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# ITI SCOTNET NEWSLETTER

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## School's in for summer

Our spring workshop this year brought the first hints of returning to CPD in conventional in-person formats – not that the switch online over the past couple of years hasn't brought certain benefits of its own. Our features in this newsletter show that, ever since that spring event, ScotNetters have been more eager than ever to engage in learning, especially with some travel into the bargain.

With that in mind, there is a real focus in this issue on events of the traditional variety – most importantly, the wonderful weekend in [Shetland](#). To mark ScotNet's most ambitious summer workshop yet, we have a whole clutch of ScotNetters reporting on their experiences of the workshop itself and beyond (and don't forget to check out the [pictures](#)). You can also read all about Ali's and Alison's visits to the [ITI Conference](#) in Brighton – about as far from Shetland as it's possible to go in the UK! Some of us have remained closer to home: my own report of the [spring workshop](#) only required an Edinburgh bus, while Paul stayed in with a [good book](#).

Wherever you are, I hope you've had a lovely summer – and of course, switching off your brain for a while is allowed too.

Siobhan ♦

*The mind is not a vessel that needs filling,  
but wood that needs igniting.*

~ Plutarch

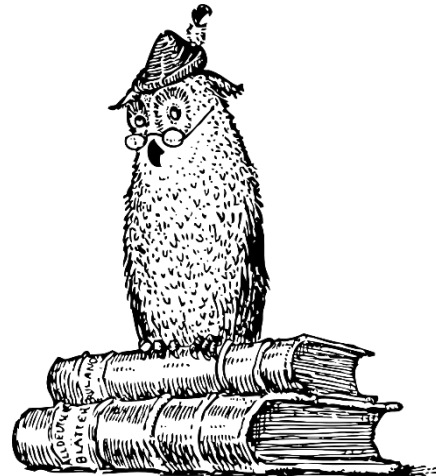


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## Dates for your diary

**ITI ScotNet autumn workshop:** Saturday, 1 October 2022, Nicolson Square Methodist Church, Nicolson Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9BX. This year's autumn workshop will focus on interpreting, with two speakers – Eloísa Monteoliva and José María Conde – discussing ethical dilemmas in interpreting, exploring codes of ethics and sharing approaches conducive to a more sustainable and ethical interpreting practice. The workshop itself will be followed by a two-course meal at the venue. Although the event is primarily aimed at interpreters, it covers an important and complex topic that is sure to be of interest to translators as well. The call notice is out now: to book your place, please return the registration form by Wednesday, 21 September 2022.

**CIOL Scottish Society – The challenges of translating sport:** Saturday, 17 September 2022, online. Speaker Jae Marple will discuss the challenges posed by translation in the field of sports, such as terminology, style and audio quality, and reflect on what a translator needs to know in order to be successful. Translating from French, Spanish and Portuguese, Jae Marple has experience in areas including product descriptions for darts retailers, rugby-themed tourism in France and web copy relating to the Paris 2024 Olympics. You can find out more about the event and book a place [here](#).

**ITI short course: The complete English syntax playbook for translators:** Friday, 16 September and Friday, 23 September 2022, online. In this short course, translator and trainer Joachim Lépine will give attendees the opportunity to improve upon real-world texts rather than focusing on grammar and syntax from a classical perspective. The course will provide valuable yet little-known tactics that can be applied to translations and other writing immediately, winning over clients and readers. For more information and to book, visit the [ITI website](#).

**ITI short course: Editing and proofreading – how to get it right:** Monday, 7 November and Monday, 14 November 2022, online. Delivered by in-demand presenter and ScotNetter Karen Tkaczyk, this course will present attendees with ways to make the final stages of checking a text more reliable and give them more confidence in their edits. It will also address useful tools for editing and proofreading, and help attendees build more confidence in negotiating for services in this area. You can find out more and book on the [ITI website](#).

*For more events, remember to visit the online [ITI Calendar](#). Our own page at [itiscotland.org.uk](http://itiscotland.org.uk) also contains all the latest details about upcoming ScotNet events.*

*If you would like to advertise your own event here, please get in touch: [editor@itiscotland.org.uk](mailto:editor@itiscotland.org.uk)*

## Peat, ponies, puffins: ITI ScotNet summer workshop 2022

Whether you travelled to Shetland by ferry or plane, or were there already, on arriving at this year's very special summer workshop, you probably shared something of a sense of disbelief that it was actually happening after two years of hiatus. But happen it did, and here a whole host of ScotNetters share their experiences of the weekend – which certainly wasn't all work and no play. This article is illustrated with pictures from the authors themselves, for which we are deeply grateful.

### Ania Marchwiak: View from a first-timer

Although I had been waiting for the Shetland workshop for a little while, most ScotNetters had been waiting for it for years. The postponement turned out to have a silver lining for me as a relatively new member, and I was able to join everyone for the trip and workshop back in May.

My partner Barry, a couple of friends and I took the ferry from Aberdeen on the Monday so we could have a few days to explore the islands. Shetland proved to be an eerie place with gob-smacking glacial landscapes surrounding us.

On the first day, we visited Sumburgh Head in the hope of spotting some puffins. It turned out that we got there too early in the day: according to a local birdwatcher, they usually come out around 6 pm when their other halves return from the sea – but the few we did see brought joy all around.

After a short walk around Lerwick the next day, we went to Vidlin and hiked to the Stones of Stofast, a glacial nunatak sitting on top of a hill between two lochs. It was a dreich day, but this somehow turned things into an authentic experience involving hopscotching over a number of bogs. Wet and tired, we returned to Lerwick before

changing and heading out again, this time to a local pub – The Lounge. It was a session night and Barry had the chance to play with the local musicians. We also became pals with some Norwegian sailors and managed to entertain a group of visitors by singing and playing until last orders.



