



A trawl through Scarborough's maritime history.

A CHART Scarborough trail created with the Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre
www.scarboroughsmaritimeheritage.org.uk

This trail will appeal to anyone who is interested in Scarborough's maritime past. It covers a relatively restricted area and could be walked at a brisk pace in about an hour and a half, though, obviously, longer is required to really take in the information and the character of the places visited. It is mainly on the flat, apart from the last section. Those with mobility problems may find this section difficult and should head straight up Eastborough to the Maritime Heritage Centre, where they will be able to experience more of Scarborough's maritime past in comfort.

Start at:

Toll House [Grid ref K17], originally used to collect tolls for the Marine Drive, it is now used as a **Coastguard Station. [Grid ref K17]** From here the North Sea - once the German Ocean - spreads out in front of us, while the Castle Headland rises precipitously behind. This craggy outcrop offers a natural protection to Scarborough's South Bay and has meant it has been used as a safe anchorage for sea farers across the centuries.

The **Marine Drive [Grid ref K18 - Q8]** (opened in 1908 after many difficulties in construction) leads to the North Bay.

We now walk towards the South Bay. On our left, between the Tea Pot Café and the back of the fairground is the entrance to the...

East Pier [Grid ref J17] which was constructed about 260 years ago. Older still is the next pier along - **Vincent's Pier. [Grid ref J16]** Named after the Georgian engineer, William Vincent, who designed what we see today, this pier began in Medieval times,

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when it would have been built of a strong timber framework filled in with rubble.

Walk down to the end of Vincent's Pier to the...

Lighthouse [Grid ref J15] used at night for signalling to boats when the tide is high enough for them to enter the harbour. The lighthouse is also home to the **Scarborough Yacht Club. [Grid ref J15]** At the end of the pier we will see a Vickers cannon recovered by the local sub aqua club. On a tall post is the **'Diving Belle' [Grid ref J15]** statue placed here by the Civic Society, a tribute to Scarborough's place as the first seaside resort in Britain.
Walking back, we pass the newly developed...

Pleasure boat Harbour [Grid ref K16] with its pontoons named after Albert Strange, yacht designer, whose history is given on the information board at the entrance to the pier. We may also see the *Coronia* and the *Regal Lady* who now take day trippers up and down the coast during the Summer. The *Coronia* once rescued British troops from the beaches of Dunkirk during World War Two.

As we exit Vincent's Pier, across the road we see above the amusement arcade, a sail loft where sails were made in the 18th & 19th centuries.

Cross the road and go behind the amusement arcade into...

Quay Street. [Grid ref K15] Here we can see the line of the original 13th Century waterfront. Here we also find one of the oldest surviving timbered houses in Scarborough, the **Three**

Mariners, [Grid ref K15] reportedly a smugglers inn. This street also had warehouses and the site of the ice house where boats would take on ice in order to preserve fish caught at sea. Further along to the left are the **Long Greece [Grid ref K15]** steps which would have taken provisions from ships straight up to the castle.

Carry straight on into...

'The Bolts'. [Grid ref K14] The back allies which run along the back of the Sandside buildings are said to have been used by smugglers. Until the harbour was constructed, they would have been flushed out by the sea each day, taking with it the sewerage and waste thrown out by residents. Turn left off **'The Bolts'** towards the harbour and arrive back in the **Foreshore Road. [Grid ref K14 - G12]** In the 17th and 18th century, Scarborough was a major ship builder, and before us would have been, on the gently sloping sand, a hive of activity, with carpenters, shipwrights and others busy on boats of all shapes and sizes, the air filled with the noise of saws and hammers, the smell of tar and wood over-laying that of sea and weed.

If we turn left we will see the large arched glass window of...

Cielo's café. [Grid ref K15] This was once the 19th Century Bethel Mission, the seaman's mission run by Methodists and was also the site of the town's first town hall until 1800. If we continue on we will pass the **Richard III House. [Grid ref K15]** This was where Richard Duke of Gloucester (later Richard III) mustered a fleet to campaign against the Scots in 1483. Further on is the **Golden Ball [Grid ref K15]** pub and then the old Scarborough **Marine Engineers [Grid ref K15]** yard (now full of market stalls). This

was the last boat building and repair yard in Scarborough and closed in 2008.

