

Helpful notes when planning your visit to Shetland and our Family History Society offices.

If you are planning to visit us at the Shetland Family History Society, we thought you might like to come with a few tips to make your journey as memorable as possible.

With a latitude of 60 degrees north and halfway to Norway we are a long way from mainland Britain. We are either an overnight ferry crossing from Aberdeen or a 1–2 hour flight from Aberdeen, Edinburgh, or Glasgow. Connecting flights from London are also available.

Shetland is long and thin. Travel takes much longer to drive around than people imagine. We have our SFHS office in the capital Lerwick, on the Mainland of Shetland. Loganair (<https://www.loganair.co.uk>) flies to Shetland from Aberdeen, Glasgow, and Edinburgh. We are 35 minutes' drive from the airport (no reliable airport bus service so hire car is essential). Northlink ferry service (northlinkferries.co.uk) docks in Lerwick at 7.30 in the morning from Aberdeen. Most populated outer islands have a 'roll on roll off' car and passenger ferry that needs to be booked during the summer months (01595745804)

At the moment our office is open for weekday booked appointments only (secretary@shetland-fhs.org.uk) This arrangement is constantly under review as the situation changes. An email to Elinor will give you the up-to-date information.

While covid is around we urge you to seek advice from the Scottish Government for advice re your visit to Shetland. The guidelines change frequently.

If you want to travel around the islands, bus services are limited, and a car is very necessary. Bolts Car Hire is a local firm which advertises in our quarterly journal and has reasonable rates. Our roads are not busy. We have many single-track roads so take plenty of time to get around to all corners that you want to visit.

We hope that we will be able to give you information about your family. If you send us any details before your visit, we can carry out some research ahead of the time. We occasionally can put you in touch with cousins, but this will need a little time to comply with data protection (and if they are home!) We hold sets of Monumental Inscription books that cover all the graveyards in Shetland that also might assist you in planning your visit. See our website for the parish areas.

Check with the Shetland Museum and Archive website for their opening times and information. (info@shetlandmuseumandarchives.org.uk)

The Shetland Tourist Office is in the centre of Lerwick, Commercial Street. They can help with accommodation and places of interest. They also have a selection of Shetland maps and booklets.

Weather! A very difficult subject to describe in a sentence. Bring wet weather coats and good waterproof shoes. Shetlanders say if you don't like the weather just wait a moment it's all very changeable. A visit in the midsummer can be magical with the very light nights. Winters are not especially cold but very windy!

We hope to see you very soon.

Susan Cooper
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