

Equality and Diversity in Shetland – Summary of Research

February 2011

Contents

| | Page |
|---|------|
| 1. Introduction and Background | 2 |
| 2. What do we know about the Shetland community? | 3 |
| 2.1 Summary of population structure | 3 |
| 2.2 Summary of issues currently known | 4 |
| 3. What do we know about the Shetland Islands Council workforce? | 6 |
| Appendix 1: Population Structure of Shetland | 8 |
| Appendix 2: Issues Currently Known in the Shetland Community | 14 |
| Appendix 3: What we know about the Shetland Islands Council workforce | 19 |
| Appendix 4: What we have achieved so far | 26 |

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

As a result of the Equality Act 2010, Shetland Islands Council wished to conduct a review of the data and research that the Council held on equality and diversity in Shetland. This would assist in establishing, what is known, what has been achieved in terms of equality and diversity in Shetland, and what is still required.

The purpose of this document is to draw together all the research the Council holds on the following protected characteristics:

- Gender (inc. Pregnancy and Maternity)
- Disability
- Race
- Age
- Sexual Orientation (inc. Gender Reassigned)
- Religion and Belief

1.2 Background

Since the Equality Act 2010 covers a wider number of protected characteristics than previous discrimination law, undertaking a review of existing knowledge helped to determine where the gaps were in data (both qualitative and quantitative) and which areas required further research or consultation.

This report covers the six protected characteristics of the Equality Act (detailed in Section 1.1 above). The draft duties of the Equality Act previously included a socio-economic duty, but this has since been excluded from the final Equality Act 2010. Despite its exclusion, the Shetland Islands Council recognises the importance of socio-economic equality, and has produced a Fairer Shetland Framework which aims to develop understanding of poverty, social exclusion and deprivation in Shetland, and also update on progress and improvements in socio-economic equality. The Fairer Shetland Framework can be found here:

<http://www.shetland.gov.uk/policy/Poverty.asp>

1.3 Sources of Information

This report can be broken down into two sections: “what we know about the Shetland Community” and “what we know about the Shetland Islands Council workforce”.

Data sourced to inform the community aspects of this report come from a variety of national and local sources. These include the General Registry of Scotland, Scottish National Statistics and the Census, but also departments within the Shetland Islands Council, Your Voice citizen’s panel, Jobcentre Plus and NHS Shetland, to name a few. The data includes data on demographics, but also on softer data and perceptions of the Shetland population taken from consultation.

Shetland Islands Council workforce data has been taken from the most recent equality monitoring report. Equality Monitoring Reports are compiled each year for the Shetland Islands Council and can be found via the following link:

<http://www.shetland.gov.uk/equalopportunities/documents.asp>

2. What do we know about the Shetland community?

2.1 Summary of Population Structure

The following provides a summary of what is known about the population structure of the Shetland community, under each protected characteristic, as of December 2010.

Gender:

- There are more men than women in Shetland (50.5% are men and 49.5% are women)¹.
- The trend of an increasing skew in the male to female ratio is projected to continue.
- The gender profile found in Shetland is different from Scotland as a whole; in Scotland there are slightly more women than men across all age groups².
- The skew in gender found in Shetland is partly due to the out migration of women of childbearing age.
- There has been an overall increase in the number of births per year between 2002 and 2009 (209 and 273 respectively). The birth rate in Shetland (12.3 births per 1000 population) exceeds the birth rate in both Orkney and the Western Isles (10.0 and 8.7 respectively) and the Scotland average at 11.4³.

Disability:

- The number of individuals with disabilities living in Shetland is increasing year on year. For example, those known to have a learning disability, those known to have a physical disability through the Blue Badge for Parking Scheme, and those who are visually impaired⁴.
- The percentage of the population with a limiting long-term illnessⁱ is lower than the Scottish average (Shetland - 15.7%, Scotland - 20.3%)⁵.
- A large number of households with a person with a limiting long-term illness have no carers living within the household (82.7%). 88.3% of all households with a resident above the age of 75 with a limiting long-term illness have no carer in the household (515 households)⁶.

Race:

- Shetland has a low black and ethnic minority population (1% of the population)⁷.
- 99% of Shetland's population are of White Ethnicity.
- Despite low numbers, Shetland has seen an increase in both the number of minority ethnic people, and the diversity of races⁸.
- There are an increasing number of immigrants described as European or 'Other White'⁹.
- The ethnic minority population tends to be widely spatially distributed¹⁰.

Age:

- The breakdown of age as percentage of the total population is as follows¹¹:
 - Children (aged 0-15) – **19.2%**
 - Working age (aged 16-64 (M), 16-59 (F)) – **61.0%**
 - Pensionable age (aged 65+ (M), 60+ (F)) – **19.8%**
- By 2033, there is expected to be:
 - A 33% decrease in 0-15 year olds;
 - A 18% decline in the number of working age; and
 - A rapid and continuing increase in the elderly of more than 50%¹².
 - Projected population figures do not take into account the increase in working age population expected following recent developments in the oil and gas sectorⁱⁱ.

ⁱ This figure includes both disabilities and chronic medical conditions

Sexual orientation:

- There is currently no statistical information available on sexual orientation in Shetland. However, anecdotal evidence of people moving away rather than moving to Shetland suggest that numbers could be lower than the national average.
- There is no accurate data on Shetland's transgender population, or knowledge of the issues that they face. Demographics may be of little use in progressing towards transgender equality; instead the focus should be on people's attitudes and openness to difference.

Religion and belief:

- 39% of the Shetland population state that they have no religion. The Church of Scotland is the most prominent religion in Shetland, followed by 'other Christian'¹³.

2.2 Summary of Issues Currently Known

The following section brings together a number of issues highlighted from previous community consultation, the majority of which are public perception, but others have been concluded from trends in statistical data.

Issues regarding **gender** equality include:

- The skew in gender found in Shetland is partly due to the out migration of women of childbearing age.
- A combination of negative net migration and negative natural change will further influence the population structure of Shetland.
- Certain workplaces are still dominated by either males, or females¹⁴.
- General perception that there is a lack of registered child minders throughout Shetland, and that there are gaps in childcare provision particularly for the 0-3 year age group.

The following details issues regarding **disability** equality. These are perceptions of respondents to a disability survey carried out in 2009¹⁵.

- There is insufficient support for those with disabilities wishing to transfer from School to College or work placement. Respondents felt that support services are provided only to the young or the elderly, with gaps in provision for those between those age groups.
- The provision available for disabled applicants to the Shetland College is not widely publicised, and more needs to be done to encourage those with disabilities to take part in training and learning programmes.
- There are still gaps in provision for transport. For those with more serious mobility problems a door-to-door service has been widely requested.
- There are some serious issues regarding external transport for those with hearing or visual impairments, i.e. lack of deaf translation for tannoy messages on the Northlink ferries. Also, there is no logging system for passengers with mobility, deaf or hearing problems on ferries. This causes problems in an emergency.
- There is insufficient support for unpaid/voluntary carers, particularly young individuals.
- Children who care for adults (siblings, parents or grandparents) are not normally given any official recognition as carers.

The following points detail issues regarding **race** equality. These are perceptions of respondents to a survey carried by NHS Shetland in 2009¹⁶ and the Your Voice citizen's panel¹⁷.

ⁱⁱ TOTAL Laggan-Tormore Project: <http://www.laggan-tormore.com/>

- Communication and access to information; there is a marked rise in the number of people from the A8 states, and many do not have a clear grasp of the English language, or do not speak English at all.
- Level of English: long and unsociable working hours, transport and childcare prevent ethnic minorities from benefiting from the learning opportunities that are available to them.
- Feelings of isolation: networks of support need to be expanded in response to an increasing ethnic minority population.
- Inclusion of ethnic groups: some groups are not yet fully integrated into the community.
- Individuals are not aware how to raise concerns about public services, as many have no experience of taking part in public consultations and are unaware of the various mechanisms used by the Council to seek the views of local people.
- Some groups are still hard to reach, i.e. Asian women. Few of these women appear to access local services or be in employment locally and there is no understanding of why.
- Many of the issues faced by black and ethnic minority populations are not unique to this group, but affect the wider community as a whole. These are housing, transport, childcare, provision of health and social care services.

Issues regarding **age** equality include:

- The projected demographic trends expected in Shetland in the next couple of decades will have a significant impact on service provision.
- The current low numbers of young adults will subsequently have an impact on future working age populations (16-74 age group) and therefore the fertility of the population.
- There will be a reduction in birth rate and an overall ageing population.
- The economic implications of these trends will need to be considered in order to promote equal opportunities for our ageing population, with particular attention to the impact on the housing market, the labour market, the delivery of public expenditure and the education system. These demographic trends are not unique to Shetland; an ageing population is expected across Scotland.

In terms of **sexual orientation** equality, the following details perceptions of respondents to a Stonewall Scotland community engagement carried out in 2010¹⁸.

- A large proportion of respondents believe homophobia and transphobia is a problem in Scotland, and 80% of gay young people surveyed said they have experienced discrimination.
- 63% of respondents felt that religious attitudes are to blame for public prejudice against gays and lesbians. Over half of respondents would be unhappy if a member of their family married a transgender individual.
- The percentage of the Shetland population that is gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender is not known. There is little knowledge of the issues that they face. This gap in knowledge is a major barrier in providing equal opportunities for this group.

Issues regarding **religion and belief** equality include^{19, 20}:

- There is demand for a permanent place of worship particularly from the Muslim community. This is a significant issue for all religious groups. Lack of quiet space in primary and secondary schools for prayer continues to be a barrier to equality.
- Lack of information of the measures in place to ensure equal opportunities for different religious groups and beliefs.
- Celebrations that form part of an individual's culture or religion are typically held as family events in Shetland. More information is needed as to whether there is a demand for community led events.

3. What do we know about the Shetland Islands Council workforce?

At the last Quarterly Joint Staffing Watch Survey (in the last quarter of 2009), the SIC had a total of 3,944 employees or 2,534 full-time equivalents²¹.

