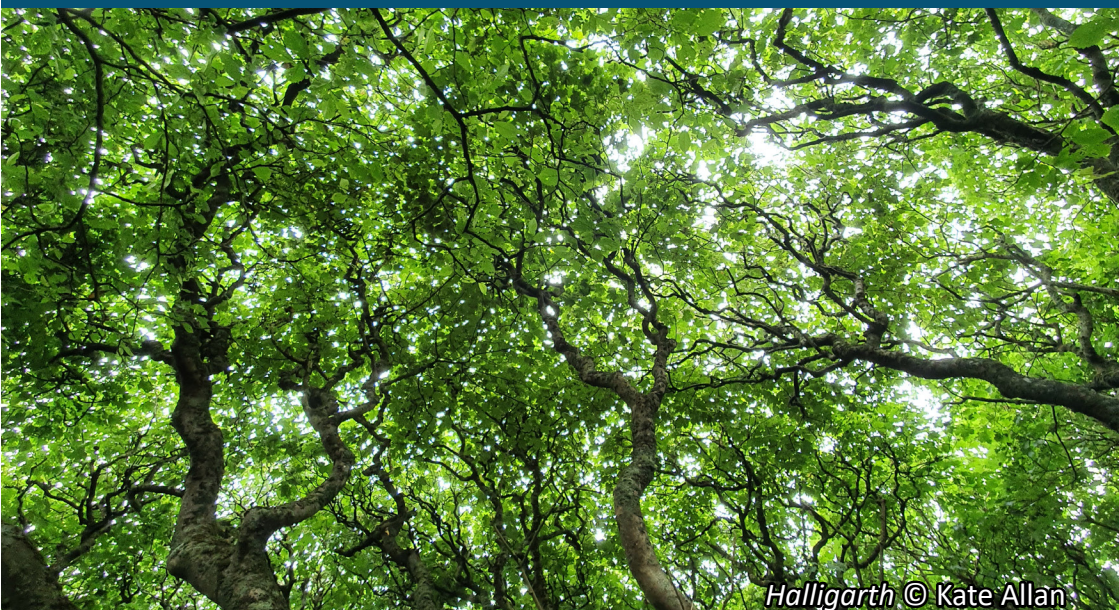




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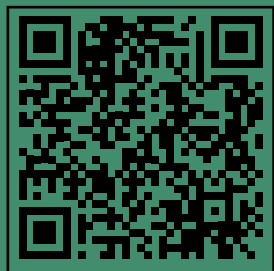


Halligarth © Kate Allan

Woodland Guide

The woodland areas in this guide include publicly accessible woodlands made up of native, non-native and mixed woodland areas. The description of each woodland area provides details on species, specific features, accessibility and directions to the site.

Follow the QR code for a map showing the woodland areas.



Please remember to take care of these spaces, stay on the paths, take your litter home, DO NOT start fires, keep dogs under control and follow any rules set out on local signage. Remember to close any gates behind you and DO NOT climb any fences. Many of these woodlands do not have specific allocated parking so please park sensibly, DO NOT block access, passing places or gateways. Visit the Scottish Outdoor Access Code website for more information.

www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot/

Through the analysis of pollen remains found in peat we know that prior to human habitation during the post-glacial Holocene period, large areas of Shetland were covered in a varied selection of tree and shrub species. These open woodland areas would have supported a selection of other species including tall-herb communities, ferns, wild flowers, fungi, invertebrates and bird species.

The first clearings happened around 7400 BP (Before Present) when human settlers made Shetland their permanent home. Woodland and shrub areas were cleared to make way for livestock and cultivation. Climatic conditions also changed around this time which may also account for some loss. More large-scale clearances followed 500-1500 years later with most species becoming extinct. Since then there has always been a presence of grazing livestock in Shetland resulting in very little natural regeneration of woodland areas.

In more recent years, Shetland Amenity Trust, community initiatives and private landowners have created spaces for woodland areas and regeneration of native species.

Further information can be found on the Shetland Woodlands website shetlandwoodlands.org.uk and SIC Outdoor Access and Core Paths website www.shetland.gov.uk/natural-historic-environment/outdoor-access

All-terrain wheelchairs are available for hire through the local charity Ability Shetland. There is also an all-terrain chair permanently kept at Michaelswood for public use. For more information have a look at their website www.abilityshetland.com



This project is supported by:



University of the
Highlands and Islands
Shetland

Contact us at:

www.shetlandcommunitywildlife.org
shetlandcommunitywildlife@outlook.com

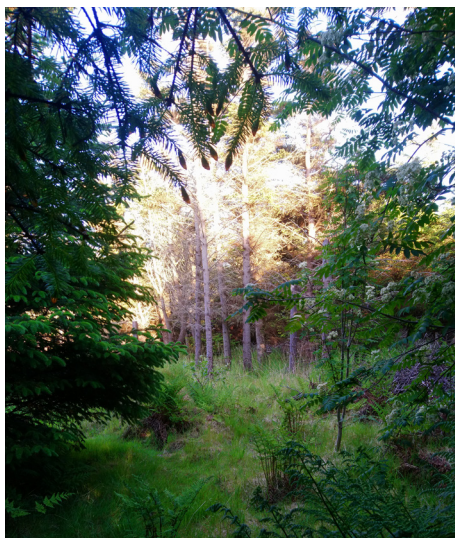
Sullom Plantation

A well-established woodland with Sitka spruce and Lodgepole pine being the first trees planted on the site in 1953. The site has been extended over the years and now also includes Aspen, Downy Birch, Japanese Larch, Juniper and Rowan.

Features- Burn, bridge, wood piles and dens.

Accessibility- Access is through a kissing gate to enter the plantation. Grassy, rough paths lead through the trees. Unsuitable for wheelchairs and all terrain chairs.

Directions- Driving north on the A970 from Brae, take the right to the village of Sullom, follow the road for a few miles. The woodland is directly next to the road on the left, a pedestrian gate leads you into the plantation.



© Charlotte Slater

East Burn Woods

A relatively young plantation which has become well-established in recent years. The path follows the burn through the trees. Planting is a mix of native and non-native species.

Features- Burn

Accessibility- Access is through a signposted metal gate at the passing place. Paths are narrow grassy trails. Not suitable for wheelchairs or all terrain chairs.

Directions- Follow the A970 north out of Brae. When the A970 splits, take the junction to the right signposted North Roe, Collafirth and Ollaberry. Follow the road for approximately 2.5 miles. The woodland runs adjacent to the A970 here at the head of Ronas Voe.



© Charlotte Slater

West Mainland

Michaelswood

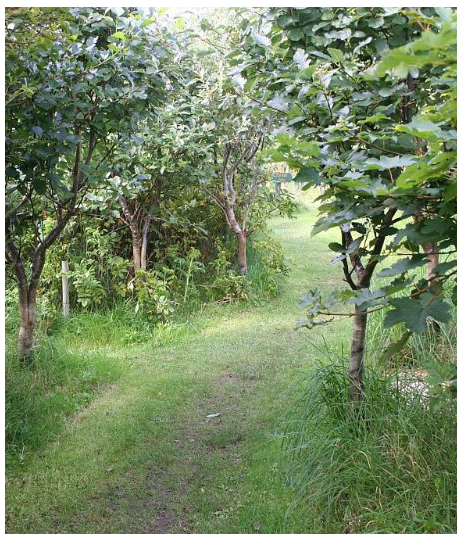
Michaelswood, situated in Aith was planted in memory of Michael Ferrie, a young musician from Aith, who died in 1996 from cancer at the age of 21. It is a “vibrant and lively” place with many features to keep both the young and old entertained. The woodland consists of over 60 different species of trees and shrubs including native and non-native species.

michaelswood.co.uk

Features- Information boards, children’s play area, dinosaur trail, bird hide, indoor and outdoor picnic areas, benches and seating.

Accessibility- Main access via the car park. No stiles. Accessible for wheelchairs and all-terrain wheelchairs.

Directions- Take the junction to the west side (A971) at Tingwall. Follow the road until Bixter and take the junction on the right signposted Aith (B9071). Once in the village of Aith, Michaelswood is signposted on the left.



© www.shetlandwoodlands.org.uk

Da Gairdins

A 60-acre site of woodland and gardens at Sand, first established by Alan and Ruby Inkster in 1997. Da Gairdins is now a registered charity with the aim of maintaining the site for the benefit of the environment. Planting includes a mix of native and non-native species of tree and shrub.

www.gairdins.org.uk

Features- Information boards, benches and seating, wildlife ponds, picnic area.

Accessibility- Access to the different areas of garden and woodland all from the main carpark. The main garden and Grannies garden are accessible via gates and have



© Da Gairdins

paved areas suitable for wheelchairs and all-terrain wheelchairs. The pine woodland plantation is accessible via stiles.

Directions- Take the junction to the west side (A971) at Tingwall. Follow the road through Bixter and take the junction on the left (B9071) signposted Skeld and Reawick. Follow the road for 3 miles and take the junction on the left signposted Sand, follow this road for 1.5 miles and the drive to Da Gairdins is signposted to the right.

Central Mainland

Kergord

The largest and oldest woodland plantation in Shetland, with the first trees planted in the early 20th century. There are several plantations with the most commonly explored being Lindsay Lee, set back from the road accessibly through the track in the field. There is a mix of species within the different plantations including some native: Downy birch, Rowan and Alder, and many other non-native species.

Features- burn, stone ruins, homemade dens

Accessibility- Access to Lyndsay Lee is through a gate and up a track through an agricultural field. Access into the plantations themselves are via stiles. There are no set paths, and tracks can be muddy. Not suitable for wheelchair or all-terrain wheelchair access.

