



# Bulandet

North Sea trail

Askvoll



## Gateway to the North Sea

*Bulandet and Værlandet form the westernmost inhabited archipelago in Norway. Værlandet has a very distinctive landscape, with its special crags, moors and lakes. Bulandet is made up of more than 365 islands and is often referred to as the "Venice of the North". The islands are home to more than 450. The most important industries are fish processing, salmon farming and slaughtering, stone quarries and stone processing, fishing net production and tourism. The 5 km long road between Værlandet and Bulandet, with 6 bridges totalling 905 metres, is truly the gateway to the North Sea!*



Bulandet from the Kjempenes brigde.  
Photo: Anne Britt Sandøy.

## North Sea Trail

The new road – known as the gateway to the North Sea – forms the North Sea trail on Bulandet. From the ferry quay on Værlandet, you can either follow the North Sea trail – the old school road – past the crags or take the main road through Landøyna to Myrvågen. The road is tarmacked and takes you through delightful scenery. Cycles are available for hire on both Værlandet and Bulandet, and in good weather, you are likely to meet more cycles than cars on the road.

The first bridge, 234 metres long, goes from Myrvåg on Værlandet to Melvær. The island of



Bulandet - made for seakayaking!  
Photo: Arne Stubhaug, Firda

Melvær has some great walking and you can visit a pothole at the very north of Melværrånen hill. A detour up to the top of Melværrånen is also recommended. The trail continues westwards from Melvær over Ytre Melværsund bridge. This is the longest bridge, at 317 metres. You cross two more bridges before arriving at Olsund bridge, the most popular.

"Standing on top of Olsund bridge, feels like standing on top of the earth and gazing out over the landscape. The islands sit like toads on the water around the bridges, and everywhere you look is the sea. If you really concentrate, you will see that the earth is round and that the sea curves away from you" (Firda, regional newspaper).

The construction of the Olsund bridge was a truly pioneering project. First, two piers in steel, each measuring 53 metres in length and weighing 250 tons, were positioned on each side. Then, the 106 metre long centre span was assembled between the piers. This was the very first time an entire centre span had been suspended on a bridge in this manner. The span weighed around 650 tons and represented the heaviest bridge lift ever performed in Norway.

The last bridge before Bulandet crosses Langøysundet onto the island of Gjørøyna, the northernmost part of Bulandet. The Gjørøy crag provides a



Having fun at Halsøyhaugen viewpoint.  
Photo: Anne Britt Sandøy

delightful viewpoint and is popular with walkers. The trail continues over the islands, crossing small bridges and landfill areas. The names of the islands, guesthouses and the different attractions are all signposted. If you follow the trail right to the very end, you arrive at Halsøyhaugen viewpoint where the view in all directions is breathtaking.

## Melvær – from boat to car

There are a number of signs to indicate that Melvær was inhabited some time before the Black Death came to Norway. The Melvær inhabitants in the 18th and 19th centuries were tenant farmers on the Svanøy estate. 1867, the tenant farmers were allowed to purchase the farm and now have cattle and butter production. The two households on Melvær relied on boat transport until the road opened in 2003.

The children would often live away from home to attend school. It must have been a constant worry to send the children across the water in all kinds of weather. The crossing between Melvær and Bulandet could be rough during the winter.

## Værlandet and Bulandet

Facilities and attractions:

- Church
- Groceries
- Café
- Boat/seakayak for hire
- Cycle hire
- Guest moorings
- Accommodation
- Gallery





4 out of 6 bridges - the gateway to the North Sea.  
Photo: Kurt Rutledal



Scilla verna.  
Photo: Private



Nikøy - the service center on the islands.  
Photo: Leif Grane

### Bulandet – conglomerate and fisheries

Conglomerate is the most predominant stone on the islands. 340 million years ago, during the Devonian period, loose stone masses were transported by glaciers and rivers and cemented together.

Bulandet is also a conglomerate of islands and skerries. It is said that there are as many islands here as there are days in a year. Around 20 of the islands are



Fishing (herring) in the 1930's.  
Photo: Sivert Halsøy



Looking for the salmon 2004.  
Photo: Eli Sandøy

inhabited and, with the exception of Sandøyna and Bjørnøyna, all these are connected by bridges and landfill areas. Bulandet is, not least, a conglomerate of different people. The 270 permanent inhabitants represent 3 parts of the world and all of Norway. The young people move away, fishing or studying and bring their partners back to the area to live. Others come here to work for a period, and never leave. Pay a visit to the local shop, and you are bound to hear a number of dialects!

While other small village communities have struggled with depopulation and unemployment, Bulandet has been marked by optimism and motivation. The new road can take the credit for much of this optimism. The people here are always willing to help each other and work together, even if they disagree. Fishing is the main industry. The community has many different fishing boats and one cargo boat.

Bulandet Fiskeindustri and Bulandet school are the largest workplaces for women. The schools on Værlandet and Bulandet merged in the autumn of 2004, and have over 80 pupils, ranging from first to tenth grade.

Tourism is an ever-increasing industry. Many inhabitants hire out cabins and fisherman's cabins, and several art ateliers have sales exhibitions. The Theme Park has exhibitions on the past and present of Bulandet, with 3 permanent exhibitions –fishing, peace and Bulandet at the millennium. The Theme Park is run by volunteers and most of the exhibitions are the result of voluntary communal efforts. Bulandet is a paradise for sea kayaking and NJORD arranges courses and guided kayaking in the area.

For the less adventurous, the postal boat provides island hopping cruises between Bulandet and Solund.

### Travel

The ferry from Askvoll on the mainland takes around one hour. It also stops on Fure in Fjaler, and corresponds with the express boat services from Bergen, Sogn, Måløy and Florø. A bus service between Bulandet and Værlandet corresponds with the ferry departures. The distance from the old ferry quay on Bulandet to the ferry quay on Værlandet is 12 km. Cycles are for hire from both A/S Nikøy and Værlandet Handel. For more information, please visit the web site for our islands.



SOGN OG FJORDANE FYLKESKOMMUNE

**PUBLIC ACCESS TO LAND APPLIES TO OUTLYING FIELDS**

**Public access:**

- Walking and skiing
- Picnicking and overnight stays
- Horse riding or cycling on paths and roads
- Boating, mooring and going ashore in outlying fields along the coast
- Picking berries, mushrooms and flowers
- Bathing in the sea, lakes and watercourses
- Fishing with angling tackle for salt-water fish

**Obligations:**

- Not to damage the natural environment or disturb animals and birds
- Not to walk over cultivated ground and fields
- Not to build fires in forests and fields between 15 April and 15 September
- To keep dogs on a leash at all times on public roads or in the countryside. For outlying fields, dogs must be kept on a leash between 1 April and 15 October and when animals are out to graze.

Tourist information: Askvoll municipality, Office of culture  
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www.jensbua.no

http://bulandet-grendalag.org/

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ASKVOLL KOMMUNE

NAVE Nortrail

North Sea trail  
NAVE Nortrail is a cooperation project for the protection of the North Sea region and its shared cultural heritage as a meeting point for communication and transp.

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