*Barry and co. providing the tunes in the Lounge Bar*

On the last day before the workshop, we decided to embark on the Deepdale and Sandness circular walk, a breathtaking coastal route that pictures or descriptions cannot do justice to. Blessed with sunny weather and the wind behind our backs (well, for the most part), we walked along the coast to see the Bay of Deepdale. The views along the way were stunning, but when we got to the bay, it truly made us stop and gasp in awe of what was in front of us. Plus, it made for a perfect lunch stop – we barely talked to each other, simply soaking up the moment

we were in. The way back was a climb up Sandness Hill, which opened up the views on the horizon. From the top we could see Papa Stour and St Magnus Bay. All in all, it was some 7.5 miles of wonders.

Friday was a big day for me, as it was the first time I would be meeting ScotNetters in person – but all my nervousness was unnecessary, of course, as they are an absolutely lovely bunch. It was fantastic to be able to meet up with people I have only ever seen online and make new contacts. I enjoyed networking during the workshop (even meeting a fellow ITI Medical Network member!) and engaging in some interesting conversations over dinner on the Saturday. My favourite part of the weekend (apart from the ceilidh and the peat conservation talk) was our multilingual translation group; I love hearing about the different approaches to the source text, as there is always a lot to learn from colleagues, who open your eyes to issues that you did not pay attention to. Overall, it was an incredible first time for me – great talks, amazing people and time spent in nature.

What can I say, the legend is true – the Scottish Network summer workshops **are** the best.



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*The stunning Bay of Deepdale*

### Elisa Cristóbal-González: A Noss prelude

When Birgit popped up in the Shetland e-group a week before our summer workshop and offered to organise an informal trip to the Noss National Nature Reserve, little did she expect that 21 of us would jump in. But how could we give it a miss? Those of us who made it to Shetland before the Friday were eager to meet up, and the opportunity of seeing nesting puffins, gannets and other seabirds during a multi-hour walk on rough terrain on a small island – and being subjected to the weather – sounded like the perfect start to our Shetland adventures.

So, on Friday morning, after a short ferry crossing from Lerwick and a three-mile drive across the isle of Bressay, we reached a small pier with views towards the isle of Noss, where the two wardens, Sally and Jen, were anticipating our arrival. One of them made her way to us on an inflatable boat and, braving the strength of the current, ferried us in groups of five across to a sheltered beach, the safest place to land that morning.

Once we had all gathered on Noss, we had a brief introduction and a look around the visitor centre, plus the various findings from



the island – including the huge skeleton of a whale! We had spotted a few dead birds at the beach upon arrival and soon learned that we would see more of them during our trip, with avian flu taking its toll amongst the gannet and great skua populations across Scotland.\*



*ScotNetters braving the boat*

As we set off on our walk, a cacophony of sounds rising from the stone wall behind the visitor centre revealed the presence of a blackbird nest full of hungry orange bills. We kept watching the coast for seabirds and otters, but they must have been busy with *otter* matters, because we didn't spot any. We did see a couple of seal heads pop out of the water, however, and watch us with the same curiosity as we watched them.

When the chatting and intermittent rain showers allowed us to look up, we saw fulmars (locally known as *maalies*), wheatears and skylarks, and we felt the watchful presence of great skuas (*bonxies*) over the moorland. They have a reputation for attacking those who approach their nests, so we had been advised to stick to the cliff path and avoid the moorland, where up to 400 pairs breed.

Once we reached the caves and the big cliffs in the south, we finally spotted some cute puffins (known as *tammie norries* on Shetland) on the grassy hilltops! With that,

our day would have been complete, but there were also nesting guillemots (*looms*) and more fulmars. Next on the menu were the high cliffs on the west after Charlie's Holm, home to an impressive colony of gannets (*solans*), with tens of thousands of birds nesting in very close proximity. Decibel levels were extremely high (and so was the smell of guano when the wind blew in from the sea), which might or might not explain that this was the spot we chose for our lunch. It was duly noted that gannets would win a noise battle against a gathering of ScotNetters.

After lunch, we continued our climb towards the top of The Noup before heading back downhill across the north section towards the visitor centre. Immersed in conversation, Heather and I were later made aware that we had sadly missed another colony of puffins on the way down. Downhill went the weather too, with strong winds bringing in heavy rain towards the end of our walk and giving us a rough time before spring returned a few minutes later as we made our way back to Bressay and then Lerwick.

*\*At the time of wrapping up this article for our newsletter, avian flu has continued to spread, even among other bird populations like the kittiwake, so Noss and other nature reserves across the country have been closed to the public in an attempt to limit the spread of the virus and protect the birds from any additional stress.*



*Elisa is a sworn translator and works from English into Spanish and Catalan, specialising in law, academia, leadership, IT and marketing.*

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## Corinne Durand: The workshop – part 1

Following a good-humoured reunion around a Chinese meal the evening before, our group of ever-enthusiastic members of ScotNet were warmly welcomed to Saturday's workshop by the first speaker of the day – and local organiser – Birgit Wagner.

Birgit started by welcoming and thanking the audience for making the journey to Shetland, more precisely the Islesburgh Community Centre, Lerwick, and briefly introduced herself. She explained her journey to becoming an adopted Shetlander, which had followed an initial career in engineering and some years in Switzerland. She arrived in Shetland in 1998, eventually becoming a technical translator working with English and German, and she now specialises in patents.



*Birgit getting back to basics*

Birgit started her highly informative presentation with a very useful definition of energy and an explanation about the difference between power and energy, terms often used interchangeably. Energy is the ability to do work (to move an object, or heat a liquid or gas, for example) and is measured in units such as joules, kWh and calories. Power is the amount of energy transferred or converted per unit of time and is measured in watts (1 watt = 1 joule per second), horsepower, and so on.

To set the scene, Birgit explored the term “renewable energy”, also often coined (somewhat inaccurately, as she went on to explain) as “sustainable”, “green” or “clean” energy: she defined it as “energy coming from sources that are naturally replenished on a human timescale”. Indeed, to be produced, these types of energy also require the use of energy and create some pollution (with consumption of materials like plastic and metals, and through transport).

Venturing into the realms of the terms “carbon neutral” and “carbon zero”, Birgit pointed out that some companies wishing to offset or reduce their carbon footprint pay other entities to do that for them (through tree planting, for example), a process which often lacks transparency.

