



Community Ties

Island Sustainability Survey

by Bill Corr, Chelsea Crooks & Betsy Sharp

The idea of leasing farmland was brought up at last summer's annual meeting, so the WCM and CLT jointly sponsored a recent community discussion about the possibility of agricultural leases and tiny-home-site leases on Waldron. Basically, the idea is that keeping our community sustainable in the long term includes making sure that housing and farming opportunities are available for the next generation. There are already some younger individuals and families who are interested in establishing themselves on Waldron, but are not immediately able to purchase property. The concept of an agricultural lease is that if a current landowner has usable farmland (or even woods in which livestock could reasonably be kept), they could give a long-term lease to a neighbor who's interested in farming. The farmer might live elsewhere on the island, or might bring a portable "tiny house" to live on the leased land while they're farming it. One successful example of an agricultural lease has been demonstrated by Blue Moon's arrangement; but many other models are also possible. Space for "tiny houses," independent of farmland, is another alternative to affordable housing. Since these dwellings are typically portable, the permit department doesn't put them in the same category as constructed buildings. There is currently at least one tiny home already here in a very comfortable relationship with the island and the landowners.

The coffeehouse was held in November, and over 25 island residents filled the schoolhouse to voice their heartfelt opinions, hopes, and concerns. As a follow up to the coffeehouse, an Island Sustainability Survey was sent out to the island-wide constituency of both full-time and part-time residents.

The response by email was actually quite substantial: We had 43 participants, each able to give lengthy input to each question; contributors could remain anonymous or not. The results came in graph, percentage, and essay form. As was suspected, about half (or 56%, to be exact) were for the idea of farmland or tiny house leases, 4 individuals (9%) were against any kind of leases, and the 15 remaining participants (35%) were either unsure or answered "It depends." The input was enlightening, with

some of the main threads being that 1) maybe this is not the correct project for the CLT, as the agreements would really come down to the relationship of the landowner and the tenant; and 2) how do we ensure a good fit between the community and the newcomers? Also, many practicalities were touched upon, such as access to water and wood, provisions for sewage, and the legality of tiny homes within county regulations and the sub-area plan.

The survey also gave us access to island residents who would be able and willing to participate in such an effort by providing land appropriate for either tiny homes, (12 participants) farming (14), or both, as well as five possible, viable newcomers suggested by the survey participants.

The CLT would like to help facilitate connections between any neighbors (or potential neighbors) who are interested in pursuing such lease arrangements. We will be personally contacting those survey respondents who expressed immediate interest in such arrangements, so that we can help such potential partners find one another. If you'd like to be on our list of potential landowners or leaseholders, please contact us at waldronlandtrust@gmail.com or at PO Box 11, 98297.

Complete survey results will be posted on CLTWI website. Listed below are examples showing the range of relevant remarks shared by survey participants.

"I believe the success of these efforts will ultimately depend on the specific arrangement developed between individuals. General guidelines or important considerations could be identified by CLT, but then adapted for each unique situation."

*"Why does Waldron need to change?
I think we should protect the way it is."*

*"Communication, community cooperation, resourcefulness, and thinking outside the box,"
factors needed to make potential leases work.*

"Young families might want to do an 'apprenticeship' on one of the existing farms before they commit to a long term lease..."



Wildfire, Wisdom, and Waldron

by Carmela Alexander

In the last newsletter forester Carson Sprenger wrote eloquently of the fire situation *vis a vis* roads on Waldron. “As I drive down the mountain road, past the parked fire trailer toward Mail Bay, it’s not the sound of the salal and blackberry and scotch broom scraping the sides of my truck that puts me on edge (though I am gritting my teeth), it’s the thought that if a fire got going in these woods there would be little or no safe way to fight it.”

In fact, for many residents, there would be no way to escape it.

That situation is beginning to change. Thanks to our Fire Brigade chief and grant writer Vicki Heater and the Department of Natural Resources Waldron received a Firewise grant to begin to chip away at this problem. The overarching goal is fuel mitigation, with a specific focus on first creating a “shaded fuel break” along the taxiway, and then continuing that work up the Mountain Road. Grant resources will also be used by individuals to create defensible space around homes and driveways.

