

Scottish Island Voices

Slices of Contemporary Hebridean Life and Work
in
40 English and Gaelic videos presented for language learners



*Craigard Day Centre – Re-Store Recycling Project – Hebridean Food
Ceòlas Summer School – Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum and Art Centre
Bi Beò Songwriters*

Short online films with transcripts and translations,
suitable for pre-intermediate to post-intermediate learners,
totalling 3 hours of listening material divided evenly between the two languages



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Acknowledgements:

Grateful thanks to all interviewees and other individuals and groups appearing in the documentaries. Without their co-operation this project could not have been attempted. Music on all soundtracks was produced by Uist residents, music staff and students at Colaisde Bheinn na Faoghla, the Lews Castle College Benbecula Campus, and Ceòlas tutors and students. Dr Will Lamb kindly proofread the Gaelic documentary scripts. Kent Andersen and other POOLS partners have supplied invaluable ideas and encouragement.

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Feedback:

Comments and suggestions welcome to Gordon Wells at sm00gw@groupwise.uhi.ac.uk

1. INTRODUCTION

The Outer Hebrides (or Western Isles) lie off the west coast of Scotland, separated by the sea into 3 groups. To the north is the largest island group of Lewis and Harris, and to the south lie Barra and Vatersay. In the middle are the Uists (North and South Uist, Benbecula, and a number of smaller islands, all connected by causeway). Unlike in many parts of Britain, the communities in these islands are accustomed to using two different languages in their daily life, both English and Gaelic. This gives a distinctive character to the local culture, in which Gaelic musical and other traditions are upheld and practised alongside the broader English language “mainstream”. Localised economic activity is largely centred on the land and the sea, while modern communication systems also allow and encourage an international business perspective. The “cosmopolitan feel” is enhanced by the number of migrant workers arriving from other European countries to work in a range of local industries, including food processing and hospitality.

As a part of the European Leonardo POOLS project – www.languages.dk – Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and partners have created 40 short videos aimed at learners of both English and Gaelic. The videos are of two kinds. Firstly, short scripted documentaries have been produced with a voice-over commentary in plain language. Secondly, “in their own words” interviews with participants in the documentaries or other community members have also been recorded.

The documentaries are generally 4-7 minutes long. In relatively simple language they provide an introduction to a particular topic, event, or situation in the Uists. The interviews vary in length between 2 and 7 minutes. They present an opportunity for learners to listen to unscripted conversation at natural speed. As a listening exercise they will be best suited to those learners who already have a good grasp of the core grammar of the language, and are looking to expand their vocabulary and train their ears to natural spoken language.

With the interviews it should be noted that, as a sample of “natural” speech, the extracts contain all the normal “performance errors” – pauses, hesitations, false starts, repetitions etc – that characterise everyday spoken language. These are not idealised and pre-scripted texts, but should be viewed as samples of “real” language, as it is used in the community.