The talk then took a deep dive into numerous technology types, including solar thermal, photovoltaics and – one of our focal points for the day, and indeed the whole trip – wind. It is a form of energy that has been harnessed for centuries – nowadays, modern wind turbines generate electricity through motion. Although different models of turbines have been seen over the years, the most efficient are those assembled with a vertical mast, a horizontal rotor and three spinning blades, plus a generator accommodated inside the nacelle at the top of the mast. Its drawbacks are its intermittent nature (as it is weather-dependent), its visual impact and noise pollution, and its detrimental effect on surrounding wildlife. Moreover, large-scale wind farms can only be located in remote places or offshore, and have heavy transportation requirements to build.

After delving into hydroelectric, marine, geothermal and biomass sources, Birgit gave us an insight into energy storage and transport. Since many renewables and associated technologies are unpredictable and often only available in certain areas, they need to be stored for use later and transported to other locations. To counteract intermittent availability, energy needs to be stored during periods when generation produces a surplus so that it can be released and used when demand exceeds supply.



*Shetland's natural resources have led to a whole host of energy sources emerging*

Birgit gave some examples of electricity transmission and energy storage, also touching on the need for voltage conversion. They included pumped storage hydroelectricity, where excess electrical energy is used to pump water from a lower source to a higher reservoir so that when demand rises, water is released back through a turbine (such as the Cruachan Dam in Scotland). Portable batteries are also used to store energy for powering a multitude of devices, as well as vehicles such as cars, ships and even planes.

Birgit concluded that all the technologies she had looked at have pros and cons, and all have an impact on the environment. However, in terms of carbon emissions, they are a better alternative to burning fossil fuels: the fact remains that we must absolutely reduce our energy consumption, so the key is to choose the right technology for the right location and application.

Historically, Shetland was an oil-oriented energy economy, Birgit went on to explain, and has therefore been late in showing an interest in exploiting renewables. But the islands are now catching up, with seemingly massive steps and projects such as the construction of a vast onshore wind farm (the Viking project), which is currently taking the existing local wind energy infrastructure to new levels, with 103 turbines. There is also a marine offshore project in Bluemull Sound, with the world's first connected array of tidal turbines. This new energy source will be transported and connected via a subsea cable running 260 km all the way to mainland Scotland, and into the national grid, allowing the energy to be exchanged and efficiently exploited.

The islands have nevertheless seen the rise of many domestic and small commercial projects, mainly based on wind and solar sources. Improvements have also seen the launch of a district heating scheme that uses an energy-from-waste plant. It is providing heating and hot water to the residents of Lerwick and beyond, and is now also using surplus heat from the old Lerwick power station: previously, this had been discharged into the sea.

The enthusiastic Q&A session discussed a variety of topics, including whether energy



production plants on Shetland were privately owned or government subsidised, the sources of domestic heating energy available on Shetland besides electricity (currently, gas is limited to LPG forms, as there is no main public grid), and what impact the Viking project was likely to have on the economy and tourism.



*Small-scale domestic and commercial projects harnessing wind and solar power are on the rise*

When time was up, Birgit, who had impressively managed to keep her composure through a pesky and persistent car alarm, concluded her thorough, skilfully delivered and – unsurprisingly – superbly received presentation.

With kind thanks to Birgit, who made her presentation available for the writing of this article.



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## Aleksandra Chlon: The workshop – part 2

During the second talk of the workshop, engineer and language enthusiast Tom Wills gave an overview of marine energy, a vague catch-all term that includes offshore wind, floating solar, wave and tidal energy, as well as the more obscure Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC) and salinity gradient energy. Tom explained how the technologies work and what stages they are at, then talked about what's happening in Shetland, Orkney, and Scotland in general. He concluded by discussing the future potential for these types of energy, which remain largely untapped except for offshore wind. Ideally I would give you a full transcript of Tom's fascinating and engaging talk, but seeing as I'd get in trouble with the editor, I'll stick to the highlights.

In addition to specialist vocabulary (“jacket foundation”, “monopile”, “yaw”), historical details (electricity was first made from wind in 1886), technical observations (the tip of a wind turbine blade can't break the speed of sound), and the pros and cons of the various technologies (floating tidal turbines benefit from higher flow speeds on the surface of the water and are easier to maintain, but they create a visual impact and an obstruction for boats), Tom shared some useful points on language use. He warned never to say that energy is “generated”: power and electricity can be generated, but energy can only be transformed from one type to another. He also noted that, when it comes to green energy, one of the most common mistakes – not just in translation but also in journalism – is to confuse waves and tides, when, in fact, the two are not related.



Two things in particular that stood out about Tom's presentation were clarity and passion. Despite the complex subject matter, Tom conveyed the information as clearly as possible, providing explanations such as the difference between a gigawatt (enough electricity to power a city) and a terawatt (the equivalent of a third of the global demand in electricity). Evidently fuelled by a passion for renewable energy, Tom explained that a greener future requires improving infrastructure, integrating fluctuating energy sources, and including storage. He praised the Scottish government for decarbonising the whole electricity supply, and criticised the British government for banking on nuclear energy without factoring in the legacy of radioactive waste. Tom called for taxing – as opposed to subsidising – energy companies, and for having a community, public-sector stake in renewable energy. After all, the wind belongs to the citizens.



*Tom smiling for the camera with Birgit*

As a sprinkling of comic relief for an audience of translators, Tom shared a couple of his linguistic mishaps involving false

friends. During a professional event at a shipyard in Chile, when speaking about cranes he confused the Spanish *grúa* (machine) and *grulla* (bird). In a much more awkward incident during a presentation for the Chilean Ministry of Energy, he meant to mention sea birds (*pájaros marinos*) but instead talked about sea masturbators (*pajeros marinos*). [Ed: *That'll do fine as this issue's blooper!*]

At one point during his talk, Tom made an astute observation about our work as translators. He said that translation itself can be difficult, but the greatest challenge is making information accessible to your audience in technical language that doesn't muddy the waters – which is an apt summary of his presentation.