A shaded fuel break translates as an evacuation corridor should wildfire sweep through our crowded forest. Brush will be cleared from the edges of the roadway, small trees will be felled, and larger trees will be limbed up to a safe height.

Two residents with land adjacent to the taxiway have already undertaken safety measures. On one property goats have browsed, thus keeping brush clear. On another, the landowner, with assistance from an EQIP grant, cleared the roadside of brush and small trees and turned the residue into biochar (charcoal used as a soil amendment). Their good work will be extended along the whole length of the taxiway and beyond.

The full grant amount is \$15,000, with half provided by DNR to help pay for labor and equipment with an agreement from the community to provide volunteer time for the other half. Volunteer hours are computed at \$23/hour, with daily rates for equipment as well. The Department of Public Works, the Conservation District, and others will also contribute to the match.

How can you help? If you are on-island, volunteer! Workers are needed to follow after the initial power machines to lop and scatter branches or make biochar. Or work on your own clearing to create a 30’ defensible space around buildings. Vicki Heater will be keeping records for the grant. Please send before-and-after photos of the work you do at home as well as an accounting of your hours to (heater@rockisland.com). Your efforts will contribute not only to your safety and that of all Waldroners, but also to our matching requirements for the grant. If you are off-island, give permission for clearing brush along the common roadways that border your property. All work covered by the grant must be completed by May 15, 2017.

Project-related gatherings are coming up soon, so please mark your calendars. On Friday, January 27, community members met to go over project details and set a work schedule. And on Wednesday, February 22, three professionals will join the Waldron community to discuss the current project, do two some home visits, and present a workshop on forest management and community preparedness. The workshop will begin at 2:30 at the school with presenters Rob Walters, who heads the Firewise Program in San Juan County; Ellen Jones, county Resource Planner and forest management plan consultant; and forester Carson Sprenger from Rain Shadow Consulting.

As winter slides into spring and the work progresses please watch the P.O. board and the message board at the “T”. Progress reports and the announcement of work days/work bees will be posted there as well as on the Waldron Info page on Facebook.

This Firewise grant is a golden opportunity to tackle a potentially deadly community problem. Let’s work on it – together!



Increasing The Impact of Firewise Fuel Reduction

by Steve and Linnea Bensel

The Firewise grant and its motivation to make our homes and island more resistant to wildfire is a wonderful and much needed thing. While doing this work we have

another opportunity to do something else important. We have a choice in the way that we deal with the material/biomass that is removed from the forest. It can be burned completely to ash, or left on the ground to decompose. With both of these methods all the carbon in the material is released into the atmosphere, adding to greenhouse gases. A third way of cleaning up woody debris is to make it into charcoal/biochar. This sequesters about 50% of the carbon in the biomass in a form that is stable for thousands of years.

Once we have the charcoal we can apply it to our gardens to enhance our ability to grow more and better food or leave it in the forest where charcoal from forest fires has always played an important role in the health of that ecosystem. Charcoal in the soil increases water retention during dry periods and holds plant nutrients so that they are not washed away by the winter rains.



A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.

~Greek proverb

What's Up with the Community Building Feasibility Study?

by Betsy Sharp

We want to give everyone a quick acknowledgment that we aren't forgetting about exploring the feasibility of a community building. It's simply that without a push from the larger island community, the five of us can't move forward quickly on such a large project.

With limited time and energy available for community service, the CLT board needs to focus on those areas that our neighbors currently identify as important. These include the WCM-initiated movement to explore agricultural and tiny home leases, as well as occasional island trash runs. When a project is important to a group of islanders, the CLT board can put our limited availability into amplifying and facilitating it.

Striking out in creative directions for exploring potential Commons usage is still happening, but on a more gradual timeline. We are working on learning about septic system requirements for flexible future Commons use. We're also planning for a fun community workbee to build an outdoor pizza oven on the Commons. With each small step, we're bringing more energy and utility to that beautiful piece of land that we all collectively own. The community building conversation is still alive!

Our Tool Lending Library Has Begun

by Betsy Sharp

Conversations recur about the occasional need for tools, and the efficiency of sharing. Tool lending libraries are successfully managed in many places, and we're interested in seeing how this could work on Waldron.

