

Seabed survey undertaken by Roving Eye Enterprises for Scottish Sea Farms



New research reaffirms ability of seabed to regenerate

A new science-based environmental monitoring programme to explore the ability of the seabed to regenerate is delivering promising initial results.

Salmon farmers have long understood that rearing healthy fish requires a healthy environment and that, to successfully operate at the same locations year after year, farming practices must have no lasting impact on the marine ecosystem.

As such, environmental monitoring is established practice, with each farm operating to its Controlled Activities Regulations (CAR) licence regulated by SEPA (Scottish Environment Protection Agency). This sets limits on fish biomass and medicine use, informed by the marine environment's capacity to breakdown and disperse materials, as well as any local sensitivities.

Among the many criteria farms are required to meet are two key biological standards relating to the seabed: one focused on its condition directly adjacent to the salmon pens; the other further afield at the edge of the allowable zone of effect.

To ensure compliance, farms are measured against these standards during peak production when fish biomass and, in turn, fish waste are approaching their maximum.

Over the last year however, Scottish Sea Farms has been repeating similar environmental monitoring once farms are fallow - free of fish - to help increase understanding of the ability of the seabed to regenerate.

Scottish Sea Farms Head of Sustainability and Development Anne Anderson said:

'While farms already adhere to strict environmental regulations, which are monitored by routine checks and unannounced SEPA inspections, we wanted to go even further in our quest to demonstrate the sustainable nature of salmon farming.'

'Building on previous work at regional level, we have been analysing the benthic conditions of seabed sediment samples from fallowed sites around our farming estate.'

'The initial findings are promising, indicating, as we have long argued, the ability of the marine environment to regenerate.'

At Lismore North in Loch Linnhe, Argyll, where the company has farmed for over 30 years prior to fallowing the site in early 2019, recent sampling indicates that, in the three years since, significant recovery has taken place with faunal diversity now on par with before farming took place.

More recently, following a nine-month fallow period at Scottish Sea Farms' Toyness site in Orkney, the range of animals and their abundance was found to have increased significantly.

'The more post-fallow analysis we can do, be it several months or many years after a farm has been harvested, the more insights we will glean,' said Anderson, 'the aim being to increase

wider understanding of just how regenerative salmon farming really is in relation to seabed restoration.'

Discussions are now underway with fellow salmon producers regarding rolling out this additional environmental monitoring sector-wide, with plans for the shared findings to be reviewed by a leading independent scientist.

Continued on page 2...

INSIDE

Future-proofing processing: Shian refit

Encouraging results from freshwater trials

BVA launch vision for sustainable finfish aquaculture

HPMAs: what you need to know

In conversation with new Head of Environment Chris Webb

Canteen Manager Trish cooks up a storm

Triple boost for local communities' U18s

...Continued from page 1.

'Salmon farming has one of the lowest carbon footprints of all the animal protein producing sectors, it produces more edible meat per tonne of animal feed used, and here in Scotland and the wider UK we are one of the most valuable food exports,' said Anderson.

'Yet there remains a degree of caution about the sector, stemming from a lack of science and understanding.

'With this new environmental monitoring programme, we hope to chip away at that.'

The need for more evidence in this area takes on heightened importance against a backdrop of Scottish Government proposals to designate at least 10 per cent of Scotland's seas as Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs), which would see several key commercial activities banned, including fishing and aquaculture.

'The proposals fail to take into account the regenerative nature of salmon farming,' said Anderson, 'just as they fail to acknowledge that Scotland's salmon farmers have been co-existing with Marine Protected Areas for many years already.

'As with wild Atlantic salmon, our farmed salmon require high quality water if they are to live and thrive, therefore it's in our own best interests as a sector to protect our marine environment.

'We know it. It's why we invest so much time, effort, and resource into minimising any impact from our activities, ensuring we're able to successfully farm at locations year after year – in the case of our longest-established farm at Dunstaffnage, for as many as 36 years.

'The priority now is demonstrating it to regulators and other key decision-makers.'

You can read more about the Scottish Government's controversial HPMAs proposals and what they would mean for Scotland's remote communities on page 5.

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Future-proofing mainland processing with facility refit



Scottish Sea Farms' mainland processing plant has undergone a major upgrade of its 'swim ashore' system, improving the flow of water and fish coming into the facility and helping both wellboat and harvesting teams manage the smoothest transition for salmon.

The upgrade, which took three weeks to complete, is part of a bigger refit, now two-thirds completed, to future-proof South Shian ahead of increased harvest volumes.

