wellbeing. Fitness team staff across our facilities were quick to rise to the challenge of continuing to support their customers and were soon offering classes on social media. This experience led to the development of online classes on a dedicated SRT platform and these are going from strength to strength with the planned introduction of our new app.

The challenges that we were facing pre-pandemic haven't gone away and we also used the time during lockdown to review our working practices, subscription models, and maintenance programme with exciting changes to be introduced in 2021/22. The buildings we own and operate are another year older and there will be difficult decisions to be made around our aging estate. Discussions are ongoing with the Charitable Trust and it is hoped that funding will be available in the future to ensure we can continue to provide the high level services that the Shetland community has come to expect and deserve.

I would like to thank James, Steven and all the staff for their resilience and attitude over what has been a particularly demanding time.

This will be my final end of year report as I am standing down as Chair at the AGM after seven years in the role. It has been a challenging, but very rewarding experience and I am confident that whoever replaces me will find the Management Committee and staff a pleasure to work with.

Bryan Leask | Chairman





Clickimin Leisure Complex



The year of 2020/21 has been the most challenging year of trading for the Complex due to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. The facility was closed from March until September at which point guidance allowed for partial re-opening until December 2020. Local outbreaks of Covid-19 forced another closure from January to March 2021 bringing to close a year which the likes of hopefully won't be witnessed again.



The challenge of the pandemic was substantial with many unknowns throughout and planning for the future was at times impossible to predict. There was one key objective throughout though and that was that we'd have to adapt to meet the needs of the customers and staff in terms of safety to operate and variety of activities on offer. Unfortunately guidance didn't allow for all Clickimin facilities to re-open and in most cases guidance restricted what ages of people could attend indoor activity.

Staying positive the management and staff of the Complex reviewed the national guidance and amended procedures to ensure that we introduced customers and staff back to a safe environment. Some of these changes will stay with us as good practise so the hard work isn't wasted and restricted to this period only.

"We felt safe in returning to the Complex. It was clear that the levels of cleaning had been increased and everything was well organised."

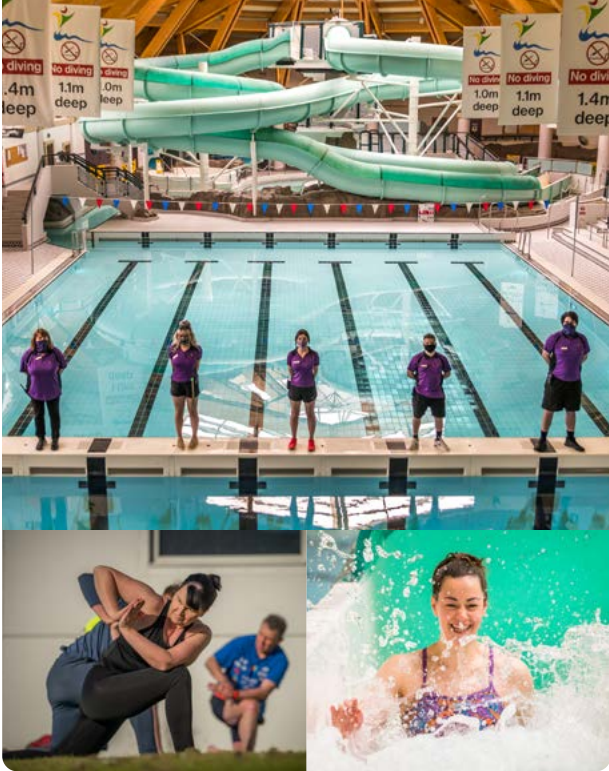
Customer Feedback



Fun Family Swim 4433*

**Based on number of physical people booked*





Customer Feedback

“Online workouts are great. Excellent variety and the ability to do from home kept me motivated. Will they be here to stay??”

2020/21 Centre Overview

- ❖ All our procedures were adapted to ensure we met the required standard to deliver safe activity in a safe environment. Cleaning schedules, equipment procedures, directional signage and programming to allow for cleaning times were all introduced.
- ❖ Online booking became a large part of life in Covid protocols and the team adjusted the programming to make this possible.
- ❖ Customers could not come to the facility so we had to find a way to get to them and an online studio was created to allow our Health and Fitness Team to deliver classes to customers in the comfort of their own home.
- ❖ A structural issue with the flumes was remedied and a full service completed as part of the work. We worked hard to remove all the scaffolding and re-open in line with the release of Covid guidance in September.
- ❖ A privacy screen was erected around the Toddlers Pool. This has been requested by the public for many years. As well as providing privacy it protects the pool from unwanted draughts coming from the outside door at reception and improves the temperature of the environment.
- ❖ All our cubicles in the changing village were refurbished to modernise and bring them back to as-new condition. We also installed three additional baby-changing units to meet demand and to make the pool more accessible for parents and toddlers.

