

The Shetland Times

Founded in 1872

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Hurricane wreaks havoc as it sweeps across Shetland

Unhappy New Year as homes are blown apart

By Rob Fogg
Alistair Munro and
John-Brian Setrice

THE hurricane which hit Shetland on Hogmanay and New Year's Day left a trail of destruction throughout the isles. Houses, caravans, sheds and boats were destroyed, radar domes at RAF Saxa Vord were blown away, part of the Hillhead and Prince Alfred Street in Lerwick had to be closed off when the roof of the Methodist Church began to be ripped off and as *The Shetland Times* went to press many parts of Shetland were still without electricity.

Gusts of well over 100 miles an hour were recorded in the hurricane force winds at the Lerwick Observatory and meteorological offices at Sella Ness and Sumburgh. Steady 125 mph winds were reported at Muckle Flugga, with gusts reaching around 200 mph. Similar speeds were being reported offshore.

The meteorological office at Sumburgh Airport recorded their highest wind speeds since the office was set up in February 1978. A spokesman said average speeds of over 73 mph, hurricane force 12, were recorded on New Year's morning along with gusts of 108 mph.

Lerwick Observatory recorded violent storm force 11 winds in the town. The highest average speed of 70 mph was recorded between 1 am and 2 am on Wednesday, with gusts reaching 100 mph. The wind in Lerwick had died down to an average speed of around 35 mph yesterday morning.

The Sella Ness meteorological office recorded average speeds of 66 mph and gusts of 100 mph early on Wednesday. A spokesman said the winds were force 11 touching hurricane force 12 frequently. He said the forecast for the weekend and next week was for fresh to strong winds reaching gale force at times. He said it would get colder on Saturday and Sunday with more winds expected for next week.

Lerwick police were kept busy with storm damage reports.

The Hillhead and Prince Alfred Street were closed to traffic

because of the damage to the Methodist Church. Slates were blown off the roof and a window at the rear was smashed. The organ inside was also damaged.

Electricity cables in Lovers Loan and Hillhead were blown down. A house in Knab Road had its window blown in and a shed was blown against a house in Breiwick Road. The roof of the Old Brevik Hospital was damaged and a large wooden container was blown onto the road at the Sumburgh Social Club. A window at The Hillhead was smashed and a shed at Bigton was blown away. A window at the Wine Shop on Commercial Street was broken and an articulated trailer belonging to P&O Ferries at Holmsgarth was blown over and store doors were blown in.

A bus shelter roof at Swarthool was blown off, and roofs off a shed at North Ness and a house at Gremista were damaged. The roof at the Baltasound Police Station, Unst, was also damaged.

A hydro pole at Gardie House, Bressay, was broken and a workman's store at Kantersted, Sound, was badly damaged.

Houses, workshops, stores and sheds in Unst were damaged during the night, with a roof at RAF Saxa Vord being blown off. The garage doors at Mills Garage, in Baltasound, were damaged and an Unst woman was treated by a local doctor after injuring her head.

Slates flying off houses in Yell and Whalsay were also reported as well as some sheds blowing away. In Mossbank a car was reported damaged by flying debris and in Brae a house roof was blown off.

There was considerable damage in Dalsetter Wynd at Sumburgh. Slates were being blown off roofs causing damage to parked cars and a garage wall was blown down. Several restaurant windows



A scene of utter devastation . . . what was left of the Annsbrae Caravan Site on Wednesday morning.

Photo: Malcolm Younger

at the Sumburgh Hotel and cladding at the Sumburgh Airport Terminal was damaged.

The Coastguard helicopter was called out at 6.15 am to airlift 11 crew from the standby vessel *Veesea Sapphire*, which lost power 110 miles east of Lerwick. The helicopter arrived on scene at 7.05 am but decided to wait on the Ninian Central platform until daylight before attempting the airlift in 77 mph winds. At 9.13 am the *Veesea Sapphire* regained her power and steering. Another supply vessel, *Kaiburn*, took the *Veesea Sapphire* under

tow to Bergen, where they arrived at 6 pm. While the Coastguard helicopter was attending to the standby vessel a Sea King rescue helicopter from Lossiemouth was brought up to Shetland to provide back-up.

The Coastguard helicopter was scrambled again at 8.12 pm on Wednesday after another oil supply vessel, *Grampian Sprite*, began to list at a 15-20 degree angle 225 miles north-east of Lerwick. Bell helicopters from nearby oil rigs airlifted nine of the 12 crew and put pumps on board. The boat was then taken under

tow by the standby vessel *Edda Fram* and the Coastguard helicopter was stood down.

A Liberian tanker, *Noga*, was being observed by Shetland Coastguard early on Wednesday after reporting steering difficulty in hurricane winds and heavy sea swells 13 miles north of the Gruney Isle Light. The master of the 65,259 tonne tanker, with 30 people on board, later said he was happy with the situation and was making headway.

During the gales the standby vessels *Alexandra Tide* and *Seaboard Support* lost power and drifted. The *Alexandra Tide* later landed two injured men at Lerwick Harbour. Standby vessel *Grampian Quest* was towed into Lerwick Harbour at 10 am yesterday damaged.

