



↑ Fugla Ness Lighthouse, West Burra
David Gifford



↑ Asta Golf Course
VisitScotland / Paul Tompkins



↑ Kertla Ness, West Burra | Kergord Trees
David Gifford



↑ The Pool, Burra
Sophie Whitehead

Useful information

Bus services

See the ZetTrans website zettrans.org.uk

Airport (inter-island)

Tingwall | +44 (0)1595 840246

Visitor information points

Scalloway Museum | Shetland Jewellery, Weisdale

Museums and heritage centres

Scalloway | Burra

Public toilets

Hamnavoe | Meal Beach (seasonal) | Scalloway

Post offices

Hamnavoe | Weisdale | Scalloway

Shops

Hamnavoe | Scalloway | Whiteness | Weisdale

Fuel

Burra | Weisdale

Swimming pool

Scalloway | +44 (0)1595 807716

Health centre

Scalloway | +44 (0)1595 880219

Police 101

2024 | Disclaimer

All details believed to be accurate at the time of going to print.



shetland.org/central-mainland



Central Mainland

The heart of Shetland



Shetland
Islands of Opportunity

Welcome to the Central Mainland

Shetland's Central Mainland contains the village of Scalloway, the islands of Burra and Trondra, and the parishes of Tingwall, Whiteness and Weisdale.

Central Shetland is a landscape of intricate contrasts: layers of limestone create slashes of green between brown hills of harder rock; long narrow voes carved by glaciers run miles into the land; off-lying islands provide peaceful sheltered anchorages. It's great walking and fishing country, with scenery, wild flowers and birdlife of amazing richness and variety.

Scalloway

The busy commercial port of Scalloway (which means "the bay of the hall") was Shetland's capital up until the 17th century. This picturesque and bustling village is shielded from Atlantic gales by a barrier of rugged islands, all of which are uninhabited except Trondra and Burra. It has long provided a place of refuge for ships on Shetland's wild Atlantic coast. To the north lies Tingwall's fertile valley and the headlands of Whiteness and Stromness.

Things to see and do

Scalloway Seafront walk

If you fancy a short walk in Scalloway start on Main Street, where you'll find a hotel, cafe and shops selling refreshments and local produce. You'll also see a memorial erected to the men who lost their lives serving with the Shetland Bus. Heading west is the Prince Olav Slipway, built by Norwegians to repair the boats damaged by storms and enemy action during raids on their Nazi-occupied homeland. Norway House, across the street, was their barracks.

Out at **Port Arthur**, the marina and Scalloway Boating Club offer a safe haven and warm welcome for visiting boats and their crews. Next to the boating club is the University of the Highlands and Islands Scalloway Campus. The campus offers training in nautical studies and research facilities for scientific and technological projects relating to the fishing and aquaculture industries. It also houses an excellent restaurant serving local produce.

Scalloway's other attractions include a heated indoor swimming pool, a youth centre, guest houses and playing fields.

Scalloway Castle

Overlooking the fine new harbour is Earl Patrick Stewart's **Scalloway Castle**, built by forced labour in 1599. The castle is a grand example of a Scottish fortified house, but it was occupied for less than a century and is now roofless. Beneath the grand banqueting hall are large kitchens and a guard room where 17th century "witches", condemned to hang on nearby **Gallow Hill**, waited to hear their fate. The castle is currently closed for restoration work. See the Historic Environment Scotland website for the latest updates.

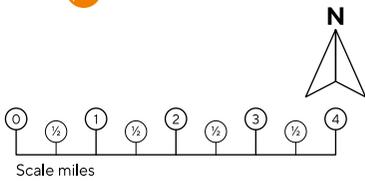
Scalloway Museum

Situated next to the castle, Scalloway Museum tells the story of the settlement's past and present - from the ploughs of prehistoric farmers to the latest developments in the aquaculture industry. There's a fascinating display on the wartime exploits of Norway's Shetland Bus heroes, who made the village their secret base in the Second World War. A small reference room houses a collection of books and documents on Scalloway and can be accessed by anyone wishing to do research into the area. The museum also has a gift shop and serves light refreshments.

