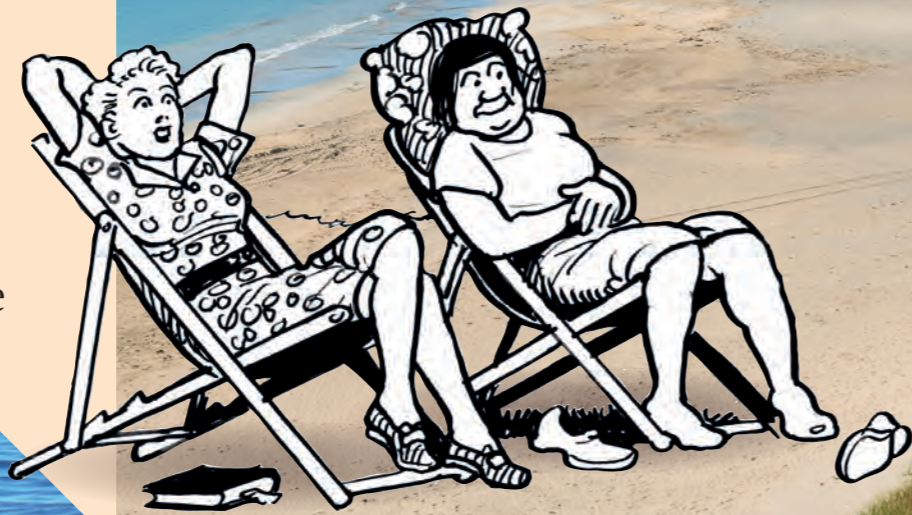


# By Gillian Esposito and OOR WULLIE! Escape to the islands for some peace an' quiet

Despite being around for 90 years, Oor Wullie isnae planning on slowing doon anytime soon. But it disnae mean he doesn't enjoy a more relaxing pace of life now an' then.



St Ninian's Isle tombolo, Shetland Islands.

That's why he's heading to explore Scotland's stunning islands. An' even better, Wullie has discovered that wi' a wee bit planning, it's much easier to reach Orkney, Shetland and the Outer Hebrides than he thocht! So, let's find out what highlights Wullie has planned for braw island escapes wi' The Broons.



A grey seal off the coast of Orkney.

## Shetland

Wullie has promised the Bairn that she can meet some horsies, so they're heading to the **Shetland Pony Experience**. Perfect for all ages, you can pet and brush the ponies before leading them through a simple obstacle course or across the rugged countryside to a secluded beach for the ultimate Shetland picture-perfect selfie opportunity. Children can even have a short, supervised pony ride (height and weight restrictions apply).

There's certainly no shortage of beaches on the Shetland Isles, and one of its most stunning leads to St Ninian's Isle. It's a tombolo - similar to a sandy causeway that connects the island to Shetland's Mainland. It's incredibly unique and scenic, the perfect spot for a relaxing stroll. While there, you can even relax in the **Haar Sauna** that nestles on the edge of this iconic strand.

You don't need to venture far to connect

with the past on these ancient islands, and the **Shetland UNESCO Global Geopark** boasts three billion years of natural history. Follow the **Shetland Volcano Trail** that lets you walk on an ancient ocean floor and explore an extinct volcano.

Or, visit **Hermaness National Nature Reserve** on the Island of Unst - a spectacular wildlife reserve at the tip of the UK's most northerly island.

No doubt inspired by the incredible landscapes, these islands are a vibrant hub for arts and crafts which you can experience along the **Shetland Craft Trail**. You can even take part in **craft workshops** such as knitting, weaving, painting, sculpture, printmaking, woodwork and more.



Sheila Fleet Jewellery, Orkney.

The Broons and Oor Wullie © DC Thomson & Co Ltd (2026)

## Orkney

The Orkney Islands come alive in spring. Seals and seabirds including puffins start to arrive in May and you'll witness the hen harriers sky-dancing above you.

With **Orca Ventures** wildlife cruises, you can take to the sea to spot seabirds, seals and killer whales while you enjoy a truly Orcadian experience of an onboard barbecue of freshly caught lobster, or scallops served with local Orkney whisky and gin.

St Magnus is considered the patron saint of Orkney, and April 16 is his celebration day. Follow in his footsteps on the **St Magnus Way**, a stunning walking or cycling route through Orkney and across the Isle of Egilsay that provides time for space and reflection while on your journey.