It involved shutting down the facility, which usually runs six days a week, for a fortnight – a major operation in itself, accomplished in tandem with the supply chain team.

Additional works included:

- Replacing an old ceiling
- Removing a dividing wall between the gutting area and tank room to create additional floor space
- Fitting LED lights to maximise light and minimise energy consumption
- Lining the packing area with stainless steel sheeting for enhanced hygiene.

Primary Processing Manager at South Shian Mateusz Grabiec said: 'We're creating more space to accommodate the extra volume as the business expands. In two to three years' time, we're going to start increasing volumes significantly and we need to be ready for that.'

To this end, the engineers' workshop has been moved out of the main building to its own quarters, and an old ice plant has been decommissioned and removed, all to free up floor space for potential expansions in the future.

In further changes, the dewatering unit has been repositioned to improve the efficiency of the flow of water back to the wellboats and ensure good biosecurity.



Left to right: Mateusz Grabiec and Donald MacAulay

This, in turn, will enable the electric stunning system to run on recycled freshwater rather than seawater, following a trial with manufacturer Ace Aquatec, reducing power consumption by 50%-80% compared with the previous method.

Additionally, a gutting machine requisitioned from Shetland, where a new processing hub has been built, will increase gutting throughput by up to 25% a day.

Donald MacAulay, Processing Operations Manager at South Shian, said: 'Over the last few years, we've gone from being a 65-70 tonnes a day facility to being able to process 140 tonnes in eight hours in exactly the same space.

'We've made better use of the buildings and rethought how we work. Now there are three different time slots for each department – harvesting, gutting, and packing – so that no colleague is ever left waiting for fish to come in.'

Trial turning seawater into freshwater ‘very encouraging’



Photo by Martin Ruddick

A trial producing freshwater from seawater as part of a new treatment strategy has seen ‘very encouraging’ results so far.

The nano-filtration system, supplied by Norwegian company FiiZK, is being piloted at Lismore North and if successful will be rolled out to other Scottish Sea Farms locations.

It is the first time the container-based technology has been deployed in Scotland, although it is already in commercial use in Norway and Ireland.

Farm Support Manager Martin Ruddick, who is overseeing the trial, said: ‘The unit, sited on a re-purposed feed barge, pumps seawater from depths of 10-20m through a pressurised filtration system

that removes salt and metals, producing low salinity water.

‘This is then channelled via pipework into two 90m storage pens fitted with tarpaulins, with each pen holding 2,400 cubic metres of water.’

For the initial trial, Scottish Sea Farms’ wellboat Aqua Viking collected the water produced at Lismore North and used it to treat fish at the company’s Bloody Bay farm in the Sound of Mull.

Throughout the treatment, key fish welfare indicators were measured, along with water chemistry.

Scottish Sea Farms Head of Fish Health Ralph Bickerdike said: ‘While the trial is still in the early stages, we think the low salinity water produced has been very good for gills and we expect it will work equally as well for control of sea lice.

‘Together with our wellboat Inter Caledonia, which makes its own freshwater through reverse osmosis, this system has the potential to increase our resources, especially in areas like Orkney which don’t have ready access to natural freshwater.’

Scottish Sea Farms Head of Veterinary Services Ronnie Soutar said manufactured freshwater, whether by nano-filtration or reverse osmosis, is more effective to kill sea lice than natural freshwater.

‘We’re convinced that reverse osmosis water is giving us really good results with sea lice and AGD, and if nano-filtration is as good as that we’ll be more than happy.’

‘The move towards pure rather than wild freshwater also fits into our drive for greater sustainability.’

Summer Isles new shore base a ‘game changer’



A new shore base in the Summer Isles has transformed operations, enabling remote feeding at two of Scottish Sea Farms’ most far-flung farms for the first time.

Situated at Old Dornie harbour, the three-roomed base not only provides a comfortable working environment for staff but also links the feed barges at Tanera and Fada to broadband.

This has allowed greater flexibility for the farm team and better care of the fish, said Summer Isles Manager Sarah Last, speaking to The Source from the new base, which runs on hybrid power.

‘Previously, if the weather was severe, we couldn’t get out to feed the fish.

‘Now, we can feed from the shore base too, meaning we can keep a close eye on the fish and ensure they’re fed every day.

‘It also helps with the logistics of staffing, especially at weekends, because we

can operate from the shore instead of sending two people to each farm (under company safety rules) to feed the fish. It’s game-changing.’