We have begun our lending library with an eye towards food and fun: We have a high-end 6-quart electric ice cream maker available for loan to any islander. We also have a small portable propane freezer available for loan. Two people can easily lift it into the back of a truck - it's meant to be portable, has handles, and weighs 60-some pounds. We ask a minimum donation of \$5 per item, for a few days' worth of use.

During these wintry days, there isn't much demand for an ice cream setup... but keep these in mind for summer. Anyone with a craving for ice cream can borrow these items, connect a 5-gallon propane tank, and earn a few dollars selling homemade ice cream -- it's very popular! Or have a great ice cream party or outdoor gathering, with a freezer that's independent of electric power. Contact Betsy or another board member to borrow one or both of these tools.

Give us more ideas for tools you'd like us to add to our lending library!



Our Newest Board Member

by Joanne Colman Wester

The land trust welcomes a new board member: Bill Corr has stepped up to serve a one year term, as a replacement for Ike Iremonger who resigned after he moved offisland. Bill is currently heading up the pizza oven project.

Sublet Opportunity

by Chelsea Crooks

Over 2 years ago, I was ecstatic to become the leaseholder on Mail Bay. Beginning to realize my dream for a healthier, more sustainable lifestyle satisfied me in a way that I'm sure many on Waldron know intimately themselves, and I was so excited to see what the next few years would bring. I love working the orchard. I make an efficiency game out of trying to create as little waste as possible. The trees, clean air, safety and the close-knit community here are the ideal spot for my ideal future.

Unfortunately, my ideal future has had to change. Things have not gone to my plans. I know, I know; plans are only just that, and reality has its own course... I feel slightly foolish for pursuing this opportunity so enthusiastically that I ignored what my body was so desperately trying to tell me. I actually loved the feeling of exhausting myself, knowing that I had been productive, connected, and kind. I have refrained from referring to Waldron as a modern Utopia, as to not sound too naïve. But let me tell you- I believe it is, and that is what makes my decision hurt so much more.

I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis a year and a half ago. And with this disease, it is not a question of whether you will get worse. It's only a question of how rapidly that will happen. Since the original diagnosis, I have been feverishly trying to continue my life as planned... just with a few adjustments. ...And then a few more adjustments... and then just a few more... and, well, you get the idea. And for the last 2 summers, I have been denying the stark truth: it just doesn't work that way. 'Resting harder' has only caused my condition to decline even more, and it breaks my heart. When I finally compared what I had been *planning* to do versus what I had actually been able to accomplish, I was forced to see my reality for what it is. *Intentions* are great. They can motive us to achieve such wonderful things, and they can nourish us even when we cannot immediately satisfy our goals. Our individual values, narratives, and sense of purpose make us who we are; and on this island in particular, I have watched all of us working in harmony, whether intentional or not.

My relapses have been increasing in duration and severity. This winter, I was unable to walk even short distances, form simple sentences, or see straight. For six weeks. Six straight weeks of not even being able to cook for myself (believe me, I tried, and it did not end well). It was sobering. What if I had

been alone on Waldron? No emergency MRIs or EEGs. No neurologist to explain what is happening to me, and no way to make immediate money, or even exist, that doesn't involve physical labor. We all know these restrictions about living here. In fact, it is part of what drew me here in the first place. Self-sufficiency has always been a high priority of mine. But I now find myself unable to take care of my own needs, and I must be somewhere closer to doctors, my family, and John, who has patiently and lovingly looked after me, and provided me with a quiet place to stay.

This article has been a really long way of saying that as much as I hate to do so, I am being forced to cut my losses, and move towards a more sustainable future- just in a different way than I had imagined. I still believe in Waldron; It is my body that has become the phantom, going in and out of any real existence at random.

And because I still so firmly believe that Waldron is a place of safety, peace, and opportunity, I am not giving up on that dream. I am just hoping that someone else might benefit from it even half as greatly as I have.

That is why I am offering an opportunity to sublet my cabin. It sits on 5 acres, has running water, electricity, and it even has internet. Though it may be better suited to a single occupant or a couple, I think a family with a child could easily adapt it to their needs. It has been the perfect 'starter homestead' for me- my body just hasn't been the perfect participant for the lifestyle. I am now into my sixth year living on



Waldron, and I hope it won't be my last. But until my body can heal, I want to see the Mail Bay leasehold being used for a better and higher purpose than it currently is.