Shetland Bus Memorial, Scalloway ↓
David Gifford



- Main Roads
- Minor Roads
- Track
- Ferry Routes
- Cliffs
- Beach
- Loch
- Trout Fishing
- Otters
- Seals
- Whales & Dolphins
- Information Point
- Toilets
- Leisure Centre
- Viewpoint
- Site of Interest
- Museum
- Historic Building
- Birds
- Airport

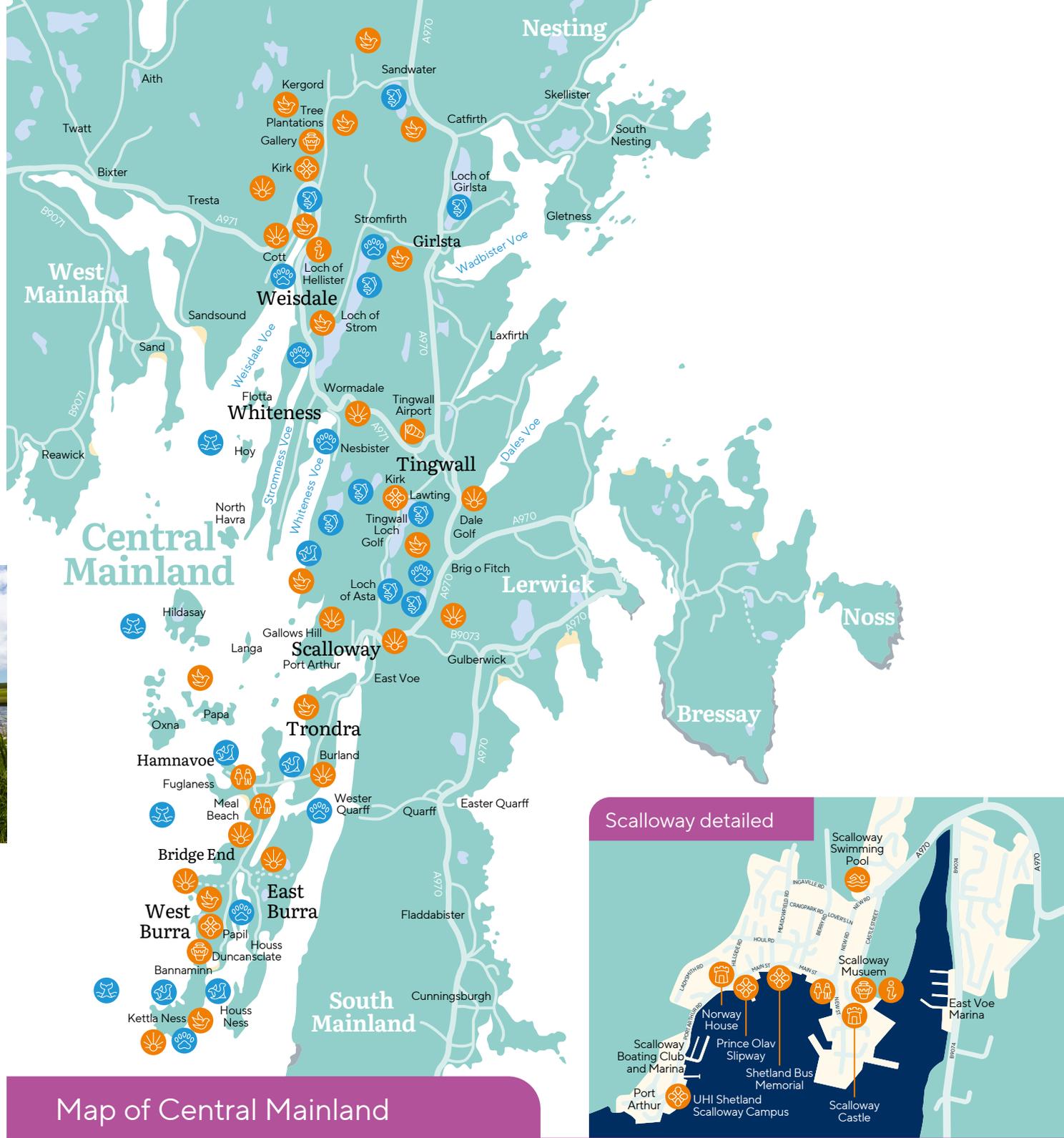


↑ Tingwall Valley and Loch David Gifford

Tingwall, Whiteness and Weisdale

Heading north from Scalloway on the B9074 you'll enter the Tingwall Valley, one of the best places to see Shetland's native wild flowers during the summer months (including several species of orchid).

A picturesque golf course lies between the **Loch of Asta** and **Tingwall Loch** - both fine trout lochs and also home to Shetland's first resident Mute Swans. Other birds include Tufted Ducks, Red-breasted Mergansers, and Common and Black-headed Gulls. You'll also find the new Scalloway Caravan Park here.



