

# Shetland Inter-Island Transport Study



Yell Public Engagement Meeting

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 – 1600–2000

Mid Yell Hall



# Shetland Inter-Island Transport Study

Welcome to the **Yell Public Engagement Meeting** for the Shetland Inter-Island Transport Study (SIITS). This meeting considers services on Yell and Bluemull Sound.. Separate boards cover Bluemull Sound.

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.



# Yell – RSM Findings

- The RSM findings for Yell Sound are as follows:

	Sailing Days	Sailings per Day	Operating Day
Current Service	7 Days	21-25 connections per day Mon-Fri, 15/16 connections per day Sat & Sun	Approx. 16.5 hours
Model Service	7 Days	20+ connections per day	More than 14 hours
<i>RSM Outcome</i>	<i>Acceptable</i>	<i>Acceptable Mon-Fri, marginal under-provision Sat &amp; Sun</i>	<i>Acceptable</i>

- Yell Sound has 7 day connections year round.
- The number of connections per day Mon-Fri and the length of the operating day are in keeping with the RSM.



# Current Ferry Service



Current Vessels:  
*MV Dagalien & MV Daggri*

Vessel Age:  
*12 years*

Scheduled Replacement Date:  
*Long-term – 2029-2034*

Carrying Capacity:  
31 cars

**Vessel Issues:** No issues – vessels are modern and of a high standard.

**Access for Disabled:** Vessels have full disabled access

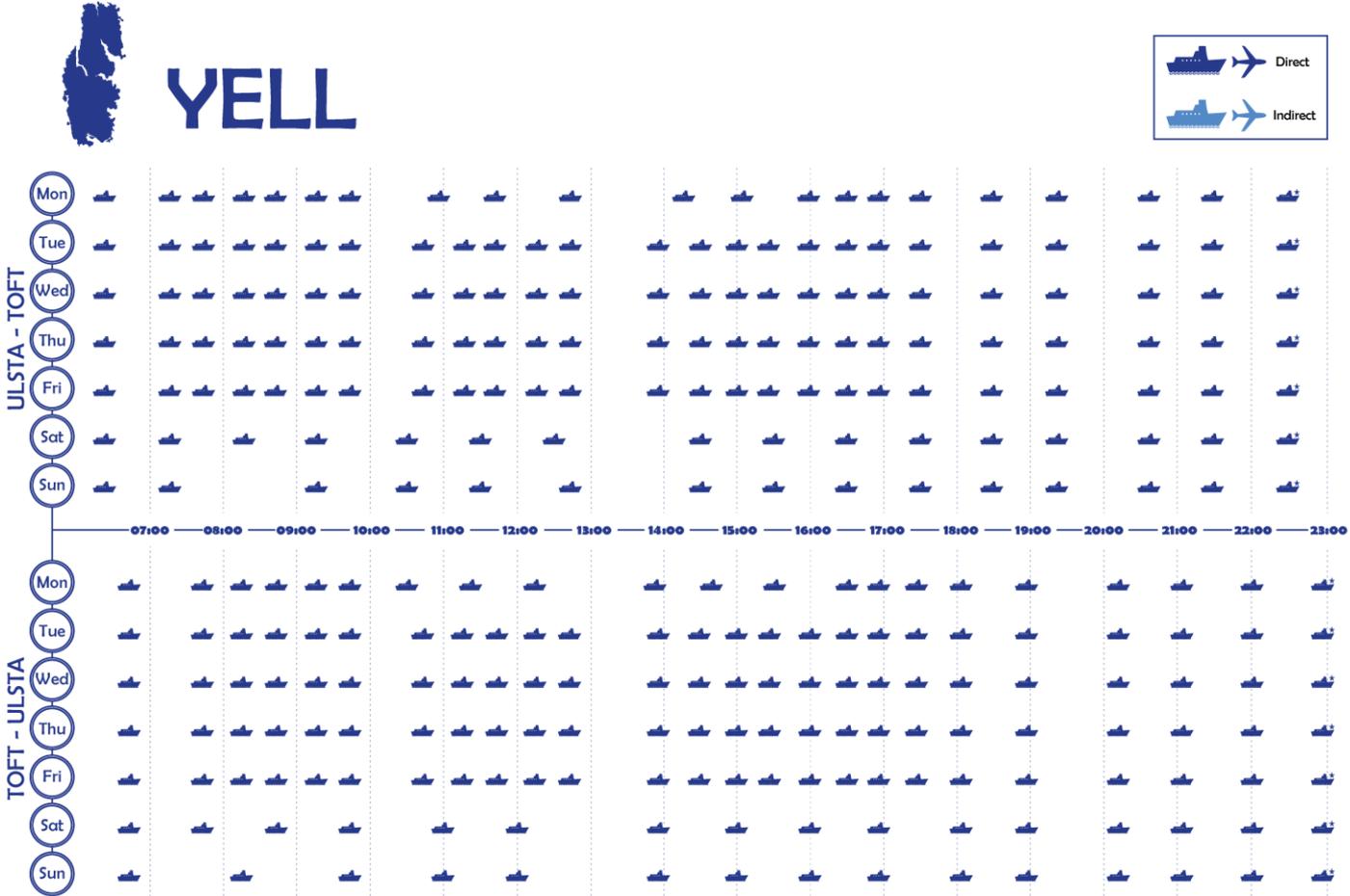
**Accommodation Issues:** No issues – passenger accommodation is of a very high standard for the relatively short crossing.

