

# Westray

## ... Queen o' the isles

*Westray is sprinkled with wonderfully atmospheric locations for you to explore. Spectacular sea cliffs, sandy beaches, rocky shores and undulating hills offer spirit-swelling locations for photographers, artists and lovers of empty places.*

A voyage out along the old Viking sea route to Westray is an essential element in any Orkney adventure.

Here the unique flavour of Orkney's island fringe can be experienced to the full. The exquisite workmanship and artistic talent of the ancient peoples we have encountered on other islands is illustrated by the Westray Stone, a rock carving found in a tomb at Pierowall, the island's largest settlement, in 1981. The spiral and lozenge design is the finest of its kind in Scotland and is permanently on display in the Westray Heritage Centre. Of the earliest Christian settlers the best evidence is again found in the lonely rock-stack or island hermitages such as at the Castle o' Burrian (also a marvellous place to see Puffins) and on the Holm of Aikerness.

The Orkneyinga Sagas, the tales of the Viking occupation of Orkney paint a vivid picture of Westray during the early 12th century and Westray families operating from power bases at Rapness, Pierowall and Tuqouy played important roles in the political life of the isles.

### Plant & animal life

The western cliffs and hills behind support a rich variety of northern maritime vegetation. The spray-sweep has created unusual clifftop salt marshes and behind this the maritime heath. Vikings are thought to have brought angelica to the island and it can still be found growing around Pierowall Bay. Seals, of course, are plentiful around Westray but whales, dolphins and porpoises are occasionally seen. Other attractions are the otter families and tell-tale tracks through rough vegetation will indicate the presence of the indigenous Westray vole.

### Birdlife

Noup Head cliffs are first port of call for birdwatchers. Huge numbers of nesting seabirds can be seen between April and July. It is also possible to see Peregrine Falcons on the island's cliffs and Ravens successfully breed each year, raising their young in nests often built from barbed wire. The rare corncrake with their characteristic call has been heard on summer evenings. Among the smaller birds the Wheatear can be seen skipping along the drystone dykes. Puffins are a great attraction at the Castle of Burrian and at Noup Head. Gannet numbers have increased dramatically in recent years at Noup.

### Industry

Westray is one of the most productive farming areas in Orkney with beef cattle a main contributor to the island's economy. Sea-faring is also deep rooted, a trait inherited from the Norse ancestors and the island has developed a modern fishing industry which includes white fish trawling and creel fishing for crab and lobster. Velvet crabs provide a significant contribution to the local economy and are exported to Europe. The modern factory at Gill pier exports processed crabs throughout Britain and Europe, and visitors are welcome to look around the facility. W. F. M. Brown is a family-run bakery at Gill Pier, which supplies daily bread and other baked products to local and mainland Orkney shops and also exports their shortbread, biscuits and cakes to shops further afield.

Westray's tourist industry plays a vital part in the local economy, providing facilities for camping and caravans, one hostel, two hotels, several B&Bs and self-catering cottages.

The Craft and Heritage Trail tempts visitors to explore the island and see the varied shops, galleries, jewellery makers, knitters and straw-backed chair making, returning to Pierowall village to the newly enlarged Heritage Centre next to the Pierowall Hotel.

