



COMMITTED TO THE FISHING INDUSTRY'S FUTURE

Lerwick Port Authority's commitment to the fishing industry and confidence in its future is reflected in a major programme of ongoing investment and development.

Projects underway, planned and in prospect include improved access and berthing for larger vessels, a temporary extension to the present fishmarket, a new fishmarket longer-term, environmental improvements, and a continuing stake in key

companies, such as Shetland Catch, Shetland Seafood Auctions and SFP (Shetland Fish Products).

Port Authority Chief Executive, Sandra Laurenson, said: "2008 has started well for us, with renewed prosperity in the white fish sector and targets being met for landings of pelagic fish. The opportunity to reinvest in the port at this time will set us up well for future challenges."

Major project to benefit fishing sector

Work will begin this month on the largest capital project yet at Lerwick Harbour, with dredging bringing a range of significant benefits for the fishing industry, particularly the pelagic sector.

These include wider and deeper access through the north entrance to Greenhead Base, an improved alignment of a new deep-water north channel, and enabling access and berthing for larger vessels at the Shetland Catch pelagic factory, with the berth deepened. Dredging will be to 9 metres throughout, a major improvement on the shallower areas, currently at 6 metres. Improved access to the fish landing berth at Heogan, on Bressay, may also be included.

With the £12 million project due for completion in the autumn, other port users, including the oil industry, will also benefit. Materials will be used to reclaim land, initially at Greenhead.

The lightest areas are being dredged to -9 metres, complementing previously deepened areas and natural deep water.

Faith in pelagic sector

The Port Authority's faith in the long-term future of the pelagic sector is demonstrated not only by aspects of its capital development programme, but also by its investment portfolio. With an increased stake since last year in Shetland Catch, it is the largest shareholder, owning 39% of the company. The Authority is also a part-owner in SFP (Shetland Fish Products), with an 11% share.

At Lerwick, Shetland Catch operates one of the largest modern pelagic fish processing plants in Europe. The geographical location means mackerel and herring are often received within hours of being caught. www.shetlandcatch.com

SFP's fish meal and fish oil plant on Bressay, on the harbour's east side, is well situated for landings of blue whiting caught in the Atlantic.

With a number of large modern pelagic trawlers operating from the port, and with Shetland Catch being a major pelagic processor, the Authority supports the sector's aim of achieving Marine Stewardship Council accreditation. www.msc.org





Taking the initiative

Key initiatives at Lerwick in recent years have helped provide a boost for the white fish sector through increased landings and higher prices.

The successful "Land in Shetland" campaign highlights the importance of Shetland's strategic position in relation to the fishing grounds, with the proximity enabling fishing boats to make the best use of the days-at-sea allowance and savings on fuel, by delivering catches to Shetland.

Shetland Seafood Auctions, (www.shetlandauction.com), has been a catalyst to modernising the selling of fish from Shetland through an electronic auction, attracting more boats – including from mainland Scotland, Orkney and Scandinavia - and an increased number of buyers using the online sales system.

Planning a new fishmarket

The requirement to replace the current white fishmarket has been reinforced by landings last year which held steady at 8,653 tonnes, worth £12.9 million.

Preliminary consultation with the industry in 2007 provided useful feedback on the preferred size and shape of the market, assisting in the design of a suitable new quay. A preferred location at Holmsgarth has been identified and site investigations undertaken to determine seabed conditions for the quay. The Port Authority is currently carrying out an Environmental Impact Assessment as a prerequisite to the necessary consents for a capital project.

Addressing the immediate need to increase the size of the market, an extension to the existing building is being designed for the short term, with the aim of being available later this year.



Accommodating growth

With a former offshore supply base at Holmsgarth now the port's main fishing vessel support area, an aim for 2008 is a better understanding between the Port Authority and the local fleet on improving the use of quaysides for net mending and shore services. For example, increased refuse skip provision has been provided for use by vessels.

The Authority engages with Shetland Fishermen's Association on members' use of quay areas and this is backed by the Authority's intention to achieve ISO14001 (Environmental standard) accreditation in 2008.

The Authority is responding to the continuing increase in the size of fishing vessels, including a programme of fendering improvements for the heavier boats now operating. With site investigations undertaken in 2007 and dredging this year, the Authority's future capital programme will include deeper berths.



ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Lerwick Harbour's strategic location at the heart of Europe's richest fishing grounds is complemented by comprehensive modern services and facilities. The port is perfectly positioned to support the servicing of vessels and the landing, selling, processing and shipment of catches and products.

- Deep-water berthing
- Temperature controlled market
- Electronic auction
- Onshore weighing & grading
- Modern processing sector
- Major pelagic factory
- Fish meal & fish oil processing
- Overnight delivery of quality products to mainland Scotland
- Services, including ice, fuel and repairs, and slipway
- 24-hour, all-weather port

Award-winning port

Lerwick won the 2007 Fishing Port of the Year Award, presented by **Fishing News Awards 2007** and benchmarking good practice, recognising excellence in service and amenities at ports and harbours throughout the UK and Ireland.

Port Authority Chairman, Brian Anderson, said: "We pride ourselves on being able to keep pace and respond to the needs of the industry as changes occur. Following the challenges faced in recent years, we face the future with confidence that Lerwick will remain a key fishing port for the white fish, pelagic fish and fish meal sectors for many years to come."