Gender:

- 75.14% of the SIC workforce are female, and 24.86% are male (2009/10).
- Shetland ranks 32nd, the poorest performing Local Authority in Scotland, for the percentage of council employees in the top 5% and top 2% of earners that are women (20.3% of the top 5% of earners are women, and 13.0% of the top 2% of earners are womenⁱⁱⁱ).
- Of the 5574 training applications received from SIC staff in 2009/10, 79.8% were from women, and 21.2% were from men.
- Of all job applications received in 2009/10, 70.65% were from women, and 25.22% were from men. Of successful applicants, 81.61% were women, and 16.09% were men.
- Of all employee review and development meetings that took place in 2009/10, 80.6% were with female employees, and 19.37% were with male employees.

Disability:

- 7.80% of SIC staff are known to have a disability in 2010, an increase from 6.21% in 2009.
- 2.17% of job applications received in 2009/10 were from individuals known to have a disability.
- 4.09% of training applications received from SIC staff in 2009/10 were from individuals known to have a disability.
- 5.41% of employee review and development meetings in 2009/10 were from individuals known to have a disability.

Race:

- The large majority, 76.92% of SIC employees are Scottish, 10.26% are English, and others include the following ethnicities (in order of highest percentage of staff):
 - Welsh
 - Irish
 - Pakistani
 - Chinese
 - African
 - Indian.
- 61.74% of all job applicants received in 2009/10 were Scottish, and 14.13% were English. Of the other 24.13% of job applicants the following ethnic origins featured:
 - Other (11.09%)
 - Undisclosed (6.52%)
 - Irish (2.61%)
 - Chinese (1.74%)
 - African (0.87%)
 - Indian (0.87%)
 - Caribbean (0.22%)
 - Welsh (0.22%).

ⁱⁱⁱ These figures are due to the merging of Shetland Towage with the Shetland Islands Council, which brought in a significant number of additional marine staff in the top pay bracket's, who were all male

- 69.78% of all training applications received in 2009/10 were from Scottish individuals.
- 82% of employee review and development meetings carried out in 2009/10 were with Scottish employees.

Age:

- Over 50% of the workforce is aged between 36 and 55.
- There is relatively few job applications received from the 36-65 age group^{iv}, despite this age group making up the largest proportion of the SIC workforce. The largest proportion (29.35%) of job applications received in 2009/10 was from those aged between 16 and 25. The second largest proportion of job applications was received from those aged 26-35.
- For the age group 56 to 65, there are fewer training applications received than the proportion of the workforce that this group makes up. For all other age groups, the proportion of training applications exceeds the proportion of the workforce that each age group makes up.
- As with training applications, the proportion of employee review and development meetings that are carried out with the 56 to 65 age group under represents the proportion of the workforce that this age group makes up.

Sexual Orientation (inc. Gender Reassignment)

- There is no publicly available data at present on employee sexual orientation or gender reassignment for the Shetland Islands Council.
- The sexual orientation profile of the Shetland the SIC's workforce may be of little use in progressing towards equality. Monitoring factors such as: attitudes of employees towards providing services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) people, or working alongside LGBT colleagues, may better reveal progress towards equality in sexual orientation and the gender reassigned.

Religion and Belief:

- There is no publicly available data at present on employee religion or beliefs within the Shetland Islands Council.

^{iv} Compared to the 16-25 age group and the 26-35 age group.

Appendix 1: Population Structure of Shetland

➤ Gender (inc. Pregnancy and Maternity)

In 2009, mid-year estimates show that there are more men than women in Shetland (50.5% are men and 49.5% are women^v), a trend that has been consistent since the 2001 census²². For the 0-64 age group there are slightly more men than women in Shetland, and from 65 upwards, the gender profile changes, with more women than men (see Figure 1). This reflects the difference in life expectancy and premature mortality between the sexes. The gender profile found in Shetland opposes that found in Scotland as a whole. In Scotland there are slightly more women than men across all age groups²³. The skew in gender found in Shetland is partly due to the out migration of women of childbearing age, which has implications on birth rate and ultimately Shetland’s future population structure. The trend of an increasing skew in the male to female ratio of the working age population is projected to continue.

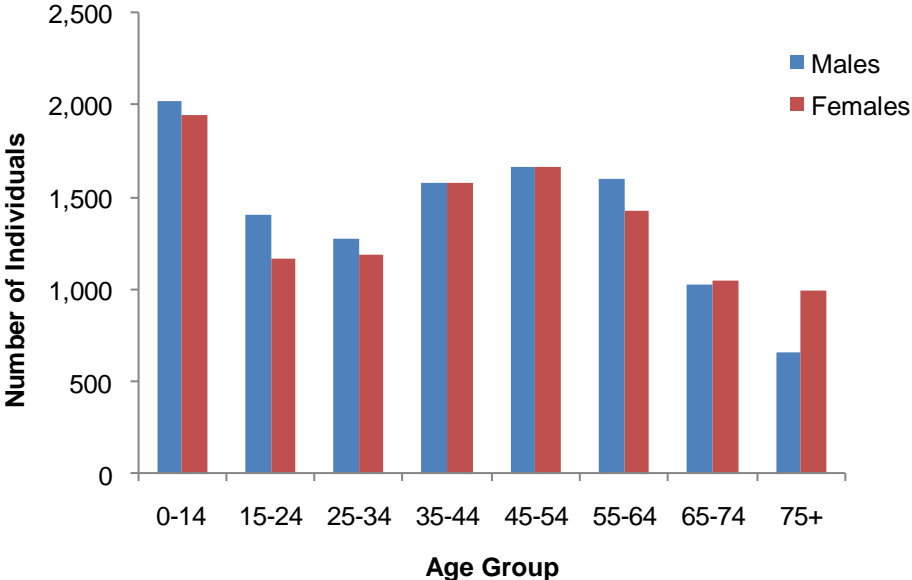


Figure 1: Gender breakdown of the Shetland population, 2009²⁴

Between 2008 and 2009, Shetland experienced a 1.8% decrease in the number of births, dropping from 278 in 2008, to 273 in 2009²⁵. However, since 2002 there has been an overall increase in the number of births per year (from 209 in 2002 to 273 in 2009). The birth rate in Shetland (12.3 births per 1000 population) in 2009, exceeds the birth rate in both Orkney and the Western Isles (10.0 and 8.7 respectively) and the majority of other areas within Scotland^{vi}

^v 11,214 males and 10,996 females

^{vi} With the exception of Glasgow City, North Lanarkshire and West Lothian.

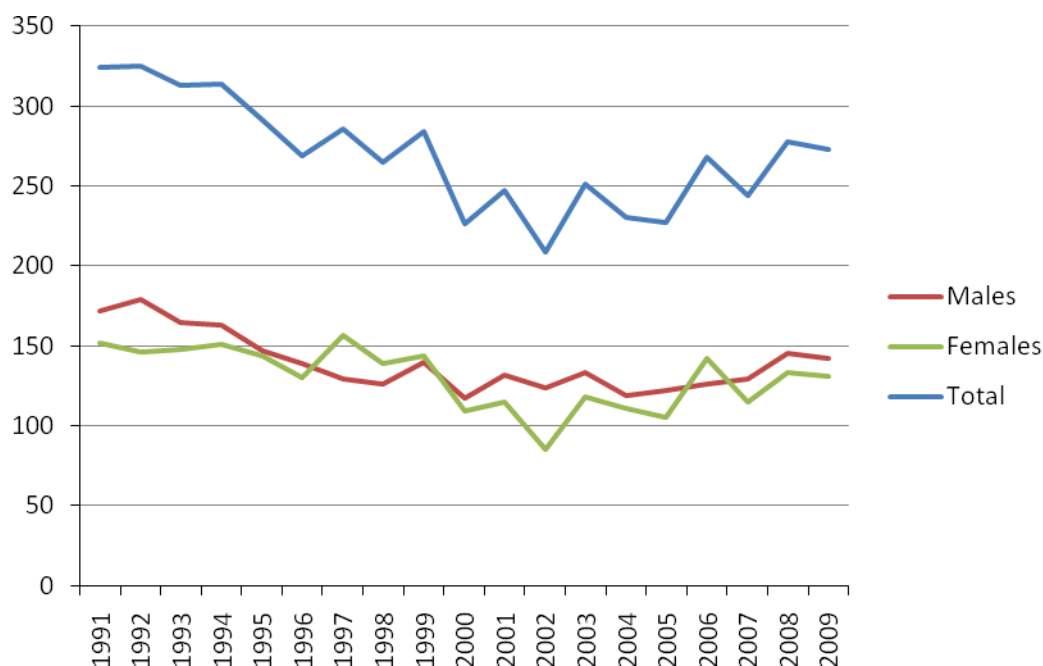


Figure 2: Number of births per year in Shetland

There is a lack of registered child minders throughout Shetland and there are still gaps in childcare provision particularly for the 0-3 year age group. This lack of childcare can be a potential barrier to employment opportunities for parents. The number of women of childbearing age is projected to fall sharply in the next 10 years²⁷. Population projections estimate a 33% decline in children aged 0-15 by 2033²⁸.

➤ Disability

The number of individuals with disabilities living in Shetland is **increasing year on year**. In 2009:

- 204 individuals are known to have a learning disability (52 of which are under the age of 16) (an increase from 195 in 2008, of which 72 are under the age of 16)²⁹
- 830 are known to have a physical disability through the Blue Badge for Parking Scheme³⁰ (an increase from 755 in 2008) (see Table 1 below for registration numbers), and 25 organisations currently hold a blue badge for parking for their company vehicles.
- 75 are visually impaired, with 50% of those registered as completely blind (an increase from 74 in 2008)³¹

Table 1: Number of individuals per year registering for a blue badge for parking (transport)

| Year | Number of individuals |
|------|-----------------------|
| 2006 | 252 |
| 2007 | 284 |
| 2008 | 336 |
| 2009 | 353 |

In April 2010, a total of 7 children were requiring intervention from the hearing impaired service (following assessment) to assist with hearing impairment³².

Scotland is estimated to have one million disabled adults who are covered by The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). This is about one in five of the population, and is increasing by 2% each year³³. One in five disabled people in the UK are unemployed but want to work;

compared to one in 15 of non-disabled people³⁴. See Table 1 for the numbers currently known to have a learning or physical disability, and visual or hearing impairment, in Shetland³⁵.