Sue White's talk on peatland restoration in Shetland felt like an intimate journey into one of the island's main ecosystems. Half of Shetland's land mass (60,000 hectares) is covered in a particular type of peatland called blanket bog. This important but inconspicuous habitat has a valuable role to play. Sue is the Shetland Peatland Restoration Project Officer at Shetland Amenity Trust, which is funded by the Scottish government. Why is the government funding peat restoration? The driver behind it all is climate change. Peatlands help mitigate climate change by reducing temperature rises through carbon storage, and they are really good at it – peatlands contain twice the amount of carbon that forests do.

The peatlands in Shetland are made up of sphagnum moss, which takes CO<sub>2</sub> out of the atmosphere and locks it into the plant. It then decomposes very slowly. The CO<sub>2</sub> gets locked into the plant as carbon and the plant

becomes compressed over the years and turns into peat. The moss can hold a great deal of water, and, in fact, peat is around 90% water – there are more solids in milk! On the flipside, the extremely high water content also makes the plant highly vulnerable. The moss contains an enzyme called sphagnum, which as an additional benefit inhibits bacterial growth. The other main plant associated with peatlands is cotton grass. When restoring bogs, a significant impact can be observed quite quickly. Cotton grass usually returns within a year, while sphagnum is a sign that the bog is back to functioning effectively and starting to once again capture and store carbon.

Ecosystem services are delivered by healthy bogs that suck in CO<sub>2</sub> and build up peat. Unfortunately, 75% of peatlands in Scotland are damaged. They do not suck in much CO<sub>2</sub>, which instead goes into the atmosphere and washes away into drinking water. The culprits responsible for the damage are sheep: there are far too many in Shetland. Elsewhere in Scotland, deer are to blame. A significant share of Shetland peatlands (namely 45,000 hectares) are damaged and actively eroding. The oxidation and erosion mean that we are losing 2 to 3 cm per year, whereas healthy bog is building up at only 1 mm per year. While peatlands in good condition store CO<sub>2</sub>, peatlands in poor condition emit CO<sub>2</sub>. The good news is that restoring peatland and turning it back into a carbon sink is one of the most cost-effective methods of mitigating climate change.

A metre of peat represents roughly a thousand years of growth. In Shetland, you can get a real sense of how old things are by looking at how deep the peat is and finding an equally old place or structure near you. A

metre of bog is a thousand years old, which goes back to Norse times and is reflected in the many Norse relics found on the island. Two metres of bog date back to the Iron Age, and you don't need to go far in Shetland before you reach a broch – a defensive round structure with thick drystone walls. When peat is three metres deep, it means that it began growing in the Bronze Age, represented by the 3,000-year-old cairns on tops of many hills.



*Sue shows off some sphagnum moss*

Sue's projects involve low-tech, nature-based solutions. She shared a few case studies and explained what happens on the ground. At Sandy Loch, south of Lerwick, which supplies the town with drinking water, eight-tonne diggers are used to fill up the blanket bog with vegetation and clamp the peat back into place. The machines are large, but the process is gentle. Vegetation is only moved once and taken from nearby. The method not only restores the peatland but also contributes to a huge drop in the bacterial content of the water. The

restoration blocks gullies and stops sheep muck from getting into the water. In Girlsta, the aim is to restore hydrology and repair bare peat, construct dams and restore peat areas. Gullies and hags are reprofiled so that vegetation covers the bare peat, which is simple yet effective.

Peat restoration mitigates climate change and has benefits for the landscape, but the advantages do not stop there. The projects create innovation, employment, training, and business opportunities in rural areas. Local contractors are used and money stays in the local economy. The principle behind peat restoration is paludiculture, namely working with, rather than fighting against, wet conditions. Blanket bogs in Shetland are important, but they are being subjected to chronic stress and neglect. The Scottish government has pledged to invest more than £250 million over 10 years, with the aim of restoring all peatlands in Scotland by 2040.

The last question is...should we boycott peated whisky? Hopefully such a drastic step is unnecessary, but we can choose brands that promote offsetting approaches such as Highland Park in Orkney. The distillery is committed to looking after the peatland habitat of Hobbister Moor and consistently goes beyond compliance on peat cutting. Slàinte!



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## Alastair Naughton: The Sunday tour

As is always the case at the ScotNet summer events, the Sundays are devoted to some sort of cultural activity – so if you’ve overindulged at the ceilidh the night before, the brisk walk is bound to go some way towards atoning for it!

Our tour of the main island was ably led by our bus driver John and, in Jarlshof, Les, who had an encyclopaedic knowledge of everything to do with Shetland’s history, culture and nature.



*A Jarlshof settlement*

Our first stop was to see evidence of an ancient settlement from Neolithic times, (4300–4000 BCE). The next wave of settlers came in the form of the Picts, who occupied the islands for about a thousand years and were followed by Norse settlers in the Iron Age. The latter have a reputation as a marauding people, but there is no clear evidence as to whether they integrated with the indigenous community, lived separately, or wiped them out completely.

What we can see today, however, are the different housing designs that the various settlers preferred. The Norse people lived in longhouses like the design above, while the



locals had up to that point lived in roundhouses with a broch attached (see Aleksandra's write-up for a fuller definition). Brochs are unique to Scotland, while roundhouses are unique to the Orkney and Shetland Isles. Houses at that time were built from stone and moss, as there are virtually no trees on the islands: while they once did exist, they were cleared for firewood and sheep-grazing – and today, the high winds would make it difficult for them to survive. In any given year, you can expect 58 days of gale-force winds on Shetland.

Little wonder, then, that the area is so attractive to those who want to develop wind-based renewable energy. However, in my view, it is difficult to understand just quite how this justifies the Viking project's 103 turbines, each 155 metres high, on Shetland's pristine landscape, especially when there is other technology available (especially in the aforementioned Bluemull Sound, where a completely invisible tidal turbine is already in operation and ready for expansion).

No trip to Shetland would be complete without seeing a colony or two of puffins, plus some guillemots and at least a few Shetland ponies. During our stop to take in some sea views, we managed to catch some real close-ups of the island's beautiful birds, which fitted in perfectly with their breathtaking marine surroundings. Shetland ponies, so synonymous with the islands, were to be seen in the fields everywhere.

