

A guide to the only town in the Outer Hebrides

2024/25





FÀILTE

Stornoway, or in Gaelic Steòrnabhagh, is the only town in the Outer Hebrides (also known as the Western Isles), it lies 44 miles off the coast of the Scottish mainland and just eight degrees south of the Arctic Circle. It is a small town of around 8,000 people, dating back to the arrival of the Vikings 1,500 years ago; although the first human settlement in the islands is thought to date back to the end of the last ice age, approximately 10,000 years ago.

The name Stornoway derives from Old Norse and has been variously translated as 'a place of clean water', and/or, 'a safe anchorage'.

For a small town it is a busy and bustling place, serving the villages and townships scattered around the coastline of Lewis and Harris.

Overlooking the town is Lews
Castle. Building began in 1847
from a design by a Glasgow
architect, it was to become the
home of Sir James and Lady
Matheson. With his business
partner, William Jardine, Matheson
became a highly successful
businessman and Victorian
entrepreneur who made a fortune
buying opium in India and selling
it to the Chinese through the port

of Hong Kong. While Matheson remains a controversial figure, the Jardine Matheson company still trades in Hong Kong today and the castle he constructed in Stornoway is now open to the public and houses the town's museum which is well worth a visit.

The land surrounding the castle is known locally as the Castle Grounds and offers delightful woodland walks along its many paths. The Castle Grounds are managed by The Stornoway Trust, the longest-standing community land trust in Scotland. The Trust have maintained stewardship of the 69,000-acre estate since the gifting of the town and its environs to the community in 1923 by Lord Leverhulme.

Leverhulme, credited with building the first multinational company Lever Brothers, owned Lewis and Harris and Lews Castle, in the early part of the 20th century. The entrepreneur had an ambitious, industrial vision for Stornoway and the islands and although some of his plans were enacted with success, clashes with the local community ultimately led to the abandonment of his grandest plans.



From the middle of the 19th century, up until the beginning of WW2 in 1939, Stornoway was the centre of a thriving herring fishing industry and much of the town's prosperity came from the 'silver darlings'. Two bronze statues in the town, one on South Beach near the bus station, and the other on North Beach close to the inner harbour, show a Stornoway herring girl clothed in a traditional Scottish jersey, cloth cap and heavy leather apron. These girls were reputed to gut one herring every second and had to fill between 40 and 50 barrels of salted herring in order to make any money from their labours. It was a hard life.

Today a walk around the outer and inner harbour highlights the bustling maritime life of the town including the fishing fleet, leisure yachts, cruise vessels, cargo ships and the daily lifeline ferry service to Ullapool. Stornoway as a port has continually defined island life from its historic importance as a commercial stop on North Atlantic shipping routes to its significance as a main departure and arrival point. Mass emigration in the 1920s saw a generation of islanders leave on ships such as the SS Metagama, in hope of better opportunities in the US, Canada and beyond; one such emigrant was a young

Mary Anne MacLeod, later Mary Anne Trump, whose son Donald would go on to become the 45th President of the United States.

Across the road from the outer harbour, on South Beach Street, lies the imposing Stornoway Town Hall, a two-storey building with a clock tower that was rebuilt in 1929 after a disastrous fire in 1918. It now houses the Stornoway Historical Society on the ground floor, and the offices of the Harris Tweed Authority, including the Harris Tweed Story Room, on the first floor.

Harris Tweed is the only textile in the world protected by an Act of Parliament. It defines Harris Tweed as: 'Handwoven, by the islanders at their homes in the Outer Hebrides, finished in the Outer Hebrides, and made from pure virgin wool dyed and spun in the Outer Hebrides.'

The Harris Tweed Authority promotes and maintains the authenticity, standard and reputation of the cloth, as well as stamping it with the famous orb trademark, one of the oldest marks in the UK. Throughout the town you will find retail outlets selling Harris Tweed items made by local weavers and finished at the three Harris Tweed mills in Lewis.

