

INITIATIVE AT THE EDGE

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Issue 7

Northmavine Development Company Newsletter



Malcolm Cowie ©

Housing in Northmavine

A shortage of housing can have severe consequences for families, with young people having to move out of the area to seek housing elsewhere. Areas also fail to benefit from new blood moving into rural community life. Adequate provision of affordable housing is essential in sustaining rural communities – both in providing a local workforce and the ability to maintain amenities and services such as shops, schools and public transport. These amenities and services rely on a balanced community made up of a mix of residents in terms of age, skills and needs.

During the NDC community consultation in 2004, the availability of affordable housing in the Northmavine was high on the community agenda. Many ideas were discussed, among them:

- the need for housing for single people
- the creation of a land bank to help make people aware of available sites for housing
- the creation of a local housing trust to work in partnership with housing agencies such as Hjaltland
- the need to encourage people with empty properties to realise the potential in helping to provide accommodation
- the creation of “smallholdings” for people who would like an acre of land to grow vegetables/keep hens

The idea of creating a “house bank” on the internet, highlighting houses for sale, was also raised. www.northmavine.com has since carried many requests from website users seeking properties to both rent and buy in Northmavine. A section on the website forum devoted to property has also been created.

Each community has unique housing needs and so to assess the need and demand for housing in Northmavine we have included a “Housing needs” survey with this newsletter. The survey will help the NDC build up a clearer picture of community need in the area and influence how we and the community, move forward with housing issues.

The questionnaire is divided into two parts. Households and families who see their housing needs being fully met for the next 5 years should only fill in **part one** of the survey. The survey is quite detailed and asks for a high level of information. Although the answers are all helpful in building up a picture of Northmavine community requirement, folk should only complete questions they are happy to answer.

Part Two of the questionnaire should only be completed and returned if you have a relative or friend in your household or currently out with Northmavine who would like to return/relocate. An online version of **part two** is also available from www.northmavine.com for those living outside the area.

Your answers will be used solely to build up a picture of housing in Northmavine. If need is identified, the information will enable us to prove evidence to funders and agencies on the level of required accommodation, and help us consider how the issue of affordable housing can be addressed in Northmavine.

Please return the relevant surveys in the stamped addressed envelope by Monday 17th December 2007

Healthy Meals

With the help of ROA funding, a group of young folk in Northmavine has got together, under the guidance of Susan Thompson from Sandvoe to organise, help prepare and serve a healthy meal. Invited guests will be treated to a healthy feast at the Ollaberry Hall in the first of the year.

Currently the group is busy planning the menu, which will include as much local fayre as possible, and designing invitations. As well as this they also intend to decorate the tables and hall using Shetland and the landscape as the theme. Members will also create a display of all the information they have gathered on the subject of healthy eating.

The young folk vary in age from 11 to 17 years and includes a range of talents in all areas of the project. Cooking skills, computer skills, cartoon/art skills, creative design and riotous imagination all feature within the group! So look out for your invitation and Bon appetite!



WRVS is a national organisation that provides voluntary services for people in need. In Shetland there are currently five social clubs in Brae, Walls, Whalsay, Burra and Lerwick. Sandwick is currently home to a *Luncheon Club*. We help people stay active in their community by providing places to meet and make friends, and transport to get them there.

WRVS is currently trying to gauge community desire for a *Luncheon Club* in the Northmavine area. In order to help us, in the first instance, we have enclosed a leaflet with the NDC newsletter this quarter to tell folk a little of what we do. A WRVS *Luncheon Club* is open to anyone who could benefit from a nice meal and a chance to catch up with friends and neighbours in Northmavine. If you would be interested in attending the club or becoming a volunteer helper, please contact Barbara 01595 743915 or e-mail Shetland.admin@wrvs.org.uk

Could you be a Childminder?

The Northmavine Community Needs Survey sent out to households last year saw many folk commenting on the need for childcare in Northmavine. The NDC is therefore looking into what can be done to improve childcare facilities for families in the community and will publish a report of the findings in a couple of weeks.

So far we have identified that one way to help folk needing childcare is for more registered childminders to be based in Northmavine. A registered childminder is a self employed professional day care provider who works in their own home providing care for other folk's children. Registered childminders may be registered to care for up to 6 children between the ages of 0-12 years (including their own children).

Childminding is a good way to earn some extra money whilst working from your own home as well as providing a valuable, much needed service for your community!

If you would like more information on how to become a childminder please contact the NDC office - 01806 544222 or Anita Gaffney from The Shetland Childcare Partnership: 01595 697411

Play Van Visits.

A positive result to come from the childcare study has been the introduction of the Play van. The Play van is a free service to communities, funded by the SIC. Two workers set up all the toys and equipment and provide snacks with refreshments for bairns and parents. Since October the Play van has visited



So many toys.....so little time!

