

Shetland Inter-Island Transport Study



Papa Stour Public Engagement Meeting



Shetland Inter-Island Transport Study

Welcome to the **Papa Stour Public Engagement Meeting** for the Shetland Inter-Island Transport Study (SIITS).

The Shetland inter-island transport network, which consists of a combination of ferry and air services, connects nine islands with Shetland mainland. These lifeline connections support the economies of Shetland's island communities as well as providing personal accessibility to employment opportunities and access to key services such as education, health and leisure opportunities.

The inter-island transport network has been supported in both capital and revenue terms by the Council over many years. Whilst this remains the case, ageing assets, escalating costs and a reduction in the funding available to local authorities has led to a need to consider the future of the inter-island transport network at the strategic level. To this end, the Council, in partnership with ZetTrans, Transport Scotland and Highlands & Islands Enterprise, commissioned the Shetland Inter-Island Transport Study (SIITS), with a view to developing and appraising options for the future of the inter-island transport services.

The purpose of this exercise is to determine the **appropriate level of service for each island / island group** and the **funding implications** of this. This will provide the Council and ZetTrans with an evidence base to inform discussions with Scottish Government. To this end, the study team, led by Peter Brett Associates LLP, has developed, appraised & costed a set of capital (e.g. vessels, harbours, fixed links, airfields and aircraft (where appropriate)) and revenue (i.e. additional sailings and / or flights) options. These options are based on identified transport problems within each island, which we have had initial confirmation of from each local Community Council.

Following the submission of the final report in October 2016, a subset of these options will be taken forward for further development and appraisal. **This is your chance to have your say on the options** – please speak to the team, provide your feedback and fill up the brief exit questionnaire which we have provided.



How have we determined what level of service is needed by the community?

There are two elements used to inform this process:

- Transport Scotland's Routes & Services Methodology (RSM)
 - Provides an initial 'model' ferry service depending on a range of inputs
 - The RSM is one of a number of inputs used to inform the appraisal
- An appraisal based on the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) and Business Case Guidance
 - provides a much more detailed analysis based on the local context and circumstances
- The study is joint-funded by Shetland Islands Council, Transport Scotland, and Highlands & Islands Enterprise
 - All stakeholders have had an input into the development of the study, ensuring consistency with other Scottish ferry-related studies



Routes and Service Methodology

As part of the Scottish Ferries Review, Transport Scotland developed a 'Routes & Services Methodology' (RSM), which is designed to produce a consistent approach to ferry service transport provision across Scotland.

The RSM is a six-step, evidence-based process which:

- Identifies the current level of service to an island
- Establishes a 'model' level of service for an island in terms of the:
 - number of sailing days
 - number of connections per day
 - the length of the operating day
- Develops and appraises options to address any gaps between the 'current' and 'model' service provision

The RSM does not imply an immediate or indeed any commitment to scale-up to the 'model' level of service, but is a tool which is taken into account in the analysis, and potentially an outcome worked towards over time.



Papa Stour – RSM Findings

- The RSM findings for Papa Stour are as follows:

	Sailing / Flight Days	Sailings / Flights Per Day	Operating Day
Current Service	5 Days	1-2 connections per day, no service on Mon or Thurs	Varies by day
Model Service	7 Days	6-8 connections per day	More than 14 hours
<i>RSM Outcome</i>	<i>Marginal under-provision</i>	<i>Substantial under-provision</i>	<i>Substantial under-provision</i>

- Papa Stour currently has a 5 day service
- There is no connection to Shetland mainland on a Monday or Thursday.
- The current service does not deliver either the RSM-defined frequency or length of operating day, although these would seem somewhat excessive for Papa Stour.



Current Ferry Service



Vessel Issues: Vessel is single screwed; insufficient sub-division below the waterline; ageing vessel.

Access for Disabled: Access to the lounge straight from car deck but sills in doorways can be an issue for those with mobility problems

Accommodation Issues: No issues

Current Vessel:
MV Snolda

Vessel Age:
33 years

Scheduled Replacement Date:
Required in short-term – 2017-2022

Carrying Capacity:
12 passengers
6 cars
115 tonnes

Ship-Shore interface:
Linkspan. MV Snolda has onboard crane so can undertake Lo-Lo operations.

The vessel overnights at West Burrafirth



Air Service



Aircraft Issues: Low carrying capacity; limited to operation during hours of daylight.

Access for Disabled: It can be challenging for people with mobility difficulties to access the aircraft.

