

WALKING THE YORKSHIRE COAST

A COMPANION GUIDE

Chris Gee

The Yorkshire Coast is hugely varied. There are Victorian seaside towns like Filey, Scarborough and Saltburn, the very epitome of the classic English seaside resort. There are quaint fishing harbours like Staithes, Runswick Bay and Robin Hood's Bay. There are high chalk cliffs, so highly symbolic of the English coast. There are fine seabird colonies where you can find gannets, puffins, razorbills, guillemots and kittiwakes. Grey seals haul out on rocks and from Whitby you can go whale watching in late summer in search of minke whales, harbour porpoise and bottlenose dolphins.

Then there is the heather moorland, a blaze of purple in late summer, which rolls down to almost touch the coast on the edge of the North York Moors, where adders and slow worms can be found basking on a summer's day. There is evidence of industry too, past and present – the steel industry, mining, quarrying, fishing and railways. And then there is Whitby, a place of legend, atmosphere and history, from where Captain Cook went on to explore the wider world and where Bram Stoker was inspired to write his classic Gothic novel, *Dracula*.

Almost the entire coastline is accessible, with long distance coastal paths that follow the very edge of Yorkshire. Those accessible sections are certainly the most appealing stretches of this spectacular coast. Some of these paths are National Trails like The Cleveland Way or other more recent long distance paths like The Headland Way. Others are ordinary, everyday footpaths which give access to some stunning, secret places. In spring and summer the coastal footpaths are a riot of colour, the pink of thrift and red campion, dazzling white ox-eye daisies and cow parsley, bright yellow bird's foot trefoil and kidney vetch.

Chris Gee explores the Yorkshire Coast from south to north. Generously illustrated, this companion guide to the Yorkshire Coast will provide added pleasure and knowledge for those who have walked it in whole or in part, or for those who still have this glorious treat awaiting them.



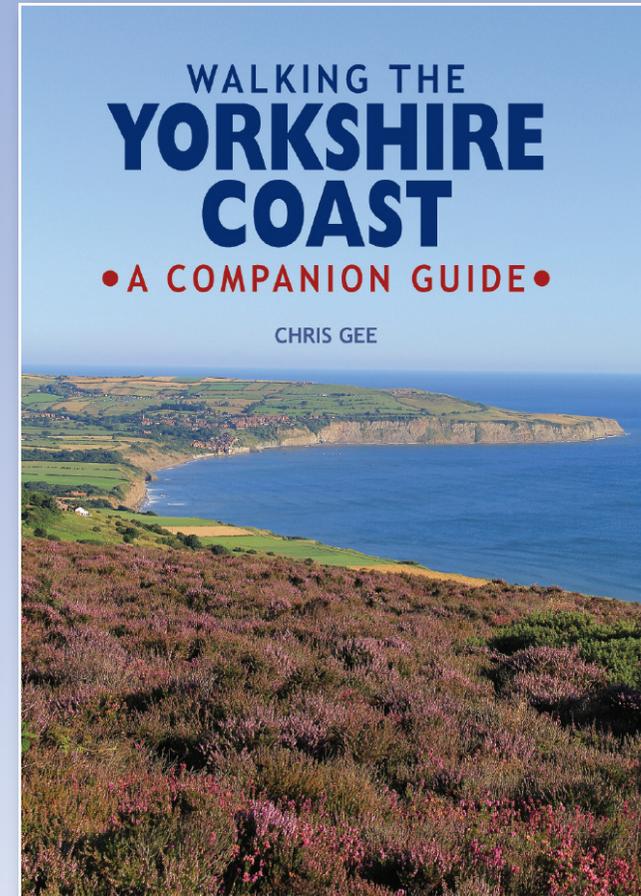
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chris Gee is a York-based photographer who specialises in outdoor writing and landscape photography. Chris combines his passion for the outdoors and walking with a keen interest in industrial archaeology, wildlife photography and recording the changing seasons. Having relocated from Manchester to York in 2012, Chris has spent the last four years exploring every inch of the Yorkshire Coast from the River Tees to the River Humber.

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HALSGROVE TITLE INFORMATION



Format: *Hardback, 144 pages, 210x148mm, profusely illustrated in colour throughout*

Price: *£9.99*

ISBN: *978 0 85710 107 5*

Imprint: *PiXZ Books*

Published: *October 2016*



Halsgrove Publishing, Halsgrove House, Ryelands Business Park, Bagley Road,
Wellington, Somerset TA21 9PZ Tel: 01823 653777 Fax: 01823 216796
www.halsgrove.com e-mail: sales@halsgrove.com

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Inset: A pair of courting gannets at the RSPB's Bempton Cliffs Reserve.

Traditional Yorkshire cobbles hauled out at Coble Landing, Filey.



Example of a double-page spread.



Above: An old wartime mine, from the top of Bay Town looking towards Stoupe Brow.



Right: Selwicks Bay, the fog signal station and Flamborough Head lighthouse, all seen from Stottle Bank Nook.



Above: Whitby Abbey.

Left: Traditional Yorkshire cobbles, Roxby Beck, Staithes.

Below: Rock pavement, Salt Pans, Cloughton Wyke.



CHAPTER 5
SCARBOROUGH

Scarborough, its castle and headland seen from South Bay.

Traditional seaside donkey rides, South Bay sands, Scarborough.

Scarborough is the spiritual home of the British seaside holiday. The discovery in 1620 of a so-called medicinal spring at the foot of South Cliffs kick-started a revolution and the popularity of spa holidays for recuperation of body and mind can be traced back to this point. Spa facilities were built and as the Victorians promoted the natural spring waters, the healing powers of sea water bathing and fresh air and exercise, the fortunes of Scarborough grew and grew.

South Bay is by far the most popular and on any given sunny summer day the beach will be busy with families. It's the only place on the Yorkshire Coast where you're likely to see donkeys still plying their trade on the beach.

It's worth taking some time to explore Scarborough on this section of the coastal walk. The approach from South Bay is a lovely way to arrive in the resort, the view ahead dominated by the castle on the headland that juts out and has given Scarborough protection from the elements that is the reason it is here today. Below the castle, the old town cascades down the hill, a jumble of houses and classic Yorkshire red pantiled roofs. These red pantile roofs are common across much of the North Riding of Yorkshire, but they originated in Holland. The red tiles were brought from the Netherlands as ships' ballast in empty boats returning to England, having sailed with export goods to Holland.

Scarborough Spa and The Grand Hotel, South Bay.