

PEERIE WANDERS

Five walks in Sumburgh, Sandwick & Dunrossness

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

**Sumburgh, Sandwick
& Dunrossness**

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.





WALK 1 - St Ninian's Isle

- Length: 1.7km or 1 mile return walk.
- Est time: 15 minutes.
- Look out for: beautiful coastal scenery, seabirds offshore such as arctic terns and divers, shorebirds on the beach, oystercatchers, ringed plovers. St Ninians Kirk remains and the site of St Ninians Isle treasure.
- Terrain: the walk down to the beach is at a gradient. Once on the beach it is a flat, pleasant walk across the sand.
- Potential Hazards: uneven ground, rabbit holes and cliff edges.

Nature connection prompt: Touch the water with your bare hands or feet. What does it feel like?



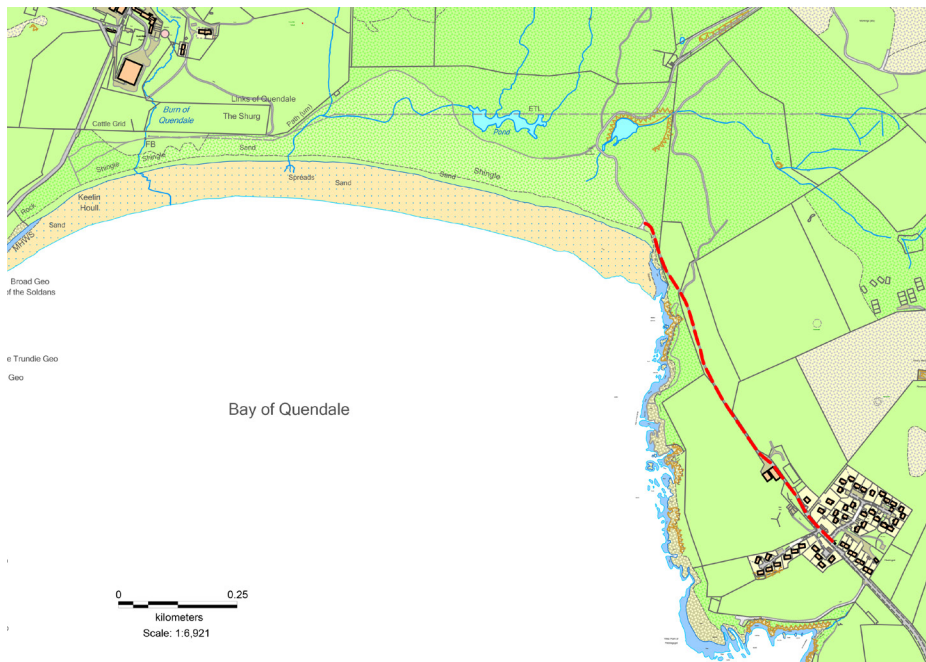
WALK 2 - Sumburgh Head Lighthouse (RSPB reserve)

Head south towards Sumburgh airport, and follow the signs to Sumburgh Head & Lighthouse. Begin your walk from the carpark. The Lookout is a fully accessible sea watching hide halfway up the hill.

- Length: 1km or 2/3 mile return walk.
- Est time: 10 minutes.
- Look out for: cliff scenery, coastal wildflowers and seabird colonies of guillemots, puffins, kittiwakes, razorbills, shags and fulmars. Look out for cetaceans and seals.
- Terrain: the walk up to the lighthouse is steep terrain. Disabled parking available at the top.
- Potential Hazards: take care around cliff edges and uneven ground.



Nature connection prompt: Focus on each one of your senses in turn. What do you hear/see/smell/feel?