At lunchtime we stopped at the Sumburgh Head Lighthouse, a historic building complete with visitor centre and restaurant. An extremely interesting attraction was the museum covering the lighthouse's role in the

Second World War, when the lighthouse was taken over as accommodation for soldiers and tank traps were dug.



*One of Shetland's famous ponies*

We finished the day with a drive past a peatland bog in the process of restoration. About half of Shetland is covered in peatland, although NatureScot estimates about 70% of it is damaged. As peat is an excellent carbon sink, it is vital that this restoration work is given high priority in the fight against climate change.

A massive shout-out is due to Birgit Wagner for taking on the organisation of this trip – without her, it simply wouldn't have happened. A huge vote of thanks is also due to John and Les for ferrying us around and keeping us informed. I'm sure I speak for everybody in saying I wouldn't have missed the weekend for the world!



*Alastair translates from German into English, specialising in travel, tourism, sustainability and adventure-based texts.*

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## Scenes from Shetland

We've added a few more picture highlights from our weekend on the next few pages. Huge thanks to all the ScotNetters and friends of ScotNet who very kindly contributed photos: Aleksandra Chlon, Elisa Cristóbal-González, Corinne Durand, Juliet Haydock, Lynda Hepburn, Ania Marchwiak, Kay McBurney, Alastair Naughton, Catherine Roux and June Woodward.

### ScotNetters at work



← Calories  
= Energy!





## Time for a much-missed ceilidh!





## Nature around Shetland





## Travel and tourism





## Embracing change, emerging stronger: ITI Conference 2022

Although ScotNetters were fewer in number at this year's ITI Conference due to it immediately backing onto the Shetland workshop, a solid contingent was still represented at this highlight of the ITI's year – another landmark event offering both in-person and online experiences for the first time. Ali Walker and Alison Hughes were among the attendees and tell us here how they found the main Conference programme and one of the workshops.

### Ali Walker: The main conference

After a great (albeit short) weekend in Shetland for the ScotNet workshop (thanks again to all involved with that!), we hopped on the ferry and several trains to rush down to Brighton for the main ITI Conference, held at the city's Grand hotel. 24 hours after the ferry left Lerwick, we pulled into the station at Brighton, exhausted but happy to have arrived!

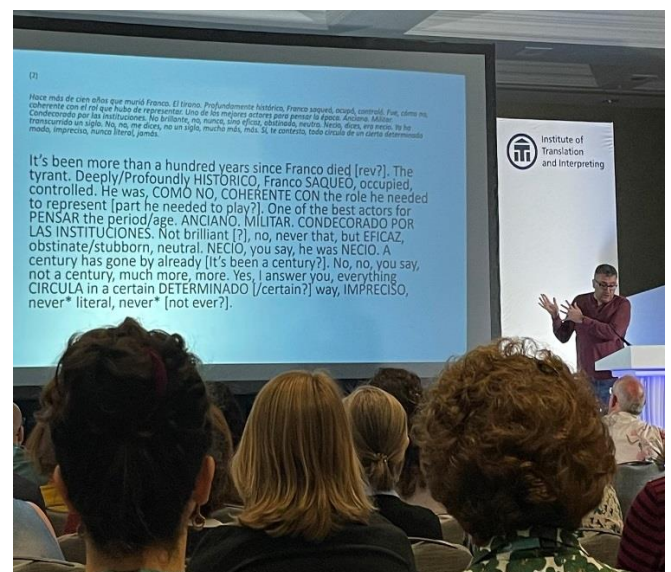
Walking down towards the Grand hotel on the Tuesday morning, I was encouraged to see a massive offshore wind farm out past the beach – a nice link to Shetland.

The next two days were a whirlwind of talks, discussions, catching up with colleagues in person (again, wonderful!) and enjoying the sunny Brighton weather and beach, including a very windy fish and chip lunch on the seafront, trying to avoid the seagulls.

The main theme of the conference was “Embracing change, emerging stronger”, which definitely reflects where I am in my translation business today. Sessions on developing new specialisations, new languages, and new ways to market and stay productive all help towards that vision. And Oliver Lawrence's session on “Fascinating

rhythm: The sweet sound of musical writing” led me down a rabbit hole into rhetoric, rhythm, alliteration and assonance, all to give me a new perspective on writing better (which I'll always be working on!).

One particular highlight for me was Daniel Hahn's keynote “Extreme visibility: on sharing a translation process”. His “shockingly bad” rough drafts, with question marks, brackets and asterisks look remarkably like my own, and while we work in very different fields (literary translation is very much not for me!), it's encouraging that many of us have a similar process and makes me at least a bit less embarrassed at how my first drafts look in practice!



*Daniel Hahn encouraging attendees to trust the process*

I wasn't able to attend everything I wanted to in person, but having the hybrid setup means that I've been able to catch up on other sessions online since I got home, which has been fantastic. And I've managed to collect far more CPD hours than I would otherwise have been able to. I know of many others who only attended the conference virtually, and I get the impression that the online chat during sessions was particularly lively, possibly more so than for those of us there in person.

*The hybrid setup means that I've been able to catch up on sessions online since I got home*

All in all, I'm really glad that I managed to get to both Shetland and Brighton. Though it might not have seemed so at first glance, there was a common thread of sustainability and renewability – on a global environmental scale, right down to my own business, and how we as a society and individuals can make changes that will successfully see us through the coming years.



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### Alison Hughes: A writing masterclass

Some 35 translators and budding writers gathered in the Empress Suite at the Grand hotel at 2 pm on Monday 30 May to kick off their conference with a writing masterclass.

We were to spend the next two hours in the capable hands of Judy Yorke, a writer and journalist who has worked on a range of titles from business magazines to regional press, women's magazines and national newspapers.

After her own introduction, she asked us to say a little about ourselves and why we had chosen to attend the workshop. The vast majority of attendees wanted to polish their finished translations or take on a more active writing role in their work. I was there because I was actually writing a book and had realised that the beginning and the ending were the two most difficult parts of the process.

