

Five walks in Fair Isle, Foula & Papa Stour

to get you out & about to improve
physical health and mental
wellbeing

Fair Isle, Foula
& Papa Stour

PEERIE WANDERS

‘Peerie Wanders’ has been designed and developed by NHS Shetland Health Improvement Department in collaboration with Shetland Islands Council. This booklet contains a number of walks to get you out and about to help you on your journey to become more active.

WHY WALKING?



Walking is a great way to be active and stay healthy—it’s not surprising that walking is the most popular leisure activity in Scotland. Walking is free, it’s good for the environment, and is suitable for almost everyone. You don’t have to be fit to start with—you just have to start! If you pick up your pace, you’ll get more health benefits. Taking notice of the natural world also helps with our wellbeing.

WHY BE MORE ACTIVE?

The human body needs to be active to function well, but modern living means that most of us are not active enough. Being regularly active can:

- Increase our energy.
- Strengthen our muscles.
- Lower our risk of heart disease, stroke and osteoporosis.
- Improve our mood and wellbeing.
- Help us sleep better.
- Improve our self-esteem and confidence.



HOW OFTEN SHOULD I BE ACTIVE?

The physical activity guidelines recommend that we should aim to do at least two and a half hours of moderate activity each week, which can be broken up into 30 minutes, 5 days a week. Walking, and any other activity that raises our heart rate and makes us feel warmer, counts towards this. Remember any amount of activity is beneficial and something is better than doing nothing.

GETTING STARTED

The walks vary in length from 1km-5km and are designed for all levels of ability and fitness. The routes may have a red route and blue route: the red route is the shorter route; the blue route gives you an added progression if you want a challenge.

Tips to help you get started:

- Start with the shortest walk at a pace that feels comfortable for you – don't worry if you can't complete it, just do what suits you.
- As you walk more and become fitter, begin walking at a more brisk pace to get more physical health benefits.
- Keep a note of your walks in the diary at the end of this booklet – you can record how you felt during the walk, how long it took you to complete and any other reflections.



PEERIE WANDERS - TOP TIPS

- Wear comfortable sensible footwear, particularly if the terrain is uneven.
- Encourage a friend, family member or colleague to join you.
- If walking alone, tell someone where you're going and how long you plan to be.
- If the visibility is poor, wear reflective clothing.
- Check the weather forecast before you go and dress appropriately.



Look out for Wildlife

On all these peerie wanders, there is the possibility to see a variety of wildlife. Some walks have more opportunities than others, depending on the area, and they will vary throughout the seasons.

The greatest variety will be in the spring and summer when most wildflower species bloom and resident bird species are joined by summer migrants. Although autumn and winter are quieter times of year, there is still plenty to look for. We have provided prompts in each walk of the wildlife you might come across.



Nature connection prompt

Find a pattern in nature that looks like a face.

RSPB Shetland Audio Trail



Scan me with your smart phone camera!

For a sound bite of some of Shetland's nature friendly places, have a listen to RSPB's audio trails. You can listen to these directly from your phone by scanning the QR code.





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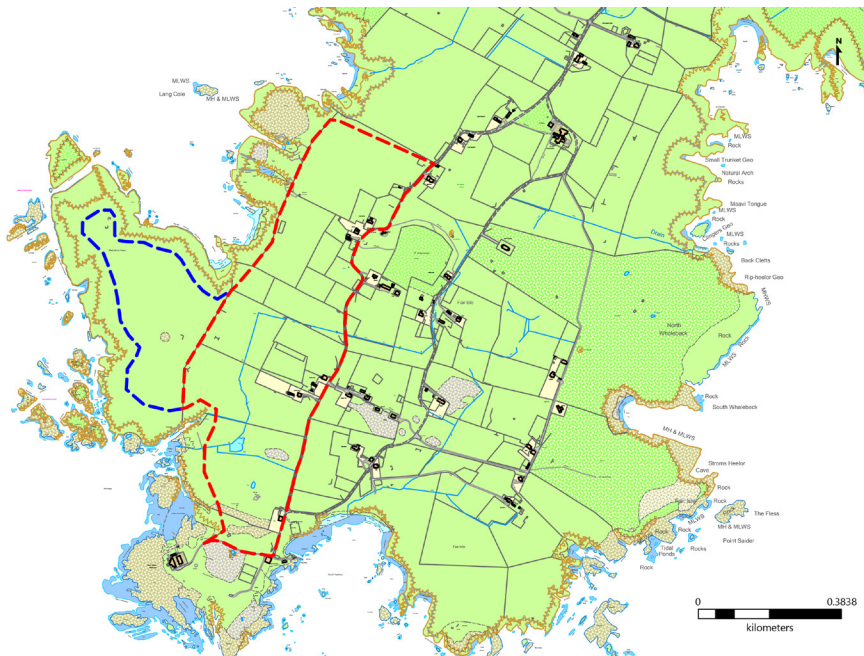
WALK 1 - Bu Ness, Fair Isle