Current Aircraft

2 * Britten-Norman Islanders

Aircraft Age

10 & 25 years old

Carrying Capacity

8-9 passengers and limited freight

Passenger numbers on G-SICB limited to 6

Airfield Features

Unlicensed

Air services limited to two rotations per week currently due to a lack of Rescue & Fire Fighting Services



Papa Stour - Current Summer Service – departures by day of week



PAPA STOUR

  Direct
  Indirect

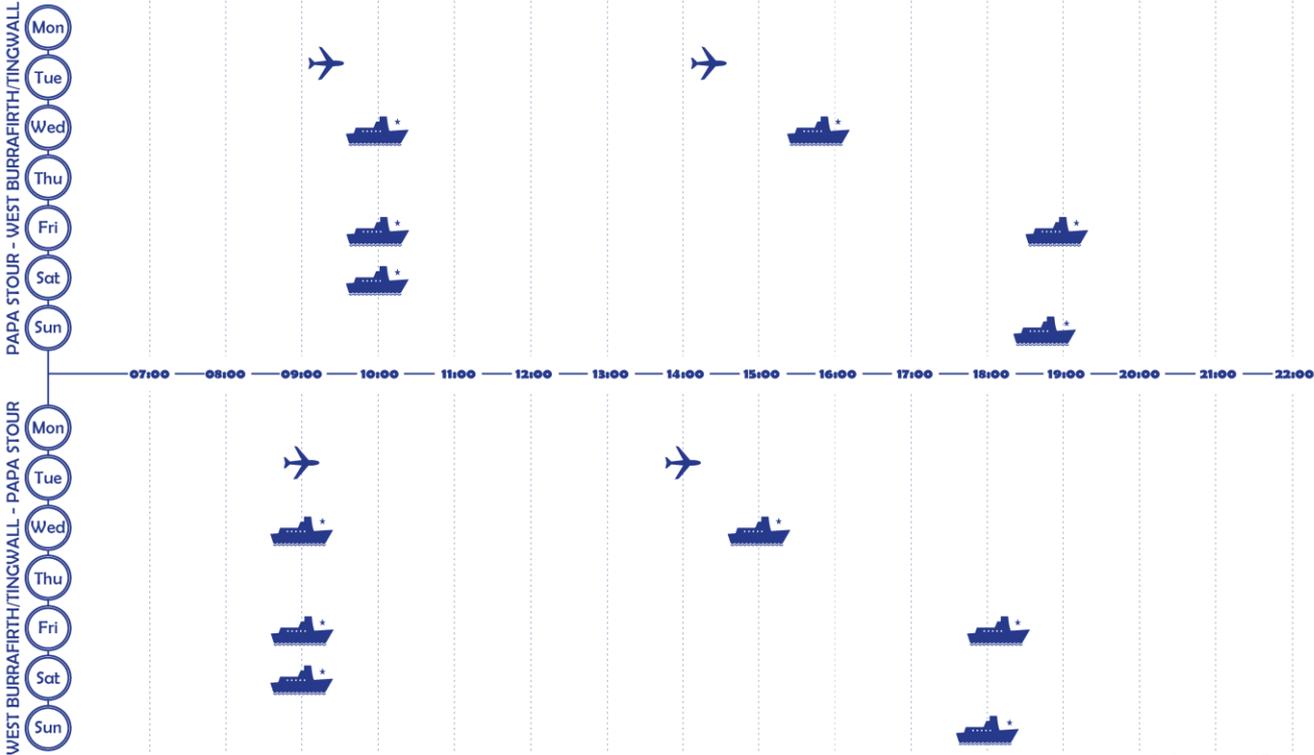


Papa Stour - Current Winter Service – departures by day of week



PAPA STOUR

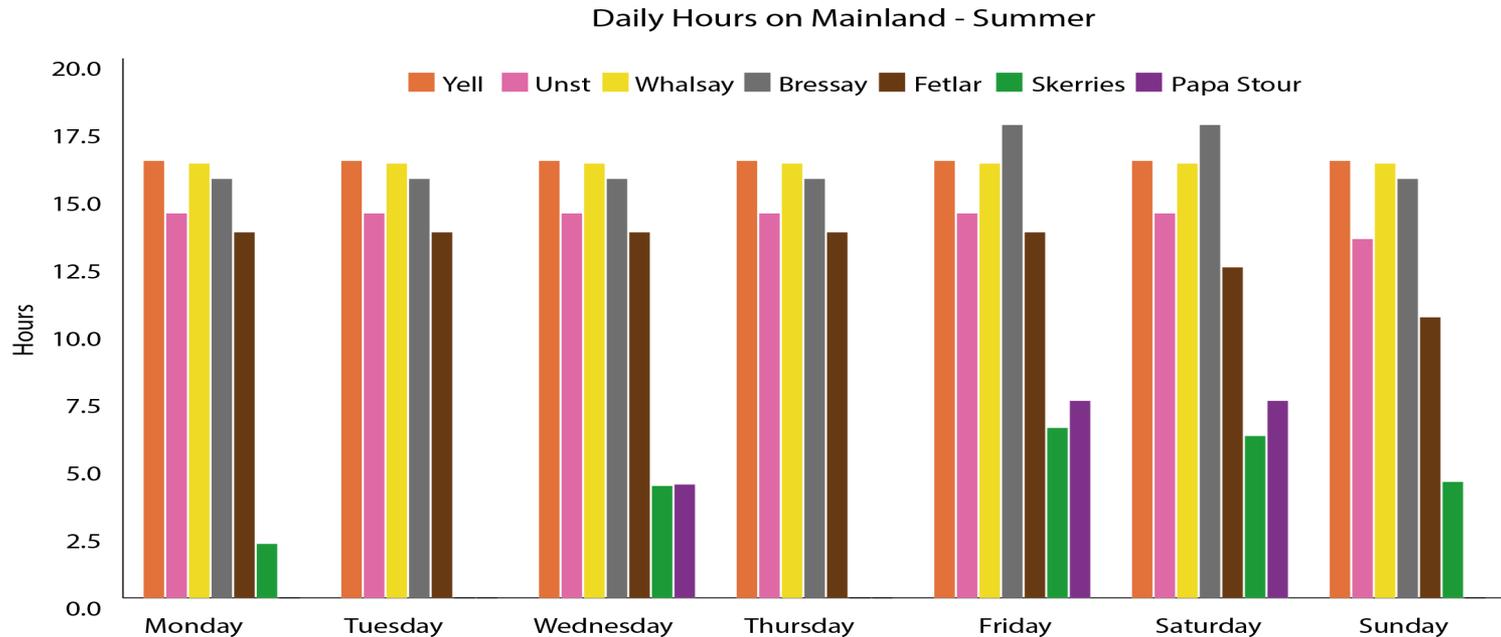
Direct
 Indirect



* Sailings are on Request



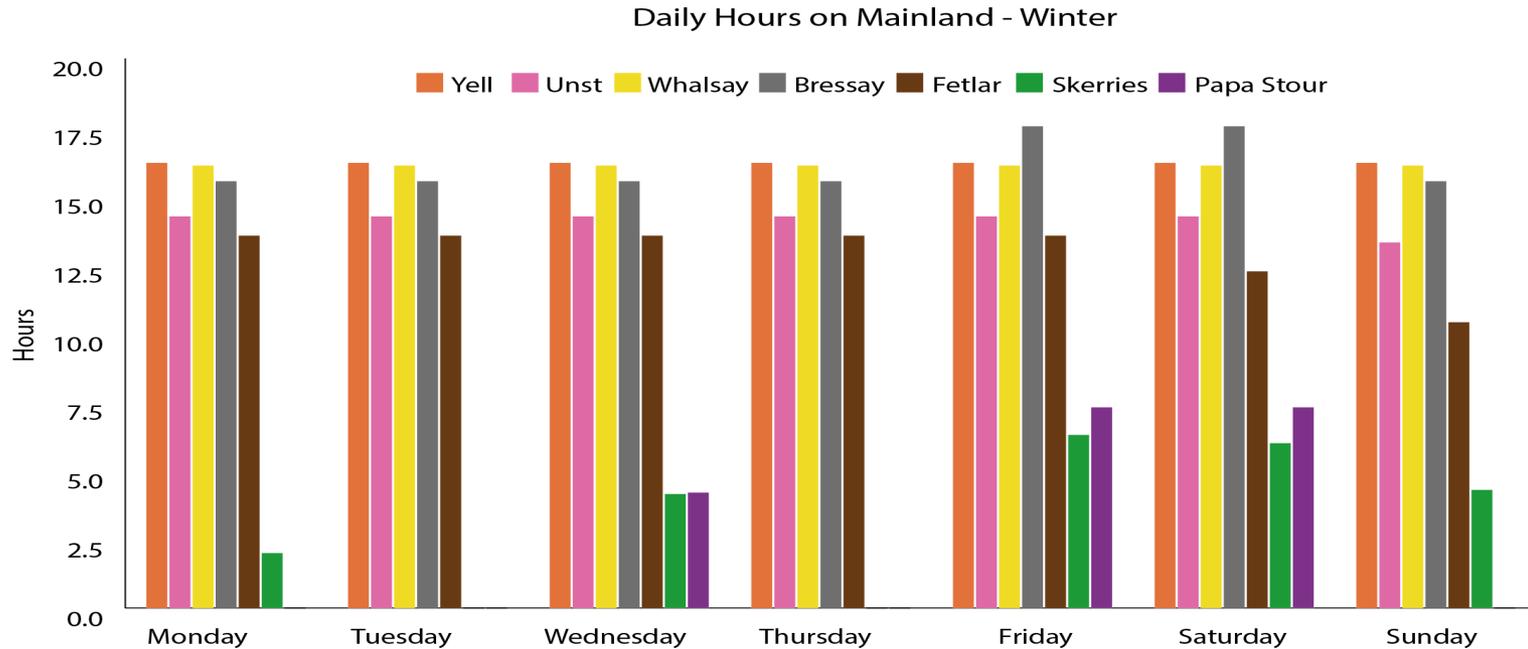
Daily Time in Shetland Mainland – Ferry - Summer