2. VIDEO LIST AND LINKS

	English	Gaelic
1	Craigard Day Care Centre Documentary	Craigard Day Care Centre Documentary
2	Client Interview <i>Donald Mackinnon</i>	Client Interview <i>Donald Mackinnon</i>
3	Supervisor Interview <i>Marnie Keltie</i>	Community Interview <i>Flora Macdonald</i>
4	Re-Store Furniture Recycling Documentary	Re-Store Furniture Recycling Documentary
5	Craftsman Interview <i>Seumas Macdonald</i>	Craftsman Interview <i>Seumas Macdonald</i>
6	Director Interview <i>Neil Macdonald</i>	Director Interview <i>Neil Macdonald</i>
7	Hebridean Food: Smokehouse Documentary	Hebridean Food: Smokehouse Documentary
8	Environmental Health Interview <i>Alasdair Maceachen</i>	Environmental Health Interview <i>Alasdair Maceachen</i>
9	Hebridean Food: Cookery Demonstration Documentary	Hebridean Food: Cookery Demonstration Documentary
10	Hotelier Interview <i>Isabel Graham</i>	Hotelier Interview <i>Isabel Graham</i>
11	Ceòlas Music Summer School Documentary	Ceòlas Music Summer School Documentary
12	Chairperson Interview <i>Mary Macinnes</i>	Chairperson Interview <i>Mary Macinnes</i>
13	Administrator Interview <i>Mary Ellen Stewart</i>	Administrator Interview <i>Mary Ellen Stewart</i>
14	Student Interview <i>Dale Cummings</i>	Student Interview <i>Ruairidh MacIlleathain</i>
15	Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum and Art Centre Documentary	Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum and Art Centre Documentary
16	Heritage Officer Interview <i>Caitriona MacCuish</i>	Heritage Officer Interview <i>Caitriona MacCuish</i>
17	Student Interview <i>Donald Ferguson</i>	Student Interview <i>Donald Ferguson</i>
18	Bi Beò Songwriting Partnership Documentary	Bi Beò Songwriting Partnership Documentary
19	Lyricist Interview <i>James McLetchie</i>	Lyricist Interview <i>James McLetchie</i>
20	Musician Interview <i>Kevin De Las Casas</i>	Song <i>James McLetchie</i>

Links to the English films are at <http://www.languages.dk/digital/index.html#English> and to the Gaelic films at <http://www.languages.dk/digital/index.html#Gaelic>. The following catalogues give details about each individual film, including duration, listening level, and a summary of content.

3. CATALOGUE OF ENGLISH VIDEOS

E1. Craigard Day Centre Documentary

Content / topic: Care for adults with special needs

Duration: 6 minutes

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: This is a short documentary about the Craigard Day Centre in Lochmaddy, North Uist. It's a centre for people with disabilities, run by the Social Services Department of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, the Western Isles Council.

Language notes: Simple documentary narrative and description.

E2. Craigard Day Centre Client Interview

Content / topic: Care for adults with special needs

Duration: 2.03 minutes

Level (listening level required): B1

Summary: Donald Mackinnon is a client at Craigard Day Centre. Here he talks about his activities at Craigard. He also talks about the pictures he's exhibiting at the Taigh Chearsabhaigh art centre. He goes on to say what else he does during the week, mentioning the names (NAAFI, Lovats) of another workplace, and his musical activities at the weekend.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing daily activities.

E3. Craigard Day Centre Supervisor Interview

Content / topic: Care for adults with special needs

Duration: 3.38 minutes

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Marnie Keltie is the Day Care Supervisor at the Craigard Day Centre in Lochmaddy, North Uist. She talks about the activities they do, and the reasons why they're important.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing daily activities, and explaining their importance.

E4. Re-Store Project Documentary

Content / topic: Furniture restoration and recycling

Duration: 5:03

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: The Re-Store Project is a social enterprise in South Uist. Old furniture is restored and recycled. The project also houses a book recycling scheme, and provides employment and training opportunities in the local community.

Language notes: Simple documentary narrative and description of furniture recycling process, with the focus on the craftsman.

E5. Re-Store Craftsman/Trainer Interview

Content / topic: Furniture restoration and recycling

Duration: 4:08

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Seumas Macdonald is the Craftsman/Trainer at the Re-Store project in Bornais, South Uist. He talks about the work and training they do, and the value of the project to the trainees and the community.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing daily activities, and explaining their importance.

E6. Re-Store Director Interview

Content / topic: Furniture restoration and recycling PLUS voluntary sector engagement in rural development

Duration: 3.29

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Neil Macdonald is a director on the Board of Management of Cothrom, the community group that manages the Re-Store project. He describes the directors' responsibilities for the work of Cothrom in general and the importance of voluntary group involvement in island community life.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing management and community issues.

E7. Hebridean Food: Smokehouse Documentary

Content / topic: Fish Processing

Duration: 4:32

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: The Hebridean Smokehouse on North Uist processes salmon and other foodstuffs for a global market. This documentary illustrates the preparation and packaging of the product

Language notes: Simple documentary narrative and description of food preparation and packaging process, with the focus on the product.

