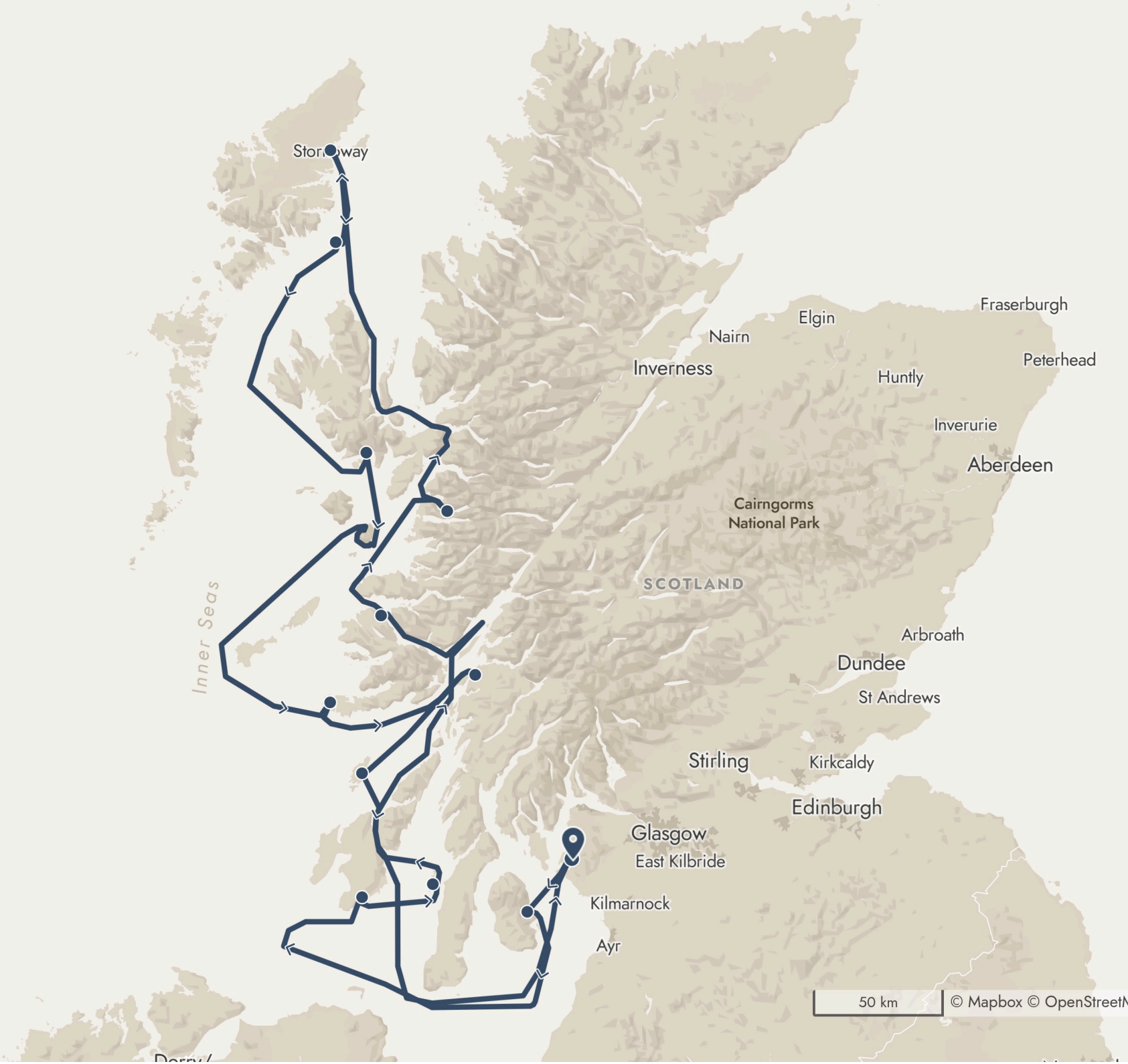




# MS SPITSBERGEN

07 - 17 April, 2026



Legend

— HX Expedition

50 km | © Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

## Day 1 - Embarkation in Fairlie

---

Our guests' journey began in Fairlie, where they were welcomed by a bright and sunny day, offering clear views of the coastline as they arrived at the pier. With calm conditions and blue skies above, they boarded MS Spitsbergen, ready to begin their exploration of the British Isles. After settling into their cabins, they took time to explore the ship and get familiar with their surroundings. Soon after, they gathered for the mandatory safety drill, an essential introduction before departure.