- The Papa Stour ferry timetable is irregular – a day return trip by ferry can only be made on a Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.
- Hours on mainland are therefore relatively limited – around 4 hours on a Monday and just over 7 hours on a Friday and Saturday



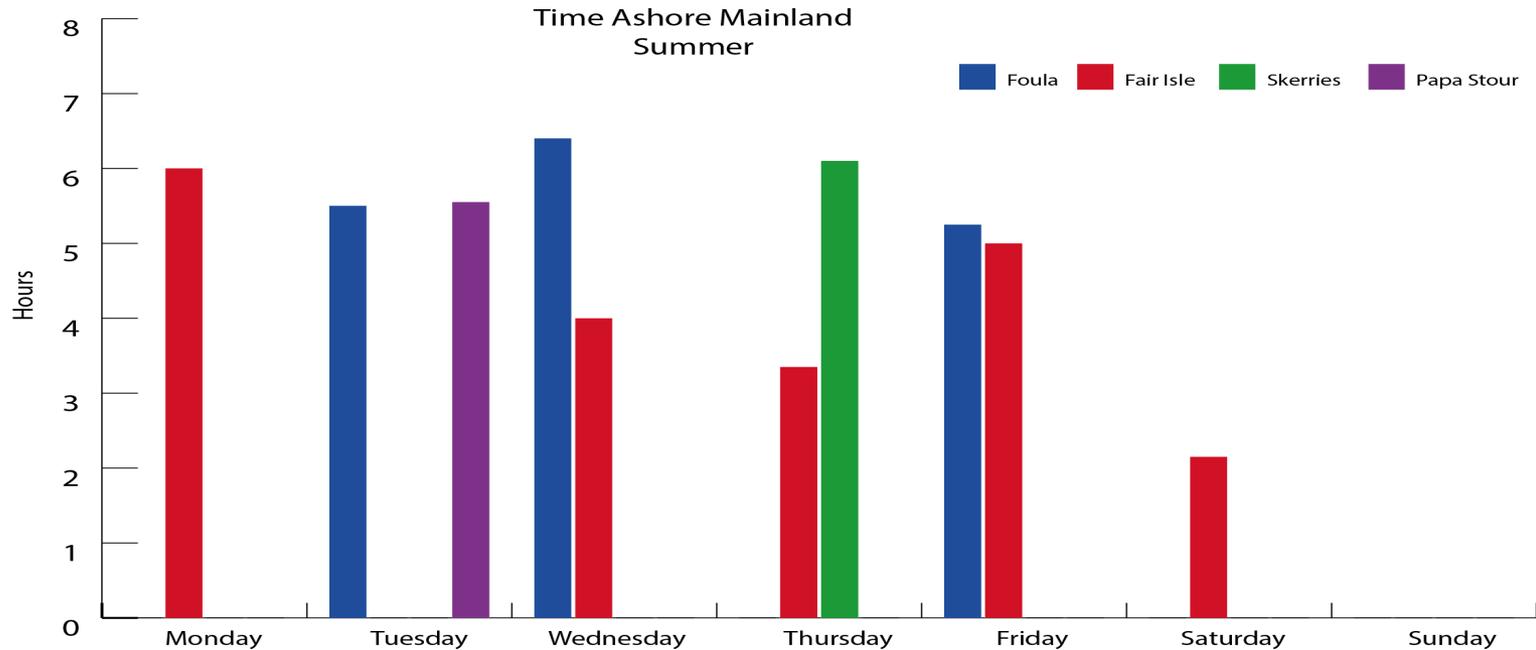
Daily Time in Shetland Mainland – Ferry - Winter



