

# North Yell Development Council

Unit 3 and 4 Sellafirth Business Park, Sellafirth, Yell, Shetland ZE2 9DD

Tel. 01957 744215

www.northyell.co.uk

office@northyell.co.uk

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**Enterprise**

**Initiative**

**Self-Help**

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## NYDC Year End Report 2025-26

### 5 Year Vision from 2022-27 Development Plan

#### **Our vision for North Yell over the next 5 years is...**

*To remain a thriving community, both socially and economically.*

*To sustain and grow our population, and support and diversify our economic base.*

*Through tackling any challenges, we might face and taking full advantage of any opportunities which might arise.*

#### **Our vision for NYDC over the next 5 years is...**

*To support the community of North Yell to remain an amazing place to live, work, visit and invest, through enterprise initiative and self-help.*

### The Main Development Priorities

Improve connectivity.

Quality jobs

Warm accommodation

Attracting people to live in North Yell

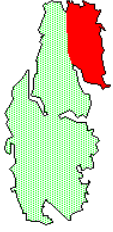
Increased renewable energy.

### NYDC Directors, membership and staff

It is with sadness that NYDC mark the passing of Phil Instone. He was a valued member of NYDC and the community of North Yell and his contributions to both were greatly appreciated, he is missed.

The remaining board of 11 members have remained the same this year with Mark Lawson as Chairperson, Robbie Coutts as Vice Chair and Andrew Nisbet as Company Secretary.

NYDC has 111 members, a mix of Ordinary Members, Associate Members and Junior Members. In April 2025 NYDC held the second Junior Members Forum where the members were consulted on future NYDC developments and contributed to NYDC's ongoing heritage work.



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NYDC currently have 3 full time and 1 part-time member of staff. Alice Mathewson remains at the Development Manager; Kate Lonsdale remains as the Development Officer, in April 2025 Ethan Mathewson was employed as a part-time finance assistant and in June 2025 Stuart Anderson was employed as the Facilities Manager.

## NYDC Social Media

NYDC have maintained and updated their website through this year ([northyell.co.uk](http://northyell.co.uk)). The website includes details about NYDC, our community, projects/events, provides tourist information, and details of the North Yell Culture and Heritage Group SCIO.

NYDC also have active Facebook accounts, both for North Yell Development Council and the North Yell Community Shop. This allows us to highlight our own projects and events, and those of other community groups and projects/events. It also provides an opportunity to gather community opinions. The NYDC Facebook has 852 followers, an increase of 68 this year. The North Yell Community Shop's Facebook page has over 1,200 followers.

## Sellafirth Community Hub

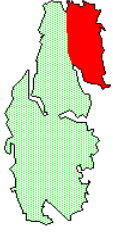
In 2025 NYDC was awarded £298,674.62 in funding from Carbon Neutral Islands Project and £25,000 from SIC and added £50,000 as match funding from NYDC for renovations and equipment required at units 3 and 4 to reduce the carbon footprint of the building to carbon neutral. The renovations have included wall insulation, insulated flooring, new windows and doors, an additional EV charge point, air source heating, changes to the interior of the building to allow for an accessible toilet, changes to the exterior of the building to replace garage doors with new windows.

The internal renovations will soon be complete and we are currently awaiting 3 phase meter installation to allow Solar Panels with battery storage to be installed, after which the exterior of the building will be painted.

NYDC will move their base of operations to the Sellafirth Community Hub. The Hub will be a multifunctional facility with many different uses in addition to being the main NYDC offices. There will be space for hot desking and coworking, access to office equipment such as printing, scanning, recording. There will be a digital training suite with 6 workstations, secure document storage, a craft workshop, a small retail space, tourist information, event space, meeting room, and a business start-up unit. The hub will also be house the Oral and Digital Heritage Achieve.

In the next year NYDC plans to use to the Hub to:

- Sustain and develop the activities of NYDC
- Establish a training centre
- Offer hotdesking and business development opportunities



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- Offer a unit for a business start up
- Offer secure document storage to local groups and organisations

## North Yell Marina

The North Yell Marina had a successful year with 15 of the 18 permanent berths occupied. Winter berthing was utilised by 2 boats. Over the year we welcomed 19 visiting boats. There were also caravans and campers who used the amenity block facilities and left donations in the honesty box.

In 2025 NYDC were approached by CW Johnson about housing the road crew at the marina for the duration of the road works. In 2026 they began developing the site to house 12 accommodation pods, a site office and amenity building. To accommodate this a 3 phase consumer unit was added to the site. It is intended that the area they are currently occupying will be developed into the Carvan Park after they leave.

Electricity pedestals have been placed on the hard standing at the marina that can be used to provide power to boats being stored out of the water.

In the coming year NYDC will:

- Continue to operate the marina for permanent and visiting boats.
- Continue to provide accommodation site for road workers.

## Cullivoe Industrial Estate

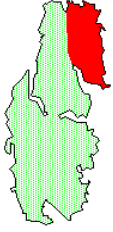
In this year NYDC continued operation of the Cullivoe Industrial Estate with 12 of the 14 sites being negotiated for long term rental. One of the sites is being used for short term rental by 4 people.