E8. Hebridean Food: Environmental Health Interview

Content / topic: Food handling

Duration: 5.31

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Alasdair MacEachen is an Environmental Health Officer in Benbecula. He describes the implications of his job in terms of both enforcement and education in particular relation to food handling and production.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing job remit and regulatory framework.

E9. Hebridean Food: Cookery Demonstration Documentary

Content / topic: Food preparation, and local specialities

Duration: 7:02

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: The "Blas Uibhist" night was put on by the Ceòlas community group in South Uist to celebrate local food as well as music. Local food producers offered tastings of their products, and a well-known hotelier gave a cookery demonstration. The evening finished with live local music. The event was held in Gaelic, with simultaneous translation into English.

Language notes: Simple documentary narrative and description.

E10. Hebridean Food: Hotelier Interview

Content / topic: Food preparation, and local specialities

Duration: 2:25

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Isabel Graham is a well-known hotelier and cook at the Orasay Inn in South Uist. Here she describes how she uses local produce when preparing meals for guests.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - expressing preferences and explaining choices.

E11. Ceòlas summer school documentary

Content / topic: Music Summer School, Tourism

Duration: 6:47

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: The Ceòlas music summer school is held annually in South Uist. It aims to integrate traditional music and dance in a community setting. It has strong links with tutors from Cape Breton in Canada, where old styles of Scottish fiddling and stepdancing have been maintained. The school attracts students from around the world.

Language notes: Simple documentary narrative and description.

E12. Ceòlas Chairperson Interview

Content / topic: Community impact of summer school

Duration: 3:57

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Mary Macinnes is the chairperson of the local committee that organises the summer school each year. She describes the activities of the group and the impact of Ceolas on the local community.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing activities, and assessing impacts.

E13. Ceòlas Administrator Interview

Content / topic: Administrative procedures for summer school

Duration: 2:25

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Mary Ellen Stewart is the administrator of the summer school. She describes the tasks that need to be done leading up to and during the week.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - listing and describing tasks.

E14. Ceòlas Student Interview

Content / topic: Educational impact of summer school

Duration: 3:30

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Dale Cummings is an American student who has regularly attended the school over many years. He talks about the quality of the instruction and the curriculum, and describes its personal impact upon himself.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing learning activities and giving personal opinions.

E15. Taigh Chearsabhaigh Museum and Art Centre Documentary

Content / topic: Museum and Art Centre, Tourism

Duration: 7:20

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: Taigh Chearsabhaigh is a key attraction for both visitors and local people in North Uist. It has an important development and educational role in the visual arts, as well as in conserving and displaying aspects of local culture and history.

Language notes: Simple documentary narrative and description.

E16. Taigh Chearsabhagh Heritage Officer Interview

Content / topic: Heritage development

Duration: 1:49

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Caitriona MacCuish is the Heritage Officer at Taigh Chearsabhagh. She describes what the job entails and what she enjoys about working there.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing job remit and satisfaction.

E17. Taigh Chearsabhagh Student Interview

Content / topic: Value of museum and art centre as visitor attraction and educational centre

Duration: 2:08

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Donald Ferguson speaks as a student on the first year of the BA in Fine Art that is hosted by Taigh Chearsabhagh. He describes and comments on the facilities in the centre and the quality of services and teaching staff on the course.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - listing and grading services and facilities.

E18. Bi Beò Songwriting Documentary

Content / topic: Media Studies

Duration: 6:19

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: Kevin De Las Casas and James McLetchie, both resident in North Uist, write and perform songs with their group "Bi Beò". The documentary follows the song creation process from initial ideas round a kitchen table through musical arrangement to studio recording.

Language notes: Simple documentary narrative and description.