Living with a Limiting Long-Term Illness (see Table 2)

The percentage of the population with a limiting long-term illness is **lower than the Scottish average**. According to the 2001 Census:

- 15.7% of the Shetland population have a limiting long-term illness (3,460 individuals)^{vii}, which is lower than the Scotland average of 20.3%³⁶.
- 14.7% of the working age population (16-74) in Shetland have a limiting long-term illness (2,306 individuals)³⁷, whereas in Scotland this figure stands at 20.0%³⁸.
- 15.5% of the economically inactive population in Shetland are permanently sick or disabled (604 individuals), and in Scotland this is 21.3%^{39,40}.
- 24.3% of all households in Shetland have one resident with a limiting long-term illness, and 5.3% have two or more residents with a limiting long-term illness⁴¹.

Table 2: Households with a person with a limiting long-term illness (LLTI) by age and by number of carers in household, Shetland^{42, 43}.

| | Number of households | No carer in household | One carer in household | Two or more carers in household |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Households with one resident with a LLTI | 2211 (24.3% of all households) | 1828 | 258 | 125 |
| - aged 0-15 | 101 | 53 | 18 | 30 |
| - aged 16-24 | 76 | 54 | 9 | 13 |
| - aged 25-34 | 126 | 108 | 13 | 5 |
| - aged 35-44 | 205 | 171 | 28 | 6 |
| - aged 45-59 | 536 | 415 | 75 | 46 |
| - aged 60-64 | 196 | 169 | 21 | 6 |
| - aged 65-74 | 388 | 343 | 36 | 9 |
| - aged 75 + | 583 | 515 | 58 | 10 |
| Household with two or more residents with a LLTI | 479 (5.3% of all households) | 299 | 109 | 71 |
| Households with only one resident with a LLTI who is also the only carer | 86 (0.9% of all households) | - | 86 | - |

A large number of households with a person with a limiting long-term illness have **no carers** living within the household. 82.7% of households with one resident with a limiting long-term illness have no carers living in the household. More significantly 88.3% of all households with a resident **above the age of 75** with a limiting long-term illness have no carer in the household (515 households).

Many disabled people **rely on the support of unpaid volunteer carers** who are often a family member. These carers often have to give up paid work or reduce hours worked and can end up on very low incomes as a result. Adult carers of disabled children are most likely to benefit from good communications and support from official bodies. Adult carers of disabled adults receive a much lower level of support whilst children who care for adults (siblings, parents or grandparents) are not normally given any official recognition as carers.

^{vii} This figure includes both disabilities and chronic medical conditions

Many disabled people experience additional stress because they are aware of the sacrifice, which their carers have to make, but are not in a financial position to compensate them⁴⁴.

➤ **Race**

Data from the 2001 Census shows that Shetland has a **very low black and ethnic minority population** of 232 individuals (1% of the population). During the 10 years between 1991 and 2001 the population of Shetland decreased, but the black and ethnic minority population doubled. Although low numbers are involved, Shetland has a diverse black and ethnic minority population with all Census categories represented (see Figure 3). The other **99% of Shetland’s population are of White Ethnicity** (2001 Census), where 85% are White Scottish, 12% are Other White British, less than 1% are White Irish, and <2% are described as Other White⁴⁵.

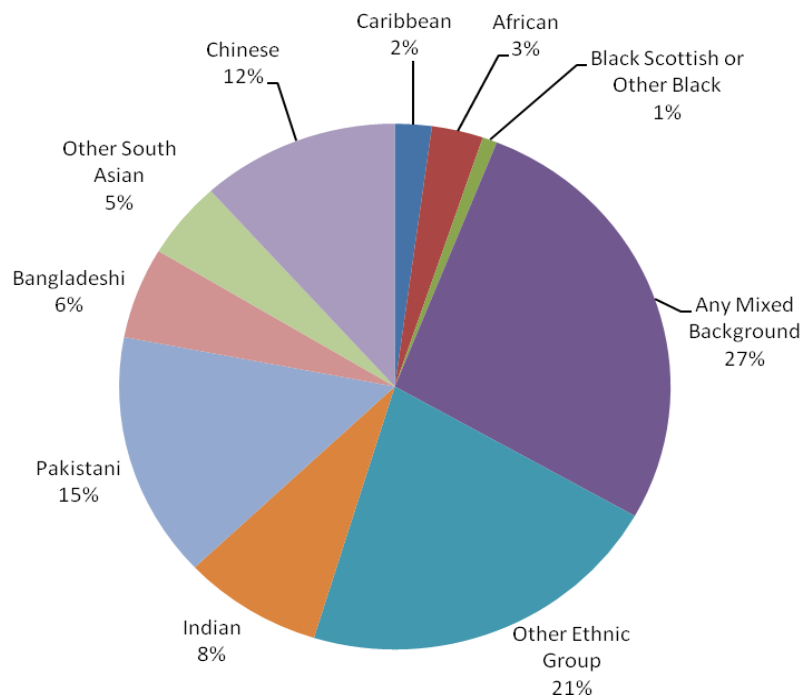


Figure 3: Ethnic breakdown of the Non-White Shetland population (1% of the population)⁴⁶

Since the 2001 Census there has been no single comprehensive data source that accurately describes changes to the ethnicity profile of Shetland’s population, so only broad conclusions can be made. Through a variety of sources⁴⁷, we can confirm that there has been an **increase** in both **the number of minority ethnic people** living here and **the diversity of races**, nationalities and cultures they represent⁴⁸.

As well as an increase in our ethnic minority population, there is an **increasing number of immigrants described as European or ‘Other White’**. According to Jobcentre Plus, almost 75% of people applying for new NI numbers in Shetland have been from the Eastern European A8 countries⁴⁹ (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia). 34% have been Polish, a further 19% were issued to Hungarian nationals, and 21% to people from the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia or Slovakia. Data collected between 2006 and 2009 on the number of new patients registering with GPs across Shetland has also supported this trend⁵⁰: in the Lerwick practice reported that 11% of their registered patients are ‘Other White’ or ‘Polish etc’; in Scalloway, 7% of patients are Polish, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Czech or Romanian origin; Hillswick and

Whalsay reported that of the 360 new patients registered at the practice since 2006; over 75% were identified as 'Other European' or 'Other White'. Of the other GP practices 3% – 7% of currently registered patients are described as 'Other White'⁵¹.

Data from Shetland's GP practices illustrate that **the ethnic minority population**, both non-white and white individuals, **tend to be widely spatially distributed** in terms of residential address. This supports the pattern evidenced by the 2001 Census data. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds illustrates an increase in European, 'Other White' nationals residing in Shetland, with 52% of the 114 pupils from ethnic minority background, currently attending Shetland's primary and secondary schools, being described as 'White-Other'⁵².

Services have seen a marked **rise in the number of people from the A8 states** (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia) presenting themselves, whether for housing or to enroll their child in school/nursery. **Many do not have a clear grasp of the English language** and some do not speak English at all. In 2009, a total of 72 pupils were registered in Shetland's primary and secondary schools as having a main home language other than English, an increase from 47 in 2007 and 39 in 2006⁵³.

➤ Age

Figure 4 provides the current population pyramid for Shetland (this is broken down by age and sex) and Figure 5 illustrates the projected change for 2031.

Currently (2009), the breakdown of age as percentage of the total population is as follows:

- Children aged 0-15 – **19.2%**
- Working age, aged 16-64 (M), 16-59 (F) – **61.0%**
- Pensionable age people, aged 65+ (M), 60+ (F) – **19.8%**⁵⁴

The population structure is projected to change substantially in the next 20 years. The outmigration of young adults is expected to produce an overall reduction in the working age population and a reduction in the number of births. There will also be a sharp rise in the 'over 75' population.

If trends continue Shetland will see a significant shift in its age profile. By 2033, there is expected to be a 33% decrease in 0-15 year olds, a 18% decline in the number of working age^{viii}, and a rapid and continuing increase in the elderly^{ix} of more than 50%^{55, 56}. This will have implications on service provision.

^{viii} Working age, aged 16-64 (M), 16-59 (F).

^{ix} Pensionable age people, aged 65+ (M), 60+ (F)

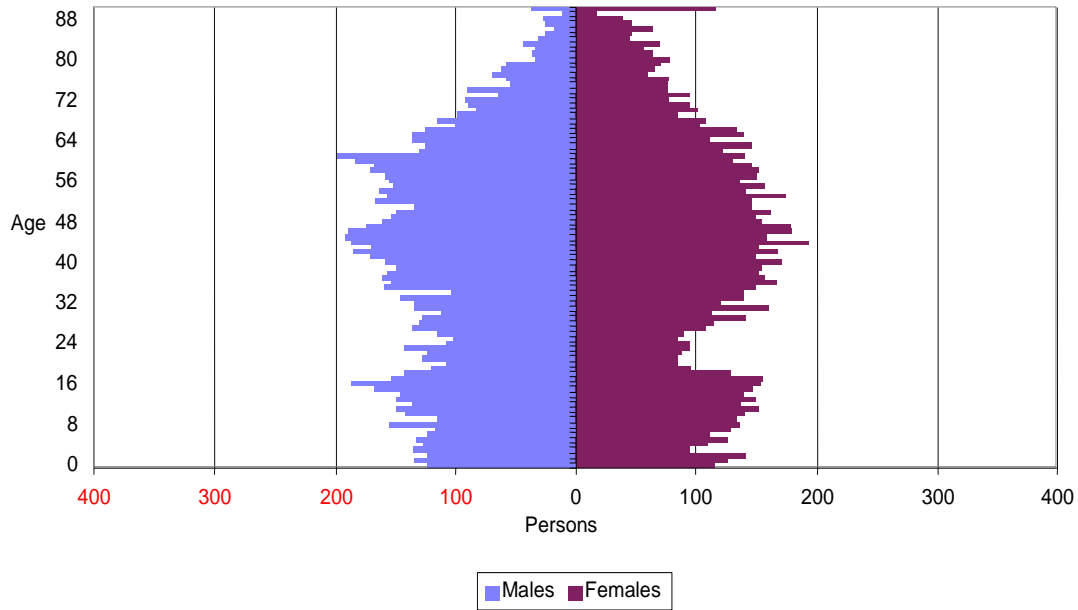


Figure 4: Population by age and sex for Shetland, 2008 (GROS)