## Points of interest

- 1 St. Mary's Medieval Parish Church, Pierowall:** This ruined church is one of two Middle Ages kirks in Westray; most of the structure dates from the 17th century but the south wall is a remnant of the original 13th century structure.
- 2 Noltland Castle:** This fortress was erected in the second half of the 16th century by Gilbert Balfour who held high office under Mary Queen of Scots.
- 3 Links of Noltland Prehistoric Settlement & Wild Flowers:** During the late 1970s an extensive area of settlement was excavated on the Links. Houses and middens, now covered over, were contemporary with Skara Brae (3000BC). Sand dune and dune pasture supports Eyebright, Felwort, Cowslip and Sandwort - this site has been re-opened for further examination.
- 4 Knowe of Queena Howe:** Deriving its name from the old Norse kvi 'enclosure' and haugr 'mound' this conspicuous mound probably contains a broch tower which is surrounded by extensive settlement. Stonework can be seen in the eroded shoreline. Nearby excavation has exposed a settlement pre-dating Skara Brae. (see 3 above).
- 5 Lochs – Breeding Wildlife and Waders:** Westray's two largest lochs, Burness, and Saintear are rich in breeding wildfowl and waders and are also popular with anglers for trout fishing. Mute swans breed in both lochs and Whooper swans overwinter here.
- 6 Noup Head Lighthouse:** This lighthouse was constructed in 1898 to warn ships off the North Shoal. First lighthouse to use a system of mercury flotation in the revolving carriage. Automated in 1964.
- 7 Noup Head R.S.P.B. Reserve:** Cliffs extend here to five miles and the northernmost section is the reserve which in terms of number of breeding seabirds is second only to St Kilda. A 1978 survey revealed over 40,000 Guillemots, 1,200 Razorbills, 1,000 Fulmars and almost 25,000 pairs of Kittiwakes. Gannets now breed here.
- 8 The Gentlemens' Cave:** Place of refuge for Orkney lairds who supported the 1745 uprising, said to be linked by an underground passage to Noltland Castle. Access is now too dangerous to visit.
- 9 Northwest Coast and North Hill:** West-facing cliffs are very exposed; Thrift, Sea Plantain, and Buck's horn Plantain are abundant and immediately inland from the cliffs nest Skuas and Arctic Terns.



## Services

### Accommodation

Accommodation providers listed below are members of VisitScotland's Quality Assurance Scheme and have been graded as part of the national scheme. Please refer to the disclaimer on the inside of the back cover.

#### HOTEL

**Pierowall Hotel (★★★INN)** - Alan and Alison Drever, t: 01857 677472/677208. e: enquiries@pierowallhotel.co.uk www.pierowallhotel.co.uk

#### BED & BREAKFAST

**No. 1 Broughton (★★★★B&B)** - waterfront bed and breakfast overlooking Pierowall Bay. 2 double and 1 twin rooms, all en-suite and with sea views. Packed lunches available. Guest lounge, conservatory and sauna. Prices from £30.00. Sheila & Jerry Wood. t: 01857 677726.

e: no1broughton@hotmail.com

www.no1broughton.co.uk

#### SELF-CATERING

**Sand o' Gill (★★★★SC)** - self-catering, sleeps 6. t: 01857 677398.

**Daisy Cottage (★★★SC)** - self catering, sleeps 4/5. Netta Harcus, e: cubbigoe@freeserve.co.uk t: 01857 677398.

**Seaquoyas (★★★★SC)** - self-catering. Karen Oddie, Cranfield, Canningal Road, St Ola, t: 01856 871169.

e: kjoddie@hotmail.com www.seaquoyaswestray.co.uk

#### HOSTEL & CAMPING

**The Barn (★★★★H)** - Chalmersquoy. Isabell Harcus, t: 01857 677214. e: info@thebarnwestray.co.uk www.thebarnwestray.co.uk

Accommodation providers listed below are not participants of VisitScotland's Quality Assurance Scheme. Please refer to the disclaimer on the inside of the back cover before booking.

**Daybreck** - self-catering cottage in the village, on the shoreline, sleeps 6. t: Suzie Rendall, 01856 876579. e: raymond.rendall@btopenworld.com, www.daybreckwestray.co.uk

**West Kirbest** self-catering in a renovated croft. Living room, 1 double bedroom, 1 twin bedroom, also sofa bed and cot. Wonderful sea and island views. Contact Catherine Ewen. t: 01383 413713.

**Bis Geos self-catering**, Three cottages, sleeping 2-8. t/f: 01857 677420. www.bisgeos.co.uk

**Skaill Cottage**, Self-catering, sleeps 6. t: Linda Hagan, 01857 677226. e: lindahagan@onetel.com

**Orcadee**, Pierowall, self-catering bungalow. Uninterrupted views of the bay. Sleeps 4/6. Marlene and Geoff Bagley, t: 01952 727814.

