



**Staffin Ecomuseum
CEUMANNAN
it's out there!**

- A fieldwork and research venue for the Earth Sciences -

Staffin is an area of coastal cliffs, grassy platforms and lochain with the Trotternish Ridge to the west being the **longest inland cliff in Britain**. *The Old Man of Storr* and the *Quiraing* are it's most spectacular landmarks. The geology mainly consists of basalt flows over sandstone and shales with successive erosion of the underlying sedimentary rocks producing **rotational slippages and features of European importance**. The coastal rocks are predominantly Jurassic, with Tertiary exposures along the Ridge.

Staffin, named by the Vikings, means the "place of upright pillars", a reference to the basaltic pillared rocks in the area. At *Kilt Rock* on the Portree-Staffin road for example you'll see the vertical black, columnar basalt folds which give this cliff its name.

The striking **geological formations and Jurassic Fossil** records are key features of the Staffin area but what makes it unique is the assemblage of natural and heritage elements. *Ceumannan*, the Staffin ecomuseum project will integrate these to reveal a more multi-faceted and rounded approach to an understanding of the area.

***Ceumannan* is a museum without walls** which will enable visitors to explore nature and culture in the environment, at locations where things really happened. It develops **landscape access through an outdoor 'presentation'**. The project is instigated by the Staffin Community Trust and supported by the North Highland LEADER+ 2000-2006 Programme, The Scottish Executive (RCF and SEERAD), Heritage Lottery Fund, SNH, Skye & Lochalsh Enterprise and Highland 2007.

Ceumannan, we believe, should also provide a mechanism by which knowledge of and access to nature and heritage resources might be enhanced through **studies** which might in turn expand understanding of these resources. A good example of what is meant is the recent expansion of information about the 'Dinosaur' record which are rapidly establishing east Trotternish's reputation as the '**Dinosaur capital**' of Scotland¹.

¹ "Dinosaurs are rare in Scotland. Although dinosaurs have been known of in England and elsewhere in the world for over 300 years, it was only in the last 23 years that dinosaurs began to appear in Scotland. The first discovery of dinosaur remains on the Isle of Skye was

Is **your department** aware of the possibilities the Staffin area provides as a fieldwork and research venue?

Would the possibility interest your department of collaborating with the Staffin Community Trust on studies geared to the interpretation of the area?

Please get in touch if we can help with setting up a fieldtrip or in assisting your research in the Staffin area.

Ceumannan - Staffin Ecomuseum

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Dun Flodigarry Hostel provides group accommodation. The hostel is set beneath the distinctive cliffs and rock formations of the Quiraing. It overlooks the sea and offers spectacular views of the Western Isles and Wester Ross. The bus, as well as a hotel with bar and restaurant, are 100 metres away.

www.hostel-scotland.co.uk/hostels/index.asp?ID=8

Staffin also offers a good selection of self-catering accommodation, Bed & Breakfast as well as two hotels and places to eat - and drink!

www.trotternish-skye.co.uk

www.isleofskye.com

www.skye.co.uk

www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk

www.columba1400.com

that of a single 49cm long ornithopod footprint discovered in 1982 in the Staffin area. Since then **dinosaur footprints** and trackways have turned up elsewhere on the Trotternish Peninsula in 165 million year old Middle Jurassic rocks. The most accessible dinosaur remains were found in 2002 at An Corran, the local beach in Staffin Bay. The giant footprints have been identified as being from a large carnivore dinosaur similar to Megalosaurus. It should be noted that they can be obscured by sand periodically. Casts are on display in Dugald Ross' **Staffin Museum** open from Easter to autumn. Here the public have the rare opportunity to see **Scotland's most prestigious and largest collection of Scottish dinosaur remains than that held anywhere else in the World.**

(Neil D L Clark, Hunterian Museum, University of Glasgow, 2005)