Ship-Shore interface:  
*Linkspan*

*The vessels overnight at Ulsta*



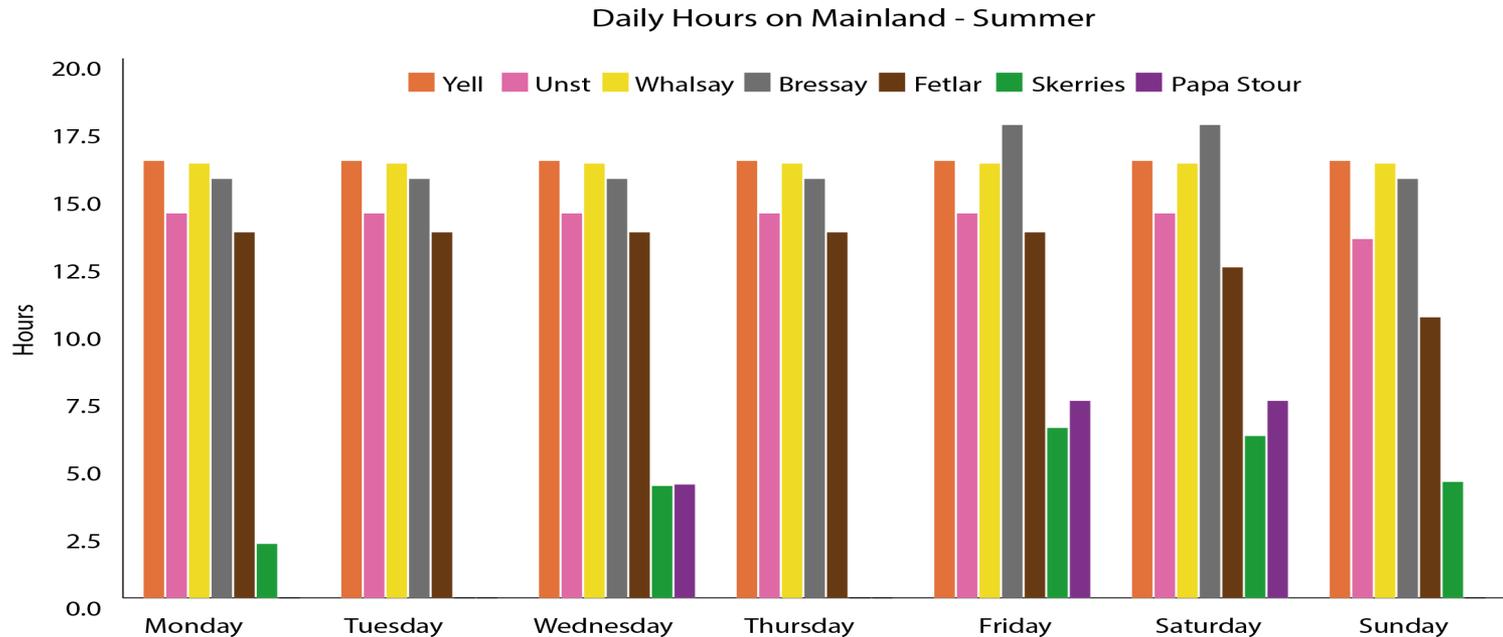
# Yell - Current Service – departures by day of week