- The hours available on Shetland mainland by ferry from Papa Stour are the same in winter as in summer.
- Note – the Saturday 1800 departure ex West Burrafirth & 1845 ex Papa Stour do not operate after late October, so there is no time on mainland on a Saturday for most of the winter timetable



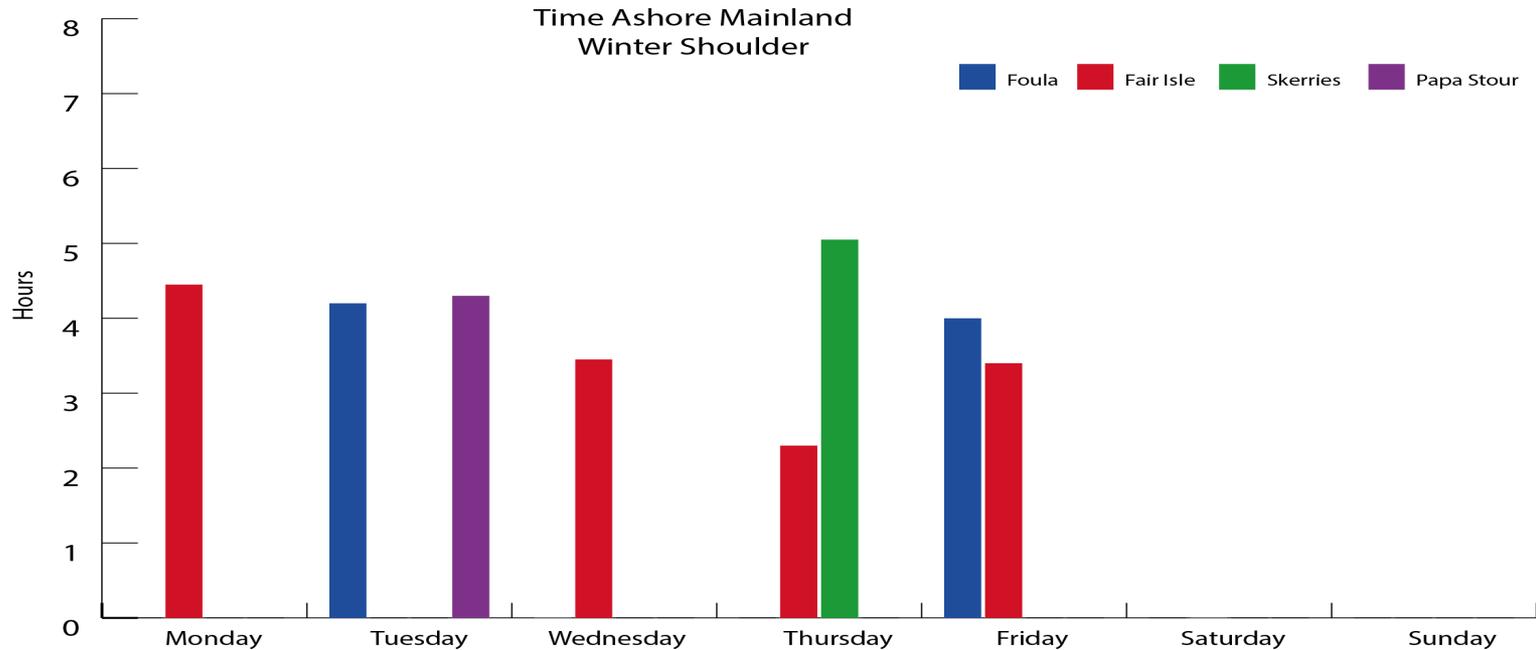
Daily Time in Shetland Mainland – Air - Summer



- Papa Stour residents can only make a meaningful day return by air on a Tuesday – this provides just under 6 hours on Shetland mainland.