Ollaberry, Sullom and Hillswick Halls bringing soft play, baby toys and bright, sporty pedal cars for pre school bairns in Northmavine! So far it has been a great success and will continue its monthly visits to each hall in 2008. Thanks must go to the workers Nicola and Patti as well as SIC and Shetland Childcare Partnership.

Busy at Greenbrae

Since our last newsletter in August, it's been fairly hectic at Greenbrae. At present there are a total of 8 projects funded by ROA, through SIC. This includes:

- Producing a tourism brochure for Northmavine
- Analysing the Northmavine visitors survey carried out in the summer
- Researching methods of how the Northmavine website can become sustainable and help folk in the area market facilities and produce
- An "Afore da Doors" photographic archive of local people
- A healthy meals project with local young folk to plan and produce a meal in a local hall
- Research and a report looking at childcare facilities in Northmavine and how this could be improved
- Events for young folk including a treasure hunt and a talent show
- A "Gie it a go" day where young folk will try their hand at various crafts and activities is also taking place
- Crofters in Northmavine have visited both North Ronaldsay and Gigha to learn more about land management and housing issues in remote communities.

The ROA projects are all carried out by folk in the Northmavine community, either as sub-groups of the NDC or community members getting involved to either lead the projects or take part. Northmavine folk are busy to begin with, but it's great to see folk giving a little extra time to get even more involved in their communities.

As well as co-ordinating the ROA projects, we're also beginning to turn our attention to housing need in Northmavine and the survey enclosed with this newsletter will help shape the course we take. We're working more closely with community groups such as the Collafirth Brig Shed committee to help provide a public toilet at the Collafirth Pier. The hope is that, as well as providing toilet facilities for folk, showers will also be installed to encourage campers and yachts to use the pier facilities.

The NDC is a community company, set up **for** the community **by** the community. We would love to see more folk getting involved in any capacity they can manage. A large share of NDC work is taken on by the volunteer members either as directors or members of the sub-groups.

Sub-groups are currently set up to look at tourism and crofting and could also be formed for projects such as renewables and the Northmavine website. If you'd like to get involved in forming a new group or perhaps you'd like to contribute as a director or new member of an existing group, please get in touch with Maree at the NDC office.

New Improved Development Company for the Northmavine Community

We've spoken before about our plans to change the NDC so we can do more, as well as maximising our chances of assistance for future projects. We've been working away over the past year with the lawyers to make those changes, and we're almost there.

The changes will involve the setting up of a new company - the Northmavine Community Development Company - and the transfer of assets from the NDC to the NCDC. The new company will have charitable status, and will meet the requirements of the Land Reform Act, but otherwise it will look much the same as the NDC.

We expect to have the NCDC incorporated in early January, and the resolution to transfer the assets and activities of the NDC to the new company will be made at the NDC Annual General Meeting in late January.

The details of the AGM will be well-advertised, so we hope you will come along and take part. It's your company, so why not have your say?

Margaret Roberts
Chair



Pink granite not Pink Floyd by Allen Fraser

Northmavine is unique. An easy statement to make, but why is it so? Just ask any visitant what they liked best (apart from Christina's cheesecake) and most will reply, "the scenery".

Most visitors (both 'fae sooth' and local) don't come to Northmavine just to tick a box on their travel itinerary. They plan their visit and are genuinely attracted by a desire to understand the landscape, both physical and historical. To enhance the visitor experience there has to be easily accessible interpretation and if this in itself can be a visitor attraction, then so much the better.

At the risk of a bad pun, it is fair to say that the 'bedrock' of

Northmavine's physical and historical landscape is the underlying geology. To represent this geology an idea sprang from the community to build a geological wall at Mavis Grind, the gateway to Northmavine. The funding and planning of the wall became part of the Shetland Geopark project led by the Shetland Amenity Trust's project officer Kate Dougan.

Tom Jamieson and Adam Brown undertook the task of sourcing the stone and building of the wall. The wall itself is a representative (rather than a scale model) East-West cross-section cut down through the bedrock of Northmavine. Tom spared no effort in gathering the relevant rock types from all corners of Northmavine, even trudging to the top of Rønies Hill and staggering back down with a block of granite.

Northmavine's unique landscape has been sculpted from a diverse geology by rivers, glaciers and the sea over the last few million years. The coastline is stunning in its variety and grandeur. The Atlantic Ocean on the West has carved some of the most spectacular cliff scenery in the world. The 20 or so rock types collected for the Mavis Grind wall represent well over 2000 million years of turbulent geological history that has led to the Northmavine of today. It is a story of mountain building and erosion; of volcanoes, deserts and ancient rivers; of ice ages and tropical seas; of climate change and sea level rise; and of minerals, miners and land use.

This is an excerpt of an article written by Allen for Northmavine. The full version will be available on www.northmavine.com and in Shetland Life in the Spring

Winter at the website

Hello, I am Malcolm your forum administrator on www.northmavine.com. Winter is upon us so I thought I'd let you know that there are lots of new features on the forum (including a "Live" chat room), some added by the previous admin and some by myself.