If you, or someone you think would be a productive addition to our community are interested, please contact me. I'm in the Waldron directory. I will be back in the spring to reprise my work in the orchards, and I would be more than happy to connect with anybody who would be a good fit. It may even work out that I can overlap with my successors for a time to ensure they are comfortable with taking on the quirky systems. I plan on being here until the end of this harvest season, but after that, I have no idea what my body and life will do, and that scares me. One comforting thought though, is that I might see someone else achieve my dream, even if I can't.

It is not the strongest of the species that survive, not the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.

~Charles Darwin

Garbage & Recycling

by Joanne Colman Wester

Plan Ahead! The CLT will sponsor both a recycling and garbage run in the spring. Last fall we lost money on our garbage run, so expect to pay \$15 per bag to help us cover costs this time. Please separate aluminum cans and recyclables from other trash as we pay less (or nothing) at the landfills for recyclables.

We are hoping to take garbage to mainland landfill where dumping costs are cheaper. Recycling is free on the mainland as well, but all recyclables must be separated as follows:

Aluminum cans: Must be empty and clean.

Cardboard: The transfer station accepts corrugated cardboard only. It must be empty, with no liners or contents and flattened.

Glass bottles and jars: Must be empty and clean, without lids, separated by color (green, brown, and clear). No dishware, pottery, window glass, or mirrors allowed.

Mixed Paper: Must be dry and clean! This includes clean and dry advertising mail, envelopes, cereal boxes, soda & beer boxes, phone books, paper egg cartons, school papers, paper sacks, and magazines. Remember no pizza boxes or other food-contaminated paper is allowed

Newspapers: Must be clean and without kitty litter or excessively soiled.

Plastics: Clean plastic bottles and jugs ONLY. Please no dairy tubs (yogurt, cottage cheese, salsa, cool whip, etc.), clamshells, bakery trays or plastic bags.

Tin Cans and Scrap metal: Please remove all plastic or other non-metal materials from your scrap before disposal.

On Orcas, recycling is currently co-mingled (except for aluminum cans.) This is easier for us, but has less value, so co-mingled recycling is charged @ \$4 per bag or \$200 per ton. Co-mingling is easy, and the list of recyclables is listed in the side box. However, **no opaque bags are allowed.** Recyclables must be in clear bags, paper bags or cardboard boxes. For our recycling run, this adds another step to the offloading process at the Orcas end if we must open every opaque garbage bag.

Watch for announcements in spring when we set date for garbage run and determine where we will be taking our recyclables so you will know how to sort. In either case, keep your aluminum cans separate as these are recycled separately at all locations.

Hazardous Waste Round-Up

Saturday, May 20, 11-2
@ the Fire Shelter

Accepted Items

- *Oil-based paints/stains/wood preservatives
- *Gasoline, kerosene, alcohols
- *Auto/boat repair products
- *Chemical cleaning supplies/solvents/thinners
- *Aerosols/adhesives
- *Contaminated motor oil or antifreeze
- *Light bulbs (all types)
- *Batteries (all types)

Recycling Guidelines in San Juan County

ACCEPTABLE CO-MINGLED:

- *Mail, junkmail, envelopes
- *Magazines and catalogs
- *Newspapers and inserts
- *Phone, paperback and hardcover books
- *Office paper
- *Shredded paper (tied in clear plastic bag)
- *Paper food boxes and egg cartons
- *Paper grocery bags
- *Paper cups (clean and empty)
- *Paper milk and juice cartons (rinsed)
- *Juice and soymilk boxes (rinsed)
- *Yogurt cups (rinsed)
- *Frozen food boxes (rinsed)
- *Plastic bottles and jugs (rinsed, labels ok, NO caps, dome tops or straws)
- *Plastic dairy containers (rinsed)
- *Glass bottles and jars (rinsed, all colors, caps and lids OK)
- *Aluminum cans, foil and trays
- *Tin cans (clean and without plastic)
- *Scrap metal (size limit 2' x 2')
- *Produce plastic bags (tied in clear plastic bag)

Co-mingled recycling may NOT be dumped in sealed, opaque plastic bags. Collect your recyclables in cardboard boxes or paper grocery bags. Plastic bags must be opened and dumped in the recycle bin.