Given the remote geography, there were complex logistics to overcome, but Scottish Sea Farms Operations and Infrastructure Leader Colin Kupris established a series of links to connect the farms with the shore base.

‘Although the two sites are close, they are on opposite sides of an island, so we put up two small masts, providing line of sight between the farms and shore base,’ he said.

‘This involved running a power cable and a fibre cable 300m up a hillside

and positioning a relay mast in the village, from where we can bounce back signals.

‘The masts are fitted with a battery back-up, which kicks in automatically, so if the village has a power cut, we can maintain connectivity and continue to feed until power is restored.’

None of this would have been possible without the cooperation of local residents, said Last: ‘It’s been something we’ve wanted for a long time and thanks to the landowner at Dornie, and a local homeowner who accommodated our mast in his garden, we now have an ideal feeding set-up, as well as a great place to welcome visitors.’

SAIC skills chief focusing on future workforce

As the future success of the aquaculture sector depends on the talent it attracts today, few roles are as critical as those responsible for recruitment and training.

At SAIC (Sustainable Aquaculture Innovation Centre), the Head of Skills and Talent, Jillian Couto-Phoenix, has been tasked with leading the organisation's career development programmes to help attract new people to the sector and support knowledge exchange within it.

Joining SAIC last August, she has hit the ground running, engaging with undergraduates at career fairs, talking to college principals to raise awareness of aquaculture jobs, and leading a bid which brought in significant funding from DEFRA to develop a sector-wide HABs (harmful algal blooms) training programme.

'Aquaculture is a relatively small sector so there's not always awareness of it or of the many opportunities it presents,' she told *The Source*.

'Research and development have helped the sector grow, and there is a lot of new technology involved and new skills, on farms, in fish health and in the supply chain too.'

'Sector attractiveness has been identified as one of the big issues that needs to be addressed, so I've been speaking with university and college course directors in departments outside of biology, such as environmental management and environmental engineering, to see how we can bring in skills to support aquaculture.'

SAIC funds PhD and Masters students, as well as internships and skills initiatives like the popular leadership course, which this year features three participants from Scottish Sea Farms, with all education and training tailored to meet the needs of the sector.

Couto-Phoenix said she wants SAIC to become even more of a place 'where people can come to learn about aquaculture and the careers available' and she would like to ensure that the right skills and talent are there in five to 10 years from now.

'Skills and training across all sectors, not just aquaculture, will change as

education systems adapt to employment sectors. This generation demands a lot more from their employment, with equality, diversity and inclusion, and environmental, social and governance issues being really important to them.'

Couto-Phoenix, who is recruiting a skills coordinator to assist with the HABs training, believes aquaculture has an advantage over many other sectors because of its sustainability credentials.

'Aquaculture will play a big role in food security and anybody who wants to work in climate adaptation should consider working in the future food supply and in aquaculture.'



Jillian Couto-Phoenix



The British Veterinary Association (BVA) has launched a new vision for sustainable finfish aquaculture in the UK.

Following on from the BVA policy on sustainable animal agriculture (2019), the new position on aquaculture was more than a year in the making and informed by a wide range of stakeholders: from veterinarians and fish health professionals to regulators and government.

Acknowledging, from the outset, the role of aquaculture in providing a healthy protein source in a low carbon way, the paper goes on to address many of the challenges currently facing the sector,

making recommendations for how it might develop more sustainably.

Scottish Sea Farms Head of Veterinary Services Ronnie Soutar, who represented the BVA Scottish branch on the Sustainable Aquaculture Working Group, said the paper provides welcome balance on often emotive issues, such as seal predation, acknowledging that humane killing of predators trapped in pens should be available as a last resort to prevent their suffering and to protect the welfare of fish.

'We need to be able to discuss difficult issues like these in a balanced, evidence-based way and I think the BVA's new

vision for sustainable aquaculture will help towards this.

'So too will attracting more veterinary voices into fish farming, whether that's existing vets currently working with other livestock or those still undertaking their training.

'For me, there are still far too few vets involved in the sector, so the new vision is an opportunity to help educate the wider profession on the merits and challenges of fish farming and also raise the profile of aquaculture as a career path.'

To read the full list of BVA recommendations visit bva.co.uk/aquaculture

HPMAs: what you need to know and why you should care



Loch Kishorn by @rjmaccinnesphotography

Aware of the current controversy over proposed HPMAs (Highly Protected Marine Areas) but not entirely sure of the ins and outs? Here's our quick guide.

Q: What exactly is being proposed?