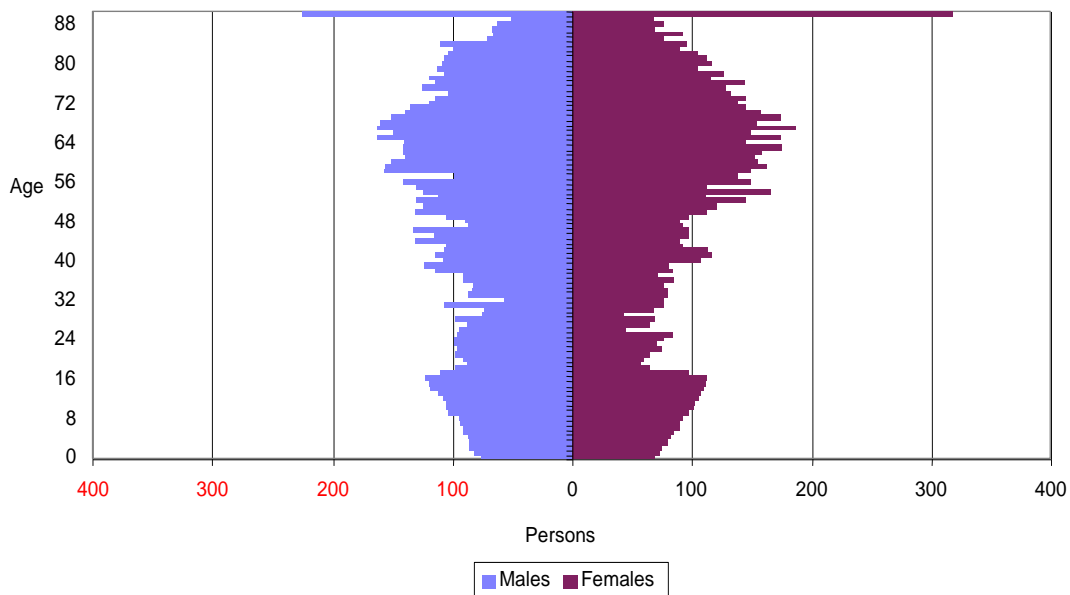


Figure 5: Projected population by age and sex for Shetland, 2033 (GROS)

Shetland is projected to show an overall population decrease of -7% by 2033, the fourth largest relative population decrease in Scotland, when compared with other local authorities⁵⁷. The population decrease in Shetland is due to a combination of both negative natural change (more deaths than births) and negative net migration (more out-migrants than in-migrants). Natural change is expected to be at minus 2%, whilst net migration is expected to be minus 5.5% by 2033. Through migration there is a projected average loss of 50 individuals a year until 2033.

➤ **Sexual Orientation (inc. Gender Reassigned)**

At the national level, it is difficult to accurately quantify how many gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people there are in Scotland since no survey has been undertaken with a sufficiently large and representative sample. Many studies have attempted to quantify numbers but they tend to be underestimated. LGBT Youth Scotland estimate there are around 500,000 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people living in Scotland

(~9% of the population)⁵⁸. Stonewall suggests that there are 300,000 gay people in Scotland (6% of the population)⁵⁹. The UK Government estimate that around 5-7% of the British population are lesbian, gay or bisexual (transgender individuals are not included in this estimate)^{60, 61}.

The data available on transgender equality is inadequate, which limits ability to understand problems and their causes, and to set priorities and track progress. Since Shetland has such a small population caution must be taken when collecting information on gender reassigned. Demographics may be of little use in progressing towards transgender equality. Monitoring other factors such as attitudes towards gender reassigned individuals, and transgender people’s experiences of discrimination and harassment within their local communities, may better reveal progress towards transgender equalities in our communities.

➤ **Religion and Belief**

Data from the 2001 Census shows the most prominent religion in Shetland to be the Church of Scotland (38% of Census respondents). However, a similar number of respondents state that they had no current religion (39%) (see Figure 6). Of the 1% that stated ‘Other’ as a religion, 48 individuals were Buddhist, 4 Hindu, 4 Jewish, 56 Muslim, 2 Sikh, and 184 individuals were from religions which did not fit into the Census’ principle categories⁶².

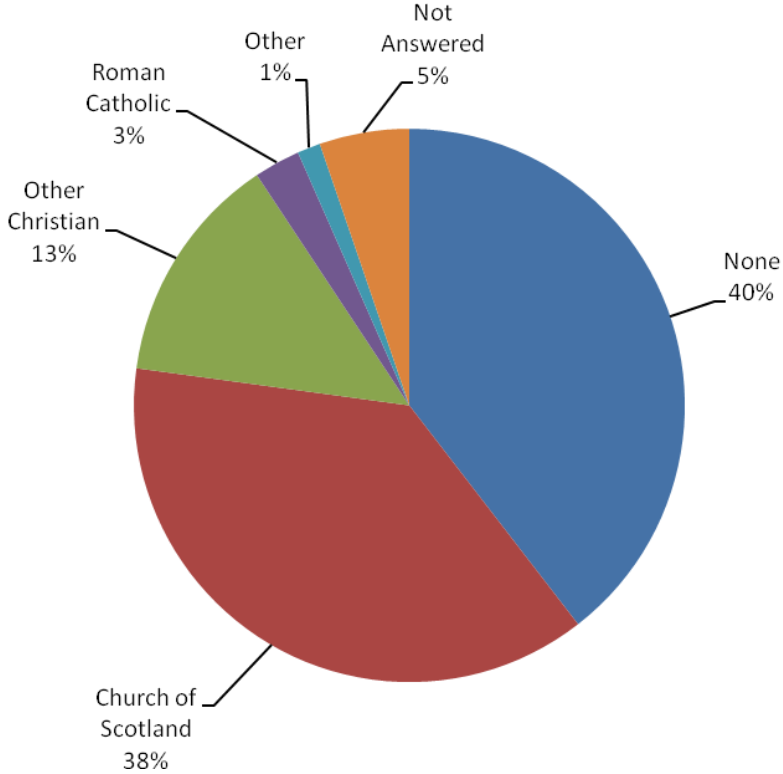


Figure 6: Religion profile of the Shetland population⁶³

Appendix 2: Issues Currently Known in the Shetland Community

➤ Gender (inc. Pregnancy and Maternity)

Table 3 provides the gender breakdown of occupation groups in Shetland from the 2001 Census. Males dominate the skilled trade occupations (29.0% of the male working age population, compared to 5.93% of female), process plant and machine operatives (17.3% of males, and 2.8% of females) and the managers and senior officials occupations (11.2% of males, and 8.35% of females). However, females dominate the administrative and secretarial occupations (18.0% of the female working age population, compared to 2.8% of male), personal service occupations (15.5% of females, 1.99% of males), and sales and customer service occupations (10.1% of females, 2.2% of males).

Table 3: Gender breakdown of occupation groups in Shetland⁶⁴.

| Gender | | Males | | Females | |
|--|--|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| | | Shetland | Scotland | Shetland | Scotland |
| Geographical Area | | | | | |
| Male (or female) working age population (aged 16-74) | | 6,337 | 1,192,329 | 5,043 | 1,068,952 |
| % of male (or female) working age population (aged 16-74) working as | Managers and senior officials | 11.16 | 14.77 | 8.35 | 9.27 |
| | Professional occupations | 7.95 | 11.38 | 10.51 | 10.23 |
| | Associate professional and technical occupations | 13.21 | 13.57 | 12.04 | 14.44 |
| | Administrative and secretarial occupations | 2.84 | 4.96 | 18.01 | 21.40 |
| | Skilled trade occupations | 29.04 | 20.99 | 5.93 | 2.35 |
| | Personal service occupations | 1.99 | 2.34 | 15.55 | 12.49 |
| | Sales and customer service occupations | 2.16 | 4.47 | 10.13 | 13.29 |
| | Process plant and machine operatives | 17.26 | 14.95 | 2.82 | 3.73 |
| | Elementary occupations | 14.39 | 12.55 | 16.68 | 12.80 |

In order to produce equal opportunities regarding pregnancy and maternity, estimated future demographics must be taken into account when reassessing service provision. At present:

- There is a lack of registered child minders throughout Shetland, and
- There are still gaps in childcare provision particularly for the 0-3 year age group.

However, the number of women of childbearing age is projected to fall sharply in the next 10 years, which will directly affect the birth rate and the demand for childcare services.

➤ Disability

A consultation carried out by Disability Shetland on behalf of the Disability Consultation Forum took place during the summer of 2009⁶⁵. The purpose of the consultations was to record the views of disabled people living in Shetland on the services they receive. This was to identify possible gaps in services as well as existing strengths. The following section breaks down the issues into a number of areas.

Social Care

Respondents of the consultation felt that there is very good support for young people and the elderly throughout Shetland, but it was felt that support tends to drop off sharply when clients leave school.

The Voluntary Sector

Many individuals and families have long standing connections with voluntary sector organisations, which are clearly of great value to them. For some, this relationship had become a central part of their lives. However, it was also noted that there are still individuals with disabilities who have little or no contact with the voluntary sector throughout their lives.

Advocacy services are available but are rarely publicised or promoted by service providers whose clients could sometimes benefit from them. Clients who have used advocacy services argue that it not only helps them but also helps to service providers as it “has a calming effect on things” and results in information or requests for information being presented in a logical and coherent manner. Clients felt that having advocacy support made it easier for them to understand the various systems and procedures and operate within them.

Schools

For the Schools Service, the quality of service provided by primary and secondary schools throughout Shetland was considered to be very high, and Bells Brae Special Unit in particular was acknowledged for its excellence. There were however service gaps in the transition from school to college, with respondents expressing that not enough time was spent with students with disabilities in helping them find suitable higher education courses or work placements. For the local college and vocational training, the opportunities that exist for students with disabilities were not widely known, and it was expressed that more publicity was needed to encourage disabled applicants to the college and its courses. It was also felt that the promotion of special adjustments available for disabled students, regarding course and exam material, was not adequate.

