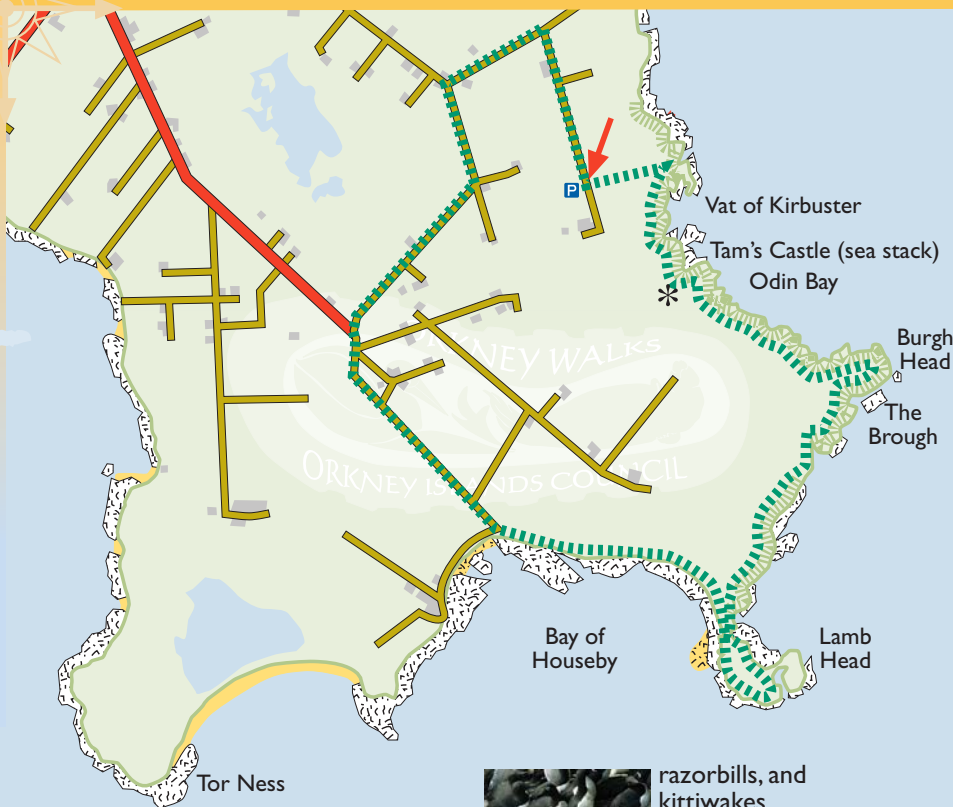


Vat of Kirbister and Odin Bay

10.4 km (6.5m) circular walk through dramatic coastal scenery



This walk follows some of the best cliff scenery in Orkney. There are sheer cliffs, caves, sea stacks and a spectacular natural arch, called the Vat of Kirbister. The 'Vat' is a gloop, formed when a sea cave partially collapses, leaving an arch spanning the entrance. When an arch collapses, it leaves a sea stack, of which there are several along the walk. One of the most interesting of these is Tam's Castle where there are the remains of an early Christian Hermitage.

The wind and the sea have eroded the cliffs to form good nesting ledges for birds. In summer these narrow ledges are packed with noisy sea birds – common guillemots,



Guillemots

razorbills, and kittiwakes. Burgh Head and Lamb Head are high promontories, popular with seabirds, but also interesting historical sites. The Brough of Burgh Head has the largest of Stronsay's hermitage sites, with a stone wall visible on the

landward side of the stack, symbolising its separation from the outside world. Lamb Head is dotted with archaeological sites, including Pict houses. Past Lamb Head the high cliffs are replaced by a much gentler rocky shore, which is very popular with birds during the winter months. Look out for turnstones, purple sandpipers, eider duck, goldeneye and snow buntings.



Vat

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