



Fleet development



The recently-extended pelagic fishing vessel, Research, at Lerwick

Investing in fishing's future

The commitment to the fishing industry in Shetland is actively backed by Lerwick Port Authority and others, including boat owners and banks, processors and the service sector, as well as government and European agencies, Shetland Islands Council and trade organisations.

Significant investment is taking place in modernising and expanding onshore and offshore infrastructure to ensure the white fish, pelagic and shellfish sectors, along with aquaculture, meet the opportunities and challenges in national and international markets.

The Port Authority's input includes major stepping-stone projects – Mair's Quay, completed in 2013; Holmsgarth North Jetty now underway; and a replacement white fish market, at the advanced planning stage – which will help sustain and develop Lerwick's future as a key industry centre and the UK's second largest fishing port.

The modernisation of the Shetland fishing fleet continues, with significant investment of around £10 million taking place in vessels. Three new white fish boats are under construction, while another pelagic trawler is undergoing lengthening.

It follows the lengthening last year of the Shetland pelagic trawler, *Research*, by 7.8 metres to 78.5 metres, with the new mid-

section making it the biggest fishing boat in Scotland. A frequent visitor to Lerwick, the extra 500 tonnes' storage capacity is required for trips west of Ireland.

Last year saw Johnson Marine add three new boats to the four already used for on-site salmon harvesting and net washing. LCL Shipping acquired a new-build 27-metre salmon feed carrier for its fleet.



Adding to resources

Construction of the £16.4 million Holmsgarth North Jetty was initiated recently, with the 800-metre-plus structure due for completion in autumn 2016. It will be an important addition to the port's versatile resources.

With ultimately 10 metres of water alongside, it will provide deeper berthing and more working area for the fishing fleet, while the outer arm of the L-shaped jetty will create a dock sheltering the planned new white fish market.

Bank of Scotland is providing funding support. Design is by civil engineers Arch Henderson LLP who are project managers, with Tulloch Developments Ltd the main contractor.



Illustration of Holmsgarth North Development (foreground), underway early 2015

Market progressing

With a layout design completed and detailed design in development, a contract for the construction of Lerwick's new white fish market is scheduled to be awarded next year. Building will begin after the Holmsgarth North jetty is completed, with the fishmarket available in 2018.

The market will complement the European Common Fisheries Policy, with the landings obligation banning discarding of fish expected to see the volume of landings rise from next year. Work to date has included extensive discussions with fishing industry stakeholders, including the catching, buying and processing sectors and hauliers, to identify facilities and services required.

The market and new quay areas will bring significant improvements in the landing of fish and in supporting and servicing vessels, and to the uplifting and onward transportation of landings. For example, chilled space will be more than doubled. It



Whitefish landings at Lerwick fish market. (Above) Auction in action

will also be more energy efficient and bring improvements in staff welfare.

The market will be located on Mair's Quay, completed on reclaimed land at a cost of £3.17 million in 2013, since when it has proved a valuable asset. It extends to 151-metres, with a minimum six metres'

water depth - a prime reason for relocating the market. There will be deeper berths at Holmsgarth North, further increasing capacity to accommodate large vessels.

Financial assistance will be sought from the European Maritime Fisheries Fund to help deliver the new market.



Processing at Shetland Catch, Europe's largest pelagic factory

Taking an interest

The Port Authority's commitment to the fishing industry also includes shareholdings in three key companies to which, as part-owners, it also contributes experience through directorships. With the industry the principal focus of the Authority's company investment, interests include:

Europe's largest pelagic processing plant, Shetland Catch (26%), which invested £1.5 million in new packing lines in 2014; fishmeal and oil manufacturer, SFP (Shetland Fish Products) (36%) which added over £300,000's worth of new production equipment last year; and Shetland Seafood Auctions (15%) with its electronic auction system handling seafood for national and international customers.

