

MORECAMBE BAY



Morecambe Heritage Trail NORTH ♂

1 Let's begin at Morecambe Visitor Information Centre, located in The Old Station building, site of the old Morecambe Promenade station.

Morecambe Promenade Station first opened to passengers in 1907 as the point of arrival for the large influx of holidaymakers from Bradford, Leeds and Scotland.

The station closed in 1994 and today houses 'The Station' pub, 'The Platform' entertainment and music venue, and Morecambe Visitor Information Centre, which is open Monday - Saturday 9.30am - 1pm and 1.45pm - 5pm plus selected Bank Holidays and summer Sundays.

2 Cross Marine Road then turn left through the gap in the wall onto the promenade. Here you will find the starting point for the Way of the Roses, a 170 mile coast-to-coast cycle route from Morecambe to Bridlington on Yorkshire's east coast.

3 Head along the promenade with the Midland Hotel on your right (more about this iconic building later) to the end of the Stone Jetty. This marks the site of Morecambe's former harbour, built around 1853. The Stone Jetty was rebuilt in 1995 and now hosts a series of artworks and pavement games that were created as part of the 'TERN' project. The building near the end, now a café, was originally a passenger and cargo railway terminal which was built to meet the bay's steam ferry. It was later the site of Ward's Shipbreaking Yard - a controversial but lucrative industry for Morecambe during the 1920s.

4 Walk back down the Stone Jetty and turn left towards the RNLI Hovercraft Station. Although there has been a lifeboat station in Morecambe for over 50 years, the first rescue hovercraft (The Hurley Flyer) was launched from the station in 2002.

5 Stay on the promenade until you reach the Eric Morecambe statue. This statue, created by sculptor Graham Ibbeson, is part of the previously mentioned TERN project and depicts Eric Morecambe in one of his characteristic poses with a pair of binoculars around his neck.

Born in Morecambe in 1926, John Eric Bartholomew was one of the most loved British comedians. He was also a keen ornithologist and loved Morecambe Bay for its natural diversity and the opportunity to view the spectacular flocks of seabirds feeding on the sandflats and saltmarshes.

6 Carry on along the promenade to the Clock Tower, now a Grade II listed building. Made of red brick and sandstone, it was a gift to the town from Alderman J.R. Birkett.

7 A little further along the promenade you can find the Lakeland Panorama, designed by Russell Coleman. This series of oxidised steel panels shows the dramatic mountain skyline that can be seen across Morecambe Bay. See if you can pick out Hard Knott, Coniston Old Man, and Helvellyn.

8 As you continue along the promenade you will pass the RNLI Lifeboat Station and then reach the Morecambe Sailing Club Race Office building. The club was started in 1936 by local fishermen who liked to race their boats and is still open for membership.

Morecambe Bay is a fantastic location for exhilarating sports but with its shifting sands and changing tide channels it can be unpredictable. It is always safer to undertake activity with a recognised organisation or guide. A Cross Bay Walk, led by the royally-appointed 'Queen's Guide to The Sands' is a great way to discover the breath-taking beauty of the bay.

8a A short walk away on Dallam Avenue off Thornton Road you can find Baxter's, home of the famous Morecambe Bay Potted Shrimp. Founded in 1799 by the Baxter family, it now holds a Royal Warrant from HM The Queen to supply the royal family with this delicious delicacy - best served on warm buttered toast. For centuries, shrimps, cockles,

mussels and whitebait have been caught in the bay - traditional methods using horses and carts giving way to today's tractors, trailers and quadbikes.

9 From the Sailing Club Race Office cross Marine Road to Morecambe Town Hall, opened in 1931. In the foyer, a beautiful cantilevered stone staircase ascends above a central mosaic panel set into the entrance hall flooring which carries the town's motto: 'Beauty Surrounds. Health Abounds'.

10 Leave the Town Hall and head back along Marine Road, passing some of the town's large hotels, formerly gentleman's residences. Sadly they no longer look out over one of Morecambe's two former piers, Central Pier, which opened in 1869 but was demolished in 1992 after being damaged by fires in 1987 and 1991. The 912 foot structure included a pier head for the steamers that ran until 1914, plus a ballroom, roller-rink, café and later an amusement arcade. Today the Old Pier Bookshop - a glorious riot of narrow corridors and piled books - and The Pier Hotel sit opposite its former site.