\* Sailings are on Request



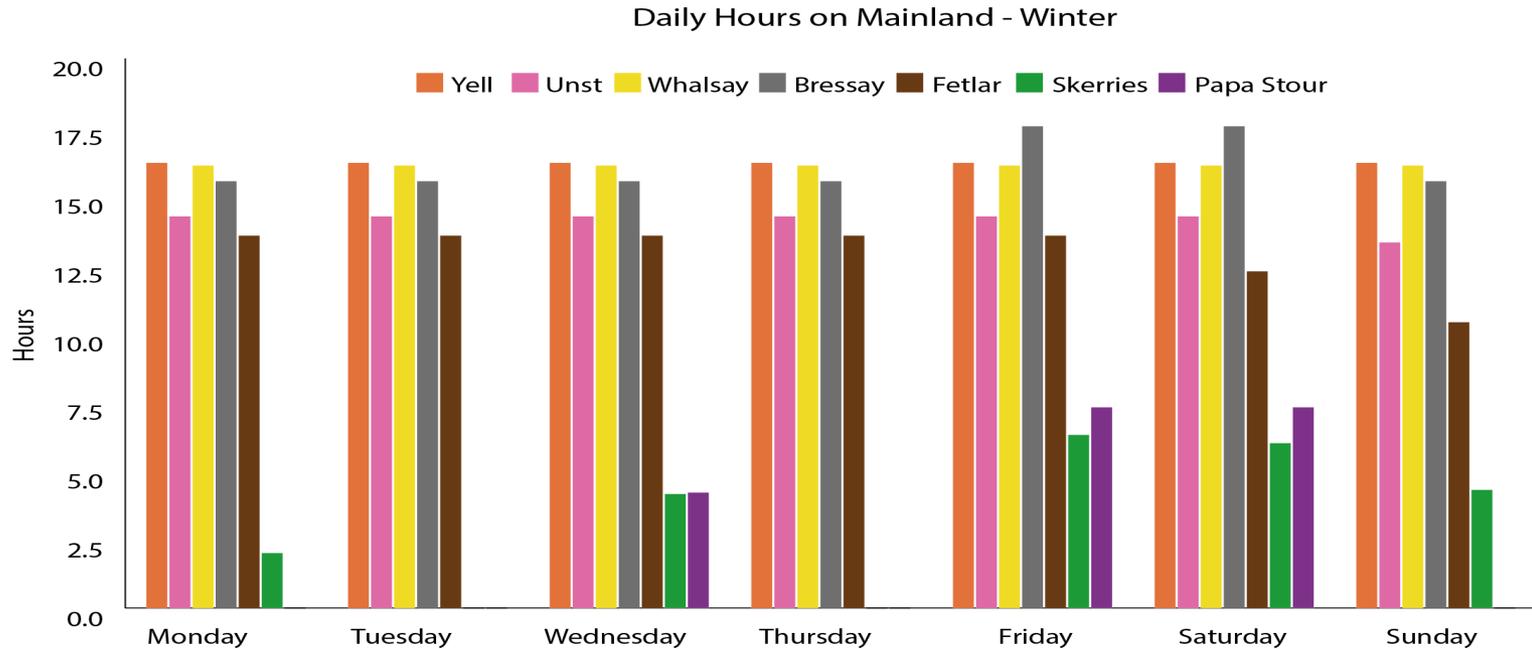
# Daily Time in Shetland Mainland – Ferry - Summer



- Yell residents generally have over 16 hours on Shetland mainland seven days a week – this is one of the highest levels of ferry service in Scotland



# Daily Time in Shetland Mainland – Ferry - Winter



- The hours available on Shetland mainland from Yell are the same in winter as in summer.



