

2026 Shetland Prepare to Travel Zoom Agenda/Meeting Notes

Monday, April 13, 2026 7:00 p.m. Central

CHECK YOUR EMAIL DAILY!!!!

Care Package Notes

- Electric adapter – I like to pack this in my carry on in case my luggage gets delayed so I can charge stuff when I get to the hotel. If you forget and pack it in your checked luggage, hotel reception will probably have one to borrow. These are **adapters, NOT converters!** If you need to bring an appliance that is not dual voltage, you will need to purchase a currency converter.
- Name tag – please wear out of respect to fellow group members and our guide/driver anytime we are gathered as a group. First time to be wearing your nametag is Friday dinner at the Craighaar.
- Rain jacket – it is not required that you bring/wear it! (Put we sure are a good looking group when you do!) If you do not want your jacket, please donate it...don't toss it. I have an extra men's medium I will bring with me in case people want to exchange sizes.
- Luggage scale only went to those who have not yet received one on a previous trip. (They also make good fiber weighing gadgets!)
- Luggage tags. Put only your name/phone/email on the tags.
- Hotel and local contact info. To leave with someone at home so they know where to find you.
- Flight companion list.
- Packing list. Most is self-explanatory. A couple of things that need to be stressed:
 - Heed the advice to place everything in your carry-on that you will need should your checked luggage get delayed!!! You don't want all your medications and clean undies landing in Spain when you are in Aberdeen! 😊
 - Passport. In addition to keeping it with you or in your carry-on, make a copy/photo on phone!!
 - Please be sure you have TWO pair of shoes. It rains often in Shetland and most activities will be held rain or shine. You don't want to walk around in sloshy shoes! Have a spare. (I bring my nice walking shoes for the day and a second pair of street shoes that I change into for dinner and use as my spare.)
 - Please don't overpack...you'll regret it when you start accumulating treasures you collect throughout our trip. We expect to see everyone in the same clothing for multiple days!
 - You do not need to dress for our group dinners. Casual is fine. I usually change into street shoes and maybe grab a shawl or sweater.
 - For those who are new to international traveling, I have put some links at the end of these notes for some items I use for efficient packing.
 - Be sure and check your electronics to make sure they are dual voltage (110/220) before you plug them in! Most computers, phones etc. are dual voltage, but you need to check.
 - If you travel with a CPAP machine, check if its dual voltage.

- Do NOT bring hairdryers (they will be in the hotel rooms), curling irons, hair straighteners. You will ruin them because most are not dual voltage. If you must have one of these items, either purchase one at the your connecting airport (AMS), or bring a voltage converter that you will need to purchase.
- Washclothes are not standard in European hotels, so don't forget to pack a couple if you like to use them.
- Medications to keep you comfortable in case you should become ill during the trip.

Suitcase & Carry-on Limits:

- Loganair flight to Sumburgh baggage limits. *"All group fares include one checked bag allowance of up to 15kg (33 lbs)per person. There will be a charge at the airport for any bag exceeding 15kg or additional bags that have not been prepaid. In addition, passengers may carry one item of cabin baggage not exceeding 40cm x 35cm x 18cm (15.75" x 13.75" x 7") with a maximum weight of 6kg."*
- All other baggage limits, please check directly on your airline website.

Itinerary Notes:

- As soon as I receive the itinerary, I will upload it to the tour webpage and alert you to it. It will probably still be a couple of weeks, maybe longer.
- We will probably be participating in three classes. You do not need to bring any supplies for them. Everything will be provided.
- Please be on the lookout in a couple of weeks for an e-newsletter asking you to make your dinner meal selections. A couple of the restaurants like to have us order ahead so they can order food. We try to pre-order all of our dinners.
- Breakfast will be at the hotels each morning. Lunch throughout the tour will typically be soup and sandwiches with tea and coffee. Most dinners will be full three-course meals.