## North Yell Community Shop

NYCS is a trading subsidiary of NYDC and is a legal entity in its own right with a separate company registration and board of directors. NYDC own the one share issued by NYCS.

This past year has seen a lot of changes to the shop. The current manager is Will Slater, who was appointed to this post in November 2025. In addition to the full-time manager NYCS employs 4 part-time adult members of staff and 4 part-time junior members of staff.

Thanks to grant funding from the SIC Rural Retail Scheme and match funding by NYDC over this year NYCS purchased new shelving and display items and a new, more energy efficient chest freezer. NYCS have developed the non-grocery side of the shop introducing new homeware, toys, gardening and hardware lines. This is in addition to the floor and fridges which were funded and installed last year.



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In the coming year NYCS will:

- Install an insulated door in the shop store with assistance from the SIC Rural Retail Scheme and NYDC.
- Develop a self-service style café at the shop.
- Undertake renovations of the till area.
- Explore options for more energy efficient lighting and solar panels.
- Seek funding opportunities for community art project for the exterior of the building.

The overall vision for the shop is that:

*Our community shop will remain the heart of our thriving, self-sufficient community in North Yell.*

It is hoped to achieve this by:

- *Ensuring NYCS remains a well-run local shop at the heart of our community, offering a wide range of food, drink, household essentials and gifts for residents and visitors, continuing vital post office services, and acting as a social hub for the community.*
- *Developing stock and services as needed to ensure that the shop is financially stable.*

## Social Projects

Community Lunches remains a thriving community event running on Tuesdays through the school term. So far in the 25/26 school year we have served 1973 lunches, averaging 66 people a week.

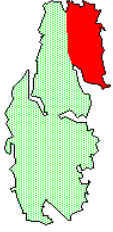
Wicked Wednesdays from the end of the October holidays to the start of the Easter holidays. The Wednesday night youth group for all primary and secondary children throughout Yell and wider afield. An average of 10 bairns attended each week ranging from P3 to S4.

NYDC have continued offering prescription deliveries to all residents in North Yell and weekly shopping deliveries to over 60s in North Yell. This is a well-used service, particularly the prescriptions deliveries that average 11 a week.

During the summer holidays of 2025 and the Easter holidays of 2026 NYDC worked with the SIC Early Adopter Communities Child Care Team, Active Schools and Unst and Yell Leisure Centres to provide activity days. During the summer holidays we took 37 bairns to the cinema to see How to Train Your Dragon. We also had 4 Multi Activity Days for primary bairns, two at the Yell Leisure Centre and two in the Unst Leisure Centre with transport provided between islands. Over the four days in the summer holidays 116 bairns attended. Due to the success of the summer holidays a further two days were held in the Easter holidays, again with transport provided between islands attracting 54 bairns.

In the coming year NYDC will:

- Continue Community Lunches



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- Resume Wicked Wednesdays after the October holidays
- Continue to offer shopping and prescription deliveries
- Seek funding to replicate the summer holiday activities.

## Environment Projects

North Yell Community Growing Spaces- NYDC have been seeking funding for the internal works for the polycrubs, but were unsuccessful. It was decided that NYDC would cover the cost of raised beds and topsoil for one of the growing tunnels so the site will be used this year. Further funding for the rest of the area will be applied for this year. Hopefully the full site will be operational by spring 2027. The space will include 3 growing tunnels rented to individuals for their own personal growing projects and the smaller tunnel will be decked and have seating as social/picnic space.

## North Isles Community Transport

In the past NYDC have been trialing the North Isles Community Transport system. Currently the scheme has 2 vehicles, a large 8 seater electric vehicle and a medium sized diesel goods van. In the trial phase the vehicles have been used for house moves, freight transportation, family trips, school trips, sports groups and transport for community events. The Community Transport vehicles are based in Sellafirth and able to be booked and used by people in the North Isles with full, clean driving licences under the age of 75.

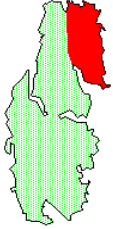
In the coming year the scheme will be formalised and advertised with bookings being taken by NYDC staff and prices reflecting a lower fee for use within the North Isles and a slightly higher fee for taking it to Mainland Shetland.

NYDC will also look into funding options to purchase a small electric car and possibly a trailer which will also be available for booking.

## Housing/Population Retention/Increase

In 2025, 10 Greenbank Terrace saw its first tenants move in. Tenants were selected in accordance with NYDC's local lettings policy with points allocated to prioritise families with children, adults with jobs and skills and people relocating back into the community. This lettings policy is administered by Arthur and Simpson. The first tenants moved out in April 2026 and, after advertising the property again through Arthur and Simpson, new tenants were selected and will move in May.

NYDC are working with a housing consultant who has submitted a Business Plan for Midfield in Cullivoe. Using this business plan NYDC are applying for funding from the Rural and Island Housing fund for the purchase of the existing house. Longer term plans are to purchase additional



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ground at this site for community housing. NYDC are also applying for funding from the Rural and Island Housing fund for the purchase of a property at Gutcher.