# Problems, Objectives & Options



## Yell Transport Problems

	Service Characteristics	Rating	Why is this a problem or not?
1	Overall journey time to Lerwick	✓	The overall journey time to Lerwick was not cited as an issue in previous consultations. <i>The community consultation response noted that connectivity on weekdays and weekends is deemed a problem – x for weekday and xx for weekends.</i>
2	First sailing / flight	✓	The first departure from Ulsta is early in the morning at 0615. <i>The community consultation response noted that the timing of the first sailing is deemed a problem – rated a x.</i>
3	Last sailing / flight	✗	The consultation suggested that the timetable is not seen to be conducive to undertaking social activities in Lerwick. However, even in winter, the first departure from Yell is 0615 and last departure from the mainland 2255 (on request), which suggests that the inability to undertake social activities on mainland is purely a function of distance. <i>The community consultation response noted that this is a moderate problem - xx</i>
4	Time on mainland	✓	The current timetable allows for a significant amount of time on the mainland daily.
5	Time in Lerwick	✓	The current timetable allows for a significant amount of time in Lerwick daily.
6	Time on island	✓	The current timetable allows for a significant amount of time on the island daily.
7	Frequency / Sailings per Day / Timetable gaps	✓	On a typical weekday (Tuesday – Friday), there are 24 timetabled and one request sailing across Yell Sound. The Monday frequency is slightly lower but still offers 20 timetabled sailings plus one request sailing. The reduced service on Mondays is considered a problem for fish lorries. <i>The community consultation response noted that this is x for personal travel and xxx for aquaculture related traffic.</i>
8	Capacity	✓	Vehicle capacity has not been identified as an issue. <i>The community consultation response noted that this is xx for ferries after meal breaks and also explained that the reduction of ferries on a Saturday and Sunday is a problem, especially when there are functions on the island. However, analysis of operator data suggests that this is not the case.</i>
9	Reliability (weather / mechanical)	✓	There are not believed to be any major reliability issues on this route. <i>The community consultation response noted that this is a major problem (xxx), noted that the 0745 from Ulsta and 0815 from Toft are frequently regularly cancelled due to a lack of staff</i>
10	Comfort	✓	The facilities on the vessel are appropriate for the length of crossing.
11	Physical access	✓	Physical access to both Yell Sound vessels is very good.
12	Integration with PT (local bus)	✗	Public transport connections at Toft are limited, although there are connections at peak times.
13	Integration with PT (strategic)	✗	Yell has a timetable which allows islanders to easily access NorthLink services from Lerwick. However, residents cannot catch the first Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Inverness or Kirkwall flights, although the first flight to Glasgow is accessible. The inability to catch the first morning flights to various locations means that Yell residents cannot carry out a day return visit for meetings, appointments etc, leading to potentially costly overnight stays.
14	Crossing / flight times	✓	The crossing time is short.
15	Onboard facilities	✓	The facilities on the vessel are appropriate for the length of crossing.
16	Weekday / weekend service variation	✗	Yell has a reduced service at the weekend. There are 15 (Saturday) and 14 (Sunday) timetabled sailings plus one request sailing on both a Saturday and Sunday. This compares to 24 timetabled sailings plus one request sailing during the week (except Monday). Whilst overall weekend provision is lower, it compares very favorably to many other Scottish islands. The consultation suggested this presents something of a problem for Yell residents, although it is clear from the timetable and data that Sunday travel is possible, albeit it is slightly less frequent. <i>The community consultation response noted that this is a moderate problem (xx)</i>
17	Landside infrastructure issues	✓	The facilities are generally adequate for the route but there are times when weather disruption could be lessened with a breakwater at Toft. During times of disruption, marshalling areas are inadequate. <i>The community consultation response noted that Yell Community Council would be concerned with the cost of adding a breakwater. They also note that parking facilities at Ulsta and Toft are inadequate. They deem this a minor problem (x).</i>
18	Landside human resources	✓	There are not currently any problems with landside human resources.