As winter is a time when we tend to spend a bit more time on-line I wondered if there were any particular features you might like to see on the boards to help occupy you during those cold winter nights. I cannot promise that every suggestion will be possible but good ones may be added. We will certainly try our best to keep you entertained.

Have you a good winter warmer recipe you would like to share? Perhaps an article for sale? (No commercial adverts please) - then just visit our "Classified" section.

Don't forget to look at the calendar for Whats On in Northmavine.

Are you hosting an event in the area? Want to let folk know about it? Then just email whatson@northmavine.com

For the youth group members there is a separate area for them to chat away with each other. Ingrid is the dedicated youth area Moderator. Hope to see you all making good use of the forum and chat room.

Tele – 544349 e-mail – malcolm57@zetnet.co.uk
Or drop a note to Greystane, Leon, Ollaberry

Treasure and Talent in Eshaness

Eshaness was a busy place on Saturday 3rd November. *Da Young Eens fae Nort* helped organise a treasure hunt in the afternoon and a Talent show in the evening. The Treasure Hunt was declared a draw between Team Morton/Goodlad/D'eath and Team Sandison/Anderson/Cranie! Teams worked really well together to logically figure out the clues. Thanks to Christina at Braewick Cafe for the much needed soup/sandwiches and cake when we all returned to the cafe.

Then it was on to the Eshaness Community for the annual bonfire and fireworks display. In calm conditions the pyrotechnics team set off an amazing display of fireworks. After everyone had tried their luck at the games tables and gorged on the suppers on sale.....the apple crumble was delicious!.....everyone waited to see if Northmavine really DID have talent. After an initial reluctance.....and a bit of co-ersion from compare and DJ for the evening Tom Morton, the young eens took to the stage. Special mention has to be made to Barry who mimed expertly to songs he didn't even know the words to, but still entertained the audience with his antics!

The audience was treated to a glimpse of the musical talent in Northmavine when Martha and Nicky on fiddle and guitar respectively played a beautiful tune. Next up were two generations of the Morton Clan when Tom on guitar and James on double bass told us why they didn't like the Beatles amongst other things!

The evening was rounded off when the group got up on stage to give Kylie a helping hand!! Councillors Cooper and Doull came along to judge the event which saw Barrie winning the prize for most entertaining and a prize for Martha and Nicky for musical talent.

Thanks must go to SIC for ROA funding, the Eshaness Community Centre and our councillors for supporting the event. An extra huge thanks to Tom Morton for his work in pulling the event together. In the end the group worked to organise the venue for the treasure hunt, write articles for Dregs column and make sure all the technical equipment was in place. The team work was excellent and that was the whole point of the exercise.

Night Classes

Beginners and Improvers Computing Class—North Roe School, starts on 14th January 2008 at 4pm—6pm. There are about 3 or 4 places available.

Digital Photo Techniques—North Roe School, starts on 4th February 2008 at 6:30pm—8:30pm. There is only one space available.

If you would be interested in any of these courses please contact: Andrew Anderson on Mobile: 07771856942 or Telephone: 01595 743969.

Seasons Greetings

I'm told it's a sign of old age when time seems to pass by quicker each year, so I must be getting old, as this year has passed particularly fast! Time, since 30th July 2007, when Pam and I started work at Greenbrae, has passed in a blur but has been very enjoyable. For me, it's very satisfying to work within the community you live.

I'm also told it's just over a fortnight till Christmas. Now that wir bairns have grown up, Christmas has lost some of the magic experienced when young faces shone with excitement after a visit fae Santee, but it's still a good time to eat too much and catch up with folk you haven't seen much of during the year.

So, however you intend to spend your Christmas, have a lovely time. (I hear some Northmavine residents will be spending it in New Zealand!) Happy Christmas to you all and Best Wishes for 2008.

Maree

Equipment Bank - The Greenbrae office has a computer for public use with internet access. A printer, a laminator, a binding machine and a set of display boards all available to the public at a small charge. Please feel free to contact us at anytime.

Up coming events

December

12/12 500 Drive – Hillswick Hall
15/12 Bairns Christmas Party—Sullom Hall
21/12 Bairns Christmas Party – Ollaberry Hall
28/12 Christmas Dance – Ollaberry Hall
29/12 New Year Doo—Sullom Hall

January 08

06/01 Quiz Night - Ollaberry Hall
23/01 500 Drive—Hillswick Hall
25/01 Burns Supper—North Roe & Lochend Hall

February 08

16/02 UHA Hop Day Spree—Hillswick Hall
20/02 500 Drive—Hillswick Hall

March 08

19/03 500 Drive—Hillswick Hall
30/03 Northmavine Bulb Show—Sullom Hall

NDC Contact Details

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