The evening continued with a welcome meeting hosted by the

Expedition Leader and Hotel Manager, where our guests were introduced to life on board and what to expect in the days ahead. Following this, we enjoyed our first dinner together, marking the true beginning of our time at sea.

To close the day, we gathered once more after dinner to learn about the plans for the next day, setting the stage for the adventures to come. As the ship prepared to depart, the calm weather and golden light of the evening created a peaceful and promising start to our voyage around the British Isles.





Largs

Fairlie

Millport

Fairlie

Kilwinning

Irvine

Brodick

Isle of Arran

Lamlash

Firth of

Legend

— HX Expedition

5 km © Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

## Day 2 - Brodick, Isle of Arran

---

Our first full day of exploration brought us to the Isle of Arran, often described as 'Scotland in miniature' for the diversity of its landscapes. From the moment we arrived, the island revealed a blend of rugged hills, forested glens, and coastal scenery, offering a rich introduction to the journey ahead.

Throughout the day, our guests spread out across a variety of excursions. Many enjoyed a visit to Brodick Castle, exploring its historic interiors and surrounding gardens at their own pace. Others joined the Expedition Team for a Fisherman's Walk, following the coastline and reaching the castle, too.

For those seeking a more active experience, the Glen Rosa Walk offered a chance to venture inland, surrounded by dramatic mountain scenery and the quiet atmosphere of one of Arran's most iconic

valleys. Meanwhile, the Forest Safari led some into the wooded areas of the island, providing a different perspective and a closer connection to its natural environment.

With each group experiencing a different side of the island, Arran offered a well-rounded and rewarding day, combining history, nature, and outdoor exploration in a setting that truly reflects the character of Scotland.

In the evening, we gathered on board for the Captain's Welcome, meeting the ship officers and officially marking the continuation of our voyage. It was a relaxed and welcoming moment, bringing everyone together after a full day ashore and setting the tone for the days ahead.





## Day 3 - Port Ellen, Islay

---

Our next stop brought us to Port Ellen, on the island of Islay, where we were greeted by what could only be described as proper Scottish spring weather. Conditions shifted throughout the day: sunshine giving way to showers, followed by wind and moments of calm, adding a dynamic and authentic atmosphere to our exploration.

We set out across the island in different directions. Most joined a town walk through Port Ellen, discovering the character of this coastal village and its connection to Islay's maritime and whisky heritage. Others headed out on a Culture and Wildlife Cruise, exploring the coastline from the water and keeping an eye out for the rich wildlife of the area.

For those seeking a more active outing, the hike to the Carraig Fhada

lighthouse offered a rewarding walk along the coast, leading to this striking landmark overlooking the sea. At the same time, a number of guests visited the renowned Ardbeg Distillery, gaining insight into the craft behind Islay's famous whiskies and experiencing its distinctive character.

In the afternoon, some took part in a beach clean-up, contributing to the preservation of this beautiful coastline. It was a meaningful moment to give something back, combining time outdoors with a shared effort to protect the natural environment.

With ever-changing skies and a mix of cultural, scenic, and hands-on experiences, Islay offered a rich and varied day: full of movement, flavour, and the unmistakable spirit of Scotland.



## Day 4 - Ardminish, Gigha

---

Our next day brought us to the Isle of Gigha, a small island with a strong sense of community and a welcoming atmosphere. Before going ashore, we were joined on board by the local ranger, who introduced us to the island, its history, and the efforts that make this place such a special part of the Hebrides.

Once ashore, we set out to explore in different ways. Many visited the renowned Achamore Gardens, where winding paths led through a surprising variety of plants thriving in this sheltered environment.

Others joined a hike toward the southern part of the island from Ardminish, enjoying open views and the quiet rhythm of island life.

Some took the opportunity to visit Achamore House, adding another

layer of history and character to the day.

In the afternoon, after returning on board, the weather began to shift as the wind picked up. Seeking more sheltered waters, we departed Gigha and continued with a scenic sailing along the Sound of Islay. From the ship, we enjoyed views of the surrounding coastlines as we navigated through this narrow channel, with the changing conditions adding a dynamic feel to the passage.

It was a day that combined community, gardens, and coastal sailing, offering a gentle yet meaningful experience in the Inner Hebrides.





