

Ionad Spòrs Leòdhais. Lewis Sports Centre
 Enjoy the brand new facilities of the Sports Centre in Stornoway. fitness centre, pool, games hall, squash courts, health suite and climbing wall. Special 'fun' sessions for children. Outdoors, an Astro Turf pitch and running track are available for group hire.
 The café area is situated between the climbing wall and pool, so you can watch the family in swimming, whilst you sit centrally having a quiet cup of coffee, watching somebody else go 'up the wall'.
 Sports complex: Open: 8am to 10pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm on Saturdays. Tel: 01851 709191
www.cne-siar.gov.uk/isl/index.asp (Map Grid Ref: D3)

Engebret Ltd Join us and explore the coastline with its abundance of bird-life and regular sightings of seals, porpoises, dolphins and the occasional whale. We have excellent sea-fishing so you can fish for your supper, and we run trips to the Shiant Islands where you can see one of the largest puffin colonies in the world. Pick up at the pontoons behind the Lifeboat Station. To book a trip, phone Charles on: 01851 702303/702304 or 07766 375434
www.visitthebrides.co.uk (Map Grid Ref: B3)

Hebridean Jewellery
www.hebrideanjewellery.co.uk
 Visit the Hebridean Jewellery shop at 63 Cromwell St. Stornoway, selling a wide variety of jewellery, giftware and books of quality and good value for money. This quality hand crafted jewellery is manufactured on South Uist in the Outer Hebrides.
 If you are unable to visit our shop, please visit us on our online store. Tel: 01851 702372 www.hebrideanjewellery.co.uk

Hebridean Celtic Festival, 15 – 18 July 2009 Each July the islands play host to an amazing four day Celtic music festival set amidst this most unique cultural backdrop with its glorious Gaelic culture and Hebridean heritage. Now an event with an international reputation, the keystone of HebCelt's progress over the last decade has been the assertiveness of its programming, right from the outset: its willingness to think big and aim high, in bold defiance of conventional wisdom. More information on this fabulous event from www.hebcelfest.com or 01851 702333.

An **Lanntair** is in the centre of Stornoway near the bus station and the ferry terminal. Open from 10am until late, from Monday to Saturday, and has all day food, exhibitions, live music and events, shopping and creative workshops. Traditional music, varied art exhibitions, café bar, restaurant with its lovely views out over the harbour. For information on their wide range of events: www.lanntair.com (Map Grid Ref: B4)

Lewis Castle. Overlooking Stornoway harbour, the impressive Lewis Castle (not Lewis Castle) was built in the mid 1800's by a rich merchant called Sir James Matheson of the Jardine Matheson company. Sir James bought the island of Lewis in 1844, developed this wonderful woodland area and built his mock Tudor castle. Lord Leverhume bought the building, complete with the island, in 1918, and in 1923 gave it back to the people of Lewis. The castle has been used since as a hospital in the Second World War, and also as a college and school, before being deemed unsafe. No public entry. (Map Grid Ref: A3)

Stornoway Museum Museum Nan Eilean Established in 1983 by the Western Isles Council, the building once was the Secondary Dept. for the Nicolson Institute. The museum holds collections of objects, photographs, prints and paintings, and archives illustrating the archaeology, social, domestic and economic history of the islands. Opening hours until 1st Oct '09: Mon to Sat 10.00am to 5.30pm. From Oct 1st to March 31st '10: Tuesday to Friday: 10am to 5pm Saturdays: 10am to 1pm. Tel: 01851 709266 (Map Grid Ref: C3)

Isle of North Uist and Berneray places to visit (map on page 8)

North Uist is a landscape of fresh and salt water lochs, bordered on its western side by miles of sandy beaches, and cultivated crofts. North Uist is very popular with walkers, bird watchers, motor homers and cyclists alike. On the west side of the island the road follows the machair, (the fertile coastal grassland bordering the sand dunes), whilst the eastern side is mainly water. This area is a fisherman's and bird watcher's paradise. Beaches are a huge attraction on North Uist and Berneray. Traigh Lingeigh has a huge expanse of pure white shell sand, crystal clear waters and a safe shallow sandy bay suitable for swimming and snorkelling. Otter Spotting is a popular island attraction, as the east side of the island is a landscape of inland and sea lochs, inlet, bays and channels. This is an Otter's paradise, and the holt can be easily spotted. It still takes patience and a bit of luck to spot the elusive creature. Study the tide timetable, as an otter is much more likely to be seen on an incoming tide, roughly 2 - 4 hours before high tide. As it comes towards high tide, the otter usually heads for its holt, which is its home and rest area. It is also where they rear their young. RSBP Nature Reserve at Balranald Balranald is famous for its corncrakes, now one of Europe's most endangered species. The circular nature trail through the croft land of the reserves is 3 miles (4.5 km) and takes 2-3 hours. The trail goes through wildflower-rich machair and round a bird-rich headland. A wide selection of wildlife can be seen, from wading birds to the elusive otter. The information centre explains the importance of traditional crofting in agriculture for management of the corncrake and other wildlife.

The Isle of Berneray lies at the northern end of the Uists, and has a very active community with some significant attractions, mainly cultural, and related to the wonderful scenery. The landscape is mostly agricultural, with corn fields on the western side of the island on the Machair (sand based grassland). Corncrakes and other long grass nesting birds are common in early summer. The village has a small shop and cafe, a picturesque fishing harbour, and the Caledonian MacBrayne pier for the connection to the Isle of Harris. Giant Macaskill Angus Mor MacAskill is known in the Guinness Book of Records as the World's largest giant. He is noted to be the tallest and the strongest man who ever lived, and the man having the largest chest measurements of any non-obese man. Queen Victoria heard about MacAskill's great strength and proclaimed him to be "the tallest, stoutest and strongest man to ever enter the palace", and presented him with two gold rings in appreciation. He was born on Berneray in 1825 and the Giant MacAskill Cairn was erected in 1991, and is located on the machair.

Information Centres: Tourist Information Office Lochmaddy 01876 500321 Claddach Kirkibost Community Centre café serving local produce and homebaking in their conservatory with spectacular views out to sea. Also computer internet access, local information, nursery services, and public toilets. Taigh Chearsabhagh in Lochmaddy, has a museum, café and facilities.

Isle of Benbecula places to visit (map on page 8)

Benbecula in Gaelic is Beinn na Faoghla which means Mountain of the Ford. This is a very apt name for the island and its solitary hill, Rueval, which is in fact a stepping stone between North and South Uist. The islands are connected by a series of causeways, but once upon a time crossing to the Uists would mean fording the dangerous stretches of tidal sands. The temptation to bypass most of Benbecula by taking the direct road through the island is always there; however, Balivanich and the coast road is worth the detour. Also, Benbecula is one of the best locations to shop, with supermarkets, a bakery, and good places to eat and have cups of coffee. The main habitation is called Balivanich, (continued))

and is situated on the north west of the island. The airport is located in Balivanich, as is the military base, hospital and a selection of shops, housing and businesses. Lincilate is the second largest habitation and is where the secondary school and very fine leisure complex are located. The local enterprise company, campsite, Borge Castle, hotels and beaches are also in the same area. Lincilate is just a few minutes off the main A865. The ruin of 14th century Caisteal Borbh (Borge Castle) was a Clanranald stronghold.