Four oil rigs had reported parting cables and the semi-submersible flotel *Safe Supporter* was being towed to Norway after two anchor cables had parted and three other lost tension.

In Unst the wind wreaked havoc at RAF Saxa Vord.

Station Commander Nicholas Gordon said the station had suffered a lot of damage and that three of the radar domes which dominate the skyline had been blown away.

Yesterday morning station personnel were hoping to make their first trip up to the domes since the storm. Squadron Leader Gordon said the wind speed had meant it had been impossible until yesterday to actually climb the hill to inspect the damage.

The roof of one barracks had been blown off and a service family had had to be rehoused.

The power in Unst was still off yesterday morning. However, the RAF base was unaffected by this as it has its own generator.

Squadron Leader Gordon said that attempts were being made to link the RAF generator up to the

Hydro system in Unst to try and supply power to other parts of the island. He said they had managed to connect it up for a short time on Wednesday night and were hoping to get it back on again yesterday.

At Northside a replica sixareen, *Far Haaf*, was destroyed.

The vessel, which was part of Duncan Sandison's collection in his boat museum, was blown along with its trailer over a fence and through nearby fields.

The museum in the old Swedish Kirk has also been flattened. The building was lifted 20 feet in the air as storm force winds ripped through the isle. Other vessels in the museum have also been destroyed.

As *The Shetland Times* went to (Continued on page two)

STOP PRESS

THE council has issued the following emergency numbers: Lerwick 2114, 2995, 5264 and 3516. The housing department, social work department and construction department are working on an emergency only basis today.

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The chimney stack at Brei ick house in the South Road fell through the roof during the storm.

Photo: Malcolm Younger

The Shetland Times

Founded in 1872

Friday, 10th January, 1992. Issue No. 2

Price 38 pence

Hurricane claims two lives in Unst

TWO tourists who died on a hillside in Unst are the only known fatalities of the New Year hurricane which left a trail of destruction throughout the isles.

The shoeless body of transmitter engineer Mr David John Caseley (26), Bromsgrove, was found on Sunday a short distance from the site of a bird watching hut at Hermaness on a track leading to the main road. He appeared to have been struck on the head. The body of Ms Mary Catherine Buyers (22), Ontario, Canada, was found the following day.

The couple were thought to have been in the corrugated iron hut when it was torn apart

by 200mph winds in the early hours of the New Year at the Hermaness Nature Reserve.

Police, RAF personnel and coastguards from Baltasound Coastguard Rescue Company took part in the search for the woman.

Auxiliary coastguards, braving gale force winds and driving rain, used climbing equipment to recover the body of Ms Buyers from the foot of 60ft cliffs at Shorda Helier on Monday. The wreckage of the hut was scattered from its original location half-a-mile from the clifftop to the edge.

Auxiliary coastguard Lowrie Robertson said: "The man was along the track a bit. He

seemed to have some sense of direction. As for the woman, it's too horrible to think about. But she probably did not know what hit her. It looks like they were in their sleeping bags when it happened."

The first clue that something was wrong came when crofter Peter Sinclair noticed the couple's car had been parked for several days near the nature reserve. He found a note in the vehicle saying that they would be back on New Year's day. He headed for the hut and found the body of the man before alerting emergency services. The Coastguard rescue helicopter took the body to Lerwick later in the day.

The couple had already had a foretaste of the power of the elements in Shetland. On 28th December, the day after they arrived in the islands, they were seen wrestling with a tent near Ronas Hill.

Crofter Drew Ratter of Ollaberry said he thought that the weather was too poor to be camping and offered to let them stay the night in his holiday caravan, an offer which they readily accepted.

He said: "They were a very friendly couple. They spent some time in the house during the evening chatting to us and left early the next day. It was quite a shock to learn later that they were the people killed at Hermaness."

MP backs damage plea by council

WHILE Shetland's leaders are striving for Government help following the New Year hurricane, Scottish Under-Secretary Lord James Douglas Hamilton has not considered a request for him to visit the isles because he is on holiday.

Isles MP Jim Wallace, who is in Shetland for meetings with the council, wrote to Lord James this week to try and get cash for emergency damage work.

The repair bill facing Shetland Islands Council will be at least "several million pounds", according to housing director Marjorie Bain, while the private sector will be faced with a "substantially higher" bill. The department hopes to have an estimate of emergency repair costs today.

Earlier SIC convener Edward Thomason wrote to the under-secretary to ask him to visit the islands. He has had no reply yet.

A Government contingency known as the Bellwin Scheme could provide money for repairs and the cost of calling out workers and services over the New Year. It does not cover capital costs such as rebuilding or the purchase of new equipment.

The scheme has only been initiated three times in Scotland, once after a storm in the Hebrides last January. It also provided money for councils in South-east England following the "Great Storm" of 1987.

The decision on whether or not Shetland will get help from the scheme rests with the Chief Secretary to the Treasury David Mellor and first the case must be accepted by Scottish Minister for Local Government Allan Stewart.