Tobermory

Lochaline

Salen


*Loch Tuath*

Mull

*Loch Scridain*

Fionnphort

Legend

 HX Expedition

3 km | © Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

## Day 5 - Tobermory

---

We arrived early in the morning in Tobermory, the main town on the Isle of Mull, greeted by a mix of fresh air and passing showers. The changing weather gave the morning a lively feel, with clouds moving quickly across the sky before gradually giving way to brighter conditions later in the day.

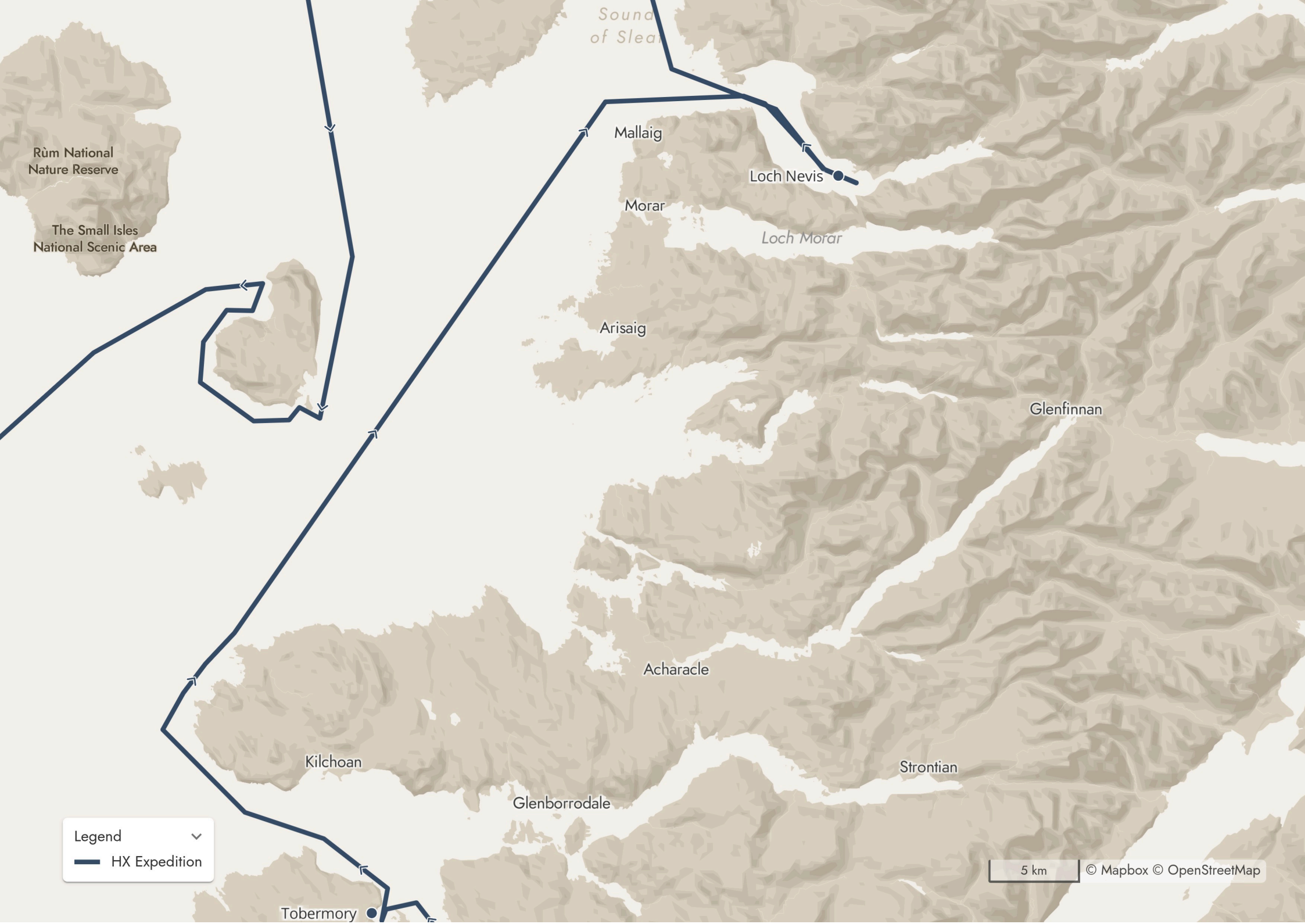
Once ashore, many joined a walking tour through Tobermory, exploring the town's history and its connection to the sea while wandering past its well-known row of colourful houses along the harbour. Others set out to visit Duart Castle, gaining insight into the island's heritage and enjoying its commanding position overlooking

the surrounding waters.

