The Soay Sheep Society
- Friends of the Soay and Boreray -

So you want to keep Soay!

WHY? Have you kept sheep before? What grazing, handling, fencing have you got?

Consider Carefully
You are still interested - great.   Try to visit someone who keeps them.
Ask lots of questions, and watch the sheep.
If you can't get to see any, these are the main points to think about.

Fencing	Needs to be adequate - standard height NO gaps, especially at ground level.
Fields	Preferably small; in a more confined space they seem to settle better, they graze it better, and the 'bonding' both ways is easier.
Housing/Shelter	Some form of housing is best if you intend to breed, and can be used with an out-side pen for handling. Shelter is essential especially from the wet.
Choice	Many new owners find it useful to buy a small "family group" selected by their current owner. This way a mix of youth and experience can stabilise the introduction. Some prefer to buy lambs, giving you and the sheep time to get acquainted, and eager lambs can sometimes be more adaptable to a new environment than adults.
Handling	Before you bring your 'flock' home, get everything sorted out to welcome them. When they arrive, treat them **QUIETLY, GENTLY, PATIENTLY.** Having established a permanent means of handling, stick to it. A small feed on a regular basis in this area helps them to get used to it and you. They are creatures of habit, anything different and they won't co-operate. They need care like any other animal. You **CANNOT** turn them into a field and forget them.
Maintenance	They do need the following - Foot trimming, Drenching for worms etc.
Fleece	The wool is normally shed, or can be plucked (rooed). Occasionally it does not shed and has to be clipped. Try not to leave old wool on as it can lead to serious skin problems, and fly attacks.

Give **TIME, CARE, PATIENCE** to your Soay, they will soon become your friends, give you hours of pleasure, and a little frustration, with their behaviour and intelligence.

ENJOY THEM.