SIC chief executive Malcolm Green has ordered reports from each department head on the extent of the damage. These will provide the substance for the

council's case for help. The social work and housing departments are appealing for information from all those affected by the hurricane.

Housing and construction officials and the council's insurers have been touring the isles assessing damage. Workmen have been making temporary repairs with work in Lerwick well under way but they are making slower progress in the remoter areas.

Extra skips are being provided at the request of the communities and people who require large amounts of debris to be removed should contact the environmental health department.

The housing, social work and construction departments have been open to emergency calls since the New Year and the social work department have been counselling those shocked by the loss or damage to their homes.

At least 500 council houses, 20 per cent of stock, were damaged on New Year morning. A continuing survey of the private sector confirms that the worst damage was done in the North Isles.

Twenty eight individuals and families — 21 of those at Annabre — have been made homeless. Eighteen of them have been placed in emergency accommodation at the Stoney Hill Hostel or in bed and breakfasts. Others have made their own arrangements.

Ms Bain praised the work of those who turned out to deal with the emergency in hurricane force winds. She said: "Given the extraordinary circumstances of the time of year and weather conditions the response of the council workers was magnificent, particularly those who were hauled out of their beds in the early hours of New Year's morning. I'd like to mention the construction department, my own staff, social

work and the back-up of the emergency services and the Hydro board.

"We were particularly pleased with the sympathetic response of the media and grateful to *The Shetland Times* for stopping their print run and putting in the emergency numbers."

Ms Bain will urge councillors to scrap Annabre as a caravan site at a housing meeting next Friday. She will also recommend that former Annabre residents be given first choice of the majority of new council chalets to become available at phase two of Hoofields in March. The housing department are considering the long let of holiday accommodation as a temporary solution to the problem.

Residents were given an opportunity to identify possessions salvaged from the debris at St Magnus Church hall last night. At a meeting on Monday they were told that it was the intention to offer them first choice at Hoofields and were issued questionnaires to help sort out matters of ownership and insurance.

Ms Bain added that several caravan dwellers had been uninsured and three of them had been refused insurance by local companies who considered them a bad risk.

Crisis loans are available from the DSS but the criteria for awards are so narrow that it is feared most people will be ineligible. Another source of help for those who have suffered loss could be the charitable trust via the social work department.

In addition to the extra spending incurred by the hurricane Shetland is facing a 15 per cent cut in revenue support grant and sizeable cuts in housing consent for this year.



Even the organ was damaged in Lerwick's Methodist Church on the Hillhead. In the background is the window which blew in, causing damage to the main roof structure. Les Hann, George Anderson and Jimmy Cogle survey the damage. Photo: Malcolm Younger

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Praise for emergency workers

TRIBUTE was paid this week to the council workers, Hydro-Electric staff, police and emergency services who helped deal with the aftermath of the New Year hurricane.

However, at a full meeting of Shetland Islands Council on Wednesday, there was criticism of the Government for its apparent lack of concern.

Convener Edward Thomason said: "I have been impressed by

the way that our staff in housing, construction and social work responded to the challenge, and in particular the work that has been done by the Hydro Board."

Yell South councillor Stuart Gray praised the staff of the council's Direct Labour Organisation. "These boys were called out first thing on New Year's morning and they have been out ever since," he said.

Twageos councillor the Rev

Lewis Smith paid tribute to the police and fire services who dealt with the havoc wreaked at the Annabre Caravan Site. However, he was less happy with the apparent lack of reaction from the Government to the islands' misfortune. "I can't help but feel if we had been in the South-east there would have been ministerial visits by now," he said.

Unst councillor Joan Easton said that in her area she was

becoming more and more aware of the potential economic problem caused by damage to premises where people made their living.

Yell North and Fetlar councillor Andrew Williamson said a farmer in his area had contacted him to say he had suffered so much damage he could face bankruptcy. "I would make a plea that the full gravity of the situation is appreciated," said Mr Williamson.

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Aftermath: time to count

By Peter Johnson

NINE DAYS after the New Year hurricane the full extent of the destruction wreaked throughout Shetland is becoming apparent.

The North Isles suffered the brunt of the wind and many people were in agreement that they had never seen anything like it. Some of the most incredible damage occurred at the early warning station at RAF Saxa Vord. Hotels, houses, a museum, stores and a medical centre were also ripped apart.

Personnel clearing the remains of three giant "golf ball" radar domes and a 100ft radio tower at the top of the hill this week were hampered by high winds. A 35-40mph safety limit meant only emergency work was being undertaken on Monday morning.

Pieces of the ray-domes are scattered on the hillside beside the station and pose a menace whenever the wind rises. The damage is estimated to cost "into the hundreds of thousands of pounds".

Station commander Squadron Leader Nicholas Gordon said that operations had been affected but national security had not been endangered. He would not say if the radars which were inside the domes, which form part of the UK's early warning system, had ceased to function.