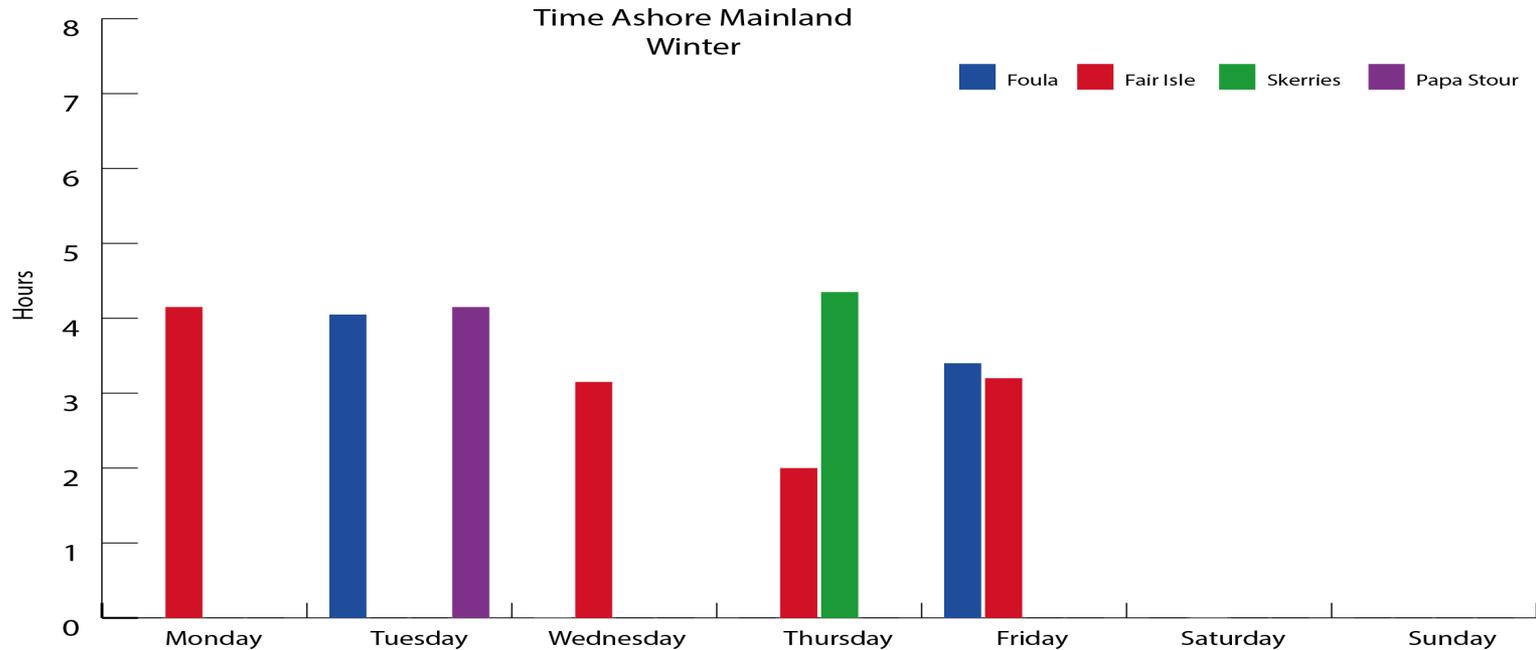
Daily Time in Shetland Mainland – Air – Shoulder Winter



- The shoulder winter timetable reduces time on mainland for Papa Stour residents from around 6 hours to 4.5 hours



Daily Time in Shetland Mainland – Air - Winter



- The winter timetable also offers around 4.5 hours on the mainland on a Tuesday for Papa Stour residents.



