

Jakob Eunson

Age: 22

Location: Shetland, Scotland



Main Challenges



Distance to mainland



Socialising



Poor connectivity

Background

Amongst Shetland's treeless landscape and dramatic coastlines exists a deeper sense of belonging for 22-year-old Jakob Eunson.

"Unless something was to drastically happen, Shetland will always be my home," says Jakob.

Jakob lives in Uradale, Shetland Isles approximately three minutes outside Scalloway, the ancient Island capital.

He farms an organic enterprise with his father and predominantly runs native Shetland breeds. It is a complete "field to fork" business; not only is Jakob a farmer, but he's also a trained butcher who supplies the farm's lamb and beef direct to wholesalers and retailers.

"All the meat is under the brand name of Uradale Farm and I take [livestock] straight from the abattoir and I butcher for the customer and I also supply cafés restaurants and other butchers.

"The majority of the beef goes straight to country shops. I mostly do everything myself, but I have three trained butchers that I use if I'm stretched a bit thin. However, the majority of the time it's all just me."

Although Jakob has been busy building both of his businesses, he has experienced personal and professional obstacles living in such a remote location.

"[Distance to the mainland] limits what I can do for my business. It's exactly the same issue socially, certainly sports help.

"Sport in Shetland is very big and if you're a part of a sports team – rugby, football, netball or hockey - it's a great social thing. I'd feel bad for those not into those types of sports and were more interested in indoor activities. It can be limiting here in terms of that."

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- Jakob Eunson

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- Jakob Eunson

Background

With such a small community, friendship has no age limit and there are strong intergenerational ties on Shetland, as there are on many of the other island communities the Rural Youth Project has been involved with.

“There’s a strong connection. The older ones teach the younger ones’ skills for work and because it is an Isle, we all depend on each other to make things work. It’s not just the older generation who do everything, they depend on the young for work but also to keep the community and economy going.”

Despite the challenges, Jakob has a strong connection with Shetland.

“The scenery is fantastic; the folk of Shetland are so nice and it’s so safe. I never worry about where I’m going. It’s not like London, there’s no knife crime or the issues that are faced down in the cities, so it’s nice that I don’t have to be watching my back. Unless something was to drastically change, it will always be home.”

Solutions

1. To combat issues around socialising, team sports are an important part of island life.
2. Working alongside people of all ages and backgrounds provides new skills and a support network.
3. Jakob collaborates with local businesses to share infrastructure to aid his ‘field to fork’ business.

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