

# Stephen Clackson's Letter from School Place

—reaching out to North Isles' residents of all ages.



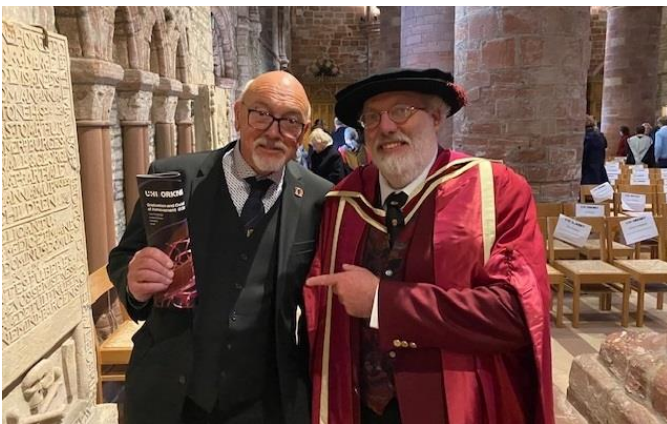
Since my last [Letter](#), I've been present at both ends of Orkney's educational spectrum, from attending the *UHI Orkney Graduation & Celebration of Achievement* at St Magnus' Cathedral as a member of the UHI Orkney Stakeholder Group (photo below left—with my worthy auld pal, Cllr John Ross Scott), to accepting an invitation (accompanied by Cllr Thomson) to Shapinsay School to talk to the primary pupils about Orkney Islands Council and being a councillor. Whilst there, we enjoyed a *World School Milk Day* lunch (photo above), and the pupils showed me around their playpark and demonstrated their gymnastic skills on the climbing frame. I would welcome invitations from other schools to meet with and talk to their pupils.

At our Policy & Resources Committee meeting, the investigation of the feasibility of a visitor levy was discussed. I brought up some of the potential challenges that accommodation providers have already made me aware of, and I also sought reassurance that it would be possible for Orkney residents travelling within Orkney to be exempted from paying such a levy.

I've also been to a Monitoring & Audit Committee meeting, yet another budget & finance seminar, and a General Meeting, and we welcomed colleagues from Shetland Islands Council to meetings of the Orkney & Shetland Valuation Joint Board. I was one of a group of councillors selected to meet His Majesty's Inspectors of Education carrying out a "thematic" inspection on local authority approaches to supporting school improvement. At short notice, I attended a GovScot/Openreach drop-in on the R100 fibre rollout in the North Isles. Work is advancing rapidly in the larger islands, and I've been apprised of how superfast broadband is being implemented in Papay, but I don't see much progress on bringing it to North Ronaldsay, Egilsay or Wyre.

If you keep poultry (or most other birds) and have not already registered them, the deadline is the end of November.

Finally, well done to my son Wulfric, who has cycled all the way from Sanday to Land's End in Cornwall via John O' Groats. He's been present at both ends of the island of Great Britain. So I must add another photograph (below right).



*Stephen*

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**Letter from School Place** is also available on-line at [clackson.info](http://clackson.info)

Photo credits: Leanne Bews, Roger Neville-Smith, anonymous bystander.