Turn back past all these buildings until we come to the...

Newcastle Packet [Grid ref K15] pub which is on the site of the 17th Century Customs House. This pub was originally named the Five Man Boat, a style of boat, along with the Coble, which was particular to Scarborough and this part of the coast.

Behind the pub is **St Thomas' Church**, once the fishermen's church, now the **Sea Cadet Hall. [Grid ref K15]** We will also see the **Tunny Club [Grid ref K14]** fish and chip shop on our right. Tunny (or tuna) was caught off this coast from the end of World War One right up to the 1950s. It was a 'gentlemen's sport', particularly in the 1920s/1930s when competitions were held to catch the largest fish, some weighing over 750 lbs.

Go to the traffic lights and cross the road. In front of us is the West Pier or the...

Fish Pier [Grid ref K14] which is still used by trawlers and shellfish boats today. It is also the main site for SeaFest, a festival of the sea, held every July. To the right of the pier is the lifeboat station. Scarborough had one of the first lifeboats before the RNLI was created. Its long, illustrious history is on display in the station.

Turning back toward the harbour we may see what remains of Scarborough's fishing fleet – a few trawlers and boats for catching shell fish. Once this harbour would have been full of fishing boats and there would have been shipbuilders, workshops, bakers of ships' biscuits, chandlers, victuallers and timber yards all along the wharf. We will still find here a red sea mine, a reminder of the lives lost by many fishermen and naval staff during the two world wars.

Now we turn our back on the sea and cross the road again heading up...

Eastborough [Grid ref K14 - K11] until we get to the corner where we go up the steep **West Sandgate. [Grid ref K14]** In a house on this street lived Admiral Sir John Lawson, scourge of the Dutch in the mid 17th Century. This was also the path by which the tithe - a tenth of all fish caught - was taken up to **St Mary's Church [Grid ref M14]** and also onto the monasteries from 1189 onwards. After the dissolution of the monasteries, the tithe was taken by the aristocracy of the area.

On West Sandgate we pass the **Leeds Hotel [Grid ref K14]** and the remains of the **Buttercross. [Grid ref K14]** This would have been at the centre of the butter market, butter being a major export in the 18th Century.

Next turn left into...

Princess Square [Grid ref L13] and onwards to **St Sepulchre Street. [Grid ref L13]** To our right is Cook's Row or **Burghwellgate, [Grid ref L13]** the site of Scarborough's first tavern and cook house. Further up St Sepulchre Street we find **Trinity House [Grid ref K12]** built in 1832. This charitable organisation was, and is, concerned with providing relief for distressed mariners. It also played a role in ensuring mariners' families were cared for and children were educated before schools were open to everyone.

As we carry on up St Sepulchre Street, we pass...

Globe Street [Grid ref K13] on our left, where the Old Globe Inn once stood and received a cannon ball through its window during the Civil War. When we reach the **Market Hall, [Grid ref K13]** we find Leading Post Street, the name apparently refers to the post which was used to help pull goods up the cliffs from the harbour before the streets which now connect this part of town with the shore existed.

Turn left and go to the main street, Eastborough. [Grid ref K15 - K11] Cross over and walk behind the...

Merchant Pub, [Grid ref K13] where we find examples of Georgian town houses. This area would have been the heart of Scarborough Fair. Originally a 45 day long fish market given a charter in 1253, it was made famous in the song sung by Simon and Garfunkel (itself a re-working of a traditional folk ballad).

We arrive back on **Eastborough** and see across the road the **Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre, [Grid ref K13]** a veritable treasure trove of information and which holds many maritime archives for the town.

To return to the start simply follow Eastborough down to Sandside and turn left. Or you could take a shortcut down many of the dark alleys leading to the forshore on your way.