- ❖ New hair dryer units were installed to replace the old ones.
- ❖ An online studio was built to provide our instructors with a suitable and professional area to deliver online classes from.
- ❖ The seating area in the pool side was refurbished. Tiled flooring was replaced and new seating fitted to replace the old seating units which had been in place since 1995.
- ❖ New underwater LEDs were fitted to provide better vision of the pool. The interchangeable lighting allows for us to create a more welcoming environment in the pool and to change it depending on the activity taking place.

Looking towards the future

- ➔ **The Complex is hoping for a more settled 2021/22 year. It is hoped that a return to ‘normal’ will happen and all activities and facilities will be accessible. Challenges lie ahead to adapt to the changes that have occurred but it is planned to grab the positives from the changes forced on the operations by Covid and continue them for future.**
- ➔ **A real effort will be made to embed the vision ‘Shetland more active, more often’ with a targeted focus on the inactive.**





Unst Leisure Centre



44* Family Pool Hires

**Based on number of hires*

2020/21 Centre Overview

- ❖ We have focused on maintaining an excellent customer experience within the constraints of Covid restrictions. We continued to offer as many activities as possible to a range of different ages and abilities.
- ❖ At the beginning of lockdown Unst fitness classes were offered free of charge online through the Zumba website. Advanced Fitness Instructor Faye Cox then linked with the Clickimin Health and Fitness Team to offer Zumba and POP Pilates to customers worldwide through Facebook. These classes are still on our timetable.
- ❖ Donations towards the free classes allowed the Centre to purchase a Concept 2 SkiErg machine, specially chosen due to its versatility of use for all ages and abilities.
- ❖ Customers told staff they missed seeing friends and instructors face to face so as soon as restrictions eased to allow outdoor group exercising, Unst quickly adapted some of its most popular classes into outdoor ones. Attendees have enjoyed the fresh air and cooler environment so much that several classes are still run outside if weather is suitable.
- ❖ Online booking proved to be very popular with our customers, increasing attendance as firm bookings were made and were often done at the same time as friends to allow for socialising.



- ❖ Centre staff continued to offer activities and classes for all ages both inside and outdoors to allow everyone to continue exercising when we were able.
- ❖ The Learn to Swim lessons were adapted with the facility offering an extra session to allow more bairns to attend. We now offer three sessions to cover all abilities over the week with 21 pupils attending.
- ❖ The ever-popular ULC Company Heroes Cup was still able to go ahead and this year was won by a team from Ability Shetland.
- ❖ The fitness suite saw 1132 users before Christmas with a number of new customers and activities for this area: an increase of 50% on the usual numbers visiting.

"Having activities for the children at the same time allows me to attend the class."

Customer Feedback

Looking towards the future

- ➔ The development of the camping pods next to the centre.
- ➔ Different challenges as well as the return of some favourites!





Yell Leisure Centre



Family Pool Hires

**Based on number of hires*

2020/21 Centre Overview

- ❖ Lane Swimming was introduced as a way to make it easier for customers to socially distance while accessing to the pool. This has proved to be popular so we will continue to offer lane swimming into the future.
- ❖ The centre was able to offer weekly swimming lessons but only for school age children. Thirty three children enrolled on these courses.
- ❖ Exclusive family pool hires were also offered as a way for families to gain access to the pool while still making it possible to follow social distancing rules.



Customer Feedback

"I really like the lane swimming, will you be keeping lane swimming when Covid restrictions are reduced?"

- ❖ The Games hall was mainly used by the school when they were allowed to come indoors for their PE lessons. The badminton club had a block booking on Tuesday nights and the football club ran junior coaching sessions on Sunday mornings.
- ❖ Capacity in the gym was reduced for customer safety and initially usage levels were moderate but this did gradually increase between the centre opening in September and closing at Christmas.
- ❖ Fitness Classes were very well attended with both the Aquacise and Spinning fully booked most weeks between October and Christmas.
- ❖ There was a substantial period when PE could only be offered outdoors and the school made good use of the football pitch when weather permitted.
- ❖ Craig Johnson started a two year Modern Apprenticeship at Yell Leisure Centre in 2019. Despite the Centre being closed for an extended period, Craig completed his portfolio on time, and he now has a permanent contract working as a Recreation Assistant. Well done Craig!