If, like the perpetually harassed Maw Broon, you're craving a break from the stresses of modern life, the stunning **Isle of Sanday** should be top of your list. Immerse yourself in the beautiful white sandy beaches, sand dunes and machair, and step back in time at **Orkney Retreats Boloquoy Victorian Farm & Watermill** for a true Victorian experience.

To uncover your creative side, discover the amazing arts and crafts makers and designers

that thrive in these inspirational islands by following the **Creative Orkney Trail**. Why not learn some new skills at an arts and crafts workshop, and at the same time soak up the sensational scenery and landscapes that make Orkney so special?

## Outer Hebrides

Famous for Instagram-worthy beaches, the Outer Hebrides have much more to offer than just stunning stretches of sand. These islands are the perfect antidote to the hustle and bustle of life and offer endless opportunities to connect with nature and the outdoors.

For an authentic crofting experience, step off the beaten path to **Long Island Retreats** on South Uist and enjoy some island time at its crofts. Meet the locals, hear tales of yesteryear, learn a little Gaelic, get up close and personal with the animals and sample homegrown croft produce.

From wellness and active retreats to wild swimming and boat tours, **Innerness Hebrides**, based in Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, offers coastal adventures all the family will enjoy.

While on the islands, be sure to make time for a **Saltbox Sauna** wild coastal experience. The company operates three mobile saunas



Isle of Eriskay, Outer Hebrides.

## Wullie's Top Travel Tips

that move between stunning beaches and locations across the islands. Check locations and book online via the Saltbox Sauna website.

A small family-run croft on the Isle of Lewis, just 10-minutes' drive from Stornoway, is home to **Alpaca Adventures**. Its alpaca experiences let you meet, feed and walk their friendly herd. Overlooking a white sand beach and turquoise waters you are guaranteed some great photos - and Murdo the alpaca is known to be generous with kisses!

From Watersay in the south to the Butt of Lewis in the north, the **Hebridean Way** is a truly iconic island experience. Spanning up to nearly 200 miles across 10 breathtaking islands, the route boasts rugged hills and dazzling Atlantic coastline. It can be walked or cycled, and if 200 miles feels a wee bit ambitious, you can select sections to complete over the course of a day or so.

If yir planning a wee trip to Orkney, Shetland or the Outer Hebrides then you've got to be canny and plan your transport. However, travelling to the islands might not take as long as you think, and using public transport can cut costs too.

You're best tae book yir ferry crossings in advance with NorthLink Ferries for Orkney and Shetland and Caledonian MacBrayne for the Outer Hebrides. For NorthLink Ferries to Orkney and Shetland, you can travel by train to Aberdeen or Thurso.

Remember too that ScotRail's Kids for a Quid is a braw deal that lets up to four children (aged five to 15) travel for £1 return each with every fare-paying adult.

Also, adults can take advantage of the new £2 bus fare cap for travel across the islands - and even through the Highlands, Moray Speyside and Argyll & The Isles.

For self-catering accommodation ideas, check out [embracescotland.co.uk](http://embracescotland.co.uk)



Scan the QR code or search VisitScotland to plan your next day out or short break



## Whit's oan

### Shetland

**Shetland Folk Festival, April 30-May 3**  
The UK's most northerly folk festival.

**Shetland Classic Motor Show, June 6-7**  
The display typically includes more than 180 classic cars and more than 160 motorcycles.

**Shetland Noir, June 11-14**  
Crime fiction literature festival with author talks, workshops, panel discussions and special events.

**Simmer Dim Rally, June 14**  
This motorcycle rally sees hundreds of visitors make an annual trip to Shetland with their motorcycles.

### Orkney

**Orkney Nature Festival, May 11-17**  
Enjoy, and be inspired by, the magnificent Orcadian wildlife with a variety of events over the space of the week.

**Orkney Folk Festival, May 21-24**  
Orkney's largest festival featuring acts from Orkney, Scotland and all over the world.

### Outer Hebrides

**Outer Hebrides Wildlife Festival, June 20-27**  
A diverse programme of events to learn about, connect with, and take action for nature in the Outer Hebrides.



# PLAN A GREAT DAY OUT THIS SPRING



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