He said the domes had been the "best on the market" when they were built, but had been totally incapable of withstanding gusts estimated at up to 200mph. The roof of a married quarters and a spectator shelter at the Astro-turf pitch were also destroyed and most buildings at the station suffered roof damage. In 1960, 170mph gusts demolished a radar at Saxa Vord.

Hagdale Lodge Hotel was destroyed. Owner Tom Ellis's other property, the Baltasound Hotel, was severely damaged. Two wings of the lodge disintegrated and blew into the sea half-a-mile away. The rest of the 60-bed building was punctured by flying wood and glass and will be demolished.

Mr Ellis said: "I would describe it as a disaster. Fortunately everybody was away for Christmas. If that had not been the case there would certainly have been very serious injuries at Hagdale. The pieces of wood that were flying around were just beyond belief."

Temporary repairs were being done to the Baltasound Hotel on



Duncan Sandison, Baltasound, with what was left of his sixreen *Far Haaf*, which was blown across a field and into the fence.
Photo: Malcolm Younger

Tuesday, the first day in which weather permitted work. A 10ft by eight foot section of roof was ripped off the lounge bar exposing it to the elements. Slates disappeared from the public bar roof and part of the flat central roof disappeared. Workmen have been unable to switch on power for safety reasons.

At Baltasound Airport a portable cabin which stored medical and emergency equipment was destroyed. The nearby terminal building was virtually unscathed.

At the south end of Unst huge roofs were ripped off farm buildings owned by Brian Hunter. The roofs of the silo and byre were spread "in complete smush" for hundreds of yards to the sea of the buildings. Remarkably, none of the cattle in the byre were hurt.

A Sundraquoy woman, Mrs Ella Cluness, had a lucky escape when the chimney stock of her house crashed through the roof and landed on her bed. She was visiting relatives at the time and has since moved in to a new house.

A nineteenth century store at North Side, Baltasound, owned by Alex Sandison & Sons was virtually destroyed. One half of the 150ft long Nissen-style office and store had the roof torn off and a wall collapsed underneath. Now the building will be demolished, leaving a severe

shortage of storage space on the island.

Mrs Lexie McMeechan, Midgarth, Baltasound, had to abandon her house after it was damaged by corrugated iron sheets from the North Side building.

The old Swedish church which housed the Baltasound boat museum owned by Duncan Sandison was completely demolished and two of the exhibits were wrecked. The first boat to compete successfully as an unballasted maid, *Maid of Thule*, built by Mr Sandison, was blown 200 yards from the building and a 30ft sixern travelled 230 yards before landing upside down on top of a straining post. Five other boats escaped relatively undamaged.

Ruined

Frank and Margaret Peterson, Muness, are fighting a losing battle to keep water from ruining their house after the back of the roof ended up in the sea.

Mr Peterson, who moved into his family home a year ago, said: "Half the house has been ruined by water and we're still assessing the damage. If there is any more wind like that the whole roof will go. We have no power and are living in darkness."

A 12 by seven metre greenhouse built by Mr Peterson last year, which provided his full-time employment, was also devastated. "It looks as if an Exocet hit it. There's just the frame and a heap of twisted pipes in the middle," he said.

Mrs Mary Peterson, who lives nearby, had a caravan blown away. It also ended up in the sea. Throughout the isle roofs, sheds, cars and other items were wind damaged.

Yell suffered extensive damage with roofs, sheds and portable cabins blown away. At West Yell the complete roof of a newly-built house owned by Mr George Arthur was lifted 50 yards uphill and across the A 968 before dropping to earth. One wall and parts of the gables were destroyed.

Also at West Yell a 10 foot piece of roof was blown from a house built last year by Mr William Williamson. The inside of the house suffered water damage.

Half the roof tiles disappeared from a new house at Cullivoe belonging to Mr William John Anderson. The inside of the house is also said to be water damaged.

At Cullivoe several outbuildings of a croft belonging to Mr Cliff Whitney were blown away. His house, workshop and stable was also damaged. A mobile home converted into a hen house was reduced to matchwood and prize bantams inside simply disappeared. He also lost his entire stock of sheep feed.

Nightmare

Mr Whitney, who was out at 5am trying to rescue his goats from debris, said: "It was a bloody nightmare. I lost almost everything." In the storm a fortnight ago a 45ft mobile home belonging to Mr Whitney was smashed to pieces.

At Mid Yell Shetland Norse Fish Farm, which lost part of a feeding system and around 10,000 1kg fish in the gale before Christmas, escaped damage after

cages were moved to a more protected location.

Council workmen were sorting through the rubble of Annsbrae Caravan Site, Lerwick, this week where 21 caravans had to be abandoned. One man continues to stay there despite the lack of electricity and official advice to leave.

Eight caravans were thrown through the air or demolished where they stood. Practically all the others were damaged. The workmen have been separating personal possessions from the wreckage as they clear the site.

Only two people received serious injuries. Mr Jeffrey Brooks is still in hospital with chest injuries and another man had a broken leg. Many people abandoned their caravans prior to the peak of the devastation. For others, only luck saved them.