Looking towards the future

- ➔ We plan to offer more virtual / online fitness classes, this will increase the choice of classes available and will also allow customers to do the class at a time that suits them.





North Mainland Leisure Centre



Family Pool Hires

**Based on number of hires*

2020/21 Centre Overview

- ❖ The Centre has adapted its usual practices to make it a safe and enjoyable environment for customer use during the pandemic.
- ❖ Outdoor circuit classes and family hire sessions that were exclusive to anyone that was in a COVID support bubble were introduced. Both these activities were very popular with family hires being sold out for several months in a row.
- ❖ We invested in some new toys and introduced kids only sessions twice a week which were utilised well.
- ❖ We introduced earlier morning booking slots for the Fitness Suite and Swimming Pool which was greatly received by our customers.
- ❖ Nala Williamson joined our staff team, bringing with her experience from her previous work at Yell Leisure Centre.
- ❖ Katriona Saunders has completed the initial course to become a Trainer Assessor and is hoping to start a course to train new lifeguards soon.

"I have very much benefited from the early morning swims both mentally and physically."

Customer Feedback

Looking towards the future

- ➔ We are looking into introducing more classes throughout the next year for both kids and adults as restrictions ease, with new additions coming soon.
- ➔ Look out for new equipment in our Fitness Suite.





Whalsay Leisure Centre



75* Family Pool Hires

**Based on number of hires*

2020/21 Centre Overview

- ❖ A 'Bookings Only Service' was rolled out across all SRT facilities and we introduced Lane Swimming Sessions which gave the customer exclusive use of a lane. We saw the majority of these sessions fully booked and received a lot of positive feedback from our customers who said that they prefer the set up.
- ❖ Our Fitness Suite numbers have remained high with many customers commenting they preferred fewer people in the gym at any one time.
- ❖ Strict cleaning practices were put in place and staff have adapted well to follow them, ensuring that the facility was kept to a high standard of cleanliness and that customers felt reassured when using the facilities.
- ❖ We aimed to continue to provide as much variety of Junior and Adult Classes as permitted and numbers remained high with the majority of our customers returning and classes running at maximum capacity.
- ❖ Where social distancing prevented us from running our regular nursery swimming classes we introduced Parent and Child Sessions which proved successful and will be something we will continue to offer in the future.
- ❖ Staff member Abbey Irvine successfully passed her Trainer Assessors course at the beginning of the year and is now a fully qualified trainer assessor joining the SRT team.
- ❖ Angela Williamson completed her SVQ Assessors Award during lockdown and was then able to work with Trainee Lisa Anderson to complete and pass her Level 2 Sport & Active Leisure Qualification.

Customer Feedback

"I probably would never have come to the gym before but since I can book and know that there will only be two people in at one time, then I feel much more confident about coming."



Looking towards the future

- ➔ With technology evolving and the increased interest in virtual classes we are looking into the possibility of creating a studio space. A large screen would be installed to enable us to host a variety of different types of classes for customers to attend at a time best suited to them. This would coincide with looking into converting the squash court into a new gym area.





West Mainland Leisure Centre



122* Family Pool Hires

**Based on number of hires*

2020/21 Centre Overview

- ❖ Many of our junior activities ran at full capacity. The popularity of our pool sessions meant we extended our weekend hours to accommodate demand.
- ❖ We introduced a pre-booking system and encouraged online bookings. This helped lead to many of our customers increasing their attendance as pre-booking meant exercise and activity was planned into their diary ahead of time.
- ❖ Exclusive Family Swim bookings and Lane Swimming were made available to support social distancing measures in the pool. Both of these adaptations proved to be very popular with customers.
- ❖ Operations were adapted to follow government and industry Covid guidance. The Health Suite, Bubble Pool and Group Changing areas had to close and cleaning and sanitisation protocols were increased.
- ❖ Customer feedback when we re-opened was extremely positive. The Leisure Centre plays an important role in the health and wellbeing of many of our customers.
- ❖ Staff continued to develop and improve their qualifications and knowledge. Stephanie Keith completed her Level 2 Certificate in Fitness Instructing and Scott Hodge continued his National Pool Lifeguard Trainer Assessor course.