Another unique local product the town is famous for is Stornoway



Black Pudding, a food delicacy which holds valued Protected Geographical Status. Just three butchers in the town, W J MacDonald, Charles MacLeod, and MacLeod & MacLeod have the coveted accolade of producing genuine Stornoway Black Pudding, or in Gaelic, *Marag Dubh*; local connoisseurs claim to be able to detect the critical differences in each butcher's Black Pudding recipes.

Stornoway has a number of cafés and restaurants where local produce can be tasted alongside a variety of international cuisine all of which contributes to a thriving cosmopolitan feel. Pakistani and Italian communities have lived in the town since the end of WW2 and now are joined by newer arrivals from countries such as Syria, Afghanistan, Ukraine and Somalia. The primary school in Stornoway has children from families from all over the world and alongside Gaelic, over 20 different first-languages can be heard, from Arabic to Yoruba. The Stornoway Mosque in James Street, opened in 2019, serves a Muslim community of about 60 people in the town.

There are a number of Christian churches throughout the town, charting the strong faith and various denominations within the local community. On the corner of

Kenneth Street and Francis Street stands the imposing Martin's Memorial Church which was built on the site of the birthplace of Canadian explorer, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, 'the first white man to cross the Canadian Continent from east to west'. The main church building was completed in 1878 with the impressive spire which dominates the town skyline added in 1911.

Directly across from Martin's Memorial Church you will find An Lanntair Arts Centre which acts as a cultural hub for the island's thriving arts scene, offering exhibitions and events throughout the year. At weekends Stornoway has a bustling nightlife with many pubs hosting live music.

Just off Point Street, opposite the Criterion Bar – known locally in the town as the Crit – lies Carn Gardens. Back in the 18th century, a house here was the birthplace of Colin Mackenzie who worked for the East India Company and became India's first Surveyor General. He died in Calcutta in 1821 and is interred under a fine colonnaded mausoleum in the city's South Park Street Cemetery.

In Carn Gardens today there is a wooden statue of a young woman with a creel of peats on her back, testament to the tradition of peat cutting that is still maintained throughout the islands, as well as a memorial to mark the centenary of the loss of the HMY Iolaire. Erected by students at The Nicolson Institute, the town's secondary school, the memorial pays tribute to the 201 men, returning home from service during WW1 who lost their lives when the vessel struck rocks and sank near the entrance to Stornoway Harbour in the small hours of New Year's Day 1919.

The Shèol an Iolaire installation along South Beach harbour also commemorates the loss, showing the true size of the vessel and representing the number of crew and passengers on board as she sailed for Stornoway. The tragedy of that night still haunts the islands today.

Where Cromwell Street and 'The Narrows' meet North Beach Street is a steel sculpture bearing a line by the renowned Gaelic poet, Derick Thompson who hailed from Lewis:

'A' leth – aithneachadh gach duine air a chuideachd, aithne gun chuimhne, is cuimhne gun aithne.'

This broadly translates as: 'The recognition of a person by the company they keep or family resemblance – a knowledge of them, without knowing them, they strike a chord in our memory.'

The quote acknowledges the inter-woven relationship of generations of community found in the islands and is just one of the many examples of Gaelic you

KEY

- Wifi available
- & Accessible entrance
- Pets welcome
- **Toilets**
- Accessible toilet
- P Parking
- R Accessible parking
- Café
- **X** Restaurant
- Take-away
- Cards accepted
- Online shop

will see around the town. The Outer Hebrides remain the stronghold of Gaelic in Scotland with the islands' schools offering Gaelic-led teaching to the next generation, reflecting the language's continued vital importance as part of life in these wild, windswept, and beautiful islands.





ATTRACTIONS WEXPERIENCES



Lews Castle is a beautiful building with a fascinating history that offers exceptional experiences in the heart of Stornoway. Co-located with the island's museum the recently refurbished venue houses luxury accommodation, Storehouse Café, Outfitters shop and stunning public rooms.