Mr Leslie Barclay was holding a New Year Day party in his uninsured caravan, the lowest on the site when, it was struck by an airborne neighbour.

"About 1.30 am we heard a whistling through the air, then the windows exploded. It sounded like a jumbo jet taking off. We managed to get out after five or 10 minutes and there was a sea of caravans around us."

Mr Barclay and several of his 14 guests were cut by flying glass and two were concussed and taken to hospital.

He said: "It was a miracle nobody was badly hurt or even killed. No one was facing the window or they would have had a face full of glass. There were small pieces stuck in my back."

He is now staying with friends and is paying back a £13,000 loan for his caravan.

The roof of Lerwick Methodist Church, Hillhead, will almost certainly have to be replaced. The north side of the roof slipped seven inches and the frame was severely damaged. Daylight can now be seen through the peak of the roof. Insurance surveyors were assessing the damage this week. A Telecom van and a nearby window were smashed by slates falling from the church.

The Rev Alan Warrell is hopeful that the organ, worth

£80,000, which was badly damaged by a flying window, is repairable.

He said: "It will be business as usual, although we will have to change location. Other churches have been extremely helpful by offering alternative venues for meetings."

Barriers on the Hillhead were lifted on Tuesday although Prince Alfred Street remains closed to traffic.

At Brevik House, South Road, a chimney fell through the roof and came to rest on iron girders supporting a water tank. Workmen dismantling the structure may also demolish the other chimney on the building.

Other houses and buildings in Lerwick had slates and cladding blown off and sheds and portable cabins were destroyed. Windows in several houses were broken by flying objects.

The west coast of Northmavine was also severely hit, although damage was done throughout the whole area. Owner of The Booth Jan Morgan described her pub "as if a bomb had hit it". The car park was washed away and the roofs of the house, cooperage and pub were damaged.

Struggle

She added that given the age and type of the buildings it was going to be a tremendous struggle to get the pub into a state where it was fit to be opened for the 1992 season.

The St Magnus Bay Hotel, 100 yards up the hill, suffered structural damage estimated at around £350,000. The front wall of the dining room moved out and the roof of the flat where proprietors Peter and Adrienne Titcombe live shifted. The kitchen and boiler room moved on their foundations and the chimney stalk will have to be demolished. The hotel is still open and only one room is totally unusable.

The roof of a house owned by Mr John Jamieson, Hillswick, lost over 300 tiles. It was also damaged in the gale two weeks ago.

Six wooden salmon cages at Aqua Farms' Hamar Voe site near Hillswick were damaged with the loss of between 5000 to 10,000



Saxa Vord CO Nicholas Gordon holds a piece of the damaged radome which left the radar in the background exposed to the elements.
Photo: Malcolm Younger

STOP TO THINK

"Honesty is the best policy, but he who acts on that principle is not an honest man."

Archbishop Richard Whately (1787-1863)

Tide Tables

High water times for Lerwick and Scalloway for the week commencing Friday, 10th January. All times are G.M.T.

LERWICK		SCALLOWAY	
Friday	01.54 13.53	Friday	00.04 12.03
Saturday	02.31 14.31	Saturday	00.41 12.41
Sunday	03.12 15.13	Sunday	01.22 13.23
Monday	03.59 16.04	Monday	02.09 14.14
Tuesday	04.58 17.11	Tuesday	03.08 15.21
Wednesday	06.14 18.39	Wednesday	04.24 16.49
Thursday	07.31 20.01	Thursday	05.41 18.11

Tidal predictions for Lerwick and Scalloway have been computed and supplied by The Hydrographer of the Navy and are Crown Copyright

WEATHER FORECAST

From the Met. Office, Sella Ness

General situation: High pressure extending north-east across Scotland is edging south. This is allowing Atlantic frontal troughs to move into the north of the Shetland area.

Forecast for today: Cloudy with periods of rain and drizzle, heavy at times in the north. Maximum temperatures rising to 7°C (45°F) and not falling much tonight. Strong to gale force south-west winds.

Outlook for the weekend: Milder than normal with clear periods and a few showers but strong south-west winds at times.

Salmon farmers are badly hit

SALMON farms suffered at least £500,000 loss in damaged cages, equipment, boats and lost fish in the hurricane.

Shetland Salmon Farmers' Association secretary Jimmy Moncrieff estimated that the total would be even higher when the final results of a survey come in from island salmon farms.

He said: "For the companies that have lost fish and cages and had direct financial loss it's very serious. Some of the smaller ones can ill afford it."

He added that it was still too

early to say if any of the smaller ones would go to the wall as a result of the destruction.

Farms in the Burra area were the worst hit by the south-westerly winds. Cliftlaks Ltd lost six cages and 18,000 smolts and had another three cages damaged. Southern Harvester lost 3400 fish. Punds Voe Salmon lost four cages and had others damaged and Shetland Sea Farms had lost and damaged cages.

On the West Side Sandsound Salmon had a workboat destroyed and Hallmark Hatchery in

Whalsay had a food store broken, storage tank destroyed and lost 1000 fish.

Other salmon farm damage is reported in the main hurricane story on these pages.

