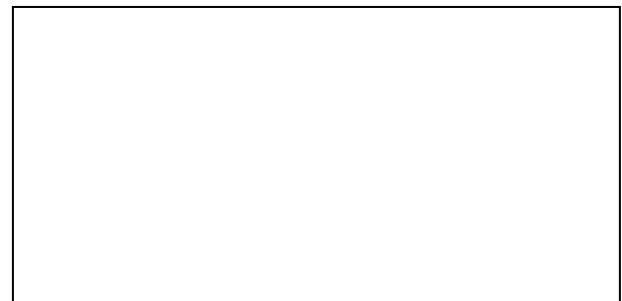




The newsletter for the island of Shapinsay produced by the Shapinsay Development Trust.
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It feels a little late in the year to be wishing you all a Happy New Year, but as this is the first edition of the *Shapinsay Sound* for 2026, Happy New Year to you all!

The Trust office has been fairly quiet over the past month, thanks to the festive period and the usual January lull, but rest assured, quiet doesn't mean nothing is happening. In fact, quite the opposite! There is so much going on just now that it's hard to know where to begin. Stick with me to the end, there's a lot to get through, but it's well worth it.

First of all: Balfour Cottages. The contractors are waiting on permits to work on the roads, but work has started internally at Balfour Cottage. It has taken two years to navigate the planning and building warrant processes, but we are finally there. R Rendall Contractors were awarded the contract following a rigorous procurement process last year, with three competing bids submitted. Funding was secured from the Scottish Land Fund for purchase, Rural Island and housing fund, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Orkney Islands Council for demolition and rebuild. The project will deliver four fully accessible, energy-efficient, two-bedroom properties, which we hope will be available for rent sometime next year.

We will keep you updated with progress photos throughout the coming months.

As you will know, we have already completed three family homes on the island, all of which are now either occupied or allocated. Our focus is now shifting

towards housing for older residents. The plan for the four new properties is for three to be immediately available for local people on completion. This will allow residents to move from homes that may no longer meet their mobility needs, without having to leave the island. We hope this, in turn, will help to free up other properties on Shapinsay for sale or rent.

The fourth property will initially be retained to provide accommodation for an overnight carer if required. While we cannot offer a warden service like sheltered housing, this would ensure that support could be provided if needed. If there is no immediate requirement for an overnight carer, the property could be used for key workers, short-term accommodation (so it can be kept available if needed, while still bringing in an income), or, depending on the demand, it could be let to someone else who needs a suitable home. The letting policy for this fourth property can be adapted as circumstances and demand change.

Over the next couple of weeks, we expect to see the demolition of the existing Balfour Cottage and the start of construction on the replacement building, which has been designed to remain very much in keeping with the original house.

Workshops

If you're on Facebook, you may also have seen that we're organising several workshops over the coming months. Our glass-making workshop is currently full, but if you'd like to be added to the waiting list, please



get in touch - we expect there may be a few folk drop out before the date. If you have already booked a place and are within the first 20 participants, please ensure your deposit is paid as soon as possible to secure your space. If there is enough interest, the organisers have offered to return on the Sunday, although this would depend on keyholder availability.

We are also planning a **photography workshop**, with the date still to be confirmed but definitely taking place on a Saturday. All skill levels are welcome, from iPhone users to DSLR enthusiasts. If you're interested in attending, please get in touch.

What's next for Shapinsay?

If you're invested in the future of Shapinsay, or even just invested in the idea of free cake, coffee and a free lunch, please keep **Saturday 28th February** free in your diary.

We have a full day planned. Why a whole day? Because we need your input into what happens next, and an afternoon or evening simply wouldn't be enough to cover it all and we don't want to keep asking you back to discuss each topic. Plans are still being finalised as I write this, but we hope to welcome the Youth Forum to work with young people, along with visitors from HIE, Orkney Islands Council, Community Energy Scotland, and other island development trusts.

So, what's it all about?

At the end of 2024, we completed our five-year plan, working alongside a consultant and following a specific set of criteria set by our funders. While this gave us a solid foundation, we felt it was missing some of those crucial "next steps", and that there should have been more opportunity for wider community engagement. Unfortunately, the criteria and tight timescales meant we had to work within those limits, but the plan does give us an excellent starting point.

During that process, the idea of creating a Place Plan for Shapinsay was already being discussed, although at the time we weren't entirely sure what that would involve. A year on, we have a much clearer understanding, and we feel that developing a Shapinsay Island Place Plan is the next natural step.