UNACCEPTABLE CO-MINGLED:

- *Prescription Vials
- *Styrofoam Packing, Packing Peanuts
- *Aerosol Cans
- *Light bulbs, Fluorescent Light Bulbs
- *Knives or Scissors
- *Ceramics or Dishes
- *Toxic Containers (oil, antifreeze, pesticide, etc.)
- *Mirrors & Window Glass
- *Confetti
- *Small Kitchen Appliances
- *Plastic Potting Containers
- *Paint
- *Food-Soiled Paper/Plastic/Cardboard

2016 CLTWI Annual Financial Report

prepared by Joanne Colman Wester

INCOME:

Leasehold Payments	\$6,000.00
Membership Dues, Donations, & Craft Fair fees	\$3,114.03
Garbage Collection fees	\$904.00
Transfer from petty cash	\$123.33
Interest on Savings Accounts	\$1.40
TOTAL 2016 INCOME	\$10,142.76

EXPENSES:

Mortgage payments	\$4,676.64
Property tax on Commons	\$35.83
State Nonprofit registration	\$10.00
Postage	\$30.08
Newsletter printing	\$59.46
Checks	\$31.55
Website fee	\$207.75
Craft Fair supplies	\$390.58
Ice cream Maker & portable freezer	\$1,035.15
Garbage run	\$1,153.27
TOTAL 2016 EXPENSES	\$7,730.23

CASH ASSETS AS OF 12/31/16

Petty Cash	\$150.00
WA Federal Savings Account	\$1,604.74
Islanders Checking Account	\$19,877.33
Islanders Savings Account	\$252.13
TOTAL CASH ASSETS	\$21,884.20

REAL PROPERTY ASSETS AS OF 12/31/16

Full ownership of Commons

Tax Parcel 371231003000

Ground ownership of Tax Parcel 371141001000

Ground ownership of Tax Parcel 371314004000
(with a mortgage we're paying)



Waldron News

Passages

John Orleman 11/10/39-10/6/16
(photo by Patrick Orleman)

Helen Wade 3/13/20-12/6/16

Weddings

Rheanna Bensel &
Zephyr Delahunt
July 30, 2016

Debby Corr & Kent Bush
December 2016



(photo by Rafael Soldi)

Real Science on Waldron

by Joanne Colman Wester

After eight years of citizen science projects on Waldron, scientist Russel Barsh is ready to share some interesting trends. We seem to have been correct that Chinook outmigration rises and falls with the El Nino - La Nina weather cycle (ENSO), a decadal cycle. There is also strong evidence that Chinook will not survive global warming at our latitude (but maybe farther north). A second finding is that for some reason, herring are helped and sandlance hurt by warming seas. We saw the first big drop in sandlance abundance in 2015 and they've stayed down. Bad news for seabirds, and all this of course is bad for the resident orcas, although the transients appear to be doing fine. The good news, if any, and it's not from our projects but from other researchers, is that anchovies are moving into the Salish Sea and bringing humpback whales with them.

Come hear all the details and other findings on **Sunday, February 26th, 11:45-3:30**, at Waldron School. Potluck lunch will precede presentation.

Russel Barsh is director for Kwiáht, a nonprofit conservation biology laboratory in and for the San Juan Islands of Washington State. Kwiáht, was founded in 2006 by the late Samish Tribal leader Kenneth Hansen. Kwiáht is a Coast Salish word that means a place that has been kept physically clean and spiritually healthy. Kwiáht projects combine the latest scientific research methods in ecology, biochemistry and genetics with respect for indigenous values of place-centered human responsibility for life processes.