E19. Bi Beò Lyricist Interview

Content / topic: Lyric writing and interpretation

Duration: 4:21

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: James McLetchie talks about what prompted him to write the words to the song “Na seann daoine” (see also G20). He explains the references to local people and family members, and reflects on how things have changed in his local community.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - explaining writing process.

E20. Bi Beò Musician Interview

Content / topic: Song composition, performance, and recording

Duration: 5:23

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: Kevin De Las Casas talks to James McLetchie about the song creation process, and about his musical background and influences. He also describes his own musical development since arriving in Uist, and the importance of performance experience for both composing and recording.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - explaining composition process.

4. CATALOGUE OF GAELIC VIDEOS

G1. Craigard Day Centre Documentary

Content / topic: Care for adults with special needs

Duration: 6 minutes

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: This is a short documentary about the Craigard Day Centre in Lochmaddy, North Uist. It's a centre for people with disabilities, run by the Social Services Department of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, the Western Isles Council.

Language notes: Simple documentary narrative and description.

G2. Craigard Day Centre Client Interview

Content / topic: Care for adults with special needs

Duration: 1.33 minutes

Level (listening level required): B1

Summary: Donald Mackinnon is a client at Craigard Day Centre. Here he talks about his activities at Craigard. He also talks about the pictures he's exhibiting at the Taigh Chearsabhaigh art centre. He goes on to say what else he does during the week, mentioning the names (NAAFI, Lovats) of another workplace, and his musical activities at the weekend.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing daily activities.

G3. Craigard Day Centre Community Interview

Content / topic: Care for adults with special needs PLUS Traditional Skills

Duration: 4.30 minutes

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Flora Macdonald, a North Uist resident, talks first of all about the importance of Craigard in the community, and her own interactions with Donald MacKinnon. She goes on to describe her reasons for setting up the traditional skills exhibition in Taigh Chearsabhaigh, and her own thoughts on their place in the community today.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing activities, and expressing opinions.

G4. Re-Store Project Documentary

Content / topic: Furniture restoration and recycling

Duration: 5:03

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: The Re-Store Project is a social enterprise in South Uist. Old furniture is restored and recycled. The project also houses a book recycling scheme, and provides employment and training opportunities in the local community.

Language notes: Simple documentary narrative and description of furniture recycling process, with the focus on the craftsman.

G5. Re-Store Craftsman/Trainer Interview

Content / topic: Furniture restoration and recycling

Duration: 4:12

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Seumas Macdonald is the Craftsman/Trainer at the Re-Store project in Bornais, South Uist. He talks about the work and training they do, and the value of the project to the trainees and the community.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing daily activities, and explaining their importance.

G6. Re-Store Director Interview

Content / topic: Furniture restoration and recycling PLUS voluntary sector engagement in rural development

Duration: 4:30

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Neil Macdonald is a director on the Board of Management of Cothrom, the community group that manages the Re-Store project. He describes the directors' responsibilities for the work of Cothrom in general and the importance of voluntary group involvement in island community life.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing management and community issues.

G7. Hebridean Food: Smokehouse Documentary

Content / topic: Fish Processing

Duration: 4:32

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: The Hebridean Smokehouse on North Uist processes salmon and other foodstuffs for a global market. This documentary illustrates the preparation and packaging of the product

Language notes: Simple documentary narrative and description of food preparation and packaging process, with the focus on the product.

G8. Hebridean Food: Environmental Health Interview

Content / topic: Food handling

Duration: 6:07

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Alasdair MacEachen is an Environmental Health Officer in Benbecula. He describes the implications of his job in terms of both enforcement and education in particular relation to food handling and production.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing job remit and regulatory framework.

G9. Hebridean Food: Cookery Demonstration Documentary

Content / topic: Food preparation, and local specialities

Duration: 7:02

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: The "Blas Uibhist" night was put on by the Ceòlas community group in South Uist to celebrate local food as well as music. Local food producers offered tastings of their products, and a well-known hotelier gave a cookery demonstration. The evening finished with live local music. The event was held in Gaelic, with simultaneous translation into English.