**5A Gill Pier**, Pierowall. Sleeps 2. Mrs S. Stout, t: 01857 677490.

**The Old Manse**, Pierowall. B&B, 3 large en-suite. Sea views. Densie and Nigel Spurgeon. t: 01857 677578.

e: westraybandb@gmail.com www.bandbwestray.co.uk

**Sand o' Gill, B & B.** t: Dorothy Groat, 01857 677374.

**Sand o' Gill Caravans.** t: 01857 677374.

**Brochie**, West Manse, Westside. Self Catering 2+2. Wing of former manse in quiet location. Disabled friendly, wheel chair access. Sandy McEwen, t: 01857 677482.

**Bonni Min**, Caravan, sleeps 6. t: Myra Kent, 01857 677436.

### Transport/Car Hire

**M. & J. Harcus**, Ferry bus service (see bus timetable on page 46. t: 07789 034289, 01857 677758.

**D. Groat**, car hire. t: 01857 677374.

**Taxi:** Kathy and Graham Maben, t: 01857 677777 and mob: 07766073088.

### Shops/Post Offices

**W. F. M. Brown**, family run bakery at Gill Pier. t: 01857 677349.

**Peter Miller**, Skelwick, **Sub-Post Office**, general merchant, souvenirs, grocery, knitwear, crafts. t: 01857 677351.

**J. C. Tulloch**, Pierowall, **general merchant and post office**, groceries, drapery, butchery, hardware; newspapers and books, fruit and vegetables, souvenirs, gifts, etc. Wheelchair access. Open 9am-9pm Mon. to Sat. and 2-4.30pm on Sundays from May until September. t: 01857 677373. e: jctulloch@tiscali.co.uk

**W. I. Rendall**, Pierowall, **general merchant**, grocery, butchery, fruit and veg., newspapers, hardware, souvenirs, gifts, petrol, diesel & bio-diesel, Calor and camping gas. Wheelchair access. Open Mon-Sat; Sundays 2.00-4.30pm May-Sept. t: 01857 677389.

**Hume Sweet Hume**, Pierowall, designer soft furnishings, knitwear, gifts and off licence sales. t: 01857 677259 e: info@humesweethume.com www.humesweethume.com

### Recreation

**Golf course** information from Stewart Rendall, t: 01857 677303.

**Cycle Hire:** Westraak. t: 01857 677777.

• Dorothy Groat, Sand o' Gill. t: 01857 677374.

**Pierowall Charters.** Boat tours and fishing trips. www.pierowallcharters.co.uk Contact: Malcolm Brown. t: 01857 677493.

**Boat Trips**, Tom Rendall, Harbour-master, Gill Pier, trips to and from Papa Westray daily and as required. t: 01857 677216.

**Swimming Pool**, opening times and information from Allison Pottinger, t: 01857 677430 or mobile 07793112372 or check the local noticeboard.

**Community Centre**, sports field, football, netball, badminton, snooker, pool, darts, weight training; contact Ann Kent, t: 01857 677436.

**Petanque**, Tony Thorpe, Cleaton House. t: 01857 677508.

**Westraak**, Guided tours of Westray. Explore Westray's scenery, history, archaeology and wildlife with experienced guide. 3 Course lunch included. t: Kathy or Graham Maben 01857 677777, mobile 07766 073088, e: info@westraak.co.uk, www.westraak.co.uk

**Children's Play Park** opposite school in Pierowall Village.

**Sailing Club**, June 1 to August 31, Tues. and Thurs. evenings, Sam Harcus, t: 01857 677860.

**Marina** - dedicated visitor berthing, shower facilities at Gill Pier. Bread available from the bakery at Gill Pier and other supplies from the shops in Pierowall village. A leisurely stroll to Pierowall village. Tom Rendall, harbour master, t: 01857 677216.