# 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.



# Yell – Capital Options

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

- Option CO1 (Do Minimum): Replace the MV *Dagalien* & MV *Daggri* on a like-for-like basis
  - These vessels would carry 31 cars
- Option CO2: Replace the MV *Dagalien* & MV *Daggri* with two larger vessels
  - These vessels would carry 50 cars
- Option CO3: Replace the MV *Dagalien* & MV *Daggri* with three vessels of varying size
  - These vessels would carry 31 cars
- Option CO4: Construct a fixed link between Yell & Shetland mainland



# Yell Sound – 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 Yell:

- Option RO1: Offer an on-request early departure from Yell (0500) Monday - Friday, which would allow connection with the first flights from Sumburgh
- Option RO2: Offer additional request sailings on a Friday and Saturday evenings (through to 0200)
- Option RO3: Operate standard weekday timetable seven days a week
- Option RO4a: Run both vessels for the full operating day seven days a week
- Option RO4b: Run both vessels for the full operating day to Monday to Friday

*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 (Do Minimum): Replace the MV Dagalien & MV Daggri on a like-for-like basis	✓	The current vessels meet the needs of the route in terms of capacity and frequency. Like-for-like remains appropriate
Option CO2: Replace the MV Dagalien & MV Daggri with two larger vessels	✓	Provides scope for the growth of Yell, Unst and Fetlar and alleviates any existing capacity issues. Detailed cost and demand analysis required
Option CO3: Replace the MV Dagalien & MV Daggri with three vessels of varying size	✗	A three vessel solution would be disproportionate for the length of the crossing
Option CO4: Construct a fixed link between Yell & Shetland mainland	✗	<p>This option is rejected from further consideration given the very high up-front capital costs. In addition, there are very high levels of technical and funding uncertainty, whilst the elapsed time before this option could be realised means that it will not be considered further in the appraisal.</p> <p>This elapsed time would also mean that if taken forward, this option would not be in place until the tail end of the strategy period, meaning that an interim ferry-based solution would be required, adding further to the cost.</p> <p>Should a nationally funded programme of fixed links emerge in future, the proposal could be revisited at this stage.</p>
Option RO1: Offer an on-request early departure from Yell Monday-Friday, which would allow connection with the first flights from Sumburgh	✓	Would provide early morning access to the Scottish mainland for Yell residents for a relatively low cost.
Option RO2: Offer additional request sailings on a Friday and Saturday evenings (through to 0200)	✓	Low cost option – merits further consideration
Option RO3: Operate standard weekday timetable seven days a week	✓	Major increase in weekend service – merits further consideration
Option RO4a: Run both vessels for the full operating day seven days a week	✗	This is considered to be disproportionate given current demand
Option RO4b: Run both vessels for the full operating day to Monday to Friday	✓	Major increase in frequency – merits further consideration

# Fixed Link

- Detailed review of options for a Yell Sound fixed link considered
- Priced by a UK and Norwegian contractor – this has resulted in a cost estimate of £81-£102 million. For appraisal purposes, contingency and optimism bias increases this cost to £150-£189 million.
- It is not feasible that SIC / ZetTrans could fund a project of this scale in the foreseeable future, which is why this question has to be taken to government
- A fixed link is rejected in the appraisal for the following reasons:
  - The cost of a fixed link across the Yell Sound significantly exceeds the costs associated with ongoing ferry services, even when considered over two ferry replacement cycles
  - A project of this nature would represent a nationally significant infrastructure scheme and would be competing for funding against other committed and planned national infrastructure schemes
  - There would also be competition with other fixed links proposals within Shetland and across Scotland for any available funding
  - Prior to construction, there would be a costly and extended period of technical development and preparation, which is not included in the above costs
- However, whilst fixed links are rejected in terms of the appraisal, there remains a wider question as to whether there should be a policy commitment to island fixed links. This is a question SIC / ZetTrans will raise with Scottish Government



# 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/Bluemull-Bressay-Whalsay-Yell-Aug2016>