Leisure

Leisure services were praised for their helpfulness and disability awareness. SIC buildings generally have good access and disability facilities, but some SIC buildings still had problems with disability access (e.g. Social Care and Fort Road).

Housing

Issues regarding housing, for individuals with disabilities, are not different from those experienced by the general public. Some of which include long waiting lists and shortage of available housing. However, there were issues that risks being a greater concern to those with disabilities. These include, no overnight accommodation space for carers and family members, which can result in unnecessary admissions to hospital when the tenant is not well enough to stay alone. There is also the issue of long waiting list for O.T. assessment when substantial modifications are required to their accommodation, and lack of consultation with the tenant when modifications are carried out. For example, visual alarms for deaf tenants are only fitted in one or two rooms of the house.

Transport

Local transport, both the ferry service and bus service, was praised for its accessibility for those with mobility problems, but respondents with more serious mobility problems expressed difficulties in getting to and from the bus stops. Other issues raised were the limited bus service during evenings and on Sundays, and the lack of routes between specific localities, such as those travelling from Tingwall and Whiteness/Weisdale to the Health Centre in Scalloway.

As for external transport, both Sumburgh and Aberdeen airport were said to have excellent service, and the same was said for Northlink ferries. However, passenger information bulletins, which are relayed by loudspeaker to cabins, cannot be heard by people with hearing difficulties. There are some serious issues for those with hearing or visual impairments, i.e. lack of deaf translation for tannoy messages on the Northlink ferries. Also, there is no logging system for passengers with mobility, deaf or hearing problems on ferries. This causes problems in an emergency.

Throughout the course of the consultation meetings, it became apparent that there was a general feeling of unease about the transition from children's services to adult services particularly for those leaving school. Various comments relating to services provided by S.I.C. Education, S.I.C. Social Care, some NHS Shetland services (e.g. dentistry) and various voluntary sector organizations gave the impression of a significant drop off in services or a complete change in the way services are provided. This period of transition was variously described as "sudden", "abrupt", "uncoordinated", "confusing", "upsetting", even "chaotic" and "frightening."

➤ Race

Through focus groups and interviews involving minority ethnic individuals there has been a number of key findings. Firstly, there are many issues raised that are not unique to minority ethnic individuals but also affect the wider population. These include **housing, transport, and provision of health and social care services**. But despite these common issues, there are specific issues such as **communication and access to information** that continue to affect minority ethnic individuals⁶⁶. For example, there are particular **cultural and religious issues** relating to use of sport and leisure facilities. Individuals from the Muslim faith highlight difficulties in using the swimming pool because it is unisex⁶⁷. Young people from minority ethnic groups express **feelings of isolation** in Shetland because of the lack of a peer group. Older people also feel isolation due to language and cultural barriers which prevent them taking part in activities and groups that cater for the wider community. It was found that individuals from minority ethnic communities have difficulties with and are **unaware of how to raise concerns about public services**. Many of the participants are unaware of the various mechanisms used by the Shetland Islands Council to seek the views of local people about planning and standard of services, and have **no experience of taking part in public consultations**⁶⁸.

A community consultation^x where respondents were asked to consider a variety of different statements and indicate whether they agree or disagree with each of them, produced the following:

- We should provide English classes to help non-English speaking incoming workers improve their language skills – 74% agree
- We should help incoming workers integrate into the community – 73% agreed
- Incoming workers may settle, long-term in Shetland and help increase our population – 64% agreed
- Incoming workers provide a good service and are hard working – 56% agreed
- There is **more racial tension and racist incidents** than a couple of years ago – 29% disagreed, whilst 21% agreed. 51% remained neutral⁶⁹.

^x Shetland Islands Council runs a Citizens Panel, called 'Your Voice', made up of 600 representatives from the community. Twice a year, the Policy Unit, SIC, requests information from services on what, if any, questions they would like to submit for the questionnaire. In Spring 2008, the Adult Learning service asked a series of questions surrounding racial tension in the community

Research into Inclusion was carried out in 2007 by SIC's Policy Unit with support from Adult Learning, SIC's Social Services and NHS Shetland, with the aim of establishing barriers black and ethnic minority people face that prevent them from accessing services and opportunities⁷⁰. It was identified that migrant workers and settled residents who speak English as an additional language had developed important networks of support. However, the research highlighted a **need to expand support networks**, to provide opportunities for befriending, to provide information and to help people access specialist help from other services.

The **greatest barrier to inclusion is poor English**. 72% (31) felt that their level of English had stopped them from getting information on accessing services and opportunities. Indications from professionals working with people from black and ethnic minorities are that poor English is also a problem when **accessing healthcare**; people do not have enough English to be able to explain clearly what is wrong with them.

A few of the women interviewed also had problems accessing **childcare**. It was expressed that this prevented them from participating in activities and groups they would like to. **Lack of flexibility in working hours** also acted as a barrier for some people who wished to take part in English language provision. The majority of these participants worked in the catering industry and typically worked long and unsocial hours.

➤ **Age**

The following implications regarding demographic trends have been raised:

- The projected demographic trends expected in Shetland in the next couple of decades will have a significant impact on service provision.
- The current low numbers of young adults will subsequently have an impact on future working age populations (16-74 age group) and therefore the fertility of the population.
- There will be a reduction in birth rate, and we will see an overall ageing population.

The economic implications of these trends will need to be considered in order to promote equal opportunities for our ageing population, with particular attention to the impact on the housing market, the labour market, the delivery of public expenditure and the education system. These demographic trends are not unique to Shetland; an ageing population is expected across Scotland. We can get valuable insight into Shetland's future by considering its place in this wider demographic context.

➤ **Sexual Orientation (inc. Gender Reassigned)**

57% of LGBT young people believe Scotland is a good place to live, but 90% believe homophobia and transphobia⁷¹ is still a major problem⁷². 80% of gay young people have experienced discrimination⁷³. Stonewall conducted a survey of attitudes in Scotland, where 73% of Scottish people were found to have a positive opinion of gay and lesbian people, and 63% of Scottish people think religious attitudes are to blame for public prejudice against gays and lesbians⁷⁴.

The incidence of discriminatory attitudes is found to be most widespread against transsexual people than any other equality group. A survey carried out by the Scottish Government found that over half of respondents would be unhappy if a member of their family married a transgender individual. This compared with around 33% who said the same in respect of someone of the same sex, and 10% expressed unhappiness at the possibility that a relative might form a relationship with someone who was black or Asian, Jewish or from a Chinese background⁷⁵.

➤ Religion and Belief

Particular issues regarding religion and culture were raised during a community consultation⁷⁶. Participants from the Muslim community raised the issue of not having a permanent place of worship. The Raba restaurant provides a quiet place for prayer and worship from time to time. Issues regarding leisure and recreation have continued, with limited private space available for hire at public pools for use by Muslims and their families.

It was commented upon that Hallal meat could not be purchased in Shetland and local Muslims had to arrange for their own frozen supplies to be shipped from Glasgow – Shetland Interfaith were engaging in dialogue with a local supermarket in an attempt to address this. J.W.Gray wholesalers provide limited supplies of Hallal meat.

There is little evidence of people from distinct ethnic groups in Shetland coming together to celebrate festivals or events that form part of their culture or religion. A participant from the Chinese community told the study that the family and staff within a restaurant might have a meal together to mark a particular festival, for instance Chinese New Year, but it was usually a private occasion and they didn't celebrate with other local Chinese people. Local Muslims had come together occasionally for religious and social events, but these gatherings had mostly ceased since the individual who had organized them has left Shetland.

It has been expressed through Interfaith that the lack of quiet space for prayer in our primary and secondary schools can be a significant barrier to equality in religion and belief.

Appendix 3: What we know about the Shetland Islands Council workforce

➤ Access to Services and Employment Opportunities

In Spring 2009, the Your Voice panel was consulted on whether they felt employees at the named public organisations **demonstrated an awareness** of equality issues when dealing with members of the public (see Table 8). More than a third of respondents replied with 'don't know', but between 20 and 31% said that the named organisations had always demonstrated awareness of equality issues. Only 1-2% of respondents said that the named organisations never illustrated awareness of equality issues⁷⁷.

Table 8: Percentage of respondents who felt employees at the named public organisations demonstrate an awareness of equality issues when dealing with members of the public.

| | SIC | Schools Service | ZetTrans | Shetland College |
|----------------|-----|-----------------|----------|------------------|
| Always | 27% | 31% | 20% | 27% |
| Sometimes | 28% | 21% | 17% | 13% |
| Never | 1% | 2% | 1% | 2% |
| Don't Know | 34% | 34% | 47% | 44% |
| Not Applicable | 10% | 13% | 15% | 15% |

The Your Voice panel were also asked whether they had felt **disadvantaged** when dealing with the above named organisations with regards to Gender, Race, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Age. The vast majority of respondents had never felt disadvantaged upon any of the above grounds. Of those who had felt disadvantaged this was most commonly mentioned in terms of gender, followed by age and then disability.

When respondents were asked whether they had experienced difficulties in **accessing public services**, the vast majority had never experienced difficulties. Of those who had, this was most commonly mentioned with reference to staff attitudes, followed by access to buildings. In terms of organisations, the most commonly mentioned was the SIC⁷⁸.

Respondents were asked specifically if they had ever felt **discriminated against** by the named public organisations (SIC, Schools Service, ZetTrans and Shetland College) in relation to the six equality strands (gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age). The vast majority of respondents did not feel that they had been discriminated against. Of those that had felt discrimination, this was most commonly mentioned in terms of gender, age and race. However, figures were extremely low varying from 1% to 4%. In terms of organisation, those commonly mentioned were the SIC at 9%, followed by the Schools Service, 4%⁷⁹. It should be noted here that the SIC is the largest employer in Shetland, employing 29% of the working age population (at 2008, the working age population stood at 13,400⁸⁰), so will naturally have more contact with the community.