In the afternoon, as the weather improved and sunshine began to break through, some headed out on a hike to Aros Park, following trails through woodland and along viewpoints that offered a different perspective of the island.

With time also to explore independently, we were able to enjoy Tobermory at our own pace; its welcoming atmosphere, colourful waterfront, and relaxed island rhythm making it a memorable stop along our journey through the Hebrides.





Sound of Sleat

Rùm National Nature Reserve  
The Small Isles National Scenic Area

Mallaig

Loch Nevis

Morar

Loch Morar

Arisaig

Glenfinnan

Acharacle

Kilchoan

Strontian

Glenborrodale

Legend

— HX Expedition

5 km © Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

Tobermory

## Day 6 - Loch Nevis & Sound of Rassay

---

The next day brought stronger winds, prompting a change of plans as we looked for a more suitable and rewarding location. We set course toward the remote waters of Loch Nevis, one of the most secluded and untouched areas along the Scottish coast.

Surrounded by steep mountains and far from any major settlements, the sense of isolation was immediate. Once in position, we launched our Zodiacs and set out to explore the loch from the water, moving through this quiet and rarely visited landscape.

Conditions remained changeable throughout the day, with shifting skies and wind creating a dynamic backdrop to our exploration. Despite this, the outing proved rewarding. Along the shoreline, we were able to observe seals resting on the rocks and spotted red deer moving across the hillsides, adding life to the otherwise still and remote environment.

Cruising through Loch Nevis offered a true sense of remoteness: an experience defined by raw nature, changing conditions, and the

feeling of being far from everything, deep within the Scottish Highlands.

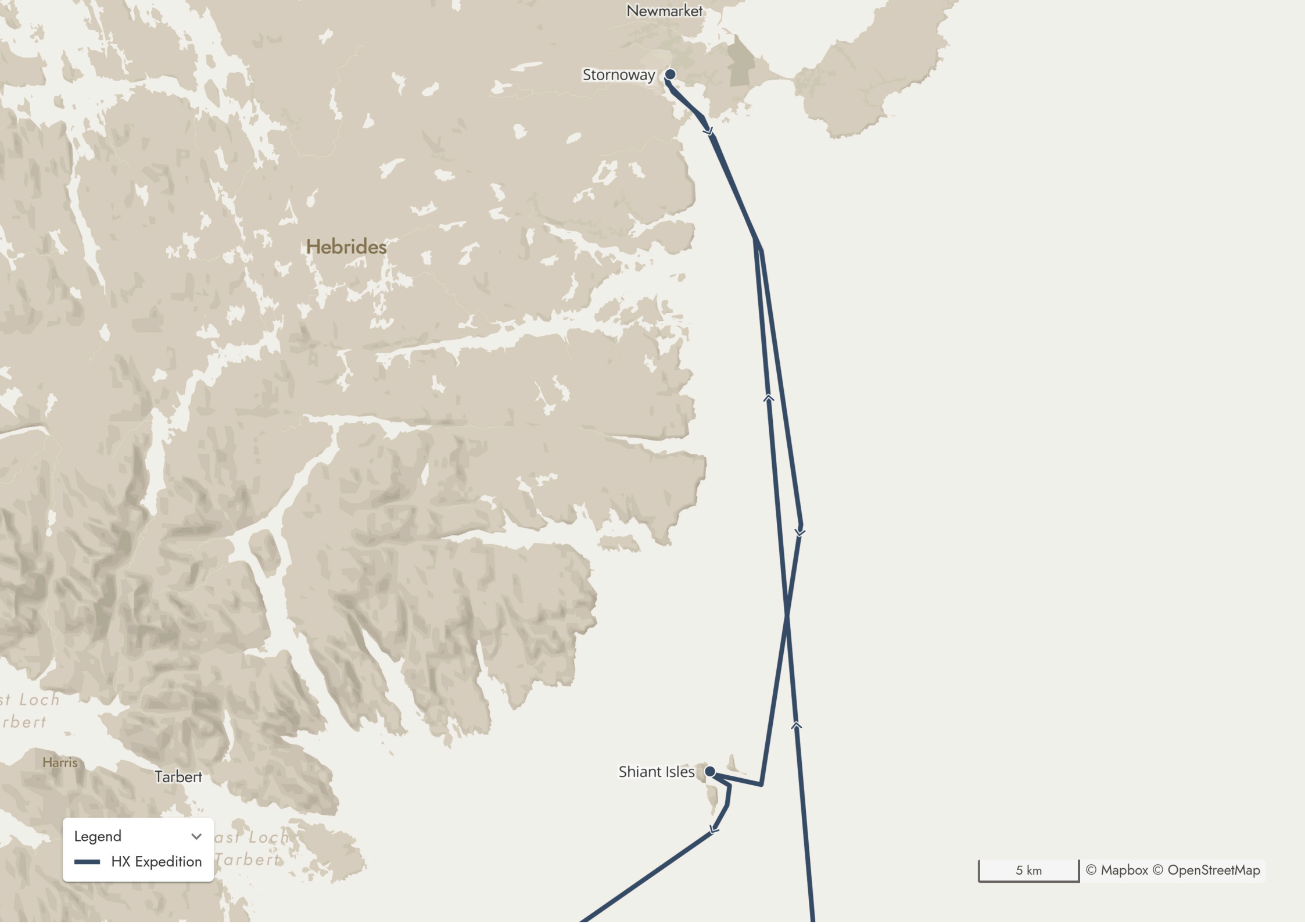
After lunch, we continued sailing north, making our way toward the next stage of our journey. Along the route, we passed beneath the Skye Bridge, entering the narrower waters between the mainland and the islands. We then sailed through the Sound of Raasay, where the landscape unfolded steadily around us: steep slopes, layered rock formations, and the distinctive profiles of the surrounding mountains creating a striking passage.