To start us off, Judy explained how a good intro sets the tone and draws in the reader. It should be short and to the point. On this basis, she asked us to work in groups (we were conveniently sitting at round tables) to assess the nine examples she had given us. Obviously, we all picked out the great ones and dismissed the long, meandering "essays", but with some it was not quite so cut and dried, and opinions differed among the groups.

We then moved on to the middle bit and Judy explained two different structures. With a rectangular press release, all the facts are included at the start and the story slowly unfolds. To take account of potential space restrictions, it must make sense no matter

where it is cut off. An article written in a circular format, on the other hand, is not so easy to shorten.

We then tackled two exercises. One involved assembling separate paragraphs of a press release in the right order (not as easy as it sounds) and, for the other, we were asked to write linking sentences to join two separate parts of several articles.

*I had realised that the beginning and ending were the two most difficult parts of the process*

Before we knew it, the “ending” was nigh. Judy’s tip was to bring the item full circle by referring to something that had been mentioned at the beginning. She provided us with two lovely articles she herself had written, minus the ending, which we were to provide.

Next, as a little bonus, we were all subjected to a spelling test and then given a useful tip to help us remember how to spell difficult words: try to think of a catchy phrase where each word begins with a letter of the word. I’d provide an example but, I confess, my mind had wandered at the point because I was thinking of my book and how I could tie the beginning in with the ending.

Mission accomplished: they both involve a Largs sunset – but that’s all I’m saying for now.



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*Sunset over Largs: a hint towards Alison's book?*

## Writing right

Translators wear many hats, as researchers, project managers and writers, to name a few – but it's the last of these that gets (or should get) most of our attention as the core skill that our careers hinge on. And nowadays, social media presences dictate that we even have to use our writing skills to act as content creators. Paul Kearns found inspiration for the act of writing in a book he recently picked up – Ann Handley's *Everybody Writes* – and here he shares his review.

Translators are great writers, right? It's one of the fundamental skills of our profession, along with source language proficiency. What I've realised, though, is the idea of writing is easy, but the act of writing is a lot harder and sometimes it's good to get some help.

One of the best resources I've come across (apart from a couple of great ITI workshops) is the book *Everybody Writes* by Ann Handley. The principal theme of the book is that everyone is a writer, because it's a skill we employ every day. We perfect our target texts, we respond to emails, we post on social media, we write blogs on our websites. The publication is aimed at content creators, and the writer is a marketer, so there's a natural bias there. However, it's still a great resource. The book is an easy read. Chapters are short, there are bulleted lists, a good number of images, and it's written in a friendly, relaxed tone.

Part one, "Writing Rules: How to Write Better (and How to Hate Writing Less)", contains lots of very practical reminders. It emphasises the need to consider the reader and be respectful of their time and attention, so if you're going to put pen to paper, have something worthwhile to say. It gives suggestions on how to write regularly, set word counts, and why a writing buddy is a real asset.

Part two looks at "Writing Rules: Grammar and Usage". Here the author stresses the need for simplicity, avoiding Frankenwords, or words that are just so far removed from people's everyday vocabulary that they clutter your writing. I'm a great believer in using Plain English (as hard as it might be sometimes) and Handley reminds the reader that sometimes it's OK to break a few rules.



Author and speaker Ann Handley

I know some translators would baulk at some of these suggestions. But context is everything. And we probably wouldn't start a sentence with *and* or *but* in one of our translations, like I've done a few times here. However, I'm assuming you're reading this newsletter while enjoying a nice cup of coffee. You're not going to quote this article in your master's dissertation, so the writing style adapts to the audience and that's the



thrust of the book – we need to reach the reader. Otherwise, what's the point?

Part three is about “Story Rules” and the need to set the correct tone of voice. Telling your story is a common theme in marketing since people buy goods and services from people they know and like. Along with part four on “Publishing Rules”, my interest dropped slightly at this stage since the focus was more on writing for formal publication. Saying that, these sections do encourage reflection and research in our writing, making sure we respect copyright, and that our research is based on reliable sources.

Part five, “13 Things Marketers Write”, looks at writing for different platforms and purposes – Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, website home pages and the like. It has some tailored suggestions on letting your personality shine through your writing: for example, by the way you use hashtags in social media or how to use humour effectively.

The final part looks at “Content Tools” and is a series of resource lists covering writing and editing tools, websites for generating blog-post ideas, and productivity resources. This chapter is quite good as a reference chapter, but the usefulness of the information will depend on how much writing you actually do.

***Writing style needs to adapt to the audience and reach the reader – otherwise, what's the point?***

Overall, I found the book really useful and it's one I'll return to often. It's designed as a manual you'll want to dip in and out of. A second edition is coming out in October. I've already used a few new techniques in my writing, mainly in my blog and on my social media threads. Perhaps more than anything, it has encouraged me just to write more confidently.



*Nowadays, many of us are expected to have content creation as part of our skillset*



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## Making time for time: ITI ScotNet spring workshop 2022

Deadlines, side projects, hobbies, childcare, chores, admin, dentist appointments, volunteering...how on earth are we supposed to fit it all in, and are some people somehow blessed with more hours in the day than others? Luckily, at this year's spring workshop, Lydia Marquardt was there to help us confidently steer our ships through the choppy waters of time management and find techniques that would truly work for us. Siobhan Gorrie tells us about the event here.

Hello, my name is Siobhan and I'm a tidsoptimist.

In a nutshell, that means I'm a chronic underestimator of the time I need to do something, or exactly how much I can cram into a given period. Definitions of "tidsoptimism" (a word of Norwegian origin) sometimes refer to people who are always late or produce slapdash work because they've left themselves so little time, and I'd like to think I don't fall into those brackets – instead, my own brand of tidsoptimism means that I habitually burn the candle at both ends, since that one-hour task has expanded into two or three. I've done this for almost as long as I can remember: if this were a TV series, we'd now see a jump-cut to me aged 16, cramming for Higher Geography at 1 am, with a multicoloured revision timetable next to me that I'd painstakingly designed but hadn't actually followed.