Money Matters: Currency, Credit Cards, Gratuities

- Currency is GBP. You can order currency before the trip on-line or possibly through your bank if it a one of the larger banks. Or exchange at the Aberdeen airport. The best exchange rate will most always be a local bank-owned ATM at your destination. ATMs are also located in Lerwick. If you need cash, let us know so we can stop at an ATM. Fortunately, this is one trip where getting local currency is easily accessible.
- Gratuities:
 - All gratuities have been included in your tour fee. These include for meals, Sarah, Jacqueline, Richard our driver, and "the luggage guy".
 - Hotel – there will be no daily housekeeping. If you want to leave a gratuity in your room at the end of your stay, feel free to do so.
- How much in GBP to get? You will be able to pay for most everything on credit card...and it's recommended you do so. You might want a small bit of cash if you stop into a coffee shop, etc. Garth's Croft sells photo greeting cards (I think £15). The one place you will need more cash is if we visit Barbara Isbister, a Shetland knitwear designer. She sells a lot of sweaters when we visit

her home, but she only takes cash. (I will let you know when I have the itinerary if we will be visiting her this year.) £200 should be enough if you find something you'd like from her. We usually visit her early in the trip, so if you have cash for a sweater and don't end up purchasing anything, you'll have time to spend your cash before the end of the trip.

- Credit cards:
 - You should plan to pay for most everything with your credit card! This is safer than carrying a lot of cash and most credit card companies are good at spotting potential fraudulent transactions.
 - MasterCard and VISA are widely accepted. Discover not. AMEX sometimes...usually at the larger businesses. Be sure you have at least two different MC and VISA credit cards with you in case something happens to one of them!!
 - Some credit card companies charge you an international transaction fee for international payments. Check the rules of your card and be sure you will not be charged a fee for making foreign transactions!
 - Check with your card company to see if they need you to alert them that you will be traveling outside of the U.S. They will put a travel alert on your card so your transactions will not be flagged for fraud.

New Country Entry Programs:

- ETA – Electronic Travel Authorization is now fully implemented and required for entry into the UK. If you haven't yet applied for this, please do it ASAP in case you run into any problems.
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-an-electronic-travel-authorisation-eta>. This is the icon you are looking for when you search for the app to download:



- EES – Entry Exit System. A new digital border control program for entry into Schengen countries that will replace manual passport stamps. Typically we do not need to go through passport control in AMS when we are connecting to enter the UK. But in the event you are sent through a queue to provide digital finger prints and a photo, please know that it's for this new program.
- ETIAS. European Travel Information and Authorization System. This is another travel authorization much like the ETA, only for entry into 30 European countries. It will be another authorization you need to apply for. However, it will not be implemented until the fall of 2026, so it is not needed for this trip.
- Summary: You MUST have the ETA to enter Scotland and the UK; and be alerted that you may go through a line to provide digital finger prints and a photo for the EES.

Health:

- All travel regulations related to COVID vaccination and testing have expired and there are no additional regulations.
- Mask-wearing is your choice unless you begin to show signs of ANY illness. Then, wearing a mask at ALL times, and eating meals separated from the group, is expected as per the terms and conditions you signed to join this tour. N95 or KN95 masks.
- You are strongly advised to wear a mask in the airports and on the aircraft until the circulation system is on.
- Please come prepared with items/OTC medications to keep you comfortable should you become ill while we travel. Do not count on being able to find a pharmacy...travel prepared!! May want to speak with your primary care practitioner to see if they advise traveling with any medications in case of illness.
- ***Any dietary or health issues you did not indicate when you registered...let me know ASAP.***

Travel Insurance.

- If you purchased insurance through me, there is a wallet card you should print and bring with you. Bring two cards and put one in your checked bag and carry the other one with you. With the RoamRight policies (not sure about Travel Guard), on the page following your wallet cards, you will find a letter to print and bring with you. This letter is to be given to a health care provider if you need medical care while traveling. You will find your wallet cards at the link to your policy on your insurance purchase confirmation. If you can't find the confirmation of your insurance purchase, [email Deb](#) and she will send it to you.
- If you did not purchase through Deb, please provide a copy of your insurance info...policy number and insurance company contact info on the emergency contact form I sent out.
- If you are traveling without any travel insurance, please provide Deb with the contact information for your health insurance provider who will be covering any international medical or accident costs should an unfortunate situation occur. You can enter this information on the emergency contact form.


Odd and ends:

- Time and weather.
 - 6 hours ahead of Central Daylight Time
 - Temps averaging mid-upper 40s degrees
 - Can be windy!
 - 17 Hours of daylight!
- Purchases, VAT and VAT claims, shipping home. Pack to allow extra room to bring home your purchases in your suitcase. Most merchants we visit do not ship. The exception used to be Jamieson & Smith, but in 2025 they discontinued shipping. (But you can ask!) VAT receipts may be available from J&S, but the smaller businesses will not provide them. You can also check with downtown Lerwick merchants. Some of them might provide VAT receipts. Please do not plan on shipping anything home through the post office. Come with extra room in your suitcase or pack an extra expandable bag so you have lots of extra room to pack your purchases.
- Phones/wifi/communications. Deb will have a phone you can use if you need to make a call. Check with your cellular provider as to the settings to use on your phone so you don't get

charged international roaming fees. There is really no need for cellular service during our trip. You should be able to do all phone and video and messaging communications using WhatsApp on WiFi.