Mr Moncrieff attributed the "relatively little" damage the Shetland farms had suffered in the extreme seas to sound moorings and added that many in the west coast of Norway had been completely wiped out on New Year's day.

Information on damage to salmon farms and land agriculture

was requested by SIC director of research and development Jack Burgess at a meeting of the salmon farming working group on Tuesday. The report will go with those from other council departments to provide an overview of the damage throughout Shetland.

Mr Moncrieff said later: "We don't want to be treated in isolation. That would be wrong. The proper way is for us to be co-ordinated and that would be the right way to approach the Government."

cost and clear up debris

smolts worth up to £40,000. The cages are thought to be repairable.

Foula, which in the past has experienced some of the most violent storms in Shetland, also had "by far the worst wind in anyone's living memory".

In an isle where houses are built to withstand the buffeting of hurricane-force squalls, byres, barns, and sheds were de-roofed, dykes were blown down and cars rolled over.

The roof of crofter John Holbourn's tiny generator shed was ripped off with five hundredweight of concrete attached. It sailed 50 yards before hitting the ground 10 yards short of his house at the north end of the isle.

Traumatic

Mr Holbourn said: "You literally could not have gone outside or you would have been gone. It was all a bit traumatic but we were very lucky that there was no major damage done to dwelling houses and no injuries."

At Ham a house owned by Ross Gear had part of the roof ripped off and the roofs of all the outbuildings there disappeared without trace. Just up the road, an imploding window at the Haa narrowly missed Vaila Holbourn when it was struck by airborne debris.

Further to the north-east Papa Stour suffered relatively little damage though farmer Ted Gray and his family came home from first footing to see their caravan rolling downhill to the sea. The wind also lifted and smashed a Shetland Model boat.

On Fetlar roofs and outbuildings were damaged and a caravan belonging to Charlie Thomason, Hubie, which was held down by half-a-ton of concrete, was hurled over a wall and the single track road without touching either.

Heavy seas washed infill from behind concrete blocks supporting timberwork at Oddsta ferry terminal and from around the base of the brakewater. According to director of construction Joe Gray the terminal remains fully operational.

Damage in the rest of Shetland was more scattered, though at Weathersta, Brae, a trail of destruction was left as sheds and garages were wrecked. At Busta, Ivor Hay's dog returned home later on New Year's day after having disappeared in its kennel. The porch of the Brae Hotel fell off and a stripped car at the Brae garage was blown across the road.

Loading of tankers at Sullom Voe Oil Terminal was suspended for some time when wind speeds rose above 30 knots. Aside from that ports and harbours department operations were unaffected.

In the terminal itself the power station, already partially denuded by the pre-Christmas gales, had more cladding ripped off. A door at the main store was blown in and extra staff were called to the site to clear up damage.

In Reawick a Shetland Model boat broke its moorings and was washed ashore and a car was rolled onto its roof.

At Vaila Sound Salmon, Walls, two wooden cages containing smolts broke in half and around 5000 fish escaped.

A garage at Bigton belonging to Mr Johny Morrison was completely destroyed. One of the three cars inside was squashed by a collapsing concrete wall but a tractor was left unscathed. Bigton farmhouse, a listed building owned by Jim Budge, lost slates from the roof and left a nearby sheep shed looking like a pepper pot. Thirty asbestos sheets and much of the house slates need replacing.

Road turning places at Westing, Unst, and the old Mossbank pier were washed out by the sea. The Westing turning place was totally destroyed and will cost an estimated £15,000 to replace.

Several road huts belonging to the department were overturned and one in Unst vanished entirely. Council plant throughout the islands had windows smashed and various buildings had roof damage. A heavy power screen was blown on its side and damaged at the Scord quarry, Scalloway.

At least 40 street lights were damaged but the tally is not complete. Five cattle grid gates were destroyed in the north and in Unst the concrete parapets of two grids were flattened. Nineteen road signs have also been reported damaged and 18 bus shelters throughout the isles were damaged or completely blown away.

Flooded

Most of the fishing fleet was tied up over the festive season, but several standby vessels were damaged. Manager of Malakoff and Moore's shipyard in Lerwick, Allan Gould, said they had repaired five boats: the *Grampian Quest* was badly damaged — her wheelhouse was stove in and her rescue boat damaged. The repairs were sufficient to allow her to return to Aberdeen. *Seaboard Skua* had her wheelhouse windows broken; *Grampian Sprite* had bulwark damage and her survivor accommodation was flooded; *Seaboard Snipe* lost her mast and *Grampian Star* had her fast rescue boats damaged.