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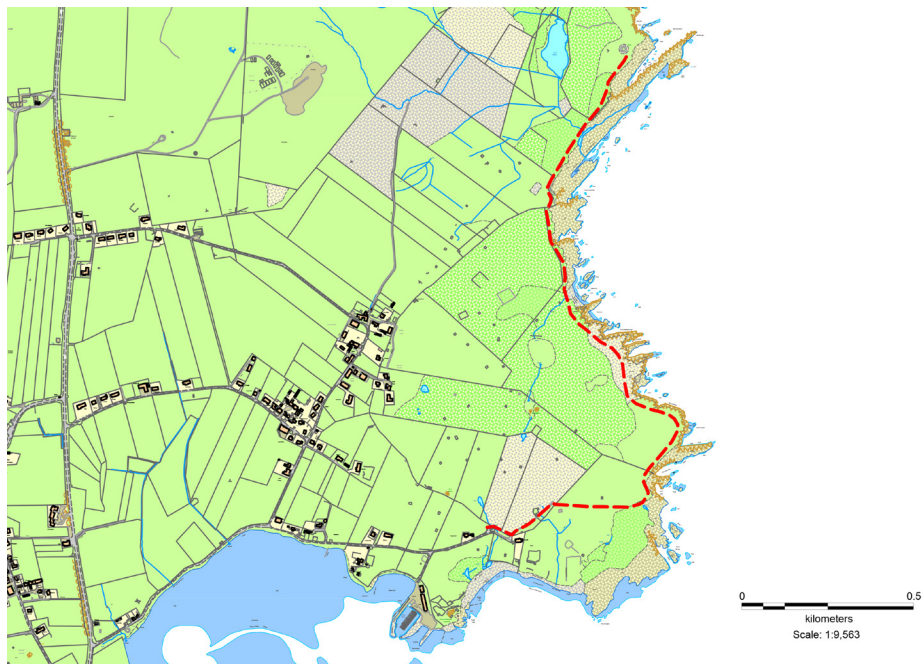
WALK 3 - Quendale Beach

From Toab head north west towards the Bay of Quendale and it's long beach. The walk takes you to the beach and back, but once there you can walk along as much of the beach as time and fitness allows.

- Length: 800m walk to beach, further if you choose to walk along the beach.
- Est time: 10 minutes plus option of longer.
- Look out for: beautiful sandy beach, seabirds offshore, and wading birds on the beach.
- Terrain: Uneven terrain and soft sand. Once on the beach, it is a flat, pleasant walk across the sand.
- Potential Hazards: Uneven terrain.



Nature connection prompt: Draw a picture in the sand, and use natural materials such as stones or seaweed to enhance it.



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WALK 5 - The Cletts, Virkie

Heading south on the A970 towards Sumburgh, take the left turn just before the runway and follow the road to the end. The walk starts at the stile on the left just before the final house.

- Length: 4km return walk.
- Est time: 1.5 hours.
- Look out for coastal scenery, “da red pool”, seabirds offshore, coastal wildflowers, wheatears and skylarks, redshank curlew, oystercatchers, teal and mallard.
- Terrain: some short hills, uneven grass, stiles and ladder stiles to get across.
- Potential Hazards: take care when going over stiles.



Nature connection prompt: Find a natural object and try to describe how it feels to the touch. Is it rough/smooth/warm/bumpy? Sometimes it helps to close your eyes!

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

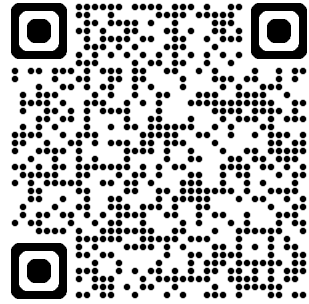
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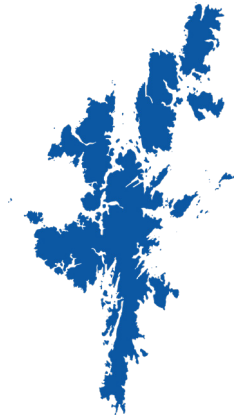
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FOR A HAPPIER,
HEALTHIER SCOTLAND



Shetland Amenity Trust
Caring for Shetland's heritage