Problems, Objectives & Options



Papa Stour Transport Problems

	Service Characteristics	Rating	Why is this a problem or not?
1	Overall journey time to Lerwick	✓	The journey time from Lerwick to Papa Stour is reasonable, particularly when considered in the context of the Outer Isles more generally.
2	First sailing / flight	✓	On days where there is a sailing, the first departure from the island is 1000 (except on a Sunday).
3	Last sailing / flight	✓	On days where there is a sailing, the last departure to the island is 1500 on a Wednesday and around 1800 on the other sailing days.
4	Time on mainland	✘✘	Unlike the other Outer Isles, it is possible to make a meaningful return to the mainland, Lerwick and the island by ferry although this is limited to a Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. The air service provides for an effective day return on a Tuesday. However, the amount of time at each end of the crossing is limited – 16-25 hours per week on the mainland, 13-20 hours in Lerwick and 20-31 hours on the island. This is a relatively limited period of time ashore when comparing Papa Stour with other islands of a similar size (e.g. Fetlar, North Ronaldsay, Papa Westray etc). The limited time ashore can lead to a need for costly overnight stays (or off-island living) when carrying out work-based or personal business which extend beyond the length of the operating day.
5	Time in Lerwick	✘✘	See point 4.
6	Time on island	✘✘	See point 4.
7	Frequency / Sailings per Day / Timetable gaps	✓	n summer, there are two return sailings from the mainland on a Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, with one return sailing on a Sunday. This has not come up as a problem in our research but community feedback is required. However, there is only a single sailing on a Saturday in winter which the community consider a problem. <i>Feedback from the community stressed the importance of maintaining the Saturday afternoon sailing all year round.</i>
8	Capacity	✓	Vehicle capacity is believed to be satisfactory for the size of the island, although the 12 passenger limit on the ferry is perceived to be a problem, as it can lead to passengers not securing a space on the service of their choice. <i>Feedback from the community suggests that capacity can be an issue in the tourist season, with the 12 passenger certification of the vessel seen to be insufficient.</i>
9	Reliability (weather / mechanical)	✓	There are not believed to be any major reliability issues on this route.
10	Comfort	✓	The facilities on the vessel are appropriate for the length of crossing.
11	Physical access	✘	The MV <i>Snolda</i> is an older vessel and can present physical accessibility issues for older and disabled passengers. However, access to the lounge is straight from car deck on same level but there are sills in doorways which are an issue for those with mobility problems. As previously explained, the Britten-Norman Islander aircraft are not well suited to those with any kind of mobility impairments. This is a key problem on Papa Stour – the ageing demographic on the island means that, in the longer-term, physical accessibility could become a barrier to necessary travel.
12	Integration with PT (local bus)	✓	There is reasonably good bus integration at West Burrafirth.
13	Integration with PT (strategic)	✘	Given the limited connections from Papa Stour, onward travel will always have to be well planned. However, there are a number of problems over and above this. Firstly, a high degree of reliability is required on both the connecting and onward service as any delay or cancellation can lead to the need for a costly overnight stay or a long layover on Shetland mainland. In addition, the air service from Papa Stour travels to Tingwall and requires a double-bus connection to get to Sumburgh.
14	Crossing / flight times	✓	The crossing time from West Burrafirth to Papa Stour is reasonable, particularly when considered in the context of the Outer Isles more generally.
15	Onboard facilities	✓	The facilities on the vessel are appropriate for the length of crossing.
16	Weekday / weekend service variation	✘	Papa Stour has connections five days per week. However, the loss of the second Saturday sailing in winter is perceived to be restrictive by the community.
17	Landside infrastructure issues	✓	The landside infrastructure is appropriate for the island.
18	Landside human resources	✘	The absence of fire cover at the airfield means the air service is limited to two rotations per week. The low frequency of the air service means that its usage is very limited, with the ferry being the more popular of the two travel options. Landside human resources would become an issue if the service frequency was increased.

Study Objectives

In the light of the problems identified across the Shetland Islands, the following objectives have been defined as the basis for the options appraisal:

- **Transport Planning Objective 1:** The capacity of the services should not act as a constraint to regular and essential personal, vehicular and freight travel between the island(s) and Shetland mainland.
- **Transport Planning Objective 2a:** Where an island has a 'commutable' combined ferry or air & drive / public transport / walk time to a main employment centre (e.g. 80 minutes), the connections provided should reliably facilitate commuting.
- **Transport Planning Objective 2b:** Where an island does not have a 'commutable' combined ferry or air & drive / public transport / walk time to a main employment centre (e.g. 80 minutes), the connections provided should reliably permit a half day (e.g. 4 hours) in Lerwick, 7 days a week, all year round.
- **Transport Planning Objective 3:** The scheduled time between connections should be minimised to increase flexibility for passengers and freight by maximising the number of island connections across the operating day.
- **Transport Planning Objective 4:** The level of connectivity provided should minimise the variation within and between weekdays, evenings, Saturdays and Sundays.
- **Transport Planning Objective 5:** Where practicable and realistic, islanders should be provided with links to strategic onward connections without the need for an overnight stay on Shetland mainland.



Papa Stour – Capital Options

In light of the analysis of transport problems and objectives, the following **capital options** have been identified for Papa Stour:

- Option CO1: Replace the MV *Snolda* on a like-for-like basis at life expiry
- Option CO2: Replace the MV *Snolda* with one larger vessel
 - Vessel would carry approximately 9 cars
- Option CO3: Replace the MV *Snolda* with the MV *Filla*



Papa Stour – Revenue Options

The current timetable is determined by the level of crewing resource and working hours legislation.