➤ Gender (inc. Pregnancy and Maternity)

The SIC holds gender data for 100% of the workforce. 75.14% of the SIC workforce are female, and 24.86% are male (2009/10). Gender discrimination is still prominent in the top earners of council employees. In 2009/10:

- The percentage of council employees in the top 5% of earners that were women stood at 20.3% (28 out of 138); and
- The percentage of council employees in the top 2% of earners that were women stood at 13.0% (7 out of 54)⁸¹.

Both figures rank 32nd, the poorest performing Local Authority in Scotland.

There is a specific and identifiable local reason for these indicators illustrating a significant gender skew. The gender skew in the top 5% of earners and top 2% of earners is due to the merging of Shetland Towing with the Shetland Islands Council, which brought in a significant number of additional marine staff in the top pay bracket's, who were all male. When statistics are analysed for Council employees, excluding Marine Staff, figures are more comparable with other Local Authorities and Public bodies.

The gender breakdown of particular types of work within the SIC are monitored and reported on annually (see Figure 7).

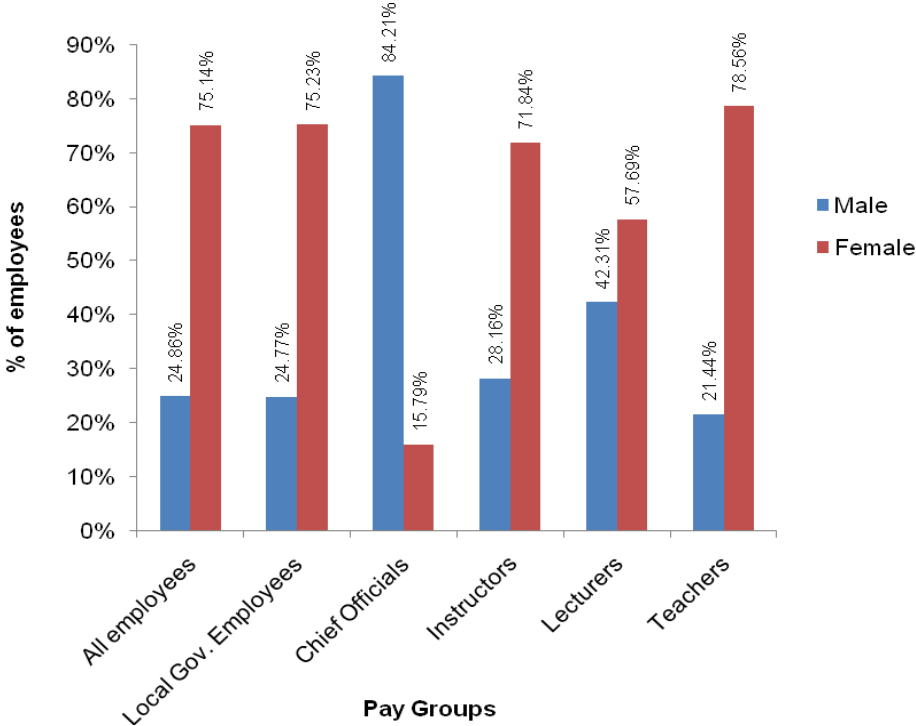


Figure 7: Gender breakdown of pay groups within the Shetland Islands Council, 2009/10⁸².

Figure 8 provides the gender breakdown of **job applications** received by the Shetland Islands Council in the financial year 2009/10. 70.65% of all applicants received were from women, and 25.22% were from men. 81.61% of successful applicants were women, and 16.09% were men.

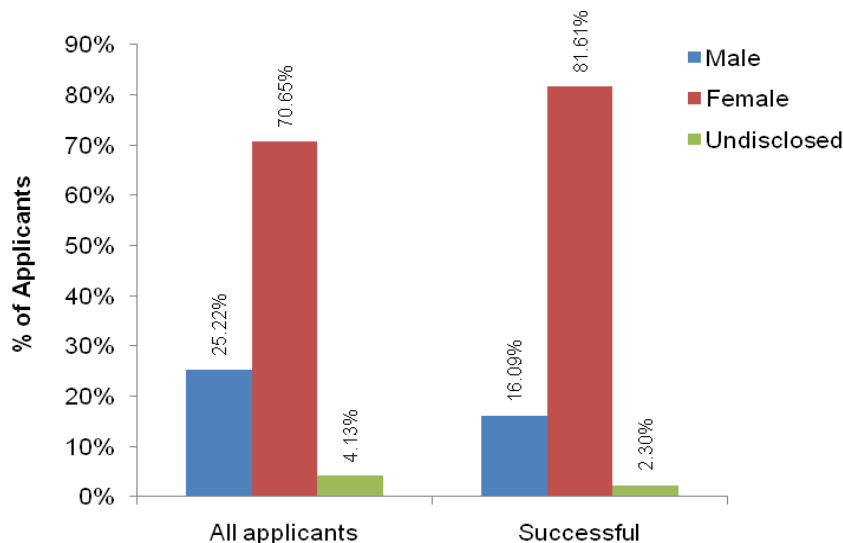


Figure 8: Gender breakdown of Job Applications received by the SIC. The gender breakdown of all applicants, and those that were successful in their application, 2009/10⁸³.

In the financial year 2009/10, there were a total of 5574 **training applications** received through the SIC. During this period:

- 78.8% of all training applications were from women
- 21.2% of all training applications were from men

This is comparable with the workforce profile of 75.1% female and 24.9% male.

In the financial year 2009/10, 222 **Employee Review and Development Meetings** took place. Of which:

- 80.6% were with female employees
- 19.4% were with male employees

This is skewed in comparison with the workforce profile of 75.1% female and 24.9% male. The proportion of males receiving an Employee Review and Development Meeting under represents the number of males that are employed by the SIC.

➤ **Disability**

The Council holds disability data on 88.54% of its workforce. At 2010, 7.80% of SIC staff were known to have a disability, an increase from 6.21% in 2009.

Of all **job applications** received in 2009/10, 2.17% of applicants were known to have a disability.

4.09% of all **training applications** received in 2009/10 were from individuals who were known to have a disability. A figure that suggests an underrepresented number of the workforce that have a disability actually take part in training and learning programmes during employment with the Council.

5.41% of all **employee review and development meetings** in 2009/10 were carried out with individuals who were known to have a disability, whereas 7.80% of SIC staff are known to have a disability. The proportion of individuals with disabilities receiving employee review and development meetings under represents the proportion of the workforce who are known to have a disability.

➤ **Race**

The council holds data on ethnic origin for 92.59% of its workforce (2010). The shortfall in data is due to incomplete Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms; the ethnicity of 0.54% of the workforce are undisclosed and a further 6.87% are unknown. The ethnic profile of the SIC workforce is illustrated in Figure 9. The large majority, 76.92%, describe themselves as Scottish⁸⁴.

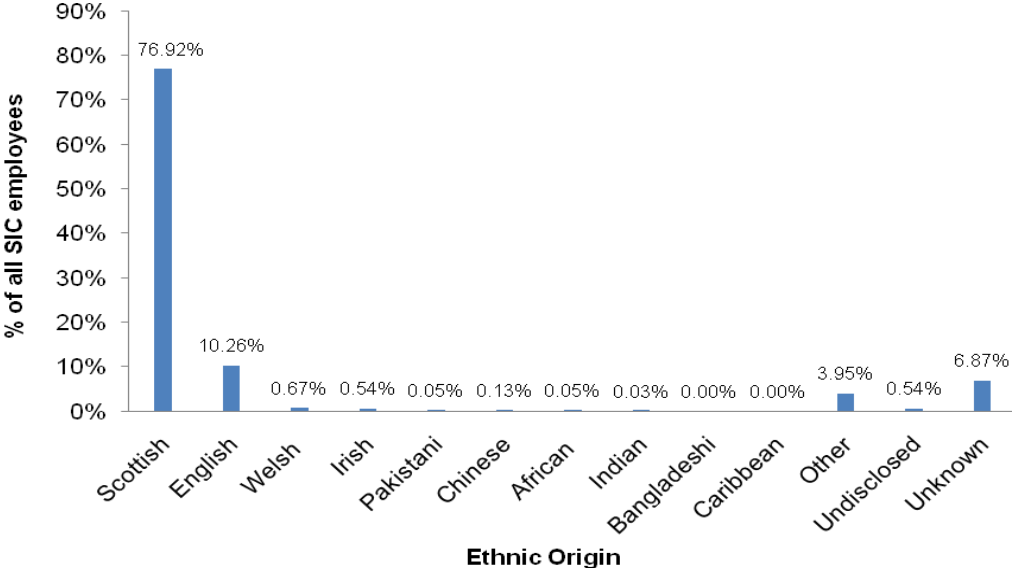


Figure 9: Ethnicity profile of the SIC workforce, 2009/10⁸⁵

Of the total number of **job applications** received in 2009/10, the majority were Scottish with 61.74% of applicants, followed by English with 14.13% of applicants (see Figure 10). A larger proportion of Chinese individuals are applying for jobs with the Council than are represented in the ethnic profile of its workforce; 1.74% of applicants were of Chinese origin, whereas only 0.13% of the SIC’s workforce is Chinese.

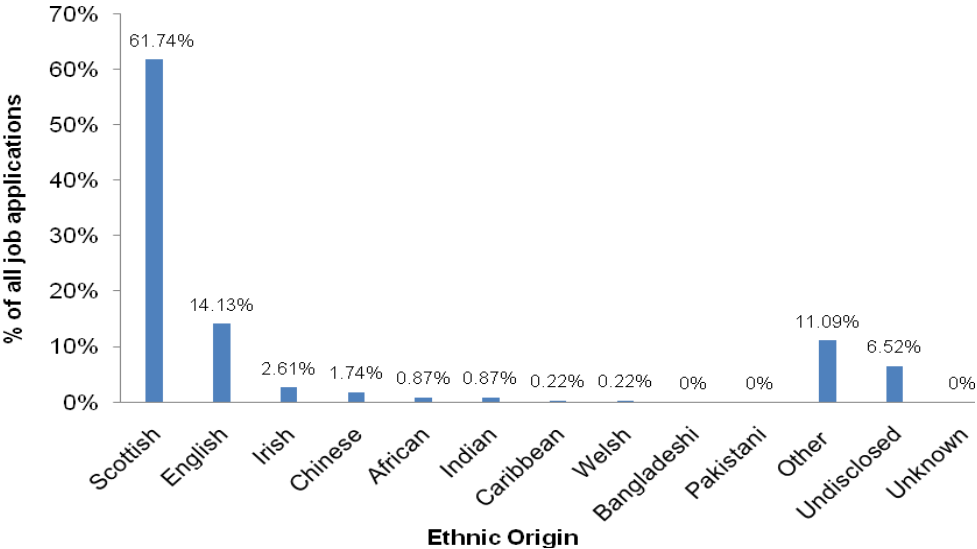


Figure 10: Ethnic profile of job applications received in 2009/10

There were a total of 5,574 training applications received in 2009/10. Of all **training applications** received in 2009/10, the majority were Scottish (69.78%) (see Figure 11). An overrepresented number than the proportion of the workforce that is Scottish (61.74%). Other ethnic groups are under represented in regards to training applications.

