

# Geowalks: Shetland Islands

## Wednesday 21 to Tuesday 27 June 2017

The wild and remote Shetland archipelago is renowned for its scenery, wildlife, archaeology and rocks, a must-visit for anyone who loves Scottish islands. The geology is extremely varied across the island group: dominated by a wide range of different metamorphic rocks, linked to the Lewisian, Dalradian and Moine of the Scottish highlands, but compressed and juxtaposed in narrow slices and accompanied by granite, sandstone and volcanic rocks from the Devonian period, and in Unst in the far north, a unique assemblage from the Iapetus Ocean floor. A huge variety of rocks that is reflected in the different character of every island and every view. These rocks and scenery would be enough to entertain and delight on their own, but are accompanied by many other features of interest, including rich archaeology and culture, and world-famous bird life.

This trip will be run with Robina Barton of Selkie Ventures. Robina is an archaeologist and tour guide, she has lived in Shetland for many years, knows its geology, nature and archaeology very well and previously worked for Geopark Shetland.



### Outline Programme

*(Monday 19 / Tuesday 20 June: optional informal geology days in Orkney – get in touch for details)*

*Tuesday 20 June overnight: Travel by ferry from Aberdeen or Orkney.*

**Wednesday 21 June:** Arrive Lerwick. Introductory tour of south mainland, including a visit to the Jarlshof prehistoric settlement for an overview of 4500 years of human settlement.

**Thursday** Shetland mainland explorations, including a boat trip to Mousa.

**Friday** Northmaven: Esha Ness Volcano Trail, fantastic coastal scenery with a walk along the Esha Ness cliffs and a visit to one of Shetland's key fault lines, the Walls Boundary Fault.

**Saturday** Flexi-day around Lerwick: time to visit the museum, take a boat trip and explore the town; optional afternoon trip to the island of Bressay for a walk at Noss sound to explore volcanic breccia and sandstone.

**Sunday** Travel north to Unst, walk across the exposed ophiolite rocks of the Keen of Hamar National Nature Reserve. Visit Saxa Vord Hill for views of Muckle Flugga. Overnight on Unst.

**Monday** Day on Unst, visiting the oceanic / continental divide at Norwick beach, the Skaw granite and Hermaness National Nature Reserve.

**Tuesday 27 June:** Travel back to Lerwick, time en route for final visits to places of interest, early evening ferry departure for Aberdeen.

*Wednesday 28 June: Arrive Aberdeen 7am.*

### Details

**Cost** Course fee £490 (including guides, all transport in Shetland, hostel accommodation with breakfast and lunch).

#### Travelling to Shetland

Cost of travelling to Shetland is not included. We recommend travel on the overnight ferry from Aberdeen (Northlink Ferries).

#### Transport during the trip

Transport will be in Selkie Ventures' people carrier and an additional hire vehicle as required.

#### Accommodation & Catering

We will be based in comfortable hostel accommodation at Isleburgh House in Lerwick and Saxavord in Unst. The cost includes six nights hostel accommodation (max four people per room), self-service breakfasts and lunches. If you'd prefer B&B or a hotel, you are free to make your own arrangements.

For evening meals there is a choice of eating out or self-catering at the hostel. We will have a couple of meals out as a group.

#### Booking Conditions

Bookings need to be confirmed with a deposit of £50 (cheques payable to Geowalks). Full payment is due four weeks in advance. If you cancel your booking, refunds will only be available if we manage to fill your place. Travel insurance is recommended – many insurers offer cheap UK-only cover.

In the unlikely event of the trip being cancelled, you will be informed immediately and receive a full refund.

#### Level of fitness required

The trip will involve short walks on paths and rough ground (up to 6 miles). There will be some flexibility in the programme, allowing you to opt out and do your own thing. Suitable for people who walk regularly and are accustomed to rough ground.

#### Recommended Reading

Orkney & Shetland, Scottish Natural Heritage (Landscape fashioned by Geology Series), 2010. ISBN 978 1 85397 602 5. Shetland Geopark – [www.geoparkshetland.org.uk](http://www.geoparkshetland.org.uk).

A photographic guide to Shetland's geology, David Malcolm and Robina Barton, published by the Shetland Times 2015.



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