Looking towards the future

- ➔ The procedures, activities and improvements that have been made this year will continue. We look forward to reopening the areas that have been required to be closed and increase capacities back to their normal levels.
- ➔ Our junior and adult classes will continue to be provided with high levels of interest and demand.
- ➔ Online and improved technology will continue to be explored and developed to enhance the customer experience and activities on offer.

"We missed you so much when you were closed and are so grateful to have you open."

Customer Feedback



Scalloway & South Mainland Pool

From the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, it was apparent that the virus would have a significant impact on our normal daily operation at Scalloway and South Mainland Pool and inevitably we were forced to close our doors in March 2020. A year of start, stop saw us reopen in September only to be closed again in December 2020 for a further two months.

As the only two SRT facilities to only have pools, staff were able to focus on what they could do differently with the pools to respond to customers' needs as much as possible during the pandemic. One manager working across both sites also helped ensure best practice was shared and some of the creative ideas staff came up with to help customers feel safe in the pool - reduced prices for exclusive pool hire - were also adopted across our other sites as the concept worked so well.



Customer Feedback

"We are so so grateful for all your hard work, our daughter who is three now, was just getting into swimming then lockdown hit and no swimming, no nothing. She was too young to understand, but you guys doing all the hard work you do has meant we can get her back in the pool safely, no words to how happy she is and us too, all your staff are so friendly and helpful we are all so grateful, massive thank you all again."

2020/21 Pools Overview

- ❖ The dedication and commitment shown by our staff was notable. Everyone pulled together and worked hard to deliver clean, safe and user-friendly environments against the difficult background of Covid.
- ❖ Operations changed in line with national Covid guidance – increased cleaning and sanitisation protocols, a reduction in maximum user numbers and one-way systems around the buildings, changing areas and in the pools themselves.
- ❖ A bookings only service proved popular with customers. These sixty-minute sessions could either be booked as individual swims or as an exclusive hire of the building.
- ❖ We reduced the price of an exclusive pool hire by more than £40.00 to offer an affordable and safer option for families who could use the pool within their 'bubbles' with less restrictions in place. Exclusive pool hires have greatly increased our usage and income at weekends.
- ❖ The exclusive hire model was replicated at many of the other SRT facilities following the success in Scalloway and the South Mainland.





252* Family Pool Hires

**Based on number of hires*

At Scalloway Pool



- ❖ The restrictions have allowed us to improve our customer service and experience. As we now know who is booked in to each session we can plan our pool and changing room set-ups to better suit our customer's needs for that particular session. We set up a mixture of lanes and family areas to cater for all customers, guaranteeing that we have no more than two lane swimmers per lane for their safety and comfort.
- ❖ Returning to the Learn to Swim Programme after a lengthy break was excellent, it was so good to see all of our pupils return and get back in to their classes.



133* Family Pool Hires

**Based on number of hires*

At South Mainland Pool



- ❖ Due to the extended closure of Clickimin Pool we were the host Centre for the Lerwick Swimming Cubs as well as our local team S.M.A.S.C, it has been brilliant to see competitive swimmers returning and improving after such a lengthy lay off.
- ❖ The long awaited return of our Aquacise fitness class has proved extremely popular, with excellent feedback and great attendance each week.

Looking towards the future

- ➔ As restrictions ease we will be able to open more services including increased numbers and availability of activity sessions and the return of the steam room.
- ➔ We're also looking forward to offering some more fitness based class sessions in the near future.



Behind the scenes

Our Maintenance Team are based out at the SRT workshop in Gremista and are essential to keeping our facilities operating safely. We did have some maintenance staff at home as part of the furlough scheme during the pandemic but they were the first department to be brought fully back and they played an important role in making sure we could open as soon as it was safe to do so.

Maintenance staff teamed up with centre managers to perform building checks all through lockdown and beyond, checking all areas of each facility as well as the equipment in plant rooms and other behind the scenes areas were all working correctly. If any issues were discovered the expertise of the rest of the team was brought in to fix and resolve.

These building checks ensured that a burst pipe in the Clickimin squash courts was discovered quickly and dealt with before too much damage was caused. A check of the plant room below the main pool at Clickimin meant a leak in the pool was also spotted quickly and the silver lining to the Covid closure was the fact that the work could be done without further disruption to customers – the building would certainly have been closed to the public to carry out the work.