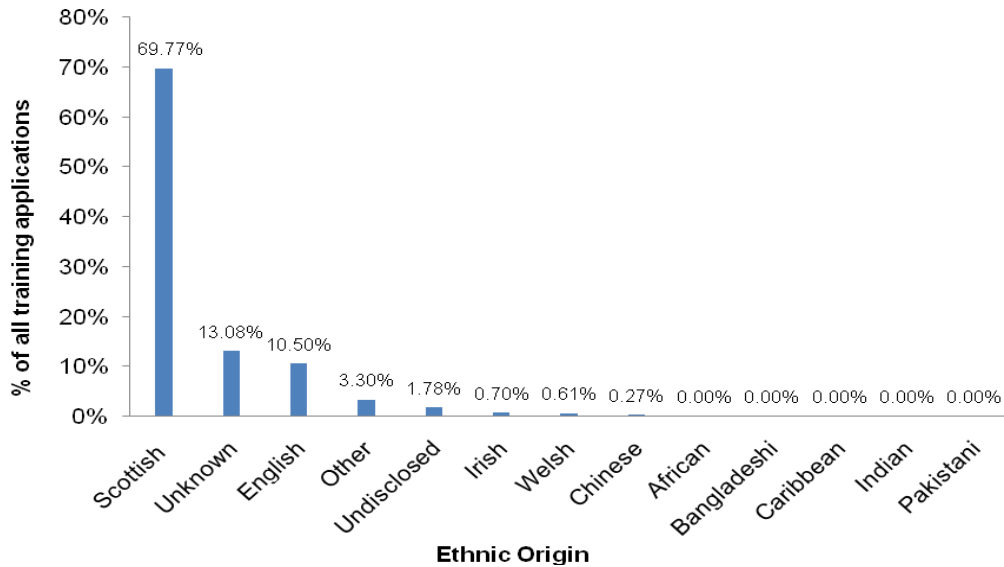


Figure 11: Ethnic profile of training applications received in 2009/10

82% of all **employee review and development meetings** carried out in 2009/10 were with Scottish employees.

➤ **Age**

The council holds data on age for 100% of its workforce. The age range of SIC employees is illustrated in Figure 12. Over 50% of the workforce is aged between 36 and 55. On a whole, the data tends to reflect the demographics of Shetland as a whole.

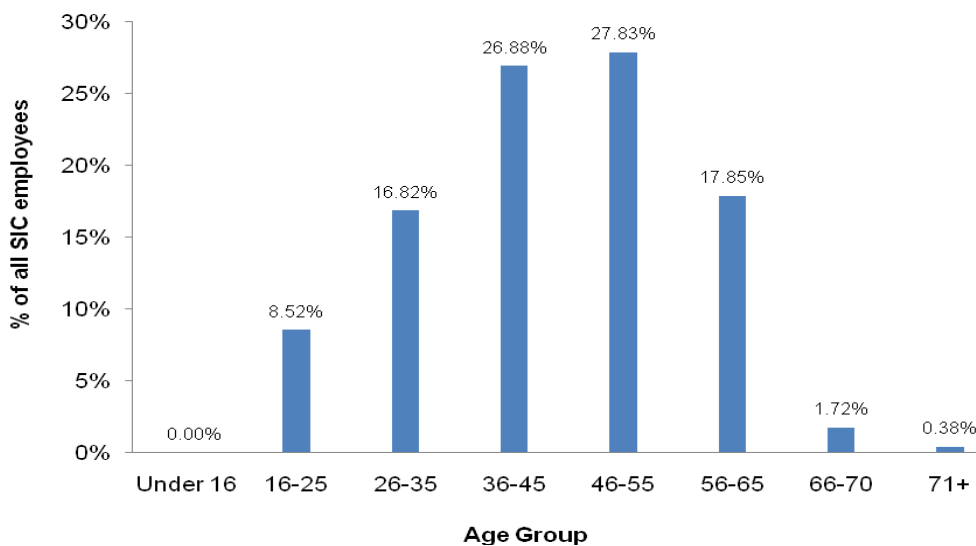


Figure 12: Age profile of the SIC workforce, 2009/10⁸⁶

Figure 13 provides the age breakdown of **job applications** received by the Shetland Islands Council in the financial year 2009/10. The largest proportion (29.35%) of job applications received in 2009/10 was from those aged between 16 and 25. The age profile of job applicants to the SIC opposes the age profile of the workforce.

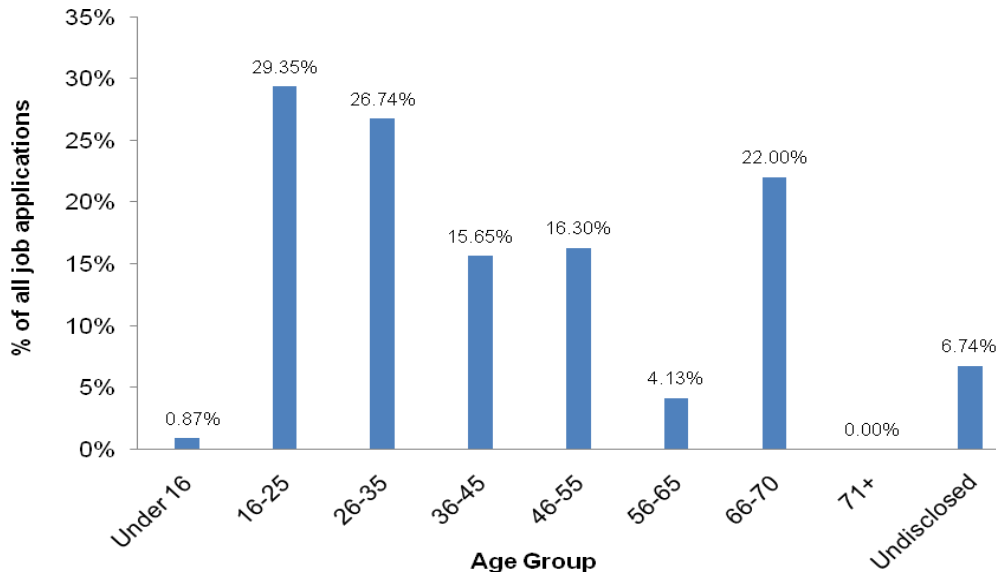


Figure 13: Age profile of job applications received in 2009/10⁸⁷

In 2009/10, there were a total of 5574 **training applications** received through the SIC. The percentage of training applications for each age group (see Figure 14) corresponds with the age profile of the workforce (see Figure 12). However, for the age group 56 to 65, there are fewer training applications received than the proportion of the workforce that this group makes up. 13.24% of training applications were received from the 56 to 65 age group, while this age group makes up 17.85% of the workforce.

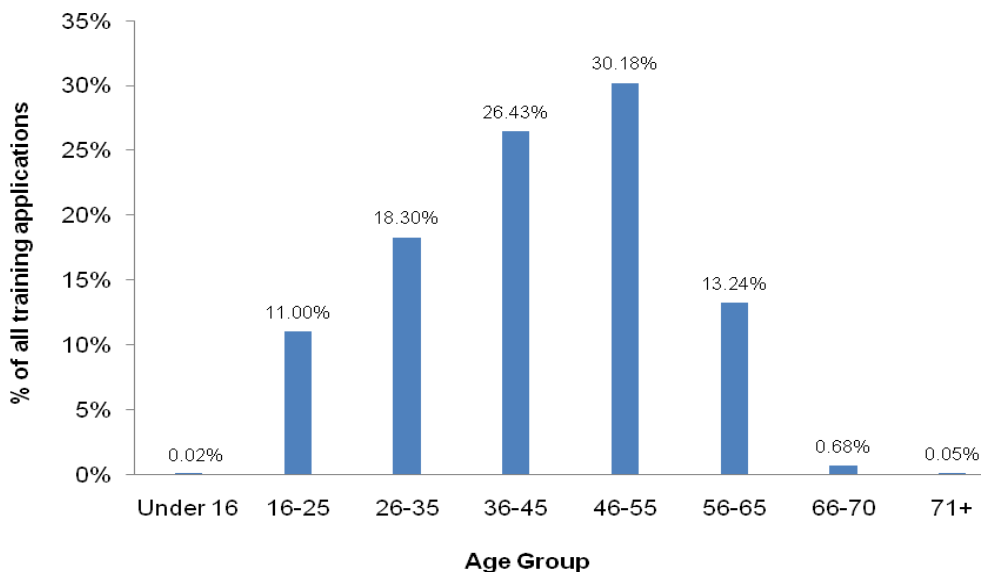


Figure 14: Age profile of training applications received in 2009/10

In 2009/10, 222 logged **employee review and development meetings** took place. The percentage of employee review and development meetings carried out for each age group in 2009/10 corresponds with the age profile of the workforce. However, for the age group 56 to 65, the proportion of this age group receiving employee review and development meetings under represents the proportion of the workforce that falls into this age group. 56 to 65 year olds make up 17.85% of the workforce, but only 10.36% of all employee review and development meetings were carried out for this group.

➤ **Sexual Orientation (inc. Gender Reassignment)**

There is no publicly available data at present on employee sexual orientation or gender reassignment for the Shetland Islands Council.