That's why Lydia Marquardt's spring workshop on time management, delivered to an enthusiastic room in Edinburgh's Royal Scots Club back in March, was so appealing. With the premise alone, I knew there'd be something I could use to help remedy my own personal ailment: the workshop agenda contained a tour of several time management techniques, followed by group work and personal insights into specific experiences

from ScotNetters who had been given the chance to try techniques in advance and then report back to the audience. At this point, it's also important to mention that the event marked the first workshop ScotNet had managed to hold fully in person in the aftermath of Covid's peak – although Covid continues to be a threat even as I write this, the atmosphere at the workshop was one of joy at being back together and working together in the same room.



*Lydia encouraging us to figure out what we want from our time management techniques*

Lydia started with an in-depth presentation whose springboard was a problem most of us face: there's just too much to do and not enough time. We all have 168 hours in the week and, for the purposes of the presentation, Lydia posited that we spend around 40 of those at work and 56 asleep – and most of us can probably put a more concrete figure on that for our own individual circumstances. However, few of us know exactly what we're doing with those

remaining 72 hours: how many times have you uttered, “I just don’t know where the time’s gone”? That’s where Lydia’s tools and tips started to come in, but her emphasis was on the fact that what we use to conquer time management is only actually useful if we know what we want, where our priorities lie and – a real dilemma for many of us – what we can give up.

I appreciated the way in which Lydia jumped straight into practical solutions and techniques for adjusting our mindset, and one image that imprinted itself on me quickly was sorting through the “rubble” of our to-do list. Like many of us, no doubt, I’ve historically treated my to-do list as a brain dump, adding to it as things occur to me. However, Lydia suggested a more curated approach that values the reasons why we have a to-do list at all: it should be a list of things that are important to us, so we shouldn’t overburden it with unnecessary things. In order to look after it, we should be prioritising (which includes delegating to others who might have more time or ability to do a job), ditching (asking ourselves what we really, absolutely need to do and what adds value – a Marie Kondo approach, if you like), and shelving (for projects that you definitely want to do but just aren’t able to right now). To make these categories more transparent, we might look towards tools such as bullet journals – more on that later – or apps to help us.

Despite too much to do and a lack of time, many of us still struggle with procrastination. Lydia put forward the idea of the “Goldilocks zone” – the sweet spot in our tasks where things are neither too boring (so we can’t face doing them) nor too challenging (we feel less motivated to do things that are difficult).

There are techniques we can use to remove negative feelings and move further into the right zone, as Lydia explained: for example, starting small by committing ourselves to just five to ten minutes on a task we’re dreading. The chances are that this short window of time will expand into a more productive session. If appropriate for the task, we can also piggyback a reward onto it – like listening to a favourite podcast while we do something menial, such as go through the pile of papers that’s been sitting on a table forever (not speaking from personal experience at all here, ahem).



*Some ScotNetters, including Susan here, shared their personal experiences*

Following the main talk, we had a chance to discuss our own personal hurdles when it came to time management – and which techniques we’d be keen to try – in the small groups we were seated in. It was a real pleasure not only to speak to people in the flesh after two years punctuated by Zoom, but also to be reminded that everyone has their own time-related obstacles in one way or the other, however much it might seem outwardly that they have everything perfectly planned out at all times!

Similarly, I enjoyed the personal touch that came from the experiences shared by the three ScotNetters who had tried out specific time management techniques for themselves.

Alicja Tokarska talked about her experience of reducing her time at work to a four-day week and how she was using time blocking: for example, setting aside 90 minutes for a specific, important task. Blocking out time, she explained, helped her focus because it removes distractions by design – and she also mentioned that the online tool [Asana](#) was proving to be a useful planning assistant.

Nicki Bone, meanwhile, had decided to try out an analogue tool in the form of a bullet journal: she had deliberately chosen a low-tech and portable approach – plus, as she pointed out, who doesn't love an opportunity to buy some nice stationery? Nicki enjoyed the customisable nature of the journal and the increased visibility it gave her over her previous activities and productivity levels. Add that to the relaxing nature of compiling the journal, and it made for a tool that she intended to continue with.

Driven by the wish to carve out more time on developing her business, Susan Swann Higgins shared her experiences with categorising tasks according to the four-quadrant Eisenhower matrix:

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	<b>Quadrant I</b> <i>urgent and important</i> <b>DO</b>	<b>Quadrant II</b> <i>not urgent but important</i> <b>PLAN</b>
NOT IMPORTANT	<b>Quadrant III</b> <i>urgent but not important</i> <b>DELEGATE</b>	<b>Quadrant IV</b> <i>not urgent and not important</i> <b>ELIMINATE</b>

Image: Wikimedia Creative Commons

She also tried breaking down her days into hourly segments and comparing her plans with what actually happened in each day, using the tool [Toggl](#) as a means of tracking her time. Susan's overall experience was mixed: she appreciated the clarity that came with seeing how long planned tasks actually take, but she pointed out that human tendencies such as procrastination are always a factor, and that good intentions inevitably disappear when our workload increases (especially if we are working as freelancers).

Although I had to dash off before lunch was served, ironically enough, I came away with a head full of ideas and a sense of optimism – not tidsoptimism this time, but a feeling that there was definitely a way to conquer my own time planning. Since then, I've been trying out the approach of planning out each day the evening before it arrives (more accommodating of variables than a weekly plan, I find) and it's been going surprisingly well. Or maybe I shouldn't be surprised at Lydia's lesson that if you put a bit of time into time management, you'll certainly be rewarded.



*Siobhan is an in-house translator from German into English, specialising in technical fields such as industrial automation, instrumentation & domestic appliances.*

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## Member news

Here's where we welcome new members to the network. Also, please remember to notify the Membership Secretary ([membership@itiscotland.org.uk](mailto:membership@itiscotland.org.uk)) of any changes to your ITI membership category since you joined the network. In particular, let the MemSec know when you upgrade to MITI, as your details can then be made available to the general public online.