You can start your walk at North Haven. Follow the road down towards the pier, from here head up the banks keeping to the left. Walk the whole way around the Bu Ness until you reach the pier again.

- Length: 2.4km or 1.5 mile return walk.
- Est time: 30 minutes.
- Look out for: cliff scenery, coastal wildflowers, seals and seabirds including puffins, wheatears and rock pipits.
- Terrain: most of this walk is off road with uneven terrain and gradients.
- Potential Hazards: Steep coastal slopes and cliffs.



Nature connection prompt: Find a natural object that is mostly grey. Are there any other colours you can see on it too?



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WALK 2 - Malcolm's Head, Fair Isle

Head towards Fair Isle Primary School where you can start your walk. Follow the road around in a loop until you come back to the school again. As an additional walk, you can follow the steep blue loop up to Malcolm's Head for some scenic views.

- Length: red route: 3km - blue route: 3.7km.
- Est time: red route: 1 hour - blue route: 1.5 hour.
- Look out for: cliff scenery, coastal wildflowers, seals, seabirds including puffins, wheatears and rock pipits.
- Terrain: the red route follows a road and then uneven grassy terrain. The blue route will take you up and down a hill with stiles.
- Potential Hazards: Steep coastal slopes and cliffs.



Nature connection prompt: Listen for natural sounds, what do you hear?



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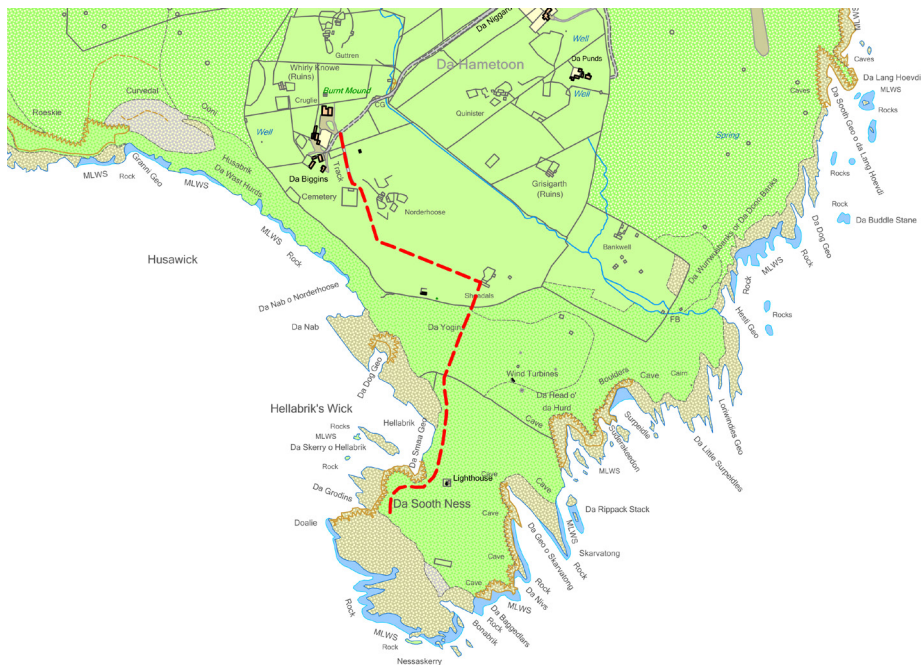
WALK 3 - Gaada Stack, Foula

You can start your walk at the northern end of the road on Foula. From here head north to the coast and follow it to the west enjoying views of stacks and cliffs.