So, what is a Place Plan?

In short, *a Place Plan is a community-led vision for the future of an area. It sets out what local people value, what needs to improve, and what actions will help the island thrive socially, economically and environmentally. A Place Plan gives the community a clear, united voice - helping to shape decisions, attract funding, and ensure that future development reflects local needs and ambitions, and that decisions made for Shapinsay's future are made with us instead of for us!*

This isn't just about what the Shapinsay Development Trust does next. It's about what Orkney Islands Council, the Scottish Government, and other key community stakeholders can do as well.

With that in mind, we have invited the Community Council, Community Association, Heritage Group, Agricultural Association, Shapinsay Kirk, OIC, HIE and others to take part on the day, and to remain involved as the discussions develop.

You're very welcome to attend for the whole day or just part of it — please come along for as much or as little as you're able. We plan to run three workshops during the day, the poster later in this newsletter will give you more idea on timings.

For more information on the wellbeing part of the consultation, please visit our website, under the projects header, where you can see all the feedback gathered from our initial survey, and from our AGM, alongside notes on whether each suggestion is feasible and how we propose to move forward. There's a lot to take in, so make yourself a cuppa and grab a biscuit first!

If you don't have access to the internet and would like printed copies, please pop past and we can arrange that. We're keen to avoid printing and delivering large amounts of paper to every household as it contributes to more avoidable waste and, as per our climate action plan, we need to be conscious of reducing unnecessary printing.

On that note, if you'd like to receive your newsletter digitally each month, please get in touch at boathouse@shapinsay.org.uk.

What else?

You may have noticed that the Green Kia Nero is no longer with us, that was upgraded in January to a Kia EV 3 through Shapinsay Renewables Ltd and leased to the trust.

In March, we hope to take delivery of 2 new Ebikes, at which time, we hope to be able to make 2 of the original ebikes available to locals at any time of year, for free.

Community Larder – We continue to top up the larder every Monday around 4.30pm, as per the original donation that was used to set it up, we put £50 of groceries in each month and spread that across each week. It was great to see an additional top up done by the men's shed, we hope a few of you were able to take advantage of this.

Reminder that if you are struggling, there are ways we can help, if you can't get to the community larder, but need a helping hand, let us know, we will see what we can do.

We seem to have an excess of Kidney beans at the larder, so if you like Kidney beans get on down there!

I thought I'd include a simple recipe that could get your creative juices flowing for a quick and easy, budget friendly Kidney bean dish!

Bean & Tomato Stew or Pasta Sauce

Serves

4–6 people (with pasta or rice)

You'll need

- 2 tins kidney beans (drained & rinsed)
- 2 tins chopped tomatoes
- 1 onion, chopped (*optional*)
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped (*optional*)
- 1 stock cube + 200 ml hot water
- 1 tsp paprika (*or mixed herbs*)
- 1 tsp oregano or basil (*dried*)
- Salt & pepper

Optional extras (use what you've got):

Carrots, peppers, courgette, mushrooms, chilli flakes, tomato purée, splash of soy sauce, spinach or kale.

How to make it

1. Heat a little oil in a large pot.
2. Cook the onion for 5 minutes until soft. Add garlic and cook 1 more minute.
3. Stir in paprika and herbs.
4. Add chopped tomatoes, kidney beans, and stock.
5. Simmer gently for 20–30 minutes, stirring now and then.
6. Mash some of the beans with a spoon to thicken the sauce.
7. Season to taste. Stir in any greens at the end.

To serve

- Cook pasta/rice according to packet instructions
- Stir the sauce through the pasta
- Add grated cheese or a drizzle of oil if you like

Good to know

- ✓ Very filling – beans add protein
- ✓ Keeps 3 days in the fridge
- ✓ Freezes well
- ✓ Can be blended smooth if preferred

If you or someone you know has been affected by cancer, the Improving the Cancer Journey service is here to support you.

To find out more about ICJ and to access the self-referral form, visit: [Improving the Cancer Journey \(ICJ\) | NHS Orkney](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cancer/improving-the-cancer-journey/)

If you have any questions or would like to refer yourself or someone else into ICJ, contact us today:

- Email: ork.icj@nhs.scot
- Phone: 01856 888084 (Public Health Department)

Improving the Cancer Journey (ICJ) Service



Cancer affects more than just your health - it can touch every part of your life

Whether you're dealing with financial stress, emotional worries, or practical challenges like work or caring responsibilities, the Improving the Cancer Journey service is here to help.