A: Scottish ministers have committed to designating at least 10 per cent of Scotland's seas as HPMAs, described by NatureScot as 'areas of the sea that are strictly protected to allow the marine ecosystems within to recover and thrive', by 2026.

This was a condition of the Bute House Agreement, a power-sharing agreement between the Scottish Government and the Scottish Greens signed in August 2021.

Q: Why the controversy?

A: The need to protect the marine environment is something everyone agrees on. However, current proposals would see many existing and future human activities banned from HPMAs, without any evidence that they are harmful or that blanket restrictions such as these are necessary.

This includes key commercial activities such as fishing, salmon farming, shellfish farming, and seaweed harvesting.

For salmon farming specifically, the proposals would mean no new farms could be sited within HPMAs and any existing farms in the area (or close enough to interact) would be forced to cease production, impacting on jobs, supplier spend and onward spend in our local communities.

Q: How have we responded so far?

A: Individual salmon farming companies and membership body Salmon Scotland have submitted detailed responses to the Scottish Government consultation, outlining our strong opposition to the plans to impose HPMAs on Scotland and the many reasons why.

We have also been engaging with the Scottish Government, urging them to undertake a more balanced, science-backed approach, and aligning with fishermen and shellfish growers to help raise wider awareness of the devastating socio-economic impact that HPMAs would have at local, regional, and national level.

Q: What are local MSPs saying?

A: The proposals have been met with cross-party opposition on a scale rarely seen before. Since the consultation closed in April, there have been three debates at Holyrood, led respectively by Lib Dem MSP for Shetland Beatrice Wishart, Conservative MSP for Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire Rachael Hamilton, and Labour MSP for Highlands and Islands region Rhoda Grant.

The proposals have also raised the concerns of Argyll and Bute MP Brendan O'Hara and Orkney MSP Liam McArthur, along with former Cabinet Secretary for Finance Kate Forbes and former Rural Affairs minister Fergus Ewing.

Q: What happens next?

A: Such has been the concern over proposals that an estimated 4,000 plus consultation responses were received, all of which will take time to read.

Acknowledging the outcry, Net Zero Secretary and minister in charge of the controversial policy Màiri McAllan committed to engage further on the issue with plans to meet with coastal MSPs and some communities.

Both McAllan and First Minister Humza Yousaf have since insisted that the government will not impose the policy on communities that don't want them, though details of how opposition or support for the policy will be determined have still to be announced.

Q: How can I make my voice heard?

A: Until the Scottish Government reveals how communities can make their feelings known on having their local waters designated as an HPMA, anyone with concerns can write to their local Councillor(s), MSP(s), or to the Cabinet Secretary.

You can read Scottish Sea Farms' full consultation response via scottishseafarms.com > News > Company comment

People on the move

The latest internal promotions from around the company

Scottish Sea Farms' Shetland region has increased its Area Managers from two to four.

George Miller, formerly Farm Manager at Mangaster, has been promoted to Area Manager for Setterness North and South, Foraness, South of Linga, and Swinning 3.

James MacDonald, long-serving Farm Manager at Vidlin, becomes Area Manager for Vidlin, Swarta Skerry, Bellister, Whalsay and Gletness.

The process to recruit successors at Mangaster and Vidlin is now underway.

The remits of the existing Area Managers will also change, with John Blance relocating west to become Area Manager for Gonfirth and Ronas Voe; and Robbie Coutts now focusing solely on the company's Scalloway farms.

Also in Shetland, Shane Groat has been appointed Senior Husbandry at Score Holms, and Alan Smith has been promoted to Senior Husbandry at Setterness South.

In Orkney, Alasdair Thomson has recently been promoted to Trainee Manager at Westerbister; and, in two more internal promotions, Glynn Walls has been appointed Senior Husbandry at Westerbister and Oliver Hart is the new Trainee Manager at Shapinsay and Puldrite.

Meanwhile, in Mainland's Scallastle team, Declan Taylor has been appointed Trainee Farm Manager; Steven Fisher moves up to Senior Husbandry with net specialism and H&S representation; and Marek Lazarewicz has been promoted to Senior Husbandry with the added responsibility of fish health.

At Shuna, Craig Grounds becomes Trainee Farm Manager reporting to Farm Manager, Colin Maxwell.



George Miller

James MacDonald

Shane Groat



Alan Smith

Alasdair Thomson

Glynn Walls



Declan Taylor

Steven Fisher

Craig Grounds



Chris Webb

Salmon veteran shares company's vision for growth

Chris Webb, Head of Environment at Scottish Sea Farms, may be new to the company but he is no stranger to salmon farming, having worked in the sector since the 1980s.