- Length: 1.6km or 1mile return walk
- Est time: 20 minutes
- Look out for: sea cliffs and stacks, coastal wildflowers, and seabirds including great and arctic skuas.
- Terrain: this walk uses a track and uneven coastal grass, with stiles.
- Potential Hazards: coastal slopes and cliffs.



Nature connection prompt: Find a natural object and use more than one of your senses to check it out. What does it look/sound/feel like?



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WALK 4 - The South Light, Foula

You can start your walk at the southern end of the road on Foula at Da Biggins. From here head south towards the lighthouse enjoying views of stacks and cliffs.

- Length: 1.6km or 1 mile return walk.
- Est time: 20 minutes.
- Look out for: coastal wildflowers and seabirds offshore.
- Terrain: this walk uses a track and uneven coastal grass with stiles.
- Potential Hazards: coastal slopes and cliffs.



Nature connection prompt: Lie on your back and look up to the sky, do you notice any recognisable shapes in the clouds?



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WALK 5 - Housa Voe, Papa Stour

Begin your walk from the ferry waiting room and head through the south gate across grass and down towards the beach for a walk around Housa Voe.

- Length: 2 km or 1.25 mile return walk.
- Est time: 20 minutes.
- Look out for: coastal wildflowers and shorebirds, as well as grey and common seals.
- Terrain: this walk is on uneven grass ground or on beach.
- Potential Hazards: uneven ground.



Nature connection prompt: Find a pebble and look closely at the patterns on it. What does it remind you of?

TAKING CARE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Shetland is famed for its natural beauty and wildlife. By following the guidelines outlined in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code you will respect the needs of those who rely on the countryside for their living, whilst preserving the natural environment.

1. Use stiles and gates to cross fences and walls. Fasten all gates that you have opened.
2. Do not walk through fields of cultivated grass as this is a very important crop in Shetland.
3. If you have to cross cultivated land, do so by the edge of the field.
4. Avoid livestock and do not disturb them, especially during lambing time (mid-April until late-June).
5. Whilst you may walk a dog, you should keep it on a short lead in the countryside, avoid livestock and be a responsible dog owner and pick up after your dog. Obey any notice forbidding dogs.
6. Do not leave litter or start fires.
7. Do not disturb nesting birds, especially those which nest on the ground.
8. Respect wildlife and refrain from picking wild flowers.
9. When parking on country roads do not obstruct access roads or access to fields. Park further away if need be.
10. Take care when walking near cliff tops as the edges can be crumbly and dangerous.

OTHER THINGS TO NOTE



All the walks in these leaflets have been safety assessed by Shetland Islands Council, however, as they are all based outside in the countryside there are factors to watch out for that may not be noted. This include potential livestock (including Bulls), cliffs, swooping birds (during mating and hatching season), animal faeces and walks taking you close to the sea. These are factors that neither NHS nor SIC can predict due to the nature of the land that these walks take place on, so take extra care looking out for potential hazards.

PEERIE WANDER WALK DIARY

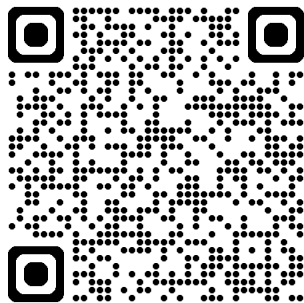
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PEERIE WANDER WALK DIARY

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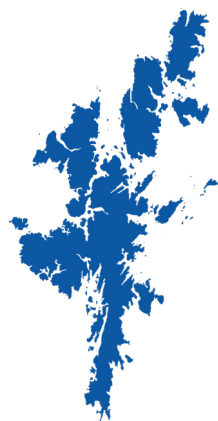
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These walks have been developed by NHS Shetland Health Improvement Department in collaboration with Shetland Islands Council. The refresh of these booklets have included input from RSPB Shetland, Shetland Amenity Trust, NatureScot and Ability Shetland. Print funded by ZetTrans & Paths for All, March 2025.

First published: 2019 Refreshed: 2025



FOR A HAPPIER,
HEALTHIER SCOTLAND



Shetland Amenity Trust
Caring for Shetland's heritage