Improving the Cancer Journey offers personalised, non-clinical support tailored to what matters most to you. From accessing benefits advice to connecting with wellbeing services, we're here to make sure you don't have to face it all alone.

COMMUNITY LARDER DONATIONS ACCEPTED

SDT are going to continue to donate £50 worth of food each month to the community larder. If you would like to donate tins, toiletries, dried goods or money towards the larder, please get in touch.

Please do not donate non-food or toiletry items. Any such donations can be given the Cast Aiffs where goods are given out on a "Pay what you can" donation basis



Shapinsay School February

We had an interesting start to the term, with 2 snow days. However, we are now back in school and would like to give everyone advance notice that on **Wednesday 25th March** we will be performing **Aladdin Trouble** and we would love to see you all there to come along and enjoy our panto. The children are all working really hard to learn all their lines and the songs, and it's shaping up to be a great performance.

Toby Diamond has now started with us as our classroom auxiliary, and Emma Mackie is working as Early Years Practitioner in the Nursery.

Primary Learning

This term the primary children are all learning about the human body. So far, the children have learned about the skeleton, heart, and lungs. We have been thinking about what we can all do to help keep us as healthy as possible. Science experiments have been taking place too, including investigating the effect of exercise on heart rate.

In French and Spanish, the children have been learning about the parts of the human body and have especially enjoyed singing "heads, shoulders, knees, and toes" in French. The children in the Stars class have also been learning colours in Spanish and are revising the numbers up to 100 in French.

In numeracy, the older children are learning different strategies for addition and subtraction and are also revising their times tables. In writing, the Stars class are learning how to write an information text using the Talk for Writing approach. They are learning a model text called 'The Swamp'



Monsters' and enjoying creating a story map to help them to remember it. The plan is for the children to invent their own mythical beasts and write a report about them.

In Art, the children have been learning linear perspective based on Van Gogh's painting 'Bedroom in Arles'. Evan has done such a fabulous job, and his work

has made it to the school's Outstanding Work display. Well done, Evan!

In PE this term we have finished off our tennis skills block started before Christmas, weather and Christmas decorations meant we had to stop early. However, Mrs Bews did a tennis course and we got some free tennis equipment we just couldn't wait to try out. Both classes are currently learning some climbing skills, using the wall bars, traverse wall and Freedom Climber. We also hope to start learning golf skills very soon, using Club Golf equipment borrowed from Active Schools. We will be working on our chipping and putting skills and creating some fun crazy golf stations.



Nursery Learning

The Nursery children have been investigating ice. They tried freezing things in different shapes and then seeing what made them melt. The children were also very interested in mini beasts, and enjoyed doing a mini beast hunt round the school.

Active Shapinsay Week

Due to various factors we were unable to hold our annual Active Shapinsay Week in 2025, but are happy to report that the Sports Committee are working hard behind the scenes to organise this year's activities. We will be holding it the last week of February, beginning on Monday the 23rd, with activities during school for the school bairns and after school and in the evening for folk in the community. So far we have rugby, dancing, kickboxing, yoga, bikeability and basketball pencilled in for the primary bairns. We have kickboxing, football and Boccia for our after school sessions and badminton, a walk and a cycle for our evening sessions. If you have a sport or anything active you would be willing to offer a session on or to help out with please get in touch with Leanne leanne.bews@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk

We still have some afternoon and evening spaces to fill and would also love to offer something at the weekend too.