Castle Grounds, Stornoway, HS2 0XP

Mon – Sun 10am – 4pm

The Storehouse Café, Outfitters shop and ground-floor access to civic rooms, with the exception of private event days.

For services and Lews Castle accommodation. visit website or call: 01625 416430

☆LewsCastle

CASTLE

LEWS

@lewscastlebyttc

lews-castle.co.uk













The Museum showcases the history of the islands through a fascinating variety of exhibitions, information and artefacts, including examples of the world famous, locally discovered, Viking era Lewis Chessmen on loan from the British Museum.

Lews Castle, Castle Grounds, **HS2 0XS (next to Lews Castle)**

Sun/Mon Closed **Tue - Sat** 10am - 5pm

Until 30th Sept 2024.

Please check our website and social media for opening hours beyond this date.

To enquire about private tours or bookings outwith these times please contact us: museumbookings@cne-siar.gov.uk 01851 822746

Museumnan Eilean

outerhebridesheritage.org.uk/ museum/museum-nan-eileanstornoway/













Based within the headquarters of the Harris Tweed Authority in Stornoway Town Hall, the 'Story Room' allows visitors an introduction to the Harris Tweed® industry using a personal audio set for their own self-guided tour. Weaving demonstrations are also available.

Town Hall, 2 Cromwell Street, Stornoway, HS1 2DB

Opening hours can be found on our website enquiries@harristweed.org 01852 702269

() @harristweedauthority Narristweedauth

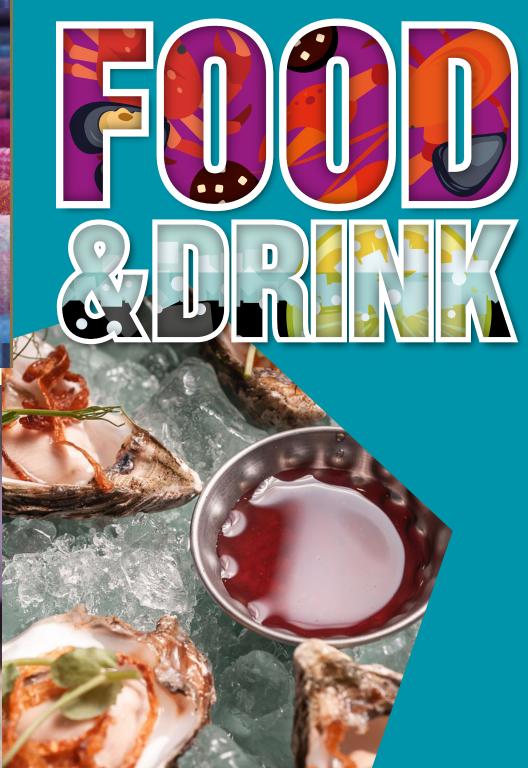
harristweed.org











Immerse yourself in the world of exquisite teas at Hebridean Tea Store. It offers over 150 varieties of high-quality teas, from traditional blends to exotic flavours, catering to diverse palates. Additionally, you can also order online. Worldwide shipping is available.

22 Cromwell Street, Stornoway, HS1 2DD

Mon 12pm - 5pm, Tue, Thu, Fri 10am - 5pm, **Sat** 10am - 4pm Wed* and Sun Closed

*From May to Sept, Wed open 10am - 5pm

(1) (a) hebrideanteastore hebrideantea

hebrideanteastore.co.uk











THE ISLAND SPIRIT WHISKY SHOP

We are a small, family run, independent whisky shop located in the heart of Stornoway. We specialise in hard to find and local whisky, local gin, other spirits, local craft beers and cider, wine and mead, glassware and gifts.

38 Cromwell Street, Stornoway, **HS1 2DD**

Daily 10am – 5.30pm

(7@islandspiritwhisky ⊗island_whisky

islandspiritwhisky.com



Excluding AMEX



Delicatessen & Speciality Foods. Take-away Hot Drinks, Sandwiches & Salads, Cheesemonger, Quality World Foods, Whisky, Artisan Gins & Spirits, Ales, Fine Wine.