The funds generated through ticket sales do not cover the costs of running air and ferry services, and this deficit is funded through the Council's annual *revenue* budget.

The following **revenue options** have been identified for Papa Stour:

- Option RO1a: Increase the sailing frequency of the ferry service to two return crossings seven days per week
- Option RO1b: Option RO1a combined with the withdrawal of the Papa Stour air service
- Option RO2a: Increase the frequency of the service on the current sailing days to three return crossings per day
- Option RO2b: Option RO2a combined with the withdrawal of the Papa Stour air service

Note that in our exit questionnaire, we will ask you what your priorities for the service would be, were more operating hours to be available.



Rationale for Selection / Rejection

Option	Take Forward (✓) or Reject (✗)	Rationale for Selection / Rejection
Option CO1 – Replace the MV <i>Snolda</i> on a like-for-like basis	✓	Current vessel generally adequate for Papa Stour in terms of vehicle capacity
Option CO2 - Replace the MV <i>Snolda</i> with one larger vessel	✗	There is no requirement for a vessel with a higher vehicle capacity
Option CO3: Replace the MV <i>Snolda</i> with the MV <i>Filla</i>	✓	Option worthy of consideration if the current Skerries ferry becomes available
Option RO1a: Increase the sailing frequency of the ferry service to two return crossings seven days per week	✓	Meets the needs of RSM, although recent experience of investment in Papa Stour should be noted
Option RO1b: Option RO1a combined with the withdrawal of the Papa Stour air service	✓	There would be little rationale for the continuation of the air service if a daily ferry connection was provided
Option RO2a: Increase the frequency of the service on the current sailing days to three return crossing per day	✗	Only provides additional frequency on current sailing days – no evidence this is required except the desired second Saturday sailing in winter
Option RO2b: Option RO2a combined with the withdrawal of the Papa Stour air service	✗	As per RO2a



Shetland Air Network – Capital Options

- The BN2 Islander remains the most appropriate aircraft in the medium-term.
- **Option CO1 – Maintain and continue with the current aircraft until life expiry (Do Minimum):**
 - This option would involve continuing with the current Britten-Norman Islanders over the length of the strategy period.
 - If it becomes clear during that period that one or both of the aircraft is nearing the end of its operational life, replacements should be considered at that stage.
- **Option CO2: Supplement the current aircraft with an additional Britten-Norman Islander:**
 - An additional Islander would be leased or purchased and added to the fleet. The timetable would be expanded to take account of this additional capacity.
 - It is likely that at least one more pilot would be required.
- **Option CO3: Install runway lighting at all four island airstrips**
 - This option would involve the installation of runway lighting at Fair Isle, Foula, Papa Stour and Skerries (and Unst / Fetlar if re-opened).
 - Further investigation into the type of lighting to be used is required – it is assumed for the purpose of this option that Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI) lights would be installed.
- **Option CO4: Install Global Navigation Satellite System on the current aircraft**
 - This option would involve the installation of GNSS and supporting equipment on the current Council Islander fleet.



Rationale for Selection / Rejection – Air Capital Options

Option	Take Forward (✓) or Reject (✗)	Rationale for Selection / Rejection
Option CO1 (Do Minimum): Maintain and continue with the current aircraft over the strategy period / until life expiry	✓	This option is retained as the Do Minimum.
Option CO2: Supplement the current aircraft with an additional Britten-Norman Islander	✗	This option will not be considered further. There is at present insufficient demand for a third aircraft, whilst the current aircraft could be worked more intensively.
Option CO3: Install runway lighting at Tingwall and all four island airstrips	✗	This option will not be considered further, except potentially in tandem with GNSS. The experience of runway lighting in Orkney coupled with the safety risks and limited probability of obtaining CAA night flight permissions mean that this option is excluded from further consideration.
Option CO4: Install Global Navigation Satellite System on the current aircraft	✓	This option will not be considered further. It should be noted that the operator concerns about safety and implementability in the Shetland environment would need to be addressed in advance of progressing this option.
Review the case for relocating the inter-island air service to Sumburgh from Tingwall	✓	The study has set out the comparative costs, benefits and risks associated with operating the air service from both Tingwall and Sumburgh. The evidence presented will be considered in more detail by the Council following completion of the study.



What to do Next?

- Thank you for taking the time to read through the above material – we would be grateful if you could now complete a short questionnaire in relation to the options presented
- Please follow this link to access the questionnaire:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/FI-Foula-PapaStour-Skerries-Aug2016>