**Traditional cooking & writing courses** at the West Manse. Contact Sandy on t: 01857 677482, www.millwestray.com.

### Camping & Caravanning Facilities

**The Barn**, Chalmersquoy. Isabell Harcus. t: 01857 677214. www.thebarnwestray.com, info@thebarnwestray.co.uk

**Sand o'Gill**. Dorothy Groat. 01857 677374.

### Other Services

www.westraypapawestray.com

**Westray Tourist Information Centre** at Haff Yok Cafe. t: 01857 677777. e: info@westraak.co.uk

**Doctor.** t: 01857 677209.

**Nurse.** t: 01857 677706.

**Church of Scotland**, Iain MacDonald, t: 01857 677357.

**Baptist Church**, Gavin Hunter. t: 01857 677265.

**Gospel Hall.** Mr A. Bews, t: 01857 677376.

**Jack's Chippy, Broughton. Open Wednesdays and Saturdays 5-9. t: 01857 677471.**

**Haff Yok Cafe**, Pierowall, tea/coffee and home baking, breakfasts, light lunches, early evening meals and refreshments. t: 01857 677777.

**Healthy Living Centre.** t: 01857 677568.

### Industry/Crafts/Archaeology

**Westray Heritage Centre**, Pierowall. VisitScotland 4-star visitor attraction. VisitScotland disabled access rating 2. Local craft and publications. Children's activities, genealogy, local history. t: 01857 677414. e: office@westrayheritage.co.uk

**R. Leslie**, Woodturner, 9 Lastigar. t: 01857 677297.

e: raymondleslie@hotmail.co.uk

**Westray Studios** Online gallery - oil, acrylics and watercolours. www.westraystudios.co.uk t: 01857 677786.

**Hume Sweet Hume.** Designer soft furnishings. t: 01857 677259. e: info@humesweethume.com www.humesweethume.com

**The Wheeling Steen Gallery (★★★★ Tourist Shop)** - New purpose-built art and craft gallery and tearoom. Unique feature is original deck cabin from 19th century sailing ship. Open Monday-Saturday 11-5pm. t: 01857 677292. www.wheeling-steen.co.uk

**Knitting** - Westray Knitters, Marlene Bews, Gorn. t: 01857 677366.

**Pierowall Fish Ltd, Broughton.** Open Monday-Friday 9-5, Saturday 9-1. t: 01857 677471 f: 01857 677451.

**Fish Processing** - Westray Processors, The Manager, Gill Pier. t: 01857 677273.

**Westray and Papa Westray Craft Assoc.** Contact Peter Brown, The Gallery, Pierowall. t: 01857 677770.

**Westray Straw.** Contact Edith Costie. t: 01857 677411.

**West-Ray Jewellery.** Mid-Ouseness, Westray. t: 01857 677400. e: westrayjewellery@btinternet.com

**Westray Cards**, Lightcost, Hand-made cards, bookmarks and gifts, original artwork, prints and a bespoke framing service. t: 01857 677287. e: jfcable@btinternet.com

**W. F. M. Brown.** Family run bakery at Gill Pier. t: 01857 677349.

**Aak Work.** Printed Souvenirs etc. Contact Linda Drever. t: 07711 577682 or 01857 677877, www.aakwork.co.uk

**Westray Pottery.** A wide range of utility stoneware pottery with natural high quality glazes. Contact Martyn Terrell. t: 01857 677776.

Email: martinandsasha@firenet.uk.net



gill pier, westray - drew kennedy



noup head lighthouse - charles tait

**Art Studio** at No 1 Broughton. Jerry Wood. Working studio with oil paintings, prints and cards to view and buy. t: 01857 677726. www.no1broughton.co.uk

**The Gallery**, Pierowall – Artists Studio and Gallery. Ongoing exhibitions of contemporary art work. Peter Brown t: 01857 677770.