Community Calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
Sunday, February 26	Citizen Science Potluck with Russel Barsh
Sunday, April 16	Easter Egg Hunt, Potluck & Softball Game
Monday, May 1 st	May Day Pole & Potluck
Monday, May 15 th	All Firewise grant volunteer work documentation due to Vicki Heater
Saturday, May 20	Hazardous Waste Round-Up
Sunday, May 21	Waldron School Plant Sale
Sunday, May 28	Third Annual Peter Alexander Memorial Ivy Pull
Friday, June 9	Waldron School Graduation

Is There a Lesson Here?

shared by Bill Appel from BBC 2/1/17

This Scottish Island Is Coming Back to Life

by Karen Gardiner

A walk around Papa Westray – a four-square-mile island on the northern edge of the Orkney archipelago in Scotland – is a walk through history.

From the 5,600-year-old [Knap of Howar](#), northern Europe's oldest standing house, you can walk up the coast to [St Boniface Kirk](#). One of the oldest Christian sites in the north of Scotland, the church's graveyard is filled with lichen-covered headstones indicating generations of families and shipwrecked sailors. Further on at the wind-battered northernmost point, where the Atlantic crashes into the North Sea and daunting cliffs are deeply ridged from centuries of erosion, a stone cairn marks the site where Britain's last great auk – the now extinct 'northern penguin' – was killed in 1813.

But Papay, as the island is locally known, is not lost in the past. Thanks to its forward-thinking residents, it is thriving.

Once home to a community of 392, Papay's population fell to an all-time low of 54 in the late 1990s. In a 1998 National Geographic article on Orkney, Bill Bryson wrote of the depopulation of Scotland's islands that "nowhere has the decline been felt more acutely than on Papa Westray".

But while other islands continue to struggle, Papay has rebounded. At the last census in 2011, the population was recorded as 90: a 40% increase which merited the expansion of the island's school and fire station.

After the island's population fell to its lowest point in 1999, the [Papay Development Trust](#) was set up to explore new ways to retain islanders – too often drawn away for better opportunities elsewhere – and to attract newcomers.

According to Julian Branscome, the trust's secretary, one key to Papay's rising population is that locals have been willing to sell their empty houses to newcomers. On other islands fighting depopulation, he said, many houses have been vacant for two or three decades, but their owners won't sell them in case a family member one day returns.

The Papay trust, on the other hand, was able to find homes for settlers to buy. Still, a lack of rental accommodations remained a problem, so the trust bought the island's former doctor's house as 'gateway accommodation': people could stay there to try out living on Papay for six to 18 months. In late 2015, the trust purchased another cottage – occupied in the summer by the [RSPB](#) warden who watches over birdlife – to rent on a monthly basis during winter. In a sign of interest in the scheme (and the island), both were empty for barely a week over the course of the last year.

The result is that around three-quarters of the island's population are now 'incomers'. While this could cause concern that Papay's cultural identity might be diluted, as Anne Hourston, who was born on the island and has lived here all her life, said: "It's much better to have somebody here who wants to be here than an indigenous person who doesn't." Indeed, it is sometimes incomers who dig deep into Papay's history to uncover its lost traditions.

Since 2011 the artists Tsz Man Chan and Ivanov have produced the annual [Papay Gyro Nights](#) festival inspired by the ancient Papay tradition of the Night of the Gyros, which was celebrated on the first full moon of February for a thousand years until it ended in 1914. The new festival fuses the old tradition of torchbearers and bonfires with contemporary art shows and experimental films screened in derelict buildings across Papay.

This year, the festival will be held in Bergen, Norway, rather than Papay. That is partly because the revitalisation of the island has created an odd problem: with the number of newcomers, there are no longer enough derelict buildings in which to host exhibits.

But while this remote island has had little trouble attracting retirees who enjoy Papa Westray's beauty and serenity, a limited job market means it still struggles to draw younger settlers. "There are really no full-time jobs on the island," said Houston, who, most days, can be

spotted delivering mail when not attending to the eight-seater plane at the tiny airfield or looking after the maintenance of the schoolhouse. "If you want to be fully employed, you need to have several jobs and hope that they work together." Internet access has opened up opportunities for people who can work at home, but it has its limitations. "If we had some decent broadband speeds," said her husband Alistair, also a native islander and the chair of the trust, "it could make a big difference."