The main pool has only been drained twice in the past twenty-six years and during lockdown it was drained a further two times. The first was a partial drainage, using a temporary dam to only drain the waters surrounding the flumes and toddlers pool so that the flumes could be refurbished. When the pool leak was discovered the main pool was drained too and the maintenance team took the opportunity to replace the seating poolside and upgrade the floor tiles to vinyl flooring. The dust and mess created during this upgrade could not have been done without the pool water becoming dirty so we are grateful to our maintenance staff for their hard work and quick thinking to allow this work to be completed.



SECTION **THREE**
Behind the scenes



New energy efficient lighting was installed in the Bowls Hall meaning both money and energy savings for the Trust. In Brae a Hoval hot water cylinder was installed and purple dye was released into all of our pools to check water flows and ensure that water was circulating properly. In addition, maintenance staff took the time to check and if necessary replace all pumps and valves at all of our sites. Again, this is something which is very difficult to do while the pumps are in operation.

Having a skilled in-house maintenance team meant that we were ahead of the game compared to many businesses when it came to Covid health and safety works. Our staff were able to make adaptations to our buildings to make them safe for the staff and public to be in. As well as installing features such as glass screens and signage, the ventilation systems in all our facilities had to be altered to increase airflow to meet the new requirements.

At Clickimin the team took advantage of the lockdown to replace a heating exchanger and water pumps, install an oil tank and recommission the boilers – all of these jobs would have required a shut down. Customer requests for a screen in front of the toddler pool was met and the cubicles in the changing village were given a smart new revamp. A digital suite was created to allow staff to deliver online classes and three new rooms were created where our dryside reception used to be to give staff meeting space and the ability to develop health and wellbeing as a priority going forward.

During the year we also looked at developing a campsite with camping pods next to Unst Leisure Centre – this is something that we plan to continue to progress going forward. We also look forward to the opportunity to bid for money which Shetland Charitable Trust has opened up for capital fund grants. Estate surveys carried out through the year mean we are in a good position to be able to put applications in as we have clear evidence of which of our buildings require which work.



Covid-19 Awareness Training

Keeping your lifeguards trained and ready to work poolside when you have nowhere to train them proved a challenge when Shetland Recreational Trust facilities and pools closed as part of the Covid-19 lockdown.

To maintain competency for the National Pool Lifeguard Qualification (NPLQ) lifeguards would normally attend monthly Ongoing Training and Competency Assessments (OT&CA) – these were of course cancelled when our pools were shut.

Once National Guidance and the Scottish Governments road map looked like facilities were able to open again this meant that SRT had a mammoth task in ensuring that all staff were trained and assessed as competent to allow facilities to safely reopen. The timescale was challenging but staff pulled together and worked hard to figure out a strategy.

The first part of the plan was to get all staff to undertake some online training. This was firstly a Covid-19 Awareness Course to allow staff to understand Covid-19 and how it is transmitted and the mitigations that the individual and workplace can take in order to stop transmission and keep everyone safe. The second part was online theory training provided by the Institute of Qualified Lifeguards (IQL). This consisted of ten sessions which covered the syllabus of the NPLQ.



The next part was to commission some of the SRT swimming pools after the lockdown closure. This would allow staff to get back into a swimming pool to get their individual swimming fitness back to a standard. No one had been swimming for a number of months by this time. When all staff were “swim fit” again it was time to look at revalidating their NPLQ awards.

National Guidance from IQL and the Resuscitation Council UK on how to safely deliver and assess the NPLQ and associated skills during the pandemic were introduced. This required all staff to successfully complete a nationally developed Return to Work Assessment and a full Mock Assessment of the NPLQ in order to revalidate their awards. Some staff awards were past their renewal dates, but these were extended by IQL to allow staff to renew their awards before a set date.

OT&CA was then introduced on a monthly basis again with newly developed Covid-19 training sessions. In January 21 OT&CA was back to the normal sessions with Covid-19 guidelines still in place.

All First Aid trained staff were required to do similar training and assessment in order to revalidate their awards and every employee of the SRT completed the Covid-19 awareness course.

SRT had to ensure that staff completed all the required assessments within a short timescale to allow staff to feel comfortable with the new guidelines on how to operate safely.