59 Cromwell Street, Stornoway, HS1 2DD

Mon – Sat 8.30am – 5.30pm

(7) the good food boutique

thegoodfoodboutique.co.uk









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ISLAND SPIRIT WHISKY SHOP

RESTAURANTS



Nicknamed 'the Gaelic café' by locals, An Taigh Cèilidh is a Gaelic cultural centre and community café. As a non-profit community project, we do everything in Gaelic – such as traditional Hebridean ceilidhs - to promote local language and culture. Order in Gaelic for a 10% discount!

16 Church Street, Stornoway, HS1 2DH

Tue - Sat 11am - 6pm October - March failte@taighceilidh.co.uk 01851 441375

() @taighceilidh taighceilidh.com









At the Cabarfeidh Hotel, we celebrate Scottish and Hebridean produce, sourcing locally for the finest seasonal dishes. Menus at Cleaver Seafood & Grill feature Scottish beef, award winning Stornoway black pudding, Hebridean seafood along with diverse vegetarian options.

Manor Park, Stornoway, HS1 2EU

Daily 12pm – 9pm Booking essential, can be made online or call 01851 702604

SolasRestaurant @cleaver.cabarfeidh

cabarfeidh-hotel.co.uk



Our family-run hotel is

conveniently located in the centre of Stornoway and is the ideal base for both business customers and for holidaymakers wishing to explore the beautiful island of Lewis and Harris. Right in the heart of Stornoway adjacent to An Lanntair Arts Centre and a few minutes from the ferry terminal.

12-14 Francis Street, Stornoway, HS1 2XB

Lunch 12pm – 2pm Dinner 5pm - 9pm Tea/Coffee/Cakes 9am - 10pm Cocktails (Fri) 5pm - 11pm (**Sat)** 3pm – 11pm

CountyHotelStornoway ©county.hotel.stornoway

countyhotelstornoway.co.uk





ROYAL HOTEI 뿓 **(B)** #SI

HS-1 Cafe bar offers a casual dining experience to relax with friends and family. Enjoy meals or light bites with views of Lews Castle in an informal setting, perfect for catching up over drinks.

81 Cromwell Street, Stornoway, **HS1 2DG**

Daily 12pm – 9pm No bookings taken, walk-ins only

GHS1CafeBar @hs1cafebarstornoway royalstornoway.co.uk







Our family-friendly restaurant

offers a diverse menu with an extensive salad bar, succulent meats on our carvery along with a variety of hot dishes. Enjoy local produce like Hebridean mussels, scallops, steaks, and tasty burgers. Vegetarian and vegan options available.

11 James Street, Stornoway, HS1 2QN

Daily 12pm – 9pm Booking essential, can be made online or call 01851 703900

 ElevenStornoway @eleven_caladh_stornoway

caladhinn.co.uk/elevenrestaurant



CALADH INN 뿓 ELEVEN @



Shop, Kitchen, & Cocktail Bar.

Buy Landfall Island Gin, flavoured by the rugged coastline of Lewis. Eat the best local and seasonal produce with a focus on fresh local seafood. Drink cocktails, craft beers, and natural wines.

3 Cromwell Street, Stornoway, HS1 2DB

Shop 12pm – 5pm Lunch served 12pm - 3.30pm **Dinner served** 5pm – 8.30pm Drinks served all day 01851 706300

⊕ stornowaydistillers stornowaydistillers.com





The Boatshed showcases local seafood such as hand-dived scallops, mussels, and langoustines, set against views of Stornoway marina leading to Lews Castle. Dive into Scottish flavours with our seasonal menus, promising a memorable dining experience for all.