People have long been drawn here. In the Norse era from the 8th to 15th Centuries, Vikings were lured by the island's fertile soil – recent excavations have uncovered two Viking burials, and the island is mentioned in the [Orkneyinga Saga](#). In medieval times, pilgrims came to [St Tredwell's Chapel](#) seeking cures for eye afflictions. Bucket-list baggers are drawn by the opportunity to take the world's shortest scheduled flight, which departs from Westray and lasts less than two minutes, and birdwatchers flock to see Arctic terns return to Papay each May.

Jonathan Ford first visited the island to see where the last great auk lived. He soon found himself drawn into local life and even invited to dinners with islanders. For the last two summers, he has lived on Papay working as the island's ranger, a new post created in 2015 to expand tourism to the island. He takes visitors on [tours](#) around Papay and is one of three skippers newly trained to drive a boat, purchased by the trust in 2016, to take visitors to the [Holm of Papay](#) – a tiny adjacent, uninhabited island that is home to three 5,000-year-old chambered cairns. The Holm was previously only accessible through a favour from a local fisherman.

In 2016, Ford and the artist Saoirse Higgins launched the contemporary art festival [Øy: A Festival of Island Magnetism](#) in the old kelp store (recently restored by the trust). It took place over the same weekend as Papay's traditional Muckle Supper, and this annual feast of Holmie lamb – from the Holm's seaweed-eating sheep – and traditional music was listed on the festival programme. "We didn't want the festival to become something split off from things that go on, on the island," Ford said. As a result, the same people who saw a contemporary art exhibition one day were taking part in traditional dancing the next.

The new energy on Papay is helping islanders in other ways, too. The renovations of once-derelict homes not only attract incomers who bolster the island's wider economy, but also provide work for Alistair, the island's builder. The launch of boat trips to the Holm means additional income and new skills – plus incentive to stay – for the newly trained boat skippers.

The school is another example of the interdependence of the new generation and long-time residents. Eight children, up to 12 years of age, attend school on Papay. (When they are from 12 to 16 years of age, they will travel daily to the bigger island of Westray by boat). The school's existence attracts other families with children – which, in turn, helps keep the school open. But it also provides jobs for the islanders.

Alistair points to the nearby island of North Ronaldsay as an example of the risk Papay could face. North Ronaldsay's sole schoolchild will soon leave, meaning the school will have to close. "So that's quite a few jobs gone," Alistair said, listing a few: "the cook, janitor, secretary..."

Papay, Alistair said, remains fragile. "We are very fortunate that we got the population to rise, but you can never be complacent," he said. "It could go the opposite way with just one family leaving." Still, there is a sense here that the islanders won't let Papay fail. Jennifer Foley, who is the trust's development officer and who runs the island's sole guesthouse [Beltane House](#), has lived on Papay for almost 20 years. She and her family were living abroad on a work contract when Papay's population hit its critical level. When the school looked in danger of closing, she said, the family decided that they would finish the contract early and return if necessary. Papa Westray's continued population growth may not be certain. But something else is: the islanders here will do what they must to keep Papay thriving.

Community Land Trust of Waldron Island

Please renew or join NOW!

Annual individual memberships run January - January

____ Renew \$15 ____ Join \$25 Please write checks to CLTWI or pay online with PayPal.
Membership amount \$ _____ Donation \$ _____ Work Trade _____
Earmark donations for ____ Commons ____ General Fund ____ Other: _____

Please check if you are interested: ____ Automatic monthly donations ____ Estate Planning

Contact Information:

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Thank you for your support!

Community Land Trust of Waldron Island, POB 11, Waldron, WA 98297, [Waldron CLT.org](http://WaldronCLT.org)

The CLTWI is a 501©(3) non-profit organization.
Donations are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Community Land Trust of Waldron Island
PO Box 11
Waldron, WA 98297
waldronlandtrust@gmail.com

Our Mission

The mission of the Community Land Trust of Waldron Island is to be a resource for and provide access to affordable homes and land for low-income Waldron residents while cultivating economic sustainability and nurturing land stewardship, thus enriching the entire community.

Newsletter Contributors:

Photographers include: Steve & Linnea Bensel, Chelsea Crooks, Pam Mills, Julia Mira, Patrick Orleman, & Rafael Soldi

Editing & Layout: Joanne Colman
Wester