

# Where the faeries are. (An adventure trail for kids.)

a CHART Scarborough trail.

Scarborough has plenty of adventure for young minds beyond the beach and the seafront glitz — hidden places, mysterious gateways, water with magical properties and even a faerie village. This trail takes you from the South Bay's valley up through South Cliff Gardens and finishing at the far end of the Esplanade. There's lots to see on the way plus we've included some activities for the journey...

Start at:

**The duck pond near Valley Bridge [Grid ref F9].** The pond seems to be ruled by a mob of over-confident geese at the moment, but it wasn't always so. Many, many years ago, an old and slightly bossy but well-meaning otter declared himself guardian-of-the-pond and would patrol the perimeter every night ensuring all the ducks were tucked up safe in their house on the island.

Although ducks don't usually like being bossed around, they were rather fond of the old otter and one particularly cold night urged him to stay warm inside rather than do his usual rounds. The otter however was a dedicated and stubborn old chap and despite the heavy snow, thick ice and freezing fog, set off on his regular nightly journey to check all the ducks were safe.

The ducks were snowed in on their island for 3 days and when they finally dug themselves out, their beaks blue with cold, the otter was nowhere to be seen. There was however an upright rock on the edge of the pond that no-one remembered having seen before and the more the ducks look at it, the more they thought it looked like the old otter. Some



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Download further trails and submit your own at:  
[www.chartscarborough.com](http://www.chartscarborough.com)

people say that the stone otter has been watching over the ducks ever since.  
Can you spot the otter rock?

Continue down Valley Road and under the bridge to...

**Valley Gardens [Grid ref F10/G10].** There are several paths through the gardens — begin by going through the archway by the tower attached to Woodend Creative Workspace. Aim for the little wrought-iron **footbridge [Grid ref G11]** that crosses Vernon Road but see if you can spot any of these on the way:

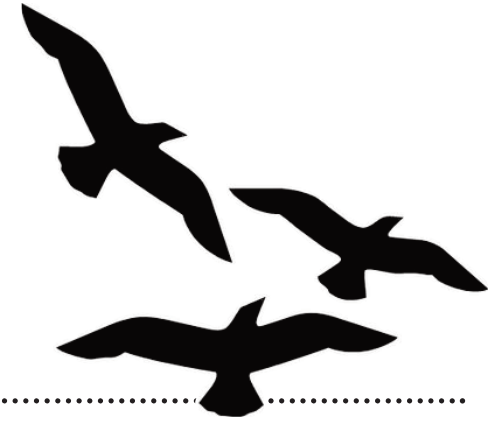
- A brick archway.
- An old water fountain.
- Lots of horse-chestnut (conker) trees.
- A boarded up cave.
- A rectangular fishpond.

Go over the small footbridge, then continue along Cliff Bridge Terrace to the **Spa Footbridge [Grid ref G11]**.

Can you spot the date the bridge was built?

Go down the steps of Museum Terrace to the right of the bridge, then turn left and underneath the arch.

Look out for the door under the arch. At one time you had to pay a toll to cross the bridge, but this looks more like the house of a troll. Dare you knock and see if he's in?



Continue through the arch and follow the cobbled path down the cliff to the road

Turn right, heading slightly up hill and then down underneath the road to cross over to the seafront.

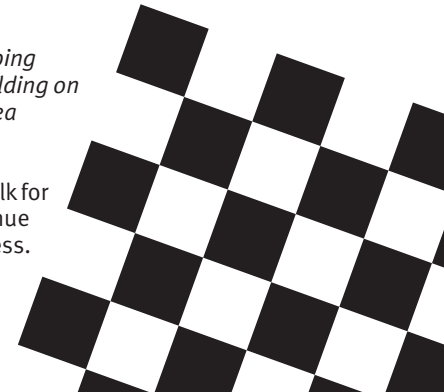
Head towards **The Spa [Grid ref F12]** — if the tide is out you can walk along the beach. Depending on which route you've taken either head up or down the steps from the beach that lead up to the small roundabout near The Spa. Stop on the steps where you see a lion's head inset into the wall.