The mobilisation of such a large staff within the SRT and to have each individual trained and assessed in order to get back to the workplace was a credit to the Managers and IQL Trainer Assessor team as well as the staff for being able to adapt and learn new skills in such a short time.



Lockdown Champions



We have been really proud of our staff this year. While many staff were on furlough members of our fitness teams across the isles rose to the challenge of keeping our customers fit even if they could not see them face to face. They found lots of positive, creative ways to support the local community to stay active.

Toyah Irvine, Clickimin Health & Fitness Team Leader and Cheryl Stewart, Clickimin Fitness Instructor created the 'SRT Squat Challenge' and set up a 'Lockdown Won't Stop Us' private Facebook group with the aim to encourage family and friends to join them in staying fit and active using challenges live workouts. The group started small but quickly grew to having over 350 followers. The popularity and success of the group meant followers came through word of mouth and there were people from outwith Shetland who were tuning in regularly too. The focus was on having fun and the instructors used fitness challenges to keep the group members motivated – you may have seen some of our customers doing burpees all over Shetland. Many members lost weight and feedback on the instructors were especially pleased to hear that the exercise and community feel created by the group had a positive impact on the mental health of many members.

In November, Cheryl received recognition from sportscotland and was presented their Coaching, Officiating and Volunteering Champion of 2020 award for her involvement in organising lockdown workouts and for raising £1,094 for Shetland Women's Aid.

Alan Williamson, Clickimin Fitness Instructor, motivated and inspired members of the Shetland Netball Team and the wider community to take part in an outdoor circuit style training session at the Gilbertson Park. He also encouraged people to take part in lockdown challenges such as the 'Lockdown Push-Up Challenge'. Alan's positivity and encouragement was welcomed by many he helped during the lockdown.



Faye Cox, Advanced Fitness Instructor, of Unst Leisure Centre responded quickly to customers who wanted to continue her classes despite the centre being closed. She offered a variety of online classes through her own app and joined Toyah, Cheryl and Alan when the classes became more official and were delivered by SRT. When guidelines allowed outdoor group exercise she moved several of the classes outside and they have proved so popular they remain a fixture on the timetable. The classes included popular workouts such as Zumba and POP Pilates.

We are very pleased that our staff went the 'extra mile' in a time of need and for having such a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the people of Shetland. For that, we are extremely proud!



James Johnston



James Johnston retired as General Manager on 31st August 2020 following a career spanning over 35 years and the development of the Shetland Recreational Trust (SRT) to what it is today.

James joined the SRT when it first opened the Clickimin Leisure Centre on 30 March 1985 and initially served as Administration Assistant Manager. The popularity and public support of Clickimin allowed for further development plans for the SRT. Leisure centres opened in Unst and Yell and a pool for was built in Brae in the latter half of 1988. After further successful years in operation, the Trust developed sites in Whalsay, the South Mainland and Scalloway, and began works on a Pool and Bowls Hall at Clickimin. In July 1995 James was promoted to General Manager and soon turned his attention to the further development of Clickimin.



In March 2001 the Apex Fitness Centre in Clickimin opened. The following year saw the development of the North and West Mainland Leisure Centres and by 2005 the Trust had eight individual sites operating with thriving usage figures.

Throughout James' career, there has been a diverse range of sporting and social activities and special events held within SRT Leisure facilities. These have ranged from badminton, swimming, football and trampolining, to fitness classes, roller discos and crèche facilities. Special events have also been hosted in Clickimin and some of our rural facilities - many of these becoming annual or bi-annual events.

Thanks to the SRT and James' hard work, customers regularly enjoy everything from the Shetland Folk Festival, Shetland Accordion and Fiddle Festival, Shetland Motor Show, The Antique Roadshow and Careers Conventions as well as some headlining acts such as The Saw Doctors, Showaddywaddy, The Proclaimers and Kevin Bridges to name but a few.



SECTION **FOUR**
James Johnston

SRT saw the biggest sporting event Shetland has seen to date when it was awarded Host of the NatWest Island Games in 2005 and James was instrumental in its success. James became a member of the Island Games committee between 1999-2007 and became vice chairman in 2007 – a role he still fulfils. It was a great achievement for James as General Manager and Island Games Committee member to host the games in Shetland in 2005. The years of hard work and planning resulted in an extremely successful Games and was one of the most momentous and memorable years of the Trust's existence.