- Will be taking photos and doing a daily photo journal on Facebook. Let me know if you do not want your picture posted. (No names are ever used.)

Group communications during tour:

- We will use WhatsApp on the tour for communications within our group. Please download the app if you don't already have it. Note that you can uninstall the app after the trip if you are not comfortable keeping it after the trip.
- 
- ***After you download WhatsApp, open it and message me at 715.220.9279. (Only use this number for texting!) Be sure and tell me your name when you message me through WhatsApp!*** I will add you to our Shetland group.
 - This is only for first-timers traveling with the Fiber Garden. For everyone else, I should already have your phone # and I will add you to the group. You only need to contact me if your cell # has changed since your last trip with me.
 - Once I have everyone in our WhatsApp group, I will send out a message asking you to check in with your name and where you are from. I will explain why we do this when we meet for our first gathering at Friday night dinner at the Craighaar.
 - You can use this to reach me if you have flight delays, etc. Also to send a message to our group or to individuals in our group.

Arrival into Aberdeen and Aberdeen notes:

- Knitting needles and crochet hooks. OK to take in carry-on with British Airways and U.S. airlines.
- Save ALL information from the airline, including info on any of your flights that change schedules or flight cancellations. You will need this documentation of your original flights and new flights if you need to file an insurance claim. You will NOT be able to get your original flight information off the airline website if the flights change. Save everything!!
- E-tickets bring a printed copy, even if you are using an airline app. I also recommend you request a paper boarding pass in case you need insurance documentation.
- Check your flights!!!
- Recommend you have the airline app on your phone for receiving up-to-date alerts about your flights.
- Arrival into Aberdeen. Message Deb via WhatsApp to let her know your flight has landed. ***Make sure you have your WiFi enabled and connected*** so your message gets through to me! Check your flight companion list to see who else in our group was on your arrival flight. Go outside the terminal and the taxi stand will be to the left. Easy to see. Get in line and grab a taxi! Most all drivers take credit cards, but double check if you need to use a card. Sometimes their machines aren't working...then you will want to wait for the next taxi.
- The Craighaar will be notified of all your flight arrival times, including those of you arriving a day early. If your room is ready, they will let you go to your room prior to check-in time. If your room is not ready, they will store your luggage and you can enjoy a walk through the neighborhood or relax in the lounge.

- Message Deb via WhatsApp when you are in the taxi on your way to the hotel. I will meet you in the lobby and help get you to your room.
- There is a bar with food, drinks, latte's and tea served in the afternoon at the hotel.
- Dinner at the Craighaar on Friday evening will be at 6:00 p.m.
- Food & Beverage walking tour on Saturday. Taxi's will be arranged to get us from our hotel to downtown. Approx 3-4-hour tour with about 5 tastings. We'll return to the hotel by about 4:30 with dinner at 6:30
- Flight time to Sumburgh on Sunday is 11:25. I will arrange taxis to take us to the airport.

Departure from Northlink Ferry terminal to airport on 5/17 will be by taxi.

- I will arrange for taxis to pick us up at the ferry terminal at 8:15-8:30
- Those traveling independently following the tour are on your own.

Links to items Deb uses:

Note that I'm not promoting Amazon via these links. It's just the easiest way to show you the products. I am not an Amazon affiliate.

- [Compression bags](#) are great for creating extra room in your suitcase and bring extra compression bags to pack your purchases in to bring home! (Note that the link is not to the bags I purchased years ago. But it will help you get your search started. I like the sets that come with multiple sizes of bags.)
- Another good packing tool is packing cubes or compression packing cubes. [These are the ones I've tried and like.](#)
- [Phone lanyard](#). I never worry about losing my phone and my hands can remain free for other things. Highly recommended if you use your phone to take photos. This is not the one I have, but looks very similar.
- [KN95 mask that I wear](#). These are the masks I travel with and always use. Comfortable, FDA approved high filtration efficiency, and they were one of the few masks given EUA for use in medical settings during the pandemic before the U.S. could produce adequate N95 masks.

CHECK YOUR EMAIL DAILY!!!!