81 Cromwell Street, Stornoway, HS1 2DG

Daily 12pm – 9pm Booking essential, can be made online or call **01851 702109**

♠ boatshedstornoway⊚ boatshedrestaurantstornoway

royalstornoway.co.uk

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Acair is an award-winning publisher of Gaelic, English and bilingual books for adults and the principal publisher of Gaelic children's books.

Many of Acair's books concern the culture and heritage of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

An Tosgan, 54 Seaforth Road, Stornoway, HS1 2SD

Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm

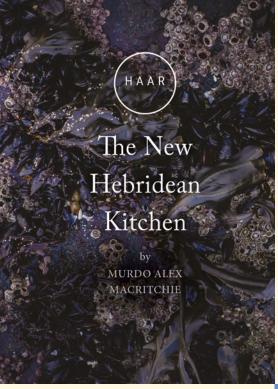
acairbooks.com











NDWICK BAY CANDLES

Sandwick Bay home fragrance and fresh machair water body-care range offers island-life inspired moments of Hebridean escape and calm for you and your home. Our shop supports independent

makers, offering gifts, cards, takeaway coffee, product refill service and speciality food from Australia and New Zealand inspired by our founder Megan's homeland.

20 South Beach Street, Stornoway, HS1 2BJ

Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm **Sat** 10am – 4pm Sun Closed

sandwickbaycandles.com











ishga is an award-winning luxury skincare brand based

in Stornoway. The ocean and our unique seaweed extract is at the core of our organic skincare range. Results-driven skincare that is created using the pillars of provenance, science and sustainability.

Gleann Seileach Business Park, Willowglen Road, Stornoway, **HS1 2QP**

Mon – Thu 9am – 5pm Fri 9am – 1pm (additional hours/days are added in the run up to the Christmas period)

☆ 〉 〉

uk.ishga.com







ISHGA





Experience the Hebrides from

the sea with our whale, dolphin and puffin RIB boat tours plus our unique sea swimming adventures. Daily boat departures from Stornoway Inner Harbour and private charters available. Weekly swim adventures and bespoke arrangements too.

Immerse Hebrides Ltd, Stornoway, HS1 2QR

Mon – Sat 9am – 5pm Booking required

(1) immersehebrides

IMMERSE HEBRIDES LTD

immersehebrides.com





HS1 2PZ

Mon/Tue/Thu/Fri 7.15am - 10pm, **Wed** 8am – 10pm, **Sat** 8am – 8pm Sun Closed

For more information please contact:

isladminteam@cne-siar.gov.uk 01851 822800 or download the app CnES - Sport Facilities

-100057583204685

isle-of-lewis.com/what-to-do/ sporting-attractions/isle-of-lewissports-centre/











SALTBOX SAUNA

Immerse yourself in the therapeutic benefits of hot and cold therapy by the sea with the islands' only wood-fired mobile beachside sauna. Seating up to six people the sauna can be booked privately or as a single seat hourly.

Lewis & Harris

Thu/Fri 12pm – 8pm **Sat** 9am – 8pm **Sun** 12pm – 6pm Bookings required saltboxsauna.co.uk/book

() @saltboxsauna

saltboxsauna.co.uk



Stornoway Library offers a range of books and media for loan and research alongside services such as printing and copying.

19 Cromwell Street, Stornoway, HS1 2DA

Sun/Mon Closed Tues - Fri 10am - 5pm **Sat** 10am – 12pm / 1pm – 4pm

☆ ⊚wilibraries

WESTERN ISLES LIBRARY

wilibraries.org.uk







Discover the Hebridean Way: An Unforgettable Adventure 10 ISLANDS, 6 CAUSEWAYS, 2 FERRIES, **1 EPIC JOURNEY**

From Vatersay to the Butt of Lewis, traverse nearly 200 miles of breathtaking terrain across 10 stunning islands. Marvel at rugged hills, dazzling coastlines, and immerse yourself in the unique heritage and vibrant Gaelic culture. With separate walking and cycling routes, plenty of pit stops, and warm island hospitality, the Hebridean Way is an awe-inspiring trail you can't miss.