Directions- Take the junction to the west side (A971) at Tingwall. At the head of Weisdale Voe take the junction on the right signposted Kergord (B9075). Follow this road for about a mile, the plantations are on the left.



© Charlotte Slater



© Charlotte Slater

Loch of Voe

The first trees were planted on this site in 1985. It was later extensively extended to create a community woodland. Species at the site include shelterbelts of Sitka alder, Alaska felt-leaf willow and Japanese larch, areas of Black cottonwood, Downy birch, Common alder, and Shetland aspen and willow.

Features- Lochside paths and views. Burn and bridge. Boardwalks in places.

Accessibility- Access via a signposted kissing gate at the north end of the parking area adjacent to the road. Stiles give access at the south end of the loch. Rough paths and some boardwalks in places, not suitable for wheelchairs/all-terrain wheelchairs due to their narrowness.

Directions- Just before reaching Voe on the A970 from the south, the woodland is on the right just after the Vidlin junction. The entrance to the woodland is marked with a sign and gate at the north end.



© Kate Allan

Burn of Valyre

A one hectare site within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) featuring only native species: Alder, Aspen, Downy birch, Rowan and Willow. The circular path takes you along the burn to a waterfall with a deep plunge pool. At the far end of the burn there are relict examples of rowan, dogrose and honeysuckle.

Features- Burn and waterfall

Accessibility- Access is through the signposted gate adjacent to the off-road parking area. Paths are narrow, rough grass tracks within the plantation area. A stile on the back fence allows you to carry on following the burn if you wish. There is no set path in this section and wellie boots are advised as you will need to cross the burn in places.

Directions- From Brae, take the B9076 signposted North Isles, Mossbank and Sullom Voe. After about a mile park on the right-hand side on a tarmacked track leading to a quarry. You will see a signposted gated entrance.



© Kate Allan

Voxter Centre

There is a plantation of Sitka Spruce and Norway Spruce next to Voxter House along with a walled garden containing mainly broadleaved trees and shrubs.

Features- Dens, rope swings, log piles. Picnic benches adjacent to Voxter House.

Accessibility- Wide gates give access to both the lower walled garden and the upper plantation. The walled garden would be easily accessible with an all-terrain wheelchair and a standard wheelchair if the

ground was dry. The lower parts of the upper plantation may be accessible with all-terrain chairs but as the trees become thicker this may become more difficult.

Directions- Take the B9076 north from Brae signposted North Isles, Mossbank and Sullom. After about a mile the Voxter Centre and plantation are clearly visible on the left. Park at the Voxter Centre and walk up the track to the woodland.



© Kate Allan

Sandgarth

Is situated at the head of Dales Lees with stunning views down through the Voe. Planting is a mix of native and non-native, mainly deciduous trees and shrubs.

Features- Benches and picnic benches, bird feeders, Summer house with view to the bird feeders, pond and burn, boardwalks and bridges.

Accessibility- Access via gates and stiles. Follow signage to access different parts of the woodland. Being next to a house, some areas are private. Paths are a mix of rough grass tracks which can be muddy in places and boardwalks. Not suitable for all-terrain wheelchairs due to narrow paths.

Directions- From Voe on the A970 take the junction signposted Toft and Sullom Voe. Follow the road for just over 3 miles then take the junction on the right where there is a wooden sign for an Access Route and a small post box. Please park sensibly and adhere to any signage.



© Kate Allan

Brae Community Woodland

Situated in the heart of Brae between the school and the Moorfield estate with children's play equipment in the playground of the school. Planting is a mix of conifer and broadleaved trees.

Features- Children's play area, burn, bridges and benches.

Accessibility- There are multiply access routes into the woodland and playpark area from the Moorfield Ring Road and the A970 just north of the swimming pool. Large access gates and wide gravel paths makes this easily accessible for wheelchairs and all terrain wheelchairs. No stiles.

Directions- Once in Brae, take the B9076 signposted North Isles, Mossbank and Sullom. Almost immediately, take the junction on the right signposted Moorfield Ring Road, the woodland is on the right.



© Charlotte Slater

North Isles

Halligarth Unst

A small area of woodland situated within a walled area next to the main house at Halligarth in Baltasound. Planting is a mix of deciduous species.

Features- mature, deciduous woodland, situated next to the historic Halligarth House.

Accessibility- There is a hardcore path from the road leading to the woodland area and continuing below and along the south side of the plantation. Gates provide access into the plantation itself, once inside there are well marked trails through the trees. Wheelchair/all-terrain wheelchair access around the edge of the plantation and may be possible inside when the ground is dry.

Directions- Follow the main road through Baltasound, just after the sharp left corner turn right. Follow this round to another 90 degree bend where you will see the plantation ahead.



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