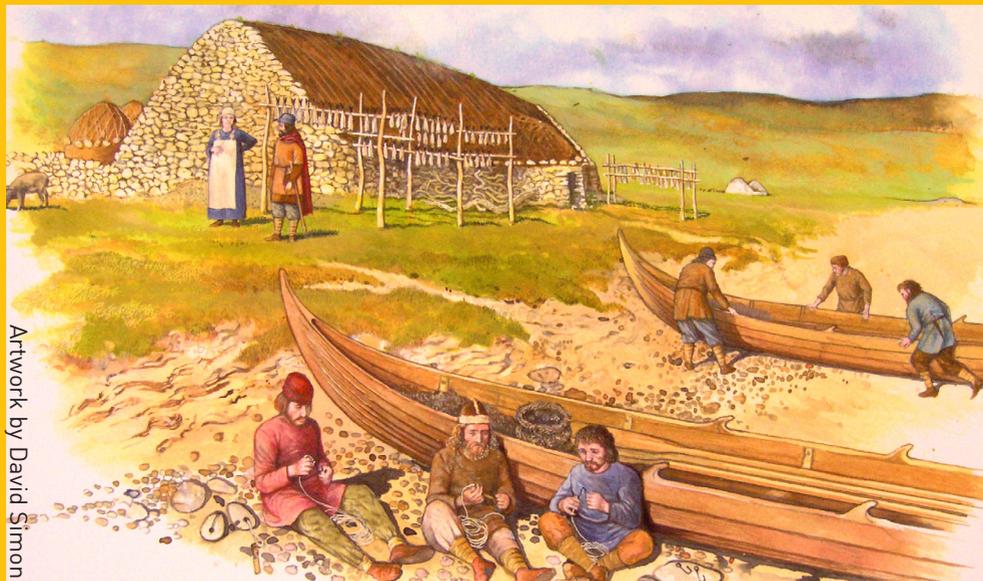


# Introduction - Follow the Vikings



Artwork by David Simon

Shetland is heavily influenced by its Viking past: place names, language and even some of our laws reflect our Scandinavian background. There is evidence of Viking and Norse occupation throughout Shetland, and especially in Unst.

There are about 60 probable Viking farmsteads, hundreds of old Norse place names and even a replica Viking longship on the island. See some of the highlights by following these trails.



Detail from Viking ship Skidbladner

It's worthwhile spending a few days exploring - you might even discover a 'new' Viking longhouse, or alternatively, visit our replica at Brookpoint, based on archaeological evidence from recent excavations at Hamar, Underhoull and Belmont.

In addition to archaeology, Unst has an amazing variety of natural resources including 2 National Nature Reserves, (Keen of Hamar and Hermaness overlooking Britain's most northerly point, Muckle Flugga). Following the trails you may encounter Shetland ponies, seals and even otters.

Please read the information on the reverse of this card – it contains important advice for a safe and successful trip.

## How to use this guide

This trail guide uses excavated and unexcavated sites to reveal a fascinating story of Unst's Viking past. Individual location maps show you how to reach each of the trail sites by car, bike or on foot. You may wish to hike between some of the locations, for which an Ordnance Survey map (OS Explorer 470 1:25000) is strongly recommended.



## Keep safe

- Shetland's weather is very changeable so be prepared for bad weather, with warm, waterproof clothing, sturdy footwear, food and hot drinks.
- Check the weather forecast before going out and heed local advice.
- Let someone know where you are going and when you expect to be back, or leave a note on the dashboard of your car.

## Please do not take our past!

Many of the sites on your walk are scheduled and it is an offence in law to disturb them. If you find any objects from the past, these must be reported to the Shetland Museum (or the police). Scotland's law of Treasure Trove means that this applies to all finds, not just precious metals. This is because all finds provide a lot of important information about our past. We are always excited to discover more and you might even get a reward for reporting it.

For information about other Viking sites in Shetland see Shetland Heritage Trails leaflet, "Vikings!" For further information about the Viking Unst Project see [www.vikingshetland.com](http://www.vikingshetland.com), visit the Unst Heritage Centre and the Shetland Museum and Archives. Other trails in this series include Shetland's Volcano Trail and Ophiolite Trail.