Language notes: Simple documentary narrative and description, mixed with sections of authentic public speaking.

G10. Hebridean Food: Hotelier Interview

Content / topic: Food preparation, and local specialities

Duration: 2:04

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Isabel Graham is a well-known hotelier and cook at the Orasay Inn in South Uist. Here she describes how she uses local produce when preparing meals for guests.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - expressing preferences and explaining choices.

G11. Ceòlas summer school documentary

Content / topic: Music Summer School, Tourism

Duration: 6:48

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: The Ceòlas music summer school is held annually in South Uist. It aims to integrate traditional music and dance in a community setting. It has strong links with tutors from Cape Breton in Canada, where old styles of Scottish fiddling and stepdancing have been maintained. The school attracts students from around the world.

Language notes: Simple documentary narrative and description.

G12. Ceòlas Chairperson Interview

Content / topic: Community impact of summer school

Duration: 4:08

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Mary Macinnes is the chairperson of the local committee that organises the summer school each year. She describes the activities of the group and the impact of Ceolas on the local community.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing activities, and assessing impacts.

G13. Ceòlas Administrator Interview

Content / topic: Administrative procedures for summer school

Duration: 2:15

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Mary Ellen Stewart is the administrator of the summer school. She describes the tasks that need to be done leading up to and during the week.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - listing and describing tasks.

G14. Ceòlas Student Interview

Content / topic: Educational impact of summer school

Duration: 2:03

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Ruairidh MacIlleathain is a well-known Gaelic broadcaster with a particular interest in Gaelic learners. He is attending Ceolas for the first time. He talks about the quality of the instruction in his chosen subjects, and assesses the value of the school for learners of Gaelic.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing learning activities and giving personal opinions.

G15. Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum and Art Centre Documentary

Content / topic: Museum and Art Centre, Tourism

Duration: 7:20

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: Taigh Chearsabhagh is a key attraction for both visitors and local people in North Uist. It has an important development and educational role in the visual arts, as well as in conserving and displaying aspects of local culture and history.

Language notes: Simple documentary narrative and description.

G16. Taigh Chearsabhagh Heritage Officer Interview

Content / topic: Heritage development

Duration: 2:03

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Caitriona MacCuish is the Heritage Officer at Taigh Chearsabhagh. She describes what the job entails and what she enjoys about working there.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - describing job remit and satisfaction.

G17. Taigh Chearsabhagh Student Interview

Content / topic: Value of museum and art centre as visitor attraction and educational centre

Duration: 2:25

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: Donald Ferguson speaks as a student on the first year of the BA in Fine Art that is hosted by Taigh Chearsabhagh. He describes and comments on the facilities in the centre and the quality of services and teaching staff on the course.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - listing and grading services and facilities.

G18. Bi Beò Songwriting Documentary

Content / topic: Media Studies

Duration: 6:19

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: Kevin De Las Casas and James McLetchie, both resident in North Uist, write and perform songs with their group "Bi Beò". The documentary follows the song creation process from initial ideas round a kitchen table through musical arrangement to studio recording.

Language notes: Simple documentary narrative and description.

G19. Bi Beò Lyricist Interview

Content / topic: Lyric writing and interpretation

Duration: 7:34

Level (listening level required): B2

Summary: James McLetchie talks about what prompted him to write the words to the song “Na seann daoine” (see also G20). He explains the references to local people and family members, talks about the importance of social customs and the physical environment in Uist, and reflects on how things have changed in his local community.

Language notes: Unscripted authentic speech at natural pace, exhibiting characteristic "performance errors" - false starts, pauses, repetitions, etc - explaining writing process.

G20. Bi Beò Song

Content / topic: Community heritage and change

Duration: 5:04

Level (listening level required): A2

Summary: The song “Na seann daoine” was created by James McLetchie and Kevin De Las Casas for performance by their group “Bi Beò”. This is a “first cut” recording made in Benbecula.

Language notes: Poetic verses and chorus.