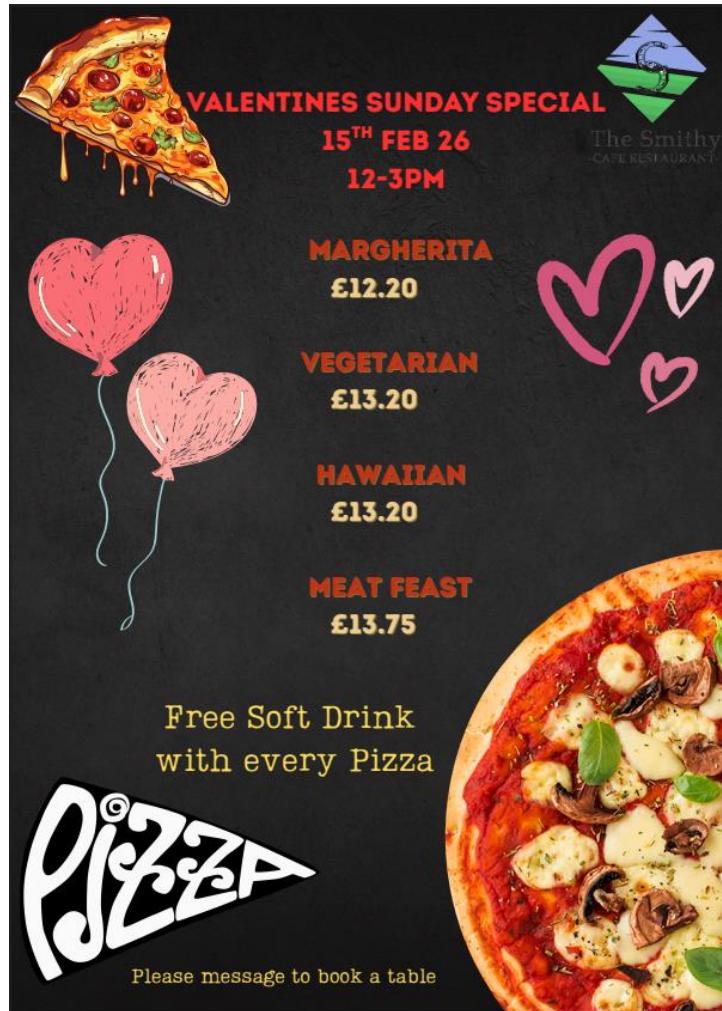
Winter warmers are subsidised by Shapinsay Development Trust and the VAO Mental Health and Wellbeing Grant and are for everyone to enjoy. If you have specific dietary requirements, please state at the time of booking



Winter Warmers
February's Dates
Thu 5th Feb
Thu 19th Nov
12pm-3pm

£7 for Islanders £13 for Non-Residents
Max Tables of 4 persons
Two Table sittings of 90minutes
12-1.30pm
Includes Two Courses with Tea or Coffee

Please book to avoid disappointment
711243 or Smithy@shapinsay.org.uk



VALENTINES SUNDAY SPECIAL
15TH FEB 26
12-3PM

MARGHERITA
£12.20

VEGETARIAN
£13.20

HAWAIIAN
£13.20

MEAT FEAST
£13.75

Free Soft Drink with every Pizza

PiZZA

Please message to book a table

Are you worried about being cold over the winter months? Are you worried about keeping warm if there is a prolonged power cut?

Shapinsay has a flask and hot water bottle service for folk who feel they would benefit.

If you, or someone you know, would like to access this service, please contact The Boathouse on 01856 711733 for further information.

Flasks & hot water bottles provided by Shapinsay Medical Fund Committee



Shapinsay Local Place Plan

Community Get-Involved day!

We are starting work on a Shapinsay Place Plan – a community-led plan that will help shape future decisions about housing, wellbeing, the local economy and how Shapinsay develops.



To kick things off, everyone on the island is invited to a community get-involved day.

Sat 28th February

9:30 - 15:30

**Shapinsay
Community Centre**

What's happening?

- Informal drop-in discussions
- Short workshops on:
 - Social life, isolation and community.
 - Regeneration, the local economy and future sustainability.
 - Housing, community facilities and recreation.
- Maps to add ideas to
- Space and activities for young people
- Breakfast, lunch and refreshments provided
- Cast Affs big spring sale

You do not need to stay all day – come for as long or as little as suits you.

Why come along?

- Share what matters most to you about Shapinsay
- Help identify priorities for the years ahead
- Find out how a Local Place Plan can influence future funding and decisions

The car service will be available. Details to follow.

Please save the date and come along. More information will be shared soon, but this is your opportunity to help shape the future of Shapinsay.



Shapinsay Local Place Plan

Community Get-Involved day!

Sat 28th February

9:30 - 15:30

**Shapinsay
Community Centre**



9:30 AM

Community Breakfast

Check-in and have a nosey about

10:00 AM

Welcome and Scene Setting

Why we are doing a Place Plan now
How the day will work

10:15 AM

How to take part

Workshops, Maps, Discussions

10:30 AM

Workshop 1: Social Life, Community, avoiding isolation

11:30 AM

Workshop 2: Regeneration, Economy & Future Sustainability

12:30 PM

Community Lunch

Discussions, Drop-ins, activity space

1:15 PM

Workshop 3: Housing, Community Spaces & Facilities

3:00 PM

Closing discussion, what next and close

You do not need to stay all day - come for as long or as little as suits you.