Discover Shetland’s most dramatic, beautiful geological landscapes.

Shetland rocks!

Shetland rocks! Discover Shetland’s most dramatic, beautiful geological landscapes.

Useful contacts
Disability Shetland
Market House, 14 Market Street, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0JP
01595 743920

Emergency Services
999

North Isles Ferries
01957 722 259

Scottish Natural Heritage
Stewart Building, Esplanade, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0LL
01595 693345

Shetland Amenity Trust
Geology Officer & Rangers
Garthspool, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0NY
01595 694688

Shetland Museum
and Archives
Hay’s Dock, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0WP
01595 695057

Visit Shetland
Market Cross, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0LU
08701 999 440

Shetland Heritage Trails
© Shetland Geotours

To ensure you get the most from your visit:

Be safe
- Shetland weather can change very quickly! Always take warm and waterproof clothing. Some walks are unsuitable for poor weather conditions.
- Be careful at cliff edges.
- Be responsible for your own actions.

Be prepared
- Not all areas of Shetland have a shop or a fuel station — check relevant area leaflets.
- At peak times North Isles ferries can be busy, booking is recommended.
- Off-road wheelchairs available from Disability Shetland. Booking essential.
- Allow plenty of time for your route.

Be considerate
- Respect people’s privacy.
- Leave all gates as you find them.
- Use a path or track if there is one.
- Keep your dog under control, and dispose of dog dirt.
- Leave the environment as you found it — do not leave litter, or pick flowers.
- Be careful not to disturb wildlife or livestock.

Know the code before you go! Find out about the Scottish Outdoor Access Code at www.outdooraccess-scotland.com, or contact Scottish Natural Heritage for further details.

Directions
Directions given as if driving from Lerwick. Many roads are single track — please use passing places provided. For information on public transport routes, timetables and fares contact Visit Shetland.

North Mainland
A970 north past Brae and Mavis Grind to Northmavine.
- South Mainland
- West Mainland

North Isles
A970 north to turn right onto the A970 towards Scalloway. Follow A970 to Gutcher. From Gutcher follow signs to Bluemull Sound.

South Mainland
In Whaligoe: Head south on the A970, turn right on to the A971 towards Bressay. Follow signs to Skeld. Leave main road at car park on the right.

West Mainland
Weswick: A970 north past Orkney. At Tighthead bridge A971 approaches to Walls and Sandness. Parking area and viewpoint approximately 2 miles (3km) from junction.

Shetland Rocks!

Shetland rocks! Discover Shetland’s most dramatic, beautiful geological landscapes.

Visit the five star museum and archives to find out more about our heritage and culture. Walk through Shetland’s story from early beginnings to present day in the exhibitions galleries and visit the archives to uncover a wealth of accessible information. Be sure to look in on Da Gadderie, the temporary exhibitions gallery, then why not stop for a bite to eat at Hay’s Dock Café Restaurant. Shetland’s premier attraction truly does offer something for everyone!

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Our ancient foundations
Beneath your feet are some of Britain’s oldest rocks, an ancient foundation formed by fire, water, wind and ice. The journey around you veils a powerful story of mighty collisions, violent eruptions, and continual change.

Shetland’s geology is unusually diverse; the landscapes you see reveal just about every geological phenomenon ever known.

About this guide
Time to pull on your warm coat and strong shoes, and get out there to explore some of our most outstanding geological ideas!

This trail leaflet will help you select where to visit, and explain some of the magnificent forces that have created the landscapes you see today.

Further information is available at each site, and look out for the symbol – it indicates topics which can be further explored at Shetland Museum and Archives. Explore and enjoy!

North Mainland

Brimstone Hill | Arctic eruption
If you’re looking for an event to Shetland’s highest peak (225m), and experience Arctic climbing, this is the event for you. Ascend from Brae (6hrs). Descend the same route. 15hr walk. Eased by cliff edges.

Eshaness | By fire and ice
Experience Shetland’s most dramatic coastal scenery as you walk on the edge of an ancient volcanic plateau! The coastal scenery has been shaped by spectacular landslides. Look out for the exposed volcanic rocks as you go! Stand on rocks described as an Arctic desert that volcanoes erupted on to. Today you reach an interpretive panel. From panel follow coast path for 2hrs, then descend by the same route. Feel the ancient power beneath your feet. Moderate ground and cliff edges.

Backs of Bressay | Quake in your boots
To explore enormous earth movements that happened 300 million years ago, visit the Backs of Bressay. Walk over exposed rock surfaces, and keep an eye on the cliffs. These cobbles were thrust upwards over 150 years ago, take a trip to Hagdale. It was once a massive crushing circle. Slow down! Failure at any time. Moderate ground and Clifford edges.

Hillswick | Rock of ages
Across the beach at Funzie find ancient cobbles set into the cliffs, and see how they were squashed and crushed when a section of ocean floor was thrust up above sea level, 400 million years ago. Continue below Eshaness. Moderate ground and cliff edges.

Wild Shetland

North Mainland

Wall of Unst | Britain’s biggest
If you’re looking for an event to show you what a section of ocean floor! When continents collided 430 to 500 million years ago, slices of ocean floor were thrust up above sea level, creating a massive fault line, part of the Great Glen Fault, that stretches as far as the west coast of Scotland! You reach an interpretive panel. From panel follow coast path for 2hrs, then descend by the same route. 30 min walk. Eased by cliff edges.

North Isles

Grytviken | The big melt
This melting glacier is around 10,000 years ago, a unique climate event! Witness how the ancient glacier that formed this valley, imagine how it melted, and imagine how it melted! Slow down! Failure at any time. Moderate ground and Clifford edges.

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