At the north end of Tingwall Loch lies the site of Shetland's ancient parliament. Delegates met at the **Lawting Holm** to make laws and decide the rights and wrongs of cases. Nearby is **Tingwall Kirk** (now closed to the public), the "mother church" of Shetland, and its ancient graveyard. **Tingwall Public Hall** is often open during the summer months for Sunday teas, while **Tingwall Airport** offers inter-island flights to Foula and Fair Isle.

One of the most spectacular views in Shetland is from **Wormadale**, on the boundary between Tingwall and **Whiteness**. Beyond the small isles lying in **Whiteness Voe**, you can see Foula, 25 miles to the west. You can also see the **Böd of Nesbister**, a 19th century merchant's store.

West of the **Loch of Strom**, with its small, ruined castle, is the parish of **Weisdale**. Beside the small **Loch of Hellister**, Shetland Jewellery, a visitor information point, welcomes visitors to view craft workers and silversmiths at work.

John Clunies Ross, who became 'king' of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, was born in a particularly beautiful area at Sound and you can see his grave in the local graveyard. From the main road on the hill above, at the **Scord of Weisdale**, there's another magnificent view over south-west Shetland. The head of **Weisdale Voe** is a good place to see wading birds, while a couple of hundred yards up the B9075 road is the Weisdale Mill, housing the **Bonhoga Gallery**, and cafe, run by Shetland Arts (closed for refurbishment until 2025). Across the road you'll find the Kergord Hatchery Bookshop, open Thursday to Sunday, selling a great selection of second-hand books.

The largest area of trees in Shetland surrounds the farm of **Kergord**, higher up the valley of Weisdale. There are no crofts here - the tenants were evicted in the mid-19th century to make way for sheep farms. The Kergord plantations, now being managed and extended, attract Chaffinches, Rooks and other woodland birds rare elsewhere in the islands. The secluded farmhouse of Flemington was the wartime Special Operations Executive's HQ for the Shetland Bus operation (see overleaf). From Kergord the road winds through the hills past peat banks to **Sandwater**, another good trout loch with extensive reedbeds. To the north is the Viking Energy Windfarm, which will generate renewable electricity from 2024, supplying the island and exporting to the national grid.

Turning right onto the main A970 road takes you past one of Shetland's biggest, deepest lochs, the **Loch of Girlsta** - famous for its Arctic Char and, tradition says, named after a Norse girl called Geirhildr: she is supposed to have drowned here 1,200 years ago.

Following the A970 south through Tingwall and over the Windy Grind, visitors will find a welcome on Shetland's main golf course at **Dale**, just north of the **Brig o Fitch** junction which takes you back to Scalloway.

Burra and Trondra

The B9074 road south from Scalloway goes through **East Voe**, before crossing the first of three bridges linking the Shetland Mainland to the beautiful isles of **Trondra**, **West Burra** and **East Burra**.

Burra Bridge leads to the pretty fishing village of **Hamnavoe**, with lovely coastal walking out to the lighthouse on **Fuglaness**. **Meal Beach** is one of Shetland's finest beaches and a favourite picnic spot with a convenient car park.

At the south end of **West Burra** the roofless kirk of St Laurence at **Papil** is famous for three early Christian carved stones found in the graveyard. Two of the original stones and a replica of the Papil stone are on show at the Shetland Museum and Archives in Lerwick.

At **Duncanslate** there's a fine example of an old croft house with a thatched roof, which has been restored to form the premises of a local history group. A footpath from the car park leads down to the Atlantic storm beach at **Minn** and on to **Kettla Ness** - a wild headland with seals and colonies of Arctic Skuas and Arctic Terns.

On an islet next to the bridge between East and West Burra is the **Bridge End Outdoor Centre**, a former school now used as a self-catering hostel and campsite for kayaking, walking and nature study holidays. The short turf on Burra's rocky hills and shores makes perfect hiking country. A walk up to the reservoir on **East Burra** gives one of the best panoramas of the islands.

Beyond the hamlet of **Houss** lies **Houss Ness**, a promontory with more good walking, rock scenery, seabirds and seals. And, wherever you walk or drive in Burra, there's always that mysterious and dramatic silhouette of the isle of Foula, out on the Atlantic horizon.

Loch of Strom, Whiteness ↓
David Gifford