Unmatched. Unmissable.

Key facts

Vatersay to Lewis

Cycling length: 185 miles

- Walking length: 156 miles

Spot otters, birds of prey and more, all in their natural habitat

visitouterhebrides.co.uk/hebrideanway







Car Hire Hebrides is a family run business with vehicles ranging from compact cars to vans and 4x4s. All vehicles are a maximum of three years old ensuring hirers always receive a high quality safe car fully covered by manufacturer's warranty.

Deep Water Terminal, Arnish, HS2 9JY Mon – Sat 8.30am – 5.30pm, Sun Closed

Cruise Days Open whenever a ship is at dock Book online or call **01851 706500**

Ferry Terminal, Shell Street, Stornoway, HS1 2AE Mon – Fri 8am – 5pm, Sat Pre-booked hires Sun Closed

Book online or call **01851 706500**

Terminal Building, Stornoway Airport, Stornoway, HS2 0BN

Mon – Fri 8am – 7.30pm, **Sat** 8am – 4pm **Sun** 12pm – 6pm

Book online or call **01851 706500**

carhire-hebrides.co.uk





Vehicle hire specialists for the whole of the Highlands and Islands. We have a group of independent car rental operations spread across the Highlands and Islands with a fleet of over 200 passenger and commercial vehicles.

Deep Water Terminal, Arnish, HS2 9JY Mon - Sat 8.30am - 5.30pm, Sun Closed

Cruise Days Open whenever a ship is at dock Book online or call **01463 440500**

Ferry Terminal, Shell Street, Stornoway, HS1 2AE

Mon – Fri 8am – 5pm, **Sat** 9am – 1.30pm **Sun** Closed

Book online or call **01463 440500**

Terminal Building, Stornoway Airport, Stornoway, HS2 0BN

Mon – Fri 7.30am – 7pm, **Sat** 8am – 2pm **Sun** 12pm – 6pm

Book online or call **01463 440500**

HighlandVehicleRental
highlandvehiclerental

highlandvr.co.uk

2



STORNOWAY BUSINESS

A friendly co-working space in the heart of Stornoway with harbour views, excellent wi-fi and plentiful tea and coffee. Meeting room for up to 10 people available by the hour and desks available for daily use.

9 Bank Street, Stornoway, **HS1 2XG**

Daily 9am - 5pm

Outside these hours by prior arrangement. Bookings are required. We can accommodate same day enquiries if spaces are available.

() @ stornowaybusinesshub

stornowaybusinesshub.co.uk







Tech-Mobile offer a wide range of IT products including PCs, laptops, printers and ink, mobile phones, tablets, games-consoles, games and accessories. Our busy on-site workshop carries out repairs on all the devices listed above. We serve businesses, home users and welcome walk-in enquiries.

17 Bayhead, Stornoway, HS1 2DU

Mon – Fri 9am – 5.30pm **Sat** 10am – 4pm Sun Closed 01851 700178

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tech-mobile.co.uk









related business or community group in the Outer Hebrides?

Do you want to see your business thrive and support the local community?

Outer Hebrides Tourism and our visitouterhebrides platform can help.

Outer Hebrides
Tourism is the official
Destination Management
Organisation (DMO) for
the islands – we work
with other organisations
including VisitScotland
and the Scottish Tourism
Alliance but where they
focus on the national
picture, we are all about
the local.

As an island-based not-for-profit.Community Interest Company, we are committed to the successful management of the islands visitor sector. We seek to lead on the development of sustainable and responsible tourism in the Outer Hebrides, taking our voice to every level of the Scottish industry we lobby for island interests.

We rely on the support of our fantastic members and guarantee that by joining in Outer Hebrides Tourism, you're investing in the Outer Hebrides as a whole. Make a difference, join us today.