For much of the past 30 years, his role has been leading the environment department at Cooke Aquaculture, based in Orkney, where he lives.

When the opportunity arose, he decided it was time to make the move to a bigger company because he was seeking new challenges. More importantly, his own hopes for the future were a good fit with those of Scottish Sea Farms.

'My main priority is to help grow the business and Scottish Sea Farms has a clear vision for moving forward. You only need to look at how SalMar and Lerøy, Scottish Sea Farms' joint owners, have developed in their native Norway to see the changes that could be made here in Scotland.

'Namely, a rationalisation of farms to fewer but bigger pens – something we're now seeing here – and a move further offshore that will potentially allow further consolidation and growth.

'It's only a matter of time before ocean farms are developed and deployed in Scotland, as they are in Norway, once we find suitable locations for them and the time is right.'

But first, the goal is to conquer the challenges of farming in 160m pens, now installed at Fishnish off Mull, and, eventually, 200m pens.

'Once we have a better understanding of the challenges posed, we'll be in a strong position to move further offshore, including novel projects such as Scotland's first ocean farm.'

With growth comes an even greater focus on sustainability and Webb said the salmon companies he's been involved with have demonstrated a 'huge commitment' to sustainable farming practices.

'Today, we need a specialised team of staff to be able to prepare environmental impact assessments and all the associated work that forms part of an application, and to liaise with government and regulatory bodies.'

Testament to this, Webb heads up a workforce of 12, working closely with Scottish Sea Farms Head of Sustainability and Development Anne Anderson.

'Scotland's salmon growers have adapted well over the years by expanding their environmental teams. However, the number of staff in regulatory departments hasn't kept pace, which impacts on understanding of the sector and response times.

'If Russell Griggs' recommendations, which include streamlining aquaculture applications, are implemented, I think this will be of huge benefit all round, both to the sector and regulators.'

In the short-term, the aim is to keep the momentum going by ensuring Scottish Sea Farms' ambitions are realised and the company continues to build on its successes.

'As soon as the statutory timescales are coming to an end, if we've not received an adequate response, we need to be chasing regulators.'

'The canteen is about more than just food'



Lunchtime for Scottish Sea Farms staff in Shetland has become the highlight of the day since Canteen Manager Trish Reid joined the company just over 18 months ago – and not just because of the delicious home-cooked dishes on offer.

With a menu that ranges from Hungarian goulash to breaded haddock, the canteen is a hub for processing and office-based staff, plus any farm, engineering or other employees who happen to drop in.

Reid, who previously catered for students and teachers at the Shetland College, even takes orders, making popular dishes on demand and adapting meals to suit individual cultures and preferences.

'Nobody goes hungry on my shift,' she told *The Source*. 'I ask what they want on the menu next week and they all shout out their favourites.'

The canteen accommodates about 40 people a day and Reid is helped by Ewa Lis, who formerly worked for Grieg Seafood.

'Ewa is a great help and originally from Poland so makes local favourites such as her leek salad that everyone loves. We also have a lot of Hungarians on our processing team, so the goulash is always popular. I try to adjust menus to colleagues' wants and needs.

'The canteen is about more than just food, though. It offers up a shared social space where colleagues from all different departments can gather, helping reaffirm the sense of one team.

'For those colleagues living on their own, it also creates the opportunity to enjoy a meal in the company of others, with some banter from us in the kitchen for good measure.'



Trish Reid

Reid, who has lived in Shetland for more than 30 years, cooks lunch from Mondays to Fridays and comes in early to prepare hot breakfast rolls.

Until recently, she managed with a small home oven in Scalloway but is 'very excited' about moving to Scottish Sea Farms' upgraded Gremista facility in Lerwick, complete with new and larger kitchen, where she will now be able to provide a salad bar on top of cooked meals.

Her regular diners will no doubt be pleased too.

'I love my job,' she said. 'I sometimes feel like I'm the most appreciated person here.'

Career spotlight



Hannah Bloomer,
Laboratory Supervisor,
Shetland

What does your role involve?

My main role is to monitor harmful plankton species. We have developed an action plan, determining harmful limits for each species, so we can warn staff of potential issues. Water samples are taken daily at each farm and harmful species are identified and counted, then sent out in a daily water quality report. I am also involved with training, support and raising awareness, across the company, of the risks that harmful plankton present.

What's your background?

