



# 25 ORKNEY THE OLD MAN OF HOY

▶ Distance: 13¼ miles/21.4km ▶ Time: 7 hours ▶ Grade: Challenging



SEE  
FEATURE  
ON PAGE 16

The Old Man of Hoy  
at point 4.



PHOTO: TAYLOR ST JOHN



## CHOSEN BY... TAYLOR ST JOHN

The 'High Island' feels far more than a 30-minute ferry ride from Orkney's mainland. This out-and-back route allows you to explore its northern half by combining the valley walk from Moaness to Rackwick Bay with the Old Man of Hoy walk from Rackwick. As you cross the valley between Cuilgass and Ward Hill (Orkney's highest peak), look out for diving Arctic skuas who come ashore to breed. At the end of the valley path, George Mackay Brown's 'hidden valley of light' appears, and from the isolated paradise of Rackwick the walk proceeds to cliffs overlooking the

famed limestone sea stack.

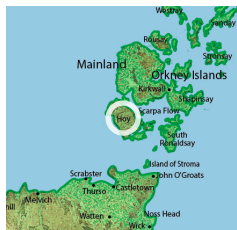
### 1 Start

After disembarking from the passenger ferry at Moaness pier, walk past an information centre on your R and bear L to follow the road. Continue straight on passing the Beneth'ill Café and then several turn-offs to your R and L. (At the second junction on your L, you can detour for a quick visit to the Hoy Kirk Heritage Centre.)

### 2 1½ miles/2.3km

Where the main road turns R, leave it to continue straight along a paved path, following a signpost for Rackwick. After 500m, cross over a burn (small stream) then turn L to follow a

## PLAN YOUR WALK



## ROUTE

### Start/parking

Arrive at Moaness Pier by passenger-only ferry from Stromness (where you can leave your car), grid ref HY244039

**Is it for me?** Paths, tracks, and some paved single-track roads. Gentle incline at start and from Rackwick to the Old Man, with small section along coastal cliffs  
**Stiles** None

## PLANNING

**Nearest town** Stromness

### Refreshments

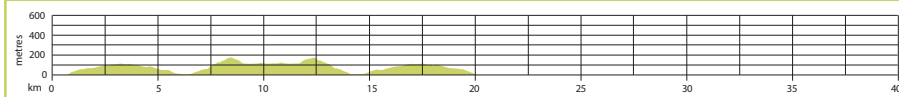
Beneth'ill Café, Moaness (Tel: 1856 791119)

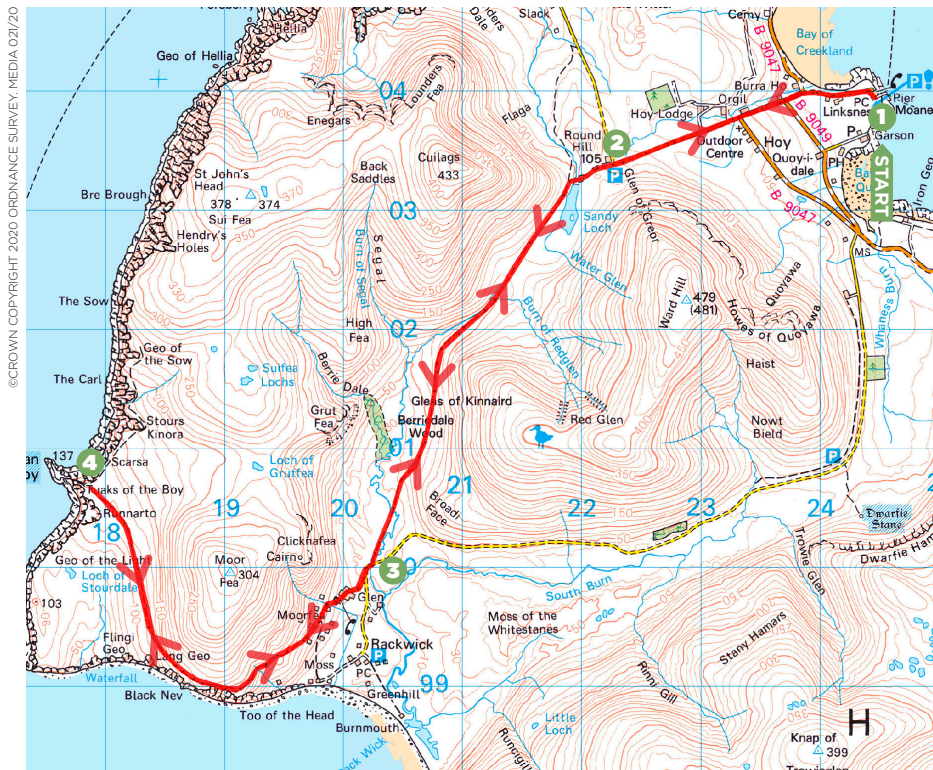
**Public toilets** Moaness Pier, Hoy Kirk Heritage Centre

**Public transport** Passenger ferry from Stromness Pier to Moaness Pier. If you prefer to cut walk short, taxi from Rackwick back to Moaness (Albert Clark Taxi, 01856791315)

**Maps** OS Explorer 462; Landranger 7

## GRADIENT PROFILE



25 ORKNEY  
THE OLD MAN OF HOY► OS Explorer map 462 ► Buy maps at: [ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop](http://ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop)

sign for Rackwick and soon passing Sandy Loch, a popular habitat for the Arctic skuas. Continue along the winding dirt path through Rackwick Glen, being careful to follow signposts.

### 3 4 miles/6.5km

Where the path ends at a T-junction with a paved road, turn R to join the road toward Rackwick. Bear R at a fork (you can bear L and head to the Rackwick Car Park if you wish

to follow the longer route along the coast.) Pass the Rackwick Hostel, then cross through a gate and continue past the heritage museum buildings. Keep to the path as it traverses the hillside, following signs for the Old Man of Hoy. Pass through a kissing gate then continue straight on to follow the wide path along the cliff-top toward the Old Man of Hoy.

### 4 6½ miles/10.6km

From here, retrace the

outward route back to Moaness Pier. For a shorter option, return to the Rackwick Car Park and take a local taxi (essential to book ahead) back to Moaness Pier. **CW**

**VIEW THE WALK ON OS MAPS ONLINE:**  
[lfto.com/cwroutes](http://lfto.com/cwroutes)

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



DATE WALKED

TIME TAKEN

YOUR RATING