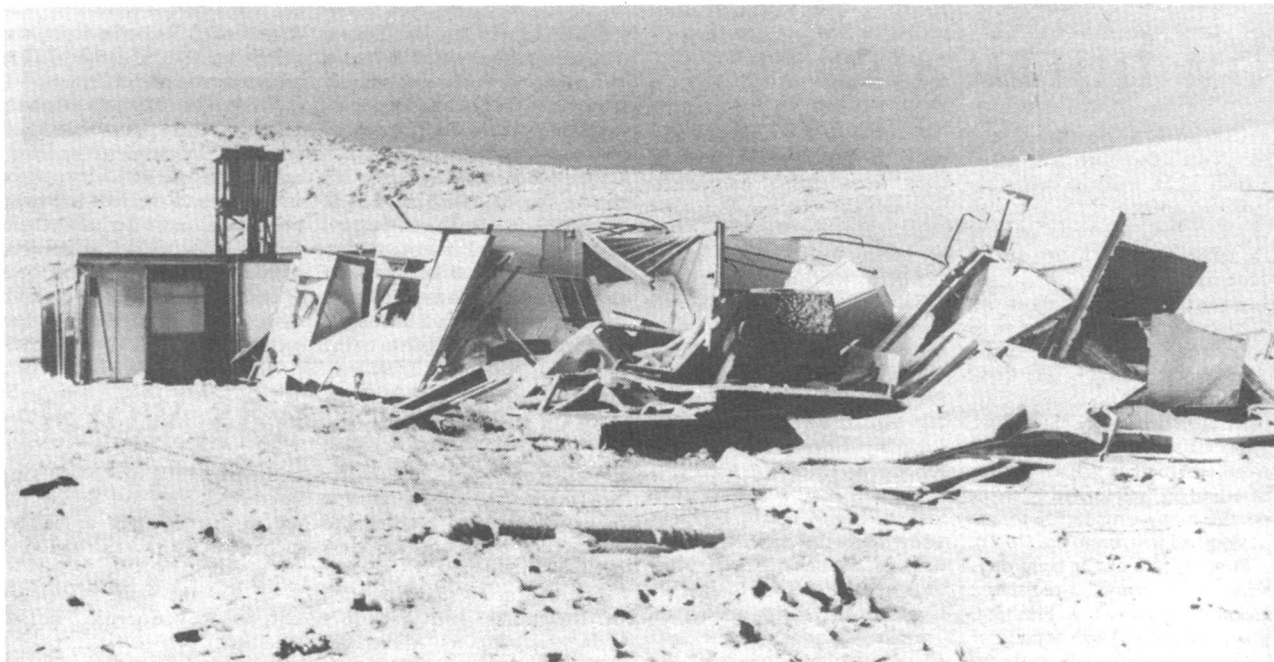
Manager of HNP John Pottinger said his firm had not had to deal with much storm damage to boats, although *Anzac*, a two-year-old lobster boat from Yell belonging to Robert Anderson, needed carpentry and engineering work.

Blacked out

A team of 45 Hydro-Electric staff, including 10 linesmen and an engineer flown from the mainland on Thursday morning, battled to reconnect supplies after most of Shetland was blacked out by snapping electricity cables and collapsing poles.

Power was cut off for five days at Saxa Vord. The RAF base generator was connected to the Unst supply on New Year's day and gave residents a half-hour respite from the gloom. It did not have the power to supply the whole island, however, and was disconnected. The rest of Unst, Yell and Fetlar were reconnected on Saturday afternoon. The West Side was reconnected the previous day and power in other areas came back on the 1st and 2nd.

Scottish Hydro-Electric district engineer David Hudson said that his men had never seen anything like the destruction caused by the



Part of the Hagdale Lodge in Unst after being demolished in the hurricane.

Photo: Malcolm Younger

200 mph winds. As well as extensive damage to cables 15 poles on Mainland and Yell were flattened. Workers concentrated on isolating faults on New Year's day and began repairs on the 2nd when winds had eased enough for linesmen to climb poles.

While revellers staggered around the town streets in the early hours of the new year Hydro men disconnected conductors brought down by flying debris at Annsbrae Caravan Site.

Mr Hudson said: "I thought the last gale, a fortnight ago, was bad enough but this was far far worse. Men were phoning up volunteering to work on New Year's Day and I think we did a pretty good job. The public have been very very patient and helpful in letting us know where the faults were."

He added that lines in Shetland were built to a higher standard than those in Scotland which were stronger than those in the rest of the UK but there was little more the Hydro could do to prevent hurricane damage.

British Telecom riggers were flown up from Manchester on the 2nd to repair damaged aerial dishes on Scousburgh hill and Bressay. Customer services were not affected, however, as engineers re-routed lines. Lightning also damaged lines in the north Mainland. Again calls were re-routed and services maintained.

The building trade is not yet rushed off its feet with repairs. At the moment they are mainly involved in producing estimates.

Quantity surveyor Michael Thomson said on Wednesday there was a lot of paperwork to be completed first. In cases where emergency repairs had to be done, where there was a threat of further damage to the property, repairs were going ahead. But if it was a case where, for example, tiles had come off a roof and the underfelt was still there, householders should get approval from their insurance companies first before getting the repairs done.

Mr Thomson said that his firm had dealt with dozens of cases where the work would run into thousands of pounds.