Later in the afternoon, we arrived off Kilt Rock, where we slowed down to fully enjoy the view. From the ship, we observed the dramatic basalt columns forming the characteristic 'kilt' pattern, while a waterfall cascaded directly into the sea below, adding movement and scale to the scene.

With calm navigation and clear views, the passage offered a memorable combination of geology and scenery, highlighting the

unique character of the Isle of Skye and its surrounding waters.





Newmarket

Stornoway

Hebrides

Shiant Isles

Harris

Tarbert

Legend

— HX Expedition

5 km

© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

## Day 7 - Stornoway (AM)

---

We arrived early in the morning in Stornoway, the main town of the Isle of Lewis, where we were able to dock alongside and step directly ashore. The town offered a welcoming atmosphere and a gateway into the history and culture of the Outer Hebrides.

Throughout the morning, we spread out across a range of expedition experiences. Many visited Lews Castle with a local guide, exploring its interiors and learning about the island's past while enjoying its elevated position overlooking the harbour. Others joined a hike through the Lews Castle grounds, taking in the surrounding woodland and coastal views at a relaxed pace.

A number of guests ventured further afield for a visit to the Blackhouse Village, gaining insight into traditional island life and the way communities lived in harmony with the environment in earlier times.

With time to explore and experience both the town and its surroundings, Stornoway offered a rich combination of history, landscape, and culture. In the early afternoon we departed and continued our journey, setting course towards the Shiant Isles.



## Day 7 - Shiant Isles (PM)

---

In the afternoon, we arrived at the Shiant Isles, located just south of Stornoway and only a few miles off the coast of Lewis. After anchoring and carefully assessing the conditions, we prepared for a short but adventurous Zodiac cruise around these remote and rugged islands.

