



WALKS  
AROUND  
THE FLOW **2**

# Graemsay

EXPLORE THE ISLAND



## WHERE IS IT?

The island of Graemsay sits in Hoy Sound and is reached by ferry from Stromness.

The Graemsay walk is a fine circular walk of approximately 3.5 miles (5.6km). Some of the route goes through fields where livestock may be grazing and there are sections of rough coastal path, but much can also be seen by staying on the island's quiet roads.

From the Graemsay pier, take the road up the hill and follow it north down the hill past Sandside House. Follow the lane past the beach and up the hill, past the wooden community centre and phone box, then turn right and walk down the green lane to rejoin the coast, which you can follow until Fulzie Geo, just before Hoy Low Lighthouse. Follow the cliff path along, or use the public road to avoid livestock. There is a place to picnic when you reach the Kirk. From there you can return to the pier along the hill road, past orchid-studded verges and beautiful heathland or go down the steps to walk east along the beach for about 250m, before taking the steps up the slope, across the rough grass, and then cross the stile, to get into the field, from where you can walk along the fenceline towards Fishy Geo. Turn inland to pick up the road to the pier.

There is no café or shop on the island, so take with you anything you may need to eat or drink. There is a toilet at the pier.

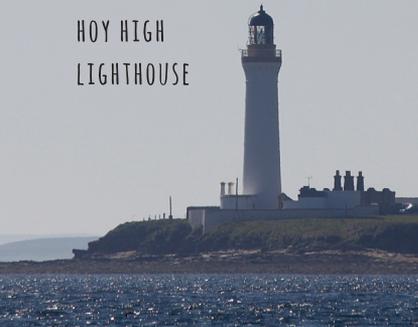
## WHAT WILL I SEE?

- The beautiful beach at Sandside has patches of what appears to be coral but which, in fact, is maerl, a species of calcified red seaweed
- Panoramic views, framed by Hoy High lighthouse to the east and Hoy Low to the west
- A coastline dusted with waders such as oystercatchers (shalders in Orkney), ringed plovers and curlew, and basking seals
- Seabirds, especially shags, feeding around the island in the strong tidal currents known locally as roosts
- Carpets of wild flowers in spring and summer, including yellow rattle, a plant that is parasitic on the roots of grasses and the seed-pods of which do actually rattle!
- The remains of the Graemsay Battery, dating from WWII, when it was a key strategic part of the defence of the Royal Navy fleet in Scapa Flow
- Evidence of early Celtic Christianity. Within the island's small area are two early church sites, one dedicated to St Bride, the other to Columba



**DISTANCE** 3.5 MILES 5.6 KM **GRADE** MODERATE **DURATION** 4-5 HOURS (ROUND TRIP)

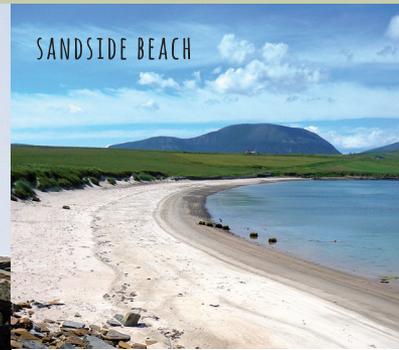
HOY HIGH  
LIGHTHOUSE



OYSTERCATCHER (SHALDER)



SANDSIDE BEACH



CURLEW



Traditional farmland



Rough grassland, bog and heather



Footpath route occasionally uses fields in which there are livestock. In these situations please keep dogs under close control.

Two sets of steps allow access to the rocky shore as an alternative route avoiding the rough cliff top. Do not use when the tide is high.



Other walking routes (harder going)

Quiet roads or surfaced tracks (easy walking)



YELLOW RATTLE

Anne Bignall



HOY LOW LIGHTHOUSE



MAERL



SHAG





# WALKS AROUND THE FLOW

EIGHT WALKS AROUND THE FLOW ·  
TAKE THESE TRAILS TO ENJOY A SPECIAL LANDSCAPE  
RICH IN WILDLIFE AND HISTORY



ROADSIDE  
WILDFLOWERS



COWRIE SHELLS  
(GROATIE BUCKIES)

## WHAT SHOULD I REMEMBER?

There are moderate slopes and several stiles.  
The ground can be wet at certain times of the year.  
Follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code -  
[www.outdooraccess-scotland.com](http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com)

- Keep dogs under control at all times
- Wear suitable footwear and be prepared for variable weather
- Let someone know your route and when you will return
- Avoid disturbing livestock or crops
- Leave gates as you found them
- Respect wildlife and take special care in the breeding season
- Bring your litter away with you - leave only footprints, take only memories!