Cuir fios/Contact Us:

enquiries@outerhebridestourism.org

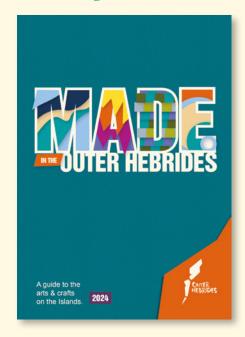
For more information on joining our tourism community:

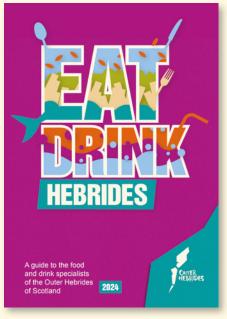
www.visitouterhebrides.co.uk/industry/join-us





Have you read our other Guides?





Made in the Outer Hebrides Art and Craft Guide

This 55-page guide showcases our amazing artists and makers and the fabulous work they produce with 83 listed in the brochure and maps of Lewis, Harris, Uist and Barra.

We have potters, painters, textile artists and makers, galleries, gift shops, Harris Tweed®artisans, craft-makers, jewellery makers, illustrators, photographers, soap makers and lots more.

A great way to guide you round our Art and Crafts and also to keep as a memento of your trip to the Outer Hebrides!

You can download the guide here or buy the guide on our online shop here.

Eat Drink Hebrides Guide

This 53-page guide showcases our amazing food producers, eateries, food shops and distilleries with 79 listed in the brochure and maps of Lewis, Harris, Uist and Barra.

We have restaurants, cafés, smokehouses, honesty boxes, butchers, delis, community shops, food vans, food producers and lots more.

A great way to guide you round our Food and Drink outlets and also to keep as a memento of your trip to the Outer Hebrides!

You can download the guide here or buy the guide on our online shop here.

OUTER HEBRIDES

is a SPECIAL



PARKING

Never park in passing places. Don't park on verges or on the machair. Don't block access to fields and driveways.

LITTER

Leave no trace.
Bin it or, even
better, take it home.
Reduce, reuse
and recycle.

ANIMALS

Keep your dog on a lead. Be alert for livestock. Leave wildlife to do their thing.

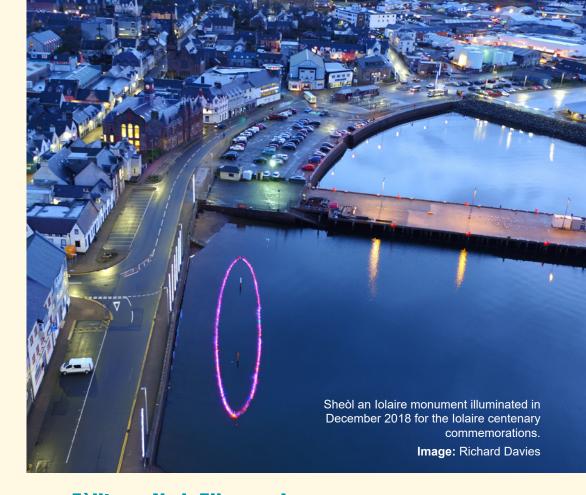
CAMPERS

Use organised campsites. Dispose of waste responsibly. Leave NO trace.

ENGAGE

Follow Scottish
Outdoor Access
Code. Support
Local businesses.
Respect locals
and way of life.

Please help us to keep it that way



Fàilte gu Na h-Eileanan lar, we hope you enjoy your time on our islands.

There is no charge for the memories, the photos are free and the space to feed your soul is priceless.

All we ask is that you make a donation of your choice to help us in our work to support our community and protect our fragile environment.

Please scan here to help us keep the Outer Hebrides a special place:



Mòran taing!

Visit Outer Hebrides is a not-for-profit Community Interest Company, for more information please visit our website: **visitouterhebrides.co.uk**

visitouterhebrides.co.uk

More leaflets to download:

visitouterhebrides.co.uk/planning-your-trip/leaflets

Follow us on Socials:





If you would like to join us and promote your business: visitouterhebrides.co.uk/industry/join-us

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