Live fish carrier, Gerda Sæle



Salmon processing

Lerwick Fish Traders, a major salmon producer and an important component in the local economy, is continuing investment in its integrated operation to provide a wholly-Shetland product, from hatchery to plate. Wellboats transport harvested salmon directly to its factory on the Port Authority's estate.

The company is part of Grieg Seafood Hjalteid.

Supply and demand



A well-equipped local supply chain serves the fishing industry

A well-established, evolving supply chain meets the demands of the fishing industry and aquaculture for a wide range of services and facilities. The combination makes Lerwick one of Britain's main centres for the landing, selling, processing and shipment of seafood and for the servicing of vessels. The infrastructure includes: deep-water berthing; a temperature controlled market operating five days a week; electronic auction; onshore weighing &

grading; modern processing factory and salmon processor, each with advanced discharge systems; fish meal & fish oil processing; overnight delivery by sea of quality products to mainland Scotland; high capacity quayside ice plant; fuel; engineering & electronic repairs; slipway; net manufacture & repairs; wire rigging, and refrigeration.



Shetland Transport – Scottish European Haulier of the Year 2015

Quality service is highlighted by Shetland Transport becoming Scottish European Haulier of the Year 2015. The company delivers from the fish market and aquaculture firms to Europe.

Lerwick's links

The port is a bustling hub for an international fishing industry from start to finish - catching through to consumers.

In addition to boats from other UK ports, visiting vessels, including Irish, Norwegian, Danish and Swedish, land catches and use services, attracted by Lerwick's proximity to fishing grounds, excellent facilities and thriving market.

Most of the frozen product from pelagic fish landed at the port is exported worldwide, including Eastern Europe and West Africa. Fresh white fish is sent in chilled transportation by roll-on/roll-off trailers to Spain and France, for example. Shellfish is transported weekly to Europe. The aquaculture sector also exports significant quantities of chilled product by roll-on/roll-off trailer to international markets.

International investment is a feature of company ownership, including processing and salmon farming.

A bustling hub for an international fishing fleet



Importance of investment

A coastal community, Shetland is dependent on fishing and aquaculture – together the largest economic driver in the islands' economy, worth £309 million annually and employing around 4,000 islanders directly and in support services. The value surpasses that of oil and gas, agriculture, tourism and the creative industries combined.

"The contribution of the seafood and aquaculture industry is vital to the island way-of-life - as is the ongoing investment by the private sector to help secure its future," said Sandra Laurenson, Port Authority Chief Executive. "Previous, present and planned developments by the Authority and others demonstrate not only that the commitment is there, but also that there is confidence in the way ahead for a vibrant industry.



Reefer ships load frozen fish at Greenhead Base

"There will always be challenges – currently including the introduction of landings obligations ending discards and sanctions closing the Russian market for pelagic exports – but there is much that is positive, including

improvements in some catching quotas and the proactive approach to development." Access www.somuchtosea.co.uk for industry background in Shetland.

Fishing figures

A total of 1,927 vessels landed around 70,000 tonnes of fish at Lerwick in 2014, valued at £61.2 million, an increase of 4.7% on volume, with a small decrease in value. A single-day landing of almost 2,000 boxes of white fish at the first market of the year meant a great start to 2015.



Mackerel and herring can be processed within hours of being caught

Frontline facts

Lerwick's proximity to Europe's richest fishing grounds, the harbour's twin entrances, 24-hour, all-weather access, sheltered, deep-water anchorages and extensive, expanding facilities and services mean it is ideally positioned to support the industry's operations, onshore and offshore.

Basing vessels at the port minimises sailing time to the northern grounds, allowing fishing vessels to make best use of days-at-sea allowances and saving on fuel costs.

Showtime!



Lerwick Port Authority is again exhibiting at this year's Skipper Expo at Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre, from 29-30 May.

Photography: sources include John Coutts, Shetland Catch, Grieg Seafood Hjaltland, Ian Leask and Alexander Simpson.



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