The sexual orientation profile of the Shetland the Shetland population (or the SIC's workforce) may be of little use in progressing towards equality. Monitoring factors such as: attitudes of employees towards providing services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) people, or working alongside LGBT colleagues, may better reveal progress towards equality in sexual orientation and the gender reassigned.

➤ **Religion and Belief**

There is no publicly available data at present on employee religion or beliefs within the Shetland Islands Council.

Appendix 4: What have we achieved?

➤ Ongoing activity:

Equal Opportunities are paramount to the **Shetland Islands Council** and its employees. All council departments must adhere to the:

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Race Equality Scheme
- Disability Equality Scheme
- Gender Equality Scheme
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures
- Remote Working Guidelines
- Flexible Working Guidelines
- Maternity and Parental Leave Policy
- Job Share Policy
- Employment Over Retirement Age Policy
- Training Policy
- Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Absence Management Policy

The Shetlands Islands Council Policy Unit regularly sends out equalities circulars to all council staff. This bulletin is 1- 2 pages long and contains relevant local and national Equalities information. This has been highlighted as a method of best practice by Audit Scotland in their 2008 Race Review.

➤ Gender (inc. Pregnancy and Maternity)

- An Equal Pay Statement has been published for Shetland Islands Council. An equal pay audit will now be conducted every three years to monitor the application of the Council's pay scheme to ensure the SIC complies with equal pay legislation and that there is no evidence of gender bias. Shetland Islands Council's Equal Pay Statement can be found here:
<http://www.shetland.gov.uk/equalopportunities/documents/EqualPayStatement.pdf>
The Equal Pay Statement will be reviewed following the first equal pay audit in 2010/11.
- In May 2009 the Policy Unit ran a pioneering Role Model Programme throughout schools in Shetland. This was to help raise young people's awareness of under representation of women and men in certain professions within Shetland. The aims of the Role Model Programme were to explore young people's perceptions of gender roles in employment and seek to inspire them to consider jobs that have been traditionally viewed as exclusively male or female. Human Resources have continued this work at the Anderson High School, challenging perceptions of traditional roles, promoting gender balancing of the workplace, and exploring pupils' views on gender roles in employment, aiming to remove gender stereotypes within the public sector.
- On 22 May 2009 the Council and Unions signed a collective agreement for a new pay model and terms and conditions for local government employees, meeting the Council's objectives to implement a fair and sustainable Single Status offer. The introduction of Single Status has eliminated the payment of bonuses to predominately male groups of workers and promotes equal pay for equal work across genders.
- During 2009, the Community Care Service introduced a Trainee Social Care Worker Programme designed for those who have not previously considered a career in care to experience a structured programme consisting of work-based learning and

taster placements in a variety of settings. Out of the 14 trainee placements, 7 were male and 7 were female.

- Employees returning to work following maternity leave has increased from 76% in the financial year 2007/08 to 93% in 2008/09. This has been mainly due to the increase in flexible working arrangements for working parents.
- The number of Shetland Islands Council employees taking childcare vouchers has increased from 48 in April 2009 to 51 in April 2010. This is due to a promotional push on the scheme, increasing awareness and interest⁸⁸.
- Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) are carried out on all Service Plans and Policy documents, to ensure services meet the needs of our diverse communities. The EqIA for the Human Resources Service Plan 2010-11 highlighted a positive impact on women: by maintaining the numbers of remote working when reducing workforce numbers, this will increase proportions more likely to be taken by women who have more caring responsibilities. Previous Service Plans have taken positive action on promoting gender equality by focusing on improving the equal opportunity SPI re the number of women in top 2% & 5% of earners within SIC.
- Schools Service staff work closely with staff from Children's Services to ensure childcare provision is available in all areas of Shetland.
- Schools Service work with staff from Human Resources to remove barriers affecting mothers returning to work.
- Shetland Library, in partnership with NHS Shetland, provide Bookstart packs (containing books and information) for parents for every child before their first birthday. The scheme is a national initiative, which aims to encourage parents to share books with their child from an early age, and to build on this bonding experience throughout the child's early years.
- In May 2009 the Policy Unit ran a pioneering role model programme throughout schools in Shetland. This was to help raise young people's awareness of under representation of women and men in certain professions within Shetland. The aims of the Role Model Programme were to explore young people's perceptions of gender roles in employment and seek to inspire them to consider jobs that have been traditionally viewed as exclusively male or female.
- The Single Status Agreement was fully implemented in September 2009. The Council will be conducting equal pay audits every three years to monitor the application of the Council's pay scheme to ensure there is no evidence of gender bias.
- A number of care at home units in Shetland will not accept male workers, due to female service users requesting female carers. This may be an area to be looked at in the future.
- Flexible employment arrangements are in place to support parents and to ensure returners are supported by ongoing contact with the service.
- Schools Service staff work with staff from Human Resources to remove barriers affecting mothers returning to work and to inform action to promote gender equality within the Schools Service. They have begun to explore the uptake of flexible arrangements to support parents and to ensure that women returners are supported by ongoing contact with the service (e.g. through attendance at in-service training). The SIC are consulting women returners on other methods of easing the process back to work.

➤ **Disability**

- In 2009, Disability Shetland undertook a number of consultations with local disability groups. Issues raised will be fed into the Equality Framework for 2011. These will inform equality outcomes regarding disability. Through the Schools Service, young people are regularly consulted through termly reviews.

- In Shetland, the number of people who receive home care stood at 461 in 2009 (SIC, 2009. Education and Social Care). Community workers provide home visits or alternate venues for those with mobility problems.
- There are a number of SIC funded voluntary organisations offering support to those with disabilities, such as: Moving On, Disability Shetland and COPE Ltd. Training regarding mental health is provided to all community learning and development staff and support groups such as Mind Your Head and Moving On Project.
- Adult Learning provides appropriate support to individuals who disclose a disability. Adaptations to learning resources have been made to enable individuals with sight difficulty or dyslexia to access them more readily, and all SIC publications are available in large print or Braille on request. Adults with learning disabilities have access to evening class programmes with support from carers.
- A library project has been launched to provide talking books for library users, and a 'housebound service' is available which provides mobile libraries to those with mobility issues.
- The Schools Service has supported the cost of mobility training, and advice and support through the Vision Service. The Vision Service is provided through Additional Support Needs, and supports children and young people who have a sight loss that causes difficulty to development, learning and independent living.
- All SIC buildings have been access audited for disabled users.
- An Independent Living Tenants Group enables people with learning difficulties living in Council accommodation to voice their opinions about matters affecting their tenancy.
- The ferry service has conducted a disability access audit, in conjunction with Disability Shetland. Information on disability access can be found on the Disability Shetland web site under Shetland Access Guide. ZetTrans continues to provide free public transport travel for the elderly and disabled groups in accordance with the national transport concessionary scheme offered by Transport Scotland.
- A new provision in the Equality Act 2010 will prevent employers from asking prospective employees questions about their health, prior to an offer of employment being made (except in very limited circumstances). The Shetland Islands Council Human Resources department is looking into SIC practice following receipt of this amendment.

➤ Race

- **Adult Learning** co-ordinates the ESOL programme (English for Speakers of Other Languages). The ESOL programme is for people who do not speak English as their first language, to provide them with support for reading, writing, listening and speaking English. Most of these courses are free. The number of enrolments in the Joint ESOL Programme has increased from 32 in 2006/07 to 137 in 2008/09.
- Through Adult Learning, tutors from a range of ethnic backgrounds have been recruited to deliver classes: there is currently one member of staff from Spain who has a role in promoting cultural cohesion and celebrating diversity, and another 14 tutors from a range of backgrounds (Germany, Spain, Asia, US, France, Colombia, New Zealand, Zimbabwe, & Slovenia) are involved in delivering classes and courses. 17.5% of Adult Learning tutors are from non-UK origin. There are also around 6 volunteers from non-UK backgrounds who support the Welcome Point and are supported by Adult Learning. The Welcome Point Project is a social drop-in point for Speakers of Other Languages. It provides a place where they can come together, get advice and information on local issues, practice English, access computers and the Internet and meet new people. This project came about as a result of a piece of research carried out by the SIC's Policy Unit which indicated that migrant workers could feel isolated and sometimes need support to access information and services.

- Shetland Islands Council (SIC) now has access to a telephone-based **professional translation/interpreter service** known as Language Line. With interpreters that can provide over 170 languages, 24 hours a day, accessibility to SIC services for those who do not speak English has been improved. This displaces the voluntary translation list that was held by the Policy Unit (SIC), which has meant improvements in confidentiality for those wishing to use the Councils translation service.
- Within the **Schools Service** a network of staff has been established to support families with English as an Additional Language (English for Speakers of Other Languages). This allows the Schools Service to highlight the needs of family ESOL learners, and provide support. At present a small number of young people are released from school to attend adult ESOL classes.
- The **ESOL Culture Club** has been developed through the College to help students actively involved in the community. Activities organized by the club are focused on Environment, History, Traditions, Dialect and Music in Shetland.

➤ **Age**

- Train Shetland provides support for the Schools Service, through training courses and programmes, for the transition from school to workplace for young people across Shetland. The Bridges Project, which has been running for 5 years now, supports young participants in the transition from School to Work, through social activities and team building projects. Local training and recruitment programs like these encourage young individuals to stay in Shetland to live, study and work.

➤ **Sexual Orientation (inc. Gender Reassigned)**

- The Equality Network has trained a volunteer from Shetland to represent the LGBT community, to collect their views and act as a voice to feed back to the Equality Network and the Council's Equality Forum.
- During LGBT History Month 2010, Shetland Islands Council Youth Services held an information event, which provided young people with information about a variety of LGBT issues. A survey had been produced for young people in order to find out their views on LGBT issues, and to help Youth Services establish what services young LGBT people need in Shetland.

➤ **Religion and Belief**

- Shetland Interfaith holds regular meetings and events to provide support to individual faiths represented in Shetland. Shetland Interfaith are in progress of developing a central point of contact for religious groups, providing information about places of worship, times of worship and a main contact for religious groups.

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