In the coming months NYDC will hold further public consultation to inform the Local Place Plan with a heavy emphasis on housing. Population retention and increase remain a top priority for NYDC. In the coming year and we hope to increase our property and land portfolio as and when suitable buildings/sites become available, and investigate the potential to work with other organisations and developers to bring additional housing to the area.

## Local Place Plan

NYDC are still working on the production of a Local Place Plan for North Yell for potential inclusion in the next Shetland Development Plan and to inform actions for the new NYDC Development Plan.

Further consultation will be needed for the plan which will be undertaken in the coming year.

## North Yell Culture and Heritage Group SCIO (NYCHG)

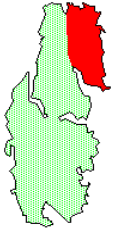
The North Yell Culture and Heritage Group was officially set up as a SCIO in early 2026. NYDC have engaged Emma Miller as an external contractor to set up and project manage the group which exists as a charitable entity separate from NYDC. The group has its own membership list and board of trustees, chaired by Barry Nisbet, who meet regularly.

The groups focus initially is to take into community ownership the Group Memorial and the Group Blee Hut, in the meantime they will work to upkeep the sites and improve onsite interpretation. The NYCHG will partner with NYDC on current heritage projects.

## NYDC's Heritage Project

NYDC began work on two heritage projects in this past year. Firstly, working with Learning for Sustainability Scotland and Museums and Galleries Scotland on a project called Savin' Wir Midder Tongue which will celebrate, promote and preserve the Shaetlan Language. As part of this project we launched 'a thoosan yarns fae Yell' a mapping project capturing stories of Yell. We also worked with NYCS to produce 'Postcards fir dee lugs', a postcard with an added sound recording to highlight language and culture. There will be more projects associated with this work in the coming year.

NYDC were also asked by COAST-R to engage in a project called Listening to North Sea Communities where we are partnered with Greyhope Bay in Aberdeenshire. This project is more focused on environmental heritage its the impact on communities. Workshops have taken place this month where bairns from the school were encouraged to record snapshots of their



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environment, these will be shared with Greyhope Bay to spark some discussion between the communities.

With the renovations completed in Sellafirth, NYDC and NYCHG will be able to begin work creating and recording a digital archive to be stored at the offices in Sellafirth. This work will be ongoing in the attempts to preserve as much digital and oral heritage as possible. This idea came about through the NYDC Development Plan as a priority for North Yell.

## NYDC Grant Schemes

NYDC continued operating their grant scheme this year. Grants this year were paid for education and training, events, and small, medium, and large community projects. Summary details of grants awarded this year are set out below.

		Community			Cost of Living Grant	Total
Training & Education	Entertainment	Small	Medium	Large		
2615.50	9,800	1275	10,780.25	16,300	£19,000	£59,770.75

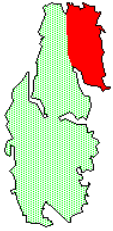
In total NYDC have awarded £59,770.75 in grants this year. Descriptions of some of these donations/awards are set out below.

**Education and Training Grants** NYDC supported individuals to undertake education and training in a variety of different areas including Open University Course, Netball course, Lifeguard training as well as international training opportunities.

**Entertainment Grant** NYDC supported 10 local groups to host entertainment events this year. This connects with the Development Plan goal of 'supporting socialising' as well as relieving the cost-of-living burden on residents by allowing certain events to be free or to charge less to participants. The entertainment included Halloween and Christmas parties, Up Helly Aa, Burns Supper, Concerts and more.

**Small Scale Community Grant (under £750)** NYDC supported an individual to attend an international Rugby trip and supported NYCS with match funding towards the cost of new freezers for the shop.

**Medium Scale Community Grant (£751 to £5,000)** NYDC supported NYCS with match funding towards their grant application for new shelving at the shop, as well as new plates and cutlery for the Cullivoe Hall for events and to Sail Yell for the running of the Traditional



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Boat Regatta. NYDC also cover the cost of swimming lessons, junior gym fit and tumble tots for bairns in North Yell.

**Large Scale Community Grant (Over £5,000)** NYDC provided a grant to the Cullivoe School for the purchase of new laptops and ipads to support the pupils learning. NYDC also supported the NYCHG and Tunnel Action Groups with fee associated with the legal costs of setting up charitable companies.

**Cost of Living Support** NYDC provided a £200 grant in the form of credit at the North Yell Community Shop at the end of 2025. This support was taken up by 98% eligible households with 95 houses taking up their grant.

## NYDC Junior Members Forum

The NYDC Junior Members Forum was held in May 2026. The Junior Members aged 12-15 were consulted about what they see as important for the future of North Yell and what they would like to see improved. They were very positive about their lives in North Yell and the opportunities and support they receive from the community as a whole and NYDC.

The NYDC directors approved a budget of £1000 for the Junior Members to action a project of their choosing to coincide with the Heritage and Culture work that NYDC are working. The Junior Members were very keen to work on a project celebrating the traditional food of Shetland, they would like classes and workshops to learn how to cook the food, competitions and potentially work on the production of a cookbook and a food festival.