11 As you walk back along Marine Road, look between the Oasis and Greenwoods buildings where you will see ahead of you the beautiful Barclays Bank building. The precinct leads through to Morecambe's main shopping area and the Arndale Centre, where you can find a number of high street stores plus the 'Eric Bartholomew' pub which houses memorabilia of local entertainers plus a heritage plaque dedicated to comedic actress Thora Hird and her links to Morecambe.

12 As you pass the former Palladium Cinema, look up to see the former 'ghost-sign', lovingly restored in 2014. Great pains were taken to match the vivid colours and fluid styling of the original - likely to have been painted freehand by a signwriter working without scaffolding whilst buffeted by the bracing winds whistling in from the bay!

13 As you near the famous Winter Gardens buildings you will pass Bruccian's. Originally opened as a Milk Bar by Bruno Brucciani in 1939, its traditional décor evokes memories of the tourists who tucked into local seafood and its signature knickerbocker glory. Next door is Morecambe Heritage Centre. Opened in 2015, the centre displays changing exhibitions charting Morecambe's maritime, railway, leisure and military history.

14 Then take a step back to view the splendour of Morecambe's Winter Gardens building. Once known as the Victoria Pavilion, it opened in 1897 and could seat over 2000 people. It contained a ballroom, bars, a billiard hall and even an aquarium. It hosted music hall performances and wartime concerts before featuring stars including Alma Cogan and Shirley Bassey. The Friends of the Winter Gardens have been working since 1986 to return it to its former glory and the building currently hosts events, tours and even ghost hunts!

15 Cross back towards The Midland Hotel. On the site of the former North Western Hotel, it was built in 1933, designed by architect Oliver Hill, with murals by Eric Ravilious and sculpture by Eric Gill which can still be seen today. During the Second World War it was requisitioned by the RAF as a hospital. After falling into disrepair, refurbishment was completed by Urban Splash in 2008 to an Art Deco-inspired design. It is now managed as a boutique hotel by English Lakes Hotels.

16 As you look out from the Sun Terrace of The Midland, you can see to your right the site of the former Super Swimming Stadium. A mile-long queue awaited its opening in July 1936 when it was claimed to be the biggest outdoor pool in Europe. After World War Two it became the venue for Miss Great Britain competitions and, despite the reportedly freezing temperatures of the water, it remained wildly popular throughout the 50s and 60s.

17 We hope you have enjoyed this tour of Morecambe - for more information about the area, talk to our friendly staff at Morecambe Visitor Information Centre!

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MORECAMBE - AN EXHILARATING NOSTALGIC PLACE

'Morecambe' was formed as a town in 1889 when the hamlets of Poulton-le-Sands, Bare and Torrisholme were joined together. Its name may have come from Ptolemy's Roman maps which described the west coast of England as 'Moriancabris Aesturis'. However a more colourful local tale suggests that a group of fishermen were asked what they thought would make Poulton more prosperous. They answered "more to come". The next year "more came" hence the fishermen's wish was granted and Morecambe was given its name!

Join us on this two-mile walk to find out more about the history and heritage of Morecambe and how its buildings and industry have survived into the 21st century.

MORECAMBE.
COME TO VISIT & YOU'LL WANT TO STAY.

01524 582808

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OTHER WALKS & TOURS OF MORECAMBE BAY

Guided Walks around Morecambe and Heysham with Peter Wade

Various dates
www.visitlancashire.com
01524 582808

Cross Bay Walks led by the Queen's Guide to the Sands

Various dates
www.visitlancashire.com
01524 582808

Heysham Village Heritage Trail

A self-guided trail around this historic and picturesque village. Pick up a leaflet from Morecambe Visitor Information Centre
01524 582808

Tours of The Winter Gardens

Various times / dates, private tours by arrangement
www.morecambewintergardens.co.uk
01524 409009

Walks, Talks, Beach Cleans, Events and Activities run by Morecambe Bay Partnership

Various dates
www.morecambabay.org.uk

For other local publications please visit :
Morecambe Visitor Information Centre
Old Station Buildings, Marine Road Central,
Morecambe, LA4 4DB
01524 582808

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MORECAMBE HERITAGE TRAIL



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