SRT continued to thrive under James' leadership and had fantastic admissions throughout the years with only a few years of lower numbers. SRT has always been grateful of support from customers and especially Shetland Charitable Trust who allocate and award the SRT an annual grant to help support running and building costs.

2013 saw another proud moment for James as the Trust was successful in gaining international recognition by winning the European Community of Sport award. The judges were very impressed with SRT Centres and the contribution made by staff to sport in Shetland.

On 10 June 2012, the Olympic Torch Relay was a huge attraction with the North Pitch being converted into a major event venue for celebrations with five SRT staff members having been chosen to carry the flame proudly around Lerwick.



James' retirement came at a time when SRT operated eight successful facilities which had seen many improvements over the years, the latest being the new location of the Anderson High School and the addition of the 60:40 facility.

On behalf of every customer which has come through our doors and every person who has taken part in any level of sport and activity in Shetland we would like to take the opportunity to thank James for his dedication and leadership over his time with the SRT and wish him all the best for his future endeavours.



Steven Laidlaw

I have always been up for a challenge and taking on the role of CEO with the Shetland Recreational Trust in a global pandemic was certainly that.



At a time when there was no indication of when Recreational Centres could re-open and with the majority of our staff on furlough, there was no way to meet the team in person. Centres needed substantial repair and our partner agencies were in an equal state of distress. The perfect time to enter the Sport and Fitness industry presented itself. This is a true case of perspective. What better time to transition into the Health and Wellness Industry when health was the number one topic in everyday conversation?

My journey with the SRT began in June learning as much as possible from my predecessor James Johnston. He had the tough job of condensing 35 years' worth of knowledge to share with me over a few short weeks. Building strong, foundational relationships with the Senior Management Team (SMT) Robert Geddes and Andrew Lyall was also a priority.

Looking at individual centre needs and opportunities for growth, with the support of the SMT and Centre Managers, we were able to carry out necessary maintenance with the support of our technical team. Our 30-year plan is in place to ensure our buildings are maintained to a high standard and it was this which led the work.

Building closures had a silver lining and meant that our maintenance team and outside contractors could complete projects without disruption to customers. As well as essential Covid health and safety works across all centres a digital suite was developed for online classes and a hot water cylinder was installed in North Mainland. The Clickimin has undergone structural refurbishment of the flumes, an installation of a screen at the toddler pool, heating exchanger replacement, oil tank and boiler recommissioning, water pump replacement, a revamp of the changing village using vinyl wrap, seating area upgrade, poolside floor replacement, upgrade of lighting in the Bowls Hall and the introduction of wellbeing development.



SECTION FOUR

Steven Laidlaw

It was a priority to consult local communities and the people of Shetland on what they want from the SRT moving forward. Surveys were utilised to ensure we are taking action to benefit the people who are using our Centres and we plan to develop our consultation process further next year.

This is all taking place with social distancing and COVID restrictions in place to add an extra element of challenge.

Alongside the day-to-day running of our facilities, delivering a high level of customer care, and supporting a strong team it was imperative to continue to have a voice in wider conversations on the Sport and Recreation Industry across the UK.

We attended virtual meetings such as CLUK (Community Leisure United Kingdom) every two weeks to share best practice and knowledge with other trusts in Scotland in the uneasiness of the pandemic. This led to further research and reviewing of Government Guidance to apply for relief funding to help the trust financially in this time.

Here is where we faced a challenge. Unlike other Trusts in Scotland, we are not owned or run by the local authority, disqualifying us from lost income schemes offered by the Scottish Government. It was imperative that we build relationships with local councillors, SMP, CLUK, COSLA and Sports Minister Fiona Hyslop to champion our cause and explain this situation.



While this year has presented its challenges which were mainly a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has also provided many opportunities for growth. We launched our new virtual digital studio during the pandemic and that is here to stay as we recognise it is a tool we can use to reach more remote areas. We had a chance to do much needed repairs and maintenance as detailed above.

To highlight once more this year has been a case of perspective and has helped us clarify what we will prioritise when put under pressure. The SRT proved this year how innovative we are in the face of adversity. We will continue to stay true to our mission statement: To provide facilities and services that inspire and support communities in Shetland to enjoy being active and healthy especially in these challenging and unprecedented times. Most importantly, we will continue to utilise a can-do attitude and will keep the people of Shetland at the core of what we do.

Steven Laidlaw | CEO, Shetland Recreational Trust





Shetland Recreational Trust

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