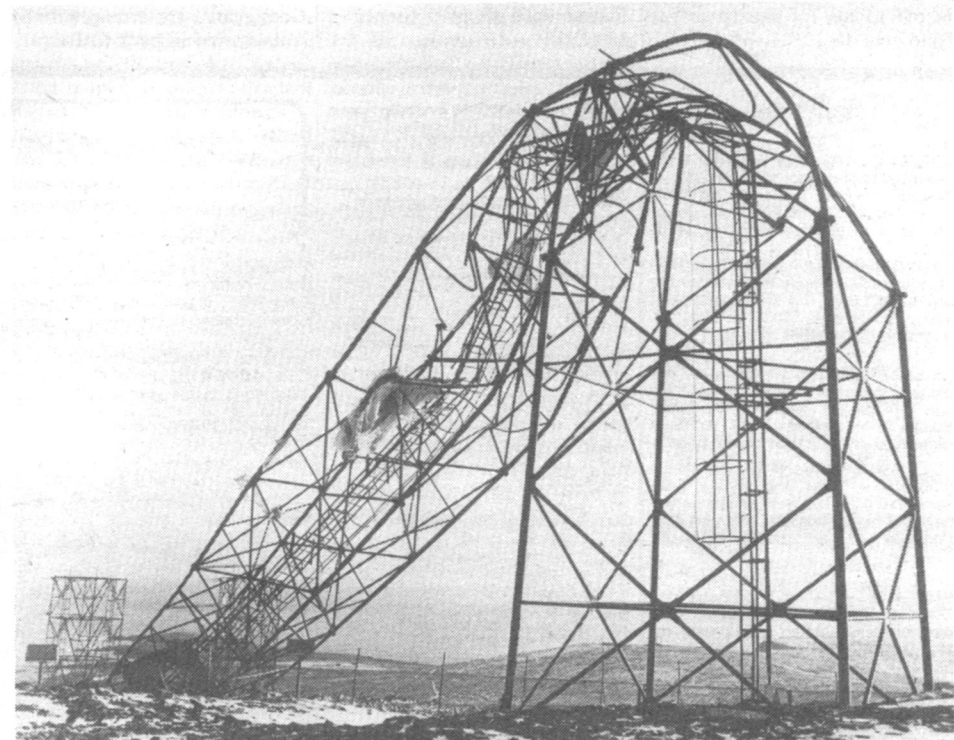
At the Prudential Insurance, manager George Simpson said the last few days had been "pretty

hectic" with hundreds of claims. It was still difficult to assess the total amount of damage which had been done, he said, and extra assessors had been brought in from the mainland to help deal with claims.

The Prudential has set up a helpline for people generally, so that anyone who needs assistance, whether or not their insurance is with the firm, can ring Lerwick 2178 for advice.

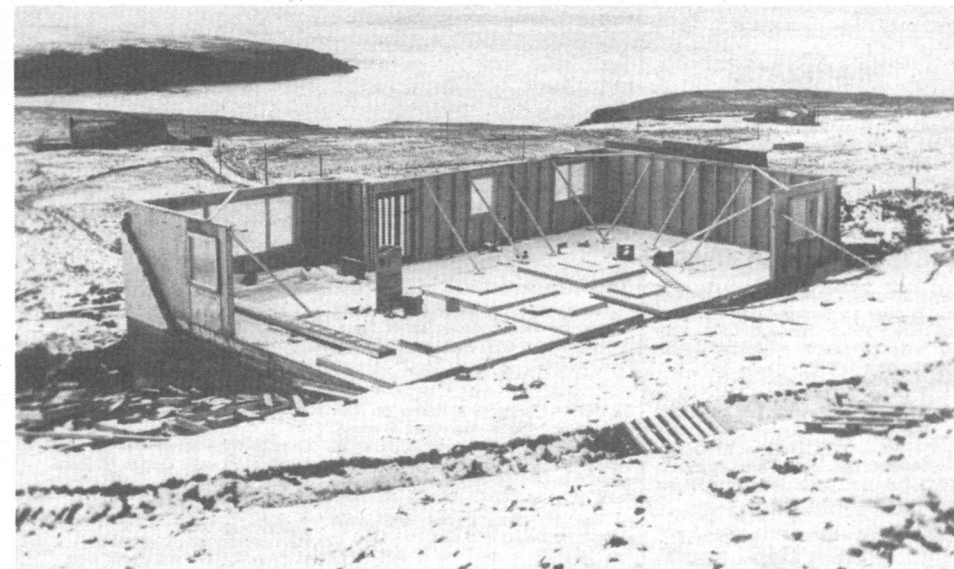
Both Mr Thomson and Mr

Simpson said they believed most people would be insured against damage apart from those who lived in caravans, which were obviously a bad risk as far as most insurance companies were concerned.



The remains of a communications mast at RAF Saxa Vord.

Photo: Malcolm Younger



This house being built in West Yell had its roof blown off and its walls damaged.

Photo: Malcolm Younger



Lowrie Robertson takes a look at the extensive damage done to Sandison's building at Baltasound.

Photo: Malcolm Younger



The roof of this garage at Bigton fell down flattening a car inside.

Photo: Malcolm Younger