

# Bressay walks

## Cullingsburgh (locally - Culliesbrough)

Approximate 1.5 hours



## Walk – Cullingsburgh.

At the end of the public road is a carpark. Go through the gate and cross the bridge to follow the rough track along the shore. The bridge across the burn has an otter trap built into it; upstream are the remains of two water mills, formerly used for grinding grain.



St Mary's Kirk. Anderhill and its WW1 watchtower behind.

This bay has eroded in historical times, a process which continues today. Several of the ruined buildings are much nearer the water's edge now than when they were built, and who knows what has disappeared. Cullingsburgh like Aith has evidence of human habitation from very early times. A Neolithic turf covered dyke bisects the flat ground and extensive ruins from the 19<sup>th</sup> c crofting settlement, houses, byres and outbuildings, can be seen. The largest house was built as the manse. It was lived in until 1887. (photo)



The last person to live at Cullingsburgh was Lowrie Manson seen here with his daughter Catherine. 1887. J Valentine

Below the houses the remains of fishing lodges and boats' noosts used during the summer by fishermen can still be seen, though much eroded. At the end of the track stands a Bronze Age burnt mound. Near the 19<sup>th</sup> c house up from the further gate are the foundations of two Viking houses. The churchyard lies over the mound of an earlier broch. In it lie the ruins of the early church of St Mary's, a pre-Reformation chapel and one of the few cross kirks in Shetland. A carved stone dating from Pictish times was found here; the original is now in the Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, but a replica stands in the graveyard. Elaborate gravestones, now much weathered, record forgotten histories; the one within the kirk is the resting place of Claes Jansen Bruyn, the captain of a Dutch East India ship which made landfall here on 24 August 1636 with her crew dead or dying of plague. Captain Bruyn died 3 days later.



Replica Bressay stone

Cullingsburgh is a fertile place; in 1754 two hay farms were recorded here. Beyond the gate is "the Mortified", formerly Church of Scotland land gifted during the 1600's by the then minister for the benefit of the people of Bressay. Follow the coast out as far as Rulesness to enjoy views of islands, birds and flowers. If you are quiet seals and otters may be seen on the rocks or watching you from the sea.



Aerial view showing L-R, broch remains, kirk yard and chapel, turf dyke, manse and other buildings.

Heritage Centre Opening times  
2022  
1st May - 30th Sept September  
Wed, Fri, Sat 10am - 4pm  
Check [www.bressay.org](http://www.bressay.org) or posters  
Tel: 01595 820750  
[bressayheritage@btinternet.com](mailto:bressayheritage@btinternet.com)  
The centre is open by appointment  
during April and October.  
Call 01595 820368 / 362 to arrange a  
visit.



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SUMMER 2022  
TUESDAY - FRIDAY 11.00 - 3.00  
SATURDAY  
PARKRUN BREAKFAST 9.30 - 11.00 CAFE 11.30 - 3.00

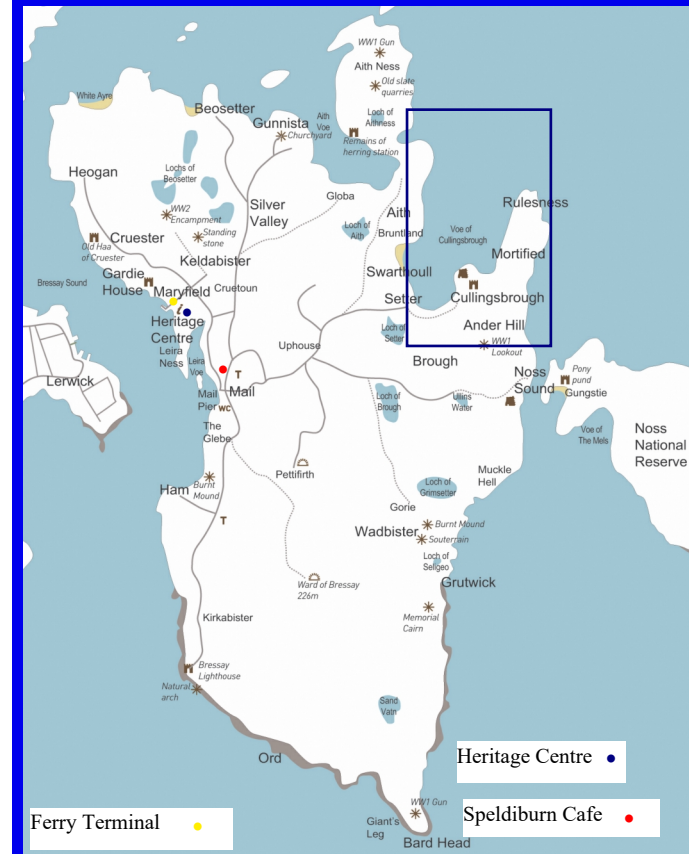


[www.bressay.org](http://www.bressay.org)



# Core Paths & Access Routes Cullingsburgh & St Mary's Church

900m



Please take care near cliff edges, avoid nesting birds  
and keep dogs on a lead at all times.

Please park responsibly  
not blocking gates or access

“Take responsibility for your actions”  
and follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code  
[www.outdooraccess-scotland.com](http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com)  
For more information go to Core Paths at:  
[www.shetland.gov.uk](http://www.shetland.gov.uk)

Further information regarding Bressay's history,  
people or sites of interest can be found in the Bressay  
Heritage Centre. All images used in this production  
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