200 years ago, thousands of people would visit Scarborough to drink or bathe in the Spa waters which they believed had medicinal properties. The waters flow out of the hillside and a tap room was built under ground — it's just inside the wall you're stood next to but it was closed in the 1930's when it was decided that actually the water wasn't very safe to drink at all.

The water that trickles from the lion's head here is now the only place you can see that supposedly magical water. Why not dip your finger in to see if it does have healing properties? Just don't drink it!

Go up the steps and keeping walking with the Spa building on your right and with the sea to your left.

Keep a look out as you walk for what would be a good venue for a massive game of chess.



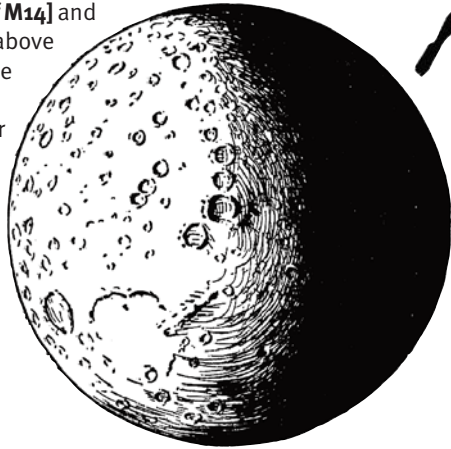
When you reach the beach huts, keep to the left and follow the path along the edge of the beach.

The path here is often covered with stones and shells washed over the seawall at high tide. See if you can collect any of the following:

- A fan-shaped shell.
- A pebble of coloured glass made smooth by the sea.
- A sprig of dried seaweed.
- A crab claw.
- Five brown pebbles, ranging from dark to light brown.

Ahead is the site of the old South Bay Pool, currently home to the largest illuminated **Star Disk [Grid ref B13]** in the UK. It shows where the brightest stars viewable from the Earth are in the sky.

It's best viewed at night, ideally on the longest day of the year when you can look across the bay towards **St. Mary's Church [Grid ref M14]** and spot the Pole Star directly above it, perfectly aligned with the Star Disk. The disk shows you where to stand at other times of the year to identify what you can see in the sky. On a clear summer afternoon you can often see the moon in the sky from Scarborough.



Can you spot these places across the bay?

- The Castle.
- The lighthouse.
- St. Mary's Church.
- The harbour entrance.
- The big wheel at Luna Park.

Head up the path that zigzags up the side of the cliff behind the Star Disk. This will bring you out below the Italian Garden **[Grid ref A13]** in South Cliff Gardens.

Can you find your way into the Italian Garden? You'll know when you're there because you'll see a statue in the middle of a fish pond of a man with wings on his feet and helmet.

He is called Mercury. In Roman mythology he was a messenger who would carry messages from one god to another. In one story he carries dreams from Morpheus, the Greek god of dreams, to sleeping humans. The wings on his feet and helmet are symbolic of how fast he could move. The planet Mercury is named after him.

Now it's your turn to move as fast as you can — at the far end of the Italian Gardens there is a path that slopes up the hill to the putting green. Have you enough energy to run all the way to the top? On your marks, get set, GO!



At the top of the putting green you will see some steps leading to a clocktower. Walk through the clocktower and cross over the road (be careful to look both ways) to **Shuttleworth Gardens** (look for the gap in the wooden fencing and the wooden sign).

Can you find the faerie village? Locals say that if you're quiet and watch carefully, you may just see a fairy. Sometimes they disguise themselves as frogs in the daylight so keep a sharp eye. Don't be tempted to go in the village though - it frightens them away!



That's the end of the trail. We hope you've had fun. If you'd like to explore South Cliff Gardens further there is a detailed map of the gardens available free from various locations in Scarborough including the Tourist Information Centres. It's also available as a download from: [www.friendsofsouthcliffgardens.com](http://www.friendsofsouthcliffgardens.com)