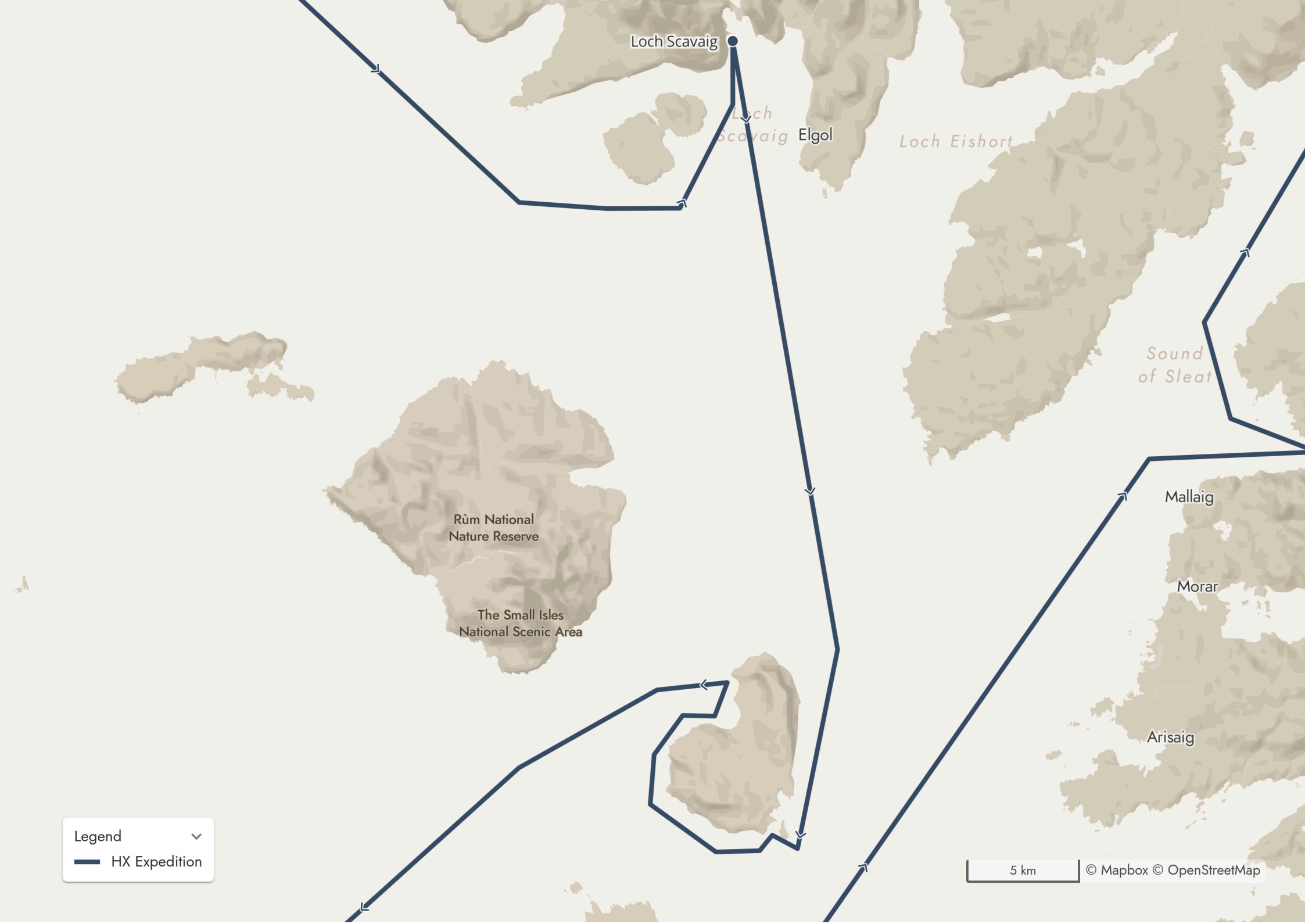
Once on the water, the experience quickly came alive. Riding the waves, we made our way closer to the shoreline, where the islands revealed their wild character. Along the rocks, we spotted seals between the swells, while puffins flew past us, moving swiftly above

the water.

Looking up toward the slopes, we could see sheep grazing on the hillsides, a quiet contrast to the energy of the sea below. Adding to the excitement, we were also fortunate to spot sea eagles, their presence reinforcing the richness of this coastal environment.

Though brief, the outing captured the essence of the Hebrides: wild, dynamic, and full of life. It was a fitting and memorable way to close a day exploring the Scottish Isles.





Loch Scaivaig

Loch Scavaig

Elgol

Loch Eishort

Sound of Sleat

Mallaig

Morar

Arisaig

Rùm National Nature Reserve

The Small Isles National Scenic Area

Legend ▼  
— HX Expedition

5 km | © Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

## Day 8 - Loch Scavaig

---

Our day began in the dramatic setting of Loch Scavaig, where we were able to go ashore and explore the area around Loch Coruisk. Surrounded by the towering peaks of the Cuillin Mountains, the landscape felt both rugged and deeply atmospheric, made even more striking by the clear skies that accompanied us throughout the morning.