**Westray Digital Art**, Links House. Digital photography and artwork. Open and limited edition prints available online at www.westraydigitalart.co.uk e: enquiries@westraydigitalart.co.uk

**Edenweave**, hand woven contemporary textiles. Workshop open 10-4pm Tuesday-Saturday from May to September. Winter hours by arrangement. Sit and Knit Group meets 2-4pm on 1st and 3rd Wednesday of month. t: 01857 677785, e: edenweave@tiscali.co.uk

For all tourist information see the Westray and Papa Westray Tourist Association website: www.westraypapawestray.com

## By Sea

### Westray/Papa Westray

Effective from 8 May until 26 September 2011

The services to Westray and Papa Westray are carried out by the vessels **m.v. Earl Thorfinn** (190 passengers and 25 cars), **m.v. Earl Sigurd** (190 passengers and 25 cars) and **m.v. Varagen** (144 passengers and 32 cars). Hot/cold drinks and cold snacks are available on all vessels at modest prices. Bookings should be made at the Kirkwall Office: t: 01856 872044, f: 01856 872921, e: info@orkneyferries.co.uk  
See page 46 for occasional extra Sunday inter-island connections



		Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Kirkwall	dep	0920A		0700B	0720B	0720B	0720B	0720B
Westray	arr	1045		0825	0845	0845	0845	0845
Westray	dep		0830A	0840B	0900B	0900B	0900B	0900B
Kirkwall	arr		0955	1005	1025	1025	1025	1025
Kirkwall	dep		0940	1300	1110	1300	1045	
Westray	arr		1105	1425	1235	1425	1210	
Westray	dep	1800A	1115	1435	1245	1435	1220*	
P. Westray	arr						1300	
P. Westray	dep						1320**	
Kirkwall	arr	1925	1240	1600	1410	1600	1510	
Kirkwall	dep	1935A	1620		1620	1620	1700	1620A
Westray	arr	2100	1745		1745	1745	1825	1745
Westray	dep		1755		1755	1755	1835	1755A
Kirkwall	arr		1920		1920	1920	2000	1920

**A** - Vehicles must be booked before 1430 hrs on Saturday.

**B** - Vehicles must be booked before 1600 hrs the day before sailing.

All other vehicle bookings must be made at least one hour before the departure from Kirkwall.

\*Not available for vehicle bookings Westray to Kirkwall. \*\*This sailing may be delayed due to cargo operations.

**NOTES:**

- 1) Vehicle check in times: **20 minutes** before departure. Passenger check in times: **10 minutes** before departure.
- 2) **No Show Charges** – All cancellations must be made not less than 24 hours before the intended date of travel or full charges may apply.
- 3) In order to accommodate certain local events these timetables will be subject to change. (See page 47).
- 4) For conditions of carriage of passengers and cargo see notices exhibited in the Company's vessels, offices and premises.

For full fares please enquire at Orkney Ferry Services Offices

Please see Page 21 for additional Papa Westray Cargo Sailings in conjunction with North Ronaldsay on Tuesdays.

### Sunday sailings direct to Papa Westray on the following dates only:

12 June (via Eday/Sanday), 17 July (via Stronsay), 14 August (via Eday/Sanday).

Further information on the connecting ferry/bus service in Westray can be found on page 47.



MONDAYS			
Dep Kirkwall	Arr	Dep	Arr Kirkwall
0930	0946	0951	1014
1630	1653	1658	1714
TUESDAYS			
Dep Kirkwall	Arr	Dep	Arr Kirkwall
0830	0856	0901	0917
1045	1108	1113	1129
1630	1653	1658	1714
WEDNESDAYS			
Dep Kirkwall	Arr	Dep	Arr Kirkwall
0840	0856	0901	0928
1525	1552	1557	1613

THURSDAYS			
Dep Kirkwall	Arr	Dep	Arr Kirkwall
0830	0846	0851	0914
1030	1053	1058	1114
1530	1553	1558	1614
FRIDAYS			
Dep Kirkwall	Arr	Dep	Arr Kirkwall
0930	0946	0951	1014
1630	1653	1658	1714
SATURDAYS			
Dep Kirkwall	Arr	Dep	Arr Kirkwall
0900	0916	0921	0944
1100	1123	1128	1144

SUNDAY			
Dep Kirkwall	Arr	Dep	Arr Kirkwall
1500	1523	1528	1544

Flights in red operate from 14 June to 30 August 2011 and are available for advance booking for sightseer trips.

Timings are subject to confirmation when making your reservation.

**LOGANAIR 01856 872494/873457**