### New members:

→ **Laila Ennia:** I grew up in Spain and completed my MA in Translation and Interpreting at the University of Alicante. In the following 10 years, I have worked in France, New Zealand and the USA. I recently moved to Edinburgh from Oregon, where I spent the past four years working as a healthcare interpreter in English, Spanish and French. While in Oregon, I also volunteered in medical clinics that allow people with lower incomes to access medical services. In my free time, I enjoy exploring the outdoors, hiking, climbing and horse riding. I am looking forward to being part of the vibrant translating and interpreting community here and hope to meet people at various events in the future!

→ **Lisa Alymova:** I have recently defended my doctoral thesis at the University of Glasgow, with a PhD project that is interdisciplinary in nature and addresses the issue of cross-linguistic lexical gaps from the standpoint of both cognitive semantics and translation studies. My study aims to reveal inconsistencies between mental representations of speakers of English, Russian and Spanish and to explore ways of overcoming them in translation practice. Prior to embarking on my PhD journey, I worked as a professional translator following my graduation in Translation Studies from the Herzen State Pedagogical University

(St Petersburg, Russia). My working languages are Russian, English, Italian and Spanish, and I specialise in scientific, literary, legal and audio-visual translation. I have lived in Scotland for over six years and am currently based in Glasgow. I am very pleased to have joined the ITI Scottish Network and look forward to meeting ScotNetters in person in the near future.

### Other news:

→ It was thrilling to see ScotNet enjoying so much success at the **ITI Awards**, announced at the ITI Conference in early May – congratulations to them all!

◆ In the category of Best Performance on a Translation Assignment, **Aleksandra Chlon** and **Alicja Tokarska** were recognised for their work on the translation of the Essential Scots-Polish Dictionary, a free guide to everyday Scots words and expressions in app form. The pair worked alongside colleague Magdalena Herok-Broughton, translating, editing and making notes in the complex project, which contains some 9,500 terms.

◆ The judges of the Awards commented that the quality of this year's entries was so high that some special commendations were also necessary. Among them were **Susan Swann Higgins** and **Mike Downey**, who were recognised in the Best Performance on an Interpreting Assignment category for their

services to a French delegation at the COP26 summit in Glasgow.

→ One ScotNetter also had a very prominent role to play at the ITI Conference: congratulations to **Nicki Bone**, who officially took up the mantle of Chair of the ITI Board at the event.

Pictured below is Nicki receiving the ceremonial gavel from Paul Appleyard, her predecessor, plus a scene from the Gala Dinner (with ScotNetter **Pernille Chapman** spotted!). Many thanks to the ITI Conference organisers for providing access to their [album](#) of photographs from the weekend.



## Women in Translation Month

To mark the recent Women in Translation Month, a project launched by book blogger Meytal Radzinski and run every August since 2013, here are a few literature picks courtesy of the WIT website. The project is volunteer-led and you can donate to it [here](#). You can also follow its activities on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

***Woman Running In The Mountains*** by Yuko Tsushima, translated by Geraldine Harcourt: Set in 1970s Japan and recently reissued in translation, this acclaimed novel looks at early motherhood through the lens of a woman seeking refuge in Tokyo and beyond.

***Son of Svea: A Tale Of The People's Home*** by Lena Andersson, translated by Sarah Death: Described as funny, moving and wise, this twentieth-century Swedish story casts an astute eye on the country's social changes and welfare state.

***You Can Be The Last Leaf: Selected Poems*** by Maya Abu al-Hayyat, translated by Fady Joudah: This collection of poetry puts Palestinian life under the microscope, combining its societal idiosyncrasies with the author's own personal experiences.

***Dead Lands*** by Núria Bendicho, translated by Maruxa Relaño and Martha Tennent: Originally penned in Catalan, this story begins with the violent death of a man in a house where only his family lives. It leads to a search for who pulled the trigger, visiting the darker aspects of human nature along the way.

## ScotNet grants

The ITI Scottish Network offers 2 levels of grants to members as a contribution towards the costs of attending ITI events:

- 1) Grants of up to £30 are available for attending Scottish Network meetings.
- 2) ScotNetters may also apply for grants of up to £70 for attending national ITI events.

### How to apply for a grant

Contact our Treasurer (currently Norma Tait) at [treasurer@itiscotland.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@itiscotland.org.uk) *before* registering for the meeting. Subject to availability and meeting the eligibility criteria, she will approve the grant and notify you. In due course, forward her a copy of the receipt for the event or transport expenses and provide her with your bank details. She will then pay the respective amount into your account.

**General conditions:** Maximum of one grant per person per subscription year. You must be a member of ITI, so Friends of the Network are not eligible. Also members living in the central belt are not eligible to receive

grants for network meetings in Edinburgh or Glasgow. All recipients must be willing to contribute a report on the event they attended to the ITI ScotNet Newsletter.

The level of grants is reviewed every year at ScotNet's AGM. Under the current budget, 10 grants of £30 and 10 of £70 are available each year. From time to time, the Committee may also decide to offer additional grants to enable ScotNetters to attend particular events such as the ITI Conference, for example.

### ScotNet support fund

Grants to help pay ITI membership fees and interest-free loans of up to £400 to cover living expenses also continue to be available to ScotNetters who are still experiencing a downturn in income as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Anyone who is a member of both ITI and ScotNet is eligible to apply so please contact Norma at [treasurer@itiscotland.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@itiscotland.org.uk) if you could use a financial helping hand. (And once again many thanks to members who have so generously donated to this fund.)

## Looking forward to the next issue...

What have you been learning lately? As this issue has shown, it's a subject we're pretty keen on, and here at the newsletter, we're always keen to find out how you've been developing your knowledge. And although travelling has been a focus of this issue, it's of course not something that everyone wants to return to just yet – we haven't waved goodbye to the pandemic by any means. If you've been doing something interesting that's been home-based – like online learning, or even kitting out your home to provide a better working environment – we'd love to hear about that too. As ever, you can get in touch via [editor@itiscotland.org.uk](mailto:editor@itiscotland.org.uk) or [siobhangorrie@gmail.com](mailto:siobhangorrie@gmail.com) – and if you're a new member, we're always especially keen to hear about what you've been up to! ♦

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## Your Committee at a glance



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