Once ashore, we explored the area in different ways. A few guests set out on a full circuit hike around the loch, one of the most demanding routes of the voyage, navigating challenging terrain in an unforgettable mountain setting. Others chose a more relaxed pace, strolling along the shores of Loch Coruisk, taking in the reflections, the scale of the surrounding peaks, and the quiet stillness of the area.

For those looking for a gentler experience, a Zodiac cruise offered a scenic approach to the landing site, with time to admire the

mountains from the water and spot seals resting on nearby islets.

Later in the day, we continued toward the Isle of Eigg, aiming to land and explore further. However, despite several attempts, the wind conditions proved too strong, with gusts exceeding 35 knots, making it unsafe to go ashore.

Adapting to the conditions, we continued sailing along the coastline of Eigg, heading north and enjoying views of the island from the ship. Even without landing, the rugged scenery and changing conditions offered a powerful reminder of the dynamic nature of this region.

A day of contrasts: calm exploration among mountains in the morning, followed by the raw strength of the elements in the afternoon captured both sides of the Hebridean experience.





Loch Tuath

Lochaline

Salen

Mull

Loch Scridain

Iona

Fionnphort

Oban

Dunbeath

Legend

— HX Expedition

5 km

© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

● Iona, United Kingdom - Apr 15, 2026

● Oban, United Kingdom - Apr 15, 2026

## Day 9 - Oban

---

Our plan for the day was to visit Iona and continue on to Staffa, but unfortunately, the weather had other ideas. After a careful and thorough evaluation of the conditions, we adjusted our route and set course for Oban, where the outlook was far more favourable.

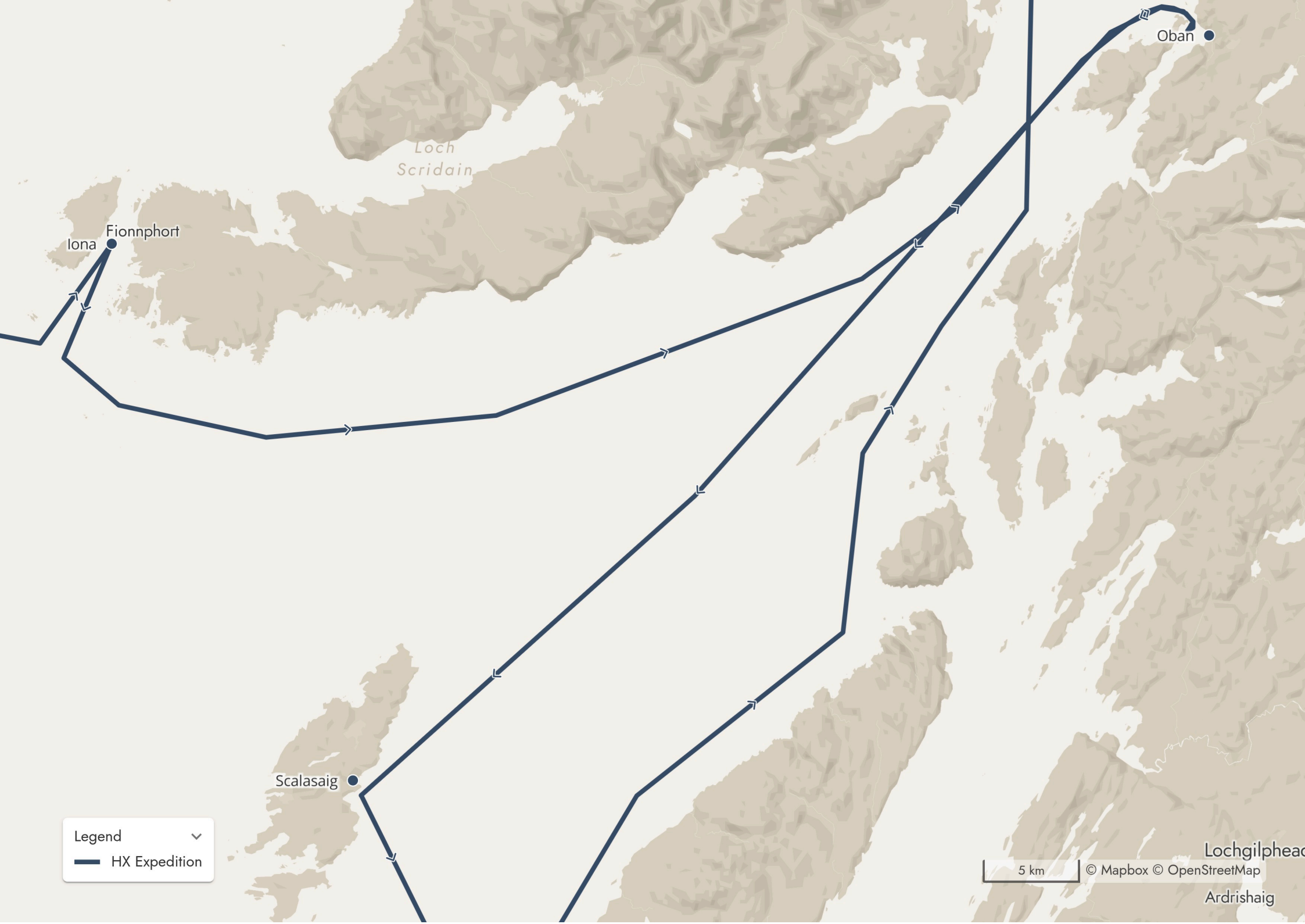
By early afternoon, we arrived and anchored in the bay, soon heading ashore to explore this lively coastal town. Oban welcomed us with a different character: less remote, but rich in history and atmosphere, offering a new perspective on Scotland's west coast.