I graduated from the University of Stirling in 2020 with an Applied Biological Sciences degree. While studying, I did work experience at Shetland Seafood Quality Control and also had a summer lab technician job with Grieg. On graduation, that became a permanent role and I have recently been promoted to Laboratory Supervisor.

Why did you choose this job?

It was always my dream to work in a lab environment and my summer job spurred my interest in marine biology and aquaculture. I am always learning and I particularly love analysing the water samples. It's unbelievable how many microscopic species you can find in just a drop of sea water, it's a whole other world.

What are the biggest challenges?

Harmful algal blooms are difficult to predict, which is why monitoring daily is so important. The lab is a fast-paced environment, with pressure to get the results out as quickly and efficiently as possible.

And the greatest rewards?

Fish health and welfare is fundamental to the success of the company so it is extremely rewarding to play a part in minimising the potential threats that harmful plankton pose.

Seeing what's in the sea for free

Every child on Mull will have the opportunity to visit the aquarium in Tobermory for free, thanks to a new collaboration.

For many years, local fishermen and fish farmers have supplied the aquarium with a variety of species, from starfish to hermit crabs to wrasse and even, occasionally, an octopus, all of which are returned to the sea after a few weeks as part of the facility's catch and release programme.

Now, school pupils and toddler groups will be able to learn about this rich marine life for free, thanks to the initiative of Aquarium Manager Grace Lambert who applied to Scottish Sea Farms' Heart of the Community Fund

for help covering the cost for all of the island's under 18s.

'Because of where we are, it's important that youngsters gain an early appreciation of the marine environment,' she said.'

'We pride ourselves on being able to showcase local species but in a sustainable, welfare-friendly way, so we tend to keep them for a maximum of four weeks. That unique element to the aquarium also brings people back because they never know what they're going to see.'



Photo courtesy of Mull Aquarium

Scottish Sea Farms donated £1,842 in support of the initiative; £942 from the main fund and £900 from three local Farm Managers' community allowances.

Farm Support Manager Andrew MacLeannan said: 'Scottish Sea Farms and Mull Aquarium go back a long way together, with many of our team's children among the regular visitors. So it seems only fitting that we do what we can to enable more children to experience the wonders of the local marine environment.'

Band aid for Kirkwall's young musicians



Kirkwall Grammar School's music-makers

The benefits of learning to play a musical instrument have been well documented and now schoolchildren in Orkney are to have even better access to a range of musical opportunities.

Additional equipment and digital resources, acquired with £2,500 from Scottish Sea Farms, will support the development of extra-curricular and curricular musical activities for students in and around Kirkwall.

Fiona Reed, Principal Teacher of Music at Kirkwall Grammar School, said the new facilities would enhance the lives of youngsters for years to come.

'We have around 100 students taking part in our extra-curricular

programme, which includes choir, chamber choir, wind band, string club, senior strings, traditional band Hadhirgaan and brass group.

'We encourage younger secondary pupils in our music classes to get involved in extra-curricular groups and there are opportunities for pupils to attend concerts and workshops on a regular basis.

'Students lost out on so much during lockdown and one of the things that had a significant impact was being unable to make music together.'

Among Reed's plans for the music department are providing more practice facilities for drummers, forming a jazz band with the school's musicians, and acquiring composing and arranging software to improve music technology provision.

'As a result of the funding, we will be able to increase and widen opportunities for our students to make music together, providing valuable benefits to their mental and physical well-being.'

Shetland youngsters to gain their water wings



Pupils receiving their Triple S certificate

A scheme to help ensure every primary aged child in Shetland can swim before secondary school has been buoyed by a Heart of the Community grant.

The programme – run by Active Schools, part of Shetland Island Council's Sport and Leisure Service, in partnership with Shetland Recreational Trust – targets children who need extra help acquiring swimming skills.

Louise Johnson, who leads the Active Schools team, said: 'Many children for a variety of reasons are less confident in the water, or have not swum regularly, and therefore benefit from small group lessons to help them achieve their 'Triple S' (Scotland's Safe Swimmer) standard.

'We aim to support 40 to 50 pupils aided by a £2,000 grant from Scottish Sea Farms which to cover tuition.'

One parent whose son has embarked on the swimming sessions said: 'After years of trying and failing to get him to swim, he is actively wanting to learn and confident enough to try. He absolutely loves his lessons.'

Heart of the Community at a glance



2023 so far
35 grants approved
£54,206 given

All time (2011-present)
723 grants approved
£1,791,820 given

Got a news item from your region or business area? Email thesource@scottishseafarms.com

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