

This is **durham**

Seaham



A walk of history...
...shopping and seaside



Location...

Seaham is situated on the B1287 coast road south of Sunderland.

Public Transport Information

For information on getting to the coast using public transport, please go to www.traveline.info, or telephone 0871 200 22 33.



Introduction

Seaham is a lively harbour town with strong links to its past. The parish Church of St Mary the Virgin has its roots in the 7th Century and is one of only 20 surviving pre-Viking churches in the country. Mining heritage is evident throughout Seaham with links to the third Marquess of Londonderry, who built the harbour for the shipping of coal from local collieries. Lord Byron also made Seaham his home for a short period after marrying Anna Isabella Millbanke in 1815. Her father Sir Ralph Millbanke, MP for County Durham and a

significant landowner built Seaham Hall in 1791.

This walk provides opportunities to explore Seaham and the Marina where there are a number of places to have a coffee or a meal or simply enjoy the view with an ice cream. Cafés, bars and small shops are plentiful along North Terrace and the Marina. Church Street and Byron Place have a range of high street stores and traditional shops.



Preparing for the walk

Please take care on this walk. It is advisable to wear walking shoes/boots as the routes could become muddy in places. Be prepared for changing weather conditions and wear or carry appropriate clothing and a map.

Our coastal village walk leaflets have been designed as a guide to help you in your discovery and exploration of the Durham Coast with routes linked to the England Coast Path National Trail.

Starting point

Start/finish: Seaham Harbour Marina,
SR7 7EE

Grid reference: NZ432495

Length: 5km

Time: Approximately 1½ hours



The Countryside Code

Respect, protect, enjoy!

Respect other people

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors.
- Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths unless wider access is available.

Protect the natural environment

- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home.
- Keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the outdoors

- Plan ahead and be prepared.
- Follow advice and local signs.





The walk

- S** Leave the Marina and head up the road towards the town and look out for the 'pit wheel' erected as a lasting memorial of the three local collieries, Dawdon, Seaham and Vane Tempest. At the pit wheel turn right, heading north past the Londonderry building on the right. The statue of the 6th Marquess of Londonderry shows him wearing the Order of the Garter and carrying plans for the extension to the harbour. The Londonderry building was built for Lady Londonderry around 1860. Some of the buildings in North Terrace retain Victorian architectural detail, particularly around the doors and windows.
- 1** The grassed area is home to the war memorial and the sculpture '1101' or locally known as 'Tommy'. Many years ago this was the site of the town's infirmary. The terrace facing the grassed area is Bath Terrace and has some of the oldest houses in the town.
- 2** Continue along the promenade passing the Masonic Hall (1873) on the left. There are good coastal views both north and south along this stretch. Continue straight on along the promenade. At the roundabout there are some interpretation panels and a sculpture focussing on the coal mining heritage of the town.
- 3** The housing estate on the opposite side of the road was once the site of Vane Tempest Colliery. The colliery opened in 1926, at its peak it had a workforce of nearly 2,000 people. The colliery closed in June 1993. Continue following the promenade through Vane Tempest car park, here the path carries on downhill for a short way before heading up towards Seaham Hall car park. Continue along the path keeping
- the car park to the right.
- 4** Tonia's is a café at the entrance to the car park and is a good place for refreshments. Cross the road opposite the café (sign posted public footpath). Just past the cottage, go through the kissing gate on the left.
- 5** Continue through the field heading towards St Mary the Virgin Anglo Saxon Church. The church is listed as being one of twenty pre-Viking churches in the country. Founded around 700AD, the chancel was rebuilt in the Norman period and the tower around 1300. At the church the footpath bears right past Seaham Hall Hotel built at the end of the 1700's. In 1815 the poet Lord Byron married Anna Isabella Milbanke at Seaham Hall. The house became a hospital during World War I closing in 1978, it is now a hotel and spa.
- 6** Follow the track through the dene and keep to the left where the path forks. This is known as New Drive and was constructed for Lady Londonderry after her husband died to shorten her travel to her offices beside the harbour. Continue along the path keeping the fence to the right. Looking across the playing fields, we can see new Seaham and Christ Church on the skyline. New Seaham developed to serve the needs of Seaham Colliery which was sunk in the 1840's. In 1880 a disaster claimed the lives of 164 men. Seaham Colliery closed in 1988.
- 7** The track becomes metalled at Seaham Harbour Cricket Club. Continue along past Seaham train station on the right.
- 8** Continue past the shop and along the road passing the Roman Catholic Church of St Mary Magdalene on the left. The founding of Seaham Harbour to handle coal from the



- various collieries owned by Lord Londonderry attracted much Irish labour and the need for a place of Catholic worship. The foundation stone was laid by Bishop Collins on 23 August 1906 and the church opened on 19 September 1907. Opposite the church turn into a gap in the wall onto a disused railway line now a footpath. Continue left along the path towards the town centre.
- 9** On leaving the footpath turn right along Adelaide Row. On the right is St John's Church dating from 1840. Turn

- left and continue down the pedestrianised Church Street towards the sea. Look for the Art Block Marina on the left hand side at the bottom of the street where local artists exhibit their work. Turn left at Costa Coffee and head towards the pit wheel. The building on the left (now a restaurant) was one of the first houses to be built and occupied in Seaham (formerly the Londonderry Arms).
- 10** At the pit wheel continue downhill towards the marina and back to start.





**County Hall
Durham
DH1 5UQ**

Telephone: **03000 268 131**
E-mail: **heritagecoast@durham.gov.uk**
Visit: **www.durhamheritagecoast.org**
www.thisisdurham.com

Sunderland Tourist Information Centre
www.seeitdoitsunderland.co.uk
Hartlepool Tourist Information Centre (01429) 523 408

We have a number of village walks leaflets to download from our website. They are in PDF format but are also compatible to be read through the BLIO App on smartphones and tablets.



Heritage Coast
Sunderland-Durham-Hartlepool

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.

03000 268 131
heritagecoast@durham.gov.uk

© Crown Copyright and database rights
2013. Ordnance Survey 100049055.

Photography:
Mike Smith, Geoff Perry, Jim Perrie, Colin Forster, Jac Howard, INCA

Acknowledgments:
Guy Tritton



Seaham Harbour Marina

Scan the code
to find out more
about Durham
Heritage Coast.