Once ashore, guests had the opportunity to visit the War and Peace

Museum, gaining insight into local history and the town's role through different periods. Some chose to join a hike with the Expedition Team, exploring the surrounding area and enjoying views over the harbour and nearby coastline. Many took the time to wander through the town at their own pace, discovering its streets, shops, and waterfront.

What began as a change of plans turned into a rewarding alternative, offering a chance to experience another side of Scotland. Oban proved to be a strong 'Plan B', reminding us once again that flexibility is part of the journey, and often leads to unexpected highlights.





Oban

Loch  
Scridain

Iona Fionnphort

Scalasaig

Lochgilphead  
Ardrishaig

Legend

— HX Expedition

5 km © Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

## Day 10 - Scalasaig, Colonsay

---

Our final day of exploration brought us to the Isle of Colonsay, where we went ashore to experience the island's quiet charm and natural beauty. With a relaxed pace set for the morning, we had time to explore and enjoy the surroundings in different ways.

Some joined the Expedition Team for a walk towards Colonsay House Gardens, taking in the landscape along the way, while others opted for the shuttle transfer, arriving more directly to enjoy the gardens at their own rhythm. The gardens offered a peaceful setting, with a surprising variety of plants thriving in this sheltered environment.

A smaller group set out on an extended hike, heading towards the higher parts of the island, where open views rewarded the effort. The variety of options allowed everyone to experience Colonsay in their own way, whether through gentle exploration or more active

discovery.

After lunch, some gathered at the slipway for an underwater drone session, offering a glimpse beneath the surface and revealing the hidden life of the coastal waters. It was an interesting contrast to the landscapes we had explored on land!

In the evening, we came together on board for the Captain's Farewell, reflecting on the journey we had shared. This was followed by the voyage slideshow, prepared by our Onboard Photographer, bringing back the highlights of our time: from remote islands and changing seas to moments ashore and together on board.

It was a calm and fulfilling final day, bringing our exploration of the Scottish isles to a memorable close.





## Day 11 - Disembarkation in Fairlie

---

Early in the morning, we arrived back in Fairlie, greeted by proper Scottish weather, with strong showers and wind accompanying our arrival. The lively conditions offered a fitting and authentic farewell to our journey through the Scottish Isles.

After breakfast, it was time for our guests to say their goodbyes, to MS Spitsbergen, to the crew and Expedition Team, and to the fellow travellers with whom they had shared these past days. From the rugged coasts of Scotland to remote islands, sheltered lochs, and lively crossings, each day had brought its own character and experiences.

We hope our guests will leave with memories of the changing skies, dramatic landscapes, wildlife encounters, and the simple moments in between: walks along quiet shores, time spent on deck, and shared stories throughout the journey. The flexibility of the voyage, shaped by weather and conditions, led us to places both planned and unexpected, each adding its own value to the experience.

As our guests stepped ashore in Fairlie, their journey came to a close, but the impressions of the Scottish Isles: its landscapes, its culture, and its atmosphere, we hope will remain with them long after the voyage has ended.



[logbook.travelmap.net/20260407-spbri2612](http://logbook.travelmap.net/20260407-spbri2612)